# BALTHASAR'S USE OF THE THEOLOGY OF AQUINAS

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THE AIM OF THIS essay is to raise some questions about the internal consistency of Hans Urs von Balthasar's use of the theology of Thomas Aquinas. These are genuine questions. That is, they are not questions ("Is Balthasar's use of Aquinas consistent?") disguising or masking answers ("Balthasar's use of Aquinas is inconsistent"). While I hope the questions set an agenda for disputations between students of these two theologians, my aim is not to settle the many disputations between the theologies of Aquinas and Balthasar, but to propose some *quaestiones disputatae.* In Balthasar's terms, the aim is to set up the theater and put some characters on the stage, not to stage the drama itself.

Why bother? First, Balthasar's theology arises out of a tradition critical of the theology of Aquinas, and students of Aquinas can only ignore such objections at the price of abandoning Aquinas's habit of responding to such criticisms. The *locus classicus* of this critique is Balthasar's claim that he omits Aquinas from his canon of theological aestheticians because Aquinas is one of those whose "deep and lucid philosophical aesthetics" has "failed to achieve a theological translation, that is, to be seen as the unfolding of a theology based on biblical revelation" *(GL* II, 21).[1] Thomas Aquinas (Balthasar later says) "was more of a philosopher than a theologian" *(GL* III, 9). We shall see later that

' I shall use the following abbreviations:
*ST = Summa Theologiae.* Latin text and English translation, ed. Thomas Gilby, various translators (New York: McGraw-Hill; London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1964-80).
*GL =The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetic,* ed. Joseph Fessio, S.J., and John Riches, various translators, 7 vols. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press; New York: Crossroad Publications, 1982-91).

Balthasar also mentions other objections to Aquinas. In fact, part of my argument will be that this central criticism of Thomas 's aesthetics is intelligible only against the background of other even more important criticisms of Aquinas's theology.

I ought also to note at this early stage, however, that Balthasar 's criticisms of Aquinas are almost always carefully qualified. For example, in the *locus classicus* just cited, Balthasar objects to Aquinas's aesthetics, not his ethics or metaphysics; indeed, it is a criticism of Aquinas's *theological* aesthetics, not his *philosophical* aesthetics. Still further, Balthasar even says it "would perhaps" be possible to develop the "implicit" theological aesthetics in Thomas 's philosophical aesthetics; however, Balthasar (inexplicably, some would say at this point) thinks this could only be done "witn uncertain success" (GL II, 21).

One reason for the frequent allusiveness of Balthasar's objections to Aquinas is a second reason for bothering with Balthasar's use of Aquinas: in and with the firmness of Balthasar's criticisms of Aquinas, the vast majority of Balthasar's uses of Aquinas are constructive rather than critical. Indeed, if taking the measure of theological disputation were primarily a matter of weighing quotations, it could easily be shown that Balthasar's use of Aquinas is by far more positive than negative. More importantly, I shall propose that Balthasar notices features of Aquinas's theology not often noted (or still not noted often enough) by many students of Aquinas. This common ground between Balthasar and Aquinas recalls how, among Roman Catholics in the first part of this century, there was a sort of alliance among Catholic reformers-over against strains of Catholic traditionalisms-between some forms of Thomism and

*TD* = *Theodramatik,* 4 vols. (Einsiedeln: Johannes Verlag, 1973-83).

*T-D* = *Theo-drama: Theological Dramatic Theory,* various translators, *5* vols. planned (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1988-).

*TL* = *Theologik,* 3 vols. (Einsiedeln: Johannes Verlag, 1985-87).

For a summary of Balthasar's trilogy on beauty and goodness and truth, see his *Epilog* (Einsiedeln/Trier: Johannes Verlag, 1987) as well as *My Work: In Retrospect,* trans. Cornelia Capol (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993).

what was known as *la nouvelle theologie* (including Balthasar).[2] It is this common ground that ought to make us wary of turning the disputation between Balthasar and Thomas into a polemic.

Just as we ought not seek to turn Balthasar's objections to Aquinas into mere polemic, however, so we ought not seek to turn their common ground into mere irenicism, crying peace where there is no peace. After all, the second half of the twentieth century has taught us that *la nouvelle theologie* of the first part of the century embraced figures who we know were agreed in what they opposed (a kind of Catholic traditionalism), not in what they proposed. One of the most well-known instances of this is the argument between Karl Rabner and Balthasar, who were allies in the new theology of mid-century, firm critics by the end of the century.[3] In fact, it might even be said that, when variants of Catholic traditionalism *(ressourcement* gone to seed) or Catholic modernism *(aggiornamento* gone to seed) prevail, the oppositions between Thomas and Balthasar will be marginal to a common cause against the disintegration of *ressourcement* and *aggiornamento.*

Perhaps we live in such times and this essay must be a modestly marginal, even purely academic, exercise. That is, perhaps traditionalists and modernists have so set the agenda in both popular religion and academic theology that the ecclesial critics of both ought to put their inter-familial arguments on the back burner. But, then again, perhaps the issues at stake have little to do with whether we are traditionalists or modernists, conservatives or liberals. Perhaps the issues have more to do with how we

[2] For example, Gilson, after reading De Lubac's *Surnaturel,* told DeLubac that "I can only agree with you, because what you say is true. It cannot be doubted" (quoted in Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Theology of Henri de Lubac: An Overview* [San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1991], 14). But many Thomists opposed "the new theology"; see, for example, David L. Greenstock, T.O.P.,"Thomism and the New Theology," *The Thomist* 13 (1950): 567-96. For a recent example of a Thomist temptation to regard Gilson (a "Thomist") as "Barthian" (incipiently, one might say, "Balthasarian"), see Wayne Hankey, "Making Theology Practical: Thomas Aquinas and the Nineteenth Century Religious Revival," *Dionysius* 9 (1985): 85-127 (especially 96).

[3] See, for example, Rowan Williams, "Balthasar and Rabner" in *The Analogy of Beauty: The Theology of Hans Urs von Balthasar* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1986), 11 - 34.

ought to live and think in the sometimes illuminating and sometimes blinding light of the Gospel-ways by the theologies of Balthasar and Aquinas. Then, I think, the debate between Balthasar and Thomas will have more direct relevance. In fact, my own bias is that the failure in the dialogue between students of Thomas and predecessors of Balthasar may have been a contributing cause to the success of quasi-traditionalisms in the first part of the twentieth century, just as the current paucity of dialogue has been a contributing factor in the dominance of quasi-modernist theologies in the second part of the twentieth century. Both traditionalisms and modernisms, I tend to think, derive their strengths from unsettled issues between Balthasar and Aquinas.

But this essay does not directly depend on such dramatic claims (although I will briefly return to them at the end). The aim here is to set the stage for handling some disputed questions between Aquinas and Balthasar, while not underestimating or overestimating the agreements or disagreements between them. I will proceed in three steps. First, against the temptation to think that the nature of disputation between Aquinas and Balthasar is simple to state, I shall suggest that the dialogue between the theologies of Thomas and Balthasar has no ready-set form. Because we have no single text on which to build the dispute, the dispute needs to be *constructed.* Second, I shall suggest that the disputation can be constructed by sorting out their common grounds and oppositions from Balthasar's point of view. We can only understand Balthasar's criticisms from the point of view of these common grounds. Third, I will propose that there are three *primafacie* inconsistencies in Balthasar's use of Aquinas, inconsistencies which may or may not prove debilitating, depending on how Aquinas is interpreted on some specific theological issues.

## I. WHAT CAN BE DONE WITHOUT A TEXT?

The major problem about developing a conversation between Balthasar and Aquinas from Balthasar's point of view is that, although Balthasar makes persistent and substantive use of Aquinas as a theological resource throughout his writings, he

provides us with no synoptic treatment of Aquinas to rival his treatment of other theologians. For example, in 1945, Balthasar said that Aquinas's "genuine vitality disclosed itself to me in his less central writings" and hoped some day "to publish an overall interpretation" of these writings.[4] But, although Balthasar did publish an "overall interpretation" of some of these less central writings, he never wrote an overall interpretation of Thomas 's theology.

Admittedly, Balthasar does provide clues for a possible "overall interpretation." For example, Aquinas plays a key role in Balthasar's early essay on Catholic philosophy.[5] This "greatest of Christian thinkers" is cited as a model for "the art of breaking open all finite philosophical truth in the direction of Christ."[6] He has a peculiar "genius for ordering," while understanding that "ordering and systematizing need not be the same thing.[117] While applauding Marechal's effort to show "the complementary truth" of Thomas and Kant, Balthasar also deplores "transposing Thomas into the modality of the modern philosophy of identity."[8] On the other hand, Balthasar also says that, where one can no longer presuppose the unity of holiness and prudence as one can in the case of Thomas, Thomas 's "gift of clarification" (which "lives in some way from the grace of the risen Lord") can become "a disaster for thought."[9] Further, while Thomas's teaching on the real distinction between essence and existence has the possibility of teaching and learning from Bergson's "philosophy of life," modern philosophy generally "takes an ever stronger interest in individuality as such (instead of being inter-

[4] *My Work*, 12. Could such an overall interpretation be among Balthasar's *Nachlass?* In 1955, Balthasar noted that he had "a number of unpublished studies of the *Distinctio realis"* in which "the attempt is made to go beyond the Thomism of the schools" *(My Work*, 23 n. 9).

[5] "On the tasks of Catholic philosophy in our time," *Communio* 20 (1993): 147-87 (originally "Von der Aufgaben der Katholischen Philosophie in der Zeit," *Annalen der Philosophischen Gesellschaft der Innerschweiz* 3, nos. 2/3 [1946/1947): 1-38).

[6] "On the tasks of Catholic philosophy," 156, 158.

[7] "On the tasks of Catholic philosophy," 158, 176.

[8] "On the tasks of Catholic philosophy," 161, 177.

[9] "On the tasks of Catholic philosophy," 173.

ested, like Thomas, only in the species)."[10] Balthasar also says that it is "not possible in the school for the dialogical form of thought to win any decisive position," for the school's "dialogue of question and answer" is "still only a question put by the pupil which awaits the superior answer of the master in which the outward semblance of the question-which is sensed to be only a semblance, but is not yet understood completely *(primum videtur)*-must be dissolved."[11]

Balthasar's 1951 interpretation of Karl Barth's theology proposed some further elements of an "overall interpretation." Balthasar claims that "one would have to go back to Thomas Aquinas" to find someone who could rival Barth in reading Scripture, "combining superior gifts of understanding with goodness of heart."[12] While stating that "even an Aquinas is only *one* Doctor of the Church among others," he also called him "the greatest of cathedrals" (although "there are still others built in different styles from his Gothic").[13] Thomas (unlike Thomism) lived in a transitional situation, looking backward to the Fathers (with their focus on the one, concrete order of creation and redemption) and forward to modernity (particularly Vatican I's proclamation of the twofold order of knowledge, natural and supernatural)-hence "the Janus-faced character of [Thomas's] entire theological synthesis."[14] Nonetheless, Balthasar insisted that it was more appropriate to interpret Aquinas "in terms of the future than of the past."[15]

These claims, we shall see, become more intelligible once we set them in the context of Balthasar's trilogy. Nonetheless, thus far Balthasar has presented not so much a reading of the actual *texts* of Aquinas as a set of generalizations about Thomas's theology (generalizations which contrast Thomas to much of Thomism). Balthasar's 1954 commentary on *Summa Theologiae*

[10] "On the tasks of Catholic philosophy," 181-82, 186.

[11] "On the Tasks of Catholic Philosophy," 174. See also note 28 below.

[12] *The Theology of Karl Barth. Exposition and Interpretation,* trans. Edward T. Oakes, S.J. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1992), 26.

[13] *The Theology of Karl Barth,* 261. See Section 11.B. below on Aquinas's "style."

[14] *The Theology of Karl Barth,* 267.

[15] *The Theology of Karl Barth,* 263.

II-II, questions 171-82, however, supplies a very detailed exegesis of texts of Thomas-and provides an example of what Balthasar meant when he said in 1945 that Thomas's "genuine vitality disclosed itself to me in his less central writings." [16] These questions could hardly be called "central" to standard readings of Aquinas (whether in the 1950s or today). Much of Balthasar's commentary consists in a learned reading of Thomas 's *questions* against the background of over a millennium of theological traditions on the various issues that Thomas discusses in this part of the *Summa Theologiae.* Further, in these questions, Balthasar says, Thomas deals with the "specifically Christian." [17] That is, Thomas here deals not with *"common* consideration of virtues and vices" *(Prima Secundae),* nor even with the particularities and singularities of human activity which "pertain to *all* human states" *(Secunda Secundae,* questions 1-170)but with those particularities which pertain to those "determinate states" Paul writes about in I Corinthians 12:4-6: the varieties of graces, works, and ministries in the Christian life (Prologue to II-II, q. 1). In fact, Balthasar notes that in Thomas's commentary on I Corinthians (although, interestingly, not in this particular section of the *Summa)* Thomas appropriates each of the three diverse charisms to the Spirit, the Son, and the Father. [18] Here we catch a glimpse of what Balthasar may have meant by Thomas 's "genuine vitality": an interest in the "specifically Christian," embedded in the Christian tradition, and focused on the triune God. Nonetheless, although Balthasar's commentary is significant both as an interpretation of Aquinas and for the later argument in his trilogy (e.g., *GL* I, 166, 292f., 315f., 409; *TL* ill, 128 n. 28,

[16] *Besondere Gnadengaben und die Zwei Wege Menschlichen Lebens. 11-11. 171-182, Summa Theologica,* trans. Dominikanem und Benediktinem Deutschlands und Osterreichs, ed. Albertus Magnus Akademie, vol. 23 (Heidelberg/MUnchen: F.H. Kerle; Graz-Wien-Salzburg: Anton Pustet, 1954); see *My Work,* 66. According to Johann Roten, this commentary was "called forth by [Balthasar's] confrontation with Adrienne's [Adrienne von Speyr's] charismatic and mystical gifts" ("The 1\vo Halves of the Moon: Marian Anthropological Dimensions in the Common Mission of Adrienne von Speyr and Hans Urs von Balthasar,» in *Hans Urs von Balthasar: His Life and Work,* ed. David L. Schindler [San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1991), 77).

[17] *Besondere Gnadengaben,* 253.

[18] *Besondere Gnadengaben,* 253.

290 n. 18), it does not aim to provide "an overall interpretation" of Aquinas.

Finally, something similar must also be said about Balthasar's use of Thomas within his trilogy of *The Glory of the Lord*, *Theodrama*, and *Theologik* (see note 1 above). Here I do not mean the abundant use of Thomas that can be tracked in the name-indices of the many volumes of the trilogy. I mean the more extended (but still relatively brief) treatments of Aquinas's metaphysics (GL IV, 393-412; here, Balthasar says, Thomas "receives his due" [19]) and his soteriology (*TD* III, 241-245). Also, the first volume of the *Theologik* (originally published in 1947 but reissued as the first of three volumes in 1985) makes use of Aquinas as a sign that Balthasar has not strayed too far from what he calls "the great tradition" (*TL* I, ix), although there is no single section on Aquinas. I shall return to these brief treatments of Aquinas in the trilogy. The point here, however, is that these pages treat aspects of (or moments of) Aquinas's theology rather than propose an "overall interpretation."

In sum, what Peter Henrici irenically says of Thomas's philosophy could also be said of his theology: although "the thinker Thomas does not appear, his [Thomas's] thinking is omnipresent [in Balthasar's thought]"-but ."Balthasar integrates Thomas's thinking, rather than being himself integrated by it." [20] Less irenically, an "overall interpretation" of the theologian Thomas does not appear, although Balthasar makes use of Thomas 's theology throughout his trilogy and elsewhere; however, Balthasar has criticisms of Aquinas which make Thomas 's theology part of a larger "whole" rather than taking Thomas's theology as a "whole" into which Balthasar's own would be integrated.

Why? I do not know why Balthasar made extensive use of Aquinas without producing a synoptic treatment of Aquinas to rival his treatment of other theologians. Perhaps it was because

[19] *My Work*, 82-83.

[20] Peter Henrici, S.J., "The Philosophy of Hans Urs von Balthasar," *Hans Urs von Balthasar. His Life and Work*, ed. David L. Schindler (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1991), 149-67 (especially 162-63 on Aquinas). Henrici provides a useful summary of Balthasar's use of Aquinas up through *Herrlichkeit*, but underplays the oppositions between the two.

