FINALITY AND INTELLIGIBILITY IN BIOLOGICAL EVOLUTION

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IN SCIENCE AND philosophy the final cause has always been controversial. To biologists the problem is complicated, but many believe that it is impossible fo give a complete description of the phenomenon of life without taking into oonsideration the teleological aspect of it. Thus Rensch:

> A special feature of all living organisms is the fact that biological processes in general appear to be: 'meaningful.' They are not only appropriate to the immediate conditions, but also seem to be directed to some purpose which in individual development is only achievE:d at a relatively late stage and after many modications of form.[1]

Simpson's approach to this problem is shaped by the conviction that biology should attempt to answer all the questions, one of whioh is the reason for a living being's activity: "Here, 'What for'-the dreadful teleological question-not only is legitimate but also must eventually be asked about every vital phenomenon."[2] To understand how finality is realized in biology, let us first turn briefly to the nature of the final cause.

The Nature of the Final CaU8e

Aristotle deals with causes in the seeond book of his *Physics:* It is through the causes that scientific conclusions about mobile heings are demonstrated. Movement is intelligible when we discover the causes that produce it. Among the

1B. Rensch, *Biophilosophy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), p. 107.

2 G. Simpson, *Th,is Vi.ew of Life* (New York: Ifarcourt, 1964), .pp. 104-108.

causes, the first and most important is the final cause, which is defined as "that for the sake of which a thing is done." [3] The final cause is the motive or reason which impels the agent to operate. Motion is the vehicle by whioh the goal is attained and, consequently, the other causes exercise their causality in dependence on the final cause. Hence, Aquinas says: " The final cause is called the cause of causes, because it is the cause of the causality of all the causes. For it is the cause of the efficient ca:usality; and the efficient cause is the cause of the causality of both the matter and the form." [4]

The final cause directs, inclines, and attracts; impelled by this attraction, the efficient pushes and exercises its action. Aquinas asserts that those who reject the final cause destroy the intelligibility of science, inasmuch as they suppress the motive or first reason which justifies motion. The final cause is not the cause that executes the adion, for this is the agent's function, the efficient cause. The final cause is the reason *why* the agent acts. Therefore, the efficient cause presupposes the final: "The end is not the cause unless it moves the agent to act. If there is no action the final cause does not exist." [5]

It is interesting to note that many biologists believe that the existence of finality destroys causality, when actually the opposite is true. For example, Simpson says: " The finalist was often the man who made a liberal use of *ignaV'a ratio,* . . . when you failed to explain a, thing by the ordinary process of causality, you could ' explain ' it 1by reference to some purpose of nature." [6]

A simple desirn or attraction is not a cause unless it is fol-

[3] Aristotle, *Ph&sias* (Trans. W. D. Ross) Book II, 3, 194b34. (Oxford, 1962).

[4] Thomas Aquinas, *In V Metaph.,* Iect. 3, n. 782. Of. *Summa Theol.,* I, q. 105, a.5.

[5] Thomas Aquinas, *On the Power of God,* trans. English Dominican Fathers (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1952), q.5, a. I.

[6] G. Simpson, *The Meaning of Evolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), p. 274.

lowed by the activity of the agent. The desire to attain the goal is called the " intention " of the action, even when the goal is not achieved, as happens in many of our actions. Failure does not destroy finality; inactivity does. For that which is first in the intention is the last to be achieved as the effect. The intention does not guarantee the success of the action. Thus Nagel:

> For example,. human beings are said to be goal oriented even when they fail to achieve their goal; and this is congruent with the intentional view, according to which an action is goal oriente:d if it is undertaken for the sake of some intended goal, whether or not the goal is reached. [7]

Since it belongs to the intention of the action, not to the action as such, the final cause cannot he measured or observed. It is the action that we measure. This is a major reason many biologists ignore finality.

Existence of the Final Cause

Teleology is part of the human experience: we are aware of the existenoe of the final cause when we reflect on our own actions. By mere introspective observation we realize that we initiate an action in order to attain a. goal. This human teleology is why we ascribe finality to biology. As Simpson observes: "We do know, however, that pul'poses peculiar and arising within organisms exist as one of the great marvels of life. We know it ,because we form purposes ourselves." [8]

Human teleology haiunts us whenever we study living organisms. We ascribe fina.lity to living beings 'because we detect similarities between the processes of t:hese organisms and ourselves. Does teleology exist in the living? Aristotle not only asserts its existence hut remarks that it is absurd to

[1] E. Nagel, *Teleoiogy Revisited and Other Essays in the Philosophy and History of Science.* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), pp. 278-279.

s Simpson, *'I'his Yiew of Life,* p. 175.

deny it.[9] Aquinas, following Aristotle's lead, notes that what most strongly demonstrates that nature acts for the sake of something is this: in the operation of nature a thing is always observed to become as good and as suitable as it can be.[10] For example, the human foot develops in a certain way so that it may he suita:ble for walking, and this development is always uniform and fixed. Regularity suggests the existence of finality; indifference destroys it, since from indifference nothing follows. " Whenever there is a determinate principle and a determinate order of procedings, there must be a determinate end for the sake of which other things come to be." [11] This reasoning allows Aquinas to find similarities between nature and the human way of acting: " Therefore, the agent that acts with nature as its principle is just as much directed to a definite end, in its action, as is the agent that acts through intellect as its principle." [12]

In the last analysis, however, the existence of finality cannot be demonstrated in the strict sense.[13] For the final cause is not a conclusion we observe hut the first principle of action, and principles cannot be demonstrated. Nature suggests and reveals its existence in a way that makes the living processes more intelligible. This is what we intend to prove by examining a few concrete examples taken from >biology.

9 Aristotle, *Physics*, II, 8, 199b 27.

10 Thomas .Aquinas, *Commentary on Aristotle's Physios*, trans. Richard Blackwell, Richard Spath and Edmund Thirkel (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), Book II, lect. 12, n. 252.

11 Ibid., Book, II, lect. 13, n. 264. Cf. *Summa, Oontro, Gentiles*, trans. Vernon J. Bourke (Garden City, N.Y.: Image, 1956), Book III, Chapter 2, n. 8.: " If an agent did not incline toward some definite effect, all results would be a matter of indifference for him."

12 Ibid. and *Oontro, Gentiles*, Book III, ch. 2, n. 6.

13 Ramirez, S., *De Hominis Beo,titudine*, Vol. 1, p. 211: "Quod quidem principium est analyticum seu per se notum, et ideo directe non potest nee debet demonstrari, quia neque indiget demonstratione. Poteat tamen declarari, exponendo terminos ejus per discursum impropium seu mere explicativum; et indirecte demonstrari per reductionem ad absurdum, si ejus veritas negaretur. (Biblioteca de Teologos Espanoles, Salamanca, 1942). Cf. Aquinas, *In III Metaph.*, lect. 5, nn. 389-390.

Examples of Finality in Biology

For plants water is a necessary element for survival. Hence all desert plants must cope ,with dryness. This is the way they do so:

> The seeds of all desert annuals, for instance;, are quiescent until enough rain has fallen so that the desert soil holds enough water for them to grow, flower and ripen their seed . . . But there are also the desert plants called phreatophytes, which reach down with their roots to underground reservoirs. Thesl': do such a remarkable job of seeking out permanent water supplies that man has learned to follow them and dig wells where they grow. The me,squite is such a water indicator-it will grow only where there is permanent water within 30 feet of the surface-and most wells in California desert have been dug between mesquite shrubs .... Still other desl':rt plants have adapted to drought conditions by making their root system so efficient that the last vestiges of water in the most minute quantities can be reached and exploited. The creosotl': bush is one of these, with roots that penetrate far and wide. After a long rainless period, however, these plants, like many others, will begin to suffer from drought. But the American pygmy cedar can forego soil water entirely: amazingly l':nough,. it is able to live on the water vapor of the air alone, replenishing its supply each night, when even on the desert the air may become nearly saturated. [14]

Is there finality in the processes? If finality is ascribed to them, they become more intelligible: the plants need water, without which the plants die. Hence all these extraordinary living activities are for the sake of a purpose-the goa.l of attaining water. Water is therefore the goal of all these remarkable adaptations, which have developed in a variety of ways according to the actual conditions of the environment and the different kinds of plants. The ultimate end is survival, which cannot be achieved without water, which in its turn is obtained by the variety of different ways described above. The harmony between means and ends is perfect. If purpose is removed from these living processes, then the alternative is that

[14] *The Plants* (New York: Time-Life Books), p. 80.

the plants survive by chance; it happened that water was the effect obtained by the plants' activities hut not the 1goal intended. Without teleology part of the explanation is missing, since we do not know why it happened.

Let us analyze .another example: rthe healing of wounds.

When you cut your finger, a fluid discharge covers the exposed region and forms a film over it. The film includes fibrous strands which stretch across the wound and probably provide guidelines for the migrating cells which form the new tissue. After the formation of the fibrous film, some skin cells become detached and are then free to wander about. This is a controlled migration of individuals-which is something like the movement of a herd of animals. Deeper lying cells migrate to replace those that were destroyed by the cut. New capillarie.s are formed. At the same time, other cells advance from the edges of the wound, perhaps following the fibrous guidelines, and bridge the surface of the wound. Bit by bit the tissue is restored to normal.
There is a final act in the healing process. The tissues of a wound not only grow when needed; they stop growing as soon as healing is completed.[15]

This example is remarkable, and invites us to ask this question: Is the healing of the wound intended? In other words, is the purpose of all these related steps the healing 0!f the wound? If not, it happened by chance, and by chance it stops as soon as the healing is completed. Finality makes the whole phenomenon more intelligible: the healing of the wound is the purpose of the process, which is achieved by the series of steps explained and naturally stops as soon as the goal-healing- is achieved.

Let us now explain the last example: the way human nature fights infections.

Foreign substances are always slipping through the body's outer defenses and attacking its internal systems. Such attacks can be troublesome when the foreign agents work their way into the bloodstream. In such cases, the entire organism may be endangered.

15 *The Oell* (New York: Time Incorporated), pp. 106-107.

Fortunately, there is a second line of defense which stands ready to repel any invaders. This is a white blood cell called the lymphoid cell ... They respond aggressively to invaders, producing a difl'ere;nt weapon for each type of intruder-a kind of magic bullet designed to hit a specific target. . . . These natural identification tags, molecules with characteristic structures,. are known as antigens.... It is known that each antigen stimulates the lymphoid cells to manufacture proteins on a large scale and to dump them into the bloodstream. It is these proteins that lead the body's attack on invaders .....

It takes usually from four to ten days for the body to prepare its defenses. These made-to-order molecules belong to a class of substances called antibodies. These substances pour into the blood stream, attack the invader germs and cause a chemical change in the germs, which make them vulnerable to the next step. This step is accomplished by a crew of wandering scavenger cells called the phagocytes. The phagocytes attack specific types of germs which have been tagged by the antigen-antibody interaction and eliminate the invaders by swallowing them whole. In most cases, the combined offensive by the antibodies and the phagocytes continues until the: infection subsides ....

During the course of a lifetime the average person may be exposed to as many as 100,000 different antigens-yet his body will develop antibodies to identify and with each invader. [16]

Is this biological activity teleological? The purpose of these prooesses is the destruction of the infection. It may happen that these extraordinary, related processes occur by chance. But if teleology is accepted, then the defense of the organism from infection makes more sense, for the purpose of this remarkable activity is the preservation of the person's life and health, which cannot be achieved unless the infection is destroyed, which in its turn requires the manufacture of concrete antibodies and so forth.. Antibodies are the means by which health-the goal-is achieved. This is a teleological explanation. This explanation does not destroy causality; on the contrary, it is the reason why the whole process takes place.

All these examples suggest the existence of a relationship between effects and causes, .between means and ends, between

1e Ibid., pp. 169-171.

the activity of the agent and the purpose achieved by that activity. The purpose of one activity is to heal the wound; the purpose of the activity of the plants in the desert is to attain water; and the purpose of :fighting human infections is the health of the individual affected. Finality is the expedient solution of the question" Why?" which we ask spontaneously to make these examples more meaningful.

The Hypothesis of Evolution

We have investigated the activity of living beings as we observe them now. But for biologists, the main conoern lies in the becoming, in the process; evolution is the key that unlocks the mysteries of living beings.

In art, the purpose of the artifact explains why it is as it is. If we ohs,ervethat the purpose of a plane is to fly, it is obvious that its becoming, the making of the plane, is essentiaily related and subordinated to the flying aotivity. This is art. We may also ask the same question of living beings. Can we postulate, or at least suggest, that evolution took place for the sake of the biological activity we observe now?

In other words, if the effect of evolution is teleological, can we suggest or even imply that evolution itself is also teleological? For example, human nature manufactures antibodies to fight infections. Can we therefore suggest that evolution " intended " their production? W1e accept this philosophical principle: " The becoming is for the sake of the being; it is ordered to the being. So those things have to be ascribed to the (Joming which are ascribed to the being." [17] Becoming and the being-evolution and the effect of evolution-are correlated. Comparing m1t and nature in the *Physica,* Aristotle suggests:

> Now intelligent action is for the sake of an end; therefore the nature of things also is so. Thus if a house, e.g., had been a thing made by nature, it would have been made in the same way as it is now by art; and if things made by nature were made also by art, they would come to be in the same way as by nature. . . . If,

[17] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theol.,* I, q. 45, a.4.

therefore, artificial products are for the sake of an end, so clearly also are natural products.[18]

These arg:uments may justify the hypothesis of the existence of teleology in evolution, hut to verify this hypothesis we must now deal with the theory of ,evolution, beginning with the genetic code.

The Genetic Code

In order to understand the change of one species into another, it is important to keep in mind that in every chromosome, in every cell, a molecule exists that makes a mouse a mouse and a man a man: DNA. The secret of its creative diversity lies in its structure. The way in which DNA is huilt accounts for the billions of forms it can command.[19] Geneticists now think that it is the *order* of steps of the DNA molecule which gives every gene its special character. The amount of DNA in a living organism and the complexity of the organism also seem to be somewhat oorl'lelated.

In general, heredity consists in self-replication of the genetic material, or DNA, with only slight modifications from the DNA of the parents. Evolution, however, " appears to depend on the self-replicating and self-varying (mutation) string of DNA, and the self-replicating and self-varying inevitably lead to natural selection." [20] Geneticists ,contend that, although sexual reproduction reshuffles the DNA deck of cards, no new genes can be created; only various new combinations of existing genes come into Evolution, however, presupposes changes in the gene pool of a population. Mutation and natural selection are not the only factors but they are the two primary factors in the theory of evolution.

The Change of Species

A. change in species, then, must be the result of a change in the structure of its paJ.'lticularDNA molecule. Mutations and

is Aristotle, *Physics*, II, 8 199a 10-15.
u *Evolution* (New York: Life Natural Library), pp. 102-103.
20 Ibid., p. 95

natural selection gradually change the structure of the DNA molecule. A profound change in the structure of the DNA, then, results in a new species, inasmuch as the form of the species must be in proportion ;to the new structure of the DNA. As Dobzhansky ·explains: "One thing no single mutation has done is to pToduce a new species, .genus, ot .family. This is because species differ always in many genes, and hence arise by summation of many mutations." [21] Mayr stresses this idea even more: " Species differ in hundreds or even thousands of genes. And ,each mutation will result in a slight change of the genie environment of all the other genes." [22]

This leads ;to a crucial issue. How is it possible to dispose the genetic materiaJ for the superior form? Here natural selection appears to be the primary factor. This was Darwin's greatest contribution to the science of evolution. The adaptation and diversity of life and the appearance of new origanized fornns can he explained by the orderly process of change Darwin called natural selection.

> We feel sure that any variation in the least injurious would be rigidly destroyed. This preservation of favorable variations and the rejection of injurious variations I call natural selection. [23]

Of course, now natural selection is not exactly as Darwin conceived it, for as Dobzhansky says:

> The selectively fit, or if you will, the fittest, is not necessarily a fellow with big muscles, or a lusty fighter, or a conquerer of all his competitors. He is rather a paterfamilias who has raised a large numbe.r of children who in turn become paterfamilias. [24]

This new idea is taken up by Lerner who defines selection

21 Thomas Dobzhansky, *Genetics and the Origm of Species* (New York, 1964)' p. 31.

:22 E. Mayr, *Systematios and the Origin of the Species* (New York: Dover, 1964), p. 69.

2a Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species.* Quoted by F. Ayala, " A Biologist's View of Nature," in *A New l!Jthic for a New l!Jarth,* ed. Glenn G. Stone (Friendship Press, 1971), p. 30.

24 Thomas Dobzhansky, *Heredity and the Nature of Man* (New York, 1966), pp. 153-154.

"In terms of its observable consequences as the non-random differential reproduction of genotypes." [25] Hence natural selection is based on the fact tha1t some genotypes leavce more offspring than others. Natura.l selection enhances the development of the life of the individual and ultimately of the species. For geneticists, natural selection is not merely a process of statistical chance hut an orderly process of orderly change governed by natural laws. Certainly it is not haphazard. [26] As the geneticists say, causal relations, not caprice, prevail in nature.21 Additionally, to many geneticists, natural selection is not merely a negative force in evolution, but an element which creates new and superior structures in the DNA molecule that call forth the emergence of new forms and species. For Simpson, it is evident that seleotion has a positive and creative role, and that it is indeed the decisive, orienting, process in continuing ada:ptation. [28] For Dohzhansky:

> Natural selection is comparable not to a sieve but to a regulatory mechanism in a cybernetic system. The genetic endowment of a living species receives and accumulates information about the challenges of the environment in which the species lives. The evolutionary changes are creative responses to the challenges of the environment. They are not alterations imposed by the environment as Lamarckists mistakenly thought. [29]

Hence evolution has not just preserved life on earth from destruction; it has created progressively more complex and adaptively more secure organizations. [30] Natural selection tends to maximiz;e the probability of the preservation and expansion o[life. For example, bhe adaptation of plant life to a dry

[25] I. M. Lerner, *The Genetic Basis of Selection* (New York: John Wiley, 1958)' p. 15.

[26] See Thomas Dobzhansky, *The Biology of Ultimate Concern* (New York: The New .American Library, 1967), p. 126ff.

[21] Ibid., pp. 126, 122. Cf., G. Simpson, "The of Life " in *Evolution After Darwin* (The University of Chicago Press, 1960), Vol. 1, p. 166.

[28] Simpson, *The Meaning of Evolution,* p. 224.

[29] Dobzhansky, *The Biology of Ultimate Concern,* p. 122.

[s0] Ibid., p. 120.

climate, as e:x;plained before, is for Dobzhansky a consequence of the crea.tive of natural selection.

For example, all dese.rt plants must cope with dryness. Different plants do so, however, by different means. Some have leaves reduced to spines, others have leaves protected by waxy or resinous secretions, others shed their leaves when humidity becomes deficient, and still others germinate, grow, flower, mature seeds, all within a short span of time when water is available.[31]

Natuml selection can aJso generate new organs by increasing the probability. of otherwise improhahle genetic combination. For example, geneticists regard the formation of the vertebrate eye as an example of natural selection.

The combination of genetic units which carries the hereditary information responsible for the formation of the vertebrate eye have never been produced by a random process like mutation-not even if we allow for the three billion years plus during which life has existed on earth. The complicated anatomy of the eye like the exact functioning of the kidney are the result of non-random proce.ss-natural selection.[32]

Teleology and Evolutwn

Some biologists explain evolution in terms of finality, although they have different ideas of its meaning. Teleological explanations imply ,the existence of a means-to-ends ship in the system under consideration. This suggests that the system is organized and meaningful. Let us the problem.

In Darwin's original theory, purpose is indispensable to his reasoning. Cassirer stresses:

It is safe to assert that no earlier biological theory ascribed quite as much significance to the idea of purpose, or advocated it so emphatically, since not only individual but absolutely all the phenomena of life are regarded from the standpoint of their survi-

a1 Ibid., p. 126.

32 F. Ayala, "A Biologist's View of Nature," in *A New Ethic for a New Earth,* p. 35.

val value. All other questions retreat into the background before this one,[33]

Survival value is the ultimate purpose in Darwin's theory. Teleology also appears fo cor11espondto contemporary natural selection, for the adaptation and survival of organisms is an observed fact which enhances the conservation and improvement of the species. In general terms, natural selection is teleologica.lly oriented in that it produces and maintains end-directed organs and mechanisms when the functions they serve contribute to the reproductivity and efficiency of the organism.34 " Teleological explanations imply that such contribution is the explanatory reason for the presence of the process or object in the sys,tem." [35] Hence it is appropriate to give a teleological explanation of the operation of the kidney in regulating the concentration of salt in the blood. We have a kidney because the regulation of the concentration of salt in the organism is a necessity, and therefore this regulation is "that for the sake of which" we haV'e a kidney. Thus Simpson:

For many biologists, utility is proposed as the purpose of evolution. The problem of utility is the problem of teleology, whether evolution has goals or ends and, if so, what and whose those ends may be ... The: organization of organisms certainly has utility, and the evolution leading to them has that utility as a goal in a sense. That sense is, however, quite special and does not correspond with a preordained plan . . . The utility of any feature of organisms is with respect to the population of those organisms at any given time. It is not related to usefulness to any other organisms; it follows no pre-existent plan; and it is not prospective toward any future goal. The over-all and universal goal is a posteriori at the given moment and is simple survival, which involves comparative success in reproduction. [36]

Emerson claims that the evolution of functions directed to-

[33] E. Cassirer, *The Problem of .Knowledge,* trans. W. II. Woglom and C. M. Hendel (New Haven, Conn., 1950), p. 166.

[34] F. Ayala, " Biology As An Autonomous Science," *American Scientist* 56, no. 3: 217.

[35] Ibid., p. 214.

[sa] Simpson, "The History of Life," p. 175.

ward ends can be demonstrated. He calls the process " teleonomic," using the word coined by Pittendright. [37] Waddington writes " of the major problems of the ' appearance of design,' or biological adaptation." [38] For biologists adaiptation, utility, and survival seem to be the accepted ,goals of evolution. Natura.l selection as " differential reproduction " is for the sake of adaptaition, utility, and, in the last .analysis, survival, inasmuch as the non-adapted living being dies.

Although teleology is part of living organisms, this is not taken to mean that purpose is to he achieved hy means of a single pre-existent plan.[39] The process is now called "teleonomic," although biologists do not totally agree on the meaning of this new term. Ayala questions the wisdom of the use of the concept of teleonomy:

> Should the term ' teleology ' eventually be discarded from the scientific volcabulary, or restricted in its meaning to preordained and directed processes, I shall welcome such an event. But the substitution does not necessarily clarify the issue at stake . . . It may further be that the term 'teleonomic' is commonly employed in the restricted sense of self-regulating mechanisms. There are phenomena in biology that are without being self-regulating mechanisms in the usual sense. The hand of a man, for example.[40]

[37] A. Emerson, " The Evolution of Adaptation in Population Systems," in *Ji1volution After Darwin,* Vol. 1, p. 343.

[38] C. H. Waddington, "Evolutionary Adaptation," in *Ji1oolution After Darwin,* Vol. 1, p. 386.

[au] Simpson, "The History of Life," p. 175.

[40] F. Ayala, "Teleological Explanatons in Evolutionary Biology," in *Philosophy of Science* 37, no. 1 (March 1970): 14. Cf. C. S. Pittendright, "Adaptation, Natural Selection and Behavior," in *Behavior and Evolution,* ed. A. Roe and G. Simpson (New Haven: Yale Unversity Press, 1958), pp. 390-416. p. 394: " It seems unfortunate that the term 'teleology' should be resurrected. The biologists' long-standing confusion could be more fully removed if all end-directed systems. were described by some other term, like 'teleonomy,' in order to emphasize that the recognition and description of end-directedness does not carry a commitment to Aristotelian teleology as an efficient causal principle." Actually, Aristotelian teleology is not an efficient causal principle, but the goal of this principle, as explained before. See also Simpson, *This View of Life,* pp. 112 and 119.

To summarize, there are different views regarding the meaning of teleology or teleonomy ascribed to living organisms. But many biologists accept the existence of end-directed processes. Observation reveals that living organisms are oriented towards adaptation, utility, and survival. Selection is for the sake of these goals.

Natural Selection a,nd Teleology: Difficulties

It is difficult to explain teleologically the operation of the genes and their mutations, for mutations produce chaos and not evolution. Dobzhansky observes that the history of life is comparable to human history, since both proceed by trial and error, with false starts, yet achieving progress on the whole. The paradoxical feature of evolution is that design and chance appear ·simultaneously, a chance and design which is opportunistic and short-sighted. And yet, in the end, chaos is redressed by natural selection, harmful genes are reduced in frequency, and useful ones perpetuated and multiplied.[41] The opportunistic trait of evolution appears to .be in opposition to the classical concept of finality. Dobzhansky explains this problem with clarity.

> Adherents of :finalism and orthogenesis contend that, since it is quite incredible that evolution could all be due to ' chance,' one must assume that it has had a design which it has followed. The reality is, however, more complex and interesting than chance vs. design dichotomy suggest.[42]

Thus, Dobzhansky, Simpson, and the majority of outstanding biologists. reject the Aristotelian concept of finality inasmuch as they identify finality with orthogenesis. Orthogenesis is defined as "evolution in a straight line."[48] Such a process would he not merely directional, but unidirectional, that is, not merely tending in some direction hut long maintaining a single di-

41 Dobzhansky, *The Biology of Ultimate Ooncern,* p. 122.
42 Ibid., p. 125.
.a Simpson, *The Meamng of lilvoltution,* p. 131 fn.l.

rection.[44] Naturally, biologists reject the concept of finality in a straight line.

> The multiplicity of ways of becoming adapted to similar environment is not in accord with hypotheses of design and orthogenesis in evolution; these hypotheses would lead one rather to expect that a single and presumably most perfect method, will be used everywhere. On the contrary, natural selection is more permissible.[45]

Evolution would be orthogenetic if a rigid orientation were everywhere the rule, hut this is not the case in evolution.[46] Hence biologists reject what they believe to be the classical concept of finality. But as explained earlier this is not the Aristotelian concept of teleology-which does not imply that the goal is achieved through the rigid orientation proper to orthogenesis.. Nor does finality require achievements to be the best possible goal, as some geneticists mistakenly believe. Simpson takes up the example of the horns developed by aJJJtelopes in the Belgium Congo: none of them achieved the best possible adaptation. "It is only under the vitalist and finalist theories that one can suppose that the changes that arise are indeed just the ones needed for the best adaptation."[47]

Simpson is wrong in his interpretation, for the classical concept of finality does not ,require as a goal the best possible adaptation, hut the adaptation which is possible given the concrete mutations available and the conditions of the environment. Natural selection works with these two elements: "Harmful genes ave reduced in frequency, and useful ones perpetuated and multiplied."[48] Adaiptation is neither orthogenetic nor the best but, as Simpson put it, opportunistic and continuous.[49] Is it possible to have classical teleology take these traits into consideration? Let us explore the question.

44 Ibid., p. 133.
45 Dobzhansky, *The Biology of Ultimate Oonoern,* p. 127.
46 Simpson, *The Meaning of Evolution,* p. 167.
47 Ibid., p. 168.
48 Dobzhansky, *The Biology of Ultimate Oonoern,* p. 122.
49 Simpson, *The Meaning of Evolution,* p. 224.

Opportunity and Extinction in Evolution

Geneticists emphasize the opportunistic character of natural selection.

> Natural sele;ction is automatic, blind, and lacking foresight. It is opportunistic, in the sense that it adapts the organism to the environments existing at the time it acts, and it cannot take into account any possible changes of the conditions in the future ... The conseque;nce of this opportunism and myopia may be extinction.[50]

Groping in the dark is the only way natural selection can proceed. It may lead to discovery of openings toward new opportunities for living, it may preserve and enhance life, or it may lead to extinotion.[51] This opportunistic trait of evolution is the reason why natural selection has developed a tremendous variety of living beings, which includes hundreds of distinct adaptive types. This is something observed in spite of the fact that the opportunities offered by mutations and the environment are always limited. " What can happen is always limited. Boundless opportunity for evolution has never existed . . . Possible w:ays of life are always restricted to two ways: environment must offer the oppo11tunityand a group of organisms must have the possibility of seizing this opportunity."[52]

Sometimes natural selection fails, for it cannot cope with an adverse environment, or it is impotent to opemte with deleterious mutations. The consequence is extinction:

> The gene.ral, true cause of extinction seems to be a change in the life selection, the organism-environment integration, requiring in the organisms concerned an adaptive change which they are unable to make.[53]

But even in these cases teleology does exist, for natural selec-

50 Dobzhansky, *The Biology of Ultimate Concern,* p. 57.
51 Ibid., p. 128.
52 Simpson, *The Meaning of Evolution,* p. 161.
53 Ibid., p. 203.

tion does not cease to stmggle for survival and for adaptation as its goals.

Among humans there are many individuals who cannot cope with the circumstances " here and now " and so they die. There are tribes in the Amazon River on the verge of extinction, in spite of their life-and-death struggle for existence. Many species of animals are now disappearing, not because they do not strive for survival, hut because their opportunistic and short-sighted reactions to the " here and now " situation are insufficient to overcome adverse conditions, usually created hy man. In all these cases natural selection is a.t work. The concept of finality does not necessarily piresuppose success, hut struggle for survival, a general orientation present in evolution. As Simpson says:

> The changes involved do have direction and orientation, even though these were not as regular as they have usually been represented. And so, in hundreds or thousands of other cases, it seems clear that there is an orientation of some sort. [54]

This orientation is not the rigid orientation of ol'lthogenesis, hut an orientation that has produced variety through the evolution of new forms of life.

> Evolution has achieved more than to preserve life on e.arth from destruction. It has created progressively more complex and adaptively more secure organizations. The human species has attained the peak of biological security. [55]

Opportunism vs. Desi,gn

Natural selection is opportunistic in the sense that it adapts the organism to the environment existing at the time it acts. " It is automatic, blind, and lacking foresight." [56] It is affected by "myopia" and it "gropes in the dark." [57] The "[h]istory

[54] Ibid., p. 131. Cf. Dobzhansky, *The Biol-Ogy of Ultimate Oonoern,* pp. 118-119: " What this seems to mean is a statement of the undoubted fact that, even in retrospect and in its totality, evolution was indeed progressive, and in this sense directional and oriented."

[55] Dobzhansky, *The Biology of Ultimate Ooncern,* p. 129. Cf. p. 117.

[56] Ibid., p. 57.

[*s1*] Ibid., p. 128.

of life is an odd blend of the directed and rbhe random, the systematic and the unsystematic." [58] W·e faoe .a semantic problem, for to be blind is not the same as to ·be short-sighted: the one who is groping in the dark is searching for light. In other words, the question posed hy natmal selection is how to harmonize the opportunistic trait of evolution with the idea of ·a plan or design. Should natural selection he blind and lacking any vision of the future, then something else must supply that vision, for evolution does appear to follow ·an "apparent purpose," direction and order. Natural selection is creative and, much more than a sieve, creates new wonders. To suggest the possibility of design, however, does not mean there must also be a fixed plan which ignores the conditions of the environment and the mutations of genes. On the -contrary, the design must take into consideration these essential factors. It depends on them. The transformation occurs, as Huxley says, in a series of finite steps, each taking a certain period of time, the earlier ones serving as basis of the later. Natural selection cannot be 1blind, but it can be opportunistic and short-sighted in the continuum of time. It transforms nature by little, in a way similar to a work of art. Another example: automobile designs have changed continuously; the Ford model of the present year is not the famous Model T or the design of the thirties. Every new model takes a series of finite steps, ea;ch taking a, certain period of time, the earlier ones serving as basis of the later.

The human design also works continuously with that which is available. Not knowing the needs of future generations, the goal and purpose is always present directing the process. The same must be true of evolution, as suggested by Aristotle, who compares the work of art and nature in this way:

> Thus if a house, e.g., had been a thing made by nature, it would have been made in the same way as it is now by art; and if things made by nature were made also by art, they would come to be in

[58] Simpson, *The Meanilng of Evolution,* p. 185.

the same way as by nature. Each step then in the series is for the sake of the next; and generally art partly completes what nature cannot bring to a finish, and partly imitates her. If therefore, artificial products are for the sake of an end, so clearly also are natural products. The relation of the later to the earlier terms of the series is the same in both. [59]

In light of these words, I dare to say that Aristotle would have accepted the existence of finality in evolution, but not ol'lthogenesis or rigid finality.

Let us see now how evolution, which for some biologists cannot coexist with finality, fulfil.Is only part of all possibilities existing in nature. Natural selection depends on mutations and chance; hence, the genetic code possesses an almost infinite number of possibilities. Yet the actualization of these possibilities is restricted by the laws of statistic probability to one at a time. In other words, the nature of living beings necessarily presupposes the impossibility of the simultaneous actualization of these infinite possibilities. " What can happen is always limited. Boundless opportunities have never existed." [60] It also presupposes that a single and presumably " mo.sit perfect method " can never be achieved. It also tells us that the design is realized in a particular way, usually by following a method that is not perfect. Defects, evil, and extinction do indeed exist in nature simultaneously with teleology. This, again, is Aristotle's view.

Now mistakes come to pass even in the operations of art; the grammarian makes a mistake in writing and the doctor pours out the wrong dose. Hence clearly mistakes are possible in the operation of nature also. If then in art there are cases in which what is rightly produced serves a purpose, and if where mistakes occur there was a purpose in what was attempted, only it was not attained, so must it be also in natural products, and monstrosities will be failures in purposive effort. [61]

Failure and extinction do not destroy finality; only inactivity does.

59 Aristotle, *Physics,* II, 8, 199b 7.
ao Dobzhansky, *The Biology of Ultimate Concern,* p. 125.
01 Aristotle, *Phyaics,* II, 8 199a 33-199b 7.

Evolution and Future Time

The theory of evolution intrigues the philosopher. Where hiologists say that evolution is blind, they mean it lacks knowledge of the future. Yet the future brings the result of the processes that take place in time: " Natural selection is not prospective towards any future goal. The over-all and universal goal is a posteriori at the given moment and is simply survival, which involves comparative success in reproduction." [82] Hence survival is the goal, the purpose for the sake of which the evolutionary process takes place. Simpson, however, does not call the process teleological, but ·teleonomic,

> What are birds' wings for? That they are an adaptation to flying is a proper answer and partial explanation near the descriptive level. Further explanation is historical; through a sequence of configurations of animals and their environments wings became possible, had an advantage function, and so evolved through natural selection.[83]

Here a telenomic prrocess describes the history of the biological aotivity hut does not mention explicitly the word time. Emerson, however, introduces time in evolution and explains how biological time involves a feedback mechanism. He hints that the evolution of functions directed towards ends can be demonstrated: "Effects quite commonly precede the repeated ca.use in time ·and obviously are ahle to modify causes by means of feedback mechanisms." [64] He proceeds to explain how elaborate and complex evolution is:

> The circularity of cause and effe:ct-with effects often influencing repeated causes-enables mechanisms to evolve that are directed toward future function. Natural selection is some.times thought to operate without ' foresight' or at least to be ' shortsighted.' **It** is true that adaptations to oft-repeated events are more obvious, but

62 Simpson, "The History of Life," in *E'oolution After Darwin,* Vol. 1, p. 175.

68 Simpson, *Thi8 View of Life,* p. 135.

64 Emerson, "Adaptation in Population Systems," in *Evolution After Darwin,* Vol. 1, pp. 338-339.

rare e;vents repeated only after the lapse of many years can also be shown to influence selection pressures ... For example, antibodies against completely new protein poisons can be generated by cells and tissues. All of this means that the organic systems incorporate time dimensions and that end-directions are; apparent in ontogenetic and phylogenetic time. Pittendright refers to such end-directedness as *teleonomy,* without implying Aristotelian teleology as an efficient causal principle.[65]

(Of course, Aristotelian teleology is not an efficient causal principle, but rather the goal that explains *why* the efficient cause is acting.) But, going back to the previous quotation, Emerson emphasizes the fact that the effect of a process often appears much later: in the case of antibodies, from four to ten days; in the case of changes in species, millions of years. How is that possible without foresight? By chance? Time must be incorporated into the evolutionary process, as Waddington clearly asserts:

The essential feature of an evolutionary theory is the suggestion that animals and plants ... have been brought to the present condition by a process extending through time, and were not designed in their modern form.[66]

This means that a.daprtation and survival require a continuous change that takes place in time. Therefore: " Biological processes ... seem to be directed to some purpose which in individual development is only achieved at a relatively late stage and after many modifications 0£ form. [67]

Teleological Evolution and the Need of a Planner

The philosopher who investigates how living organisms adaipt themselves to the environment sees that they do not do it consciously. n natura,l selection presupposes a means-to-end relationship in the system, then :who determines the end,

65 *Ibid.,* p. 341.

ss C. H. Waddington, "Evolutionary Adaptation," in *Iilvoliitioii A.fte1· Darwin,* Vol. 1, p. 382.

67 Ren.sch, *Biophilosophy,* p. 107.

who decides the means, and who knows the relationship between ends and means? [68]

For example, plants in the desert store water to avoid perishing. By storing this precious liquid plants pireserve themselves and the species. Yet how do plants know they have to store ilt? It is remarkruble to observe the following hierarchical subordination of means <to ends: The preservation of the species is the ultimate end (adaptation), which rrequires the preservation of the individual plant; but tills is impossible unless the plant stores water, which in ithe cacti I'iequires a change in the normal process of photosynthesis. The ultimate goal imparts intelligibility to the rest of the process. But, again, how do the cacti know to do all this? It may perhaps happen by sheer chance, but ev,en biologists reject as impossible this kind of " preadaptation " order:

> The improbability that such a structure arise by sheer accident or by any continued series of accidents is short of infinity.... It is necessary to agree with Julian Huxley that "to produce such adapted types by chance recombination ... would require a total assemblage of organisms that would more than fill the universe, and ove,r astronomical time.' Some geneticists really were, for a time, so naive as simply to deny the reality of the problem of adaptation. Earlier opinion that random preadaptation is an adequate explanation of adaptation were, however,.quite unjustified.[69]

The process of evolution does not follow the statistical laws of pure chance; therefore, it must follow a scheme, a plan, an order, although granted this plan is not orthogenesis. Let us suppose natural selection is teleological. Should we then accept the existence of a planner who knows and directs the process? The old aphorism *"opus naturae est opus intelligentiae* " (" the work of nature is the work of an intelligence ") seems apropos here.

Darwin in his early writings did not rule out the possibility of a supreme being hidden ,behind the process of nature. He declared at the very end of his *Origin:*

68 Aquinas, *Contra Gentiles,* Book 2, ch. 23.
69 Simpson, *This View of Life,* p. 202.

There is a grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one; and that, while the planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most be,autiful and most wonderful have been, and are being evolved.[70]

These were not his last ,words, for Darwin changed from the " brea:thed by the Creator " to "that like will be found to ·be a consequence of some general laws-that is, the result of natural processes rather than divine inrtervention." [71]

The majority of biologists follow Davwin's view, for they hold that evolution is the result of immanent laws that do not need anything .from outside directing them. However, Simpson says: "The source of these immanent laws themselves is quite unknown .and probably unknowable to science; here religion may honorably enter the picture." [12] Further, he declares: " The ultimate mystery is beyond the reach of scientific inv;estigation, and probably of the human mind . . . Here is hidden :the First Cause sought by theology and philosophy." [71]

Let us not force .an incorrect interpretation of Simpson's position, for in his view there is no room for God as the final cause of evolution: "If evolution is God's plan of creation-a proposition that a scientist as such should neither affirm nor deny-then God is not a finalist." [74] For Simpson, God as finalist would produce instantaneous and perfect effects, which is contrary to ·what we observe in biological processes. As explained before, however, instantaneous and perfect effects are not a necessity for teleology, which only requires the existence of a goal for the sake of which the operation takes place.

The synthetic theory of evolution poses other kinds of difficulties, and even apparent contradictions, articulated well in this quotation:

1-0 Darwin, *The Origin of Species,* end.
n See Simpson, *This View of Life,* p. 11.
12 Ibid., p. 38.
1s Simpson, *The Meaning of lilvolution,* p. 279.
74 Simpson, *This View of Life,* p. 265.

Adaptation is real, and it is achieved by a progressive and directed process. The process is wholly natural in its operation. This natural process achieves the aspect of purpose without the intervention of a purposer, and it has produced a vast plan without the concurrent action of a planner. It may be that the initiation of the process and the physical laws under which it functions had a Purposer and that this mechanistic way of achieving a plan is the instrument of a Planner-of this still deeper problem the scientist, as scientist, cannot speak.[75]

Again, this is Simpson. Is it possible to have a vast plan without a planner, and a progressive and directed process without some intelligence who plans and directs?

Dobzhansky criticizes Sinot for feeling a need to have gaps between natural events to accommodate God.[76] He says that the Gods of the ,gaps are dead, "and they have been killed by those who most cherished and wanted to protecrt them."[77]

Philosophers and theologians must be cautious, true. But the scientists' ideas on God are not always right, and often incomplete. They believe that, if God should intervene in nature, the effect would be perfect, instantaneous, the best solution and the result of a fixed plan-which, consequently, leaves no room for evolution.[78] They do not let God accommodate his action to the nature He himself created. Nor do they let God intervene continuously in the process of evolution, which is what the evolutionary process demands. As Waiddington points out:

[75] Ibid., p. 212.