Balthasar could not see clearly how to write such a synoptic treatment; if Balthasar says a number of things about Aquinas's theology that are *primafacie* inconsistent, the possibility cannot be ruled out beforehand that Balthasar mirrors the confusion rather than makes an advance from the ways non-Thomist theologies have related themselves to Thomism; or, perhaps, mirrors paradoxes in Thomas's texts themselves. But, then again, perhaps such a synoptic treatment would have required dealing not only with the primary literature ("Thomas") but also with such a large body of secondary literature ("Thomism") that it would have distracted Balthasar from his main project.

But there is little point speculating about such matters here. The main point is that we do not find Balthasar's treatment of Aquinas ready-made in a single text. Against the temptation to think that Balthasar's critique of Thomas is a "given" to be described and debated, we must *construct* Balthasar's use of Aquinas, without pretending that it must have a coherence it might only have if Balthasar had produced a more synoptic treatment. The risk of painting a picture or telling a tale of Balthasar's use of Aquinas that merely fits our expectations is considerable. The main way to discipline this risk is by convincing the reader that our construction is not *ex nihilo* but is a construction from diverse texts by Balthasar on Aquinas.

## II. IDENTITY AND DIFFERENCE

One way to gather together the oppositions and common grounds between Aquinas and Balthasar is to survey the use of Aquinas in Balthasar's trilogy. If we do so on Balthasar's own terms, we find three different sorts of differences.

### *A. Historical Contexts and Charisms*

How can we account for Balthasar's simultaneously critical and constructive use of Aquinas? First, Balthasar thinks that Thomas Aquinas has a quite specific historical context. But Balthasar turns this truism into an important remark in the first volumes of his trilogy by locating Aquinas in what we might call a non-developmentalist, charismatic reading of the history of theological aesthetics. Balthasar claims that "a continuous his-

tory of theological aesthetics can . . . not be written, because it simply does not exist" *(GL* II, 20). It not only does not exist but seemingly cannot exist for at least two reasons. First, history (Balthasar says) is composed not only of continuities but also discontinuities. There is no such thing (apparently) as a simply "continuous history" of anything, much less theological aesthetics. The history of theological aesthetics is a history of diverse, partly overlapping and partly incommensurable theologies which seem to resist any single narrative, or drama.

The reason for this is Balthasar's second reason for being suspicious of developmental readings of history: "new and original" aesthetic perceptions, "which certainly, in the succession of the ages, are related to one another," ultimately break forth "from the midpoint which is beyond history," i.e., from the eternal trinitarian God. "In this realm there is no more scope for development as such" *(GL* II, 20). Thus, Balthasar's reading of Aquinas is done in the context of this non-developmentalist reading of the history of this aesthetic aspect (or, to dramatize the noun "aspect," this moment) of the history of theology. The time *(kairos)* of theological aesthetics is not just *any* time. Aesthetics becomes a paradigm for how history, we might say, is epiphany (i.e., the appearance of the triune God).

Balthasar's reading of Aquinas, however, is also refracted through a view of theologians that aims to see not only the form of revelation and the teaching of the Church but also "the commissions of theological charisms in which individual theologians can share" *(GL* II, 28; cf. 32, 141, 213). Theologians have different charisms in different historical circumstances. A claim that a theologian does not embody (or does not fully embody) a charism is fully consistent with a claim that the theologian was an authentic (saintly) theologian in her or his circumstances.

What, then, is Thomas's *kairos* and *charis?* Here Balthasar expands the reading of Thomas we can now say was intimated in *The Theology of Karl Barth.* Thomas is a "transient" (or, as he had said earlier, "transitional") figure, for he "is a kairos in the sense of being an historically transient state between the old monastic world of thought, which, whether Greek or Christian, saw philosophy and theology as a unity and the approaching

dualistic world which … will try to rend philosophy and the theology of revelation asunder" *(GL* IV, 396-397; cf. *GL* V, 9-15).[21] This is the crux of the narrative Balthasar supplies for Aquinas's metaphysics. It means (to mention only one example for now) that, on the one hand, in contrast to the modern split between philosophy and theology, Aquinas's *i'n.telligere* is wholly at the service of the *credere,* since for him "the normative tradition of thought remains the integrated philosophical and theological method common to both the Platonic-Aristotelian and the Augustinian-Dionysian streams" *(GL* I, 72; cf. 146). (The influence of Denys as well as Augustine on Aquinas is crucial for Balthasar's reading of Aquinas *[GL* II, 148ff.].) Balthasar much prefers Aquinas to modern theologies which eliminate aesthetics from theology. After Thomas, "official" (in contrast to non-official, "lay") theologians who are "able to treat the radiant power of the revelation of Christ both influentially and originally, without any trace of decadence … are rare" *(GL* II, 15-16). And yet, on the other hand, Balthasar also claims that "Thomas is a kairos more through his general ontology than his aesthetics" *(GL* IV, 393). What is important to emphasize is that Balthasar's "non-developmentalist reading" is only a reading of the history of the *aesthetic* moment of theology, for Balthasar does offer a reading of the history of *metaphysics* in which there *is* "development," at least from ancient myth and philosophy until Thomas Aquinas *(GL* IV). In fact, although Aquinas is not a member of the elite constellation of theological aestheticians, Thomas has his own chapter in the history of metaphysics (IV, 393-412).

In this chapter, Balthasar argues that there are two sides to Aquinas's contribution. On the one hand, Aquinas harmonizes the aesthetic tradition he inherits "without, so it would seem, making an original contribution of his own to aesthetics in the strict sense" *(GL* IV, 393). On the other hand, "at another level everything is put in a new light by the fact that the doctrine of transcendentals is interpreted in the perspective of Thomas's

[21] Balthasar will speak of Thomas as both "transient" *(verganglich* [here, from *GL* IV, 396] and "transitional" *(uberganglich* [especially in Balthasar's *The Theology of Karl Barth,* 267, 270]).

major creative achievement-his definition of *esse* and its relation to essences" *(GL* IV, 393). In a dense argument, Balthasar suggests that Thomas 's distinction between essence and existence simultaneously preserves traditional "essentialist aesthetics" and transcends it-in at least two ways: the "starting point" of aesthetics becomes "(more than ever) corporeal beauty" and this beauty "can only be finally grasped in thought at the super-essential level" *(GL* I\T, 407). In fact, here Balthasar makes his most important constructive claim about Aquinas: the "metaphysics of Thomas is ... the philosophical reflection of the free glory of the living God of the Bible" *(GL* IV, 406-407).[22]

Nonetheless, our own historical context is quite different from Aquinas's. If Aquinas's circumstances were "transitional" or "transient," Balthasar sometimes characterizes our circumstances as "post-Christian" (e.g., *GL* IV, 14; *T-D* I, 321; II, 417-28). It is not easy to say precisely what Balthasar means by this. On the one hand, Balthasar (as he says) prefers Goethe to Kant -that is, he prefers what he calls "Classical Mediation" over the immediacy of the modern "Metaphysics of the Spirit" *(GL* V, 247-610). But, despite this ("conservative," we might say) preference for ancient over modern philosophies, Balthasar insists that the '"battle between ancients and moderns' is a mock battle"; the real issue is "a decision between Christianity and nihilism" *(GL* V, 249). To characterize our circumstances as "post-Christian" is to suggest that we live not in the "middle" ages but "at the end time," confronted with novel Gnosticisms and Titanisms as well as "the Other Face" of Judaism *(T-D* ill, 417-28). It is in these circumstances that Balthasar enacts his own theological charism-a charism centered less on the movement between Thomas 's evangelical (mendicant) vows and the university than

[22] I realize that Balthasar also says that Aquinas's distinction between *"species* and *lumen* ('form' and 'splendour')" frames the organization of *The Glory of the Lord (GL* I, 10). Why not claim that *this* is Balthasar's "most constructive use" of Aquinas? Because Balthasar also points out that this distinction is Augustine's *(GL* II, 115) as well as Plotinus' *(GL* IV, 307). Balthasar's nuanced critique of Aquinas on beauty permits Balthasar to make periodic use of Aquinas's aesthetic categories and judgments (particularly when these categories and judgments re-articulate the tradition), without implying that these are the crucial points in the dialogue.

on a movement "between the world and the monastery" in the Community of St. John. [23]

I will later raise some questions about the internal consistency of the historical setting Balthasar provides or presumes for Aquinas and the theological use he makes of him. For now what is crucial is that this narrative is intrinsic (rather than extrinsic or accidental) to Balthasar's use of Aquinas's theology.

*B. Theological Styles and The Drama of the Question*

How is it that Thomas provides such an acute philosophical reflection of the glory of God but without an apt theology of that glory (i.e., a theological aesthetics)? Balthasar once said that calling his theological aesthetics "the masterpiece, the work of my life" is "to misunderstand my fundamental intention." [24] Clearly the three parts of the trilogy need to be read in light of each other rather than in isolation.

For example, there is another strand of Balthasar's contextualizing of theologians like Aquinas. Balthasar's *ressourcement* not only attends to historical context but also to what Balthasar calls theological "styles" in those contexts -styles embodied (inscribed) in written texts. Balthasar's summary of diverse theological styles *(GL* II, 24-26) is a succinct display of his learning; his attempt to be inclusive of all kinds of theological styles while not privileging any one of them for all purposes is impressive. In this context, Balthasar says that Aquinas is one of those theologians who "concentrate entirely on the inner structure and ordering of the mystery and seek to mediate in his style as faithful an impression of them as possible, as do Irenaeus or Cyril of Jerusalem, and in particular Anselm and

[23] On Thomas 's movement between the mendicant orders and the university, see Josef Pieper, *Guide to Thomas Aquinas,* trans. Richard and Clara Winston (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1991), 22ff; on the community of St. John and Balthasar's movement between the monastery and the Church, see Johann Roten, S.M., "The TWo Halves of the Moon" (note 16 above), 68, 72, *75,* 85. On Balthasar's own view of his own theological charisms, see *My Work in Retrospect,* especially 43, 58, *95*

[24] *My Work,* 96. According to Peter Henrici, *"Theodramatik* was conceived before the Aesthetic, and in its origins, it perhaps goes back still further [than the *Theologik?];* it was certainly closer to von Balthasar's heart" ("A Sketch of Balthasar's Life," in *Hans Urs von Balthasar: His Life and Work,* 33).

Thomas Aquinas, who strive in their style for the utmost self-stripping and a pure transparency and service to the matter in hand" *(GL* II, 24-25; *GL* ill, 24). Such clear and rigorous order contrasts with someone like Bonaventure for whom "revelation appears to the outsider like something 'uncertain, with no order, and like a kind of virgin forest'" *(GL* II, 266, the internal quote from Bonaventure). Aquinas is "the greatest artist of order and organization in the history of thought," says Balthasar *(GL* III, 284).[25]

Thus far this sort of praise seems to cohere with Balthasar's praise of Aquinas's charism for metaphysics, at least for those for whom "metaphysics" and "order" are mutually resonant. However, what distinguishes such remarks about Aquinas's clarity and order from cliches which can praise this aspect of Aquinas's "style" while dismissing what Aquinas has to say? The answer to this question is, I think, only clear in Balthasar's *Theo-drama.* Here Balthasar finds the medieval *summae* to be "dramatic cells" composed of questions, answers, dialogue, "open and searching" *(T-D* I, 127). What distinguishes Balthasar's praise of the order of Aquinas's metaphysics from the way others might praise Aquinas on these grounds is (I propose) that Balthasar reads Aquinas's metaphysics as articulated in such "dramatic cells."

This is obviously related to the use that Balthasar makes of Aquinas. If Aquinas's "style" is not simply orderly and organized, but orderly *the way* such dramatic cells are orderly, Aquinas can become a resource not primarily in the logical order of the *Summa* but also in its "dramatic order." This is perhaps clearest when Balthasar praises Aquinas's exegesis. The time of Aquinas, Balthasar says, was "a time when theology and exegesis were so close to each other . . -. and the interpretation of Scripture was always in touch with the drama of revelation" *(T-*DI, 127). Recall that Balthasar does not just praise Aquinas's metaphysics but praises it precisely because it is "the philosophi-

[25] Recall also the claims for Aquinas's powers of order and clarity in "The Tasks of Catholic Philosophy" above.

cal reflection of the free glory of the living God *of the Bible" (GL* IV, 406-407).

There are a number of examples of Balthasar's reading of Aquinas as a particular kind of biblical theologian. One of the key examples is "the Thomist paradox (which Henri de Lubac has again brought to light): man strives to fulfill himself in an Absolute and yet, although he is *'causa sui,'* he is unable to achieve this by his own power or by attaining any finite thing or finite good. Precisely this, according to Thomas, constitutes man's dignity" III, 225-26).[26] Thomas, according to Balthasar, has aptly depicted this central moment of the drama of the interaction between infinite and finite freedoms.

Even more importantly for Balthasar, the drama of the interaction of divine and human freedoms in creation presumes an inner-trinitarian "drama." As Aquinas puts it, "God the Father creates the creature through his Word who is the Son and through his Love who is the Holy Spirit. Thus, the processions of the persons are the rationales *(rationes)* of the begetting of creatures, insofar as they include the essential attributes of knowing and willing" (STI, q. 45, a. 6; quoted at *T-D* m, 54). It is axiomatic for theological drama that a non-trinitarian God could not be Creator *(TD* IV, 54).

Most importantly of all, for both Aquinas and Balthasar, the eternal processions within God are identical with the temporal missions of Word and Spirit *(T-D* I, 646; *TD* IV, 53-56). Here Balthasar appeals to Thomas 's questions on the mission of the divine persons, where Thomas sketches the grammar of the relations between the immanent and economic trinity as complex relations of identity and difference between terms applying to God in eternity and time *(ST* I, q. 43, aa. 1-8). These examples suggest the remarkable agreement Balthasar articulates between Thomas 's and his own vision of theological drama as the inter-

[26] See *The Theowgy of Karl Barth,* 282 n. 27 for analysis of a particular text in Thomas on this score; also, *T-D* m, 271-73, 416; *TD* m, 130. Balthasar uses "paradox" in a special sense closer to "mystery" than "logical contradiction."

action of divine and human freedoms grounded in God's inner-trinitarian relations.[27]

We may be puzzled when we compare this use of Aquinas with the critique in *The Glory of the Lord.* How can Aquinas be lacking theologically when his theology (like Balthasar's) is focused on the trinitarian drama of divine and human freedoms? It is when we turn from Balthasar's "program notes" on the *characters* of the theological drama to the *action* of the drama itself, however, that we find opposition between Aquinas and Balthasar--on two key issues. First, Thomas Aquinas was "a Christian fighting for the value of the individual" as "he passionately defended the view that divine providence extends not only to genera and species but also to the individual members which God created as such" *(T-D* I, 549; cf. *T-D* III, 204, 458). And yet, on the other hand, one can ask "whether Thomas ... was in a position to lead the battle for the Christian dignity of the individual to a triumphant conclusion. For here the human person becomes an individual *ratione materiae,* and an entity is more intelligible the more it is abstracted from matter and generalized" *(T-D* I, 550-51). At various points in his *Theodrama,* Balthasar suggests what he might mean. For example, he says that the *imago trinitatis* in human persons is not (as for Thomas) "primarily in the human soul" but in "interpersonality" *(T-D* III, 459). And his critique of Thomas's claims about the knowledge of Jesus, while appreciative of Thomas's insistence that all knowledge is through the senses, criticizes Thomas for neglecting how human knowledge (including Jesus') comes through an other, a Thou (e.g., in Jesus' case, Mary) *(T-D* III, 174-75).

As far as I can see, however, Balthasar pursues this criticism less in relation to Thomas's anthropology (e.g., Thomas's way of explicating what makes us irreducibly unique individuals) than in relation to the "individuality" of the trinitarian persons. This

[27] The relations between immanent and economic trinity are particularly complex because of what Balthasar calls the "trinitarian inversion" that occurs because of the difference between what is prior in the order of nature and of time; to explain this trinitarian inversion, Balthasar (once again!) appeals to Thomas-this time the distinction at *ST* ill, q. 7, a. 13; see *T-D* m, 185-86.

is a point to which I shall return. However, it is perhaps worth speculating that this criticism may also be related to Balthasar's contention (early in his life and outside the trilogy) that it is "not possible in the school for the dialogical form of thought to win any decisive position," for the school's "dialogue of question and answer" is "still only a question put by the pupil which awaits the superior answer of the master in which the outward semblance of the question-which is sensed to be only a semblance, but is not yet understood completely *(primum videtur)* -must be dissolved." [28] If so (i.e., if Balthasar's criticism of Aquinas's "individualism" is related to Balthasar's criticism of "the school"), we can speculate that Balthasar's appreciation of "the drama of the question" has its counter-point in a critique of the "style" of the *quaestio,* unless that "style" is implemented in relation to the right "drama."