[76] Dobzhansky, *The Biology of Ultimate Concern,* p. 23.

[11] Ibid., pp. 33-34.

[78] Dobzhansky, *The Biology of Ultimate Concern,* p. 120: "If evolution is propelled and guided toward some goal by divine intervention (finalism), then its meaning becomes a tantalizing, and even distressing, puzzle. If the universe was designed to advance toward some state of absolute beauty and goodness, the design was incredibly faulty ... The universe could have been created in the state of perfection. Why so many false starts, extinctions, disasters, misery, anguish, and finally the greatest of evils-death? The God of love and mercy could not have planned this." Hence, for Dobzhansky, the problem transcends evolution; it lies mainly in the problem of evil, for he cannot accept a God who permits evil. This problem is as old as the human race.

The essential feature of an evolutionary theory is the suggestion that animals and plants ... have been brought to their present condition by a process extending through time, and not designed in their modern form. This does not, as many of Darwin's contemporaries thought it did, necessarily deny the existence of any form of intelligent designer. It means only that any designing activity may be has operated through a process extending over long periods of time and has not brought suddenly into being each of the biological foms as we now see them. The question of atheism or theism ... must be settled, if evex can be, in some other way.[79]

Waddington poses the problem with philosophical intuition. We are not trying to prove the existence of God but only to suggest that teleology in biology and evolution demands the existence of an intelligent being who knows the goals and the means to achie¥e them. Neither plants nor cells nor organisms know their goals. If nature lacks intelligence yet operates in ways that demand a principle of order, then who *does* plan and direct evolution? For we are reluctant to accept the existence of a vast plan without a planner and of an apparent purpose without a purposer. The planner appears to use nature as the instrument of his plan through a process extending over long periods of time, in a series of finite steps, each taking a certain period of time, with the earlier ones serving as hasis of the later.

79 Waddington, " Evolutionary Adaptation," pp. 382-383. Cf. Aquinas, *On the Power of God,* q. 3, a. 7: "It follows of necessity that God causes the actions of every natural thing by moving and applying its power to action .•. it (nature) is the instrument of the final cause in regard to that effect." *On The Truth,* q. 12 a. 6: "God moves each thing according to its mode." *On the Physics.,* Book II, lect. 14, n. 268: "Hence, it is clear that nature is nothing but a certain kind of art, i.e., the divine art, impressed upon things, by which these things are moved to a determinate end. It is as if a shipbuilder were to give to timbers that by which they would move themselves to take the form of a ship." Simpson accepts the possibility of nature as the instrument of God. *This View of Life,* p. 212: "It may be that the initiation of the process and the physical laws under which it functions had a Purposer and that this mechanistic view of achieving a plan is the instrument of the Planner--of this still deeper problem the scientist, as scientist, cannot speak."

Simpson poses this thorny problem with acute clarity:

We do know, however, that purpose peculiar to and ar1smg within organisms exists as one of the great marvels of life. We know it because we form purposes ourselves. We do not know how general such purposes are among organisms. Must a purpose be conscious, and if so, how far does consciousness exist? Perhaps it is only a matter of definition, and perhaps there is some sense in which purpose is one: of the universal improvements of living over nonliving. [80]

Wright stresses the similarities between biological activity and the ways conscious humans act thus:

Just as the conscious function provides a consequence-etiology (that is, behavior that occurs because it brings about some specified end) by virtue of conscious selection; natural functions provide the ve.ry same sort of etiology as a result of natural selection. [81]

According to Woodfield, the problem of intention is resolved by recourse to feedback systems. It "consists of the fact that they behave as if they had desires and beliefs in virtue of the fact that they are feedback systems." [82] He holds: " There are no clear rules for deciding when an internal state is sufficiently similar to a desire to coulllt as the state of having a goal." [83]

Nagel is extremely critical of these views, rejecting any similarity between the intentional model of finality and biological processes:

In short, whatever may be the merits of the intentional view as an analysis of goal-directed behavior of purposive human beings,

so Simpson, *This View of Li'.fe,* p. 175. Cf. Dobzhansky, *The Biology of Ultimate Concern,* p. 42.

81 Wright, L. *Teleological Explanation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), p. 38; cf. p. 84. Dobzhansky in *The Biology of Ultimate Concern,* p. 42, quotes Wright: "The philosophical biologist cannot escape from the problem of the relation of mind and matter ... The only satisfactory solution of these dilemmas would seem to be that mind is universal, present not only in all organisms and their cells but in molecules, atoms and elementary particles."

82 A. Woodfield, *Teleology* (Cambridge, England, 1976), p. 164.

sa Ibid., p. 195.

it contributes little to the clarification of the concept as it is used in biology.[84]

Nagel's atttitude is logical, for although he accepts the existence of teleology, finality is reduced to a mere explanation a posteriori, from effects to causes, hut the effect is not considered as the goal intended hy the cause.[85]

Selection and the Thing Selected

Professor Mayr writes these suggestive words:

> Evolution is not an all-or-none process. Genetic variation is enormous and does not consist merely in the production of a few types ... It " selects " them precisely in the same way in which a breeder " selects " the founder individuals for the next generation of breeding. This is a thoroughly positive process; inferior zygotes are simply lost ... As soon as the selection is defined as differential reproduction, its creative aspects become evident. Characteys are the developmental products of an intricate interaction of genes, and since it is selection that " supervises " the bringing together of these genes, one is justified in asserting that selection creates superior new ge.ne combinations.[86]

Naturally, this quotation can he misinterpreted, for as Nagel says, a breeder deliberately selects the animal he will mate, and he is looking at the future ·generation. Natural selection, however, has no eye to the But it is also true that natural selection selects the genotype-that combination of genes that will adapt the living being to the environment-which takes place in the future. According to Olson, natural selection is complete on the descriptive level but not satisfactory from the viewpoint of causal explanation.

84 Nagel, *Teleology Revistea,* p. 281.

85 Ibid., p. 315: "The appropriate answer, so it seems to me, is that inquiries into effects or consequences are as legitimate as inquiries into causes or antecedent conditions, that biologists ... have been concerned with ascertaining the effects produced by various systems and subsystems."

ssE. Mayr, *Populations, Species, and Evolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), p. 119.

s1 Nagel, *Teleology Revisited,* p. 303.

But this use seems to have little but a descriptive meaning. As soon as it is required that causes of changes in frequency be e.x-plained and the idea of adaptation enters into causal sense, things are less clear and problems in interpretation of observed events arise.[88]

Olson praises the selection theory for its many 'advantages, but he does not deny its limitwtions.

Here we should pose a last question rega,rding evolution. It is obvious that in the case of human selection, the process of selection is .different from the process that follows after the thing has been selected. T·he breeder, for example, selects the horses for the new generation of breeding. But the hreeder is nort the cause of the offspring which follows this selection. Once the selection is over, the thing selected operates according to the Jaws of nature, without any further intervention of the breeder.

In the case of evolution, the selection of the right genes for the sake of adaptation to the environment is the result of nactural selection. But is the selection the cause of the new being, the new organ, or the new species? The creativity, the wisdom, and the wonder of new forms lie not in the selection but in the genotype ,selected, which .adapts itself to the envi11onment with a creativity and wisdom superior to that of humans. Similarly, Olson makes the dis1tinction between the selection as differential reproduction, which appeals to geneticists, and the new adapted form, which appeals to paleontologists.89 In other words, the selection theory helps enormously in understanding evolution but does not exhaust the total explanation of its processes.

Dobzhansky praises selection in this way: "Writers, poets, naturalists, have often declaimed ahout the wonderful, prodigal, breathtaking inventiveness of nature. They have seldom realized that they were praising natural selection." [90] The se-

[88] E. Olson, "Morophology, Paleontology, and Evolution," in *Evolution After Darwin,* Vol. 1, p. 542. Cf. p. 541.

[s9] Ibid., p. 530. Cf. p. 542.

[BO] Dobzhansky, *The Biology of Ultimate Concern,* p. 61.

lection is indeed part of the breathtaking creativity of nature. But the mystery of new forms lies beyond natural selection, although, granted, selection is a necessary pre-requisite for the total pmcess. For example, the cactus cannot exist without the selection of appropriate genes. But what causes our admiration is how with these genes the cactus stores water, changes the process of photosynthesis, and adapts itself to the dry environment.

Naturally, the interpretation of natme is far from easy. Simpson surprises us with this quotation:

> It has also been shown that purpose and plan are not characteristics of organic evolution and are not a key to any of its operations. But purpose and plan are characteristic in the ne;w evolution, because man has purposes and he makes plans. Here purpose and plan do definitely enter into evolution, as a result and not as a cause of the processes seen in the long history of life. The purpose and plans are ours, not those of the universe, which displays convincing evidence of their absence. [91]

This quotation poses p:mfound epistemological problems. Do we ascribe intelligibility to nature because we discover what is there, or because man has purposes and he makes plans?

Philosophers and scientists are convinced that there exists a mysterious .order and beauty in the universe. This order and beauty is precisely the motive that urged them to search for causes and explanations. Einstein, the prophet of the modern physics, wrote these inspiring, poetic words:

> Without the belief in the inner harmony of our world, there could be no science. This belief is and always will remain the fundamental motive for all scientific creation. Throughout all our efforts,. in every dramatic struggle between old and new views, we recognize the eternal longing for the understanding: the ever-firm belief in the harmony of our world, continuously strengthened by the increasing obstacles to comprehension. [92]

91 Simpson, *The Meaning of Evolution,* p. 293.

92A. Einstein and L. Infeld, *The Evolution of Physics* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1938), p. 313. Cf. *N.* Hanson, *Patterns of Discovery* (Cambridge University Press, 1958), p. 18: "Physics is primarily a search for intelligibility-it is a philosophy of matter."

This longing for comprehension is what impelled us to search for purpose and finality in biology. First we tried to explain the meaning of teleology in living organisms. But since this is only pa,rt of the problem, we then describe the theory of evolution, >to see whether or not the opportunistic trait of the theory implies teleology, that is, whether evolution is or is not "for the sake of an end." We are convinced that teleological explanations help us to understand the complex processes of living organisms and make the mysterious process of continuous evolution more intelligible-and intelligibility is what both scientists and philosophers are searching for in their continuous quest for new comprehension.

AQUINAS ON GOD'S KNOWLEDGE OF FUTURE CONTINGENTS

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IF A THEOLOGICAL fatalist is someone who believes that God's foreknowledge of future events is incompatible with contingency and human freedom, then Thomas Aquinas was a theological fatalist. Unlike Augustine, Boethius, and Anselm, he did not believe that one could accept that God foreknows future events and yet adhere to the contingency of the future states of affairs in question. The reason for this seems *w* have been that one version of the fatalistic argument, which did not confront his predecessors, namely, that version based on the una1tera;bility of God's knowledge in the past, seemed to Thomas to escape all previous refutations which tried to show the compatibility of genuine foreknowledge and future contingency. Accordingly, he had to find another way out of the fatalistic dilemma.

God's Knowledge of Non-Existents

Aquinas's on God's knowledge of future contingents will be more understandable if we consider it within the context of God's knowledge of things that do not exist.[1] Thomas maintains that God has knowledge, not only of all existents, hut also of all non-existents because in knowing His own essence He knows them as pl'oducib1e in His power. Since He

1 Thomas .Aquinas, *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate,* q.2, a..8; *Summa contra* I. c.66; *Summa theofogiae,* I, q.14, aJl.

has complete knowledge of Himself and since He is the First Cause or ·ground of being for all thait ·exists,in knowing Himself as the First Cause God knows all His e:ffects[2] But since His power is infinite, it is not exhausted by what exists; the divine essence can be mirrored as the exemplar for innumeraible oreatures. Hence, in knowing His power and essence, God knows all rthe beings that could exist hut in fact do not. Thomas writes,

> ... through His essence God knows things other than Himself in so far as His is the likeness of the things that proceed from Him .... But since ... the essence of God is of an infinite perfection,. whereas every other thing has a limited being and perfection, it is impossible that the universe of things other than God equal the perfection of the divine essence. Hence, its power of representation extends to many more things than to those that are. Therefore, if God knows completely the power and perfection of His essence, His knowledge extends not only to the things that are but also to the things that are not.[8]

There is, however, an important distinction to be made with regard to things that do not exist. For some beings do not exist *simplic.iter,* whereas other beings do not exist *yet* or *any longer.* Beings which existed in the past or will exist in the £uture do not now exist hut nevertheless have a share in existence which pure possibiles do not enjoy. Accordingly God's

2 Aquinas, *De veritate* q.2, a.3-5; *Summa contra gentiles* I, c.49; *Summa theologiae,* I, q.14, a.5.

s .Aquinas, *Summa contra gentiles* I, c.66.4. (.All citations of this *Summa* will be from the Pegis translation.)

> "... deus cognoscit alia a se per suam essentiam inquantum est similitudo eorum quae ab eo procedunt ... sed, cum essentia dei sit in:finitae perfectionis . . . quaelibet autem alia res habeat esse et perfectionem terminatam: impossibile est quod universitas rerum aliarum adaequet essentiae divinae perfectionem, extendit igitur se vis suae repraesentationis ad multo plura quam ad ea qua sunt. Si igitur deus totaliter virtutem et perfectionem essentiae suae cognoscit, extendit se eius cognitio non solum ad ea quae sunt, sed etiam ad ea qua non sunt." .All texts of Thomas's works other than the *Summa theologiae* are from *S. Thomae Aquinatis Opera Omnia,* 7 vols., ed. Robertus Busa (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Friedrich Frommann Verlag, 1980).

knowledge 0r these two classes of non-exi&tents differs, as Aquinas explains:

Yet we have to take account of a difference among things not actually existent. Some of them, although they are not now actually existent, either once were so or will be: all these God is said to know by *knowledge of vision.* The reason is that God's act of knowledge, which is His existence, is measured by eternity which, itself without succession, takes in the whole of time; and therefore God's present is directed to the whole of time,. and to all that exists in any time, as to what is present before Him. Other things there are which *can* be produced by God or by creatures, yet are not, were not, and never will be. With respect to these God is said to have not knowledge of vision, but *knowledge of simple understanding:),*

The knowledge of v1s1on is associated with God's timeless eternity in which He " sees " the whole temporal series laid out before Him. In effect, knowledge of vision is simply God's knowledge of the actual world. Thomas recognizes that the appeal here to vision is rnetaphorical; [5] but unfortunakely he rarely if ever gets beyond the metaphor to explain the nature of this knowledge. If *scientia vision:is* is simply knowledge of the actual world, it is not immediately evident why it must he associated with timeless eternity; why could not a temporal Deity know all past, present, and future states of affairs?

[4] Aquinas, *Summa theologiae,* I, q.14, a.9. (All citations of this *i'fomma* are from the Blackfriarn edition.)

" Sed horum quae actu non sunt, est attendenda quaeclam diversitas. Quaedam enim, licet non sint nunc in actu, tamen vel fuerunt vcl erunt: omnia ista tlicitur Deus seire scientia *visionis.* Quia, cum intelligere Dei, quad est ejus esse, aeternitate mensuretur, qur,,e sine successione exis.tens totum tempus cmnprehendit, praesens intuitus Dei fertur in totum tempus, et in omnia quae sunt in quocunque tempore, sicut in subjecta sibi praesentialiter. Quaetlam vero sunt in potentia Dei vel creatnrne, quae tamen nee sunt nee erunt moque fuerunt. Et respectu honm1 non dicitur habere scientiam visionis, sed *simpUcis intclligentiae."*

The text is also from the Blackfriars edition. Cf. also *De 'Vcr·itate,* q.2, a.9, ad 2.

[5] Aquinas, *De veritnte,* q.2, a.!l, atl 3.

Aquinas's answer is not at all evident. One might expect him to answer along the lines of the Aristotelian view of truth as correspondence, ·whereby a proposition can have no antecedent truth value unless the state of affairs which it describes is actualized or necessary. Therefore, a temporal God could not know future contingent states of affairs. But, as we shall see, Aquinas did not appear to hold to this facet of Aristotle's view of truth. Indeed, in response to the objection that there are many eternal truths because future-tense propositions have always been true, Aquinas rejoins that such propositions have heen always true not in themselves-since they have not always existed-but in that simple truth known in the divine intellect where they have truth from eternity.[6] I hope to explain this mysterious notion more fully later on; for now, however, the point is that future-tense propositions have truth from eternity in the divine mind. Therefore, it is very perplexing why a temporal Deity could not have knowledge of the actual world's future. It might be said that even here the truth in the divine intellect is associa!ted with eternity. This is true; but the focus is on eternity in the sense not of timelessness but of infinite past temporal duration. If such foture-tense propositions have been known without beginning to be true in the divine intellect, then it is not clear why knowledge of vision must be connected with ,timeless eternity. It may be that the answer is that God could not always have known such propositions as true were it not for the fact that He timelessly knows them to ·he true. The reason He must know them timelessly to be true is that otherwise His knowledge could only be inferential, based on present causal conditions, whereas if He is timelessly eternal, He knows future things as they in some sense actually do exist. Thus, in his commentary on *De interpretatione,* he rugrees with Aristotle that in the case of that which is indeterminate to either of two alternatives, it cannot be determinately said either that it will be or that it

e Aquinas, *De veritate,* q.l, a.5, ad 1, 7, 10.

will not be, for it is not determined more to one than the other. [1] He explains,

. . . as long as something is future, it does not ye:t exist in itself, but it is in a certain way in its cause in such a way that it comes from it necessarily. In this case it has being determinately in its cause, and therefore it can be dete.rminately said of it that it will be. In another way something is in its cause as it has an inclination to its effect but can be impeded. This, then, is determined in its cause.,. but changeably, and hence it can truly be said of it that it will be but not with complete certainty. Thirdly, something is in its cause purely in potency. This is the case in which the cause is as yet not determined more to one thing than to another, and it cannot in any way be said determinately of these that it is going to be, but that it is or is not going to be.[8]

"Determinate " here appears to mean "ce:rtain," and Aquinas's meaning seems to be that future contingent propositions cannot be asserted with complete confidence. Hence, if God were in time, He could not know the future, as he later explains:

. . . future things are not known in themselves because they do not yet exist, but can be known in their causes-with certitude if they are totally dE:terminedin their causes so that they will take place of necessity; but by conjecture if they are not so determined that they cannot be impeded, as in the case of those things that are: for the most part; in no way if in their causes they are wholly in potency, i.e., not more determined to one than to another, as in the case of those that are indeterminate to either of two. The

T .Aquinas, *In libros perihermeneias,* lect. 13, 9. (.All citations of this work are from the Oesterle translation.)

s Ibid., lect. 13. 11.

"•• quamdiu aliquid est futurum, nondum est in seipso, est tamen aliqualiter in sua causa: quod quidem contingit tripliciter. Uno modo, ut sic sit in sua causa ut ex necessitate ex ea proveniat; et tune determinate habet esse in sua causa; unde determinate potest dici de eo quod erit. .Alio modo, aliquid est in sua causa, ut quae habet inclinationem ad suum e:ffectum, quae tamen impediri potest; unde et hoc determinatum est in sua causa, sed mutabiliter; et sic de hoc vere dici potest, hoc erit, sed non per omnimodam certitudinem. Tertio, aliquid est in sua causa pure in potentia, quae etiam non magis est determinata ad unum quam ad aliud; unde relinquitur quod nullo modo potest de aliquo eorum determinate dici quod sit futurum, sed quod sit vel non sit."

reason for this is that a thing is not knowable, according as it is in potency, but only according as it is in act, as the Philosopher shows in IX *Metaphysica* [l05la22] .[9]

Similarly, in *De veritate* Aquinas explains that wha,t is necessary can be known even when it will happen in the future, as is the case with an astronomer's knowledge of a coming eclipse, but a contingent cannot be known as future because it can be impeded before it is brought into being. Even with regard to events which are not wholly indeterminate but happen for the most part, God could only foreknow them inferentially in their causes as something that is going to happen (to recall Aris-itotle's distinction) but may not in fact happen. "God ... also knows the relation of one thing to another, and in this way He knows that a thing is future in regard to another thing. Consequently, thel'e is no difficulty in affirming that God knows something as future which will not take place, inasmuch as He knows that certain causes are inclined toward a certain effect which will not be produced." [10] Foreknowledge of this sort is knowledge of true generalizations which may or may not hold in specific cases. In any given case, such inferential fore-knowledge is possibly mistaken. Since divine knowledge, how-ever, excludes all possibility of falsity, it would be impossible for God to have knowledge of future contingents if He knew

9 Ibid., lect. 14.19.
"... futurum autem non cognoscit in seipsis, quia nondum sunt, sed cognoscere ea potest in causis suis, per certitudinem quidem, si totaliter in causis suis sint determinata, ut ex quibus de necessitate evenient; per coniectm:am autem, si non sint sic deter:minata quin impediri possint, sicut quae sunt ut in pluribus; nullo autem modo, si in suis causis sunt omnino in potentia non magis determinata ad unum quam ad aliud, sicut quae sunt ad utrumlibet, non enim est aliquid cognoscibile secundum quod est in potentia, sed solum secundum quod est in actu, ut pate'G per philosophum in *iaJ* metaphysicae."

10 Aquinas, *De 1)eritate*, q.2, a.12 ad 9. "... deus cognoscat ordinem unius ad alterum, et sic cognoscat aliquid esse futurum alteri, sed sic non est inconveniens quod ponatur, quod deus scit aliquid esse futurum quod non erit; in quantum, scilicet, scit aliquas causas esse inclinatas ad aliquem effectum, qui non producetur .... "

them as future.[11] Hence, if God is to know future contingents He must know them in some sense as actual or existent. Now in His eternity, Aquinas. believes, events which are future for us are present to God and known by Him as present. This is another metaphor, however, and would seem to mean that such events are somehow existent and actualized for God. This will require further comment in the sequel, but I think this point is clear: the association between knowledge of vision and God's eternity is based on the impossibility of knowing states of affairs which are as yet in potency for the knower, since only actualized or necessary states of affairs can be known.

Knowledge of simple understanding, on the other hand, is not knowledge of actual existents at whatever time. It is, in effect, knowledge of all other possible worlds which God could actualize. It *is* associated with knowledge of His own essence and power. According to Aquinas, God knows actual existents under three modes: in His power as producible by Him, in their secondary causes in the temporal series, and in themselves as really existing. By contrast, since mere possibles never exist, He does not know them in themselves or in their causes but only in His power.[12]

Similar .to Thomas' s distinction between *scientia visi<Ynis* and *smentia simplicis intelligentiae* is his differentiation between God's speculative *(speoolativa)* and practical *(practica)* knowledge.[13] An artist has both speculative or theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge of something that can he made. He possesses the former when he knows the intimate nature of a work without the intention of producing it. He has the latter when by his intention he makes the nature of the work his productive goal. Practical knowledge is directed toward production, speculative knowledge toward the consideration of truth. Practical knowledge follows speculative, and

[11] Ibid. q.2, a.12; cf. q.2, a.12, ad 6. See also *Summa theologiae,* I, q.86, a.4.

[12] Aquinas, *Summa contra gentiles* I, c.66.8; cf. *Soriptum in IV Libros Sententiarum.*

1a Aquinas, *De veritate,* q.2, a.8; *S·umma theologiae,* I, q.14, a.16.

speculative can exist without practical. Now God has practical knowledge of all things that are, were, or will be, for these come forth from His knowledge as He decides. But He possesses speculative knowledge of all beings which He has not decreed to make. These" exist" in God's power as producible by Him and in His goodness as potential expressions thereof. It seems clear that the extension of *scientia praotica* is identical to that of *scientia visionis,* while that of *scientia speculativa* is identical to that of *scientia simplicis intelligentiae.* But the link between practical knowledge and divine eternity does not exist, for a temporal God could have complete intentional knowledge of His future creations. In this case God's foreknowledge would not entail timeless eternity. It might be thought that such a conception of God's foreknowledge would ;be deterministic, but as we shall see, Aquinas did not think that it was so-at least from God's perspective. But he did think that God's temporally prior knowledge of future events would be fatalistic and, hence, deterministic in that only if all events were part of an Aristotelian cyclical process could they be foreknown. Accordingly, we find that when he turns to the discussion of God's foreknowledge of future contingents, the notion of pra.ctical knowledge is left aside in preference to God's knowledge of vision.

God's Knowledge of Future Contingents

This discussion concerning God's knowledge of non-existents furnishes the backdrop for Thomas's discussion of God's foreknowledge of future contingents. It will be useful to follow Thomas's own procedure and to consider first the principal objections to divine foreknowledge .before looking at his own position and replies to the objections.

Objections to God's

1. Nothing but the true can .be known. But in *De interpretatione* 9 Aristotle argues that there is no definite truth in

future contingent singular propositions. Hence, God cannot have knowledge of these.[14]

2. Only that which is rela.ted to the act of existence can be related rto the true. Hut future contingents do not have any act of existence. Therefore, neither are propositions about them true. Hence, there can be no knowledge of them.[15]

3. Whatever is known by God must neces,sarily ,be. For lif what God knew to exist did not in fact exist, then His knowledge would 1be false. But rthis is impossible. Therefore, if God knows something to exist, it necessarily exists. But no contingent thing must necessarily exist. Hence, God cannot have knowledge of contingents.[16]

4. The impossible does not follow from the possible. But if God foreknew a future singular oontingenrt, then the impossible would follow, namely, that God's knowledge could be wrong. For suppose He foreknows some future singular contingent event, for exa;mple, Socrates' sitting down. Now either it is possible for Socrates to refrain from sitting down or it is not possible. If it is not possible, then it is impossible for Socrates to refrain from sitting down. Therefore, it is necessary that he sit down-but this contradicts the hypothesis that his sitting down is a contingent event. Therefore, it must be possible for him to refrain from sitting. But suppose that he exercises this ability and does not in fact sit down. This involves no contradiction. It would, however, entail that God's foreknowledge is in error, which is impossible. Hence, since the impossible does not follow from the possible, it must be impossible for God to know future singular contingents.[17]

5. If the antecedent of any true conditional statement is necessarily true, then the consequent is also necessarily true. Now the following conditional statement is true: "If God knew that this is going to happen, then it will happen." For

14 .Aquinas, *De veritate,* q.2, a.12, arg. 1.
u Ibid, q.2, a.12, arg. 9.
18 Ibid., q.2, a.12, arg. 4; *Summa theologia,* I, q.14, a.13, arg. 3.
11 .Aquinas, *De veritate,* q.2, a.12, arg. 2.

since knowledge is only of the truth, if God foreknows something, then it must be true that it will happen. But the antecedent of the conditional statement above is necessary, for (i) whatever is eternal is necessary and all that God has known He has known from eternity; and (ii) the antecedent concerns a past state of affairs, and whatever is said about the past is necessary because the past, having taken place, cannot have not-taken place. Since the antecedent is a necessary truth, so is the consequent. Hence, whatever is known by God is necessary, and He has no knowledge of future contingents. [18]

Thomas's Position on God's Foreknowledge

In the face of these objections, Thomas maintains that a denial of God's knowledge of .future contingents cannot stand because this would undercut God's providence over human affairs. But neither, on the other hand, can fatalism be embraced, for then advice would be futile and reward and punishment unjust. Thomas finds the escape through the horns of this dilemma via God's timeless knowledge of vision. A contingent event, he explains, can be considered in two ways: [19] (1) in itself, as alrea.dy in a state of actuality. So regarded, the event is not future, but present and hence determinate. fo this condiition it can be the object of certain and infallible knowledge while remaining yet contingent. For example, when I see Socrates sitting down, my vision of this event, though certain, does not remove from the event its contingent character. It is not necessary that Socrates sit down, and yet as I see him sit I cannot be mistaken. Aquinas's point is not that ocular delusion is impossible, but rather that my vision is of a fully determinate event which cannot turn out to be otherwise and so render the judgment based on my perception mistaken. He comments, " Now from the fact that a man sees Socrates sitting, the contingency of his sitting, which concerns

is Ibid., q.2, a.12, aTg. 7, 8; *ffo,mrna theologiae,* I, q.14, a.13, arg. 2.
19 Aquinas, *Summa theologiae,* I, q.14, a.13.

the order of cause to effect, is not destroyed; yet the eye of the man most certainly and infallibly sees Socrates sitting while he is sitting, since each thing as it is in itself is al.ready determined." [20] As he explains elsewhere, after a contingent event has been brought into being, it can no longer be prevented. [21] Hence, a cognitive power can make a judgment about a present contingent in which falsity is never to be found. (2) A contingent event may be considered in its proximate cause. So considered, it is going to occur as an event which is not yet determined between two opposing states of affairs. It is therefore not a subject of certain knowledge. Anyone who knows a contingent event only in its cause has merely conjectural knowledge of it.

This distinction provides the clue that enables us to understand how it is that God can have certain and infallible knowledge of future contingents. In His timeless eternity, all events-past, present, and future-are present to God and laid bare to His gaze. He knows them infallibly with His knowledge of vision, yet because they are present to Him, such knowledge does not remove from them their contingency. Aquinas explains,

20 Aquinas, *In perihermeneias,* lect. 14, 21.
"Ex hoc autem quod homo videt socratern sedere, non tollitur eius contingentia quae rcspicit ordinem causae ad effectum; tamen certissime et infallibiliter videt oculus hominis socratem sedere clum sedet, quia unumquodque prout est in seipso iam determinatum est."

21 Aquinas, *De veritate,* q.2, a.12. Baumer tries to analyze this necessity in terms of David Lewis's inevitability. A proposition is inevitable at time *t* at a world *i* iff it is true in every world exactly like *i* up to *t.* Aquinas's solution is that insofar as a thing is actual, its existence is inevitable, but as it exists in its causes it is potential. God knows it as actual and, hence, inevitable. (Michael R. Baumer, "The Role of 'Inevitability at Time T' in Aquinas's Solution to the Problem of Future Contingents," *New Soholasticism* 53 [1979]: 152-3.) Not only does the concept of inevtability seem out of place with reference to what is present, but Aquinas would hold that a future contingent, though actual for God, fa not necessary in the sense that it occurs in all possible worlds with identical histories up to *t.* It is necessary in that it cannot be changed, but it remains contingent in that in other worlds identical up to *t,* it does not always occur.

The contingent is opposed to the certitude of knowledge only so far as it is future,. not so far as it is present. For when the contingent is future:, it can not-be. Thus, the knowledge of one conjecturing that it will be can be mistaken: it will be mistaken if what he conjectures as future will not take place. But in so far as the contingent is present, in that time it cannot not-be. It can not-be: in the future, but this affects the contingent not so far as it is present but so far as it is future. Thus, nothing is lost to the certitude of sense when someone sees a man running, even though this judgment is contingent. All knowledge, the,refore, that bears on something contingent as present can be certain. But the vision of the divine intellect from all eternity is directed to e,ach of the things that take place in the course of time, in so far as it is present. . . . It remains, therefore,. that nothing pre,vents God from having from all eternity an infallible knowledge of contingents. [22]

Thomas here argues first that in so far as a contingent is present it may he the subject of certain knowledge. He makes more explicit, however, that this is because at the moment of its existence the contingent cannot not-be. This brings to mind Aristotle's notion of temporal necessity, which appears to lie just beneath the surface here. A present event is causally contingent, but temporally necessary in that it can no longer be the case that at that moment the event not occur. Aquinas declares, "... from the moment that it is, it cannot not be when it is; for, 'what is must be when it is,' as is said in *Interpretation.* It does not follow, however, that it is necessary

22 Aquinas, *8umma contra gentiles,* I, c.67.2.
" Contingens enim certitudini cognitionis non repugnat nisi secundum quod futurum est, non autem secundum quod praesens est. Contingens enim, cum futurum est, potest non esse: et sic cognitio aestimantis ipsum futurum esse falli potest; falletur enim si non erit quod futurum esse aestimavit, ex quo autem praesens est, pro illo tempore non potest non esse: potest autem in futurum non esse, sed hoc non iam pertinet ad contingens prout praesens est, sed prout futurum est, unde nihil certitudini sensus deperit cum quis videt currere hominem, quamvis hoc dictum sit contingens, omnis igitur cognitio quae supra contingens fertur prout praesens est, certa esse potest. Divini autem intellectus intuitus ab aeterno fertur in unumquodque eorum quae temporis cursu peraguntur prout praesens est .... relinquitur igitur quod de contingentibus nihil prohibet deum ab aeterno scientiam infallibilem habere."

without any qualification or that God's knowledge is defective-just as my sense of sight is not deceived when I see that Socrates is sitting, although this fact is contingent." [23] Thomas agrees that once something is present, it is temporally necessary, but he insists that this in no way removes the contingency of the event. Having argued that the contingent when present may he the object of certain knowledge, he then makes the ingenious move of contending that in God's eternity aU events are present and so infallibly knowa:ble. God, he says, exists as an ever-abiding, simultaneous whole; but the duration of time is stretched out through the succession of ,before and after. The proportion of eternity to the total duration of time is therefore that of an indivisible point to a continuum-not, indeed, on the continuum but lying outside it. The relation of God to the temporal series may be compared to that between the center of a circle and its circumference. Any point on the circumference, though indivisible, does not exist "simultaneously " with any other point in regard to position. But the center of the circle is directly related to every point on the circumference. Letting the center represent eternity and the circumference the temporal series, we may see that while no event in the series is simultaneous with any other, nevertheless, eternity is simultaneously present to all the events in the series. In this sense, all the events may be said to be present to God:

> Hence, whatever is found in any part of time coexists with what is eternal as bdng present to it, although with respect to some other time it be past or future. Something can be present to what is eternal only by being present to the whole of it, since the eternal does not have the duration of succession. The divine intellect,

[23] Aquinas, *De veritate,* q.2, a.12, ad 2.

"... contingens, refertur ad divinam cognitionem secundum quod ponitur esse in rerum natura: ex quo autem est, non potest non esse tune quando est, quia quod est, necesse est esse quando est, ut in I perihermeneias dicitur; non tamen sequitur quod simpliciter sit necessarium, nee quod scientia dei fallatur, sicut et visus meus non fallitur dum video socratem sedere, quamvis hoc sit contingens."

sees in the whole of its eternity, as being present to it, whatever takes place through the whole course of time. And yet what takes place in a certain part of time was not always existent. It remains, therefore,, that God has a knowledge of those things that according to the march of time do not yet exist.[24]

God, thus, does not experience events successively as past, present, and future, as we do; rather, the whole time line, if you will, is stretched out before Him. He does not, as some critics have alleged against this view, see all events as simultaneous with each other; [25] rather He sees at once all the events and all the relations of before and after between them. Aquinas is fond of comparing God's knowledge to the vision of a man high on a watchtower, who in a single glance surveys the whole train of travellers along the road helow.[26] Each traveller corresponds to an event in time, and while a person standing on the road sees them passing by successively, the man in the watchtower sees all of them in a single moment. "God," Thomas writes, "... is wholly outside the order of time, stationed as it were at the summit of eternity, which is wholly simultaneous, and to Him the whole course of time is subjected in one simple intuition." [27]

·Thus present to Him in eternity, all events, including future

[24] Aquinas, *Bumma contra gentiles,* I, c.66.7.
"quicquid igitur in quacumque parte temporis est, coexistit aeterno quasi praesens eidem: etsi respectu alterius partis temporis sit praeteritum vel futurum aeterno autem non .potest aliquid praesentialiter coexistere nisi toti: quia successionis durationem non habet. Quicquid igitur per totum decursum temporis agitur, divinus intellectus in tota sua aeternitate intuetur quasi praesens. Nee tamen quod quadem parte temporis agitur, semper fuit existens. Relinquitur igitur quod eorum quae secundum decursum temporis nondum sunt, deus notitiam habet."

[25] Anthony Kenny, "Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom," in *Aquinas: a OoUeotion of Oritioal Flssays,* ed. A. Kenny, Modern Studies in Philosophy (Garden City, *N.* Y.: Doubleday, Anchor Books, 1969), p. 264.

[26] Aquinas, *De veritate,* q.2, a.12; *In perihermeneias* lect. 14.19; *Bumma theologiae,* I, q.14, a.13, ad 3; *Oompendium theologiae,* 133.

[27] Aquinas, *In perihermeneias,* lect. 14.20. "Sed deus est omnino extra ordinem temporis, quasi in arce aeternitatis constitutus, quae est tota simul, cui subiacet totus temporis decursus secundum unum et simplicem eius in·tuitum ...."

contingents, are known by God *via* knowledge of vision. Aquinas sums up his position:

> Therefore, since the vision of divine knowledge is measured by eternity, which is all simultaneous and yet includes the whole of time without being absent from any part of it, it follows that God sees whatever happens in time, not as future, but as present. For what is seen by God is, indeed, future to som£: other thing which it follows in time; to the divine vision, however, which is not inside time but outside time, it is not future but present. Therefore,. we see what is future as future because it is future with respect to our se.eing, since our seeing is itself measured by time; but to the divine vision, which is outside time, there is no future. [28]

In seeing all things as present, God technically foreknows nothing. Again, some critics charge that if "to know the future " means " to know a fact which comes later in the time series than some other fact " then we know the future, too, since we know events which *were* future when, say, Cleopatra was a. girl.[29] But this is a misconception. "To know the future" means to know *all* events later in the time series than *any* given event, a power humans certainly do not share. Thus, it is not the case that on Aquinas's view we must say that God knows that .a man *is landing* (not *will land)* on Mars-a statement which is false and hence not knowable by God. Rathel" for Aquinas, God knows that the proposition " Men *land* on Mars at *t,.*" is true; or to be more faithful to Thomas's own formulation, God knows that the proposition " Men are landing Mars" is true at *t..*, after being false at tu. Similarly,

[28] .Aquinas *De veritate,* q.2, a.12.
"unde, cum visio divinae scientiae aeternitate mensuretur, quae est tota simul, et tamen totum tempus includit, nee alicui parti temporis deest, sequitur ut quidquid in tempore geritur, non ut futurum, sed ut praesens videat: hoc enim quod est a deo visum est quidem futurum rei alteri, cui succedit in tempore; sed ipsae divinae visioni, quae non (est) in tempore, sed extra tempus, non est futurum, sed praesens. Ita ergo nos videmus futurum ut futurum, quia visioni nostrae futurum est, cum tempore nostra visio mensuretur; sed divinae visioni, quae est extra tempus, futurum non est."

[29] Kenny, " Divine Foreknowledge," pp. 262-3.

there seems to be little substance in the charge that on Aquinas's view we must say God knows nothing now.[30] For God knows everything; but since He transcends the temporal series one cannot say He knows something *a.t this time.* One can, however, assert" It is true now that God timelessly knows everything," or " It may be truly asserted now that God timelessly knows everything." Similarly, it is not the case that with regard to prophecy, God knew *then* that the Jews would be converted. Rather it was true to assert then that " God knows timelessly that at *tn* the Jews convert." Aquinas's view, properly understood, holds that God timelessly knows all events and what propositions are true at what times in the temporal series, but that His kno·wledge of these eve:rrts and propositions no more imposes necessity upon them than our knowledge of the present moment imposes necessity upon the things that now exist.

Answers to Objections

Turning then to the five previous objections, Aquinas responds to the first objection based on the indeterminacy of truth value of future contingent singular propositions: " Although a contingent is not detennined as long as it is future, yet, as soon as it is produced in the realm of nature, it has a determinate truth. It is in this way that the gaze of divine knowledge is brought upon it." [31] This raises the difficult question of what Aquinas means by determinate truth. Does he mean that such a proposition becomes temporally necessarily true or that it becomes capable of being certainly known to be true, or that it simply becomes true? Unfortunately he never explains what he means by this expression. In his commentary on *De interpreta.tione* 9, he states that Aristotle's whole con-

[30] Arthur *N.* Prior, "The Formalities of Omniscience," in his *Papers on Tirne and Tense* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), p. 29; Kenny, "Divine Foreknowledge," pp. 263-4.

[31] Aquinas, *De veritate,* q.2, a.12, ad l. " . . . licet contingens non sit determinatum quamdiu futurum est, tamen ex quo productum est in rerum natura, veritatem determinatam habet; et hoc modo super illud fertur intuitus di·vinae cognitionis."

cem is whether for future contingent singular propositions it is necessary that one of the opposites be determinately true ·and the other determinately false[32]-but he does not define his terms. There are some indications that he held tib.at future contingent singular propositions are neither true nor false. For example, in his exposition of Aristotle's second fatalistic difficulty, Aquinas drops the langua:ge of "determinately true" and explains how the simple truth of such propositions entails fatalism.[83] On the other hand, "deteNninately" may be implicit. He also understands Aristotle's a:rgument that we cannot say that neither member of the *antiphasis* is true to mean that hoth cannot be false.[34] This is characteristic of the standard interpreta:tion. His comments on Aristotle's remarks on Excluded Middle are ambiguous: he states that it is necessary of a disjunction that it will or will not .be in the future and this because contradictories cannot be at once both true and false; but if one of the disjuncts is taken separately, it is not necessary that that one be absolutely.[85] Aquinas concludes with this comment:

It is evident from what has been said that it is not necessary in every genus of affirmation and negation of opposites that one is dete.rminately true and the other false, for truth and falsity are not had in the same way in regard to things that are already in the present and those that are not but which could be or not be. . . . In those that are, it is necessary that one of them determinately true and the other false; in things that are future, which could or could not be, the case is not the same.[36]

32 Aquinas, *In perihermeneias,* lect. 13.6.
38 Ibid., lect. 13.10.
34 Ibid., lect. 13.12.
s5 Ibid., Iect. 15.3-4.
86 Ibid., Iect. 15.5.
". . . dicit manifestum esse ex praedictis quod non est necesse in omni genere affirmationum et negationum oppositarum, alteram determinate esse veram et alteram esse falsam: qua non eodem modo se habet veritas et falsitas in his quae sunt iam de praesenti et in his quae non sunt, sed possunt esse vel non esse. . . . in his quae sunt necesse est determinate alterum esse verum et alterum falsum: quod non contingit in futuris quae possunt esse et non esse."