Balthasar's second criticism of Aquinas's "drama of the question" is probably more important, for it is a criticism of Thomas 's soteriology. Balthasar contends that there are five basic soteriological motifs in Scripture: reconciliation as God's giving up God's only Son, as an exchange of places, as a setting free, as an initiation into the trinitarian life, as a return to the merciful love of God *(TD* III, 221-23). Balthasar then diagnoses the soteriological tradition by how well a theologian holds these motifs together. The centrality of "satisfaction" in Thomas is a variant of the third biblical motif, although (says Balthasar) Thomas does relate it to all the other biblical motifs. Nonetheless, soteriology as a dramatic exchange (the key patristic motif, says Balthasar) is down-played in that there is lacking in Thomas "any inner connection *[jede innere Beriihrung]* between Jesus and the reality of sin as such" *(TD* III, 243) because Christ continues to enjoy the beatific vision in his suffering *(TD* III, 243-44, with many references to the Tertia Pars; see also *T-D* III, 241-42).

[28] "On the Tasks of Catholic Philosophy," 174; see also note 11 above. My guess is that this point is not unrelated to why Baltbasar did not consider his own mission primarily academic or scholastic. We might say that the Cartesian *quaestio* is too solipsistic for Balthasar, and tbe scholastic *quaestio* too centered on tbe school to provide an embracing theological "style."

Here we touch on one of the centers of Balthasar's theology. Only a "dramatic soteriology," Balthasar contends, can give an adequate account of the suffering of God, even unto God's embrace of Godforsakenness-hence the importance of Christ's descent into hell for Balthasar (and his critique of Thomas 's and others' interpretation of this descent [e.g., *GL* III, 83-85]). And this leads to a critique of the eschatology of the tradition (including Thomas) that climaxed in the equipoise of heaven and hell (see especially *TD* IV, 284-91).[29]

Once again, we may ask questions about the internal consistency of an appreciation of the paradox of infinite (trinitarian) and finite freedom in Thomas-and a critique of Thomas's anthropology and soteriology. But first we need to isolate a final set of common grounds and differences between Aquinas and Balthasar.

C. *Trinity and Theological Arguments about Truth*

For some, these issues of historical context (II.A. above) and theological style (II.B. above) will seem secondary to analyzing the arguments Aquinas and Balthasar make for their particular truth-claims. But this is not the case for Balthasar or (Balthasar's) Aquinas. For Balthasar (as well as Aquinas, on Balthasar's reading), questions about the adjudication of competing truth-claims are inseparable from theological aesthetics (II.A. above) and theo-drama (II.B.).

Nonetheless, it is also the case that issues of truth raise yet a third set of issues. Balthasar's *Theologik* is about how God's revelation, aesthetically perceived and dramatically enacted, is true -and how this truth is one with its beauty and goodness *(TL* I, vii-viii). The first volume of this *Theologik* is about the truth of the world, climaxing in God's truth as principle and end of the

[29] But, on this score, one must once again emphasize that Balthasar's criticisms of Thomas 's eschatology are more appreciative of Thomas than they are of much of the tradition on this score. See the more constructive than critical use of Thomas in Balthasar's *Dare we Hope 'That All Men Be Saved"? with a Short Discourse on Hell,* trans. Dr. David Kipp and Rev. Lothar Krauth (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1988), especially chapter 4.

world *(TL* I, x-xi, 20). The second volume focuses on the truth of God's Word as the norm of worldly truth *(TL* I, xi, xvii-xviii), while the final volume is about the Spirit of truth as the Spirit of the Father through the Son who divinizes (as the Greeks say) or incorporates (as the West said) us into God's triune life *(TL* m, 15)-and so unifying human beauty and goodness and truth.

Recall that Balthasar here says that he periodically refers to Thomas Aquinas to show that he has not strayed far "from the great tradition" *(TL* I, x). Nonetheless, like *The Glory of the Lord* and *Theo-drama, Theologik* has no overall interpretation of Aquinas on truth; the reader is left to piece together uses of Aquinas that span three volumes. Rather than dare a full-scale comparison of Aquinas and Balthasar on this issue, I will merely point out one constructive and one critical use of Aquinas in these volumes.

Perhaps the most important use of Aquinas in the *Theologik* is Balthasar's use of Aquinas's claim that "a natural thing, placed between two intellects, is said to be true according to its correspondence to either" *(TL* II, 32 n. 9).[30] Balthasar is, of course, thinking of Thomas 's claim that "something is said to be true by its relation to intellect, divine and human."[31] Truth is defined, then, not simply as *adaequatio rei et intellectus* in general but also "in a relation to the divine intellect" *(ST* I, q. 16, a. 2, ad 2). Truth is not simply the "truth of the world" *(TL* I) but also the "truth of God" *(TL* II). Truth in this sense is, says Aquinas, appropriated to the Son *(ST* I, q. 16, a. 6, ad 2; I, q. 39) who announces "I am the truth" *(TL* II, 13ff.).

Balthasar also makes use of Thomas's treatment of the logic of trinitarian discourse when he discusses, for example, whether the trinitarian relations or processions are logically prior *(TL*

[30] Here Balthasar quotes (without citing) *De veritate* q. 1, a. 2 and the 1951 edition of a text by Joseph Pieper, a later edition of which is now translated as *Living the 1'ruth* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989). See also *ST* I, q. 16, a. 1.

[31] *De veritate* q. 1, a. 6; English translation by Robert W. Mulligan, S.J. (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1952), 1:32. See also Pieper, *Living the 1'ruth,* 51. For an important debate among contemporary students of Thomas over this issue, see Bruce Marshall, "Thomas, Thomisms, and 'fruth," *The Thomist* 56 (1992): 499-524.

II, 121-24, 147-48). And yet, despite this use of Aquinas's *Deveritate*, Balthasar is centrally interested in what he might call a trinitarian account of truth centered on a pneumatology.[32] Jesus promises "the Spirit of truth" Gohn 16:13ff.; see *TL* ill, 13). On this score, Balthasar is interested in developing a pneumatology that can do justice to both the Spirit's relationship to Father and Son and the Spirit's identity as a distinct *hypostasis-a* pneumatology that can do justice to both a Latin focus on "incorporation" and a Greek focus on "divinization," both Word and Spirit, both the Western *filioque* and the Eastern procession of the Spirit "through the Son."

Once again, Balthasar's critique is nuanced. The Spirit is not a person in the same way that the Father and Son are persons; the Holy Spirit, says Balthasar quoting Aquinas, has a distinct *modus existendi (TL* III, 124-26). **It** is foolish, Balthasar says, to charge the scholastics with forgetting the Spirit. On the other hand, Balthasar also says that thinking of the Spirit as the mutual love between Father and Son does not yet do justice to the person of the Spirit as such *(TL* III, 129). Balthasar's critique of Aquinas on truth is of a piece with his critique of the majority opinion in the West on the procession of the Spirit from the Father *filioque*. Balthasar's *Theologik* is an effort to develop a trinitarian account of truth which can embrace both Latin and Greek, Western and Eastern visions of God. His resolution of the East-West dispute centers on the claim that the Spirit can only be articulated in "two reciprocally related sentences," as the unity of the Father and Son as well as the fruit of their love.[33]

**If** the use of Aquinas in the *Theodrama* implied a trinitarian reading of Aquinas, the use of Aquinas in the *Theologik* suggests a critique of that trinitarian theology. Rather than pursue the critique of the *Theologik* further on this score, however, we can

[32] See also "The Holy Spirit as Love," in *Creator Spirit, Explorations in Theology*, vol. 3, trans. Brian McNeil, C.R.V. (Ignatius Press, 1993), 117-34.

[33] E.g., *TL* II, 123 ("zwei *gegenlitufigen* Siitzen" [Balthasar's emphasis]; ill, 142). Needless to say, Balthasar is writing these last two volumes of *Theologik* at the same time as the official dialogues between Eastern Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism are maturing, including the effort to sort out those aspects of the traditional disputes over *thefilioque* which involve substantive theological arguments; see note 44 below.

find the most succinct statement of his criticism not in the *Theologik* but (to return to the beginning of this part of this essay) in the theological aesthetics. In the introduction to his constellation of theologians of beauty, Balthasar says that these theological visions "can be ordered to some extent in accordance with their grasp of the formal object of theology" in four different ways *(GL* II, 22-24). First, the formal object can be "God in himself" (e.g., Evagrius, Gregory the Great, Eckhart, John of the Cross, Fenelon, and "the prevailing world-view of the East"). The formal object can also be "God's Revelation"-in three different ways. Second, God can be revealed "as the one who has found the culmination of his self-being in the other, in man, in Jesus Christ: here we find Maximus, Nicholas of Cusa, Soloviev, and *in all essentials Thomas Aquinas"* (my emphasis). Third, the formal object can be Jesus Christ, but in such a way that "sin, suffering and death are now also represented in the formal object itself" (e.g., Bonaventure, Peguy, Pascal, Hamann). Finally, the formal object of theology may be the Holy Spirit" (e.g., Joachim, Hegel, Schleiermacher, Mohler, Pilgrim, and "a number of Russians').

Balthasar is perhaps thinking here of Thomas's discussion of the threefold *(tripliciter)* way of considering the object of faith *(ST* II-II, q. 2, a. 2). With regard to our intellectual powers, says Aquinas, the material object of faith is "believing in God" *(credere Deum)* and the formal object is "believing God" *(credere Deo)* who is the *veritas prima (ST* II-II, q. 1, a. 1). Further, "the first basis for classifying the articles of faith is that some pertain to the majesty of the Godhead, some to the mystery of Christ's humanity which is the sacrament of piety (as is said in I Timothy [3, 16])"*(ST* II-II, q. 2, a. 8). The "mystery of Christ's humanity" is analyzed in detail in the *Tertia Pars,* where Thomas brings his "entire theological discourse to completion by considering the Saviour himself and his benefits to the human race," where the benefits include the sacraments and eternal life *(ST* III, *Prologus).*

It is tempting at this point to think that Aquinas and Balthasar contrast in the same way as do the second and third ways, that is, as Aquinas contrasts with Bonaventure. For

example, Balthasar does periodically contrast Aquinas and Bonaventure, saying that for Aquinas God is the formal object of theology while for Bonaventure it is Christ *(TL* ill, 28).[34] And there is little doubt that Balthasar sometimes seems to side with the third option above, i.e., Bonaventure's focus on the crucified Christ. And yet, in sketching his third option, Balthasar also says that this third option "risks slipping into, or a change into anthropology, when faith in Christ threatens to become simply the 'authenticity' of man (Schleiermacher, Kierkegaard, Bultmann)" *(GL* II, 23, 358-59). The formal object of theology for Balthasar is the form of all four of the formal objects he sketches: the trinitarian being of God, expressed or enacted in creation and Christ (particula.rly Christ crucified) and the eschatological Spirit. "Seeing the form" is seeing this God. If so, Balthasar's critique of Aquinas's formal object at this point is a critique of Aquinas's pneumatology.

In sum, as in the two previous sections, we see that Balthasar makes use of Thomas both constructively and critically. Thomas provides the framework for defining truth as constituted by divine (trinitarian) and human intellects, and is criticized not so much for what he says as for what he does not say about the particularity of the Spirit's *hypostasis* and the shape (form) this Spirit gives to theology's formal object. Balthasar's criticism of Thomas's aesthetics, with which I began, ends up a penetrating reading of Thomas as trinitarian theologian as well as criticism of Thomas's (and Western) pneumatology.

## ill. INTERNAL INCONSISTENCIES

I hope I have persuaded the reader that, despite Balthasar's lack of a single sustained treatment of Aquinas to rival the treatments he gives other theologians, he makes persistent and massive use of Aquinas's theology. In the process, Balthasar interprets Aquinas's theology in ways still too frequently over-

[34] Also in 1961, outside the trilogy, Balthasar says that the "formal object of theology" is "the mystery of God in his divine depth as this discloses itself in Jesus Christ"; see "Philosophy, Christianity, Monasticism," *Explorations in Theology II: Spouse of the Word,* trans. Fr. Brian McNeil, C.R.V. et al. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1991), 366.

looked: he gives careful attention to Aquinas's philosophy only in relation to his theology and his theology only in relation to his exegesis; he attends not simply to individual *questions* or sets of questions but to a reading of Aquinas's "style" as an *ordo* of dramatic questions, so that the questions Aquinas asks are questions within and about a drama of infinite and finite freedoms; he reads Aquinas as a trinitarian theologian for whom the economic work of Word and Spirit are central.

On the other hand, I hope I have also suggested how Balthasar's criticisms of Aquinas are intelligible only in the context of the movement of Balthasar's trilogy. Thus, while reading Aquinas as a trinitarian theologian, Balthasar doubts that Thomas can account for the particularity of the Spirit and thus overcome the divide between Greek and Latin visions of the trinity. While approving of Aquinas's rendering of the basic paradox of divine and human freedom, Balthasar dissents from key aspects of Aquinas's anthropology and soteriology: he does not think the former can account for radical individuality or the latter for God's embrace of our sin. While claiming that Aquinas presents us with a "philosophical reflection of the free glory of the living God of the Bible," Balthasar also thinks that Aquinas's aesthetics "failed to achieve a theological translation" *(GL* II, 21).

What does this imply for the conduct of the disputation? First, from Balthasar's point of view, this implies that their disagreements need to be located in relation to their diverse charisms in a common tradition as well as their diverse enactments of theological style. If Balthasar is correct, historical (dramatic) context and theological (aesthetic) style, far from being extrinsic or accidental to theological disputation, are essential to it (for Balthasar as well as Balthasar's Thomas).

Once we are attuned to dramatic context and aesthetic style, however, the temptation at this stage is to argue that Balthasar has correctly and/or incorrectly interpreted Aquinas--and to draw the appropriate conclusion. Thus, some might argue that, if Balthasar is correct, his theology provides a massive alternative to Aquinas-or, if Balthasar is incorrect, he is another in a long line of instances of failed critics of Thomism. And, of

course, still others might argue that Aquinas and Balthasar are each mistaken relative to yet another alternative. I think, however, that any of these moves would be premature. My argument at this stage is more modest, for I wish to suggest that Balthasar's criticisms are not *prima facie* consistent with each other. By sifting these inconsistencies I hope-not to settle the disputation-but to drive students of Aquinas and Balthasar back to their texts so that the dispute can be conducted on these particular issues. In any case, here are three internal inconsistencies, each with an afterthought about what might be done to demonstrate consistency on either side.[35]

First, it is difficult to square Balthasar's claims about the integration of exegesis, philosophy, and theology in Thomas with the claim that Thomas 's "deep and lucid philosophical aesthetics" has "failed to achieve a theological translation, that is, to be seen as the unfolding of a theology based on the biblical revelation" *(GL* II, 21). How can Thomas *both* be a member of an era for which "the normative tradition of thought remains the integrated philosophical and theological method common to both the Platonic-Aristotelian and the Augustinian-Dionysian streams" *(GL* I, 72) yielding "the philosophical reflection of the free glory of the living God of the Bible" *(GL* IV, 406-407) and be one whose "deep and lucid philosophical aesthetics" has "failed to achieve a theological translation, that is, to be seen as the unfolding of a theology based on the biblical revelation" *(GL* II, 21)?

This is what I initially called "a genuine question." I am suggesting that these two claims are *prima facie* inconsistent, without ruling out the possibility that they could be shown to be consistent. Students of Thomas might respond to it by re-reading

[35] In other words, I have not tried to rule out three possibilities: Balthasar misreads Aquinas; Balthasar rightly reads Aquinas (and Aquinas is *internally* inconsistent); both Aquinas and Balthasar are internally inconsistent relative to principles of consistency external to both. For a description of what I mean by internal and external consistency, see William A. Christian, Sr., *Doctrines of Religious Communities: A Philosophical Study* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1987), especially 47-50 and 161-70.

Thomas so that aesthetics plays a larger role than is often thought [36]--or others might construct a theological aesthetics which aims to embrace and transcend Aquinas or Balthasar [37]; in turn, students of Balthasar might insist that Balthasar's aesthetics be read only in perichoretic relation to his theo-drama and theo-logic. Only further discussion could show that this *prima facie* internal inconsistency was or was not a genuine one.

Second, Balthasar's *Theo-drama* suggests agreement with Thomas on the interaction of divine and human freedoms, grounded in God's inner-trinitarian relations - and dissent from Thomas's anthropology and soteriology. But how c;an Balthasar assent to what he called "the Thomist paradox" of infinite and finite freedom while criticizing Thomas 's anthropology and soteriology this way? Could not a favorable reading of Thomas on the former lead to a more charitable reading of Thomas on the latter?

At this point it would be interesting to know Balthasar's response to students of Thomas who (like Balthasar) take the drama of Aquinas's exegesis of Scripture seriously. For example, both Michel Corbin and Otto Hermann Pesch propose a trinitarian shape for Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae.* For Corbin, Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae* returns to the plan of his commentary on Lombard's *Sentences;* that is, *Aquinas's Summa Theologiae* locates his *questions* on the trinity in the *Prima Pars*

[36] See Francis J. Kovach, *Die Asthetik des Thomas von Aquin: Eine Genetische und systematische Analyse* (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter & Co., 1961); this is the work on which Balthasar relies at *GL* IV, 373 and 397. For works with theological implications (but with no direct engagement with Balthasar), see Mark D. Jordan, "The Evidence of the Transcendentals and the Place of Beauty in Thomas Aquinas," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 29 (1989): 393-407 (which includes what Jordan calls "reconsiderations and improvements" on "The Grammar of *Esse:* Re-Reading Thomas on the Transcendentals," *The Thomist* 44 (1980]: 1-26); Umberto Eco, *The Aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas,* trans. Hugh Bredin (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988 [Original edition 1956]); Armand A. Maurer, C.S.B., *About Beauty: A Thomistic Interpretation* (Houston, Texas: University of St. Thomas, Center for Thomistic Studies, 1983).

[37] Perhaps the two most impressive efforts to date are Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Art in Action: Toward a Christian Aesthetic* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1980); Patrick Sherry, *Spirit and Beauty: An Introduction to Theological Aesthetics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

(rather than, as in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, in the last part). Thus, Corbin argues, Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae* is simultaneously "theocentric and christocentric." [38] This implies (Corbin further argues) that Thomas's theology of Christ as mediator "relativizes" the notion of satisfaction, although it is admittedly unclear how Corbin's reading of Aquinas's methodological questions on theology would impact on more material theological issues.[39]

Pesch is even clearer than Corbin: human beings are created in the image of God "beginning with the creation of humans in grace, concluding with the sending of the Spirit." [40] Like Corbin, Pesch argues for a "relativizing" of Aquinas's soteriology of satisfaction in relation to Christ's *"whole life* and work" [41] although it must also be said that the result of this relativizing for the theology of Christ's crucifixion remains unclear in both Pesch and Corbin (perhaps because they ignore the possibility that Aquinas's *quaestiones* about the life and death and resurrection of Jesus are questions about what Balthasar *and* Aquinas might call the narrative drama of the Gospels). What is needed at this point is a more detailed exploration of Aquinas's anthropology and soteriology in relationship to his exegesis (i.e., if Balthasar is correct, Thomas's rendition of the drama of infinite and finite freedoms).

[38] Michel Corbin, *Le Chemin de la Theologie chez Thomas D'Aquin. Bibliotheque des Archives de Philosophie. Nouvelle Serie* 16 (Paris: Beauchesne, 1974), especially 793-98. It ought also be said that because Corbin is rightly concerned to emphasize the prevenience of "Revelation" in Aquinas (as in Barth), Corbin asserts the pertinence of trinitarian issues rather than shows them; if Balthasar would do well to attend to careful textual studies of Aquinas like Corbin, Corbin would do well to study Balthasar's deployment of Aquinas's *quaestiones* on the trinity.

[39] Corbin, *Le Chemin de la Theologie chez Thomas D'Aquin,* 801. On the movement of Aquinas's christology in his major systematic texts, see Corbin's "La Parole devenue Chair. Lecture de la question de la *Tertia Pars* de la Somme Tht!ologique de Thomas d'Aquin," in *I.!lnoui·: Six ltudes christologiques* (Descl6e de Brouwer, 1980), 110-158.

[40] Otto Hermann Pesch, *Thomas von Aquin. Grenze und Griisse mittelalterlicher Theologie. Eine EinfiJhrung* (Mainz: Matthias-Gruenewald Verlag, 1988), 386-87; see especially chapter 15 ("Der Mensch als Ebenbild des dreieinen Gottes").

[41] Pesch, *Thomas von Aquin,* 327.

Third, how is the praise for Aquinas's trinitarian drama in *Theo-drama* consistent with the critique of the pneumatology in *Theologik?* Balthasar's central criticism, I have proposed, arises out of Balthasar's quest for a way to hold together the Latin*filioque* (including Thomas) with the Greek affirmation of the distinctive divinizing work of the Spirit. In making this criticism, I proposed that Balthasar was relying on *Summa Theologiae* II-II, q. 2, a. 2, which considers the threefold way faith is directed to its object. But, if this is so (i.e., if Balthasar is relying on the texts in the *Summa theologiae* just cited as evidence for Aquinas's view of the formal object of theology as centering on Christ's humanity), it is curious that Balthasar does not here explore Aquinas's third way to consider the object of faith, i.e., as the intellect (with this material and formal object) is moved by the will; here the object of faith is "believing unto God" *(credere in Deum).* "But," as Bruce Marshall puts it, *"credere in Deum* means precisely to believe out of *caritas,* out of that love which returns to God his own friendship toward us and is rooted in God's gift of himself to us."[42] Here, then, truth is constituted as a gift of the Spirit to us who are thus enabled to believe unto God. The Word is the truth, and the Spirit "makes us participants of divine wisdom and knowers of truth," capable of *(capaces)* Christ's teaching.[43]

What is needed at this point is a careful comparison of Balthasar and Aquinas on the "grammar" of trinitarian discourse, particularly in relation to the Holy Spirit. This would be no simple chore. On the one hand, Aquinas's *quaestio* "style" makes it easier to find succinct and clear statements of his than of Balthasar's position, written with an eye to consistency-satisfying, we might say, the demands of those moving

[42] Bruce Marshall, "Thomas as Postliberal Theologian," *The Thomist* 53 (1989): 384-85. It is noteworthy that the main texts Marshall cites at this point are Thomas's Scriptural commentaries (on Romans, Hebrews, and John). See also Marshall's "Thomas, Thomisms, and Truth" (note 31 above).

[43] *Super Evangelium S. loannis Lectura,* ed. Raphaelis Cai, O.P. (Turin: Marietti, 1952), c. 14, lee. 6 (par. 1958). It was Bruce Marshall who suggested to me that the exegesis of the five paraclete passages in John (14:16-17and 26; 15:26-27;16:7-11and12-14) would be central to the dispute between Thomas and Balthasar on this point.

between evangelical vows and the medieval university. Balthasar's "style" (to use Balthasar's own characterization of Bonaventure's style) sometimes "appears to the outsider like something uncertain, with no order, and like a kind of virgin forest" *(GL* II, 266)--satisfying, we might say, the demands of those moving between the monastery and the world.

On the other hand, if Balthasar's reading of Aquinas is correct, Aquinas's *quaestio* "style" needs to be read against the background of the way Aquinas follows, enacts, and directs the biblical drama-so that the clarity of his *quaestiones* on the Spirit does not become a wooden version of *thefilioque* to those not attuned to his exegesis of the drama of the Spirit in the letters of Paul and the Gospel of John. This would require reading Aquinas on the *filioque* in light of his contention that things which "sound well in Greek do not perhaps sound well in Latin"; as a result, the translator ought to attend less to what is said "word by word" in Greek or Latin than to "the mode of expression according to the peculiarity [or idiom, as an English translation says, or "style," as Balthasar might translate] of the language into which he is translating" *(modum loquendi secundum proprietatem linguae in quam transfert).* [44]

Further, Balthasar's style appears "with no order" to those who do not wish to submit demands for order and tidiness to the demands of the Gospel. In the case of the Spirit, for example, the best East and West can do for now may well be Balthasar's "two reciprocally related sentences" on the Spirit as the unifying love of Father and Son as well as the fruit of the love of Father and Son *(TL* II, 123; III, 142). But Aquinas might say that both piety

[44] *Contra Errores Graecorum,* in *Opera Omnia* (Parma: Fiaccadori, 1852-73), 15:239; the translations here are my own, though now there is an English translation in James Likoudis, *Ending the Byzantine Greek Schism* (New Rochelle, N.Y.: Catholics United for the Faith, 1992). Aquinas and Balthasar would (I think) have sympathy with the ecumenical efforts summarized in *Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ: Ecumenical Reflections on the Filioque Controversy,* Faith and Order Paper No. 103, ed. Lukas VIScher(London: SPCK; Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1981), including the claim that there is a "valid meaning" to the *filioque* (p. 15). However, both Aquinas and Balthasar would disagree that *"it should not be said* that the Spirit proceeds 'from the Father and the Son', for this would efface the difference in his relationship to the Father and the Son" (p. 15; emphasis in original).

and theology will keep urging the Church toward a teaching which unifies the two--and that only *thefilioque* can truly preserve the distinctness of the Spirit (e.g., *ST* I, *q.* 36, a. 2)

I obviously do not aim here to settle this dispute between Aquinas's and Balthasar's pneumatology but only to propose a context for conducting the disputation. That context would have to include their different historical circumstances (Christendom's East-West schism and the postmodern divide of the Christian *internationale* and nationally), their different styles (the *quaestio* against the background of the biblical drama and the diffuse styles of a trilogy guarding the best of the Christian tradition), and the different logics of theologies informed by *thefilioque* and those seeking formulations which preserve and transcend it.

In fact, at the beginning of this essay, I mentioned that traditionalisms and modernisms may derive their strengths from unsettled issues between Balthasar and Aquinas. Such traditionalisms and modernisms would have us choose between these different aspects or moments of our context-between a narrative of our historical context that refuses to see the novelty of our post-Christian circumstances and a narrative which thinks that that novelty requires a thorough jettisoning of Christendom; between a theological style that merely reiterates previous styles and one that admits only our *quaestiones;* between a view of theo-logic in which all the essential doctrinal questions are settled and one which seeks a post-dogmatic era of the Spirit. But these are precisely the choices that Aquinas and Balthasar refuse to make.

Nonetheless, despite this common ground, the question I ask is whether Balthasar can both make the deep and persistent use of Aquinas's theology he does and still maintain these criticisms in these forms. The next stage of the disputation ought to take up these (and surely other) theological issues one by one, locating them in relation to Aquinas's and Balthasar's diverse historical contexts and theological styles.[45]

[45] Thanks to L. Gregory Jones for helpful comments on an earlier version of this essay.

# ST. THOMAS ON ANGELIC TIME AND MOTION

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## A. THOMAS'S STANDARD DOCTRINE: THE NEED FOR A SINGLE TIME.

THERE IS an under-discussed problem about time for St. Thomas. Most discussions of his views on time center around either the question of God's foreknowledge or around the notions of eternity and aeviternity. Even those discussions which deal directly with Thomas's views on time ignore the issue I wish to discuss here.[1] The problem is this: St. Thomas held both that there is a single time, created by God, and that there are three distinct times: two for the angels, and one for the rest of creation. Moreover, he seems, fairly explicitly, to have been unwilling to adopt either of the obvious ways out of this apparent contradiction.

Thomas believed, and often said, that time is unitary, and typically offered an Aristotelian reason for the claim: "the true reason why time is one, is to be found in the oneness of the first movement by which, since it is most simple, all other movements are measured. Therefore time is referred to that movement, not only as a measure is to the thing measured, but also as accident

[1] See, for example, Piero Ariotti, "Celestial reductionism of time: on the scholastic conception of time from Albert the great and Thomas Aquinas to the end of the 16th century," *Studia Internationale Filosofia* 4 (1972): 91-120, and Antonio Moreno, "Time and Relativity: Some Philosophical Considerations," *The Thomist 45* (1981): 62-79. I have referred to this problem earlier in "Time and St. Thomas" (in *To Myself from Others,* ed. David Miller [Warwick: University of Warwick, 1989)), and in "Aquinas, Ockham, and Prior (and the unexpected examination)," *Auckland Philosophy Papers* , no. 1 (1990).

is to subject; and thus receives unity from it."[2] Moreover, such a doctrine is necessary if what he tells us about the foreknowledge of God, and God's inability to change the past,[3] not to mention his views on the knowledge that angels and demons have of what is genuinely future, is to be correct. Briefly, those views commit him to a view of a single time that is linear past, and is non-branching future as well.[4] There is some exegetical question as to whether or not his views on time, contingency, and freedom led him to adopt a truth-gap account of genuinely future tense contingent propositions, but that the singleness of time is required has not been questioned.[5]

This is not the place to deal with the difficulties Aquinas faced concerning God's foreknowledge, but a brief introductory word is in order to show how central the singleness of time is for his thought in this area. Since all past- and present-tense truths have necessity *per accidens* (that is, they concern matters which are *now* irrevocable), the class of contingent truths is a proper subset of genuinely future-tense claims. A *proper* subset because

[2] *Summa Theologiae,* I, q. 10, a. 6 c (hereafter cited as ST; English translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province, 5 vols., (1920; reprint, Westminster, Maryland: Christian Classics, 1981). This is the translation I have standardly used, sometimes with slight changes, but I have also made use of the translation by the Blackfriars (61 vols. [London: Blackfriars, in conjunction with Eyre and Spottiswood, 1964-81], hereafter cited as Blackfriars).

[3] Thus, for example, "God can make the existence of an angel not future; but He cannot cause him not to be while he is, or not to have been, after he has been" *(ST* I, q. 10, a. 5, ad 3).

[4] By contrast, Ockham, for example, adopted an implicit tense logic with branching future possibilities. As far as I know, no mediaeval thinker allowed branching pasts. For a discussion of that possibility, see John Mackie, *Truth, Probability and Paradox: Studies in Philosophical Logic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973). For a helpful general discussion of the issues involved, see R. Thomason, "Combinations of Tense and Modality," in D. Gabbay and D. Guenthner, eds., *Handbook of Philosophical Logic,* 3 vols. (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1984), 2:135-165.

[5] That St. Thomas opted for a truth-gap solution is suggested by A. N. Prior in *Past Present and Future* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), 121. That he was a "fatalist" is suggested by W. L. Craig in "Aquinas on God's Knowledge of Future Contingents," *The Thomist* 54 (1990): 33-79. Texts such as STII-11, q. 171, a. 3 c, where Thomas remarks that the truth of future contingents is undetermined, lend clear support to Prior's claim, but there are conflicting texts elsewhere. Perhaps the simplest thing to say is that textually the issue is unclear.

some future events are "already present in their causes," that is, they are now as irrevocable as present and past events; and *genuinely* future to rule out the class that Ockham was subsequently to highlight, sentences apparently future but really past (or present) such as "It will be the case tomorrow that Socrates was sitting down two days ago."[6] Similarly, there are sentences that are apparently in the present tense ("Peter is predestinate/reprobate" provides a clear if tricky example), but are in the future tense in their deep structure, a point noticed by Aquinas, and spelled out clearly by Ockham.[7] Aristotle's "happy" provides another example, for to call a child *eudaimon* is to make a prediction.[8]

Now, genuine future contingents are knowable only by God, and God's knowledge of them is just like his knowledge of the past or present and unlike his knowledge of mere *possibilia:*

> [W]e 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 … is measured by eternity which, itself without succession, takes in the whole of time and therefore God's present gaze 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. (ST* I, q. 14, a. 9 c)[9]

Thus God must see future things not as future, but as present,

[6] For Thomas's awareness of the relevance of this point, see, e.g., *De Veritate,* q. 2, a. 12, ad 7.

[7] See particularly the short *Tractatus de Praedestinatione et de Praescientia Dei Respectu Futurorum Contingentium,* ed. Philotheus Boehner, in *Opera Philosophica II* (New York: St. Bonaventure, 1978), translated, with other relevant passages, by M. Adams and N. Kretzmann as *William Ockham: Predestination, God's Foreknowledge, and Future Contingents* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1969).

[8] *Nie. Eth.* bk I, ch. 9, 1100· 1-10.