The ambiguity is frustrating to the reader of Aquinas, but I think that the best sense of his comments can be made if we take " determinate " to mean something like " certainly knowable." I say this chiefly on the strength of a passage in *De veritate* where Thomas seems to assert pretty dearly that the correspondence theory of truth does not require that the states of affairs described by a proposition must exist in order for that proposition to have a truth value. In Thomas's understanding " *True* expresses the correspondence of being to the knowing power . . . . "; it is a "conformity of thing and intellect." [37] For Aquinas " . . . *true* is predicated primarily of a true intellect and secondarily of a thing conformed with intellect." [38] Truth is not so much a property of propositions as of intellects and things, when the things exist as the intellect judges them to be. In the act of judging, the intellect possesses truth, and a judgment is said to be true when it conforms to the external reality. [39] Now, Aquinas explains,

> In this commensuration or conformity of intellect and thing it is not necessary that each of the two actually exist. Our intellect can be in conformity with things that, although not existing now, will exist in the future. Otherwise it would not be true to say that " the Antichrist will be born." Hence a proposition is said to be true because of the truth that is in the intellect alone even when the thing stated does not exist. [40]

Aquinas seems to contend that even if there is no truth in the thing, since it does not yet exist, still there is truth in the intellect which has formed the £uture-tense proposition .. Hence,

s1 Aquinas, *De veritate,* q.l, a.I. "Convenientam vero entis ad intellectum exprimit hoc nomen verum." "adaequatfo intellectus et rei."

ss Ibid., q.l, a.2, ad I. " . . . verum per prius dicitur de intellectu vero, et per posterius de re sibi adaequa ta."

a9 Ibid., q.l, a.3.

4-0 Ibid., q.l, a.5.

> "in hac autem adaequatione vel commensuratione intellectus ac rei non requiritur quad utrumque extremorum sit in actu. Intellectus enim noster potest nunc adaequari his quae in futurum erunt, nunc autem non sunt; aliter non esset haec vera: antichristus nascetur; uncle hoc denominatur verum a veritate quae est in intellectu tantum, etiam quando non est res ipsa." Cf. a.5, ad 11.

one cannot say that future contingent singular propositions lack truth value because of a failure to correspond. The only escape from this conclusion would seem to be to maintain " The Antichrist will be born" is necessary, which it quite plainly is not-at least in the Aristotelian sense. There would therefore he no grounds for denying truth value to future contingent singular propositions. Aquinas thus sees no fatalistic implications from the antecedent truth of future-tense propositions. But in that case, to say that such propositions are not *determinately* true or false must mean that we cannot know for certain-as Thomas often emphasizes-whether they are true or false. Interestingly, since the reason we cannot know for certain is that future contingents are causally indeterminate, this analysis of " determinate " seems to imply necessity as well, when necessity is understood. as the causal necessity of everlasting cyclical processes. Unless the events in question have this necessity, the propositions about them are not certainly true or false, though in an *antiphasis* of future-tense propositions, one proposition, unknown to us with assurance, is true and the other false. Therefore, it seems to me that Kenny is mistaken when he asserts that on Aquinas's view future-tense propositions have a truth value in eternity but lack one in time.[41] Kenny is correct in saying that for Aquinas a future contingent proposition cannot be known *qua* future; hut the emphasis here is on *known*, for while it cannot be known to ,be true because of the indeterminacy of its proximate causes, nevertheless it is either true or false.

Thomas's answer to the first objection, then, appears to be that future contingent singufa.r propositions are not certainly knowable to be true or false. If God were in time, He could not know for certain the truth of such propositions. But in His eternity, the events of the future are present to Him and, hence, pvopositions about them can be certainly known to be true or false. "Neither our [knowledge J nor God's knowledge

41 Anthony Kenny, *The God of the Philosophers* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979)' pp. 54-5.

can be about future contingents. This would be ev;en more true if He knew them as foture. He knows them, however, as present to Himself 1and future to others." [42] Interestingly, this seems to commit Aquinas to the thesis of the timelessness of truth, at least from God's perspective. For God all futu:re-tense statements may ,be translated into tenseless propositions with definite temporal indexicals which are timelessly true or tfalse.Thus, from God's rperspective,"Socrates *aits* at 396 B.C." is timelessly true, and He knows it as such. One might therefore think that Aquinas would agree with those contemporary philosophers who would escape fatalism by maintaining that the timeless truth of :propositions does not entail the temporally antecedent truth of future-tense statements. [48] Nevertheless, Aquinas explicitly ,rejects the position which claims tha;t past, present, and future propositions may be translated into a tenseless idiom and cannot change in truth value." Rather he maintains that God knows which propositions are true at one time and false at another. But even if all PTOpositions cannot be translated into a tenseless idiom, it seems undeniable that on Aquinas's view God's knowledge of future contingents is knowledge of such timelessly true propositions. And since obviously all events, whether past, present, or future, are equally real to God, it follows that He knows the timeless truth of propositions about past and present events

42 Aquinas, *De veritate,* q.2, a.12, ad 6. ". . . sicut scientia nostra non potest esse de futuris contingentibus, ita nee scientia dei; et adhuc multo minus, si ea ut futura cognosceret; cognoscit autem ea ut praesentia sibi, aliis autem futura - - - - " (The Mulligan translation has "science" for the first " scientia.")

4sSee R. D. Bradley, "Must the Future Be What It Is Going to Be?" *Mind* 68 (1959) : 201; William Kneale and Martha Kneale, *The Development of Logic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, Hl78), p. 51; G. H. von Wrght, "Time, Truth and Necessity," in *Tntention and Intentionality,* ed. Cora Diamond and Jenny Teichman, (Brighton, England: Harvester Press, 1979), p. 241 ; cf. Thomas Bradley Talbott, " Fatalism and the Timelessness of Truth" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Santa Barbara: 1974)' pp. 167-79.

44 Aquinas, *Summa theologiae,* I, q.14, a.15, ad 3.

as well. Thus, even if Aquinas denies that all propositions can be translated without loss into a tense1essform, nonetheless, he seems compelled to admit that God's knowledge of vision is exclusively of such tenseless propositions. Even the knowledge that some proposition *p* is true at ti. and false at *t2* is itself knowledge of a timelessly true proposition about a temporally true proposition at designated times. Hence, his escape from fata.lism is that the timeless truth of propositions known by God does not eliminate the contingency of the events corresponding to these propositions.

As for the second objection concerning the existence of future contingents, Thomas replies: "Although a contingent does not exercise an act of existence as long as it is a future, as soon as it is present it has both existence and truth, and in this condition stands under the divine vision." [45] But the oddity in this reply is that the future contingent is conceived of as timelessly present to God, and therefore it always has existence and truth. There is a tension here between real becoming and timeless presence. More will be said of this later, but Aquinas's position seems to be that although past/future events do not now exist, nevertheless they do exist from God's point of view in eternity. Therefore, He knows them as existents, though they do not exist any longer or yet for us.

Thomas's reply seems to be shaped by his exposition of how God knows future contingents in His timeless eternity, for, as we saw earlier, Aquinas did not in fact think that the corresponding states of affairs had to exist actually in order for a proposition about them to be true. With regard to our knowledge of non-being, Aquinas explains, "Anything existing positively outside the soul has something in itself by which it can be called true; but this is not the case with the non-existence of a thing: whatever truth is attributed to it comes from the

[45] .Aquinas, *De veritate,* q.2, a.12, ad 9. "... quamvis contingens, dum est futurum, non h;i,beat esse, tamen ex quo est praesens, esse habet et veritatem; et sic divinae visioni substat .•.. "

intellect." [46] Tha.t is to sa.y, things contain universal forms which the intellect may abstract from the sense impression it has of the things, but since non-being has no such intelligible form the only truth about it is in the intellect alone, not in the object. Now, Aquinas reasons, "Since the future as such is not, ·and the past as such is not, the same reasonin·g holds for the truth of the past and future as for the truth of non-being." [47] The point is that with regard to future events, the truth about them resides in the intellect alone rather than in the objects themselves, which do not, insofar as they are future (in *quantum est futurum)* exist. On this analysis, the future contingents need not be conceived as in any sense existing (though that is not excluded) ; it is enough for the truth value of future contingent singular propositions that the states of affairs described *will* some day obtain. On Thomas's analysis in his immediate reply to· the objection, however, future things must he conceived, it appears, as in some sense existent-'but more of this later.

Thomas answers the third objection by employing the medieval distinction between necessity *de re* (applied to the thing referred to) and *de dioto* (applied to the proposition) .[48] The

[46] Ibid., q.l, a.5, ad 2. "res ergo quae est aliquid positive extra animam, habet aliquid in se unde vera dici possit. Non autem non esse rei, sed quid·quid veritatis ei attribuitur est ex parte intellectus."

[47] Ibid., q.l, a.5, ad 7. "... illud quod est futurum, in quantum est fu. turum, non est, et similiter quod est praeteritum, in quantum huiusmodi, unde eadem ratio est de veritate praeteriti et futuri, sicut et de veritate non entis .... "

[48] Ibid., q.2, a.12, ad 4; *Summa theologiae,* I, q.14, a.13, ad 3. The dis·tinction is equivalent in medieval terminology to the distinction between necessity *in sensu oomposito* and *in sensu d.wiso.* The composite sense of neces·sity was *de dioto;* the divided sense referred to necessity *de re.* See Kenny, "Divne Foreknowledge," pp. 258-9. In contemporary logical theory the dis·tinction rests on the order of the quantifier and the intensional operator: O (x) (!IS x) is *de dioto* necessity, while (x) D (!IS x) is *de re* necessity. *De re* necessity requires that one quantify over the modal operator, while *de dioto* necessity requires that the modal operator govern the entire quantified expression. See Alvin Plantinga, *The Nature of Necessity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), pp. 9-13.

proposition " Whatever is known by God must necessarily be " is, if understood *de re,* false. For in this case, one may substitute for the words " whatever is known by God " any arbitrarily chosen subject, for example, "Socrates' sitting down " and thus obtain "Socrates' sitting down must necessarily be," which is false. Understood *de dicto,* however, the proposition is true: "Necessarily, whatever is known by God exists." Here the modal operator governs the whole *dictum* and correctly indicates that " Whatever is known by God exists" is a necessarily true proposition. This is not fatalistic, however, for the things known by God may be contingent. Hence, it does not follow that if God knows something to exist, it exists necessarily.

To answer the fourth objection, Aquinas employs both a medieval distinction and an Aristotelian axiom. In the first place, one must distinguish between the necessity of the consequence *(neoessitas oonsequentiae)* and the necessity of the consequent *(necessitas consequentis)* .[49] The impossibility of Socrates' sitting is predicated on the prim assumption that he *is* (tenselessly) not sitting at the time in question. But in this case the necessity of his sitting is the necessity of the entire hypothetical: " Necessarily, if he is seen by God to he sitting, he is sitting." But the consequent itself is not necessary. Socrates may sit or stand, but necessarily if he is seen to do *x,* then he is doing *x.* If the hypothetical statement is put into categorical form, " Whatever is seen to be sitting must necessarily be sitting," then once again the proposition is false *de re,* but true *de dicto,* as we saw above. But there is ·another answer to this ohjection.[50] In God's eternity Socr:ates' sitting down is present to God. But, as Aristotle put it, "Whatever is, necessrurily is, rwhen it is." Hence, since Socrates' sitting down is present to God, it is in this Aristotelian sense necessary. From God's perspective it is actualized, unpreventable, •and immutable. In this sense it is indeed impossible for Soc-

49 Aquinas, *Summa contra gentiles,* I, c.67.10.
so Aquinas, *De veritate,* q.2, a.12, ad 2.

rates to ref.rain from sitting down because he *i8* sitting down. But this does not remove the contingency of the event, anymore than my observation of ,a present event removes its contingency, for God merely" sees" what Socrates is freely doing. He does not know in advance what Socrates will do; He merely knows what Socrates is doing at any point in the temporal series, which in its entirety is present to God in eternity.

·The final objection, based on the fact of past foreknowledge of future events, :receivesmore extensive treatment by Aquinas.[51] Some, he notes, have attempted to turn back the force of the reasoning ,by .arguing that the antecedent, " God knew this future contingent event," is not necessarily true because it contains an implicit reference to the future, which is contingent.[52] Thus," God foreknew that Socrates will sit down " is a contingent statement, since Socrates' action is still outstanding, and if he does not sit down, then it will turn out that God did not foreknow this after all. Therefore, although the act of God's knowledge is in the past, it is, so long as the object of knowledge is yet in potency, contingent whether that act was indeed knowledge. Thomas's reaction to this argument is very puzzling:

> This argument, however, is invalid; for when one says, " This is future" or " This was future," one designates the ordination of the causes of that thing to its production. Now although it is possible that the causes ordained to a certain effect can be impeded in such a way that the effect will not follow from them, it is not possible to prevent their having been at some time ordained to produce this effect. Hence, even if that which is future should be abk not to happen in the future, it will never be able at any time not to have been a future.[53]

[51] Ibid., *De veritate,* q.2, a.12, ad 7; *Summa contra gentiles,* I, c.67.9; *Summa theologiae,* I, q.14, a.13, ad 2. For a critical discussion see Prior, "Formalities of Omniscience," pp. 31-44; Kenny, "Divine Foreknowledge," pp. 259-60; idem, *God of the Philosophers,* pp. 55-6.

[52] See Bonaventure, *I Sententiarum,* 38.2.2; Albertus Magnus, *I Sententiarum,* 38.4.

[58] Aquinas, *De veritate,* q.2, a.12, ad 7.

"sed hoc nihil est: quia cum dicitur: hoc est futurum, vel fuit futurum;

There seem to he several incongruities in this response. First, the designation of some event as future is surely not the same as designating the chain of causes leading to that event. The event could theoretically lack any prior proximate cause. The context suggests that Aquinas may be recalling Aristotle's point in *De genera.tione et corruptione* that an event which definitely will be, as opposed to one which is merely going to be, is causally linked to the present. But it seems inappropriate to import that notion here, for one who asserts the truth of a future-tense proposition need not be committed to that thesis. Besides, Aquinas does not seem to have Aristotle's distinction in mind, for he speaks freely of something that was future not happening in the future; clearly to be future is not therefore to be necessary, as it was for Aristotle. Second, the fact that causes *were* ordered to a certain effect, even if that effect did not eventuate, seems irrelevant. This merely underlines the contingency of the effect. It is to say that the oounterfactual is true: " The effect would have occurred had not *x* impeded it." But this seems uninteresting as far as fatalism goes. Third, again the fact that an event does not happen in the future, even though it is always the case that it was going to happen, is beside the point. The point is that because the event may not occur, a prediction concerning it is contingently true or false. Unlike Anselm, Aquinas here treats the future as something changea;ble. The event was future but, due to impeding obstacles, is no longer future. Hence, he reasons, the proposition "God foreknew *x*" must he temporaily necessary, apparently because when God foreknew it it was future, though in the end it did not turn out. The fact that this proposition has an implicit future reference" does not take away its necessity, because what had in fact a 'reference to a future event

designatur ordo qui est in causis illius rei ad productionem eius. Quamvis autem causa quae sunt ordinatae ad aliquem effectum possint impediri, ut effectus non consequatur ex eis, non tamen potest impediri quin fuerint aliquando ad hoc ordina tae; unde, licet quod est futurum, possint non esse futurum, nunquam tamen potest non fuisse futurum."

must have had it, even though the future is sometimes not realized." [54] Since the proposition is necessary, the fatalist objectiongoes through.

Some other theologians however, attempted to refute the argument by claiming that the antecedent was not necessary because, although God's knowledge is necessary, what is known by Him is contingent ..[55] Henoe, though whatever God knows He knows necessarily, nevertheless what He knows may be a contingent pmposition. Therefore, the proposition " God foreknew *x*" is contingent. Aquinas, however, finds this argument, too, deficient. Fhr the truth of a p.voposition is not affected hy the necessity or oontingency of what is asserted materially in the proposition. Only the principal composition of a proposition determines its truth. Aquinrus' point seems to be that in contexts expressing propositional attitudes, the content of what is believed, known, asserted, and so forth is irrelevant to the truth vialue and hence to the modality of the proposition. [56] "Hence, the same character of neces,sity and contingency is found in ,each of the following: ' I think that man is an animal' and **'I** think that Socrates is running.'" [57] In the proposition, " God foreknew *x* " the contingency of event *x* is irrelevant to the necessity that attaches to this proposition in virtue of its being in the past tense. Nothing

54 Aquinas, *Summa theologiae,* I, q.14, a.13, ad 2: "non tollit ei necessitatem; quia id quod habuit respectum ad futurum, necesse est habuisse, licet etiam futurum non sequatur quandoque."

55 See Robert Grosseteste, *De libero arbitrio,* 6.

56 Prior interprets Aquinas to mean that the necessity of a proposition does not depend on its component, but on the main "link," which, though correct here, is not always true, e.g., a conjunction (Prior, "Formalities of Omniscience." p. 34). But Prior seems to have overlooked the propositional attitude terms which indicate that such contexts were Aquinas's focus of concern. Prior also associates Occamist views with this solution, but they would seem to follow more closely the first solution.

57 Aquinas, *De veritate,* q.2, a.12, ad 7. "unde eadem ratio necessitatis et contingentiae est in utraque istarum: ego cogito hominem esse animal; et: ego cogito socratem currere."

can change the fact that God forelmeiw *x,* regard1ess of *x's* **con**tingency.

Finally, other thinkers concede that the antecedent is necessary but deny that the consequent is equally necessary, unless it is causally determined by the antecedent as by a proximate oause.[58] **If** the antecedent is only the remote cause, the necessity of the effect can be impeded by a proximate cause. But Thomas rightly criticizes this argument for assimilating ,logical to causal necessity. "**... It** is not due to the nature of the cause and effect tha:t a necessary consequence follows from a necessary antecedent, but rather to the relation that the consequent has to its antecedent." [59] **It** is logically impossible for the contradictory of the oonsequent to follow from the antecedent. Aceording to Aquinas, in any true conditional the consequent must he necessary if the antecedent is necessary. In fact, unless he is speaking of strict implication, Thomas is incorrect in this; D *q* follows from D *p* only if D (p > q). But Aquinas would certainly hold the conditional "**If** God foreknew *x* will happen, then *x* will happen " to be necessarily true. The argument therefore may be so schematized and is in Aquinas's view valid. The curious feature of this argument is that whereas the modal operator on the conditional conveys logical necessity, the modal neeessity of the antecedent is temporal necessity. vVe thus have an argument in which two premises, both necess,ary but in different senses, are said to yield a conclusion that is also necessary. Is this a valid procedure? And in what sense can the conclusion be said to he necessary? **If** we say the necessity attaching to the conclusion is simply logical, then what role have we allowed for the temporal necessity attaching to the first premise? On the other hand, the necessity attaching to the conclusion does not appear to he temporal necessity, since the state of affairs of which

[58] .Alexander of Hales, *Summa theologiae,* l.171.184.

[59] Aquinas, *De veritate,* q.2, a.12, ad 7. "... hoc non est propter naturam causae et causati quod ex ant0eedente necessarlo sequitur consequens sarium, sed magis propter orclinem consequentis ad antecedens."

it speaks does not yet obtain at the time at which the argument is made. Unfortunately, Aquinas is either silent or unclear on these questions.[60]

He proposes instead a different solution to the difficulty. When the antecedent refers to a mental act, the consequent is to be understood not insofar as it refers to the independently existing object but rather insofar as it refers to the mental act. For example, in the proposition "Whatever the mind knows is immaterial," the world " immaterial " is to be taken in reference to the objects of thought, not the independently existing objects. Similarly in the proposition "If God knew something, it will happen " the consequent should be taken in reference to the divine knowledge. In that respect, the event in question is not future but present to God. Hence, it is more technically correct to say " If God knows something, it is."[61] In effect, Aquinas is in a rather contrived way simply asserting that the antecedent of the objection is false. God foreknows nothing. But Aquinas wishes to .give an account of God's foreknowledge, not deny it flatly. Hence, he reinterprets it in terms of divine eternity. It might be objected that even in the technically correct oonditional, the antecedent " God knows something" is still temporally necessary, since it is present-tensed, and the present is a:s necessary as the past. Hence, the consequent is ,also still necessary. This Aquinas

[60] In *De veritate,* q.2, a.12, ad 7, he asserts that the consequent is absolutely necessary in the way in which it follows from the antecedent; but in *Summa theologiae,* I, q.14, a.13, ad 2, he says it has the same necessity as the antecedent.

[61] Iseminger calls Aquinas's response unsuccessful because there can be no difference between a propositon as thought of and a proposition in itself. And even if there were, if the proposition as tbe object of God's thought were true at t_1 then the proposition in itself must be true at t_1 (Gary Iseminger, "Foreknowledge and Necessity: Summa Theologiae la.14, 13 ad 2," *Midwest .Studies in Philosophy* 1 [1976]: 9-10). But Iseminger is importing modern notions into Aquinas. Thomas was not talking about propositions as the objects of God's knowledge, but things. God's knowledge is in fact non-propositional. Aquinas simply wants to underscore that God knows things as they are present t-0 Him, not future. Aquinas did not even accept the existence of such an abstract object as a " proposition in itself."

concedes. He explains that when we say that God knows/ knew some future event, we a:ssume a time lag between the knowledge and the event. But with regard to divine knowledge, there is no time la;g because there is no future. Hence, there is no question of something known by God failing to eventuate. "For that which already is cannot, with respect to that moment of time, not be." [62] Hence, the consequent has the same necessity as the antecedent, for that which is, when it is, necessarily is.[63] But, as we have seen, Aquinas did not regard the temporal necessity of the pl.'esent as incompatible with contingency. The pl'oposition "If I know something it is " is also true and the antecedent temporally necessary; there£ol'e the consequent is also temporally necessary-but who would say this removes contingency? The point seems to be that such knowledge does not precede the event in question and cannot therefore prejudice its occurrence. So long as the knowledge and the event are simultaneous, fatalism cannot arise.

Summary

In summary, then, Thomas has appealed exclusively to the tradition of God's timelessness in order to defuse the threat of fatalism. That threat arises, not frnm the fore-truth of future-tense propositions, which Aquinas grants but from foreknowledge of such propositions, since such knowledge is a fact of the past and hence cannot be changed. If God foreknew future contingent singular propositions, then, since His knowledge is infallible, fatalism would follow. But since many future events are indeterminate or in potency to either occurring or not occurring, propositions about those events cannot be infaUibly foreknown to he true or false. A temporal God, therefore, could not foreknow the future. Since God is, however, timeless, He t:rianscends the whole temporal series. All

62 Aquinas, *Summa contra gentiles,* I, c.67.9. "... quia quod iam est, non potest, quantum ad illum instans, non esse."

63 Aquinas, *Summa theologiae,* I, q.14, a.13, ad 2.

the events which occur successively in time are present to Him. By His knowledge of vision He apprehends the entire temporal series timelessly. Therefore, He timelessly knows what is futme for us. What is present to God timelessly and known by Him is necessary, since what is actually present cannot be made to have not been present at that moment. But this necessity is not fatalistic beoause God's knowledge is not prior to but simultaneous with each event, and He observes it as happening without thereby canceling its contingency *vis-a-vis* its proximate causes.

Thomas's Implied Theory of Time

Having ,exposited Thomas's response to the challenge of fatalism, I should now like to direct our attention more closely to the theory of time involved in his solution. We have seen that Aquinas uses the metaphor of vision to characterize God's knowledge of the actual world. In the same connection he also employs the metaphor of things being present to God in His eternity. He illustrates this presence by means of a circle, whose center is "simultaneous" with every point on its circumference. We saw that, were it not for this presence of the entire temporal series before God, He could have no knowledge of the future. The principal reason for this appeared to lie in the impossibility of inferring future events infallibly from present causes. All this seems to imply that the metaphors of vision and of presence are meant to express the fact that God does not know by means of inference from present states of affairs those propositions to be true that He does know; rather all the states of the actual world--past, present, and future-,are equally real to Him. Thus, the presence of all events to God does not seem to be merely epistemic; rather Aquinas's understanding of foreknowledge seems to require that the past and future be ontologicaily on a par with presently existing reality. In several statemenbs, Thomas says as much. In the *Summa contra gentiles* he speaks of the being which future things possess:

The contingent is in its cause in such a way that it can both be and not-be from it; but the necessary can only be from its cause. But according to the way both of them are in themselves, they do not differ as to being, upon which the true is founded. ll'or, according as it is in itself, the contingent cannot be and not-be, it can only be, even though in the future it can not-be ....
. . . We, cannot say that this is known God as non-existent, so as to leave room for the question whether it can not-be; rather it will be said to be known by God in such a way that it is seen by Him already in its own existence. On this basis there is no room for the pre.ceding question. For that which already is cannot, with respect to that moment of time, not-be. [64]

Here Thomas claims that considered in abstraction from their proximate causes, the contingent and the necessary do not differ in their being. The contingent, the necessary, cannot be and not-he, but only be. This might be to mean that when the contingent comes to e:id.st, it cannot be and not-be; but this does not imply that it *is.* But Aquinas did seem to think that future contingents *have* being: of the things that for us are not yet, God sees not only the being that .they have in their causes but also the being that they have in themselves, in so far as His eternity is present in its indivisibility to all time." [65] Moreover, Thomas proceeds to say that God sees a contingent event, future us, *in its own exist-*

64 Aquinas, *Summa contra gentiles,* I, c.67.3, 9.
"contingens enim sic in sua causa est ut non t•:,: ea possit et esse; necess.arium vero non potest ex sua causa nisl Secundum id vero quod uhumque emum in se est, non differt quantum ad esse, sup1·a quod fundatur veruxn: quia in contingenti, secundun1 id in se est, non est esse et :non esse: sed solum esse, licet in futunc:n.1 contingens possit non esse ....
. . . non est dicere hoc esse eognitum quasi ncn ut locum habeat quaestio qua quaeritur an possit non esse: sed sic cognitum dicetur a Deo ut iam in sua existentia visum, quo ptYiito, non remanet praedictae quaestioni locus: quia quod iam est, non pot(cst, qmintum ad illud instans, non esse."

65 Ibid., I, c.66.8. "non enim Deus reru:m quae apud nos nondum sunt, videt solum esse quod habent in suis causis, sed etiam illud quod habent in seipsis, inquantum eius aeternitas est praesens sua inclivisibilitate omni tempori."

ence (*iam in sua existentia)* . This is remarkable language; while we might expect Thomas to say that such an event does not yet exist, here he ·asserts that it in ·some sense already exists. The suggestion seems to he that .future contingents exist in themselves and so are known by God and cannot be otherwise, though they are not necessitated by their proximate causes and are thus future and indeterminate to us in the temporal series.

Again in the *Summa theol,ogiae* he appears to deny tha:t the presence of ·all things to God is merely epistemic:

> ... God knows all contingent events not only as they are in their causes but also as each of them is in actual existence in itself. Now although contingent events come into actual existence successively, God does not, as we do, know them in their actual existence successively, but all at once; because his knowledge is measured by eternity, as is also his existence; and eternity, which exists as a simultaneous whole, takes in the whole of time .... Hence all that takes place in time is eternally present to God, not merely, as some hold [Avicenna and his followers], in the sense that he has the intelligible natures of things present in himself, but because he eternally surveys all things as they are in their presence to him.[66]

Thomas appears here to wish to hold on the one hand that events are actualized successively and on the other that they rure timelessly present to God. He states that God knows *all* contingent events (presumably therefore future contingents) as each of them in itself is in actual existence. The "·as" *(prout)* is n.ot here temporal, as if to say He knows them ·as

66 .Aquinas, *Summa theologiae,* I, q.14, a.13.

" Deus . . . cognoscit omnia contingentia, non solum prout sunt in suis causis, sed etiam prout unumquodque eorum est actu in seipso.

Et licet contingentia fiant in actu successive, non tamen Deus successive cognoscit contingentia prout sunt in suo esse, sicut nos, sed simul; quia sua cognitio mensuratur aeternitate, sicut etia.m suum esse; aeternitas autem tota simul existens ambit totum tempus. . . . Unde omnia quae sunt in tempore, sunt Deo ab aeterno praesentia, non solum ea ratione qua habet rationes rerum apud se praesentes, ut quidam dicunt; sed quia ejus intuitus fertur super omnia ab aeterno, prout sunt in sua praesentialitate."

they successively occur. Rather God knows them according as they are in actual existence. But if, as he says, contingent events come into actual existence successively then ho"v can God fail to know them successively in their actual existence? The answer is that all the events are present eternally to God. Aquinas emphasizes that this is not merely so in that the essences *(rationes)* of things are comprehended in the divine essence; rather God eternally surveys all things according to their presence to Him. The point here seems to he that this presence is not internal to God, but a real external presence. Since God knows contingents according to their actual existence, it seems undeniable that for God future contingents actually exist. This does not mean that such events always exist, for on this view that would be to exist throughout all time, which they do not.[67] But the entire temporal series would seem to exist timelessly, on the analogy of a spatial extension, and as such is known by God.

Finally, in his *Compendiu1n theologiae,* Thomas seems to ascribe actual existence to future oontingents before they come into being temporally:

> Even before they come into being, He sees them as they actually exist, and not merely as they will be in the future and as virtually present in their causes,. in the way we are able to know some future; things. Contingent things, regarded as virtually present in their causes with a claim to future existence, are not sufficiently determinate to admit of certain knowledge about them; but, regarded as actually possessing existence, they are determinate, and hence certain knowledge of them is possible.... For His eternity is in present contact with the whole course of time, and even passes beyond time. We may fancy that God knows the flight of time in His eternity, in the way that a person standing on top of a watch-tower embraces in a singfo glance a whole caravan of passing travelers.[68]

67 Cf. .Aquinas, *Summa contra gentiles,* I, c.66.'l; *De veritate,* q.2, a.3, ad 12. es .Aquinas, *Compendium theologiae,* 133.

68 "... quia etiam antequam fiant, intuetur ea prout sunt actu in suo esse, et non solum prout sunt futura et virtute in suis cansis, sicut nos

In this remarkable passage, Aquinas states that God sees future contingents in their actual existence *(prout sunt actu in suo esse)* before they come to be *(fiant).* Here becoming and being are contrasted in such a way as to suggest that from God's perspective the whole time-line has being timelessly, but from our perspective on the time-line, things oome to be successively. In this way God's eternity is in present contact with the whole course of time and transcends it. While not experiencing the :flux of time, still He knows it: the temporal process is apprehended Him on the spatial analogy *of* the man who at once sees all the passers-by on the road below him. Because God k:nows the temporal series as it is (timelessly), He knows the events, contingent in their causes, as already determined to one a,lternative . . . *determinata ad v:nurn)*. Thus, His knowledge is certain.

Therefore, what doctrine of God's eternity and knowledge of future contingents was seen to imply seems to be positively affirrned by Aquinas, namely, that the pa;st, present, and future are all ontologically on a par with each other. Accordingly, Thomas held to a B-theory of time. l'fovertheless, I find it inconceivable that he consciously adhered to such a theory of time. For him becoming was not mind-dependent but real, and it was only because God's eternal being that all things were present to Him.[69] Aquinas seemed to hold both to a dynamical view of time and to the actual existence of all temporal things for God in Despite this, however, I must admit that I can make sense of Aquinas's position

> aliqua futura cognoscere possumus. Contingentia autem licet prout sunt **in suis causis virtute futura existentia, non su:nt deterrni:nata ad unun1,** nt de eis certa cognitio haberi possit, tamen prout sunt actu in suo e2,se, iam sunt cleterminata ad mmm, et potest de eis certa haberi cognitio . . . . nam aeternitas sua praesentialiter totum temporis decursum attingit, et ultr2. transce11dit, ut sic considercmus Deum in sua aeternitate fluxum temporis cognoscern, sicut qui in altitudine spcculae constitutus totum transitum viatorum simul intuetur."

ae Aquinas, *Smnnia contra gentiles,* II, c.35; *Summa theologiae,* I, q.10, a.I, ad 5; I, q.10, a.4, ad 2; I, q.14, a.13.

on God's foreknowledge and future contingents by interpreting him as proponent of the B-theory of time.[70]

God's Know'ledge of All Things through His Essence

The picture I have presented thus far of Aquinas's view of God's knowledge of future contingents would, however, be mis-Jeaidingif it were truken to imply that for Thomas God has direct knowledge of the crea:ted order. In fact, Aquinas believes that God has no direct knowledge of anything other than Himself.[71] Aristotle argued that God knows only the best and, hence, He knows only Himself. Thomas agrees and adds that as pure actuality God's act of knowledge cannot be actuated by anything other than His own substance. Otherwise, the divine intellect would stand in r:elation to that thing as potency to actuality, for the thing known would bring about God's act of knowledge. Hence, the only immediate object of God's act of knowledge is His own essence. His esseinceserves as the intelligible species whereby He conceives Himself. When human intellects know objects, the active intellect abstracts from the sense impressions received through the bodily organs the universal essence or intelligible species embodied in the particular. The passive intellect, in turn, receives these universal forms, which constitutes knowledge. But since God is simple and pure actuality, such distinctions do not exist in Him. Rather in God the intellect, the object of knowledge (Himself), the

10 Prior's difficulties in understanding Thomas's view stem from the fact that he attributes to Aquinas a dynamical theory of time. Hence, Prior muses that he cannot understand what is meant by saying that future contingent events are neither future nor contingent as God sees them. In fact, he wonders, how could God know a state of affairs to be present and beyond alteration until it is? If God sees the state of affairs as present when it is not, then He is mistaken. (Prior, " Formalities of Omniscience," pp. 43-4.) But on a "block" view of time, such difficulties disappear. Prior would no doubt say that the "block" view of time itself makes no s.ense, and in this he may well be right.

11.Aquinas, *De veritate,* q.2, a.1-5; *Summa contra gentiles,* I, c.44-50; *Summa theologiae,* I, q.14, a.1-5. See also Gilson, *Philosophy of Thomas Aqwinas,* pp. 115-16.

means of knowledge (intelligible species), and the act of knowledge are e1I1tirely one and the same. God's act of know-·ing is itself a self-subsistent knowing of itself. Hence, Aquinas often asserts that God knows Himself through Himself. Thomas recognizes that our finite intellect cannot comprehend how in God knowledge and indeed all the other divine attributes-are not distinct; but he insists that all these are perfectly united in God as all the properties of numbers pre-exist in unity, and our multiple conceptions of the divine essence are imperfect images of the one, simple essence of God. But Aquinas differs sharply with Aristotle concerning God's knowledge of the universe. Since the Christian God, unlike the Unmoved Mover, is the Creator of the world, the world stands to God as effect to oause. This constitutes the crucial watershed between Aristotle and Aquinas on this score, for God, in knowing Himself, knows His power and the effects to which that po·wer extends. In knowing Himself as the First Cause of everything that exists, God knows all Hi:s effects. Thus, God knows Himself through Himself and all created things through Himself. Nor does He know created things merely as universal essences, which imitate His own essence; rus the existential cause of every singular, God in knowing Himself as First Cause knows every singular effect p11oduced by Him. As Aquinas puts it, God's knowledge has the same extension in this regard as His causality. Therefore although the divine essence is the only direct object of the divine knowledge, nevertheless God possesses indirect knowledge of all other existents.

Now it is perplexing how this understanding of God's knowledge is related to God's knowledge of future contingents *aJS* explained by Aquinas. We have seen that God's knowledge of vision seems to entail the actual existence of the temporal series of events as the proper object of God's knowledge. But in the context of the doctrine of God's simplicity and pure actuality, it seems that the eternal divine essence, not the tempor:al series of events, is the proper object of God's knowledge.

This impression seems confirmed when we consider that Aquinas affirmed the Augustinian doctrine of the divine exemplar ideas.[72] According to Thomas, the divine ideas serve two purposes: (I) to be for God's practical knowledge the pattern of those created things which have the ideas as their forms, ·and (2) to be for God's speculative knowledge the principle of knowing a thing in its intelligible nature. Thomas maintains that such plurality is not incompatible with divine simplicity, since the plurality of ideas is the object of God's knowledge, not the means of His knowledge, which is the divine essence as the simple intelligible species. What God knows may be in itself complex, but God's act of knowledge is simple. In effect, what Aquina;s seems to have done is simply to have substituted a mental realm of particulars for the physical realm of particulars .as the objects of God's knowledge. One therefore is led to ask why the presence of all things to God in His eternity might not be construed to mean the presence to God of the divine ideas. In this way Aquinas would not seem committed to the ontological parity of the past, present, and future. The events themselves are not present to God, but only their exemplar ideas. In His eternity God sees the ideal archtypal world and so timelessly understands the truths about past, present, and future events in the temporal series, which is in a sta.te of genuine becoming. But while one might wish to re-interpret the Thomistic doctrine in this way, one cannot plausibly claim that this represents Aquinas's own view. In his discussion of God's knowledge of future contingents, he always speaks of the things or events themselves, never of their exemplar ideas. Indeed, this Augustinian doctrine seems to fit ill with Thomas's view of God's immediate and simple knowledge of Himself. But if God's essence is the object of His knowing, then why, one might yet demand, must the events

12 .Aquinas, *De veritate,* q.3; *Summa oontra gentiles* I, c.51-4, *Summa theologiae,* I, q.15. For a good account see Frederick Copleston, *A History of Philosophy,* vol. 2: *Mediaeval Philosophy: Augustine to Sootus* (Westminster, :Maryland: Newman Press, 1950), pp. 358-60.

themselves be actual to God in His eternity? Is it not enough that He merely know Himself insofar as He is the cause of all particulars which do obtain? The answer would seem to be "yes"; but He knows Himself as the cause of the particulars that do obtain precisely because they *do* obtain. If they did not actually obtain, God oould not know Himself as their cause. It might be thought that it would be sufficient that they *will* obtain in order to yield such knowledge. But we have seen that, given Aquinas's understanding of foreknowledge, this is not the case. Unless the particular actually obtains, God cannot know Himself timelessly as its cause because prior to its actual existence there is no way by which one may infallibly infer the truth of the propositions "This particular will exist." It might be said that God knows Himself timelessly as the cause of the particular, though the particular does not come to exist until later in the course of the temporal process.[73] But to speak thus is to place God Himself in time; what this really means is God knows Himself timelessly as the cause of a particular, which lies timelessly on the time-line at a point after some prior designated point. But all points are ontologically on a par for God. Hence, rthe fact that God knows His own essence immediately and the actual world only indirectly through that essence as its cause does not obviate the need that the world actually exist for God in eternity. To return to the metaphor, the temporal series must be present to God if He is to have His knowledge of vision of it.

God's Knowledge as the Cause of Things

One final issue deserves to be mentioned that threatens to undermine Thomas's attempt to preserve contingency in the [ace of divine knowledge. This is his doct<rine that God's

78 Aquinas, *Summa, contra gentiles,* II, c.35. This chapter is very instructive, for Aquinas seems to presuppose a dynamical view of time, but in fact his arguments only serve to prove that the universe has not existed sempiternally. If we eliminate the equivocation on "eternity," what Thomas succeeds in showing is only that God's timeless action need not cause an everlasting effect.

knowledge is the cause of its objects rather than the objects' being the cause of God's knowledge.[74] Origen had said, "A thing will not happen in the future because God knows it will happen, but because it is going to happen, therefore it is known by God before it does happen." [75] But Thomas dis,agrees,contrasting in this respect human and divine knowledge:

> ... the knowledge of the human intellect is in a manner caused by things. Hence it is that knowable things are the measurE: of human knowledge; for something that is judged to be so by the intellect is true because it is so in reality, and not conversely. But the divine intellect through its knowledge is the cause of things. Hence, its knowledge is thE: measure of things .... The divine intellect, therefore, is related to things as things are related to the human intellect. [76]

Here Aquinas appears to maintain that a human judgment is true 'because it corresponds to what is the case in reality; reality is not as it is because a judgment is true. As he says elsewhere, the truth of our propositions (*enuntiabilia)* is not the cause of the existence of things, but vice versa.[77] Now if this is also the case for God, Origen reasons, then fo.r any given time the state of affairs which contingently obtains at that time determines the truth of the corresponding propositions and thus the content of God's knowledge. But Aquinas repudiates this position, contending that precisely the opposite is true. Because God knows certain things to be true, reality

74 .Aquinas, *De veritate,* q.2, a.14; *Summa contra gentiles,* I, c.61.7; *Summa theologiae,* I, q.14, a.8.