[9] Blackfriars, vol. 4, trans. Thomas Gornall.

for to Him every thing is present and nothing is future.[10] For this reason, Boethius says that His knowledge of future things "is more properly called providence than foresight,"" since He sees them all, as it were, from a great distance, in the mirror of eternity. However, it might also be called foresight because of its relation to other things in whose regard what He knows is future.[12]

In this context Aquinas makes use of the Boethian image of a watcher on a height observing at a glance all that is happening on a road that lies below, though it can only be experienced serially by a walker on the road.[13] He remarks that this knowledge does not affect the contingency of the things known, and notes that the "difficulty in this matter arises from the fact that we can describe the divine knowledge only after the manner of our own, at the same time pointing out the temporal differences" *(De Veritate* q. 2, a.12 c).

This account is laden with difficulties, but one stands out as important here. As so often happens, the most awkward objection is brought forward by Aquinas himself:

[10] Anthony Kenny has pointed out that, strictly, this amounts to a denial of God's foreknowledge ("Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom," in A. Kenny, ed., *Aquinas: A Collection of Critical Essays* [London: Macmillan, 1969], 263). Also important in this connection are two papers of Arthur Prior, "Thank Goodness That's Over," *Philosophy* 34 (1959), and "The Formalities of Omniscience," *Philosophy* 37 (1962), reprinted as ch. 3 of A. N. Prior, *Papers on Time and Tense* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968).

[11] Boethius, *The Consolations of Philosophy,* 5.6.

[12] *De Veritate,* q. 2, a. 12 c; English translation, *The Disputed Questions on Truth,* by Robert W. Mulligan (qq. 1-9), James V. McGlynn (qq. 10-20), and Robert W. Schmidt (qq 21-29), 3 vols. (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1952-54). See also Anthony Kenny, "Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom," 255-270, where Kenny argues that Thomas's Boethian stance amounts to a denial of God'sforeknowledge, despite Aquinas's terminological point.

[13] ST I, q. 14, a. 13; see Boethius, *The Consolations of Philosophy,* 4.6. Interestingly, Boethius' phrase *"specula alta* [is] a Virgilian phrase for a Platonic idea" (H. Chadwick, *Boethius: The Consolations of Music, Logic, Theology, and Philosophy* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981], 243). N. Kretzmann and E. Stump note that for Boethius "[e]ternity is the complete possession all at once of illimitable life," and point out that (in view of the final term) this at once separates eternity from the eternality which numbers, certain truths, and the world have, or might be supposed to have ("Eternity," *The Journal of Philosophy* 78 (1981]: 429-58, reprinted in Thomas V. Morris, ed., *The Concept of God* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987], 219-52; note esp. 221 n. 3). Their discussion of "atemporal duration" is continued in "Prophecy, Past Truth, and Eternity," in James E. Tomberlin, ed., *Philosophical Perspectives, 5, Philosophy of Religion, 1991* (Atascadero, Cal.: Ridgeview Publishing, 1991), 395-424.

If the antecedent of any true conditional proposition is absolutely necessary, the consequent will be absolutely necessary. But the following conditional is true. If something is known by God, it will exist. Since this antecedent, "This is known by God," is absolutely necessary, the consequent will be absolutely necessary. Hence, whatever is known by God must necessarily exist. That this, namely, "This is known by God," is absolutely necessary was proved as follows. This is something said about the past. But whatever is said about the past, if true, is necessary; for, since it has been, it cannot not have been. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary.[14]

The problem is clear: we have

$$D\,Kgp \vdash D\,p$$

and contingency flies out the window.

We should note two points about this case. One is that for Aquinas, as for other major thirteenth- and fourteenth-century writers, the normal conditional was thought of as having modal force, while the comparatively unimportant truth functional, or material, conditional was explained as having "necessity *ut nunc"* in view of its content. It had its necessity "as of now" in view, not of its form, but of its content or matter (hence its name). One point in favor of treating the ordinary conditional as having implicit necessity may be seen by considering negated conditionals: if I deny the claim that if the moon shines in your mouth you will go mad, it seems harsh to insist that I am committed to the claim that the moon has indeed shone in your mouth. What I am committed to, however, is the result St. Thomas would have

[14] *De Ver.*, q. 2, a. 12, obj. 7. Calvin Normore points out that a somewhat more sophisticated version of same argument is found in Peter Aureoli, who uses it to argue explicitly for a truth-gap theory: "Hence this is not true 'The Antichrist will be' nor also this 'The Antichrist will not be' but well indeed is the disjunction 'The Antichrist will be or he will not be'" *(Commentarium in primum librum Sententiarum,* D.38, a. 3, quoted by C. Normore, *The Logic of Time and Modality in the Later Middle Ages: The Contribution of William of Ockham,* [Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1975, National Library of Canada No. TC35093], 230). The same point is made in Normore's "Future Contingents," in N. Kretzmann, A. Kenny, and J. Pinborg, eds., *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 369-70, where Normore also points out, following Baudry *(La Querelle des futurs contingents* [Paris: Vrin, 1950]), that it is Aureoli whose view Peter de Rivo defends.

accepted: there is a conjoint *possibility* of the moon's shining in your mouth, and your retaining your sanity.[15]

The second important point is that although Aquinas's normal use of "absolute necessity[16]" requires "the relation of the terms, as when the predicate forms part of the definition of the subject" (*ST* I, q. 19, a. 3 c), he also speaks of "absolute necessity" in a number of other contexts, including the impossibility of God's altering the past. For Aquinas, God's being unable to change the past is like his being unable to make a contradiction true: it is not even a candidate for something do-able:

> if the past thing is considered as past, that it should not have been is impossible, not only in itself, but absolutely since it implies a contradiction. Thus, it is more impossible than the raising of the dead; in which there is nothing contradictory, because this is reckoned impossible in reference to some power, that is to say, some natural power; for such impossible things do come under the scope of divine power. (*ST* I, q. 25, a. 4, ad 1)

Elsewhere Aquinas spells the argument out in slightly more detail, building the absolute necessity of the past on its necessity *per accidens.* Suppose it is now the case that PnP (i.e., it was the case *n* time units ago that p). Then it is now *per accidens* impossible that Pn-.p. That is, it is *now necessary per accidens* that PnP· But if it were also possible *now* that Pn-.p, we would have OPn<P /\-.p) which is a contradiction: but "this would be the case if the past were made not to have been." [17]

In his long and careful treatment of the *De Veritate* objection concerning God's foreknowledge Aquinas rejects a variety of answers he considers to be unsatisfactory and finally, in effect,

[15] In our notation, using for the truth functional conditional, the difference is between ., (P Q), equivalent (implausibly) to (P /\ ., Q), and ., O"(P Q), equivalent to O(P /\ ., Q), which would be the usual intention of the negation.

[16] Here, and throughout, when nothing hangs on the translation I shall attribute the use of English terms to St. Thomas to avoid tedious cirqamlocutions.

[17] *De Potentia Dei*, q. 1, a. 3, ad 9; English translation, *On the Power of God*, by Lawrence Shapcote, 2 vols. (London: Bums Oates & Washboume, 1932; reprint [2 vols. in 1), Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1952). Note that this is equivalent to disallowing branching past time.

allows the difficulty, with the ultimately unhelpful proviso that the necessity attaching to the consequent is a necessity involving God's *present* knowledge, not our future knowledge.[11]

This is not truly satisfactory, as Aquinas was well aware, but one thing is clear: the time of which God has foreknowledge, and creatures do not, is one time for all, including the angels. However, his views on other aspects of the angels, combined with his acceptance of Aristotelian physics and what looks like an argumentative slip, lead him to an account of time incompatible with this more common one, for when his attention is turned to the angels he tells us on more than one occasion, that there are three distinct times. So there is a *prima facie* problem here.[19]

## B. ARISTOTELIAN TIME AND MOTION

Probably the best start that any philosopher can make when dealing with time is to adopt the views of the most advanced science of the time, and this is precisely what St. Thomas did.[20] He turned to Aristotle's views on the matter, and accepted all the central ones concerning time without demur, though with some complicating additions. Aristotle had decided, on the basis of an argument whose details need not detain us here, that time was either change, or some aspect of change *(Physics,* 219a9); but it cannot be change *simpliciter,* because changes can be fast or slow. Therefore it is some aspect of change. But what aspect of change? Aristotle's argument makes considerable use of a technical term, "the before and after" *(to proteron kai husteron),*

[18] See also Prior, "The Formalities of Omniscience," 31-35.

[19] In *"Active and Passive Potency" in Thomistic Angelology* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1972), Howard P. Kainz suggests that the problem does not really arise because the angels are "outside and ontologically above the sphere of time" (47). But besides being a solution that skirts rather than deals with the difficulty, this leaves unexplained Thomas's clear invocation of the notion of separate *times* for these separate substances.

[20] This was standard practice for Thomas. For exapiple, in the five ways, when he invokes the principle that whatever is moved from potency to act must be moved by something already in act, it is clearly the *basic* Aristotelian properties of the hot, the cold, the wet and the dry that he has in mind. Thomas did not think that the living could die only after coming in contact with the dead, but he did think that dry things only became wet after causal interaction with something wet. For a further example, see his discussion of the composition of an angel's assumed body, mentioned later in this paper.

whose meaning is, unfortunately, far from clear.[21] The basic structure of the argument, however, seems to be this: every change is a change of magnitude, and every change is measured by time. But then, since magnitude is continuous, change must be, and so in consequence must time be *(Physics,* 219a10-12). This looks remarkably like "he who drives fat oxen must himself be fat," but it is Aristotle's conclusion that is of interest for the moment, not the validity of his argument, for it is a conclusion which St. Thomas also accepted.[22]

Aquinas did not distinguish between continuous and dense intervals, a distinction that was not fully understood until the work of Dedekind and Cantor in the nineteenth century, and which, since the introduction of *surreal* numbers earlier this century, is still coming under scrutiny. Following Aristotle (who in turn was offering a standard definition), Aquinas held that "the continuous is defined as that which is infinitely divisible" *(Physics,* 200b19). Though as a definition this leads only to denseness, it is clearly continuity that his argument requires, and we may without anachronism suppose him to be speaking of continuity here while highlighting one of the properties of continuity which is important for the argument.[23]

Time, then, must be continuous and is, says Aristotle, somewhat abruptly, the "number of change in respect of the before and after *(Physics,* 219bl)"-not just any old change, however, for then there would be as many times as there are changes, which is unacceptable: time "is the same time . . . everywhere together" *(Physics,* 220b5). Thus it must be the measure of some single fundamental motion, and the obvious candidate is the motion of the celestial sphere: "the other changes are measured by this one, and time by this change" *(Physics,* 223b22). Aquinas

[21] For an interesting discussion of "the before and after," see Edward Hussey's notes to the passage beginning at *Physics* 219al4 *(Aristotle's Physics, Books III and IV,* translated with notes by E. Hussey [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983], 146-57').

[22] For Thomas's comments, see *In IV Phys.,* lee. 17; English translation (ET), *Commentary on Aristotle's Physics,* by R. J. Blackwell, R. J. Spath, and W. E. Thirlkel (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963).

[23] Thanks to Roy Laird for making this point clear to me.

accepts these points: "Time primarily measures and numbers the first circular motion, and through this it measures all other motions. Hence, there is only one time because of the unity of the first motion." [24]

In Aristotelian physics nothing moves unless it is moved by another, and so all motion, ultimately, can be traced back to a primary source of motion. [25] This primary source, whose initial impact is on the celestial sphere, is the unmoved first mover. Aquinas explicitly agrees: everything that is capable of change and corruption must be traced back *(reducere)* to an unchanging first principle which is *per se* necessary *(ST* I, q. 2, a. 3, ad 2). For Aquinas, the human will is explicitly included *(ST* I-II, q. 9, a. 6). [26] It should be noted, however, that Aquinas is no occasionalist: "God works in things in such a manner that things have their proper operation" *(ST* I, q. 105, a. 5 c).

What is important for our purposes here is that in Aristotelian physics time is the measure of the motion of the celestial sphere, and all sub-lunar creatures are subject to it. But angels are not sub-lunar creatures, nor are they subject to corruption and decay as we are, though they do partake of change. And since St. Thomas, unlike Aristotle, believes in the existence of angels, a complicating factor arises.

### C. WHY ANGELS ARE INTERESTING

Philosophical commentators tend to skirt somewhat apologetically around the Angelic Doctor's interest in angels, which may in part explain the absence of discussion of the doctrine of the three times. It is almost as if they feel some embarrassment about the amount of time and philosophical energy expended on

[24] *In IV Phys.,* lec. 23 (ET, 636). See also the short but helpful Appendices to Blackfriars vol. 10 by William Wallace (particularly 3, "Ancient and Medieval Astronomy," and 4, "Aristotelian Physics"). For greater detail, see D. C. Lindberg, The *Beginnings of Western Science* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), especially chs. 3, 11, and 12.

[25] This is true even for "self-moving" entities such as the animals, for the motion with which animals move themselves "is not strictly originated by them" *(Physics,* 259b8).

[26] The issue is somewhat more complicated and controversial than this suggests. For a helpful recent discussion of the issues involved, see Daniel Westerberg, "Did Aquinas Change his Mind about the Will?" *The Thomist* 58 (1994): 41-60.

the angels, but such embarrassment, if it exists, is inappropriate, for Thomistic angels have considerable philosophical interest and importance. In his various discussions of angels Aquinas wrestles with some of the major difficulties that face anyone who wants to hold that there can be incorporeal agents. Many thinkers, of whom Descartes and his followers are simply the most obvious, have claimed that there could be such agents, have claimed indeed that *we* are, or have been, or will be, such agents, but few have attempted to explain in any detail what it would be like for such agents to exist.[27]

St. Thomas believed that humans have immaterial souls which, somewhat mysteriously, survive their death, but he did not believe that humans either were, or could be, disembodied entities.[28] Thus, since "Christ's soul was separated from his body" in death, it follows that "Christ was not a man during the three days of death and so neither the same nor another man [although] his soul was indeed entirely the same numerically.[1129] Nor was Aquinas alone in this view. Along with "God exists," the claim that humans are animals was as stock an example of a necessary truth in mediaeval logic as "2 + 2 =4" is in our time. The human soul is the form of the human being (a view accepted officially by the Fifth Lateran Council in 1512), but a human being is the complete animal.

It is [says Peter Geach] a savage superstition to suppose that a man consists of two pieces, body and soul, which come apart at death; the superstition is not mended but rather aggravated by conceptual confu-

[27] For still unanswered difficulties surrounding the notion of dis- or unembodied agents, see Terence Penelhum, *Survival and Disembodied Existence* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970).

[28] In question 1 of the *Quaestiones Disjmtatae de Anima* Thomas asks, "Whether a human soul can be both a form and an entity?" and decides that it can: it is "able to exist *per se,* though it cannot exist in the fullness of its nature apart from its body" *(Q.D. de Anima,* q. 1, ad 16; English translation by James H. Robb [Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1984)).

[29] *Quodl.* 2, q. 1, a. 1 c; English translation, *Quodlibetal Questions 1and2,* by Sandra Edwards (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1983). The same point is made at *ST* m, q. SO, a. 4. For further discussion, see Peter Geach, *God and the Soul* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969), especially chs. 1and2.

sion, if the soul-piece is supposed to be immaterial. The genius of Plato and Descartes has given this superstition an undeservedly long lease of life.... [30]

Nonetheless, the superstition of Descartes is still with us, and one of the things that its proponents owe us and themselves is some account of just how, exactly, the interaction between the soul and its corporeal adjunct might operate. What St. Thomas does in the case of angels is to consider the *generalized* Cartesian case: what would it be like for there to be a finite creature which was not material, but which could interact with the material world not merely at some brain's pineal gland but, within very wide limits, anywhere it decided to? Given the views concerning sensation, memory, and imagination which were current in the thirteenth century, and which persisted until at least the seventeenth century, how could such beings (a) have perceptual knowledge; (b) have event memories; (c) have sensations (e.g., of pain); (d) have emotions; or (e) form images? Descartes's account of perception overlapped with all the relevant parts of St. Thomas 's account which generated these difficulties, and in both theories perception required a neuro-physiological system. Unlike St. Thomas, however, who discussed the problems involved at length, Descartes failed even to try to meet them. [31]

## D. THE NATURE OF ANGELS

Thomas believed that we know, either through revelation or natural reason, a number of truths about the angels. We know, for example, that there are good angels and bad angels, that they are incorporeal, [32] and that it is probable that they were created when the material universe was. Indeed, Thomas believed, though with some hesitation about saying so, since Augustine and others disagreed *(ST* I, q. 61, a. 3 c; *ST* I, q. 66, a. 4 c), that time, the material universe, the empyrean heaven, and the

[30] Geach, *God and the Soul,* 38.