75 Origen, *On Romans VII,* cited in .Aquinas, *Summa theologiae,* I, q.14, a.8. "Non propterea aliquid erit quia id scit Deus futurum; s.ed quia futurum est, ideo scitur a Deo antequam fiat."

76 .Aquinas, *Summa contra gentiles,* I, c.61.7.

> "... scientia intellectus humani a rebus quodammodo causatur: unde provenit quod scibilia sunt mensura scientiae humanae; ex hoc enim verum est quod intellectu diiudicatur, quia res ita se habet, et non e converso, intellectus autem divinus per suam scientiam est causa rerum, inde oportet quod scientia eius sit mensura rerum .... talis igitur est comparatio intellectus divini ad res qualis rerum ad intellectum hu**manum."**

Cf. Ibid. I. c.66.2.

77.Aquinas, *In perihermeneias,* lect. 14,3.

therefore conforms to God's knowledge, so that we can say God's knowledge is the cause of things. The reason for this :reversal with regard to divine knowledge is that the temporal cannot cause the eternal:

> . . . either thE: knowledge is the cause of the thing known, or the thing known is the cause of the knowledge, or both are caused by one cause. It cannot be said, however, that what is known by God is the cause of His knowledge; for things are te,mporal and His knowledge is eternal, and what is temporal cannot be the cause of anything eternal. Similarly it cannot be said that both are caused by one cause. because there can be nothing caused in God, seeing that He is whatever He has. Hence, there is left only one possibility: His knowledge is the cause of things.[78]

Actually both reasons given here could be directed against God's knowledge being caused by things: His intellect would ·be in potency to those things and the eternal would be caused by the temporal. Aquinas does not explain why God's eternal knowledge could not be caused by something temporal. It is diffi.cult to see why such a causal relation could not obtain, when one recalls that all temporal things are present to God in His eternity. In any case, Aquinas seems to hold that God'·s knowledge causes the objects of His knowledge. In reply to Origen, he states,

> His saying that God foreknows certain things because they are going to happen, is to be understood of the causality of logical consequence,. not of the causality which produces existence. For it follows logically that if certain things are going to happen, God fore,knows them; but the things that are going to happen are not themselves the cause of God's knowledge.[79]

1s Aquinas, *De veritate,* q.2, a.14.
". . .. vel scientia sit causa sciti, vel scitum sit causa scientiae, vel utrumque ab una causa causetur. Non potest autem dici quod res scitae a Deo sint causae scientiae in eo; quia res sunt temporales, et scientia Dei sit aeterna, temporale autem non potest esse causa aeterni. Similiter non potest dici quod utrumque ab una causa causetur; quia in Deo nihil potest esse causatum, cum ipse sit quidquid habet. Unde relinquitur quod scientia eius sit causa rerum."

79 Aquinas, *Summa theologiae,* I, q.14, a.8, ad 1.
" .S!!d quod dicit ideo praescire Deum aliqua quia futura sunt, intelligen-

His point seems to be that while it is true that from "*x* is going to happen " it follows that " God foreknows *x,*" this does not mean *x* is the efficient cause of God's foreknowledge. Origen could certainly agree to this. But Origen meant more than that logical entailment holds between these two propositions; otherwise, nothing is proved, since it is equally the case that the former may be derived from the latter. Origen meant that God's foreknowledge of the event is dependent upon the obtaining of the event itself, not vice vers;a. Of course, Aquinas is bending over backwards to be charitable here; still the point seems to remain that in Thomas's opinion, while "xis going to happen " and " God foreknows *x* " mutually entail each other, nevertheless God's knowledge is the *causa essendi* of the things that are going to happen.

Now this doctrine seems nearly unintelligible. For what does it mean to say God's knowledge is the cause of some thing? Does this mean God knows certain propositions to be true and His knowing them to be true causes the corresponding states of affairs to obtain in reality? If so, what makes the propositions true to begin with? How can God know them to be true unless they correspond with reality so as to be true? And how can knowing a proposition to be true be the existential cause of the corresponding state of affairs? Aquina;s's answers to such questions are not at all clear. He would agree that truth is conformity between the intellect and the thing known.[80] The intellect knows truth when it judges that there is a correspondence between the mental form of a thing in the intellect and the thing itself. Aquinas would agree that a proposition formed in the intellect has truth insofar as it corresponds with reality.[81] But God does not form proposiitions in His intellect, since it is fully actual and simple and does not therefore make

dum est secundum causam consequentiae, et non secundum causam essendi. Sequitur enim, si aliqua sunt futura, quod Deus ea prae.scierit; non tamen res futurae sunt causa quod Deus sciat."

so Aquinas, *De veritate,* q.l, a.I; *Summa theologiae,* I, q.16, a. 2.

s1 Aquinas, *Summa theologiae,* I, q.16, a.7.

judgments by compounding and dividing subjects and predicates.[82] Nevertheless, He knows the truth of all possible propositions by His knowledge of simple understanding. For in fully comprehending the essence of a thing He grasps all possible predications that would be true of it. Hence, by knowing His own essence, He knows the essence of all things, and in knowing them He knows all possible propositions that could be truly enunciated of them. Since His being is identical with His act of knowledge, in knowing possibles He confers being upon them. But if His knowledge is the cause of things, then-per *impossibile-shouid* not all possible states of affairs obtain? Thomas here qualifies his position to maintain that God's knowledge is the cause of what exists only insofar as His will agrees to the positing of certain possibles in reality:

> ... an intelligible form does not indicate a principle of activity merely as it is in the knower, unless it is accompanied by an inclination towards producing an effect; this is supplied by the will. A knowledge-form is indifferent to opposite courses, since one and the same knowledge covers contraries .... Now it is clear that God causes things through his intellect, since his existence is his act of knowing. His knowledge, therefore, must be the cause of things when regarded in conjunction with his will. Hence God's knowledge as the cause of things has come to be called the " knowledge of approbation." [83]

Now this changes the picture considerably. It is no longer the case God's knowledge is the cause of things *simpliciter*. Rather His knowledge comprehends possibles and their opposites alike,

[82] Ibid., I. q.14, a.14; *De veritate,* q.l, a.5, ad 10.

[83] Aquinas, *Summa theologiae,* I, q.14, a.8.

> ". . . forma intelligibilis non nominat principium actionis secundum quod est tantum in intelligente, nisi adjungatur ei inclinatio ad effectum; quae est per voluntatem. Cum enim forma intelligibilis ad opposita se habeat (cum sit eadem scientia oppositorum) ... Manifestum est autem quod Deus per suum intellectum causat res, cum suum esse sit suum intelligere. Unde necess.e est quod sua scientia sit caus;i, rerum, secundum quod habet voluntatem corrjunctam. Unde scienta Dei, secundum quod est causa rerum, consuevit nominari *scientia approbationis."*

Cf. *De veritate,* q.2, a.14.

and His will selects the possibles to be actualized. So it is only His *scientia approbationis* that is the existential cause of things. But this no longer seems to be necessarily opposed to the account Aquinas gives of human knowledge. To use his own example, an artist executes a painting on the basis of his prior idea of what he wishes to portray. Similarly God creates certain creatures on the basis of the intelligible forms He wishes to instantiate. But this sounds merely like the doctrine of creation according to exemplar ideas. God knows every conceivable way in which the divine essence could be imitated. Those exemplifications His will selects are created by Him. But this seems in no way inherently opposed to the Origenist view that God's knowledge of the actual world depends on what actually exists. Just as the artist created the painting on the pattern of his exemplar idea and yet knows the truth of the proposition "This pa.inting portray,s an idyllic English countryside" (because that is in fact what the painting portrays), so God creates the actual world after His a11chetypal ideas and yet knows the truth of the proposition " The universe contains *n* hydrogen atoms " precisely because it does contain that quantity of hydrogen atoms. Of course, the world does contain exactly so many hydrogen atoms because God so wills, but this does not obviate the fact that " *n* hydrogen a.toms exist " is true because *n* hydrogen atoms do exist. Since God knows all true propositions, He knows the truth of *"n* hydrogen atoms exist." Thus, it seems that it is more correctly God's will that causes the existence of things rather than God's knowledge. Indeed, on Aquinas',s analysis there seem to be three moments in God's knowledge: (1) *scientia simplwis intelligentiae* of all possibles, *scientia approbationis* of which possibles shall obtain, a:nd (3) *scientia visionis* or God's knowledge of the actual world based upon what obtains. Moments (1) and seem closely related to God's *scienbi,a speculativa* and *sc.ientia practica* respectively. For in the first moment He considers all possible things wholly apart from the intention to create, whereas in the second He selects some

things with the intention to bring them into existence. (Again, this raises the question why this knowledge is not sufficient for God's foreknowledge of future contingents.) Aquinas's response to Origen would, in this light, be seen to be the claim that what will be in the future will be because God has the intention to create it according to the selection of His will. In this peculiar sense His knowledge causes what He knows. But Origen, of course, was speaking of (3) knowledge of vision, not of (Q) the selection of divine will. Knowledge of vision is, it seems, conditioned by what actually exists. In this sense, God knows what will happen because it will in fact happen, not vice versa. Of course, insofar as God has selected to instantiate certain possibles, those possibles will be because God "knows " they will be-" knows " in the sense of "chooses." Aquinas's position thus seems to amount to the assertion that God does not choose what will be because they will be, but He by His choice determines everything that will be.

Now the question which arises in relaition to this doctrine of Aquinais is whether it does not entail consequences as fatalistic, or rather deterministic, as those he sought to avoid. For if God's knowledge is the cause of its objects, how then is divine determinism to be avoided? For Thomas maintains that among the things known by God are the motions of the human will.[84] He argues that 1since God knows His own essence as the First Cause of every thing to which His causality extends, He knows the opemtions of the human intellect and will. Yet Aquinas insists that the power of the will to will or not-will is not removed by being under the influence of the higher divine cause which is the source of its existence and operation. One wonders whether Thomas means merely that the power of choice and the being of the will come from God, but not the actual decisions of the will. The answer to this is clear: God causes not only the power of the will but also the motion of

[84] Aquinas, *Summa contra gentiles,* I, c.68.

the will.[85] It is a;gain Origen who is the target of Thomas's opposition on this matter. Aquinas maintains that "... God is for us the cause not only of our will, but aliso of our act of willing..•. every mov:ement of the will must be caused by the first will, which is the wi1l of God." [86] Again, "... acts of choice and movements of the will are controlled immediately by God." [87] At the same time, Thomas doggedly insists that God's knowing and determining the choices of the will does not remove the contingency of those choices.[88] In the first place, whatever God wills must be so, but only with the necessity of supposition *(necessitas suppositionis)* .[89] That is to say, given that something is willed by God, then, necessarily, it will be so. But it is not absolutely necessary in itself, since God could have willed the opposite. Hence, the proposition " Il God wills something, it will ·be" is necessarily true; but the

1!5 Jbid., III, c.89.

86 Ibid., III, c.89.5-6. "Deus igitur est causa nobis non solum voluntatis, sed etiam volendi. ... omnis motus voluntatis a prima voluntate causetur, quae est voluntas Dei."

87 Jbid., III, c.91.2. "... electiones et voluntatum motus immediate a. Deo disponuntur ...."

ss Aquinas, *De veritate* 2.14.

> "Hence, between His knowledge (the cause of the thing) and the thing caused there is found a. two-fold medium: one on the part of God, namely, the divine will; another on the par.t of the things themselves in regard to certain effects, namely, the medium of secondary causes through whose mediation things proceed from God's knowledge. . . . Hence, the things known by God proceed from His knowledge as conditioned by His will and as conditioned by secondary causes. Consequently, it is not necessary that these things follow the manner of His knowledge in all respects."
>
> ". . . unde inter scientiam dei, quae est causa rei, et ipsam rem causatam invenitur duplex medium: unum ex pa.rte dei, scilicet divina voluntas; aliud ex parte ipsarum rerum quantum ad quosdam effectus, scilicet causae secundae, quibus mediantibus proveniunt res a scientia dei. ... et ideo res scitae a Deo .procedunt ab eius scientia per modum voluntatis, et per modum causarum secundarum; nee oportet quod in omnibus modum scientiae sequantur."

sa Aquinas *Summa contra gentiles,* I, c.85.5-6; cf. I, c.83. *Necessitas suppositionis* is the volitional analogy of *necessitas consequentiae;* it is a condi·tional necessity.

consequent is not in itself necessary. But this move, analogous to the distinction between *neces:ritas consequentiae* and *consequentis* in the fatalism dispute, does not seem to work so well in this context. For now the necessity at issue is causal, not logical. While God did not have to will what He wills, nevertheless now that He has done so, it is causally determined that what He willed take place. Hence, if God in eternity wills that the proposition " Socrates is sitting " be true at *tn,* then it is causally determined by His *scientia approbationis* that Socrates sit at *tn.* Granted that Socrates's sitting is not logically necessary, still it is causally necessary. Secondly, Aquinas argues, God wills that some events occur contingently. There-:fore, they must occur contingently. [90] But again, this Augustinian inspired argument does not seem to work well when causal necessity is involved. Fo:r God does not on this account simply foreknow that an event will take place contingently; His knowledge causes the event to take place as it does. It is God in His eternity who determines which possible motion of tihe will shall he actualized, and in so knowing it He causes it. Thus, the event is not contingent *vis-a-vis* God. But a closer reading of Aquinas reveals that this is not his daim. [91] The event is indeed causally determined with regard to God; to say rit is contingent me,ans that it is not causally determined by its *proximate* causes in the temporal series. But this seems entirely irrelevant; for the event, whatever its relation to its proximate oauses, is still causaily determined to occur by the divine *scientia approbationis.* Worse still, Thomas seems to have forgotten that those secondary causes are themselves also similarly determined, so that even on this level contingency seems to be squeezed out. Thus, it is futile for him to contend that God's knowledge does not necessitate an effect because the effect may be impeded by its secondary cause, for this secondary cause is itself determined causally by God. Therefore, it seems to me that, having sought to escape the clutches

[90] Ibid., I, c.85.2-4.
[91] Ibid., I, c.67.6.

of theologioal fatalism, Aquinas fiees into the arms of divine determinism.[92] In maintaining that God's knowledge is the cause of everything God knows, Thomas transforms the universe into a nexus which, though freely chosen by God, is ca;usally determined from above, thus eliminating human freedom.

92 Joyce agrees and attempts to escape the determinism of the Dominican theory of God's pre-motion of the human will by means of the Jesuit conception of *scientia media,* whereby God knows the truth-value of all counterfactuals concerning possibles prior to His instantiation of the ones He selects (George Hayward Joyce, *Principles of Natiiral Theology,* Stonylmrst Philosophical Series [London: L{)ngmans, Green, & Co., 1923], p. 353-71) .

TRANSCENDENTAL THOMISM AND THE THOMISTIC TEXTS

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SOME THIRTY YEARS ago in the journal *Thought,* there appeared an article by Fr. Joseph Donceel, S.J., entitled " A Thomistic Misapprehension? " Its thesis is that American Thomism had seen too much of the *a posteriori* in Aquinas's noetic.[1] In fact the interpretation was so *a posteriori* that it bordered on empiricism and positivism. Donceel intends to balance the American understanding of Aquinas by spotlighting various Thomistic texts that speak of an *a priori* contribution of the intellect to human knowledge. Donceel is merely calling attention to something that some outstanding European Thomists, e.g., Defever, Marechal, and Rahner have known for some time.

Donceel's " balanced" interpretation is what is called Transcendental Thomism. In sum, the position claims that the human intellect is not so complete a *tabula rasa* that it fails to make an *a priori* contribution to the data of sensation. This contribution is the intellect's very dynamism to Infinite Being. The dynamism has a constitutive role in human experience. Swept up within this intellectual torrent, the data of sensation stand before us in consciousness as finite and limited. So " objectified " the data are disposed for the traditional abstvactive account of the specific and generic natures.

After the Second Vatican Council, Thomism generally fell into disrepute among American Catholic intellectuals. Phi-

1 Joseph Donceel, " A Thomistic Misapprehension?" *Thought,* 32 (1957) : 189.

losophy departments "pluralized." Their members represented analytic, existential, and process philosophy.[2] If Thomism remained vibrant, it was in the *a priori* strain. Both on the philosophical and theological levels, it was at home with the pluralism tha.t marked the time.[3] The current emphasis on political activism, however, ha:s caused even Transcendental Thomism to suffer an eclipse. In the heat of political struggle, Transcendental Thomism, too, appears decadent and bourgeois. The case can be made, though, that the uncovering of the intellect's *a priori* dynamism to the Infinite was a crucial move for liberationists. Gutierrez notes[4] that the Transcendental Thomist understanding of the human intellect posits a single finality for human nature. The traditional distinction between the temporal and eternal planes loses meaning. Human history becomes salvation history. In this way, then, Transcendental Thomism continues to exercise its influence.

This paper investigates the purported Thomistic texts expressing an apriorism. The texts cited by Donceel are all found in Marechal's *Cahier V.*[5] There MarechaI mentions many others besides. Hence, my paper will use the Marechalian collection. My treatment focuses upon the texts that are seemingly most *a priori.*

I.

A central text for Marechal is *De Veritate,* q.l, a.4, ad *5m* (first set) . Aquinas remarks:

2 See "Is a 'Catholic' Philosophy Department Possible? " by the Committee on Research (Thomas I.angan, K. I,. Schmitz, Jude P. Dougherty) of the ACPA (HJ78).

3 On Transcendental Thomism's capacity to admit a theological pluralism without falling into a relativism, see Gerald *A.* McCool, *Catholic Theology in the Nineteenth Gent1.ry* (New York: *The Seab1iry Pres8,* 1977), pp. 258-9.

4 Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation,* trans. by Caridad Inda and John Eagleson (New York: Orbis Books, 1973), p. 69.

5 *Oahier V* is a volume in Jl.riarechal's monumenfal *Le point de depart de la metaphysique.* Subsequent references to *Oahier V* are from Donceel's substantive translation *A J,[wrechal Reader* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970).

The truth by which the soul passes judgment on all things is the first truth; for, just as from the truth of the divine intellect there flow into the angelic intellects those: intelligible species by which angels know all things, so does the truth of the first principles by which we judge everything proceed from the truth of the divine intellect as from its exemplary cause. Since we can judge by means of the truth of these first principles only insofar as this truth is a likeness of the first truth, we are said to judge everything according to the first truth. [6]

The text illustrates a " dynamic exemplarism " in Aquinas's understanding of the human intellect. According to Marechal, every created intellect, because it is made according to the exemplar of the First Intellect, must ". . . actively define *(mensurat)* truth to some extent, in this way prolonging the sovereign spontaneity of the perfect Intelligence." Marechal views this dynamic exemplarism as ". . . nothing but a doctrine of the intellectual *a priori* formulated in metaphysical terms." [7]

To be noted is that the above argument is Marechal's. No Thomistic text for the argument is given. Rather, a purported Thomistic text for the argument's conclusion is provided.

I have three comments to make on this text. First, the text does not say that the truth of the first principles proceeds from the divine intellect into our intellect so that the human intellect would possess *a priori* knowledge. Aquinas does not expressly say that the human intellect is directly stamped with knowledge from the divine intellect.

Second, what Aquinas says is that the truth of the first principles proceeds from the divine intellect as from " an exemplary cause." Wha.t does this phrase mean? The reply to the fifth objection does not elaborate. The sense of the phrase must, then, be determined from the *responsio* of the article.

The *responsio* mentions Augustine's gloss on Psalm 2 (v. "Truths are decayed from among the children of men." The

6Trans. by Robert W. Mulligan, *The Disputed Questions on Truth* (Chicago: Regnery, 1952), p. 19.

1 Both quotes are from Donceel, *Mareohal Reader,* p. 101.

gloss is that the truth of God's intellect is one, and from it **are** drawn the many truths in the human intellect-" just ais from one man's face many likenesses are reflected in a mirror." The gloss alone could suggest a direct, albeit scattered, infusion **of** divine truth into the human intellect. Noteworthy, then, is Aquinas's interpretation. It takes a straight *a posteriori* turn. The scattered divine truth is found first in things outside the human intellect: "Now, there are many truths in things, just as there are many entities of things." From this truth in things derives truth in the human intellect.

> Again, truth is primarily in a thing because of its relation to the divine intellect, not to the human intellect, because it is related to the divine intellect as its cause, but to the human intellect as to its effect in the sense that the [human intellect] receive.:; its knowledge from things .

.According to Aquinas's interpretation of the Augustinian gloss, the human intellect does not *directly* mirror in scattered fashion the truth contained in the divine intellect. First is the mirror of created things outside the human intellect. In scattered fashion they reflect the divine truth. That situation in turn i:s picked up by the human intellect because " the human intellect receives its knowledge from things."

The meaning of " exemplary cause " in the fifth reply is now clear. The truth by which we judge thin.gs comes exemplarily from the divine intellect precisely beeam.se it is drawn from other things made in the likeness of the divine truth.

In conclusion, Aquinas neither makes Marechal'l'l argument for a dynamic exemplarism nor affirms its conclusion. The text Marechal cites is straight aposteriorism. Especially to he noted is that into this *a posteriori* context Aquinws situates the truth of the first principles. Since Marechal cites other texts for the *a priori* character of these principles, we are forewarned of an incorrect interpretation.

Before proceeding, a parallel text cited by Marechal ought to be noted. In *Summa Theologiae* I, q.16, a.6, ad Im, Aquinas remar"ks,

The soul does not judge of all things according to any kind of truth, but according to the first truth, inasmuch as it is reflected in the soul as in a mirror, by reason of the first principles of the understanding.8

Note that Aquinas does not say here that the soul does not derive the fust principles of the understanding from things. *A priori,sm* from this text alone is a plain *non sequitur.* As a text parallel to *De Ver.,* q.l, a.4, ad 6m, fairness would dictate that the above *prima pars* text be interpreted in a similar *a ']>Osteriori* vein. In fact the *responsio* of the *Summa* text aigain cites Augustine's gloss of Psalm 2. Once more the gloss is given an *a posteriori* interpretation. That is, many likenesses of the divine truth exist in the human intellect because the human intellect draws its knowledge from many things: "... secundum plura cognita."

II.

Marechal cites Thomistic texts ascribing to the human intellect an implicit knowledge of God.[9] Marechal thinks that this Thomistic point fits nicely with his own idea of the intellect's *a priori* dynamism to Infinite Being. Is Marechal correct in this textual judgment? What exactly is Aquinas speaking about in these texts?

The strongest text is from the *De Veritate,* q.22, a.2, ad Im. The argument to which the text is replying claimed that not all things tend to God. The first argument is:

Things are oriented to God as knowable and appetible. But not all things oriented to God as knowable know Him, for not all cognitive beings know God. Therefore, neither do all things oriented to Him as appetible tend to Him.[10]

In sum, all things do not tend to God because some that can know him do not and some that can desire him do not.

8 .As ed. by Anton C. Pegis, *Basic Writings of Baint Thomas Aquinas* (New York: Random House, 1945), p. 176.

s Donceel, *Marechal Reader,* pp. 152 and 185.

10 The translation of the objection and reply are by Robert W. Schmidt, *The Disputed Questions on Truth* (Chicago: Regnery, 1954), pp. 40 and 42.

Aquinas's reply is as follows:

> All cognitive beings also know God implicitly in any object of knowledge. Just as nothing has the note of appetibility except by a likeness to the first goodness, so nothing is knowable except by a likeness to the first truth.

In sum, all cognitive beings tend to God because they implicitly know him. The nature of this implicit knowledge is explained by an analogy: just as nothing is desirable except by likeness to God, so too nothing is knowable except in the same way. If we can understand this analogy, we can understand doctrine of " implicit knowledge of God."

Aid in understanding the first part of the analogy is furnished by consulting some of the parallel texts. For example, in *Summa Theologiae,* I, q.6, a.1, ad 2m, Aquinas says:

> All things, by desiring their own perfection, desire God Himself, inasmuch as the perfections of all things are so many similitudes of the divine being, as appears from what is said above.[11]

In other words, because everything is made in God's likeness, then we can say that each thing in desiring its own perfection desires God. To desire the copy is *ipso facto* to desire the original. How does Aquinas know this? There is a backward reference to q.4, a.8 in which Aquinas argues a likeness, albeit non-univocal, of creatures to God. The basic premise here is that an agent acts according to its form; hence some likeness between agent and effect exists. Now God is the first and universal principle of being; hence creatures are like God. The characterization of God as " the first and universal producing cause " seems to be a reference back to the *secunda via* of *prima pars,* q.2, a.8, c.

In sum, to desire God implicitly means to desire things made in God's likeness. And such a doctrine seems *subsequent* to a proof of God as the all-perfect being in whose likeness everything is made. That the implicit desire for God is such is reiterated at *prima pars,* q.44, a.4, ad 8m:

[11] Pegis, *Basic Writings,* pp. 51-2.

All things desire God as their end in desiring any particular good, whether this desire be intellectual or sensible or natural, i.e., without knowledge; for nothing is good and desirable except inasmuch as it participates in the likeness of God.[12]

With this understanding of the first part of the analogy mentioned in *De Ver.*, q.22, a.2, ad lm, we can go on to grasp the analogy's second part. Cognitive beings implicitly know God in any object of knowledge simply because every single thing has been made in the likeness of God. To know the thing is, then, to know God. We n'lay not this at first. But once things have been understood as creatures, we can affirm it. The implicit knowledge of God doctrine in Aquinas indicates nothing *a priori.* Rather, it is a gloss on *a posteriori* knowledge once the status of things as creatures has been discovered through *a posteriori* reasoning.

Summa Theologiae, I, q.2, a.l, ad lm, can he :read m the same way. First the text:

To know that God exists in a general and confused way is implanted in us by nature, inasmuch as God is man's beatitude. For man naturally desires happiness, and what is naturally desired by man is naturally known by him. This, however, is not to know absolutely that God exists; just as to know that someone is approaching is not the same as to know that Peter is approaching, even though it is Peter who is approaching. [13]

The connection with the preceding ana,lysis is plain from this parallel text,

For man naturally knows God in the same way as he naturally desires God. Now,. man naturally desires God insofar as he naturally desires which is a certain likeness of the divine goodness. On this basis, it is not necessary that God considered in Himself be naturally known to man, but only a likeness of God.[14]

12 *Jbid.,* p. 432.

rn *Ibid.,* pp. 19-20.

14 *S.C.G.,* I, c.11, *Ad quartam;* trans. by Anton C. Pegis, *Summa Contra Gentiles* I (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), p. 83.

Our natural knowledge of God is again glossed in terms of a desire natural to a creature, in this case a desire for human happiness, that in fact expresses a likeness to God. Hence, to know the happiness that we naturally desire is *ipso facto* to know God. Nothing in these texts resembles Marechal's *a prwri* dynamism of the human intellect to Infinite Being.

believes that he possesses two other Thomistic loci illustrating that the human intellect implicitly knows God in e¥erything that it knows. This implicit knowledge must be present to account for our consciousness of finite objects. The first text is *Summa Theologiae,* I, q.84, a.5, **c:**

> And thus we must needs say that the human soul knows all things in the eternal exemplars, since by participation in these exemplars we know all things. For the intellectual light itself, which is in us, is nothing else than a participated likeness of the uncreated light, in which are contained eternal exemplars.[15]

But note that the text is carefully written so that it does not affirm that the exempla11s are also in our aigent intellect. Rather, we are said to know by them simply because they are in the divine light that in turn has fashioned our created intellectual light. The agent intellect is not at all presented as a case of knowledge. **It** remains merely a principle, or condition, of knowledge.

The second text is *Summa. Theologiae,* I, q.88, a.3, c. Aquinas is discussing whether God is our first object of knowledge. He says: no, the quiddity of the material thing is that. God is known only by reasoning from his effects. Marechal interprets this text *epistemologically,* viz., God is uncovered by transcendental method as the *a priori* condition for our consciousness of things. But by the inclusion of Rom. I: the article harks back to question two, article This article maintains that God can be demonstrated from the things he has made and prefaces the famous *quinque viae.* In this earlier context, Aquinas's analysis is simply ontological. He is not in-

15 Pegis, *Basic Writings,* pp. 804-5.

vestigating the conditions for knowledge but the conditions for being. The fair .assumption is that this remains the context for q.88, a.3.

III.

Marechal drops a flurry of Thomistic texts on the agent intellect's "natural knowledge" of the first principles. Marechal is eX!plainingthe abstraction of generic and specific concepts from the phantasm. These abstractions presuppose the *a priori* projection on to the phantasm of the speculative unity of being. Without that projection, nothing would stand out from which to abstract. Marechal argues this *a priori* projection from the following texts. First, he cites *De Veritate,* q.10, a.6, c: "In the light of the a;gent intellect, the universal science *(omnis scientia)* is isomehow congenitally inborn in us . . . " Marechal remarks that the universal science comprises an analogical knowledge of the transcendent being.[16]

Second, Marechal quotes *In IV Meta.*, lect. 6, on the inborn nature of the " first principle " of being *as such,* not just of quantitative being.

> . . . [the first principle] comes from without to someone who, as it were, possesses it by nature, as if it were known naturally, and not from any learning. For the first principles are known through the vexy light of the agent intellect.

Marechal concludes by driving home his point:

> *Advenit quasi habenti ipsum:* " it comes from without to someone who, as it were, possesses it by nature"; this is the very formula of the virtual, dynamic *ap'l'iori,* as it becomes explicit, under the impact of outside data in some object of knowledge.[17]

In sum, Marechal believes that Thomistic texts expressing the " inborn " and " natura:l " character of the first principles indicate an *a priori* dynamism of the intellect to infinite being. Is this true?

Before answering this question, an introductory remark is

ie Donceel, *Mareckal Reader,* p. 142.

11 *Ibid.,* p. 143.

necessary. Maroohal's interpretation of these texts is most obviously strained, ,insofar as the texts speak of the first principles not in relation to *esse ipsum* but in relation to *ens.* The former is distinct from the latter as a cause is distinct from its e:ffect. Perhaps, though, the notion of *ens* is *a priori* and so too the principles. With this more aippropriate issue in mind, the above texts can be studied.

Taken by themselves, the texts look good. Placed in context, though, their supposed tmnscendental character fades away. To begin, *De Veritate,* q.10, a.6, c, contains a mistranslation. Marechal renders *"omnis scientia"* as "universal science." But a few lines earlier, *"scientia"* was used obviously for "knowledge": "*... verum est quod scientiam a sensibilibus mens nostra accipit."* One can rightly assume this sense in Marechal's cited lines. Their translation would be: " in the light of the aigent intellect, all knowledge is in a sense originally implanted in us."

The correct translation dispels a transcendental interpretation. A transcendental interpretation would now become a Platonism in which no knowledge is drawn from the senses. Aquinas cannot have that, and neither can Marechal.

But the context of the lines also preempts a transcendental interpretation. The paragraph reads as follows:

> Accordingly, it is true that our mind takes knowledge from sensible things. Nevertheless, the soul itself forms in itself likenesses of things insofar as, through the light of the age,nt intellect,. forms abstracted from sensible things are made intelligible in act and so are able to be received in the possible intellect. And so in the light of the agent intellect, all knowledge is in a certain way originally given-i.e., by the mediating universal conceptions that are immediately known by the agent intellect. These conceptions serve as universal principles through which we judge about other things and in which we: foreknow these others.[18]

These universal conceptions are known through the light of

18 Trans. by James V. MeGlynn, *The Disputed Questions on Truth* (Chicago: Regnery, 1953), p. 28.

the argent intellect. But that light pmduces knowledge through abstraction from sensible things. Hence, I understand the text this way: In the light of the agent intellect, ,all knowledge is originally implanted in us because this knowledge follows upon certain universal conceptions *made known by the abstra()tion of the agent inteflect.* The agent intellect ha;s all knowledge not because it is a case of knowledge but because it is the *condition* necessary to abstract those conceptions from which all other knowledge will proceed. Nothing *a priori* here.

In this vein one can handle another line unquoted by Marechal. In the Teply to the sixth objection, Aquinas writes: " The first principles of which we have innate cognition are certain likenesses of uncreated t.mth." In line with the *responsio,* this inborn cognition should he the inborn capacity of the a.gent intellect immediately to *abstract* these principles.

What about *In IV Meta.,* lect. 6? As Marechal translates it, the text reads:

> ... [the first principle] comes from without to someone who, as it were, possesses it by nature, as if it were known naturally and not from any learning. For the first principles are known through the very light of the agent intellect.[19]

Does " possessing by nature " mean a transcendental *a priori?* For two reasons, it is doubtful. First, the text is not opposing itself to *a posteriori* knowledge but to discursive knowledge. For instance, " The third condition is that it is not acquired by demonstration or by any similar method, ..." and "... they are not acquired by any process of reasoning." [20]

Second, the principle is acquired *a posteriori.* This is plain from the last lines of the paragraph. The notions that comprise the principle are drawn from experience that in turn is drawn from sensible things. Also, later in the *lectio*$_1$ the notion of being from which the first principle is derived is com-

19 Donceel, *Mareohal Reader,* p. 142.

20 Trans. by John P. Rowan, *Oommentary on the Metaphysics of A.ristotlt:* (Chicago: Regnery, 1961), I, p. 242.

;pared to other simple notions like whole and part. These are *a posteriori.* [21]

What then is the meaning of "possessed by nature"? In light of the above, I would suggest that we possess this principle by nature insofar as the light of our agent intellect is naturally able to abstract the notion of being from which the first principle follows.

The above *a posteriori* interpretations are in line with *De Ver.*, q.l, a.4, and iwith this striking text:

> Some have believed that the agent intellect is nothing but the habitual knowledge: of the first indemonstrable principles in us. But that is impossible, since we know these indemonstrable principles through abstraction from the singular. [22]

IV.

The remammg texts can be summarily treated. J\IIarechal finds another *a priori* outcrop in this text:

> But since the phantasms cannot of themselves immute th€; possible intellect, but require to be made actually intelligible by the agent intellect, it cannot be said that sensible knowledge is the total and perfect cause of intellectual knowledge, but rather is in a way the matter of the cause [*quodammodo est materia causae]* .[23]

Marechal leaps upon this text as conversely expressing a " formal " contribution to knowledge from the intellect. [24]

But the text has long been known to *a posteriori* Thomists.

21 "Ex ipsa enim natura animae intellectualis, convenit homini quod statim, cognitio quid est totum et quid est pars, cognoscat quod omne totum est maius sua parte: et simile est in ceteris. Sed quid sit totum, et quid sit pars, cognoscere non potest nisi per species intelligibiles a phantasmatibus acceptas." *B.T.,* I-II, q.51, a.I, c.

22 Aquinas, *Qua,estiones de Anima,* a.5, c; my trans. See also, "The principle [of contradiction] is, in fact, merely a recognition of the necessity of being in a given act of existence." Robert Henle, *Method in Meta,physios* (Milwaukee: Marquette, 1980), p. 56. Joseph Owens makes the same observation in *An Elementary Christian Metaphysios* (Houston: Center for Thomistic Studies, 1985), pp. 269-71.

Pegis, *Ba,sio Writings,* p. 807.

24 Donceel, *Ma,reoha,lReader,* p. 126.

Peifer points out that the qualified ascription of material causality to sensation leads to understanding sensation as the "objective material cause" of intellection.[25] This interpretation allows all cognitional content to remain derived from the 1sensiblething.

By itself, then, q.84, a.6 is ambiguous. It can be interpreted either in an *a posteriori* or *a priori* fash1on. Transcendental Thomists can tilt the interpretation in their fav;or only under the influence of less ambiguous *a priori* passages. These passages have not been forthcoming.

Finally, Marecha,I[26] cites a text from *Contra Gentiles,* I, c. 43. Aquinas is .arguing for the infinity of God. In one argument he remarks: "Our intellect, furthennore, extends to the infinite in understanding; and a sign of this is that, given any finite quantity our intellect can think of a greater one."[27] Marechal claims that this text is Aquinas's experiential recognition of the intellect's *a priori* dynamism to the infinite in the light of which finite things appear as the finite things that they are.

But the text fails to say that the intellect's extending to the infinite is *a priori.* From this text alone then Marechal's claim is simply a *non sequitur.* Neither does the text characterize the infinite as the all-perfect. What does the text mean? Elsewhere while again discussing the divine infinity, Aquinas characterizes form abstracted from matter as infinite since it is found common to ma:ny: ".Again, form is made finite by matter inasmuch as form, considered in itself, is common to many."[28] The intellect would extend to the infinite in actually understanding because it *abstracts* from the real. Insofar as reality contains the form that in itself is common, no addition by the intellect is necessary. To know the universal, the in-

25 John Peifer, *The Mystm·y of Knowledge* (Albany: Magi Books, Inc., 1964), p. 127.

2s Donceel, *Marechal Reader,* p. 166.

21 Pegis trans., *Summa Contra Gentiles,* p. 167.

28 *S.T.,* I, q.7, a.I, c; Pegis, *Basio Writings,* p. 57.

tellect just disengages the form from the matter. This abstractive position of Aquinas contrasts to the projective position of Marechal. For Marechal the intellect extends to the infinite in understanding because of an *a priori* dynamism to the infinite superimposed upon the data of sensation. Aquinas's abstractionism is underlined if one reca1ls that the truly infinite concept of *ens* is expressly produced through abstraction. [29]

V.

In conclusion, Thomistic texts supposedly expressive of an apriorism turn out to express exactly the opposite. Time and again the Transcendental Thomist is caught reading passages out of context. Aquinas never presents the human intellect as a case of knowledge. But the Transcendental Thomist sees it a.s such; for him the intellect of itself is a dynamism to the Infinite. This *a priori* surge is brought to the data of sensation and adds "filling " to it. The data now stand forth as finite beings. Just as the conclusion appears in the minor premise when the minor is juxtaposed to the major, so too sensible things appear as finite heings when caught in the intellectual torrent to the Infinite.

In contrast, Aquinas presents the intellect simply as a condition for knowledge. The intellect never has a constitutive function. The nature of a cognitive power determines merely the range of what is known, not how it is known. Just as a lock will admit some keys but not others, so sight receives colors but not sounds. Likewise the human intellect can receive material quiddities hut not immaterial ones.[30] What is known, however, remains a function of the thing itself.[31] For

[29] On the infinity of *ens,* see *S.O.G.,* I. c.25, *Quod autem.*

[30] Marechal mentions the lock example to illustrate his *a priori* position. See Donceel, *Marechal Reader,* pp. 113-4. The design of the lock is a "previous rule" of all keys that are to fit it. But the analogy of design to *a priori* is inappropriate. The design performs no constitutive function.

[31] " [The cognitive activity's] structure comes from the thing known, and not from any apriori in the intellect. In the cognitional order, consequently,

a transcendental philosopher, the knower resembles a pencil sharpener rather than a lock. The pencil sharpener not only admits pencils hut modifies them as well. It imposes a structure on what it admits. To interpret Aquinas in this vein is truly a misapprehension.

the human intellect is something purely potential. In the real 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 thing before it." Joseph Owens, "Judgment and Truth in Aquinas," in *St. Thoma8 Aquinas on the H11Jistence of God,* ed. John R. Catan (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1980), p. 51.

ROSS AND SCOTUS ON THE EXISTENCE OF GOD: TWO PROOFS FROM POSSIBILITY

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Abstract: In his *Philosophical Theology* James Ross claims to have uncove,red an assumption essential to the proof of God's existence advanced by Duns Scotus: the equivalence of logical and real possibility. Ross argues that the omission is reparable, and that Scotus's proof is ultimately satisfactory. In this paper I examine his claim and determine that while Scotus may have believed there to be a significant connection between these two concepts, his proof of God does not depend on it. Ross's attempt to rework the Scotist de,monstration merits consideration on its own terms, however. In calling attention to the relation between real and metaphysical possibility, Ross has hit on a way of circumventing one of the major impediments to the acceptability of Scotus's original proof: the infinite regress of causes. Since Scotus argues against the possibility of the infinite regress in copious detail, we must wonder whether he could have countenanced the alternate route suggested by Ross. While I shall argue that indeed Ross's gambit is flawed in a way that Scotus may have foreseen, his proof nevertheless deserves recognition as an original and noteworthy contribution to the literature.

Introduction.*

JAMES ROSS [1] has argued that, despite Duns Scotus's fabled subtlety, the demonstration of the existence of God presented in the *Tractatus de Primo Principio* contains at least one straightforward lapse of logic. He claims that the pmof depends crucially on the assumption of the equivalence

*I am grateful to Louis Mackey for commenting on a draft of this paper.

[1] Ross, James D., *Philosophical Theology.* Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1969. All references to Ross are to this book.

orf logical and real possibility, and furthermore that this fact utterly escapes Scotus's attention. Ross is an apologist for Scotus: accounting for and repairing the damage done by this omission is his self-appointed task, but, interestingly, he devotes very little space to supporting his claim, mentioning only briefly that some of Scotus's views are difficult to interpret without our assuming the equivalence in question.

Ross's commendable intentions notwithstanding, it seems reasonable to devote some space to the question of whether the Subtle Doctor is guilty of this logical blunder before we set about trying to correct it. I therefore propose to conduct an inquiry along the following lines: (1) Is Scotus committed to the equivalence of rea:l and logical possibility? (2) Does Ross succeed in establishing that they *are* equivalent notions? (3) Does Scotus depend on this equivalence for the success of his ;proof? (4) Does Ross offer us a substantially improved version of the Scotist proof? The answers I will offer do not favor Ross's views. I believe that his reading of Scotus is flawed, that he does not establish the equiv:alence in question, and that his proof does not represent a significant improvement over Sootus's original. But I a.Iso believe that ·along the way Ross has made a novel and interesting contribution both to the literature on Scotus and to proofs of God's existence generally. As we shall see, Ross's demonstration cleverly circumvents the veJcing issue of the infinite regress of causes. This is a problem that consumed Scotus, and, though ihis solution both anticipates and addresses Kant's causal antinomy in a highly original way, it is not generally thought to have solved it. There is every reason to take seriously an attempt to adapt Scotist principles to a proof that avoids this issue completely.

1. Scotus's Use of the Concept of Possibility

Scotus, it is well known, took himself to be providing a demonstration of God's existence in accordance with the strictest Aristotelian directives, requiring, *inter alia,* that all premises employed be necessarily true. He objected to Aquinas's

five ways on precisely the grounds that the pil"emisesemployed fail in this regard, yet he also believed that many proofs which fail this test (including Aquinas's) are made useful when expressed in the mode of poss,ibility. In this mode, they function in the very a;t;tenuated capacity of proofs of God's *possib"le* existence, something few would have thought necessary or useful to demonstrate. Yet Sootus did not regard this as any sort of oompromise. Indeed, what had been forfeited wa;s a completely inadequate concept of a;n existing God (one that did not exist necessarily) , while what had been gained was a very significant first step toward an acceptable *quia* demonstration of the existence of God *qua* necessary being. Generally speaking, expressing contingent propositions in the mode of possibility wa;s Scotus's recipe for generating necessary truths.[2] Applied to Aquinas's proof of a first efficient cause, for example, the true premise that something contingent exists is converted to the *neoessary* truth that it is possible that something contingent exists. By the familiar inferences we realize not that God *(qua* first efficient cause) exists, but that it is possible that He exists.

In addition to being a tool for the large scale production of necessary truths, Scotus believed the concept of possibility to have another important property as well. The proposition "**It** is possible that Duns Scotus exists" is (according to Scotus) a necessary truth. This may be interesting, but it is a useless premise insofar a.s we might be concerned to prove the existence of Scotus. (Indeed, it is very important that it be useless since otherwise Scotus will turn out to be a necessary being, leaving us with a problem similar to that of Anselm's most perfect isfand.) The possibility of *God's* existence, how-

[2] **It** is not my purpose to defend this claim though I think it may be worth pointing out that "Whatever is possible is necessarily possible" is axiomatic in many modal logics (85 for example). The justification for this is rather pragmatic, however. One wants rules which prevent the stacking up of modal quantifiers and bizarre possible worlds schemes. I myself see no compelling reason to suppose that anything necessary follows from contingent premises.

ever, provides us with a singular situation, for by appealing to certain properties thrut w:e uniquely associate with the term ' God ' it can be demonstrated that His possibility *guarantees* His existence. This follows from the division of all possible existents into two categories, the potential a.nd the actual. Conjoined with the proposition that God is uncausable, it follows that He cannot be potential and must, therefore, be actual.

It is not difficult to make a case for the claim that Scotus depends on a notion of possibility that is different from mere logical consistency. We noted, for example, tha;t Scotus insists on demonstrating God's possibility. The manner in which he does this is interesting: He does not, as one would expect if Sootus were insisting on mere logical possibility, just ascertain that the concept of God is logically consistent. One might argue otherwise. One might argue, for instance, that Scotus's proof of the possihility of a first efficient cause proceeds simply as an analysis of the concept of contingent being. But indeed we must hope that Scotus did not proceed in this way, for it would render his understanding of contingency utterly vacuous. For Scotus the idea of a contingent thing necessarily in-¥olves the possibility of its production (a contingent being is just a producible entity, i.e., one that it is *possible* to produce), but the statement: "a contingent being is one that it is *logically consistent* to say is produced " is senseless. Consistency is a property of the definition, not the object. We are justified in assuming, then, that Scotus at least sometimes appeals to a sense of possibility one might reasonably call ' real ' or ' metaphysical' possibility. It is the possibility that we associate with being, rather than thought. (I shall recall this point later.) Still, knowing that Scotus probably employed two ·separate of possibility is a far cry from knowing, as Ross claims, that he assumed them to be equivalent, and this is still farther from knowing that he depended upon this equivalence for his proof. We will attempt to determine whether either of these further conclusions is warranted.

2. Did Scotus Assume the Equivalence?

The closest that Ross comes to providing an argument for his claim that Scotus regards the two modes of possibility to be logica.lly equivalent is the following:

> Duns Scotus argued . . . that for anything which doe:s not exist but is possible, something else must exist or must have existed which could have produced it or some producer of it. The meaning of Scotus' claim ... is obvious if read in terms of possible$_2$, but it is somewhat if read possible$_1$ unless being possible$_2$ is understood to be a logically necessary condition for being possible1 ... (p. 110-111)

Read ' possible1' as ' logically possible ' ·and 'possibb' as ' really possible '. This argument is not convincing as it stands, for why not simply inter.pret Scotus's claim in terms of ' real possibility ' and be done with it? I suppose that Ross could reply that there is no reason to allow Scotus the concept of real possibility .in this case since, for things which do not exist, their possibility is known to us only through their conceivability; their real possibility being a. mere article of faith in the absence of a demonstration that logical possLbility is a sufficient condition for real possibility. But this would be a weak argument. There *are* ways that we can know of the real possibility of something that does not exist. Consider, for instance, things that existed in the past. We may know of such things through past acquaintance with them, and we might also validly infer them from things we are currently acquainted with (inferring from their contingent existence the existence of others which pl"oducedthem) .

Ross offers various historical hypotheses that would account for Scotus's having .assumed this equivalence •without ever explicitly acknowledging it. They are not compelling in my view and we sha:ll not examine them, but I think there is an argument for Ross's claim which he does not make. Scotus says in the *De Primo Principia* (chapter three, fifth conclusion) that " It is not possible for something not to exist unless something positively or privatively incompatible can exist." This sti:ite-

ment, though difficult to penetrate, can be rendered intelligible by substituting ' logically ' for ' positively', 'causally ' for 'privatively ', and assuming as seems warranted, that real possibility is the intended sense of ' possible ' here. We now have a statement to the effect that there has to be a !reason for something not to exist, i.e., there are no unexplainable cases of impossibility.3 This is an interesting version of what Leibniz later called the Principle of Sufficient Reason (the idea that there can be no unexplainable existents-hereafter PSR) and, in a sense, it is stronger. While the PSR prohibits us from imaigining a world in which things pop into existence unaccountably, hence linking contingent possibility to a means of production, Scotus's proclamation seems to require that everything exist which does not have something impeding its production. The former principle lays down a necessary condition for existence. The latter lays down a sufficient one.

Now, there is no doubt that Scotus accepted the more familiar PSR. The excerpt taken from Ross's book contains .a formulation of it. Given the other as well, which seems unique to Sootus (for the time, that is) ,[4] it seems that we have tight connection between the concepts of logical and real possibility. While the PSR essentially states that logical possibility is prior to real possibility, principle (let's call it tJhe PIR) [5] states that real possibility is prior to logical possibility.[6]

a A lot rides on this being an acceptable interpretation. I'm not entirely confident that it is, but it seems to be the most defensible in light of the text. I can think of others that are more *plausible,* for instance, " there has to be a reason for something not to be possible "-but this doesn't seem to fit the statement nearly as well.

some justifimtion for believing that Scotus supposes a very

4 I am grateful to Louis Mackey for pointing out that thi,s principle can also be read as a variation of the Principle of Plenitude, first expressed in Plato's *Timaeus* and essential to justifying Augustine's aesthetic conception of evil. See Arthur Lovejoy's *The Great Chain of Being,* Cambridge, Mass., 1936 for a complete articulation of this principle.

5 Principle of Insufficient Reason.

6 The relation 'prior to' is intentionally vague. I don't want to prejudge the nature of this connection by using the term ' imply' just yet.

To see this, consider first the meaning of the PSR: Nothing comes from nothing; there must be an explanation for anything that exists. One way of defending this principle is to say (as we noted earlier) that the means of production is part of the concept of the thing itself. (This is certainly plausible: human beings are essentially things produced by other human beings, etc.) But isn't this just to say that real possibility somehow presupposes logical possibility? [7] On the other hand, the PIR is easily explicruted when we notice how much more broadly the concept of ' logical consistency ' can be interpreted than simply ' lack of interna;l contradiction '. Scotus uses the terms 'privative compatibility' and 'positive compatibility' to illustrate just this. We can not claim that a concept is consistent until we imagine what it would be like for the state of a:ffairs it s·ignifiesto obtain (it needs to be not only internally consistent but also externally consistent). If the statement that such a thing exists is essentially incompatible with the way things are, then it is not a logically consistent notion. Of course, the key word here is 'essentially ', and the question remains whether we can spell out this 'broadening' of the concept of logical consistency in a way that really does bro.aden it without making *all* falsehood out to be a matter of conceptual conflict. It doesn't strike me as entirely implausible. Regardless of whether the PIR can be adequately defended, however, it should be dear that its *meaning* is that real possibility is presupposed by logical consistency.

Let's take for granted, then, that Scotus supposed some significant connection to obtain between the concepts of logical and real possibility. The exact nature of this connection is still unclear, but there is now at least some reason to examine whether such a relation can be made out. I believe that a cursory examination of Ross's attempt will show that he, at least, is unsuccessful.

[7] I know this sounds odd. We seem to have taken a substantial thesis and turned it into something trivial. This is not my purpose. Please keep in mind that th:= 'prim· to' and ' somehow presupposes ' are intentionally being left ambiguous at this point.

3. Proving the Equivalence

Before proceeding it is worth considering what it would mean to establish an equivalence between the notions of logical and real possibility. One might, for instance, attempt to demonstrate that, contrary to our intuitions, they actually mean the same thing. This gambit woud I think be tantamount to demonstrating that the rough and ready characterizations we employ in making a *prima facie* distinction on closer inspection actually end up rendering one of them incoherent. A simple-minded attempt to do just this is based on the idea that we must align the meaning of a term with the evidence we have for invoking it. It can be claimed that our insight into the possible begins and ends at the level of logical consistency, and q1at our statements about the possible must all in some way be statements about concepts or perhaps our ability to form them. There are at foast two things that can be said a:gainst this. First, we certainly have some insight int() the really or metaphysically possible, namely, the actual. For Scotus, this is axiomatic. Secondly, even though we often make statements like " It is possible that I will soon be a weaHhy man," it is rarely the case that such an expression is elliptical for " My being .a wealthy man is a logically consistent concept." The meaning of a statement is not always commensurate with the evidence we have for making it. I rather doubt that Ross has anything like this in mind, though, as we shall see, there are times when he inexplicably favors the use of the concept of logical possibility.

Still another way of demonstrating this connection would be to accept that the meanings of the terms are different and show that the ideas are, nevertheless, logically equivalent. Think, for instance, of the relation between "closed plane :figure with three internal angles," and " closed plane figure with three sides." The same set of things, triangles, is (necessarily) the connotation of both phrases but they differ in terms of the properties which they essentially attribute. So their logical

sterns from a :necessary interchangeability *salva*

veritate. I think that this is the kind of thing that Ross may have in mind, but it still strikes me as *prima facie* implausible. This sort of analysis ignores the very reasonable and straightforward restriction of the idea of logical consistency to a domain consisting of one kind: concepts, thoughts, propositions, and so forth; and rea.I possibility to a domain consisting of another: objects and actions. These two categories reflect a difference that renders the terms " logical possibility " and "real possibility" nowhere interchangeable. [8] On this pessimistic note let us tum to Ross's attempt to demonstrate the equivalence. According to Ross:

We find two relevant senses in which the expression " possible " is used by the classical philosophers.

1. " p is possible " means " p is logically consistent."
2. "xis possible" means:
   a. x is logically consistent, and
   b. If x e.xists, there is a sufficient explanation of the fact that x exists to be found either in the nature of x, or in something else in combination with the nature of x, and
   c. If x does not exist, either x could begin to exist or x could have begun to and
   d. If x does not exist, but could begin to exist or could have begun to exist, there actually exists or actually did exist something which could explain or could have explained the beginning-to-exist of x, or produce something which could be or which could have been such an explanation. (p. 110)

It doesn't take long to become confused by this definition. To begin, (2a) seems reasonable until we note that in (2h), (2c), and (2d) the same variable, x, is being used to denote what I claim to be a fundamentally different kind of entity. (2a) is obviously the condition for the possibility of a concept, but in the others we are talking no longer about the existence of

s Many medieval theologians, .Anselm most obviously, would claim that 'God' is the concept for which logical possibility guarantees metaphysical possibility. One might even claim that, in some sense, God's logical possibility is one with his real possibility. However this claim is ultimately parsed out, I take it that it is com,pletely at odds with the view that the two concepts are logically equivalent in an unqualified way.

a concept, but about the existence of the thing that the concept signifies. This is not a trivial complaint. It is extremely important to Ross that (2a) he part of the definition of (2): it automatically p:mvides that (2) implies (1), hence defining his p:roject as the demonstration that (1) implies (2).[9] Even if we were to accept the definition as it stands, this does not appear to be a simple task, but an acceptable emendation such as the removal of (2a) or the introduction of a different variable for (2b), (2c), and (2d) would make it impossible to establish a necessary connection between the two statements by any standard rules of substitution.

(2h), considered alone, is not without its difficulties either. It is the only condition that deals with the case in which the thing in question actually exists, yet it has the interesting consequence that something might exist whose existence is, nevertheless, impossible, viz., anything without an explanation. To explain: if, when applying the term to an existent entity, "X is possible" is analyzed as meaning that X is in some way explainable, then it follows that an existent thing for which there is no explanation is impossible. This may not be an entirely repugnant conclusion, yet Scotus, at least, seems to believe that whatever exists is *ipso facto* possible, and this is not captured by the above definition. One might rejoin that Scotus's acceptance of the PSR commits him to (2b), and this, of oourse, is true. But it is one thing to accept it as a truth and another to accept it as part of the definition of metaphysical possibility.

This is a sticky area for interpreters of Scotus, and I do not want to give the impression that the above comments are entirely unproblematic. Scotus does, it seems to me, infer rea:l possibility directly from existence, which is why (2h) conflicts with his notion of metaphysical possibility. Further, such an inference seems to me to be eminently reasonable. To say that X is possible may not exactly be to assert a disjunction one

[9] Ross actualJ.y proves that not- (2) implies not- (1).

side of which says " X exists," but it is at least true that most would regard the strongest evidence for the possibility of X to be the existence of X. Nevertheless, one could argue that the PSR plays an essential role in this inference. That is, one infers the metaphysical possibility of an existent entity because of a prior commitment to the view that nothing exists which cannot be expfained, analyzing possibility in terms of explainability as in (2b).[10] This analysis gives the appearance of making a commitment to the PSR justified: without it we could not preserve the intuition that all existent things are possible, but it is still a bit perverse given the intuitive plausibility of inferring this fact directly.

Finally, (2c) and (2d) both have the problem that they contain an unexplicated use of the mode of possibility. One sees this in the phrases "could begin to exist," "could explain," and "could produce." It is, I think, a vicious circularity. One might attempt to analyze bhese uses in terms of the first sense of possibility, but I doubt that the mere logical consistency of, say, something's being able to exist, is what is being sought here. It is difficult to see what such an analysis would add to the concept of logical possibility anyway.

It will be clear that I think this attempt to demonstrate the equivalence of logical and real possibility is otiose. To be fair to Ross, however, the above definitions really only represent his attempt to clarify classical usage. With them he makes the best argument he can for the equivalence of logical and real possibility, but he in fact ends up concluding (for reasons different foom the ones just ·given) that the demonstration fails. In 011der to remedy this situation Ross embarks on a proof of the equivalence considerably more refined than the one whose beginning we have just considered. Nevertheless, it hars difficulties of its own, and they are easily revealed. For his own attempt to make out the equivalence in question, Ross defines real possibility in terms of its consistency with something he

[10] I am not accusing Ross of making this argument.

calls the Principle of Explicahility (E for short). E (I will not bother with its precise formulation) is essentially a modally qualified PSR. Whereas PSR says that everything has an explanation, E says that it is *posmble* for everything to have an explanation. Ross believes that the PSR is dubious as a necessary truth, though true in fact. Hence, employing Scotus's argument that every contingent truth expressed in the mode of possibility is necessary, he reasons that E is *a priori,* and defines real possibility in terms of this principle saying that " a state of affairs is really possible if and only if it is [logically] possible that it should have an explanation." [11]

The question of the a prioricity of E aside, this concept of 'real possibility is inadequate given the intuitions it is expected to support. The PSR might be used to get at a satisfying notion of real possibility since, according to it, the only things that are possible are things that are *in fact* explainable. But why should we accept as equal to the same task a principle that only requires that it not be *inconmstent* to regard them as explainable? What does the mere fact that we can attribute a cause (formulate an explanation) without contradiction have to do with its real possibility? Ross seems unconcerned with the intuitive plausibility of his definition, yet oonsiderations of this nature make me doubt that he can satisfactorily establish the equivalence he is after.

One might offer the follmv:ingreasoning in defense of Ross's ·giambit: if we are going to allow that producibility is part of the concept of contingent being, and, further, that being divides ,without remainder into the set of things which exist necessarily and the set of things which exist contingently, then it is trivial to assert that the logical possibility of a cause is going to determine the real possibility of non-existents. This defense seems right to me. If we allow that real po,ssibil-

11.An obvious implication of this is that things which are not explainable may, nevertheless, be really possible. This is not obviously objectionable; we might *want* to allow that it is really possible for things to pop into existence unexplainably.

ity is simply ibuilt into the concept of a contingent being, then Ross's move seems more legitimate. On this conception it becomes nonsensical to require ourselves to conceive of a nonexistent being whose real possibility is not guaranteed. But this merely shows that we can pack a lot into the concept of contingent being (perhaps as much as Scotus did), and it ignores the fact that we can pack in cons.idembly less without offending our intuitions. The bottom line here might be that it is only by allowing •a wea;k concept of contingency (e.g., that which does not exist necessarily, that which ha;s not always existed, etc.) that the problem of the relation between logical and real possibility exists. But whether we should allow the richer interpretation without taking a hard look at the problems it imports is, at the very least, debatable.

4. Examining Scotus's Al'lgument

The foregoing considerations are not necessarily damaging to Scotus, for although we have seen some reason to believe that he accepts the equivalence of logical and metaphysical possibility we have seen little reason to cl!aim that he depends on it. In this final section I shall claim that, in fact, he doesn't depend on it at all. More importantly, however, I think we will arrive at a deeper understanding oif why Ross thinks that he ought to.

Scotus demonstrates the existence of a first efficient cause in roughly the following way.[12]

1. It is possible that a first efficient cause exists.
2. Whatever is possible is either actual or potential.
8. Whatever is potential is causable;.
4. A first efficient cause cannot itself be caused, else it would not be first.
5. A first efficient cause is not causable.
6. A first efficient cause is actual, i.e;., exists.

12 The 'roughly' is not intended to indicate an inattention to detail, but rather to admit that various other interpretations are possible and that I do not intend to consider them.

This proof is very similar to one offered by Ross in a later chapter of his book, the primary difference being that Ross explicitly quafrfies both occurrences of the term ' possible ' as meaning '1ogica1ly possible'. The reason for this is unclear. There is, as far as I can tell, no textual support for it. It may be that since he takes himself to have demonstrated the equivalence of logical and real possibility in an earlier chapter of his book he simply wants to work with the least problematic notions in stating a simple version of Scotus's pmof. Perhaps, too, he believes that real possibility is something that Scotus could not logically appeal to in this context until such an equivalence had been demonstrated. In any case, Ross doesn't provide us with an explanation. Vvhat we shall do here is first to interpret the proof using the concept of logical possibility only and then show how this fails unless we assume the equivalence (which we have tentatively rejected). We shall then interpl'et it using the concept of real possibility and attempt to determine, first, whether the proof goes through, and, second, whether appealing to the concept of real possibility is permissible without first demonstrating the equivalence.

We commented earlier in this paper that Scotus demonstrates premise (1) by adapting Aquinas's third way to his own purposes, and we stated that it seemed unlikely that the mere logical possibility of the first efficient cause is what he was try-&ng to gain. Nevertheless, let's ignore this for the moment and suppose that premise (1) should be read as "It is logicaily possible that a first efficient cause exists." In other words, the concept of a. first efficient cause is logioally consistent. Ross claims that premise (2), "Whatever is logically possible is either actual or potential " is a priori true ..

> This premise is a priori true; it is a complete disjunction equivalent to the statement that every thing which is logically consistent is such that either it exists at some: time or it never exists, although it might have existed. (p. 178)

But even if we overlook the odd usage, i.e., speaking of things rather than concepts as objects of the term ' logically consis-

tent', it is not possible to ignore that the phrase "might ihave existed" .aippeals to an unanalyzed sense of possibility. (We assume, of course, that ' logical possibility ' is the intended meaning here as well and that Ross takes the term 'potential ' to be properly analyzed as 'non-existent but logically possible'.) This takes us to premise (8): "Whatever is potentfal is causahle," i.e., " Whatever is non-existent but logically possible is causable." It should be clear from our earlier discussion that the truth of this statement depends on something like the PSR, and, as we saw, an acceptable version of this principle is what Ross sets out to provide when he attempts to forge a link between the logically possible and the really possible. It is easy to see why providing such a Hnk is the only recourse: the mode of possibility has turned up once more in the term ' causable ', and this time, for precisely the reasons given at the end of section one of this paper, it is not acceptable to analyze the notion in terms of logical possibility.

Now let us interpret the proof using the concept of real possibility. We haven't endorsed any part.icufoJ.'definition of this concept, but let us accept that the definition we eventually arrive at will necessarily incorporate the concept of causality. That is, let us assume that to say " ,something that does not exist is rea.llypossible is," above all, to say that it can be *made to* exist or *produced* somehow. So there is no problem in establishing the connection between potentiality and causability. If potential is defined 1as 'non-existent but really possible' premise (8) will foHow ana;lyticaUy. Premise will be true *a 'j)ri,ori* as before, so premise (1) is our only candidate for causing problems: "It is really possible that a first efficient cause exists." Ha.s this been satisfactorily established? An adequate answer to this question would require a discussion of consider-·ablelength, for it is well known that Aristotle/ Aquinas's proof of a first efficient cause relies on the impossibility of an infinite regress of causes. Scotus argues for this at length, employing the very controversial distinction between accidentally orde1red and essentially ordered causes, and the argument is absolutely essentia.1to the proof.

At this point, however, we may divine and appreciate some of the impetus for Ross's program. Ross manaiges to bypass rthis argument and in a very ingenious way. Seeking only to establish the logical possibility of the first efficient cause he presents us with the following:

1. Some things are actually produced.
   Therefore some producer is logically possible.
S. This producer is either
   a: an eleme,ntof a series of producers each of which is causable; or
   b: an element of a series of producers that terminates in one that is uncausable.
4. (Sa) is not analytic
5. Therefore, (Sb) is not self-contradictory.
6. Therefore, a first-efficie;ntcause is logicallypossible. (p. 177) [13]

The trick is this: one can avoid ha.ving to prove the impossibility of an infinite regress orf ca:uses by realizing that to establish the logical possibility of (Sb) one need only show that it is not contradictory. (Sb) could even be false, as long as it is not *necessarily* false, i.e., as long as (Sa) is not necessarily true. By concentrating on the concept of logical possibility Ross mana:ges to dodge the problem of the infinite regress. The cost: prove the equiva:lence of logical and real possibility.

Why didn't Scotus think of that? I do want to emphasize strongly my belief that in light of the problematic nature of Scotus's rejection of the infinite regress of causes, Ross's proof has at least as much independent plausibility as that of Scotus. But it seems to me that Scotus would have been right in rejecting this alternative method of proof. (I leave the hypothesis that he *did* reject to others.) My reasoning is simple: If :bhere is one thing certain about Scotus's very difficult argu-

ia As in the previous excer.pt I have modified the wording slightly. I am using the concept of a first-efficient cause rather than the Uncausable Producer as in Ross and Scotus. These are different, but the differences are unimportant for our purposes. Also, note that Scotus would express premise (1) in terms of ' contingent being' rather than a ' producer ', but the connection is evident enough. It seems like a harmless simplification.

ment for (Sb), it is that he considers it to have established (3b) as a. *necessary* truth. As we observed earlier, this is just a methodological axiom for Scotus. That means that (8a) must be seen as necessarily false *even if it isn't logically contradictory.* In other words it does not suffice for the possibility of (8b) that (3a) is not analytic: one needs to show that (3a) isn't a synthetic *a priori* truth either. Ross simply hasn't addressed this possibility. It seems clear to me that, as long as we don't assume the equivalence of logical and real possibility, the real possibility of (Sb) will not he established unless (Sa) is shown to be actually false, and this, of course, is what Scotus attempts to demonstrate.

Now if we amend the above proof to ,something that adequately represents the Scotist version and ignore the question whether his proof of the necessary falsity of (3a) is adequate, we end up with a very simple demonstration:

(1) Some things are actually produced.
Some producer is really possible.
(3) Since there is no infinite regress of causes, this producer would be an element of a series of producers which terminates in a first producer that is not itself produced, i.e., a first efficient cause.
(4) He,nce, a first efficient cause is really possible.

Ross expressed line (2) of his version of the proof in terms of logical possibility. This makes sense given his overall program, but we have rewritten it to coincide with what we surmise to have been Scotus's true intentions. Indeed, it seems to me that this is a point at which Ross's move is most suspect. For (as I have already argued) when do we have more justification for asserting the real possibility of something than when that thing actually exists? Moreover, the proof as it now stands (disregarding (3), as we said) is sound. One can pick at it in various ways, but none of these bear on the question of whether the concept of real possibility is admissible. If we can assume (8) to be true, then the only assumption that has not been explicitly recognized here is that, given the

real possibility of a producer that is itself produced, we must also admit the real possibility of the producer that has produced the producer of it. This seems unassailable.

Conclusion

I think we have seen that Scotus's use of the concept of real possibility can be defended without assuming that he did not distinguish it from logical possibility. Thus we are not compelled to accept Ross's claim that the *Tractatus de Primo Principia* contains a;t least one major logical blunder. But while we might reject Ross's work considered as the project of bringing Scotus's originail proof into logical alignment, we should not deny its significance considered as an independent demonstration of God's existence. It is straightforward, it is clear, and it aippears to have only one major failing: the equivalence in question has not been adequately established. I have expressed doubts concerning the meaningfulness of this putative equivalence, not to mention the possibility of proving it, hut my doubts are hardly a proof. Perhrups a more sensitive reaiding of Ross will reveal something I have missed.

ALBERTUS MAGNUS AND THE NOTION OF SYLLOGISTIC MIDDLE TERM

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ABERT THE GREAT is recognized as one of the great scientific minds of the Middle *A:ges,* both for his commentaries on Aristotle's scientific works and for his own contributions to the study of nature. His contributions to the science of logic go largely unnoticed, however. This is probably due to the ascendency of the Summulae tradition in medieval logic a.bout the time of Albert's death, for the Summulae traidition is quite different from the one represented in his commentaries on the logical writings of Aristotle. I should like to remedy this a bit by looking at how he understands the concept of middle term in Aristotle's *Prior Analytics.*

There are two points with which we can begin this study. First, Albert insists that Ar.istotle's remark that second and third figure syllogisms are imperfect when compared to those of the first figure does not mean that they somehow lack the necessity cha.racteristic of syHogisms of the first figure. On the contra;ry, all syllogisms, in whatever figure, conclude necessa,rily. This is what it is to be a syllogism. First figure syllogisms are perfect with respect to us, for in them the necessity of consequence, which is the very na;bure of the syllogism, is manifest to us in a way that it is not in syllogisms of the second and third figures. Hence, the marks *perfect* and *imperfeot* refer not to the syllogisms in themselves but to the syUogisms in relation to us.[1]

[1] Albertus Magnus, *Oommentares CYn the Prior Analytics,* Bk. I, Tr. 1, Ch. 8, pp. 469-71. See also Tr. 1, Ch. 6, p. 467, and Tr. 1, Chs. 5 and 6. Page

Seoond, the notion of syllogism is coextensive with the notion of middle term, for the middle term is the root and cause of the necessity that characterizes the syllogism. This is why some other kinds of argument, induction and example for instance, are not syllogisms strictly speaking, but only in a loose and improper sense; they lack a true middle term.[2]

What is it, then, to be a middle term of a syllogism on Albert's reading of Aristotle? Is the middle term *middle* in some quantitative sense, then? Although Albert uses the expressions *scope, breadth, contain,* etc., he is quite explicit that the notions of figure and term are transferred "metaphorically" from quantity to properly logical considerations.[8] For logic deails not with quantity and its relations, but with relations that exist between things as conceived by the mind, the most fundamental of which is the relation of predica.bility. To be predicable is to be sayable of many things, and although a predicable can be considered a whole in relation to the things of which it is said (its parts then) , such talk is metaphorical and not literal. A predicable (whole) is sayable of many things but is not constituted by them. *Dog,* for instance, is sayable of Fido and Rover, but being a dog is not being Fido and Rover. A whole in the ordinary sense, on the other hand, is not sayable of its parts and is composed of them. One could not say that a wall is a house, but a house is composed, among other things, of a wall. The notions of figure and term, and therefore of middle term, are taken from the quantitative aspects of things and transferred to properly logical things. This being so, the notion of middle term cannot be reduced to something quantatative, spatial organization for example.

From these remarks one can anticipate how Albert would respond to the suggestion that the middle term is the one that is middle in universality with respect to the other two. This

references will be to *Oommentaria in Prioru.m A.nalytiooru.m* in *Opera Omnia,* ed. A. Borgnet (Paris: Vives, 1890), Vol. 1.

[2] Bk. II, Tr. 7, Ch. 4, p. 794.

[a] Bk. I, Tr. I, Ch. 2, pp. 460-61.

would rule out the possibility that the syllogisms of the second and third figures could be truly syllogisms, for only in the fust figure is the middle term middle in universaJ.ity. In fact, what he says is that only the middle term in the first figure is a perfect middle term, although in the other figures the middle term is truly a middle term. [4]

The reason for this, Albert remarks, is that the notion of middle term has two notes or marks, both of which are necessary to constitute the notion of perfect middle term, but only one of which constitutes the very nature of middle term. [5] The ficrst is that the middle term can be middle in the order of predica:tion; the second is that it must unite or conjoin the extreme,s. The middle term of the first figure has both and is thus a perfect middle term. The middle terms of the second and third figures lack the first note but retain the second, and so although they are truly middle terms they a.re not perfectly so. This is why syllogisms of the first figure are perfect compared to all those in the other two figures. What this :i;rieans is that syllogisms of the first figure conclude necessarily, and this necessity is manifest to us. In the second and third figures the fact that the conclusion follows necessarily is not manifest. It is evident, then, that the perfection of the first figure lies in the cla.rity with which it presents the necessity of consequence, and this is due to the middle term being middle in universality.

It follows, then, that since being middle in universality accounts for the manifest chairacter of the necessity of consequence and that this is proper to the first figure, what it is to be a middle term cannot consist in being middle in predication. It must, according to Albert, consist in the unitive or joining force that is found in the middle terms of a:ll three figures. Of course, this simply moves the question to another one. For what one needs to know is what precisely gives the middle term this unitive or joining fm.·ce so that it is capable

[4] Bk. I, Tr. 2, Ch. 6, p. 467. Cf. p. 470, col. b.

of producing a conclusion that follows necessarily from the premises?

In commenting on chapter twenty-three of the first book of the *Prior Analytics,* Albert considers the following suggestion: [6] Could the middle term be reduced to the notions of subject and predicate in such a way that what makes the middle term a linking term is that it is either subject or predicate or both? Albert rejects this suggestion, but it will be instructive to follow his line of argument, for it will provide one of the elements in the notion of middle term.

In the chapter in question, Aristotle considers the question whether all syllogisms are to he found in one of the three figures that have already been treated. He answers in the affirmative, thus by implication rejecting a fourth figure. Albert follows the Stagirite in this and makes the point explicit. The argument is this: The notion of middle term cannot be reduced to the notions of subject and predicate as set out above because that would imply that a fourth figure is possible. But it is not. Why then does Albert, following Aristotle, think that all syllogisms are in three figures and thus no fourth figure is necessary or even, as we shall see, possible?

The fourth figure would have to be one in which the middle term is subject and predicate. For the other two combinations, predicate twice and subject twice, give rise to the second and third figures respectively. Furthermore, there are two ways to represent the so-called fourth figure, according to Albert, only one of which is correct. For one might arrange the terms in this way:

S-M
M-P

However this arrangement, he would say, is not truly a fourth figure because it is only incidentally different from the first figure. [7] It really is the first figure, but with the premises inter-

[6] Bk. I, Tr. 5, Ch. 1 & 2.
[7] Bk. 1, Tr. 1, Ch. 2, p. 488. See also Bk. 1, Tr. 5, Ch. 1, pp. 600-612.

changed. That is not the fourth figure, anymore than interchanging the premises in the other two figures produces a fifth or a sixth figure.

The reason for this Albert gives elsewhere.[8] He says that just as figures are reduced to the first figure, so they flow from ,it. Thus, the second figure is produced, so to speak, by converting the first premise of the first figure, and the third by converting the second premise of the first figure. Thus, the so-called fourth figure would have to be produced by converting both premises, which would give the following arirangement:

P-M
M-S

This is the arrangement that, according to Albert, Aristotle rules out when he argues that all syllogisms are produced in the three figures.

Why is this arrangement inefficacious for producing a condusion? .A:ccoll1dingto Albert, Aristotle's point is that only in the three figures do the extremes have something, the middle term, in common, and without this sharing of the middle by the extremes there can he no conclusion. But is this so? Is it the case that no conclusion can be obtained kom such an armngement? Suppose the following al'gument:

All P-M
All M-S

Doesn't it necessarily follow that All P is S?

Although this is correct, it misses the point. The argument is nothing hut a first-figure syllogism with the p1remises interchanged so that Sis now the name of the first term and P the name of the last term. Aristotle's point, a.ccording to Albert, is that in the SO-'ca11ed fourth figure no conclusion of the form *S is P* can he obtained. This is because in such an arrangement the middle term cannot be common to the extremes so as to

s Bk. I, Tr. 5, Ch. 2, pp. 612-13.

produce a conclusion *Sis P.* In othe.r words, the question Aristotle is asking is, given terms arranged in two premises, when does it necessarily follow that S is P? In this context there can be no fourth figure. This is why Albert says that in such an ,arrangement of terms there can be no first term and no last term, i.e., there can be no conclusion of the form *Sis P.*[9] There is no first or last term .because, with respect to the conclusion *Sis P,* the middle term is both first term and last term. And that is precisely why it cannot be common to the extremes S andP.[10]

The point can be put simply this way. The conclusion of the argument says P belongs to S, but the premises only say that S belongs to P. So the argument cannot produce the in-:tended conclusion. If one says that what the argument necessarily concludes is *P is S,* then what one has is a first-figure argument with the premises interchanged and the terms renamed. It is not substantially a new arrangement of terms anymore than doing the same thing to the second and third figures produces any new figures.

What we learn fmm this is that the middle term must be common to the extremes not simply by being either a subject or a predicate in relation to them but by being common in predication, one might say. To be common in predica.tion is to be common in such a way as to produce a conclusion in which P is said to belong to S.

The reason why the so-called fourth figure cannot produce such a conclusion is that in its premises P is never said of S, ·and so it cannot be concluded of S either. Rathm- S is said of P. The relation being-said-of (the predica.bility relation) is founded upon the relation of universality. A proposition says thait the universail signified by the predicate is related affirmatively or negatively as either being in or not being in the things

9 Bk. I, Tr. 5, Ch. 1, p. 611, Col. b.

10 These remarks pertain to what are called the direct moods of the three figures. Indirect moods conclude a pro·position of the form *P is S.* Albert remarks on this in Bk. I, Tr. 2, Ch. 5, pp. 693-94, and Ch. 13, pp. 510-12.

signified by the subject of the proposition. Thus, in the so-called fourth figure the first premise says that M is in P, and the second that S is in M. But from this one does not know anything about whether P is or is not in S. And so one cannot conclude *S is P*. To be common in predication, then, is not reducible to the notions of subject and/or predicate. Rather, it is the sharing by the extremes of the same term in such a way that the major extreme can be concluded to belong to the minor extreme either affirmatively or negatively. This can happen only in one of the three figures.

This, then, is what it means for the middle term to be common in predication, and this is one of the elements in the notion of the syllogistic middle. But it is not the only one. In commenting on the chapter immediately following the one just considered, Albert adds another element to the notion of what it takes for the middle term to be the cause of the necessity of the conclusion following from the premises. *Prior Analytics*, Book One, Chapter Twenty-four, argues that the middle term must be related universally at least once to one of the extremes. Otherwise, Aristotle says, either there will be no syllogism or, if there is one, it will not prove what it is supposed to or will beg the question.

Albert explains this using Aristotle's terms.[11] Suppose one wants to prove that music is good because pleasurable. If there is no universality on the part of the middle term *pleasurable*, then no syllogism is possible. For one cannot infer pleasurable from good, nor music from pleasurable without universality with respect to the middle such that all pleasurable things are good. From pleasurable one can infer good, because the pleasurable actually is good. But from good one cannot infer the pleasurable, because good does not actually contain the pleasurable.

Thus, the middle term must be common in predication, and it must be related universally to at least one of the extremes. From this a third element in the notion of middle term can

[11] Bk. I, Tr. 5, Ch. 3, pp. 613-15.

be seen. :Bor if the middle term must be related univers,aJly to at least one exreme, then the middle term must be universal. Only universals can be quantified; singuJars cannot. This is why the middle term of an induction cannot produce the necessity of consequence characteris1tic of the syllogism. Its middle term is a collection 0;f singulars, and such a collection is not a universal anymore than one singular is.[12]

Putting all of the preceding remarks together one can say that, according to Albert, the syllogistic middle term is a universal, that is taken universally, and that is universal in predication in the way explained. And this is the reason for the kind of necessity that chara;cterizes the syllogism as a kind of argument.

12 Bk. II, Tr. 7, Ch. 4, p. 794.

RECENT INTERPRETATIONS OF EARLY CHRISTIAN ASCETICISM

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Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1988.

Sebastian Brock and Susan Ashbrook Harvey, *Holy Women of the Syria.n Orient.* Be1·keley: University of California Press, 1987.

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Introduction

FROM THE FIRST century, the development of patristic Christology, both orthodox and heterodox, was the result of a collective reflection upon the identity and redemptive action of Jesus, the Logos, who was *en arche* and became incarnate at a specific point in the history of the cosmos. Likewise, the development of the patristic theory of *askesis,* tihe devout discipline of the Christian, beginning within the New Testament canon, was a discussion of how the Christian might, through his moral life, move toward the goal offered him by the Logos: conversion to, identification with, and eventual unification with Jesus Christ. This occurred by the means of progressive discipline and love in the company of other believers and employed methods older than Christianity itself. What made and makes Christian *askesis* unique as a

religious self-discipline is the personal identification of the believer with Christ.

It is undeniable that soteriology, and ascetical theory have been linked historically. The answer to the question, "Who do men say that I am?" (Mt. 16.13) will imply the form of the response to the divine imperative of "follow me" 16.24,Q5). Those theologians of the early church who were blessed with consistency almost automatically adjusted their Christology and their moral theology.

A concise statement of this connection may be found in Irenaeus's *Against Heresis* (5.18-20). "[Christ] caused man to cleave to and to become one with God ... unless man had been joined to God, he could never have become a partaker of immortality." The result of the incarnation is the imperative .for human beings, now freed by the "most holy and merciful Lord, [who] loves the human race" (18.6), to model their actions after his (20.2).

Origen's *Exhortation to Martyrdom* recalls the earlier formulation of Paul when he refers to "the mind of Christ within us" (ch. 4) and states that "Now it is revealed whether or not we have taken up our cross and followed Jesus. This will have happened if Christ is living in us" (12). The willingness to face martyrdom was the great test of Christ's inner presence: "I think that they love God with all their soul who with a great desire to be in union with God withdraw and separate their soul not only from the earthly hody but from eveTything material" (3).

Such an exhortation, which sees *askesis* as a preparation for martyrdom as well as a mode of life, had already been clear·ly enunciated hy Ignatius *(To the Ephesians,* 4). Ignatius, "called *Theophoros* (God-bearer)," wrote that he had "welcomed that beloved name of yours, earned through your natural righteousness in accordance with faith and love in Christ Jesus, our savior. Imitating God [incarnate] and inflamed by the blood of God [in the Eucharist] you accomplished your common task perfectly."

Together with Paul, Ignatius left a legacy of early Christi.an opinion remarkable for the unity it proposes between Christ .and the Christian. Reflecting upon the incarnation, it understands Christ ,as redeemer and model for Christians. Although critical Biblical scholarship has for decades prescinded from a portrait of Christ himself, as opposed to the communities founded hy him, most early Christians considered him to have been a single, celibate person. They did not, of course, think of Christ as a monk in the later sense of the term, hut their insistence that the Christian moral life of ascesis and sacrifice ,be modeled upon Jesus' own life can he seen a:s preparing the way for such a view of Christ.