[31] See also J. J. Macintosh, "Perception and Imagination in Descartes, Boyle and Hooke," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 13 (1983): 327-52.

[32] At *ST* I, q. 50, a. 2 Thomas discusses, but dismisses, the claim that the fact that the angels have potentiality means that they are to that extent material, though incorporeal.

angels, who exist "in exceeding great number, far beyond all material multitude *(ST* I, q. 50, a. 3 c)," were co-created, and notes that this means that both the angels and the world of corporeal creatures "have always been in existence, not that they were from eternity but from all time, because whenever time was," they were.[33] That time and the world were co-created was commonly accepted. As Ibn Rushd (Averroes) remarked in the previous century: "Most people who accept a temporal creation of the world believe time to have been created with it."[34] At *De Potentia* q. 3, a. 17, ad 13 Aquinas has a Leibniz-anticipating argument from sufficient reason to show that time and the world were created together: if time existed before the world of creatures, there would be no good reason for God to have created that world at lo rather than at lo:te· But creation is not a matter of whim. We note, in passing, that the time that was created together with the world, heaven, and the angels was a *single* time.

Angels are not discursive intellects-being aware of a principle they are immediately aware of all its consequences-but they understand syllogistic reasoning, and they have successive conceptions *(ST* I, q. 58, a. 3). The angels understand the way we reason, but do not reason in that way themselves *(ST* I, q. 58, a. 4). Although they are pure intellects they can know singulars *(ST* I, q. 57, a. 2), but even though their ideas encompass past, present, and future, they do not know wholly future individuals as singulars; nor do they know future contingent truths: such knowledge of things "in themselves" belongs to God alone *(ST* I, q. 57, a. 3). Similarly, although the angels, both blessed and fallen, are much better than we are at interpreting the mental states which underlie our behavior and physiological states, our innermost thoughts-our desires and the thoughts of our hearts *(cogitationes cordium et affectiones voluntatum)-can* be known only

[33] Aquinas felt that one should not say that an opinion held by "great doctors" is erroneous, but it was perfectly in order to say that some other position is more reasonable *(De Pot.,* q. 3, a. 18 c). For the claim that the angels and some corporeal creatures or other have always existed, see *De Pot.,* q. 3, a. 18, ad 20.

[34] Ibn Rushd, *1hhqfut al-tahofut (The Incoherence of the "Incoherence"),* trans. Simon Van Den Bergh, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954), 1:17.

by God *(ST* I, q. 57, a. 4 c). Being incorporeal, angels cannot differ materially (as you and I do), and hence no two of them can belong to a single species *(ST* I, q. 50, a. 4 c).[35] Being incorporeal, they are incorruptible, since corruption requires a separation of form from matter, and hence "the angels are incorruptible of their own nature" *(ST* I, q. 50, a. 5 c). They have, that is, necessary existence, although since they are created they have their necessity from another. They are not embodied, but they can assume bodies.[36]

They need not be in *any* place, though they are typically to be found in the empyrean heaven, which is a fitting place for angelic meditation *(De Pot.,* q. 3, a. 19, ad 2, ad 4). Though incorporeal they can move bodies, which they do "by application of the angelic power in any manner whatever to any place" *(STI,* q. 52, a. 1 c). Presumably the point of the phrase "in any manner whatever" is to allow for the three degrees of involvement made familiar in Aristotle's discussions of potentiality.[37] There is a sense in which at any time any angel has the potentiality to be anywhere not already occupied by another angel, but this is not enough to let us say that they *are* there. On the other hand, they do not need actually to be exercising their causal powers at a place in order to be there. One may have the potentiality to act skillfully merely by having the potentiality to acquire the capacity in question without having yet acquired it, or one may have the potentiality to act skillfully by already having the capacity, without now exhibiting it. It is in this second sense that an angel

[35] See also *De Spiritualibus Creaturis,* a. 5, ad 8. What differentiates one angelic form, and hence one angel, from another is their degree of resemblance to the most perfect first mover *(Q.D. de Anima,* q. 7 c).

[36] *ST* I, q. 51, a. 2 c. At *ST* I, q. 51, a. 2, ad 3 Aquinas decided, for reasons having to do with the nature of the four basic elements of Aristotelian physics and the recorded behavior of angels, that the angels form the bodies they assume by "condensing [air) by Divine power insofar as is needful for forming the assumed body." Angels do not burn people, so fire is ruled out, and they can disappear instantaneously, so earth and water are ruled out. Nothing tells against air, however, save its transparency, and, as we see in the case of clouds, air *can* be both shaped and colored.

[37] See e.g., *Metaphys.* V and IX, *Nie. Eth.* 1146b31.

may "exercise his power" at a place at a time without *actively* interacting with it at that time.

This application of angelic power "in any manner whatever" need not result in the movement of the body, but such contact does mean that the angel is, albeit equivocally, *at* that place. An angel's being at a place, says Thomas, is a matter of his *willing* to be attached to that particular place: then he is there *per contactum virtutis-by* power-contact *(Quodl.* I, q. 3, a. 2 c). Thus angels do move, but the term "move" is used equivocally of angels and humans.[38] Unlike our motion, angelic motion is a matter of the angel making *virtual,* or *power, contact* with a place which may be, but need not be, point-sized *(ST* I, q. 52, a. 2 c). Thus an angel would be present in every part of his assumed body, and this would count as his being "in one place." Being dimensionless, the angel is not contained in a place as corporeal entities are; rather, says Thomas, the angel contains the place in which it is said to be *(ST* I, q. 52, a. 1 c). This inversion metaphor seems not to have any cash value of its own but is invoked rather to emphasize the distinction between our *occupation* of a spatial place and the angel's *utilization* of it.

What is important here is that the angel, being finite, can act only on one determined thing at a time, and that thing determines the (single) place of the angel. St. Thomas puts no limit on the *size* of the place: it could be smaller than a photon or larger than a galaxy, but there seems to be a prohibition on a "place" having *scattered* regions. However, the step involved in "since an angel's power is finite, it does not extend to all things, but to one determined thing," looks like a straightforward fallacy. Given that there is an upper limit to an angel's power, it does not follow that therefore it can be expended in only one place at a time, for Thomas does not seem to be making the conceptual

[38] The term *movere* and its cognates have, for Aquinas, a wider range than the English "move" and its cognates have for us. His *movere* is more like our *change,* though the two are not coextensive. The argument that angels *can* move spatially is pretty: A beatified angel, says Thomas, can move if a beatified soul can move. But it is an article of faith that Christ's soul descended into hell. Hence a beatified soul can move locally. Therefore a beatified angel can move locally. *(ST* I, q. 53, a. 1, *sed contra)*

point that, *wherever* an angel acted, *that* would be his (single) place, for that would allow the angel to act simultaneously on what would otherwise be counted as *two* places.[39]

## E. THE WAY ANGELS MOVE

When corporeal entities move, they move continuously in continuous time, and are subject, causally, to the movement of the celestial sphere. With angels, matters are otherwise. Importantly, for present purposes, the movement of angels, which can be continuous or non-continuous, does not depend on the heavens in the way in which the movement of corporeal bodies does. Because of their nature, the angels are not wholly subject to time. Thomas writes:

> since eternity is the measure of a permanent being, in so far as anything recedes from permanence of being, it recedes from eternity. Now some things recede from permanence of being so that their being is subject to change, or consists in change; and these things are measured by time, as are all movements, and also the being of all things corruptible. But others recede less from permanence of being, forasmuch as their being neither consists in change, nor is the subject of change; nevertheless they have change annexed to them either actually, or potentially. This appears in the heavenly bodies, the substantial being of which is unchangeable; and yet with unchangeable being they have changeableness of place. The same applies to the angels, who have an unchangeableness as regards their nature with changeableness as regards choice; moreover they have changeableness of intelligence, of affections, and of places, in their own degree. Therefore these are measured by aeviternity *[aevum],* which is a mean between eternity and time. *(ST* I, q. 10, a. 5 c)

An angel's being at a place is a matter of its being able to act *on* a place. Moreover, if an angel *is* at a place, his power touches it *immediately* (the analogy is with an immediate, as opposed to a mediate, cause), and he thereby contains it *per modum continentis perfecti-he* contains it uniquely *(ST* I, q. 52, a. 3 c). Thus, two angels cannot occupy the same place. Once again, the conclusion seems not to follow from the premises, as

[39] For Thomas 's acceptance of this point see *ST* I, q. 53, a. 1 c.

Thomas almost points out, for he notes that several tugs may pull a boat and remarks that in such a case, they are acting as a single mover. But then, why could not angels equally cooperate? A hint of a possible further answer is given by his remark that if such a thing were to happen the angels' actions "would be confused" *(De Pot.,* q. 3, a. 19, ad 1; cf. q. 3, a. 7, obj. 11).[40]

Suppose that an angel is, in the relevant sense, in place A, and decides to "move" to place B in order to act there. There are two possibilities. The angel may simply be in A one instant, and in B the next. Thus its motion would be discrete rather than continuous and, necessarily, the time which measures its motion would also be discrete, in part at least (though Thomas has another reason) because it is there the *next* instant. But in order for it to be there the *next* instant, there must *be* a next instant, and this is not possible if time is continuous, or even dense. As we shall see, this argument has its problems, and an alternative solution was available to St. Thomas, but at this stage I am simply trying to spell out his position.

The angel can also move continuously from A to B, however, and in that case its motion, and hence the time that measures it, would be continuous. Moreover, the body which the angel has assumed, or on which it is acting, may itself move, and in that case, since the body *must* move continuously, the angel moving it will also move continuously. In the case of both continuous and discontinuous movement Thomas speaks of the motion "as a succession of power-contacts at diverse places *[successionem virtualis contactus ad loca diversa]."*[41]

Here is a partial analogue for the movement of Thomistic angels. Suppose you are dreaming or daydreaming, and are cur-

[40] In his note to *ST* I, q. 52, a. 3 c (Blackfriars, vol. 9, SOff.), Kenelm Foster suggests that Thomas's discussion here is restricted to the case where the angel is the "sufficient cause" of the effect in question. But even so a problem remains, for it is a truism of action theory that a given effect may be overdetermined, so that while there is no reason to think that two angels *would* cooperate unnecessarily, it does not follow that they could not. Thomas's notion of a "complete cause" may rule even this out by fiat, but then the interesting question still remains and, *contra* Foster, Thomas writes as if he had answered the general question, not merely a terminologically restricted variant of it.

[41] *1Teatise on Separate Substances,* trans. F. J. Lescoe (West Hartford, Conn.: Saint Joseph College, 1963), c. 18, (p. 103).

rently fancying yourself in Spain. In the context of your dream (or daydream) you are an agent. Now your dream shifts to (say) Syria. It may shift you there continuously (via Italy, for example) or it may simply shift you there, so that you are now in Spain, and then immediately are in Syria. Such possibilities are open to us only in thought, but they are standard real world fare for the angels: "it is under [an angel's] control to apply himself to a place just as he wills, either through or without the intervening place." St. Thomas considers, but rejects, precisely this analogy at *STI,* q. *53,* a. 2 obj. 2, ad 2. While rejecting it, however, he in effect allows it, for all he says against it is that when a human *thinks,* now of Spain, now of Syria, the human's soul, unlike the angel, does not "apply its'essence" to the things being thought of, and so the two cases are different. But that, while true, is not to the point: they are not *exactly* the same-more than most, St. Thomas should really have taken the point of an analogy!-but one might nonetheless serve as a *model* of the other. Of course there are difficulties hidden, not very deeply, in such an account, but that is not what is at issue here.

At this point *(ST* I, q. *53,* a. 2 c) Aquinas offers us a subtle argument making use of two features of infinity to highlight the underlying basis of a point about discontinuous movement. He takes the following two points as given without further argument:

(1) In continuous movement, between any two temporal points there is a third, and hence an infinite number, a point already noted by Aristotle. Therefore there must be an infinite number of *spatial* points traversed, since every temporal point will correspond to a spatial point.

(2) To put the second point briefly if anachronistically, the integers have no upper bound. It follows from these two features that a movement which traverses an infinity of points in a line segment, an infinity by division, is quite possible, but traversal of an infinite set of discrete points, an infinity by addition, is impossible.[42] That being so, if an

•z *ST* I, q. 7, a. 3, ad 3. For a further discussion of this point, see J. J. Macintosh, "St. Thomas and the Traversal of the Infinite," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 68 (1994): 157-77.

angel's motion is discontinuous either "it does not pass through all the intermediate places, or else it actually numbers infinite places: which is not possible. Accordingly,then, as the angel's movement is not continuous, he does not pass through all intermediate places."

But now, because the angelic nature is such that angels are subject, primarily, to aeviternity and not to time, and particularly because their movement does not depend on the movement of the heavens, we need two *extra* sorts of time. Thomas writes:

> an angel's movement takes place in time: in continuous time if the motion is continuous; in discontinuous time if it is not.... this angelic time-whether continuous or not-is not the same as the time which measures the motion of the heavens and of all the corporeal things whose changes depend on that motion. For the angel's movement is independent of the heavens. *(ST* I, q. 53, a. 3 c)[43]

That is, there are *three* distinct times, a doctrine which Thomas has no hesitation in reiterating whenever he is talking about the angels. When he is not, however, it often seems to slip his mind. For example, when responding affirmatively to the question "Will the Heavenly movement cease at any time?" he writes: "Even as the celestial movement will cease, so also will time be no more ... *"(De Pot.,* q. *5,* a. *5,* ad 11). But either there are three times (which seems independently implausible), or there is one: one of these positions must be dropped, and the obvious one to drop is the claim that there are three times.

### F. A THOMISTIC SOLUTION TO THE DILEMMA

Like all philosophers, St. Thomas had difficulty with the notion of time. He also had important insights into the correct way to treat temporal concepts. Though he lacked both the terminology and the notation, he recognized, much more clearly than Aristotle, the nature of closed and open intervals, and their applicability to certain puzzles about time.[44] As we have seen, the

[43] Blackfriars, vol. 9, trans. Kenelm Foster.

[44] On Aristotle see M. C. Morkovsky, "The elastic instant of Aristotle's becoming and perishing," *The Modern Schoolman* 46 (1969): 191-217.

distinction between denseness and continuity had not yet been recognized by mathematicians, even in the Arab world. In fact, the true nature of the distinction was not to be realized until some six centuries after St. Thomas 's death. The distinction of which St. Thomas makes use, however, is applicable to the rationals and the reals alike. Suppose we are interested in the numbers in the interval 0 to 1. We may wish to specify all the numbers, including 0 and 1. That is a *closed* interval, and we write, [0,1]; we may wish to specify the open interval which does not include either 0 or 1, which we indicate by (0,1); or we may wish to specify an interval which is closed at one end, open at the other: (0,1] or [0,1). The important thing is that we realize that, for example, the intervals (0,1), (1,2], exhaust the numbers between 0 and 2 inclusive. The first interval includes all the numbers up to but not including 1 (and thus has no last member), while the second has both a first and a last member. These are important notions when we want to talk of something happening *at a time,* and want to raise the question, what was the world like *just before* the time in question?

St. Thomas discusses four such cases: the beginning of time, the ending of time, the moment of transubstantiation, and the time of the justification of the ungodly. In the case of transubstantiation Thomas considers the question: what *sort* of change is involved in the change from bread to the body of Christ? On the face of it, the change is instantaneous, but there seem to be difficulties with this solution; in particular, there is no *instant* immediately preceding the moment of change. As Thomas points out, one way out of this difficulty would be to deny the density of time:

> Some[45] do not grant simply that there is a mid-time between every two instants. For they say that this is true of two instants referring to the same movement, but not if they refer to different things. Hence between the instant that marks the close of rest, and another which marks the beginning of movement, there is no mid-time. (STiil, q. 75, a. 7, ad 1)

[45] Albert the Great and St. Bonaventure.

But all such changes, Thomas argues, must be judged "according to the first movement of the heavens, which is the measure of all movement and rest," and this standard yields a time which is continuous.

Others offer a semantic way out: "it is the same instant in fact, but another according to reason." But this too, as one would expect, is rejected. The way of truth, after all, is one and the same. Thomas's own solution is ingenious and exact:

> this change ... is wrought by Christ's words which are spoken by the priest, so that the last instant of pronouncing the words is the first instant in which Christ's body is in the sacrament; ... the substance of the bread is there during the whole preceding time. Of this time no instant is to be taken as proximately preceding the last one, because time is not made up of successive instants, as is proved in *Phys.* vi. And therefore a first instant can be assigned in which Christ's body is present; but a last instant cannot be assigned in which the substance of bread is there, but a last time can be assigned. *(ST* III, q. 75, a. 7, ad 1)

This catches the point precisely: we can have *afirst* instant of the second interval, provided that we do not ask for a *last* instant of the preceding interval; nonetheless, that preceding interval does have a last *portion:* "a last time can be assigned."