The best reason for their conclusion is in Christ's own moral teaching as recorded in the Gospels and the :few :references in Paul. Early Olrnistian teaching, based on traditional Jewish moral maxims 'as influenced hy Hellenistic ethical norms and the first-century proximity of the Qumran community, was original in its :focus on Christ's teaching. The" I am" formulations of John's gospel together with the advice, contained in the synoptic Gospels, to imitate his own life of humility ,and patience made a potent wellspring £or his contemporaries, the disciples and their successors. Jesus' own !'ecommenda;biomf the ,angelic life (Mt. 22.23-30), of apostolic 'Wandering without provision for material things (Mt. 16.19-34), perfection though abandonment of possessions and following Christ (Mt. 19.16-21), and ,Jiving in poverty, humility and meekness (Mt. *5,* Sermon on the Mount) , seemed to the earliest Christians to provide both a portrait of Christ's life and ,a pattern for the life of his followers.

Such ,a conclusion---ithat Christians remembered and imitated the me of their reoognized Lol'ld-may seem obvious. Assuming thait early Christians made no conspiratorial attempt to hide Jesus' marriage and descendants, or his wealth 1and lu:rurious diet, one can say the following: first, eairly Chrisitian interpretations of the life of Jesus, including those of the Gospels, ought to 1be given weighty consideration a,s actual

remembrance, preserved in 'good faith if fragmentarily, of Jesus' mode oif life and that of his early disciples. Second, failing that exact correspondence between early Christian text and memory and Jesus' actual mode of life, modern interpreters ought to take literally the sincerity and universality of the attempts of later generaitions of Christians to imitate Jesus. This imitation included habitually among its constitutive elements an *askesis* which mandated some form of continence, along with other .aspects of a personal regimen. If we admit this link between the life of Jesus as remembered in the earliest Christian texts and the pattern of his .followers' lives, it .becomesless surprising to find scores of examples of imitators in the pre-1Constantinian church. Evidence for the theory and praictice of Christian *askesis* is rubundant, iin short, and it is generally linked to the life oif the incarnate God himse1t1

However, it is the mark of numerous recent interpretations of early Christian asceticism or early Christian treatments of marriage 1and sexuality to ignore or to discount the example of Jesus 1in explaining either the interest of Christians (from the Apostolic Fathers forwa.rd) in virginity or continence, or its appearance in fourth-century monasticism, or hoth. In some of the studies discussed .below, this :has led to a lopsided treatment of Christian asceticism which must resort to peripheml explanations to account for one of the most marked developments of ·early Christian religion-the rise of monasticism as an organized movement of first Jay and then clerical rpiety.

This aprpvoruch deems the preeminence of virginity and monasticism in early Christianity a:s a "rev:olution " instead of a development. Such 1an aprpl'loaoh is not, of course, new: Reitzenstein and Harnack both :regal'ded the desert fathers a;s an innovaltion and sought to explain them ifrom causes extrinsic to prior Christian doctrine and institutions. [2]

[1] See the works of Birger Gerhardsson for a reassessment of the historicity of NT writings. The first: *Memory and Manusoript.* Lund: Gleerup, 1964; and most recent: *The Gospel Tradition.* Lund: Gleerup, 1986.

[2] Richard Reitzenstein, *Historia Monaohorum und Historia Lausiaoa*

This tradition in modern scholarship ha;s its deepest roots in ecclesiastical divisions. The sixteenth-century reformers' rejection of monasticism ·as unscriptural has led to the view that monasticism and celibacy were a corruption and innovation, and that Jesus' single sta;te was a function of his brief career and extrao11dinary purpose. On this view, the notion of the consecrated Christian virgin was ·a surd, as was the perpetual virrginity of Mary, another model for !human followers of Jesus since the second century.

The more recent studies under discussion here do not spring if:rom ecclesiasrbicaipolemic. Written from the point of view of the critical historian, they attempt to set Christian approaches to virginity not in the long historical tradition leading :back to Jesus hut in the contexts of late ·antique attitudes to the body and its expression in sexuality, marriaige, and virginity.

Chnsbi,an Asceticism in Late .Antiquity

The decade now ended ihas been one in which numerous historians, hoth American and European, have turned their attenbi.on to the phenomenon of Christian asceticism and its formal expression [n the monastic life. Building on the work of previous generations of philologists and historians (Gribomont, Guillaumont, Chitty, Voobus, for instance) they have sought to bring a new interpretation to the Christian practice by Viiewing it th11ough various new lenses: those of structural anthropology, of feminist interpretation, or of the *Annales* school's desire to catalogue .the lives of the little individuals, or of the priv:aite selves of the mighty (here Evelyne Patlagean has heen a prime inspiration).

Undoubtedly, however, one of the main inspira.tions of this new attention given to Christian monasticism, of which the works listed above are only a sample, is a famous essay by Beter Brown, " The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in

(1916); Adolf von Harnack, *Mission und Ausbreitung des Ohristentums in den erst en drei Jahrhunderten* (4th ed., 1924) .

Late Antiquty." [3] In 1Jhait work, Brown 1attempted to show that the function of rthe holy man, understood as a hermit or a favm-type ascetic, was to ameliorate ·social relations in the Later Roman Empire by his manipulation of patrona;ge, often for the dispossessed who had no other !recourse. This article did not rule out other explanations for the attraiction of holy men for the lay people who consulted them, of course, but it ma;de society, mther than religious belief or practice, the primary context for rthe monastic endeavor.

The Body and Society is Brown's first major work on monasticism since the rpublication of that article, and indeed his first monograph since *Augustine of Hippo* (1967). The book is divided into three parts. The first, " From Paul to Anthony," covers the diverse Christian witnesses to the practice of sexual renunciaition oT permanent celibaicy until roughly 300 A.D. The appearance oif Anthony in Alexandria during the persecution has always made a dramatic beginning for the monastic movement, hut Brown wants to show that second-century developments culminated in Origen's vision of virginity ·and that Anthony was an echo recorded by Athanasius. 'Dhe second part of the book, "Asceticism and Society in the Eastern Empire," covers rbhe literiature of desert monasticism, Cappadocian a;sceticism, 1and the efforts of John Chrysostom to promote monasticism in Antioch; it also gives a :portrait of the tradition of Syria;c-speaking Syria and Mesopotamia. The final part 1turns ito the West, £or " The Making of the LaJtin Traidition." Here Ambrose, Jerome and Augustine each 1.'eceive a chapter detailing their transformations of prior ascetic practice.

Any single volume describing .such :a cihronoiogical and geographical extent in less than five hundred pwges w:ould provide objecrtions for the delectation of dozens of ,gl:ad scholairs. B:vown, ·aware of this, states rin the *Preface* his intention to

[3] Now in P. Brown, *Society and the Holy in Late Antiquity.* London: Faber, 19S2, pp. 103-152.

" make clear the notions of the human person and of society implied in su<ih !renunciations, and to follow in detail the reflection and controversy rwhich these notions generated . . ." (xiii). He also makes tbhe assumption that the asceticism of which he will write is fundamentally different from that of later, Catholic Christianity in its notions of sexual .renunciation, devotion rto Mary, manner of clerical celibacy, the" clear and orderly profile " of Benedictine monasticism, and perpetual virginity. This assumption is necessary, he cautions, because

> The Early Church remains a period still charged with more than academic interest for many readers. Stereotypes, alternately placid and histrionic, gravitate around it with remarkable ease. If my book gives back to the Christian men and women of the first five centuries a little of the disturbing strangeness of their most central preoccupations, I will consider that I have achieved my purpose in writing it (xv).

B:vown seems to consider his 1chie£ duty one of the interpreting for " ·a humane person of the modern age" (xvi) a kind of Christianity which must he regarded by any reader as utterly separated fvom its later forms " by a chasm almost as vast ·as that which still appears to separate us from the moral horizons of a Medite:vranean Islamic country" (xvii).

The foregoing quotations give only a taste of the *suavita:s* of B!l'own's prose. Despite his cautions, Brown's vuice is sympathetic to his subjects, ancient Christian believers who !resemble the *imams'* .followers more than their descendants. He is also, like any good writer, sympathetic to his ·audience, taking pains to compose essays and ·lectures which beguile -as they transmit the fruits of :reading and rereading difficult texts in various rtongues. His audience has been composed of classicists, scholars of early Christianity, iand those historians who stand on the cusps of Byzantium, scJholairs of the late ancient Roman world.

Brown has, ·along with other American and European scholars, created a field-late antique history-now advanced in the series he edits for the Unive!l'sity of California Press,

The Transformation of the CZasmool Heritage. He and his colleagues have arrived at novel, and ingenious, conclusions **to** the degTee that .they iha-ve been aible to pose to familiar texts some questions which ecclesiastical historians or historical theologians have not asked. His inter:pretation has attracted crowds of readers; *The Body and Society* sold out in its first printing, to the expressed surprise of his publisher. Its popularity doubtless stemmed in pal'lt from the public lectures, sponsored by the American Council of Learned Societies, wihich preceded its written form. For some reason, however, far beyond the ·attraction of previous lectures or essays, the book has attra:cted laudatory attention from the moment of publication.[4] Perhaps it is because many specialized works, treating discrete parts of Christian asceticism, had appeared and an overview was necessary; or perhaps larger questions, such as the .contemporary meaning of sexuality and renunciation, press upon the minds of Brown's readers. In ·either case, there is no doubt that the book ha;s heen, ·and will continue to be, an extremely influential interpretation of one of the central expressions of Christian faith and teaching.

For those scholars, such as historical theologians, whose procedures presuppose a continuity between the thought of early Christianity 1and that of later periods, Brown's narrative, smooth •thougihit is, will contain a series of terrible shocks. It is no accident that the term " patristic " does not appear in the book. 'J;he division, as noted above, between early Christianity and its heirs is neo-Arian, in that it renders the term " father" of the church a merely tmditionail term of convenience, a dogmatic leftover. Traditional periodization evaporates in this schema, ·and eaxly Ohristianity ends with 1the invasion of North Africa hy the Huns.

This shock will he salutary, in part. It is ·instructive for theologians to have the Gnostics icompared with other Chris-

[4] The :first lengthy, laudatory review appeared in *The New York Review of Books* vol. 36:39-41 for Feb. 2, 1989, by W. H. C. Frend, the church historian; it was entitled "The Devil and the Flesh."

tians in bhe kind of levding which only a scholarship freed (by 1rejection) from the terms "orthodoxy " and " heresy " can do. Likewise, Marcion and Mani are given equal consideration with Hermas and Irenaeus as witnesses for early Christian life. Such a trea:tment communicates well the variety of second-century Christianity.

Yet many of the study's surprises are unpleasant ones, and not because they overturn the stereotypes of hitherto-sacred theology. From its first pages this hook makes the kind of errors of interpretation which flow from a selective and partial reading of early Christian texts. In beginning with the late-Roman view of marriage, in minimizing the figure of Jesus as model and object of devotion, in (for the later period) concentrating almost solely on those texts addressing virgins, and in failing to argue in favor of his theses and conclusions (there are no arguments made as such) , the hook ihas presented a composite portrait of early Christianity in which some of its most prominent members receive a persistent description as "ehill" prnponents of a new and ,revcolutionary view of Christian *askesis.* It is well to ;record the hook's final, evcocative parag'raph before pmceeding to a discussion of its contents:

> To modern persons, whatever their religious beliefs, the Early Christian themes of sexual renunciation, of continence, celibacy, and the virgin life have come to carry with them icy overtones. The very fact that modern Europe and America grew out of the Christian world that replaced the Roman Empire in the Middle Ages has ensured that, even today, these notions still crowd in upon us, as pale, forbidding presences. Historians must bring to them their due measure of warm, red blood. By studying their precise social and religious context, the scholar can give back to these ideas a little of the human weight that they once carried in their own time. When such an offering is made, the chill shades may speak to us again, and perhaps more gently than we had thought they might, in the strange tongue of a long-lost Christianity. Whether they will say anything of help or comfort for our own times the readers of this book must decide for themselves (447).

The historian must not he expected to regard or recommend

the early Christian as a moT'al or spiritual guide. However, the perceptible *frisson* he 'records is an indication that their lives and works carry a negative valuation. It is not hard to detect the book's favorite ,authors (among them Clement, the promoter of well-regulated Christian mairriage) or its view that to ;the " humane " *reaider-res ipsa loquitwr-the* early Christian ,ascetics, martyrs 1and later the monks, were for:bidding and strange on the ,face of it.

Bar:ly Christians themselves often regarded the ascetic practices of their coreligionists as extreme or misguided. Basil of Caesa,rea wrote his rules for the community life in order to safeguard the monk against the conceit ,and imbalance of the hermitage; later, Benedict regulated for monastic stability under the ,aibbot in order to 1avoid the notorious errors of the " wandering monks," known to Cassian and others. But they assumed that ascetics were engaged in the business of imitating Jesus.

The first problem with *The Body and Society* is that it pays so little attention to the activities of Jesus and John the Baptist and to their presence in the thoughts of their later imitators. In fact, the book begins with a chapter on late antique views of marriage and sexuality, in order to establish the context for the 'growth of early Christian attitudes ,to the body. The contrast with the first generations of the " Jesus-movement " could ha,rdly be more stark. John the the Baptist is one of the "disaffected males" of first-century Palestine, and Jesus is celibate because this was "normal for a prophet" (40, 41). But there is a gulf between them :and their interpretation in the Gospels, :whioh were written in a " very different, more tense world." Here the ,appmach of Bultmann's heirs and of the more recent work of E. P. Sanders are joined. The book minimizes the currents in contemporary Judaism, 'as reflected in the Qumran documents and some later :rabbinic texts, which point to 1a high valuation of continence and virginity.[5]

[5] See E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (London, 1985) and Geza Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*. Phladelphia: Fortress, 1981. They offer a corrective to the

The Body and Society regards Paul as having introduced, in 1 Cor., !a "fatal legacy to future ages" *(55)*. Chapter *'J* of that letter, written :as a "rearguard action" a:gainst overenibhusiastic 1ascetics, ought not to have become a charter for Christian celibacy 1and marriage; Brown contr:asts it with the deutero-Pauline material where the "domesticahility of sex" *(55)* taken forr granted.

In the hook's first fifty pages, then, Brown has established the pattern of interpretation which will shape his account of early Christian asceticism: The married were in the majority of Jesus' early followers and PauYs correspondents, hut a series of crucial decisions ·and movements led to the increasing emphasis on sexual renunciation as the route to holiness. For Brown, this consensus was a mistaken direction for Christianity.

None of these objections should obscure the achievement which is Brown's. The book is a kind of monument to patient scholarship, and its notes and bibliography are a treasure for those interested in the phenomenon it describes. But Brown is less interested in the ideas of Christians about themselves in relation ito their savior and moire concerned to tease out their views of their bodies in relation to a pagan society, which admittedly depended upon marriage and reproduction simply for the good of survival. This has caused him to miss the central, most important fact about early Christians' views of their hodies: now i:Jhat Christ had entered history, the image of God was being restored a.nd :becoming visible within mankind. One of the primary loci for this visibility was within the body transformed through ·a variety of enlivening ways within :the Christian body as .a whole. These .ways included the Eucharist, haptism, and worship and also membership in the church.

If any interpretation loses sight of this idea held hy early

anti-Jewish bias of much German NT scholarship but share with it a disregard for any claims of the NT for historicity: the texts were the work of later generations and produced for their needs.

Christians, its explanation of Christian asceticism, ,whether theological or historical, will ,suffer proportionately. That is why this hook's interpretation ifalters at the heginning and continues to fail its narrative unfolds. To interpret the earliest appearances of Christian asceticism *primarily* through the social caitegories of pagan antiquity, even in the service of emphasizing the ascetics' " strangeness," is to obscure, not to clrurify. Furthennore, the ,book has 'an odd habit of neglecting to avgue for its interpretations. Often it is satisfied to evoke mJJd rto allude, leaving an impression which, because of the stature of the author, may well seem authoritative to the unwary.

Such is the case with the book's treatment of the Encratites. This group, ·alleged hy early Christian authors (such as the highly partial Eusebius) to have ·required all its members to renounce wine, meat and sex, left no document ,which can firmly he assigned to it. the historian, they remain a tantalizing hut mysterious outfit. Yet Bmwn makes Enoratites responsible for introducing the " rejection of the womb " and childbirth into "all future Christian presentations of se:imality" (99). Indeed, hy ·associating Tatian, the *Acts of Judas Thomas,* mLd the Encratites, and linking them with the Marcionites, B11own finds the progenitors of hoth "radical Syrian Christianity" .and the organized asceticism wthich ·appeared in the late third century. But there is no cfi,rrn justification, historically, for linking these groups. In mntrast, Clement (who certainly did join other autho:rs in opposition to the Encratites) is responsible merely for being the cause of the restriction of the marital ,act's justification to procreation (133), a view Bro·wn regards •as "stark."

When Bvown reruches Origen, the ·stage is set already for the presumed domination of the church hy celibate clerics. The activ;e role occupied in the third century hy the widows, as outlined in the *Didasoalia Apostolorrum,* shows how little the clergy " valued the active participation of the lay person of either sex" (148); likewise, the thwd- and fourth-century bish-

ops were " not interested in rethinking the issue of the sanctification of the married." (139) In the first case, widows were not clergy, and in the second, some 1of those bishops did not need to emphasize the sanctification o:f the married hecause they assumed it. One such bishop, Gregory Nazianzen, could .be an admirer of Origen and of monastic life ;and at the same 1time write encomia prais1ing his married relatives for their virtue.

Origen, the eunuch by choice, foreshadows the future for Bmwn. Already attuned to the " immensity of the desert," Origen's iack of interest in the body (and his singleminded attention to the rise of <the individual *nous* from its envelope of flesh m1rd *psyohe)* makes plain the drift of late-third century Christianity into a church in which the " hrigher way " belongs to the celibate and the lower to the continent married. Furthermore, even the higher way was a lonely one; Brown writes that for Or1gen,. " i:Jhe Kisses of the Bridegroom would come only in the empty study-room" (174) and then primarily to the " intact," the virginal. Such a judgment gives far too little weight to the *Exhortation to Martyrdom* or fo those portions of the *On Prayer* in which Origen shows that he, like other thir:d-and fourth-century writers, monks included, regarded self-sacrifice in the arena of martyrdom, not intact virginity, to be the supreme imitation of Christ. And the primary locus for training in this imitation came in the whole Christian community, a,lbeit one schooled hy the Spirit-inspired teacher like himself.

This objection is a general one. *'The Body and Society* leaves a mistaken impression not only because it ignores the imitation of Christ, as explained above, ,but because it does not !have sufficient familiarity with the foll opera of the patristic authors upon whom it depends for ev.idence. Three examples will suffice. The first is G:vegory Nazianzen, who left considera.ble evidence that the virtuous married Christians of Cappadocia continued to enjoy a wide respect as pillars of the

church. The second is John Chrysostom, whose homilies reveal his attempts to cultivate virtue 'among tJhe fl'lactious Chris--rtians oif Antioch. The third is Ambrose, another ,author rwho wrote to various kinds of audiences in order to promote virtue 1aimong them. E·ach example [s meant merely to remind the reader that patristic authors, like others, fit their :topic to their audience: to ascetics, they emphasized virginity, but to their congregations or married correspondents, many authors-including consecrated, celibate ones-offered ,advice which appreciated, rather than rebuked, their married state.

Gregory Nazianzen wrote several orations which show that he thought the married woman to he an important figure in Christian life. The *Epitaphios* on Gorgonia, ·another on his father, and sections of his poems show, not, as Brown thinks, that the great Christian families of Cappadocia were voluntarily " dissolving " into monasteries, but that chaste marriage continued to fluorish in the last deca;des of the century. Furthermore, Gregory thought these families could he displayed to Christian audiences, including clerical and lay people, as models for virtue. During her life of quiet service in her household, Gorgonia, according to Gregory, reversed the custom since Eve and overturned her husband's domination; her soul was progressively likened to Christ its archetype. Nonna, his mother, he praised for her leadership of her priest-husband and her influence in the church. Both women had brought about their husbands' conversion.

John Chrysostom is characterized in *Body and Society* as ,attempting to make the houses of his city-congregation into miniature monasteries. This former solitary, presbyter in Antioch from *386,* earlier had written defenses of the monastic life and demanded the ,reform of the church in Antioch. Yet he did not think the unvirgina.l 1bodies of the Christians ,there were unruble to receive Christ. In his *Homilies on Romans,* he urged a male and female congregation of various ages to llnitate the apostle Paul by making themselves Christ's instruments, through which he might speak:

> He desires it more than we, and therefore he prepared this tool (to *organon),* and wishes to have it always to hand ... if Christ sees it tuned, he will sound forth through it . . . And should Christ sound forth, and the Spirit alight, we shall better than the heavens. not having the sun and the moon fixed in the body, but the Lord of the sun and moon and angels dwelling and walking around in us. (Hom. 7; *PafJrologia Graeca* 53.464b)

All of this was possible if the Christians true charity. Chryostom did not limit this advice to monks. One could give numerous examples of his exhortations to maxried Christians.

Ambrose of Milan is another early Christian bishop who supposedly promoted the double standaJ11d. Although ihe did not quite attain the "inflexible Catholicism of the filth and sixth centuries" (p. this "tensile" and "taut" proponent of virginity is, in Broiwn's reckoning, ;responsible for linking notions of the sacred with the Catholic church and with virginity while associating the" profane" with heresy and the flesh. Yet in the *Homilies on thB Hexaemeron,* a moral and allegorical interpretation delivered on the first chapters of Genesis to his Milanese congregation, Ambrose did not deliver one moral code to celibates and another to the ma,rried. His letters and ascetical treatises reveal an Ambrose who prefers celibacy, but other works show that Ambrose also promoted Christian marriage.

A final, and rather recondite, topic must he aiddressed. *Body and Society* contains a brief (pp. portrait of Syriac-speaking Christianity, whose most famous patristic author is Ephrem of Nisibis. With Aphrahat, he represents the urban Christianity of Mesopotamia in which the celibate "Sons and Daughters of the Covenant " ,worked within the church and provided the living models of Christ's brides. These two authors' works allow the scholar to discern some of the native traditions of Syrian asceticism in tJhe fourth century, within a church fully :aware of the larger Christian body.

Yet despite this base of primary terts, the book continues to present 1a portrait of Syriac Christianity and its asceticism

as if it were derived from Encratism of the second century, with strong Ma.rcionite and Manichean influences. Such was the interpretation of Arthur Voobus. But the works of Guillaumont and Gcibomont, among others, have norw erased this image of an isolated Syrian church whose origins, as Walter Bauer thought, were thoroughly heterodox. Brown persists in thinking of Syrian holy men as the wandering extremists of fourth-century fantasy or as :Messalians tramping across the arid countryside. [6]

The same view, that Syriac Ohristianity existed in romantic, Semitic isolation until the end of the fourth century, also mars the introduction to ·an otherwise valuable collection of translated texts, *The Holy Women of the Syrian Orient.* This presents a collection of eight ha,giographies translated fvom Syriac and dating from the fourth to the seventh :century. Some of these texts have a claim to historical veracity, hut all give some dues of popular ideas of femaile holiness. The women's imitation of Christ's death makes these texts parallel those of the Greek and Latin martyr a.cts, although set in the less-familiar lands of Zoroastrian Mesopotamia or Jewish-ruled Najran in Arabia. Unfortunately, the introduction obscures this parallel by holding to the Encratite origins of a totally celibate Syrian church, aloof :from Mediterranean Ohristianity for ·almost five centuries. Its translated texts will stand, however, as a useful collection for historians who lack facility with the original languages.

Ascietic:Piety .and Women's Faith is a collection interesting for its highly original research upon the evidence of women's participation in fourth-century Christianity. Its introduction reprints an address on "The State and Future of Historical Theology. Patristic Studies," which records and advocates the eclipse of theology and the ascendancy of histo:rical method in the field. Written from 1977 to 1985, the essays examine

[6] See Walter Bauer, *01·tlwdo!C1J and Heresy in Earliest Christianity.* Philadelphia: Fortress, 1968.

"Women in Late Ancient Christianity," "Asceticism and Sexuality," and "Asceticism and Exegesis." Before Clark's research, contained in this ,::md other volumes, little work had been done on such Roman women as the two Melanias, who not only adopted asceticism but also abandoned their traditional family obligations. Among the .best of Clark's essays are the ones which explore the friendship experienced between Jerome and the Roman women who supported him or hetween Chrysostom and the Constantinopolitan widow Olympias. Although not stating any particular feminist theory of interpretation or investigation, these essays are written from the perspective of women's studies, thoroughly informed as to the theological ideas of their subjects. These essays, and those in such a volume as *Jerome, Chrysostom Friends,* ha.ve become standard interpretations already.

So well-accepted are they in the :field of early Christian studies that they appear in the highly derivative and very often wrongiheaded *Adam, Eve the Serpent,* a popular volume already reviewed in this journal. Pagels's views or asceticism contribute to argument that a five-century-long tradition of Christian theological anthropology which emphasized "liberty" was corrupted by Augustine (who found in Genesis 1-3, unlike all previous interpreters, "a story of human bondage" [p 95]). Like *The and Society,* this is a volume which has afoeady become widely read by the interested public. Pagels discusses neither the role of Christology nor the role of soteriology in the of the ascetic. She regards the varying New Testament of Christ's opinions (and Paul's) to be the foundation of Christian "double standard," which holds marria:ge to be inferior to virginity. Her conclusions about the value of asceticism will have, by now, a familiar ring:

> [Women who renounced marriage] claimed the opportunity to travel to devote themselves to intellectual and spiritual pursuits, to found institutions, and to direct them.
> Yet the men who wrote most of the literature in praise of virginity undoubtedly also found, in chastity and renunciation, the rewards

of liberty they sought-freedom from the oppre,ssive weight of imperial rule, of custom, tradition, " destiny," or fate, and from the internal tyranny of the passions. (96)

This ,assessment is so pale and so ignores the stated motives of the ascetics themselves, that the reader is hafiled:; there is simply no resemblance between the primary texts and their representation in *Adam, Eve.*

With the exception of .the Pagels ,book, aH the studies discussed here have radded valuable information to contemporary understandings of the phenomenon---,admittedly an alien one from a contemporary <Yr an ancient perspective--of early Christian ,ascetic renunciation . .Although some of its conclusions are wrong, Brown's study is empa:thetic and even lavish in style and documentation; it invites the reader to follow avenues of investigation back through the primary and secondary texts with 1which *The Body and So<dety* was constructed. Brock and Harvey's, more modest in intent and scope, allows the holy women to spea:k for themselves, and this demonstrates their kinship with female ascetics and martyrs of Gaul or Carthage. C1ark's has advanced patristic scholarship hy ca:reiful resea11ch and attention to hitherto-overlooked subject-matter.7

All of these volumes view Christian asceticism as primari,ly ,a social institution. .Certainly, they should not be required to trace a chrono1ogiicalor theological connection to later developments, nor do they offer the New Testament as background. The New Testwment approach has too often been apologetic or ahistorical, distorting the texts under study and lending false confidence to reader and author alike. Brown's iconclurding challenge, ihowever, should not he the only response to his hook. In time, another survey of early Christian ascetics may appear, with a full and £air understanding of their religious ideas ,and of their milieux. Until then, *The Body and Society* may he read for pleasure and ga.in, cireumspectly.

7 See her critique of the late French scholar who inspired much of the scholarly examination of the antique body; in "Foucault, the Fathers and Sex," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 56/4:619-641.

A CRITICAL NOTE ON THOMAS MORRIS'S *THE LOGIC OF GOD INCARNATE* [1]

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PROFOUND philosophical puzzle lies at the center of traditional Christian docbrine: hmv a person (the second person of the Trinity) who is omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, etc., can have *become* human, given that humans are limited in knowledge, beset with '\Veaknesses, and in some sense spatially circumscribed. Unless this belief in the Incarnation is to he dismissed as pious sentimentality, a philosophical case must be made for at least the possible rationality of the idea.

A mol'e than valiant attempt at such a case has been made by Thomas Morris. Indeed, although it claims only to be arguing that the idea of God Incarnate is not impossible-and even acknowledges some agreement with Peter Geach's claim that natural reason cannot even establish the non-contradictoriness of the Incarnation-The *Logic of God Incarnate,* by means of the clarity of its arguments and the calm assurance with which its author successfully confronts the preponderance of modern philosophical argumentation against the Incarnation, manages to put the traditional doctrine in a quite plausible ,light.

A large part of the power of Morris's arguments lies in a number of almost common-sensical distinctions which he draws ea:rly on. His wielding of these distinctions is deft and sure.

[1] Ithaca and London: Cornell University Pr11,ss, 1986. Pp. 220. $19.95 (hardcover) .

He does not *crack* nuts, he slips his keen knife into their seams, and they fall open.

Take for instance a problem proposed by A. D. Smith:

> If Christ is God, then he cannot have begun to exist at a certain point in human history because God (and his Son) are necessarily eternal. But then nothing can count as a man, a creature, which does not have a beginning in time and which is thus coeval with God.[2]

Smith concludes, of course, that the Son could not !have become man. Underlying his argument, however, as Morris points out, is the unwarranted assumption that beginning to exist in human history is an *essential* characteristic of humans -is part of what it means rto "count as a man."

Indeed, considered on its own, i.e., independent of theofogical considerations, to say tha.t human beings ·as a matter of essence have 1beginnings is almost a truism. But theologians are hy no means forced to accede to Smith's conclusions since it is possible to draw ·a distinction between essential human properties :and *common* ones. At the present moment it is correct to say that an human beings have spent at least a portion of their lives on planet Earth. This is a property *common* to all humans. A hundred years from now, however, it may very well he the case that some humans, having spent :their entire lives on the moon or in some spaice station, will never have set foot on Earth. " Earth-dwelling," therefore, while a common pmperty of present day humans, cannot be an essential property. By simply identifying the property "having hegun to exist at a cerfain point in history " as similarly common but not essential, Morris permits orthodox Christian theologians to assert that t:he Son of God (who has existed for all time) became fully (i.e., essentially) a man.

Drawing another (though connected) distinction, he asserts that Jesus Christ, aJ.though *fully* human, was not *merely* human. That is, although he possessed aill the properties which

2A. D. Smith, "God's Death," *Theology,* 80 (July, 1979)): 265; quoted in Morris, p. 62.

are essential to being human, he was not limited to these but possessed in addition properties essential to a category of persons *aboV'e* the human: Godly properties. A mere human possesses "limitation properties " such as that adduced by Smith. We are merely human because we have haid a beginning in history. But no orthodox Christian theologian has ever rurgued that Jesus Christ was merely a man; indeed, that would .be to hold the heresy known as PsilantJhropism.

The former distinction has some very interesting ramifications. It allows Morris, in the first instance, to Tesolve a difficulty, suggested by C. B. Martin, [3] concerning the possibility oif Jesus Christ's having sinned. Again, the difficulty hinges on the supposition that possibility of sinning *is* essential to being human. If heing fully human involves essentially the .possibility of sinning, then Jesus Christ was either not fully human or not God. This hypothetical is troublesome for theologians, however, only on the assumption that possibility of sinning is an essential property of humans. Denying this, it remains quite 1reasonableto hold that Jesus Christ was fully human.

But is this not to suggest that Jesus was not capable of being *tempted?* E.ven if we grant that a person incapable of sin could he fully human, " How could Jesus the Christ, Son of God, be tempted by sin if he was, even in his earthly career, necessarily good, *non posse peccare?"* (p. 146). This is a serious difficulty for Christians, given the ·gospel accounts of Christ's temptation (Mt 4: 1-11; Mk 1: 12-13; Lk 4: 1-13) . And this is where Morris gets especially interesting.

He points, first of all, to the inadequacy of the stock and facile response that Jesus *qua* God was necessarily incapable of sinning but *qua* human was *CCYntingently* incapable. It is true, he argues, that " nothing about human nature carries with it the enta;ilment of necessary goodness." But this does not make Jesus's virtue *qua* human 1a contingent matter. It

a C. B. Martin, *Religious BeUef* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1959), p. 40. See Morris, pp. 137-62.

is not *qua* man that he is necessarily good-he is that by virtue of heing God.

But of course it does not follow from this that *qua* man he is only contingently good. The consistent orthodox position here should be: just that nothing follows from his human nature alone concerning the modal status of Christ's goodness (p. 147).

The truth of this remark teaches us, I <believe,that theologians must be extremely wary of relying too heavily on the Chalcedonian formula, " one person, two natures," to explain away difficulties. The two natures, unmingled though they be, are united in the person of Christ. There are certain properties whioh cannot, so to speak, he " kept off" the person, even though they are spo£:;en of primarily in regard to one or the other nature. Modal properties are prime examples. We cannot say that a *nature* is necessarily (or contingently) one of those properties that *rnake up* that nature. **It** is the person who *ha8* the nature, who has it in some mode.

Similarly, to bounce hack and forth between the two natures, saying, for instance, that Jesus in his divine nature predicted his death and resurrection but in his human nature said that " no one knows [the hour of the rupocalypse],not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father" (Mk 13:32), is to risk .bifurcating the person of Jesus. **If** we say that Jesus was ignorant of such-and-such even while holding that Jesus was the Son of God, there must be some sense in which we can say that the Son of God was ignorant, even as we maintain that he was omniscient. The *cornrniinicatio idionwtum* demands as much. This is, quite obviously, a tall order. I shall, however, make some suggestions below as to how it might be filled.

To defer this latter considera;tion, however, how *are* the aspects of Christ's person distinguished in terms of goodness if not in terms of contingency and ne'Cessity? Here we have Morris's second interesting claim, one which allows for Christ's being genuinely tempted: Christ was *epistemically* •capable of sinning even while in a broadly logica.l sense being incap-

able of sinning. Just as any human person can .be tempted to go and lie to an acquaintance who, unbeknownst to him, has died recently (thus, strictly ·speaking, making it impossible to lie to him) , so Christ could in the fullest sense he tempted to sin if and only if he did not know that he was incapable of sinning. The interesting quality of this claim is this: it follows from it that, if Jesus was tempted, he either did not know in a fully explicit sense that he was God or he did not know (in a full sense) that God w:as incapable of sin. The latter alternative appears unlikely, which leaves us with the proposition that Jesus did not !have fully explicit knowledge of his deity. True, this all hinges on the claim that the" epistemological/hroadly logical" distinction is a valid one; but, even iif it is not, any explanation of how Jesus might have .been tempted would seem to require some degree of ignorance on his part. It is simply incompatible with the notion of being tempted to know in ·an explicit manner that one is incapable of performing that act which is the object of the supposed temptation.

This brings us to the matter which was deferred ahove and also, urufortunately, to the hook's chief inadequacy. Morris expresses tentative support for a "two minds " themy as a way of vesolving the theological difficulty raised by the idea that Jesus, the Son of God, was in some sense ignorant.

We can say that Jesus was ignorant of certain true propositions (e.g., that he was incapable of sinning) even while being omniscient if we ·conceive of one mind attaching to his human nature and another to his divine nature. It was only the human mind that was ignorant. But this also, unfortunately, leaves us with *two minds* in Christ. True, we can *say* that the mind does not equal the person-and that, if an hypostasis (a metaphysical person) can support two natures, it can support two minds; but a.gain this seems to come perilously close to a bifurcation of the person of Christ.

Morris goes some distance in solving this problem .by showing that the two minds of Christ need not be ·working at cross

purposes. One (the divine) might contain and have access to the other without the latter having similar powers. He uses the analogy of an artificial intelligence (oomputer) system. Imagine, suggests Morris, a master system (M) that has absolute access to, and much more information than, another system (SI) which has the capability of receiving data from an environment, formulating thoughts on its own, etc. It is easy to imagine, he says, " Sl engaging in heha.vior it would not engage in if it had all the information of M, so that in ascribing mindedness to 1both Sl and M we would he justified in thinking of two minds" (p. 158) . At the same time, we also perceive a certain unity of the two systems, not entirely different pevhaps from that we conceive of as existing between the divine and human natures of Christ.

This, however, as Morris acknowledges, is not a fully adequate analogy. AccO"vding to traditional theology, God has access to *all* minds. In other words, M would have access to not only SI hut and S3 and 84, etc. In what sense, then, is the relationship between the deity and Jesus (if, indeed, it is right to call it "a relationship ") special? Morris attempts to meet this objection also, hut his answer comes rather too close to the heresy known as monothelitism.

The relationship ·between M and Sl or etc., Morris acknowledges, is very similar to the one that is held to exist when one person has telepathic access to another's mind. In telepathy between two persons, however, tw;o *powers* are definitely involved: "If anyone has anything like telepathic access to the •contents of my mind, he thereby has, as a result of an exercise of his *own* cognitive and/or causal powers, access to something the existence of which consists in, or results from, an exereise of *my* powers" (p. 161). In the case of Jesus, God Incarnate, the relationship is different. Access of the divine to the human mind is complete as in telepathy hut Jesus "was not a being endowed with a set of personal cognitive and causal powers distinct from the cognitive .and causal powers of God the Son" (p. 161).

Morris is well aware of the existence of the heresy monothelitism but he mistakenly believes that he has avoided it by referring not to one will (one *thelema)* .but one *power.* He seems unaware that monothelitism was originally known as monenergism--or "one-power-ism." The original monothelite formula, worked out in the 7th century by various monophysite leaders and Emperor Hemclius, spoke of *mia energeia.* It was only with the infamous letters of Pope Honorius that the form "one will" was taken up, replacing " one energy."

A better w:ay of solving the problem presented hy the idea of there being two minds in Christ would be to examine the concept of knowledge itself. The idea that Christ has two minds sounds as intuitively implausible as does the idea that he has two wills-until we rea1ize (in both cases) that the members of each pair are not to be conceived of as identical in nature. Just as the divine will (God's will) is not the same sort of will as the one we use when we make a conscious effort to take our physical body to the other side of the .room (since God does not have to deal with such limitations), so the divine mind does not *think* about things in the way a human mind does. That is, if every hit of knowledge that a. person might gain is knowledge aJcquired from a particular historical/physical viewpoint (however infallible), divine knowledge has no such .limitations for God is everywhere.

A typical way of reporting knowledge is to say " I know that *x''* (where *x* can be replaced by any proposition). Such sentences, 1as Dona.Id Davidson rema,rks, "wear their logical form on their sleeves": [4] they consist of an expression denoting the spe•aker, a predicate, and the *demonstrative* " that." It is almost as if the person uttering the sentence were *pointing* at the proposition known-and such pointing presupposes a standpoint other than that " occupied " by the thing pointed to. With God there can be no such separation of knower and thing known.

[4] Donald Davidson, "On Saying That," reprinted in *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), p. 106.

Conceiving of Christ's divine knowledge in this (apophatic) fashion makes it easier to conceive how Ohrist might know something in his divine nature (as, for example, who are "all the members of his mystica1 body ")[5] even while not knowing *that* St. Ignatius Loyola, for exaiillple, would become an exalted member of that body. God does not know *that* anything-or, at least, use of sentences such as "God knows that *x"* (or even " God knows who are *x* ") cannot he understood literally hut only figuratively, analogously. "Knowledge *that"* belongs to 1humannature.

Even this clarification of ty:pes of knowledge within Christ does not, hoiwever, solve the problem raised above of Christ's temptations, although it does provide a backg:mund for its solution. For the Church teaehes that Christ ,was possessed of the beatific vision from the moment of oonception,[6] which would seem to imply not only knowledge that he was God (or the Son of God) but also that this knowledge was human, not only divine.

But if this knowledge was human, we need not conceive of it as propositional knowledge, such as might be reported by means of a sentence of the form " I know that *x."* Indeed, if the process of becoming more blessed (approaching the beatific vision) is, as the Eastern Christian tmditions especially tell us, a process of divinization, any knowledge that is part of the beatific vision would have to approach the non-propositional, or so it would seem. As a matter of fact, this is precisely how a number of modern commentators conceive of Christ's know1edge that he was God.[1] Indeed, one of these commentators, Jean Galot, suggests that there is a logical difficulty with the very idea of Christ having a direct vision

[5] H. Denzinger and A. Schonmetzer, *Enchiridion Symbolorum: Definitionum et Declarationum de Rebits Fidei et Marum* (Rome: Herder, 1976), no. 3812.

[6] Denzinger, Schonmetzer, no. 3812.

[1] See, for example, Karl Rahner, "Dogmatic Reflections on the Knowledge and Self-Consciousness of Christ," in *1'heological Investigations,* Vol. 5, (Baltimore: Helicon Press) pp. 193-215; Jean Galot *Who l8 Ghrist?* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1981), pp. 339-43, 353-59.

of his own divinity, since this would he to look (in some sense) directly at the subject who is doing the looking.[8]

An approach that in some fashion takes into account non-propositional knowledge, the present ;believes, would be a .fruitful one for !Tofessor Morris-or any philosopher of religion-to pursue. It could quite easily, for instance, lead one into an application of Wittgenstein's rejection of type theory to the problems inherent in an account of mystical knowledge. This is surely philosophically (and theologically) interesting territory. The importance of MoITis's book is that it does open up these new vistas, and particularly for philosophers who are likely to explore them in a rigorous manner. And no one on the contemporary philosophical scene seems more likely to add clarity and calmness to this rigor than the author of this hook.

s Galot, pp. 353-4.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Abuse of Casuistry: A History of Moral Reasoning. By ALBERT R. JONSEN & STEPHEN TOULMIN. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988. Pp. ix + 420.

This volume results from the collaborative efforts of a social philosopher and an ethician. The two authors undertook the book's composition while taking part in the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research. Set up by the United States Congress in 1974, this federal commission worked for some three years. Thus, it was in the course of political discussions, which concerned governmental control of scientific experimentation involving human persons, that the authors generated new perspectives on and, to be sure, a new definition of casuistry. Furthermore, in *Abuse of Casuistry,* Albert R. Jonsen and Stephen Toulmin purport to establish an historical perspective for concerns which figure prominently in the cacophony of contemporary moral discourse. Towards this end, they set forth an innovative interpretation of the history of moral reasoning. Regretfully, this task constrains them. Throughout the book, the authors deal selectively with any data which do not conform to their fundamental intuition concerning the ultimate particularity of moral decisions.

In short, the authors advance the argument that " casuistry " (as they understand and define it) provides a basic paradigm for all practical moral decisions, so that the validity of moral " rules " meets with a priori suspicion. Undoubtedly the problem-solving situation which gave rise to the collaborative research abets such a *point de depart.* We are not surprised, then, to discover a sub-heading like "the tyranny of principles " (p. 5) early along in the book's prologue. The authors explain their focus: "[I]t is just those situations that are *not* covered by appeal to any single simple rule that begin to be problematic; and in just those cases our concern to act rightly gives rise to genuinely moral "questions" and "issues" (p. 7). Furthermore, they insist: " Even a simple rule may leave us in genuine doubt in situations to which it applies only *marginally or ambiguously."* This exclusive emphasis on what moralists once called the " situation " launches an ambitious project to re-capitulate the history of moral reasoning from perspectives broadly characteristic of casuistry.

The basic plan of the book incorporates six major parts. In a

cursory way, the first three parts consider large fields of research: first, classical philosophy, which, argue the authors, forms the "roots of casuistry in antiquity," next, the early and medieval Christian "precursors" of casuistry, and, finally, the renaissance phenomenon, which scholars usually identify as the period of casuistry. All in all, we move from the peripatetic Greeks of the 5th and 4th centuries B.C. to the European casuists of the 16th and 17th centuries A.D. Part one locates the remote origins of casuistry in classical Greek philosophy and its concern for the difference between theory and practice in moral matters. In part two, the authors consider representative figures from Athens, Rome, and Jerusalem in order to illustrate clearly that the resolution of moral perplexities has always formed part of any serious moralist's work. We also encounter the medieval canonists, confessors, and theologians.

Unfortunately, the authors sometimes press a theologian into unwilling service for their working hypothesis. To cite one example, as expected, they focus their study of Aquinas onto his consideration of moral circumstances in *Summa theologiae*, Ia-Hae, qq. 7 and 18. It is true, their general theory holds: serious moralists do take into account those "special circumstances that mark the individual's lot" (George Eliot, "The Mill on the Floss"). However, the authors also overstate their conclusions. For instance, they implicate Aquinas as follows:

> In sum, 'the human act ought to vary according to diverse circumstances: this is the entire matter of morality.' That last text from Thomas Aquinas could almost serve as the motto for the whole enterprise of casuistry (p. 135).

Of course, such an evaluation does not take even partial account of Aquinas's moral theory. What is more to the point, the quotation does not exist in any of the three different places named by the authors, viz., *Summa theologiae,* Ia-Hae, q. 18, aa. 10, 11; *De malo,* q. 2, a. 4, ad 13; *IV Sentences,* d. 33, q. 1, a. l. Such careless scholarship surely gives the attentive reader moment for pause. In any event, Jonsen and Toulmin continue their historical survey with a description of what they term casuistry's "century of maturity: 1556-1656" (p. 142). Part three, then, briefly examines representative texts, authors, and the methods employed by casuist authors during the height of casuistry. At this point, however, the authors interrupt the historical narrative so that they can take a different approach to the material.

In part four, the authors turn their attention to three specific problems considered by the casuists of the high period. Usury, equivocation, and duelling are the cases chosen for examination. Although moralists continue to debate the first two subjects, the third remains somewhat more culturally determined: "Might one morally kill an-

other who insults one by beating or slapping him? " The three " samples " of casuistry serve well the general thesis which the authors have propounded from the beginning of the book. Each case enforces the conviction that, in certain cases, at least, methods of moral reasoning as well as conclusions in moral science reflect their historical circumstances. Therefore, the authors approvingly cite the contemporary author Bernard Williams:

> The trouble with casuistry, if it is seen as the basic process of ethical thought, is not so much its misuse as the obvious fact that the repertory of substantive ethical concepts differs between cultures, changes over time and is open to criticism *(Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy,* p. 96) (p. 177).

This perspective also shapes the authors' treatment of these classical moral controversies. Moreover, one has the suspicion that Williams supplies the authors with the hermeneutic which controls their entire re-interpretation of casuistry.

Part five briefly returns the reader to the chronology of casuistry. There the authors provide an essay on the celebrated critique found in Pascal. To be sure, the authors take a dim of view of *The Provincial Letters.* Rather, the Jesuit, Louis Bourdaloue (+1704), wins the day. Why? Because his critique, as the authors recount it, discredits Pascal's rebuttal-" It was not theology, it was not ethics, it was not satire; it was simply slander" (p. 248). Thus, the authors themselves take strong exception to the view that Pascal dealt casuistry its death blow. Rather, they insist again on their central thesis, namely, "the plausibility of ' case analysis ' as an approach to the resolution of moral problems" (p. 249). A summary essay on the achievement of casuistry completes part five. In short, we find there a retrospect on their historical findings and their conclusion: " the medieval tradition of casuistry gave priority to *concrete issues of practice* rather than to *abstract matters of theory;* and that alternative remains open to us today " (p. 265) • They also advance the argument that today the possibility of comprehensive moral discussions, such as those during the National Commission (which served as the seedbed for this collection of essays), results from the shared practice of casuistry in both the Anglican and Roman Catholic traditions.

Part six collects four essays under the general heading, " The Future of Casuistry." First of all, a popularized survey of developments within the various Christian confessions from the 18th through the 20th century recounts casuistry's decline. "In general," the authors conclude, "most twentieth-century Roman Catholic casuistry has been a textbook exercise, purveyed in mechanical form to seminarians " (p. 271). Thus, they apparently judge the universal practice of the pre-conciliar

church in matters of moral theology a deformation instead of a development of classical casuistry. On the other hand, the authors do recognize that " a slight renewal of interest in casuistry was stimulated as a result of the brief vogue of 'situation ethics' " (p. 272). This substantiates the view that, for them, casuistry means situationalism. Still, the hook evidences a certain ambivalence when it comes to asking whether situation ethics amounts to a legitimate form of casuistry. On the one hand, the authors acknowledge that " many differences can he found between situation ethics and classical casuistry" (p. 272). At the same time, in a section called the " revival of casuistry," they call Joseph Fletcher's 1954 book, *Morals and Medicine* "pioneering" (p. 304).

Although an intervening section on " Philosophy and the Springs of Morality " appears somewhat extraneous to the discussion, it does prepare for the book's final section. Under the heading, "The Revival of Casuistry," the final section sets forth the authors' developed theory on moral reasoning. Practical moral reasoning, they conclude, " still fits better the patterns of topical (or 'rhetorical') argumentation ter than it does those of formal (or ' geometrical ') demonstration " (cf. p. 326). Thus, we are invited to share both the conviction that casuistry is unavoidable and the recognition that one can apply paradigmatic examples of good and evil, right and wrong which even a small child "knows at a glance" (p. 330) to specific cases and concrete problems. Admittedly, they call the first claim weak, hut the second remains their "stronger "conclusion. Why? Because paradigms and cases are the *"elements* that constitute a given 'moral' issue, just as, within the traditions of the common law, the corresponding elements constitute a 'legal' issue" (p. 330). An epilogue seeks to show that this ecumenical formula finds support within the general Judaeo-Christian tradition. A catalogue of casuists, end notes, name and subject indices complete the volume. Although we can felicitate the authors for their ambitious undertaking, we must also remark that their project remains flawed in two principal ways. First, it turns an idiosyncratic model of moral reasoning into a Procrustean bed. But the whole history of moral theology and philosophy cannot comfortably fit therein. Secondly, rather than benefiting from the collaboration of two authors, the volume suffers from it.

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Practicing Christianity: Critical Perspectives for an Embodied Spirituality, hy MARGARET R. MILES. New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1988. Pp. 207. $19.95.

Scholarly surveys of devotional literature and practices are in relatively short supply in the academy, where interest continues to focus on much more complex and finely nuanced theological issues. Margaret Miles, Bussey Professor of Historical Theology at Harvard Divinity School, is therefore to he commended for taking popular devotional traditions with great seriousness and producing a very scholarly and readable analysis of major themes and practices in the history of Christian devotion. The first section of her hook, a work filled with fascinating insights, discusses three principal metaphors and motifs in the history of devotional writing: the imitation of Christ, pilgrimage, and ascent. Part II covers common devotional practices: asceticism, worship and sacraments, service and prayer. Part III, entitled "Embodiment of Christian Life," deals with the way in which Christian, tradition has treated personal relationships, happiness, suffering and death.

Describing herself as having been raised in a fundamentalist Baptist parsonage, Dr. Miles has herself been on a long "pilgrimage." She writes from the standpoint of contemporary revisionist theologians, informing her readers that hers is "an active and disobedient reading." Her stated purpose is to identify and scrutinize what is " unintended, accidental, or so thoroughly assumed that it appears ' natural ' within the text's argument" (p. x). This she does hy means of an acute intelligence--so acute that we might better substitute the word " clinical " for " critical " in the subtitle. Her approach is cool, methodical, and entirely predictable in its conclusions. Asking the question " What in our devotional traditions is retrievable for a nuclear world? " the answer she comes up with is: "not much." In fact, most of the accumulated wisdom about spiritual practice throughout the history of Christianity she labels downright dangerous, given her assessment of the conditions of the global village in the late twentieth century.

Drawing on some of the most familiar sources in the history of spirituality-Gregory of Nyssa, Thomas a Kempis, Frances de Sales, John Bunyan, and others-Miles tackles each new topic by describing the motif or practice accurately and dispassionately. She assumes, probably correctly, that what she is describing will sound at least alien if not bizarre to many modern ears. Next, she applies what she terms a " hermeneutic of generosity " to the material, attempting to contex-

tualize it sufficiently so that the reader will come to see the otherwise odd practice as an understandable, perhaps even appropriate response to a given set of (usually deplorable) historical conditions. Thus, instead of being allowed simply to dismiss an ancient attitude out of hand, the reader is invited to a less parochial, more historically-informed, i.e. " generous " assessment. We are illumined and enlarged by this exercise. But her next step reveals the fist of mail concealed within the velvet glove. She now reminds the reader that *we* live in a very different time. Ours is a " nuclear " age, and the threats we face are unprecedented. The fate of the world as we know it now lies in human hands, and it follows that if one set of circumstances justified a particular response in previous times, the new and unimaginably dan· gerous circumstances we live in today calls for a different devotional response. As the times change, so must our practice of Christianity, which appears here as primarily a human response to historical conditions rather than as a divinely reliable cure for what ails us. Context is all.

Until very recently in the history of the church, theologians have based their critiques of Christian practice on the extent to which this practice has conformed to biblical and traditional norms. Included in this standard has been a perspective on human nature that understands it to he fallen, on a universal scale, and therefore quite predictable in its propensity to sin *whatever* the historical circumstances in which it finds itself. The human propensity to sin and the divine propensity to love and forgive have been the non-negotiable " givens " in Christian tradition and practice, the standard by which all novelties, innovations and " contextualizations " have been judged. Christians have been taught that earthly existence is very important *because* there is more to come, that our readiness to receive what God has in store for us eternally depends to large extent on how we have disposed of our time, energy, talents and, most especially, our capacity to love *in time.* Sensing that everything is at stake in how we live our lives, pious Christiarn> of every age have sought direction and inspiration in pop· ular devotional guides, some of which by their perennial usefulness have obtained the status of classics.

By contrast, much contemporary theology has effectively abandoned the hope of eternal life-not by denying it, hut by ignoring it or labelling it " dangerously individualistic and otherworldly." The fear expressed by such theologians is that hope in eternal life diminishes interest in human welfare here and now, that belief in the supernatural evidences a degenerate " dualism " and inevitably results in the denigration of the natural aspects of life, especially the human body and/or our fragile ecosystem. Christians who live their lives here in anticipa·

tion of something more satisfying on the other side of the grave **must** inevitably he concerned with their own individual salvation. Oddly, there is a school of thought in theology today, subscribed to hy such notable feminists as Reuther and McFague, that sees this most ancient of Christian concerns as myopic and selfish. " Individualism " has become, at least in theory, the scourge of the late twentieth-century church. The following set of conclusions applied to devotional practices thought to help the believer " imitate " Christ are typical of Miles's unrelenting hostility to concern for individual salvation:

> Neither the voluntary physical suffering of Saint Francis nor Gregory of Nyssa's cultivation of intellectual virtues and emotional tranquility offer viable resources for most twentieth-century Christians. Similarly, reliving the heightened emotions felt by the family and friends of the historical Jesus or contemplating and attempting to incorporate the inner life of Christ fail to recommend themselves as activities that offer concrete suggestions for the nuclear world. Moreover, there is an emphasis on individual struggle and achievement both imbedded in the metaphor *[imitatio]* itself and in devotional manuals' interpretations of the imitation of Christ. Nations and governments, political powers, and even ecclesiastical institutions probably cannot imitate Christ; :rather, use of the metaphor requires individual appropriation. And focus on individual development as an end in itself is neither realistic nor desirable in a world in which the human :race must somehow learn to live together in order to avoid dying together in a nuclear holocaust **(p.** 37).

Following Michel Foucault, Miles believes it is essential that each Christian selectively identify a " main danger " and then press her energies into the service of defeating that danger, whatever it may he, without claiming that one's action is rooted in any absolute or nonnegotiable principles. (Interestingly, she sees no dangerous individualism here.) For Miles, nuclear war is that main danger, and her strategy for protecting the world against it is to root out elements of Christian practice and belief which might in any way de-sensitize people to the beauty and fragility of the created order. The virtues she seeks to cultivate are gratitude and responsibility: gratitude for the beauty of the earth and responsibility in protecting it from destruction. Christian suspicions of worldliness-a pervasive theme in devotional literature-and traditional ascetical practices (which she sees as almost always encouraging a disparaging attitude toward the body) are personally destructive and socially dangerous in today's world. But if her analytical description of asceticism is fascinating and informative, her conclusions sound conveniently" self "-serving: Even the very word " asceticism " should go, and individual practices of self-denial would he better replaced by forms of social and political activism. "Asceticism," she claims,

> is a word that invites, if not entails, a dualistic disdain for bodies and the natural world. All the theological definition in the world will not either repair the human waste and loss that has occurred under the rubric "asceticism" or rehabilitate Christianity's public image in the eyes of contemporary secular people. Rather, people who speak and write within Christian perspective should turn our attention to interpretations of Christianity that emphasize love for the beauty and goodness of the created world, the equality of lifestyles in providing the circumstances within which a Christian loves God by-not instead of-loving other people, and concern over the part that the history of Christianity has played in the making of the nuclear world (p. 104).

Even more stunning than her rejection of asceticism is her dismissal of traditional understandings of "Christian service." Tainted, as she sees it, by the motive to serve the neighbor for God (rather than for his own sake) or as acts of self-denial, the term Christian service is not (at least yet) rehahilitatahle:

> For many of us the term "Christian service" is immediately disaffecting. It seems presumptuous, even contemptuous, to do something for another human being, not out of love and concern for that human being, but for the good of one's own soul, to amass future heavenly rewards, or, distinterestedly, to "serve God." ... The minimalist approach of relating one's service activities to values associated with Christianity may he the best rationale for "Christian service" today. • • . Loving service, from the perspective of this interpretation, is simply gratitude for being, acted out (pp. 120·121).

What the older manuals saw as the sinful predispositions of human nature, Miles attributes to the pervasive socializing forces of a materialistic culture, i.e., it is learned behavior which the self-conscious Christian can also learn to overcome. For Miles, the devotional classics were, in their day, state-of-the-art self-help manuals that allowed Christians to take charge of their lives. Hence, the chief value these devotional classics have for today's Christian is the model they present of the examined, self-chosen life that provides a counter-cultural challenge to the more or less mindlessly socialized self. A mixed blessing, these works evidence a good intent; what we must beware of is their actual content. Whatever she may or may not believe (in theory) about eternal life, Dr. Miles is clearly a card-carrying member of the "This is it" school of thought. And in today's mainline seminaries, she has plenty of company.

The collapse of transcendence as a significant theological category for many contemporary theologians ensures that the devotional literature of the past will fail to pass muster. Transcendence itself must he redefined, says Miles, in terms of self-awareness and interdependence, and the traditional notion of self-transcendence promoted in traditional manuals must be "reconstructed"

> as an imperative to enter more deeply into the demanding religious disciplines of physical existence, loving relationship, community, and worshipful expression of gratitude for the heavenly [sic] beauty of the earth. Only *this* kind of self-transcendence will give us the "sharp quick sense of life " that will energize our passionate response to the problems of a nuclear world (p. 180).

Finally, the cure she prescribes for the deadly virus of "individualism " is a religious pluralism that refuses to concede an absolute perspective, a "God's eye view, from which to speak with dogmatic authority."

> Because Christian traditions have not accepted pluralism, i.e., differences among people within communities, individualism has resulted-the self. isolation of people who recognize few connections with, or responsibilities to, other human beings and society. In the last decade of the twentieth-century, individualism can only he countered by pluralism .•• (p. 181).

Since devotional manuals assume a common human condition and give universal prescriptions for behavior, they effectively "conceal" injustices in the societies out of which they arose.

Her conclusions place Miles's work squarely among the Protestant elite in the theological academy, who, whether they speak favorably of " spirituality " or not, continue to harbor a deep distrust of mystical attitudes and practices. Furthermore, her analysis allows, in fact, *encourages* academic theologians of whatever persuasion to keep these classics on the shelf and to claim the moral high ground for so doing.

Yet this type of analysis and prescription ultimately removes the critic from the living stream of Christian tradition and strains the credibility of the academy, since the common Christian continues to find traditional emphases on individual salvation spiritually bracing and a semblance of objectivity and universality in norms for Christian behavior consoling. The *sensus fidelium,* that anchor of realism and relevance in the Church, has more than once embraced that which scandalizes the refined intellect and rationally polished conscience. So, dangerous or not, the work of Thomas a Kempis, Francis de Sales, and John Bunyan will survive into the twenty-first century to be read and pondered long after *Practicing Christianity* has gone out of print.

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The Vatican and Homosexuality: Reactions to the "Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons." Edited by JEANNINE GRAMICK AND PAT FUREY. New York: Crossroad, 1988. Pp. xxi + 226. $14.95 (paper).

This book contains the full text of the letter named in its subtitle (from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith [CDF], Oct. 1986), followed by twenty-five commentaries. Sixteen of the authors are professors of theology or other disciplines including biology, history, and social sciences; the remainder are active in various forms of church ministry, social advocacy, or communications. With three exceptions-San Francisco Archbishop John Quinn's article and William H. Shannon's reply, both first published in *America*, and Dan Grippo's critique, which first appeared in the *National Catholic Reporter-all* are original contributions.

In the editors' introduction, which gives a helpful summary of theological developments during the preceding decade as well as an overview of the hook's contents, "the reader is urged to consider that [CDF] document carefully before proceeding to the other contrihutions which critique, analyze, and discuss the implications of the Vatican letter" (p. xiii). These commentaries, the editors state, "are meant to be a contribution to the lively debate about homosexuality ... with full respect for persons and for the nature and mission of the Church and its ministry of teaching " (p. xx). The implied reference here, later made explicit by Shannon (p. 27), is to a remark by Paul VI in a letter to the German episcopate (Aug. 30, 1968) expressing hope that "the lively debate aroused by our encyclical *[Humanae Vitae]* will lead to a better knowledge of God's will."

The present book should indeed help in guiding the whole Church toward "a better knowledge of God's will" in the matter of homosexuality. That positive assessment requires some qualification inasmuch as " the lively debate " in this hook is heavily one-sided. Only one of the contributions (Benedict Ashley's) offers a strongly positive evaluation of the Vatican letter. Two others (Archbishop Quinn's and James Pollack's) are measured analyses, more intent on promoting amicable understanding than on taking sides. The concluding essay hy J. Giles Milhaven, while critical of the Vatican, is mainly a benign and non-judgmental challenge addressed to gay and lesbian persons, asking them to enlighten the Church as to why sexual activity is important to them. The remaining articles express a more or less strongly negative reaction to the CDF letter, and several of these manifest an attitude

toward the magisterium which falls considerably short of the " respect " called for in the introduction; a few even descend to unsavory *ad hominem* polemics against the Vatican hierarchy (described as insulated celibates who are power-obsessed, etc.). Nevertheless, many of the adversely critical articles-including some which are objectionable in the ways just noted, as well as others which scrupulously try to be fair to the magisterium-present some very legitimate challenges to the positions advanced in the CDF letter and offer substantial insights which should serve a constructive function in the effort to resolve this most vexing theological and pastoral issue.

Some of the best chapters in this book are by women-a particularly noteworthy merit in view of the fact, underlined by Mary C. Segers, that "the Vatican letter succumbs to [the common] tendency to focus on homosexuality as a male phenomenon and to ignore completely the experience of lesbian women" (p. 85). Segers thinks it may be the special aptitude of lesbian feminists, with their " more subtle, rich appreciation of same-sex love," to teach Vatican authorities that " instead of issuing mean-spirited instructions to bishops which reinforce homophobia in the context of society's heightened fears about AIDS, the Church should be in the vanguard of the movement for social justice for all people" (p. 89).

I regard Carolyn Osiek's "Rights, Responsibilities, and Homosexuality" (pp. 126-132) as the most penetrating essay in the collection. " The heart of the argument has to do not with Scripture or natural law," she observes, " but with the relationship of sexuality to individual rights and responsibilities and of these to the common good. The real fear is voiced [in the CDF letter] at number 9: ... The threat is not to individuals but to the family, and thus to the common good" (p. 129). Osiek follows up with a series of challenges to the key premises of the Vatican's stance, e.g., the equation of the common good with family life to the exclusion of other sexually active lifestyles, and the assumption that homosexuality is necessarily a threat to the family and the common good. Although she twice suggests that these and other related assumptions amount to irrational homophobic stereotyping, Osiek seems concerned not so much to refute the assumptions as to question them; this she does, searchingly and forcefully. Moreover, while thus challenging the magisterium to justify its assumptions, Osiek's essay also implicitly challenges progay apologists to be more attentive to the Church's sensibilities regarding the common good instead of overstating their more typical arguments based on personal freedom. In sum, more effectively than most writing on this subject, Osiek's brief article shows that sexuality is inevitably a social and political concern and not just a private matter. Her thesis points the way toward a badly needed refocusing of the entire debate.

Other critics uncover further valuable insights into the CDF letter and point out exaggerated interpretations of some of its more negative features. Peter Hebblethwaite sees merit in the letter's complaint about ambiguity and equivocation in some recent Catholic approaches to homosexuality and urges revisionists to he more candid about their agenda (p. 142). The same author, discussing the letter's clarification of the earlier CDF declaration *Persona Humana* (1975) with respect to the homosexual " inclination," offers a most lucid and plausible explanation of how the earlier document came to he widely interpreted in a sense which the new letter regards as " overly benign " (pp. 138-140). With equal clarity and plausibility, P. A. van Gennip speculates that the letter's recourse to the novel expression "objective disorder," as a description of the homosexual inclination, was a studied effort to indicate disvalue while avoiding both the " sin " and the " sickness " models (p. 72). Ronald Modras demonstrates that the overall perspective of the CDF letter is fully consonant with John Paul II's "theology of the body," and argues that this theology, for all its contemporary personalistic language, is still heavily laden with the Platonic suspicion of spontaneous physical desires of all kinds-not only homosexual ones (pp. 119-125). For what it is worth, Modras's thesis coincides with my own growing impression based on several years of conducting graduate level courses and seminars on the pope's sexual catecheses.

Wider recognition of these insights might have forestalled the common tendency among the CDF letter's critics, in this volume and elsewhere, to overinterpret the letter's phrase "objective disorder" as a quasi-moral condemnation of homosexual persons as such. A companion error, likewise a frequent refrain in this hook, is to charge that CDF identifies homosexuality exclusively with genital activity. The Congregation in fact does the exact opposite at the start of its letter, explaining that it will prescind from many other dimensions of the " complex " subject of homosexuality so as to concentrate on what is of paramount concern for "the Catholic moral perspective" (no. 2). 0£ course, critics can and do question whether this paramount moral concern is rightly focused so heavily on the issue of genital behavior -and whether, in any case, such behavior can he morally evaluated in abstraction from other dimensions of the homosexual orientation. But it is wrong to claim that those other dimensions over and above genitality have been negated or denied by the Congregation.

With respect to genitality itself, we must address the essential issue posed by the "objective order" statement. The issue is: could the Church logically maintain its traditional teaching that homogenital activity is " intrinsically disordered " and hence always unconditionally wrong, and at the same time allow that the particular inclination to-

ward that very activity is *not* some kind of "objective disorder"? It **is** clear that most contributors to the present volume would like to see the Church reverse its global disapproval of homogenital activity, affirming that such activity is good as an authentic expression of love between homosexually-oriented persons. They are understandably outraged that the Congregation has more firmly shut the door against such a reversal by stating that the notion of " disorder" applies not only (in a moral sense) to homogenital activity, but also (in a non-moral, "objective" sense) to the corresponding inclination. If that statement about genital activity and inclination is taken by critics to mean that gays and lesbians are radically disordered persons, then it would seem to he those critics-not the men of CDF-who effectively reduce the homosexual person to his or her genitality.

Benedict Ashley's lone defense of the Vatican letter is based on what " the Bible and Christian tradition have always taught " about sex and marriage (p. 105). Homosexual orientation is seen as " a disability ... in regard to the very important ability to marry and have children " (p. 105) ; genital activity even between committed homosexual lovers " can never he an authentic expression of their love for each other, but only a substitute for what their deeper nature really requires " (p. 107). A counselor " may very well hesitate to break up such a couple " so as to forestall promiscuity; but to " encourage a client to seek such a partnership " would be irresponsible, due to the theological reason just stated and also the pragmatic consideration that prospects for success in such a relationship appear very slight from statistical indications (p. 107). Celibacy is thus the more realistic option as well as the only morally satisfactory one; homosexuals do not need a special charism for this, because " for all Christians the graces of baptism and the other sacraments suffice to carry our cross whatever it may be " (p. 108).

Ashley does not confront any criticisms of this traditional line, beyond asserting that gays and lesbians who think otherwise are in a state of denial encouraged by " current propaganda and the mistaken compassion of certain psychiatrists and theologians" (p. 105); he does, however, urge pastors to respect the sincerely dissenting consciences of homosexual believers and to engage them in constructive dialogue as far as possible (p. 108). He also advocates church support for the civil rights of homosexuals, including protection against discrimination in employment, provided that one's homosexual orientation "not be made evident by public acts"; in that latter case, it is not unjust "to exclude active homosexuals from positions which would seem to give approval to such behavior " especially to the impressionable young (p. 109). Other elements of Ashley's program would include research into

the " causes and remedies " of homosexuality (this entails a guarded challenge to the notion of " constitutional " homosexuality) and a special outreach to people with AIDS; a long endnote undertakes to defend the thesis that AIDS can sometmies he, at least in a qualified sense, divine punishment for sexual sin (p. 110 n. 4).

Ashley's essay concludes with an apology for any unintended offense resulting from imprecise or otherwise infelicitous expressions of his position; and he suggests that such lapses on the part of the CDF letter itself were " inevitable in a document that had to he brief and directly to the point in order to clear up the ambiguities with which this complex question has been obscured" (p. 109). My personal assessment is that Ashley has succeeded much better than CDF in minimizing such problems; he might have been even more successful had he not been so intent on downplaying or excusing the letter's undeniable faults in this regard. Of course, Ashley is here engaging in debate with the Vatican's critics; were he instead directly addressing CDF, his approach might well have been different. Even in the present context, however, as a better gesture toward gay and lesbian people wounded by the letter's simplistic and harsh prescriptions, it would have been well for Ashley to repeat the observation he once addressed to U.S. and Canadian bishops assembled in Dallas for a sexuality workshop (Feb. 2-6, 1981): "Overfacile solutions to the tragic dilemmas of life which people are experiencing make the Church appear smug and silly."

The debate over this issue will continue, as indeed it must. The participants in this hook, notwithstanding problems on either side, have contributed significantly to the ongoing conversation and have set a high standard which we must hope will he emulated by all who carry the conversation forward.

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Perplexity in the Moral Life: Philosophical and Theological Considerations. By EDMUND N. SANTURRI. Charlottesville, Va.: The University Press of Virginia, 1988. Pp. 256. $35.00.

Edmund Santurri has written an important book about a central issue in moral theory and a fundamental problem in the moral life. On occasion, one feels on the horns of a dilemma. Whatever course of action might he taken, it appears as if wrong will he done in the process of doing right. Thus, we want to keep promises, but if we keep

this promise, we will cause or allow some great harm to come to another person. How ought this sort of dilemma to he understood?

Santurri argues that there are within the traditions of moral philosophy and theology two ways of construing the problem. One can say either that moral dilemmas of the sort Santurri discusses are the result of deficient knowledge and so in principle resolvable, or that they stem from the structure of the moral universe itself and are in consequence not resolvable. It is Santurri's contention that Christian ethics must hold to the former position and defend the view that in all dilemmatic contexts there is a way to dispel moral perplexity through more adequate moral knowledge. In order to establish this thesis he undertakes a review of typical philosophical and theological literature that addresses the problem he has identified.

Santurri's review of the philosophical literature, though on occasion unnecessarily dense, is always competent and generally thorough. Among others, he reviews the work of David Lyons, Bernard Williams, and Thomas Nagel. His conclusion is that philosophical argument can establish neither of the two possible views of moral dilemma as superior to the other. Arguments designed to establish both points of view prove inconclusive in the end because they beg more fundamental questions concerning the content, nature, and function of morality itself.

Thus, Santurri argues that moral perplexity cannot he interpreted adequately apart from a discussion of " certain fundamental questions of moral ontology " (p. 4) , and he quite successfully shows that these questions are passed over or inadequately treated in the philosophical literature. The fundamental questions he lists are these:

> Are moral codes simply systems of convention or do these codes refer to a transcendent moral reality? If such codes do wholly or partially reflect an independent moral reality, what is the character of that reality? Is the world of moral value irreducibly pluralistic or monistic? If pluralistic, are the constituent values orderahle or are they incommensurable and beyond the possibility of mutual ordering? Is moral requirement to he regarded as a function of divine providential directive or of divine command? If either, what is the nature of the God who issues these providential directives or co=ands? (pp. 4-5)

Having shown the inconclusive nature of the philosophical literature, Santurri can rightly assume. that philosophy of itself cannot demonstrate that the moral universe is by nature contradictory. It is both possible and potentially convincing to argue that what is good and right is in a sense both objective and coherent. Having established the rationality of such a premise, he is free to get on with his basic task; namely, to suggest that in all construals of Christian belief it is impossible to remain coherent and yet contend that there are irresolvable moral dilemmas.

To make his point, Santurri addresses first of all the two most basic sorts of Christian ethic. These are, in turn, natural law theory of a Thomistic sort and theological voluntarism like that of Emil Brunner. He goes on to consider various accounts of the Christian life that posit a conflict either between the universal demands of agape and the moral requirements of special relation, or the peaceful demands of love and the coercive demands of justice, or the demands of a sensitive conscience and the necessities of social utility. Finally he provides an extended treatment of the case for moral conflict made by Helmut Thielicke, who argued that these conflicts necessarily arise in a fallen world and can be addressed only on the basis of the justification of the sinner by grace through faith.

Santurri finds in none of the positions he investigates a convincing argument for the presence of genuine moral dilemmas. In respect to natural law theory, he concludes that genuine dilemmas cannot be admitted without undermining the notion of divine providence and casting doubt upon God's power to realize his purposes. In respect to theological voluntarism, one cannot admit genuine dilemmas without admitting at the same time incoherence and impracticality into God's will. The oppositions between love and special relations, love and coercion, and conscience and social responsibility yield tensions but not genuine conflicts. Finally, in respect to Thielicke's claim that sin brings about genuine dilemmas and that they can be dealt with by means of God's justification of sinners, Santurri concludes both that the tensions mentioned have not been shown to be irresolvable and that no necessary connection has been shown between the existence of moral dilemmas and a fallen world.

In a wonderfully clear and comprehensive introduction, Santurri concludes with his own summary of the position he intends to present: Christian ethics will have to interpret moral perplexity " as a function of deficiencies in our moral knowledge rather than as a sign of irre· solvable conflict in the structure of the moral universe" (p. 6). To m.y eyes, Santurri has made his point. I wish he had, in his discussion of theological voluntarism, given some attention to William of Occam, Kierkegaard, and Karl Barth. And I miss a discussion of Martha Nussbaum's *The Fragility of Goodness* during his treatment of philosophical accounts of genuine moral conflicts. In addition to these omissions, there are a few minor points at which an attentive reader will want to quibble, but little purpose would be served by noting them here. The important thing to say is that Santurri presents a remarkably well argued thesis-one that it will be difficult to discredit.

There are, however, several comments that ought to be made both about this pioneering work in Christian Ethics and its conclusion.

There is one that strikes me with particular force, and it begins to suggest itself from the very earliest pages. It may he true that the case for genuine moral dilemmas cannot he made decisively, and it may he true, as I believe, that the case for a non-conflictual account of right and good is the more convincing of the two options. Nonetheless, the moral life does present us all too frequently with terrible tensions and very painful situations, and we must seek to understand what to make of them. What, for example, should we think and feel when circumstances seem to demand that we break a promise?

In his very suggestive conclusion, Santurri invites his readers to consider moral tragedy: not in the sense of having to choose between two wrongs, hut in the sense of knowing that there will he in one's morally right choice, let us say to break a promise, an accompanying loss of moral good and so also an appropriate sense of regret. The direction in which Santurri points his reader is the right one, hut one must ask if tragedy and regret over the loss of moral good exhaust what is morally involved in such circumstances? Might there also he obligations generated by the very fact that an obligation mutually understood has been superseded by one not necessarily mutually understood? One can assume perhaps that an obligation to break a promise, whlle doing good for someone, might bring real harm to the promisee. Are there subsequent obligations incurred by the promisor in such circum· stances both to explain his action and to seek to remedy any harm that may have befallen others because of his actions? Or, conversely, does the promisee have an obligation to relinquish claims upon the promisor once he or she recognizes that circumstances presented the promisor a more pressing obligation? These questions have occurred to almost everyone at one time or another, and they cannot he adequately addressed merely by reference to a tragic element in the moral life. At this point, Santurri's argument poses questions which need at least to he registered.

This point suggests another which is closely related. It is an issue Kierkegaard raised most clearly over a century ago in *Fear and Trembling.* The dilemma S. K. presented in that hook did not have to do with a conflict between *moral* demands but rather between *moral* and *religious* ones. Ought God to suspend ethical obligations for a higher purpose? Can it ever he that to fulfill a *religious* obligation one must do *moral* wrong? To he sure, Santurri addresses the possibility of *moral* dilemma rather than of both *religious* and *moral* perplexity, and one ought not to assign an author a project he has not himself under· taken. Nonetheless, religious/moral conflicts of the sort S. K. imagined present themselves to believers more painfully than conflicts between moral obligations.

Santurri, on the basis of the overall argument he constructs, would certainly say that no genuine dilemma exists in this case. Obligations to God must be taken to trump all others, and so one is confronted neither with a conflict in the natural law nor between specific divine commands. Nonetheless, one is left, as in the point made above, with the question of what responsibilities are incurred both by God and by human agents when moral obligations are set aside, if indeed they are, for religious ones?

These questions need to be addressed for reasons additional to comprehensiveness. They are central to the project Santurri has undertaken, which as I take it is to show that the moral life is coherent and not self-frustrating. Now, there are at least two ways in which the moral life can founder. The first is the one Santurri so ably discusses. It might he that the moral universe is structured in such a way that one cannot avoid doing wrong in doing right. The second is suggested by the questions asked immediately above which he does not address. It may he that, in setting aside one obligation for another, additional obligations are engendered which might possibly make the living of the moral life after either self-defeating or exhausting or both. Perhaps moral or religious/moral tensions do not contain genuine dilemmas, hut suppose they generate fearful moral debts that simply continue to pile up?

It is the mark of a good book to leave its readers with questions they did not have when first they picked it up. The questions I have just put are intended to suggest what a fertile field Santurri has begun to plow and what a fine job he has performed in doing so.

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Theologies of the Body: Humanist and Christian. By BENEDICT ASHLEY, O.P. Braintree, Mass: The Pope John XXIII Medical Moral Center, 1985. Pp. xii + 770. $20.95 (paper).

This is one of those rare books which can truly he called a masterpiece, the sort of book to which one can (and indeed must) return time and time again for instruction and enlightenment. To do justice to it in a short review is impossible, but I hope to call attention to the features that make it so exceptionally worthwhile and important.

It is, first of all, a work of immense learning, packed with information and extensive documentation. The author's mastery of contem-

porary science and of the historical development of both philosophy and theology is amazing. But more than this, Ashley knows how to go to the heart of the matter, to sift the incidental from the essential. Serenely confident that the precious truths of Christian relevation are compatible with the truths that can he known through scientific and philosophic inquiry, Ashley offers readers a work that in very many ways can be described as a contemporary apologetic, one that shows the reasonableness and intelligibility of Catholic faith. For while the central focus of the book is on anthropology, on the meaning of the human person, its ultimate goal, so it seems to me, is to show the rea· sonableness and credibility of the Christian understanding of the human person as a *bodily* being, made in God's image and redeemed by the death and resurrection of the Word, who for love of humankind he· came flesh.

The work is divided into four parts. Parts One and Two, " Science, the Body, and Humanist Theology" and "Christian Theologies of the Body," are, to a great extent, massively erudite discussions intended to prepare the way for the author's thoughtful and thought-provoking articulation of a philosophically sound account of the human person and of the human person's divine vocation in Parts Three and Four, " A Radical Process Interpretation of Science " and " A Process The· ology of the Body."

In Part One Ashley first provides readers with a fascinating sum· mary of what modern science has to tell us about human beings as bodily entities. His conclusion is that modern science has by no means falsified the old definition of man as rational animal, hut that it is necessary, in light of modern scientific discoveries, to expand this term. " Rational animal" should include all the rich detail that sci· entific study has thus far uncovered about man. Humans are bodily beings who are creative, communicating, socially intelligent animals, motivated by conscious emotions and purposes, capable of achieving scientific knowledge though which they can control their own activities, environment, and evolution. In this Part, Ashley also provides a rich and sympathetic account of various " Humanist" theologies of the body. Here he takes as paradigmatic of the worldview animating these theologies the "Humanist Manifesto II" of 1973. This sees man as an autonomous being, capable, by reason of his superior intelligence, of caring for himself and of shaping societies in which human needs can be met humanely without any appeal to transcendent God or without any need of redemption from dark powers within himself. Ashley argues that the major factor contributing to the rise of humanist theologies was disgust over the bitter religious wars of the sixteenth century. He traces the development of divergent Humanist "theolo-

gies ": the empiricist variety rooted in the mechanistic deism of Newton and the radical empiricism of Hume, the idealistic-romantic variety grounded in the thought of Kant and German idealism, etc. Here too he provides a balanced judgment of the strengths and weaknesses of these divergent Humanist theologies, their internal inconsistencies and contradictions.

In Part Two Ashley offers a brief yet comprehensive sketch of "Christian Theologies of the Body," beginning with basic biblical themes that early Christian thinkers sought to explore and interpret in terms, first, of divergent Platonic philosophies and, second, in terms of Aristotelian thought. He discusses the Cappadocians, Origen, Maximus the Confessor, Pseudo-Dionysius, Augustine, and the rise of Aristotelianism in the West and its impact on the thought of medieval theologians such as St. Thomas. His summaries are models of scholarship. In this Part, too, he traces the debilitating effects of nominalism and legalism on later Scholastic thought, on the Reformation, and on the Counter-Reform.