Thomas makes a similar point with regard to the beginning of the world: "the world did not precede time, because the instant wherein the world began, though not time, is something belonging to time, not indeed a part but the starting-point of time" *(De Pot.*, q. 3, a. 17, ad 5).

Clearly, Thomas appreciated the distinction between a closed and an open interval. But if he has that distinction he need not invoke discrete time to account for an angel's non-continuous movement. An angel moving directly from A to B is at A for every instant up to the time he is at B, and is then at B from that instant on. One of the intervals will be closed at the relevant end, the other open: there is no need to invoke non-continuous time for non-continuous movement, any more than there is in the case of the sacrament. Time is the measure of motion, and the motion is non-continuous, but it does not follow that its measure must be. Moreover, even if angelic movement is (in some sense) measured by a different time, it will nonetheless be *correlated*

with our, public, time: for the angel will be at place A at some time $t_1$ of our time, and at some subsequent time $t_{1+e}$ it will not be at A. What is more, though e may approach zero as closely as we wish it cannot equal zero, for then an angel would be in two places simultaneously, which has already been ruled out. All that is left is that, in terms of *our* time at least, the angel is at A until $t_1$ and then at B at all succeeding times (until the next move). Even if we say this change is measured by a different time, it is also measured by *our* time. Similar considerations apply, of course, to angelic continuous time.

St. Thomas's reason for invoking a special continuous time for the angels was that they must not be governed by "the first movement of the heavens." When talking about the changing of bread into the body of Christ, however, he clearly allows that, in that case, "the first movement of the heavens ... is the measure of all movement and rest" (*ST* III, q. 75, a. 7, ad 1), and it is not clear why in that case the movement of the angels too could not be so measured.

Moreover, Thomas is quite willing to allow what *we* would think of as *time* after the time that is measured by the movement of the celestial sphere has ceased. He allows, for example, that "God knows even the thoughts and affections of hearts, which will be multiplied to infinity as rational creatures go on for ever" (*ST* I, q. 14, a. 12 c)," which for discursive intellects such as ourselves, requires infinite time. As Ockham remarked, "if there were no first motion, then there would be no time that is the same as a real motion that measures other inferior motions. That is the way the Doctors understand the claim that there will be no time after Judgment Day."[46] Further, Thomas recognizes that once we have a standard for time, we can extrapolate beyond that, for he remarks, "God does indeed precede the world by duration, not of time but of eternity, since God's existence is not measured by time. Nor was there real time before the world, but only imaginary; thus now we can imagine an infinite space

[46] Quoted by M. M. Adams, *William Ockham*, 2 vols. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987), 2:885.

of time running with eternity and preceding the beginning of time."[47] That is, although *celestial* time began with the creation of the heavens, once we have that temporal system set up, we can extend the temporal dimension in both directions beyond the actual temporal bounds of the celestial system.

So far, I have been concentrating simply on the mechanics of instantaneous movement, and have tried to show that St. Thomas has the necessary conceptual apparatus to handle such events within a framework of a single continuous time. Following Thomas, I have talked of angels, but for all that has been so far said about them in connection with non-continuous movement I could as well have been talking about elementary particles (for example, electrons in the Bohr atom). Whether for particles or angels, however, the position I have sketched was available to St. Thomas.

## G. Two DIFFICULTIES

There remain, however, two difficulties, one exegetical and one philosophical. The exegetical one is this: in his discussion of grace Aquinas clearly makes the point about the way to make use of the notion of open and closed intervals, and equally explicitly denies that this applies to the angels. Considering the objection:

> if grace is infused into the soul, there must be an instant when it first dwells in the soul; so, too, if sin is forgiven there must be a last instant that man is in sin. But it cannot be the same instant, otherwise opposites would be in the same simultaneously. Hence they must be two successive instants; between which there must be time as the Philosopher says *(Phys.* vi.1). Therefore the justification of the ungodly takes place not all at once, but successively. *(ST* 1-11, q. 113, a. 8, obj. 5)

Thomas replies:

> The succession of opposites in the same subject must be looked at differently in the things that are subject to time and in those that are above time. For in those that are in time, there is no last instant in

[47] *De Pot.*, q. 3, a. 17, ad 5, ad 20.

which the previous form inheres in the subject; but there is the last time, and the first instant that the subsequent form inheres in the matter or subject; and this for the reason that in time we are not to consider one instant as immediately preceding another instant, since neither do instants succeed each other immediately in time, nor points in a line, as is proved in *Physics* vi. 1. But time is terminated by an instant. Hence in the whole of the previous time wherein anything is moving towards its form, it is under the opposite form; but in the last instant of this time, which is the first instant of the subsequent time, it has the form which is the term of the movement.

But in those that are above time, it is otherwise. For if there be any succession of affections or intellectual conceptions in them (as in the angels), such succession is not measured by continuous time, but by discrete time, even as the things measured are not continuous. . . . In these, therefore, there is a last instant in which the preceding is, and a first instant in which the subsequent is. Nor must there be time in between, since there is no continuity of time, which this would necessitate. *(ST* 1-Il, q. 113, a. 8, ad 5)

Clearly, then, Thomas was aware of the possibility of applying the open/closed intervals solution to the non-continuous movement of angels, but rejected it outright, under the influence of the doctrine that makes the *kind* of time invoked a function of the kind of entity (or motion) involved. That makes the following suggestion tempting. The angels are not "in" time. Given Thomas's conceptual scheme, placing the angels *in* time involves the imposition of an inappropriately Newtonian structure: time is the measure of change, so to ask about an entity's *time* is to ask not: *when is it?* but: *how does it change?-and* so to say that there are three times is simply to say that there are three kinds of change. Thus "time" is used equivocally, now to refer to normal, public time, now to the measure of change. This would also fit in nicely with Aquinas's twin claims that though time will come to an end, humans and their bodies along with "a principle of movement" will remain *(De Pot.,* q. 5, a. 5, ad 10, ad 11; q. 5, a. 10 c) In some sense, I think, this "equivocality" suggestion must be the right one: St. Thomas simply uses "time" in two (or more) radically different senses. The exegetical difficulty with this suggestion is that Thomas passes up opportunity after opportunity to mention the fact that "time" is equivocal, though he points out clearly that both "move" and the notion of

being "at" or "in" a place are equivocal as applied to angels and lesser creatures. Just as, in the remarks on grace, he appears definitively to reject the solution involving the suggestion that the angels are in *our* time, so also, it seems, he would reject any such "equivocality" solution. So a problem remains.

Moreover, the equivocation, were it allowed, would be both radical and ultimately unhelpful: angelic knowledge of the future, for example, is knowledge of our (i.e., *the)* future, so epistemically they manage to inhabit our time, and there is no real reason why they should not do so dynamically as well. Nonetheless it seems clear that St. Thomas's failure to take this way out-if failure it be-was not the result of an oversight.

So much for the exegetical problem. The philosophical problem is thornier, but again, it was a problem of which Thomas was explicitly aware, though perhaps not one which had occurred to him when he was discussing the nature of angels in the *Summa.* Some two to five years after writing the relevant part of the *Summa,* he considered the objection that "if an angel moves from A to B without passing through an intermediate, it will be necessary for it to be destroyed at A and created again at B. This is impossible because then it would not be the same angel. Therefore, it is necessary for it to pass through the intermediate." Thomas replied, a shade briskly, that "this does not happen through the destruction or new creation of an angel, but because its power is supereminent over a place *[quia eius virtus supereminet loco]"(Quodl.* I, q. 3, a. 2).[48]

This passage poses two problems. In the first place it is by no means clear *how* St. Thomas 's answer is meant to deal with the problem. That difficulty I here ignore. In the second place, and more interestingly, it is by no means clear what exactly the problem is.

In part, clearly, the objection relies on an analogy with the case of more everyday objects. For ordinary material complex-

[48] *Quodl.* 1 is almost certainly later than *ST* I, which was probably finished in 1267, while *Quodl.* 1 was composed in the period 1269-72. See also Kenelm Foster, Introduction, Blackfriars, vol. 9, xxviii; Sandra Edwards, Introduction, *Quodlibetal Questions 1 and Z, 5.*

es, corporeal entities such as molecules, whales, or human beings, identity is lost in the absence of spatio-temporal continuity.[49] Thus there must be something *particular* about angels that makes this point inapplicable. Thomas offers the fact that they have "supereminent" power over a place, but it is far from clear how this could help; indeed it is not even clear how it is relevant.

On the other hand, it is equally unclear that the problems that arise in the ordinary case need plague the angels. After all, what is the problem in the normal case? Thomas's usual doctrine is that individuation within a species requires matter, and reidentification over time requires continuity of both matter and form, though in the special case of human beings, the form and the body may be separated for a time. How this can be is a mystery, but is required if resurrection is to be achieved. For resurrection there must be something that re-surges. We have, Aquinas believed, good evidence for this: Christ's soul (but not Christ the human person) descended into hell, but Christ himself was resurrected.

What is required in the general case is this: there must be an "individuated form," in the case of living things, a vivifying soul, and a parcel of "designated matter" informed by its substantial form (hereafter, to restrict ourselves to living things: its soul). The soul is a forin, and the human form is one and the same for all humans; nonetheless we do have individual souls: we have an "individuated form." In "Aquinas on Individuals and their Essences," Sandra Edwards draws our attention to an important

[49] Cf. Geach, *God and the Sou4* 28-9:

> There is of course no philosophical reason to expect that from a human corpse there will arise at some future date a new human body, continuous in some way with the corpse; and in some particular cases there appear strong empirical objections. But apart from the *possibility* of resurrection, it seems to me a mere illusion to have any hope for life after death. I am of the mind of Judas Maccabeus: if there is no resurrection, it is superfluous and vain to pray for the dead.

Aquinas's views are set out clearly in Sandra Edwards's extremely helpful paper, "Aquinas on Individuals and their Essences," *Philosophical 1bpics* 13 (1985): 155-64; see also "Saint Thomas Aquinas on 'the same man,'" *Southwestem Joumal of Philosophy* 10 (1979): 89-97. The matter is complicated, however. In *Quodlibet* Iv, q. 5 Aquinas remarks: "Were a thing to be annihilated, God could still restore it with the same numerical identity"; one is left wishing that Aquinas had left us a more detailed treatment of the issue.

passage in *Contra Gentiles:* "A singular essence is constituted from designated matter and individuated form *[ex materia designata et Jonna individuata* ], as the essence of Socrates is constituted from this body and this soul *[ex hoc corpore et hac animal"* and notes that the contrast is with the universal essence of humanity *(essentia hominis universalis)* which is constituted solely from soul and body *(ScG* I, c. 65).

We should note in passing how well this fits in with the claim that finite creatures cannot know wholly future singulars. Even if they could know that *some* person of a certain kind would come to be, they 'ould not, in the absence of revelation, have knowledge of just *this* person-for knowledge of *this* person must, for creatures, wait upon its existence. More recently, Prior noted an interesting consequence of this point. Even with logical necessity/possibility certain things that were impossible, or at least, not possible, may *become* possible, so that the set of the possible gains as well as loses members over time:

> [T]here can be no truths, not even logical truths, that are distinguishably 'about' Caesar and Antony until there are such persons to be the subjects of these truths. Hence, while the passage of time may eliminate 'possibilities' in the sense of alternative outcomes of actual states of affairs, and cause that to be no longer alterable which once might have been otherwise, with 'logical' possibilities the opposite change occurs. For as new distinguishable individuals come into being, there is a multiplication of the number of different subjects to which our predications can consistently be attached, and so a multiplication of distinguishable logical possibilities. What was once just a possibility that 'someone' should have such-and-such a history, and 'someone else' should have such-and-such another history, can now be replaced by the distinct possibilities that *X* should have had the first history and *Y* the second, and that *Y* should have had the first and *X* the second.[50]

We note that, for Aquinas, a doctrine such as that of John Hick, in which two corporeal entities, separated in time with no continuing entity of any kind joining them, are claimed to be identical, would be fundamentally mistaken. God cannot achieve conceptual impossibilities, and this would be a paradigm

[50] A. N. Prior, "Identifiable Individuals," *Review of Metaphysics* 13 (1960): 521-39; reprinted in *Papers on Time and Tense,* 77.

case of such an impossibility.[51]

Quite apart from the need for continuing designated matter and individuated form there is another difficulty. Identity attributions are, if true, necessarily true. But then, identity over time requires not merely that, for each original individual, there be in fact at most one subsequent applicant for identity with that individual, it requires that there cannot even be the possibility of more than one claimant to the title. In the case of a normal corporeal entity, however, such necessity would be lacking if there were a spatio-temporal gap.

Thus, in the normal case, identity requires spatio-temporal continuity. But what should we say about the angels? For angels are pure form, with no admixture of matter, their time is not our time, and every species of angel has at most one member. The second distinction, I have argued, we should ignore, but the first and third are surely relevant. Consider for the moment the question, not "Can an angel retain identity over a spatio-temporal gap?" but rather the question, "Can angels *lose* identity over such a gap?" In the normal case, the lack of material continuity would be conclusive: but here there is no matter. In the normal case, the possibility of a competitor would be decisive: but here there is no such possibility, for every angelic species is a unit class. This distinguishes the case of the angels from other, similar, cases such as the already mentioned case of the Bohr atom, or the equally unreal case of the phoenix.[52] It was, moreover, not clear in the Bohr framework that there was any particular reason to identify the pre-jump electron with the post-jump electron and, indeed, "electron" has turned out to be a sortal with no very clear criteria of reidentification. Thus though the Bohr electron

[51] See also J. J. Macintosh, "The Impossibility of Miraculous Reincarnation," in H. Meynell and J. J. Macintosh, eds., *Faith, Scepticism and Personal Identity: Essays in Honour of Terence Penelhum* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1994), 211-33.

[52] I am assuming for this example that electrons in the Bohr atom (a) actually orbit the nucleus spatially (as in the Rutherford atom), (b) can only be in one of a set of discrete states (orbits) determined by Planck's constant, and (c) move discontinuously from one to another of these states (orbits) by emitting or absorbing a photon. For further details, see Niels Bohr, "The Structure of the Atom," in J. H. Weaver, ed., *The World of Physics*, 3 vols. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), vol. 2, *The Einstein Universe and the Bohr Atom*, 315-38.

shares the possibility of discontinuous movement with the angels, it does not really provide a useful analogue for angelic movement and identity. The phoenix, on the other hand, shares the other feature, uniqueness under a form, but in the case of the phoenix, unlike that of the angels, such uniqueness is, so to say, accidental to the world: there *happens* to be only one phoenix in the fictional world closest to us in possibility space, but this is either not a necessary feature of phoenixes or, if it is, it is necessary by fiat only. St. Thomas has a reason for claiming unit membership for the classes of angels, but there is no such reason available for phoenix uniqueness. Neither of these overlapping cases, then, helps us with the question, would angelic identity be lost after non-continuous movement?

Indeed, the striking features of the angelic case prompt a more extreme question: *could* God annihilate an angel of a given type, and create another *different* angel of that type? On the face of it one is tempted to say yes, of course. That much surely lies within God's omnipotence. But what would be the significant difference between that case, where we may assume a variety of relevant replicated properties, including q-memories, etc., and the case of an angel's normal discontinuous movement?[53] What the objection highlights is this: either every such case involves loss of identity, or no such case could. Both these results sit uneasily with our intuitions in this area, and what one should say on this matter is unclear. However, though this issue is relevant to views on angelic motion, as well as being independently interesting, it should not affect our views on angelic time: that at least can be dispensed with.

[53] Nor is this the only problem. James F. Ross has pointed out that since incorruptible creatures are incorruptible by nature, there is a grave difficulty about the notion that they can be annihilated, despite *De Pot.*, q. 5, a. 3 where Thomas makes it clear that "it is not impossible for God to reduce things to nothing," with no restriction on the "things" in question. Thus, even though God *will* not annihilate an everlasting being, such annihilation remains possible-but, asks Ross, is this claim consistent? .Ross's provocative and interesting paper deals with wider problems concerning the intelligibility of annihilation, but the angels present a particularly difficult case ("Aquinas on Annihilation," in John F. Wippel, ed., *Studies in Medieval Philosophy*, Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy, vol. 17 [Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1987], 177-99).