In Part III, "A Radical Process Interpretation of Science," Ashley begins systematically to develop his own integral view of the human person as a bodily being summoned to share in the life of God. His own view is basically that of a follower of St. Thomas who seeks throughout to integrate, with the help of the basic principles of the Common Doctor's thought, the truths of contemporary scientific inquiry. At least, this is how I understand his effort. In developing his own " theology of the body " or philosophical anthropology, Ashley first shows, in what I believe to be a very brilliant way, the futility of various " reductionist " attempts, whether of the materialist or idealist (Whiteheadian, process philosophy) varieties. Ashley argues that once the nonsense has been cleared away we can best approach the issue-who are we and what do we know?-if we adhere faithfully to two sound principles of Aristotelian epistemology: (1) we must always begin in thought from what we know best to explore what we know less well, and (2) we must remember that all valid knowledge must begin in sense experience. Adhering to these principles Ashley then sets forth in considerable detail a philosophical anthropology that begins with a grasp of the being we know first and best, that is, the material, constantly changing being of our experience, beginning with our experience of ourselves as being-in-process or in change. Ashley continues by arguing that we can, on the basis of this beginning, come to an understanding of our cosmos as a set of real relations among primary units or substantial entities and of ourselves as animals *with a difference,* namely, as beings whose knowledge transcends the material, as evidenced by our knowledge of ourselves in self-awareness. In short,

in Part III, Ashley presents what could he called a contemporary Thomistic philosophy of knowledge and of the human existent. In this Part also he seeks to come to grips with contemporary relativism and historicism, particularly in the realm of ethics. Rejecting relativistic and culturally conditioned historicism as a valid understanding of our existence as moral beings, Ashley seeks in this part to rehabilitate a Thomistic understanding of natural law, focussing on the essential "needs" of the human person. In this Part, Ashley turns to the biblical stories of creation, offering a brilliant interpretation of both the Priestly and Yahwist accounts in tenns of their underlying symbolism. The chapter devoted to these biblical narratives is perhaps one of the most masterful in the entire volume, although, as Ashley himself notes in his documentation, this chapter would undoubtedly have been more masterful had there been the opportunity to integrate into it the rich thought of John Paul H on the beatifying beginnings of the human race.

In Part IV, inappropriately called, in opinion, " A Process Theology of the Body," Ashley first develops he calls the "ethics of co-creative stewardship." Here he builds on the basis elaborated in the previous part, namely, St. Thomas's of natural law as our intelligent ordering of our own actions in terms of our basic needs: the need for food and drink, for defending life from what threatens it, for sexuality and society, for information, and, Ashley adds, for creativity. The material in this section of Part IV, while sketchily developed because of limitations of space, is exceptionally thoughtful and helpful. Ashley provides, for example, an intelligent but perhaps overhrief account of the Christian understanding of human sexuality as both unitive and procreative; these goods of human sexuality can only be honored rightly in the marital covenant and only in acts of genital sexuality open to the good of human life.

In the final chapters of Part IV Ashley focuses on the New Testament as a revelatory witness to Jesus of Nazareth, true man, born of woman, who was also truly God. In this pari: of his work Ashley argues, cogently in my view, that the "mind of " as set forth in what is *asserted* about him in the New Testament, shows us a man inwardly related to God in a way transcendently different and higher than the way other men are related to him: they show us a man personally related to God as a son is related to his father, with a mission to preach God's reign and to reconcile sinful humanity to him by his own suf· fering and death. They show us, in short, a man, horn of woman and bodily just as we are, who is in truth God's only Son. In this part of the work Ashley argues that the infancy narratives in Matthew and Luke, which speak of the virginal conception of Jesus, are not merely,

as some contemporary exegetes hold, " theologoumea " hut rather *as· sertions* by their authors of revelatory signs of Jesus' life and ministry and therefore normative for Christian faith. .Ashley's patient analysis of the relevant texts and of the context of which they are part, his complete honesty in setting forth the views of those exegetes with whom he disagrees, and his understanding and sympathy for their approach are typical of his procedure throughout the entire work, namely, of patient scholarly research and of respect for the positions taken by others.

In a work of such vast content and scope there are, naturally, sections that disappoint to some extent. In my opinion, the pages Ashley devotes to show that human intelligence (and therefore human beings) differs radically in kind from the intelligence associated with other animals (319-332) focuses too exclusively on the phenomenon of self-awareness and the reflexive character of human thought and does not sufficiently show how perceptual " thought" differs from " conceptual " thought. Or at least, in my opinion, his pages devoted to this topic are not as clearly and cogently developed as were Mortimer Adler's treat· ment in *The Difference and Man and the Difference It Makes.* I was also somewhat amazed that, in setting forth St. Thomas's view of the natural law, .Ashley focuses on basic human *needs* and not on the basic *goods* to which these needs (or as St. Thomas called them, " natural inclinations ") orient us; those goods, when intelligently understood, serve as the starting points or indemonstrable first principles of prac· tical thinking. I also find the use of the term " process " in the titles of Parts HI and IV somewhat confusing. Many readers may initially think that .Ashley is a proponent of what is today called " process " philosophy, but he clearly repudiates the process thought of Whitehead and his disciples. .Ashley uses the term " process " in a somewhat idiosyncratic way.

But these are minor, perhaps idiosyncratic complaints about a work from which I have learned much and from which, I am sure, I will learn more as I return to it in the future. This is the sort of book to which one must return again and again in order to draw from it the riches that it contains. It is, as one can gather from this review, a work of first-rank importance.

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Nature and Grace: Toward an Integral Perspective. By JAMES A. CARPENTER. New York: Crossroad, 1988. Pp. 229. $22.50.

Alexander Ganoczy recently observed in his article *"Natur"* in the *Lexikon der katholischen Dogmatik* that contemporary theologians increasingly strive to incorporate an enhanced notion of " nature " into their docrtine of creation. Motivated by environmental and ecological concerns, their efforts typically include criticism of human exploitation of the material universe; they seek to reexamine the relationship of nature and culture, while according due recognition to the intrinsic value of the non-human world. The goal of such approaches is a more harmonious conception of the place of the human race within the whole of creation.

James A. Carpenter, the author of *Gore: A Study in Liberal Catholic Thought* (London: The Faith Press, 1960), is professor of systematic theology at General Theological Seminary in New York. Hi.s latest work, *Natuff":e and Grace,* while fitting clearly into the general pattern of the tendency mentioned above, is distinguished from more typical approaches to these topics by its single-minded focus on integrating grace into nature. Carpenter decries anthropocentrism as a root evil in Christian theology and rejects theological inclinations to envision history, rather than nature, as the privileged locus of divine revelation. In opposition to all such positions, he seeks to promote a theology of nature which assesses created reality as a manifestation of grace and locates grace "in the very constitution of nature" (p. 8). *Nature and Grace* is largely devoted to pursuit of these themes; its title nonwithstanding, it provides no extended treatment of the topics commonly discussed in Roman Catholic theology under the rubric " nature and grace."

Though governed by constructive systematic intent, *Nature and Grace* is primarily a series of studies of selected theologians, past and pres·ent. Opening chapters examine Augustine and Irenaeus as represen·tatives of Westem and Eastern patristic thought. Carpenter recognizes in the Eastern tradition a stance toward nature more positive than what has normally prevailed in the West, but he diagnoses serious deficiencies in both segments of the Church. Augustine is charged with developing against Pelagius a privatized view of grace as cure rather than as component of nature, while Irenaeus is criticized for a christocentric conception which subordinates nature to history and creation to redemption. In Carpenter's judgment, theocentrism and anthropocentrism (of which christocentrism is a species) are mutually

exclusive, and it is inconsistent to attribute goodness to created reality without characterizing its existence as grace.

Prescinding from a study of medieval and early modern thought, Carpenter devotes the next set of chapters to a presentation and critique of four 20th century theologians: Paul Tillich, Karl Rahner, Johann Baptist Metz, and Jurgen Moltmann. In each case, Carpenter notes positive references to nature (in varying meanings) hut detects pervasive anthropocentrism and exaggerated orientation toward history. Tillich receives praise for his concern for the inorganic realm, his recognition of a need to relate God to nature, and his interpretation of the Kingdom of God as a symbol of hope for the fulfillment of all life, hut is criticized for his concentration on culture and his rejection of natural theology. Rahner- is found more comprehensive than Tillich and more focused on the relation of nature and grace hut charged with a low estimation of creation as such. Metz, alleged from the outset to he "highly negative toward the doctrine of nature and grace" (p. 76), receives low marks for his anthropocentrism and for the bifurcation of nature and history in his political theology. The theology of nature inchoatively present in Moltmann's recent work is judged to he blocked from achieving its full potential by the excesses of his anthropocentric eschatology. Thus, in Carpenter's judgment, none of these four major modern authors is able to provide an adequate theology of nature.

Seeking a resource to remedy these inadequacies, Carpenter devotes two chapters to a sympathetic account of the process philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead. Whitehead's radical personalization of na-1ture appropriately takes account of the impossibility of drawing a fine line between natural and human reality and displays little interest in human history. In his conception, nature could not exist without grace, which is seen as a type of divine persuasion. While detecting in White·head a certain exaggeration of freedom in "actual entities" (" persuasion and coercion need to he viewed more dialectically than he allows, for there is a certain coerciveness in the nature of things " [p. 127]), Carpenter finds process thought on the whole congenial and suitable for theological use.

The final study is dedicated to Old Testament perspectives, with particular focus on the writings of Claus Westermann, though other exegetes are also taken into consideration. While finding value in some aspects of Westermann's work, especially his attention to the theme of blessing, Carpenter judges him preoccupied with human concerns and unable to attain the unified vision he seeks since his consciousness " has been infected by the bacillus of history " (p. 157). Thus his work, while superior to that of many other biblical scholars in its ap·preciation of the world of nature, remains seriously flawed.

Against the background of this survey of selected authors, a final chapter, more directly systematic, advances Carpenter's hope that in time one " will be able to speak not only of grace in the traditional sense but of mathematical grace, of grace within the scientific realm, or at least of the grace of nature and its structures and forces " (p. 184). Since the preconditions of grace, including such processes as natural selection, are themselves of grace, a consistently theocentric view will overcome the traditional Christian focus on human needs and classify redemption as an aspect of creation. A bipolar functiOnal unity, though not a complete identity, of nature and grace will then be achieved, with grace understood as " God in relation to the world " (p. 166). Regressive anthropocentric conceptions (such as Carpenter's own description of grace as " the divine endeavor to communicate itself to human beings in varied circumstances and cultural conditions " [p. 172]) will then be surpassed.

Nature and Grace suffers from numerous defects. The most serious flaws in its constructive proposal stem from the author's preoccupation with a single issue and corresponding neglect of aspects of the theology of grace which are not at the focal point of his concern. In his historical analyses, evaluation often intrudes on exposition, and these theologians are never allowed to deepen or modify Carpenter's conception of the embeddedness of grace in nature. What of Augustine's interest in the problem of evil, Rahner's concern for the gratuity of grace, or Metz's attention to unjust suffering? Reflections of other theologians which address Carpenter's questions but do not make use of the term " nature " (e.g., Rahner's analysis of hominization and notion of active self-transcendence) are underemphasized. As a result of such deficiencies, the remedy proposed in *Nature and Grace* as a solution to contemporary problems would vitiate theological efforts to address other significant issues.

In addition to these weaknesses, the book contains several inaccurate assertions in its expository sections. Carpenter speaks of " the dogma, long established in Protestantism and now even in some Roman Catholic theological circles, that there can be no such thing as natural theology" (p. 52). The views of some Catholic theologians on the separation of grace from human consciousness are identified as " the Roman Church's teaching, following the Council of Trent" (p. 58); Karl Rahner is then praised for rejecting church doctrine, when in fact he merely differs from some other theologians on this subject. The thesis that " nature cannot exist apart from the grace that envelops it and is constitutive of it" (p. 60) is wrongly attributed to Rahner. The suggestion that a theology of nature could replace the traditional natural theology while resolving the longstanding disputes about the

legitimacy of that discipline (p. 54-55) betrays a failure to grasp the issues at stake in both fields. As these examples indicate, the book is not a reliable source of information on doctrinal or theological matters. Thus, while the concerns motivating Carpenter's undertaking are legitimate and important, *Nature and Grace* cannot he recommended.

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Answering for Faith: Christ and the Human Search for Salvation. By RICHARD VILADESAU. New York: Paulist Press, 1987. Pp. 312. $12.95 (paper) .

Answering for Faith: Christ and the Human Search for Salvation, by Richard Viladesau, is an elaboration of Rahner's approach to Christianity and other religions. Although Viladesau acknowledges his indebtedness to Lonergan and cites Tillich and Troeltsch for support, his primary aim can he described as the task which Rahner briefly refers to in *Foundations of the Christian Faith* (316)-the analysis of non-Christian religions for " the presence of Christ beyond his presence in the salvific faith of the non-Christian".

In other words, Viladesau takes up the task of examining several non-Christian religions in an a posteriori empirical way. By means of criteria which he draws from his transcendental analysis of human experience, he evaluates the adequacy of the belief content of these religions. Whereas Rahner's concepts of implicit faith and anonymous Christianity focus on the non-Christian's interior, transcendental experience. Viladesau looks at how the non-Christian can he said to re· ceive God's revelation, not despite, but through the public symbols and institutionalized belief content of his/her own religion. In Rahnerian terms, Viladesau intends to affirm and describe in some detail God's special categorical revelation in the history of non-Christian religions.

Viladesau wants to evaluate religions on the basis of criteria that have "a basis in a subjectively 'verifiable' philosophy of human being" (194). Thus the hook is also an exercise in foundational theology. Like Tillich, the author wants to " answer for faith " by correlating the answers of faith with human experience. The hook's apologetic method consists of a "turn to the subject," a transcendental analysis of the conditions for human experience. In its method, the hook constitutes a theological anthropology. (In the first two chapters,

Viladesau summarizes the theological anthropology presented in his previous book *The Reason for Our Hope.)*

For Viladesau, there are more and less primitive, higher and lower religions. Although he does not think there is a linear progression from lower to higher in the history of religions, he does think that there been "thresholds" in "the human ability to objectify our spiritual life" (91).

The basis for making valuations as to which features of religion are closest to the truth, the most valuable, and thus " higher " is " the extent to which each formulation corresponds to our view of human existence, as known through our own existential and transcendental experience" (87). On the basis of his transcendental analysis of human experience, religions that are closest to the truth are 1) centered in personhood and love, 2) historical, 3) conscious of the problem of salvation, 4) capable of progression, 5) able to synthesize all of human experience, including lower levels, 6) holy, 7) communal, and 8) transcendent (184) .

Viladesau's aims in developing criteria by which to evaluate religions are laudable. He wants to affirm that God wills to save all people. He does not want to say that God saves non-Christians *despite* the errors in their religious beliefs and practices; rather, he wants to say that non-Christian religions contain truths and values which are a medium for their salvation.

The question is, are Viladesau's conceptual means adequate to his aim? In this reviewer's opinion, they are not. (For fuller critical discussions of problems with the notion of implicit Christian faith see Joseph DiNoia, "Implicit Faith, General Revelation and the State of Non-Christians", *The Thomist,* 47 (April, 1983): 209-241; George Lindbeck, *"Fides ex auditu* and the Salvation of Non-Christians: Contemporary Catholic and Protestant Positions ", in *The Gospel and the Ambiguity of the Church,* edited by Vilmos Vajta, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974, pp. 92-123; and George Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine, Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age,* Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1984.)

The difficulties that I have with Viladesau's approach inhere in the hook's main premise--the assumption that there is a core or essence to religion, available through a transcendental analysis of human experience.

One problem is that Viladesau does not provide a perspective from which his method can be considered. He discusses his method hut does not make explicit any awareness that he might have of other possible ways to achieve his goals. Consequently, the hook is limited in that it is primarily an application and elaboration of Rahner's ideas, not an

attempt to break new conceptual ground. Viladesau shares in the difficulties that are already present in Rahner's development of the concepts of implicit faith and anonymous Christianity and does not o:ffer any new conceptual solutions. (On the other hand, Viladesau's attempt to make sense of Rahner's concepts on the empirical level of categorical revelation in non-Christian religions highlights the difficulties implicit in these concepts in a way that Rahner's own writings do not.)

In his hook, *The Nature of Doctrine,* George Lindbeck has described the approach that Rahner and Viladesau share and labeled it the experiential-expressive model for religion. In this approach, God is seen as present in the transcendental depths of the religious questing and experiences of all human beings. What is most fundamental in human persons is preconceptual and prelinguistic and can he arrived at hy means of transcendental deductions. Differing beliefs can he seen as more or less adequate objectifications of the same depth experience. According to Lindbeck, this approach, which is primarily philosophically, not theologically, motivated, is the basis for Rahner's use of the concepts of implicit faith and anonymous Christianity to account for the salvation of non-Christians. For Lindbeck, (and I agree with him,) the weakness of attempts to find concrete evidence of Christian faith in non-Christian religions is thus rooted in the implausibility of the assumption that all human beings share the same depth experience on a preconceptual and prelinguistic level.

Viladesau and Rahner share the experiential-expressive approach with classical Protestant liberals. That is why Viladesau refers to Tillich and Troeltsch, for example, as supportive of his ideas. All of these theologians believe that religions have u'1e same essence, that they are all different paths to the same goal or diverse manifestations of the same essential content.

This belief is not conclusively supported by objective evidence in anthropology and comparative religion. It is an assumption which cannot be conclusively proved by means of empirical analyses of religions but which needs to he analyzed and defended on non-empirical grounds. My objection to Viladesau's empirical studies of non-Christian religions is not that he isn't accurate (which I am not competent to judge), but that it doesn't help to persuade me of the assumption which guides his studies.

If one is not naturally inclined to accept Viladesau's assumption and takes, in contrast, what Lindbeck calls the cultural-linguistic approach to religion and the construction of human reality, then Viladesau's hook is not persuasive. In the cultural-linguistic approach, one holds that human reality is constructed from the outside inwards, that social and linguistic patterns make possible the individual's perception of his/her

internal reality, not vice versa. Differing social and linguistic environments lead to differing depth experiences, which do not share a common core or essence.

Viladesau nods to Wittgenstein and linguistic analysis, hut he does not seem to register fully their implications for his own position. His own view of the nature of language is not Wittgensteinian. He sees speech as primarily the positing of a sign outside oneself. The sign addresses someone and has some informative content (4$). Thus his discussion of language does not take into account Wittgenstein's criticism of the view that the meaning of language is a function of reference.

Viladesau seems to think that the main significance of Wittgenstein has been to point out the importance of language in delineating human reality. He seems to feel that the acknowledgement that inner human reality is always expressed in sense reality and concrete categorical terms is enough to satisfy Wittgensteinian linguistic analysts. This is not the case. Although there is much disagreement among those who make use of Wittgenstein, it is indisputable that Wittgenstein did not see language primarily in terms of symbols through which human beings expressed and concretised the depths of transcendental experience (82).

From the point of view of someone who holds the cultural-linguistic view of religion and of human reality, Viladesau's delineation of what is common to religions is not very interesting. As George Lindbeck puts it, " The datum that all religions recommend something which can he called ' love ' toward that which is taken to he most important ('God') is a banality as uninteresting as the fact that all languages are (or were) spoken. The significant things are the distinctive patterns of story, belief, ritual, and behavior that give ' love ' and ' God ' their specific and sometimes contradictory meanings" *(The Nature of Doctrine,* 4.2).

There are also practical shortcomings to Viladesau's approach to non-Christian religions. For the purposes of interfaith dialogue (for any dialogue for that matter) , it is tactically and psychologically counterproductive to assert that one knows better than one's dialogue partner what that dialogue partner is about when he or she describes his or her own beliefs and practices. Viladesau believes that the assumption of his transcendental method, that all human beings share a common depth experience, is necessary for interfaith dialogue. In fact, it is probably often a counterproductive one.

The question is, does the assumption that the higher religions express what is common to human transcendental experience do justice to the non-Christian religions which are analyzed by this method? I

am not persuaded that it does, because the method focuses on what any given religion has in common with Viladesau's list of essential features. The self-descriptions of adherents of the religions that Viladesau describes would probably not acquiesce to his designation of some features as the " highest " and most valuable in their religion; their list of the elements which reflect essential human nature, if they even agreed to the possibility of such a list, would diverge from his.

Viladesau admits that there is a selectivity to his method of analyzing non-Christian religions and that what he selects as significant is determined by the anthropology already found in his own religion. Nevertheless, he believes that his method is "legitimate, as long as we admit what we are about" (166). He thinks that there is no way to avoid having criteria of evaluation when one looks at other religions, and that the best one can do is to examine one's criteria and assumptions critically and then proceed (166, n4). My problem with what Viladesau is doing is that he is claiming a transcendental source and universal validity for his anthropological criteria. One can evaluate other religions in terms of criteria from one's own cultural situation without the claim that these criteria are universal, or derived from a transcendental analysis of basic human experience. Viladesau refers to the fact that other religions also differentiate among religions and rate them as higher or lower. The fact that they do this and have criteria for doing this does not support Viladesau's postulation of his own criteria nor his postulation of them as transcendentally derived.

To summarize, there are both conceptual and practical difficulties with Viladesau's approach to non-Christian religions. The book is competent, in as far as one considers only what Viladesau aims to do–conduct an empirical study of major non-Christian religions on the basis of criteria derived from a transcendental analysis of human experience. However, Viladesau does not take into consideration the questions that might he raised about his premises by people who stand outside of his philosophical tradition.

(Incidentally, the book occasionally lapses into a non-inclusive generic use of "man." In a book on theological anthropology, this lack of editorial consistency, whether deliberate or inadvertent, is surprising.)

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On Intuition and Discursive Reasoning in Aristotle. By VICTOR KAL. Philosophia Antiqua, no. 46. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1988. Pp. 196. 74 guilders (approx. $37.00).

This is a study of Aristotle's logic and psychology of mind which explores a connection between the two. This connection is used, on the one hand, to corroborate the results of the study of the logic and, on the other hand, to elucidate the most controverted text of Aristotle's psychology, *De Anima*, 3. 5, with its discussion of active mind. Part 1 argues for the dependence of all discursive thinking on non-discursive sources of knowldge, viz., experience and intuition. Part 2, a bridge section, distinguishes logic, epistemology, and psychology: logic studies the forms of reasoning; epistemology studies the connection of reasoning to reality, as Aristotle does notably in *Posterior Analytics*, 2. 19; and psychology "shows how ... cognitive processes ... take place from the point of view of physics and First Philosophy " (p. 63). Part 3 investigates the psychology of cognition found in the *De Anima* and elsewhere and finds in it confirmation of the results of part 1. In addition, Kal here offers a new interpretation of what Aristotle means by active mind.

In part 1 Kal presents a careful textual study of Aristotle's view of definition, induction, and the syllogism, both dialectical and demonstrative, and argues that, as discursve methods, all of them presuppose knowledge already acquired, i.e., first principles that must be known. This raises the question of the origin of such principles, a question which Aristotle addresses and answers in *Posterior Analytics*, 2. 19. A common interpretation of this difficult chapter holds that first principles are grasped through induction. The text which seems to support this view is found in lines l00b3-5: " Thus it is clear that we necessarily know the first principles by induction; for sensation also produces the universal in this way." Kal argues that this text, when understood according to the indications of its context, does not make induction the source of first principles. Rather, Aristotle's position is that sensation, which gives us the universal, is based on experience (lOOall) and, therefore, an induction, which is also based on experience, also gives the universal (p. 51). Furthermore, Kal finds a much simpler argument against the position that induction is the source of our knowledge of first principles in the beginning of *Posterior Analytics*, 2. 19, where "Aristotle rejects knowledge based on previous knowledge, and thus induction, as a solution to the problem of the knowledge of the first principles" (p. 52). Induction, then, remains one of the discursive methods, and, as such, depends on a kind of knowledge that is acquired

without being based on previously acquired knowledge. Kai insists that, if knowledge is possible, there must he a non-discursive origin for first principles; and, in his investigation of Aristotle's position, he finds only two such origins-experience and intuition. Sense experience brings the universal to light, although it does not know the universal as such, hut only as an accidental object of sensation. It is intellective intuition *(nous)* which knows the universal as such (p. 48).

Having argued for the primacy of intuition *(nous)* in part l, Kai turns to the psychology of cognition in part 3. Is the primacy of *nous* corroborated by Aristotle's understanding of sensation and thinking? Kal finds that it is. From the point of view of logic and epistemology, the non-discursive origin of first principles is an immediate knowledge, a knowledge that does not require a middle term. As Kal puts it, the immediacy of intuition " lies . . . in the fact that contact is made with the object of knowledge simply, without active intervention of the knower" (p. 59). In receiving the object of knowledge the knower is completely receptive. Similarly, Kal argues, sensation and thinking in the sense of intuitive thought are also completely receptive, and this receptivity confirms the results of part l; cognition when viewed both from the point of view of logic-and epistemology, and from the point of view of psychology reveals the same essential receptivity. Just as Aristotle argues in the *Posterior Analytics* that the first principles of knowledge are received and are not the product of any discursive activity of mind, so in the *De Anima* he explains the contact of sensa· tion and thinking with reality hy holding that in both cases the cognitive power receives something that is given to it (pp. 69, 77).

The essential receptivity, or passivity, of sensation and thinking at their origin guarantees the truth of cognition. The psychological account of cognition, of course, recognizes the possibility of error, which arises, for sensation, with " active imagination," and, for thinking, with "active thought or active contemplation" (not to he confused with active mind) (p. 80). Active imagination and thought are subject to error precisely because in these cognitive activities it is the knower, rather than the object known, that " initiates the movement " (that is, the cognitive activity) . In " passive sensation and passive intuition " the "relation to reality" is direct; in active imagination and thought the relation is indirect. The lack of direct relation to reality in the second case provides further explanation of the possibility of error (p. 80).

For Kal, the active mind of *De Anima,* 3. 5, is a divine intuitive mind. Its role in human cognition is to actualize " the potential of a physical thing to be an object of insight and to possess a noetic or intelligible status. It makes the physical thing intelligible to some degree, so that mind can be said to he mixed with it. Or: the mind of

God causes some measure of noetic order to rule the physical world, regardless of whether this world is an object of human intellective cognition " (p. 87). Active mind, then, provides an answer to "the fourth problem, with which *De anima*, 3. 4, concludes, viz., "that the object of knowledge, i.e. physical reality, is only potentially an object of intellective intuition, while in turn the knowing intellect of man can only be brought to actual intuition by this object" (p. 83). In attributing to a divine active mind the role of making potential intelligibles actual intelligibles, Kal eliminates the need for the human mind to perform any abstraction (p. 83) . It is the divine mind, rather than any human activity of abstraction that provides the human mind with an object altogether ready to be known, an object "not only *in potentia intelligibilis*, but knowable as such" (p. 83). Moreover, in causing physical things to attain an intelligible status, the divine mind does not think them (p. 163, n. 15) .

Kal agrees with Alexander of Aphrodisias in identifying " the causa-' tive mind of *De anima*, 3. 5 with the First Cause of *Metaphysics*, Lambda, i.e. with the mind of God" (pp. 95-96). He answers the common objections against this identification (pp. 85, 96), but the real merit of his position is his argument in favor of making the identification. Kal identifies the active mind of *De Anima*, 3. 5 with the unmoved mover of *Metaphysics*, Lambda, on the basis of the most significant attribute of active mind, its being "in essence actuality." Whereas the other three attributes are also predicated of what Kal calls " the mind-in-potentiality" discussed in *De Anima*, 3. 4, being "in essence actuality " is not. The potential mind of 3. 4 cannot be essentially an actuality; according to Kal, this description can only apply to the mind that is the unmoved mover, whose essence is said to be actuality *(Metaph.*, 12. 6. 107lb20) (pp. 88; 166, n. 34). Potential mind is, of course, actual in the act of thinking, but only a mind which engages in an eternal act of thinking could be said to be " in essence actuality " (v. *De Anima*, 3. 5. 430a22: "It is not the case that it sometimes thinks and sometimes does not.")

While accepting Kal's view of the primacy of *nous* (both from the point of view of logic and epistemology, and from the point of view of psychology) and his identification of active mind with the unmoved mover, one might nevertheless disagree with him at some points. First, Kal's insistence on the passive character of sensation and intuitive thinking seems to lead him to deny any activity to them (pp. 147-50, nn. 6-7). Yet it is possible to recognize both passivity and activity: the sense power and the mind may be passive in receiving the form of the thing known a:nd nevertheless active in exercising the activity of sensing and knowing. By making the distinction between the specification of the cognitive act by its object and the exercise of the act by the

knower, one may avoid undercutting the position that the cognitive powers are passive, without failing to do justice to the fact that awareness and discrimination are activities of the knower {pp. 71-72; 148·49, n. 6). Second, Kai holds that the individual human being cannot really he said to have intuitive mind in himself: "Man has mind; hut only to a certain degree and without mind losing its independence from the human whole. . . . the divine mind is present in man without losing its character of divine mind " (p. 75). If only God has intuitive mind {pp. 155, n. 32; 156-57, n. 13), how can the individual human being really know, even in the sense of having discursive thought? Since knowledge depends on first principles, what does not possess the intuitive mind which knows the first principles would, it seems, not properly have knowledge.

The only hope for a definitive interpretation of the disconcertingly brief *De Anima,* 3. 5, lies in the possibility that one can establish a definite connection between this chapter and other elements in the Aristotelian corpus, a connection that would elucidate the otherwise inscrutable teaching on active mind. It is the great merit of Kai to have made an excellent case for a connection between *De Anima,* 3. 5, and two other elements in the Aristotelian corpus: *nous* as it functions in the logic and epistemology, and the unmoved mover of *Metaphysics,* Lambda. Exploring this connection in a penetrating and thorough analysis of a great body of Aristotelian and secondary Kai has not merely taken a position on a more than two-thousand-year-old controversy, hut also has decisively advanced our understanding of active mind.

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Anselm Studies: An Occasional Journal. Vol. 2. Edited by JosEPH ScHNAUBELT, OSA, *et al.,* White Plains, New York: Kraus International Publications, 1988. Pp. 634. $55.00.

This volume contains the proceedings of the Fifth International Saint Anselm Conference (Villanova University, September 16-21, 1985). Held in conjunction with the Tenth International Patristic, Medieval, and Renaissance Conference, the meeting occasioned papers concentrating on areas of "influence and juncture" in the life and thought of St. Anselm and St. Augustine. Given the dependence of much of Anselm's work on the thought of St. Augustine, the Conference took as its particular objective the understanding of the relationship between

faith and reason. While the focus of the papers in this volume includes both saints, the principal emphasis falls on Anselm as inheritor and interpretor of the methods and ideas of his intellectual ancestor.

A brief introduction provides cameo presentations of Anselm's character as abbot, monk, and archbishop, together with a conspectus on Anselm's position vis-a-vis the canonical and ecclesiological issues of his day. The papers are then divided into five chapters: "Anselm's Monasticism." "The *Proslogion* Argument," "Truth: Anselm and Augustine," "Theological Method," and "The Anselmian Worldview." While the papers are of use to scholarly readers desiring detailed treatment of central issues in Anselm's logic and epistemology, the undoubted strength of the collection lies in its well-calculated effort to integrate an understanding of Anselm's intellectual and spiritual outlook with the theological, spiritual, and literacy currents of his time. Especially for the historian of intellect and society, the essays in this volume provide analysis that advances our understanding of the cultural context of the 11th and 12th centuries.

The contribution to our understanding of Anselm's culture is particularly clear in the first and fourth divisions of the volume, the sections dealing with monasticism and Anselm's worldview.

In the former division, Glenn Olsen's assessment of " Anselm and Homosexuality" neatly evaluates the evidence for Anselm's sexual orientation made controversial by John Boswell's *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality.* In fact, the present article, together with its notes, provides a useful summary of the critical literature which has grown up of late around the Boswellian thesis as well as the study of literary expressions of affection in the 11th and 12th centuries. Olsen grasps the difficulties of an anachronistic use of modern jargon (e.g. the use of " gay " when applied to medieval literary and spiritual convention) and balances an understanding of epistolary usage with the evident passion of Anselm's pastoral concern for those he came in contact with. Mary-Rose Banal's reflection on related ideas of friendship and *conversatio* also deals with issues of affection and mutual relationship, touching in helpful ways on the psychological use of technical theological terms (mind, spirit, sense). But the conclusion that friendship for Anselm was " less than it appeared to be ", that it expressed "general benevolence for his companions in religious life ... " seems to side-step a thorough accounting of the depth of personal emotion which informs even literary convention. To preserve the reality of Anselm's affection while seeing it in a priestly, pastoral, and eminently monastic context seems a better approach-one as suited to Anselm as, say, to Bernard of Clairvaux when he discusses similar issues.

The coordinate section of this volume ("The Anselmian Worldview ") concentrates not simply on the literary evidence-Walter

Frohlich's analysis of the edition of Anselm's letters over time will be a substantial technical aid to on-going research-but also on the conceptual relationship of Anselm's intellectual presuppositions with those of Augustine. In particular, Vernon Bourke's survey of Christian Platonism, examining Augustine, Anselm, and Ficino, is a tightly focussed *vade mecum* on the subject which could well be used as an accessible introduction for undergraduates or even graduate students. Eduardo Briancesco's essay on the *De concordia* is, as well, a fine exercise in the application of literary-critical techniques to discern the juncture *"de la conscience noetique"* with *" la conscience ethique "*: the way in which mind and spirit cooperate in the redemptive work of the Spirit in and on man.

Bracketed by the two sections adumbrated above are three sets of essays which address specific questions of epistemology, logic, and theological method. The *Proslogion* argument is examined variously-from the point of view of Descartes as well as Parmenides, for example. In the latter case, Michael Slattery argues that the first proponent of the ontological argument for the existence of God was Parmenides, not Anselm. Slattery makes the argument persuasively and with care, without, however, addressing the more difficult issues of Anselm's actual dependence on Parmenides. In view of interest in demonstrable points of juncture between the medieval and antique literary traditions, it would he useful to explore this question.

Herrera's reflection on Anselm's appropriation of Augustine's notion of purification places the defects of the Fool in appropriate psychological and spiritual context rather then simply in the category of deficient " reason ". Likewise, Klaus Kienzler's application of form-critical techniques to Anselm and Augustine interprets the personal spiritual dimensions of Anselm's theological and philosophical thought in ways that restore a sense of godly vitality to otherwise arid views of Anselmian method.

In general, then, this volume will he of major interest for its con·tribution to an understanding of Anselm's thought in medieval context; it gives notable examples of ways in which the application of literary and form analysis can open new perspectives on the feeling as well as thought of St. Anselm. The text, published in typescript, is easy to read and the notes are clearly rendered. Given the comprehensive thematic scope of the volume, even a rudimentary index of key concepts or terms would have been useful. But this is a minor cavil to raise with respect to an otherwise well-edited, painstakingly proofed volume.

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Later Medieval Philosophy (1150-1350): An Introduction. By JOHN MARENBON. London and New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987. Pp. xi, 230. $35.00.

Later Medieval Philosophy (LMP), the sequel to John Marenbon's 1983 *Early Medieval Philosophy 480-1150* (EMP), aims to be not a historical account of later medieval philosophy but an " introduction . . . intended . . . to help " the reader " begin his own study of the subject" (p. **1).** To this end "Part One examines the organization of studies in medieval universities, the forms of writing and techniques of thought, the presuppositions and aims of thirteenth- and fourteenth-cntury scholars. Part Two examines in detail the way in which some important later medieval thinkers discussed a difficult and central question: the nature of intellectual knowledge" (p. 1).

Marenbon justifies his two-fold approach in the "Conclusion to Part One: What is Medieval Philosophy? " (pp. 83-90). Surveying three current approaches to medieval philosophy, Marenbon notes (1) a ' separationism ' between philosophy and theology provoked by ' rationalists ' like V. Cousin and B. Haureau and preserved in Catholic philosophical circles by such exponents as Fernand von Steenberghen; (2) a view that agrees " that it is right to consider the history of medieval philosophy as a separate subject from the history of medieval theology; but it is a philosophy which, nonetheless, depends on Christian revelation and cannot be understood in abstraction from certain fundamental tenets of the faith," viz. that of Etienne Gilson who maintains the existence of a 'Christian philosophy'; and (3) the 'modern analytic approach' advocated by Norman Kretzmann and others in the *Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy* ("to end the era in which it has been studied in a philosophical ghetto"). The third approach de-emphasizes " the theological context " of " the particular philosophical arguments they isolate " and " the origin and literary form of texts " (p. 87) to " concentrate on the philosophical problems which they believe they share with medieval scholars " and " to translate medieval texts so far as possible into modern terms ... " (pp. 86-87). The arguments for these three approaches, however, are "based, not on historical evidence about medieval attitudes to philosophy, hut on different conceptions of what philosophy should he" (p. 88). These hermeneutical presuppositions affect the selection and arrangement of evidence by the various sorts of historian. Marenhon offers a fourth approach: ' historical analysis ', which " aims both to bridge the distance between the interests and assumptions of a modern reader and

the writings of later medieval thinkers, and yet to take account of it " (p. 89). Two restrictions are involved; historical analysts must not make " anachronistic assumptions about the identity of the problems discussed in their texts" (p. 89) and must restrict the scope of their investigations " to a single topic (or a set of individual topics) " rather than" writing ... comprehensive *Histories"* (p. 90). Marenhon seems to recognize that there may he " patronizing " ways to take account of the difference between " medieval scholars " and " ourselves " hut such " limitations " are inescapable " conditions of disciplined thought " (p. 191).

Fortunately Marenhon has moved away from the parochial assumption governing his *Early Medieval Philosophy* "that any thinker who appeared to share the methods and interests of ·modern British philosophers was a philosopher, and that all other thinkers were theologians, mystics, poets, scientists or whatever, hut not philosophers." He now holds "that there is no single, identifiable subject-' philosophy'- which has been studied from Plato's time to the present day" (EMP, 1988 rev. ed., p. vii). Thus, Marenhon does not explicitly entertain the grand thesis that all or the most important forms of medieval philosophy are actually superior to all or the most important kinds of modern philosophy to justify the importance of studying medieval philosophy today (cf. Leo Strauss, *Philosophie und Gesetz)*. Instead Marenhon, noting that " *philosophia* has a wide range of reference " (LMP, p. 66) and tacitly assuming that philosophy is an important activity, focuses on the problem of intellectual knowledge. The selection of exactly this problem, however, is not incompatible with the view that the epistemological turn characteristic of modern philosophy is still taken as normative. Accordingly, Marenhon provokes in us such questions as, Is philosophy today as good as philosophy in the hands of the " sophisticated abstract thinkers " (p. **1)** of the Middle Ages? According to what criteria?

Part One consists of four chapters and a concluding section, each compendiously, usefully, and intelligently presented: (I) Teaching and learning in the universities, (2) The techniques of logic, (3) Philosophy: the ancients, the Arabs and the Jews, (4) The aims of arts masters and theologians. There are helpful tabulations of the normal student's academic career, of typical formats for disputed questions, and of the types of supposition in various authors; Marenhon correctly notes that, contrary to modern expectations, " commentary was often the vehicle for original thought " (p. 9) and focuses on the two scholastic methods of reading and disputation (pp. 16-20). As to logic, Marenhon's employment of modern terminology such as ' subset ' and ' class ' in his discussion of genus and species may he controversial hut is at least clear (p. 37) .

More seriously controversial, however, is the relationship between Avicenna and Aristotle on the relationship between the study of being and the study of God. According to Marenbon, " the study of being is far more intrinsically related to the study of God for the Islamic thinker than it was for his great predecessor" (p. 61). If this means that, for Avicenna, God or the ultimate causes are the *subject* of metaphysics, it is clearly wrong. For Avicenna explicitly rejects such a view, even when he admits that the ultimate causes are its *goal:* "Monstrata est igitur destructio illius opinionis qua dicitur quod suhiectum huius scientiae sunt causae ultimae, sed tamen debes scire quod hae sunt completio et quaesitum eius" *(Metaphysica,* Tr. 1, cap. l; Venice 1508, fol. 70v1). It is noteworthy that Marenbon refrains from mentioning Aristotle's use of the term 'theology' or 'divine science' to name the study until page 75-well after introducing the term ' first philosophy' (p. 66). This suggests that Marenbon is trying to get the ' *theos* ' as far as possible away from what others might regard as Aristotle's onto-theo-logical project. In this respect, Marenbon seems to owe more to Avicenna than he realizes: Marenbon's Aristotle, like the historical Avicenna, excludes God as subject of metaphysics in favor of common being; Avicenna, however, has God as goal.

Part Two contains seven rich and thought-provoking chapters and a conclusion: (5) Intellectual knowledge: the problem and its sources, (6) William of Auvergne, (7) Thomas Aquinas, (8) Modes and intentions: some arts masters on intellectual knowledge, (9) Henry of Ghent, (10) Duns Scotus: intuition and memory, (11) William of Ockham, and then the conclusion.

The valuable and well-focused bibliography (pp. 194-224) is divided into two sections. Section I (Primary Sources) is sub-divided into two parts: (i) "a list of some of the more important Greek and Arabic philosophical works available in Latin translation in the Middle Ages " and (ii) a list of editions of Latin primary texts and modern translations. Section II (Secondary Works) presents an excellent introductory bibliography commensurate with the stated objective. It would he helpful for future editions, however, to mention *The Domain of Logic according to St. Thomas Aquinas* by Robert Schmidt, S.J. (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966) in section 7.3; and to rectify the mistransliterations of *vovs 7TOL7JTLK6s* in section 5.3.

In all, Marenhon's clearly written and intelligent philosophical essay deserves a place on the shelves of undergraduate libraries as a complement to surveys like Armand Maurer's Gilsonian *Medieval Philosophy.*

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REVIEWS