## H. CONCLUSION

In addition to his claim that time is single, St. Thomas, under the twin influences of Aristotle and the angels, was led to the view that there are three times. But there is really no reason, even given the Aristotelian background, to let the angels occupy a different time, and in view of what is said of them epistemologically, there is every reason not to. Further, Thomas is aware that while time, as *actually* measured by the movement of the celestial sphere, has fixed limits, our ability to invoke temporal notions, including quantitative ones, is not so limited. Even if "real" time stops, "imaginary" time can continue, and the thoughts and acts of humans can continue with it.[54] "Time like place is extraneous to things."[55] Nor is the argument from Aristotelian physics convincing, even in thirteenth-century terms. The conclusion simply does not follow. The move from the two premises: (i) there are distinct kinds of motion, and (ii) motion is a necessary and sufficient condition for time, to the conclusion: (iii) there are distinct kinds of time, is simply illicit. We may allow St. Thomas (within his context) the premises: but neither we nor he should accept his conclusion on these grounds. He need not, on this account at least, give up the doctrine that the angels can move both continuously and discontinuously, but he could without loss have dropped the unnecessary and unnecessarily complicating claim that that doctrine requires a multiplicity of times as well as a multiplicity of motions.[56]

[54] In a similar vein Thomas, discussing the way in which the notion of "eternity" is broadened colloquially, remarks: "The fire of hell is called eternal, only because it never ends. Still, there is change in the pains of the lost, according to the words, *To extreme heat they will pass from snowy waters* (Job xxiv.19). Hence in hell true eternity does not exist, but rather time; according to the text of the Psalm, *Their time will be for ever* (Ps lxxx.16)" (*ST* I, q. 10, a. 3, ad 2).

[55] *De Pot.*, q. 3, a. 17 c..

[56] Earlier versions of this paper were read to the Philosophy Department of the University of Calgary and to the annual meeting of the Canadian Society of Mediaevalists, and I am grateful to members of both audiences for their helpful comments. Suggestions by my colleague Ali Kazmi have been particularly helpful.

# DOES SCIENCE SAY THAT HUMAN EXISTENCE IS POINTLESS?

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IN AN ARTICLE published by Marine Biological Laboratory, historian of science William Provine claims that contemporary science imposes on us the view that human existence is meaningless: "Modern science directly implies that the world is organized strictly in accordance with mechanistic principles. There are no purposive principles whatsoever in nature. There are no gods and no designing forces that are rationally detectable .... Modern science directly implies that there are no inherent moral or ethical laws, no absolute guiding principles for human society.... When I die I shall rot and that is the end of me. There is no hope of life everlasting .... Free will as it is traditionally conceived, the freedom to make uncoerced unpredictable choices among alternative possible courses of action, simply does not exist. . . . There is no ultimate meaning for humans." [1] Provine's position can be reduced to five denials: no purposefulness in nature, no God, no ethical principles, no immortality, no free will. Are these denials scientific as Provine contends? No one would maintain that they are scientific in the sense of being proven. No experimental science claims to prove any of them. One occasionally finds one of the five denials, simply asserted without evidence, in the introduction to a textbook or in the popular writings of a scientist, but no scientific proofs are ever offered. Provine himself, in the article proclaiming these denials, neither offers nor refers to any such proofs. He seems to

[1] William Provine, "Evolution and The Foundation of Ethics," *MBL Science 3* (1988): 27-28.

concede that there are none when he says "modern science directly *implies,"* not proves.

If the five denials are not scientific in the sense of being proven, perhaps they are nevertheless indispensable as background assumptions to make the scientific method work properly. Must the working scientist adopt Provine 's five denials to make discoveries or to explain phenomena? The founders of modern science did not think so, and did not assume the five denials in their work. On the contrary, they integrated into their scientific work the existence of God, purpose in the universe, free choice, the immortality of the human soul, and the reality of ethics. For instance, Copernicus argued that the cosmos must be harmonious because' it is made by the "best and most orderly Workman of all."[2] By explicitly following the principle that nature is purposeful, William Harvey discovered the circulation of blood.[3] Seventeenth-century chemist Robert Boyle wrote: "When I consider the rational soul as an immaterial and immortal being, that bears the image of its divine maker, being endowed with a capacious intellect, and a will, that no creature can force: I am by these considerations disposed to think the soul of man a nobler and more valuable being, than the whole corporeal world."[4] It was the passion of Kepler's life to investigate the deeper harmonies of the heavens, for, in his words, the "fuller knowledge of God through nature."[5] "Galileo never thought of denying an ultimately religious answer to the problems of the universe," writes E. A. Burtt.[6] Galileo repudiated Aristotle's physics but praised and extolled his ethics. Isaac Newton con-

[2] Nicolaus Copernicus, *On the Revolutions of the HemJenly Spheres,* trans. Charles Glenn Wallis, vol. 16 of *Great Books of the Western World* (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 1952), 508.

[3] William Harvey, "An Anatomical Disquisition on the Motion of the Heart and Blood in Animals," vol. 26 of *Great Books of the Western World,* ed. Philip Goetz (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 1990), 285.

[4] Robert Boyle, *The Works of the Honourable Robert Boyle,* ed. Thomas Birch (London, 1672) vol. 4, 19.

*sJoannis Kepleri Astronomi Opera Omnia,* ed. Ch. Frisch (Frankfurt and Erlangen, 1858), vol. 8, 688.

[6] Edwin Arthur Burtt, *The Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Physical Science* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1950), 93.

sidered his *Principia* to be one great proof for the existence of God whom he describes in his famous General Scholium as living, intelligent, perfect, eternal, omniscient, and omnipresent. [7]

If the founding fathers of modern science assumed the contrary of Provine 's five denials and yet made major discoveries and contributions, then it would seem that the five denials are not needed to do good science. But perhaps Provine will still try to maintain that at least no scientific evidence supports immortality, freedom, purpose, God, and ethics. It is my contention that even this is not true. In the following sections, I shall argue that a plausible case can be made from contemporary evidence that good science is quite open to the possibilities of a spiritual element in human beings and hence immortality, human free choice, purposiveness in nature, the existence of God, and genuine ethics. I shall not present an exhaustive treatment of any of these subjects but merely give a brief indication of their compatibility with current scientific evidence, relying in large measure upon the testimony of eminent scientists.

## IMMORTALITY

Sir Charles Sherrington, the father of modern neurophysiology, after a lifetime of pioneering investigations of the brain, concluded that the mind and its functions are not reducible to the chemistry and physics of brain activity.[8] On this basis he posits two irreducible elements in human beings: body and mind. In this connection Sherrington remarks: "That our being should consist of two fundamental elements offers, I suppose, no greater improbability than that it should rest on one only."[9] Neuroscientist Sir John Eccles concurs: "Conscious experiences ... are quite different in kind from any goings-on in the neuronal machinery; nevertheless, the events in the neuronal

[7] Sir Isaac Newton, *The Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy* (London, 1803), vol. 2, 311.

[8] Charles Sherrington, *Man on His Nature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 230.

[9] Quoted in Wilder Penfield, *The Mystery of the Mind: A Critical Study of Consciousness and the Human Brain* (Princeton University Press, 1975), 4.

machinery are a necessary condition for experience, though ... they are not a sufficient condition." [10]

Supporting the conclusions of Sherrington and Eccles are the dramatic findings of Wilder Penfield, Canadian neurosurgeon, published in his book *Mystery of the Mind.* Penfield found that electrical stimulation to the exposed cortex of the brain of a conscious person can trigger flashbacks of memory; cause simple sensations, temporary aphasia, and the deja vu experience. Using his electrode and the responses of conscious patients during brain surgery, Penfield was able to map out the function of every area in the brain with unprecedented certainty, but there was no area responsible for thinking or deciding. Penfield declares: "None of the actions that we attribute to the mind has been initiated by electrode stimulation or epileptic discharge." He adds: " There is no place in the cerebral cortex where electric stimulation will cause a patient to believe or to decide." [11] The electrode can evoke sensations and memories, but it cannot make the patient syllogize or do algebra. It cannot even produce in the mind the simplest elements of reasoning. The electrode can make the patient's body move, but it cannot make him want to move it. It cannot coerce the will. Evidently, then, the human intellect and the human will have no bodily organs.

Penfield concluded that it will always be quite impossible to explain the mind on the basis of nerve actions in the brain and hence maintained it is "more reasonable to suggest ... that the mind may be a distinct and *different* essence" from the body.[12] Throughout his scientific career, Penfield recounts, he had struggled to prove that the mind is a by-product of the brain. His own observations, however, finally compelled him to admit that the human mind is distinct from the brain. "What a thrill it is, then," he declares, "to discover that the scientist, too, can legitimately believe in the existence of the spirit!" [13] And if the human mind is nonmaterial, then it is, in the words of neuroscientist John

[10] John Eccles, *Facing Reality* (Berlin: Springer-Verlag, 1970), 162.
[11] Penfield, 77.
[12] Ibid., 62.
[13] Ibid., 85.

Eccles, arguably "not subject in death to the disintegration that affects ... both the body and the brain," [14] thus opening the possibility of immortality. Provine, on the other hand, offers no scientific evidence for his claim that "There is no hope of life everlasting."

## FREEDOM

In his brain observations of conscious patients Penfield found that cortex areas controlling bodily movements did not control acts of the will: "When I have caused a patient to move his hand by applying an electrode to the motor cortex of one hemisphere, I have often asked him about it. Invariably his response was: 'I didn't do that. You did.' When I caused him to vocalize, he said: 'I didn't make that sound. You pulled it out of me." [115]

These involuntary movements are like a patient's leg jumping in response to the tap of a physician's hammer. Everyone recognizes that such movements are not freely chosen. Penfield found that he could coerce a patient's limbs by brain activation but he could not evoke acts of the will by this process. He concluded that the will is autonomous from the brain. If our ability to choose has no bodily organ, then it should not be surprising that it acts in a way that matter cannot, namely, freely. Physicist Freeman Dyson insists that "Our consciousness is not just a passive epiphenomenon carried along by chemical events in our brains, but is an active agent." [16]

There is nothing unscientific about the recognition in ourselves of the autonomy of choice. Eccles declares: "There are thus no sound scientific grounds for denying the freedom of the will, which ironically, must be assumed if we are to act as scientific investigators." [17] In fact, denying the possibility of free choice renders the whole of science absurd. The scientist would have to ask not "What is true?" but "What are we conditioned to believe?" As physicist Carl von Weizsacker writes: "Freedom is

[14] Eccles, 174.
[15] Penfield, 76.
[16] Freeman Dyson, *Disturbing the Universe* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), 249.
[17] Eccles, 120.

a prerequisite of the experiment. Only where my action and thought are not determined by circumstances, urges or customs but by my free choice can I make experiments." [18] So, oddly, one of Provine's denials-human beings have no free will-would render science impossible.

## PURPOSE

Contemporary physics and cosmology offer evidence of purpose in the universe. Just to give a sample, astrophysicist Stephen Hawking argues that the present rate of expansion of the universe is critically adjusted to what is needed to have a universe where life is possible.[19] Physicist John A. Wheeler in a similar way argues that the size of our universe had to be what it is in order for heavy elements to occur and hence for life to exist: "Life ... however anyone has imagined it, demands heavy elements. To produce elements out of the primordial hydrogen requires thermonuclear combustion. Thermonuclear combustion in turn needs several [billion] years cooking time in the interior of a star. But for the universe to provide several [billion] years of time, according to general relativity, it must have a reach in space of the order of several [billion ... light years]. Why then is the universe as big as it is? Because we are here!"[20]

Astronomer Hugh Ross documents sixteen physical and astronomical features of our universe that appear uniquely designed for life and shows nineteen other delicately balanced parameters of the planet earth that make it a hospitable environment for living things. Ross concludes: "It seems abundantly clear that the earth . . . in addition to the universe, has experienced . . . design." [21] Physicist Paul Davies concedes that "the impression of

[18] Carl F. von Weizsacker, *The World View of Physics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949), 203.

[19] Stephen W. Hawking, "The Anisotropy of the Universe at Large 'limes," in *Confrontation of Cosmological Theories with Observational Data,* ed. M. S. Longair (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1974) 285-286.

[20] John A. Wheeler, "Genesis and Observership," in *Foundational Problems in the Special Sciences,* ed. Robert E. Butts and Jaakko Hintikka (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1977), 18.

[21] Hugh Ross, *The Fingerprint of God* (Orange, California: Promise Pub., 1989), 119-138.

design is overwhelming. *nu* Astronomer John Barrow and physicist Frank 1ipler, in a comprehensive study of purpose in nature, argue that "the Universe must have those properties which allow life to develop within it at some stage in its history."[23] Molecular biologist George Wald affirms: "if any one of a considerable number of physical properties of the universe . . . were other than it is . . . life . . . would become impossible, here or anywhere." And he declares: "This is a life-breeding universe."[24]

Physicist Freeman Dyson points out that the forces within the nucleus of atoms "had to lie within a rather narrow range to make life possible." So on the small scale and on the very large scale, there is now muc,h evidence from physics, chemistry, and cosmology that our universe, its history, and its material laws are uniquely subordinated to the possibility of life. Dyson writes: "The more I examine the universe and study the details of its architecture, the more evidence I find that the universe in some sense must have known we were coming."[25] The evidence offered by Hawking, Wheeler, Ross, Davies, and Dyson challenges the credibility of Provine's assertion that "there are no purposive principles whatsoever in nature."

## GOD

The new discoveries supporting purpose in the universe have theological implications. Astronomer George Greenstein reflects: "As we survey all the evidence, the thought insistently arises that some supernatural agency--0r, rather, Agency-must be involved. Is it possible that suddenly, without intending to, we have stumbled upon scientific proof of the existence of a Supreme Being? Was it God who stepped in and so providentially crafted the cosmos for our benefit?"[26] Astronomer Fred

[22] Paul Davies, *The Cosmic Blueprint* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988), 203.

[23] John D. Barrow and Frank J. 'Iipler, *The Anthropic Cosmological Principle* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 21.

[24] George Wald, "Life and Mind in the Universe," *International Journal of Quantum Chemistry: Quantum Biology Symposium* 11 (New York: Wiley, 1984), 2, 7.

[25] Dyson, *250.*

[26] George Greenstein, *The Symbiotic Universe: Life and Mind in the Cosmos* (New York: William Morrow, 1988), 26-27.

Hoyle is more blunt about it: "A commonsense interpretation of the facts suggests that a superintellect has monkeyed with physics, as well as chemistry and biology, and that there are no blind forces worth speaking about in nature." [21]

A universe aiming at making life possible implies a mind directing it. For matter alone cannot aim at anything: it cannot act with anything in mind. If the universe, which has no understanding, acts for the sake of an end, it must be directed by some other being endowed with understanding. A mind behind the whole of nature, directing the universe and all its laws to an end, describes God.

The Big Bang account of the history of our universe, now universally accepted among physicists, also has theological implications. How does the Big Bang point to the existence of God? According to the very best evidence in astrophysics, the whole universe-including matter, energy, space, and time-is a one-time event and had a definite beginning.[28] As astrophysicist Joseph Silk declares: "The beginning of time is unavoidable." [29] The universe's age has been confirmed by three lines of research, including stellar ages and the expansion rate of the universe. All estimates converge on a figure between 14 and 18 billion years old.[30]

But something must have always existed; for if ever absolutely nothing existed, then nothing would exist now, since nothing comes from nothing. The material universe cannot be the thing that always existed because matter had a beginning. It is 14 to 18 billion years old. This means that whatever has always existed is nonmaterial. The only nonmaterial reality we have experience of is mind, as suggested by Penfield's observations. If mind is what has always existed, then matter must have been brought into existence by a mind that always was. This points to an intelli-

[21] Fred Hoyle, quoted by Paul Davies, *The Accidental Universe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 118.

[28] Robert M. Augros and George N. Stanciu, *The New Story of Science* (New York: Bantam, 1986), 57-64.

[29] Joseph Silk, *The Big Bang: The Creation and Evolution of the Universe* (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, 1980), 312.

[30] Ross, 92

gent, eternal being who created all things. Such a being is what we mean by the term God.

Physicist Edmund Whittaker reasons: "There is no ground for supposing that matter and energy existed before [the Big Bang] and were suddenly galvanized into action. For what could distinguish that moment from all other moments in eternity? It is simpler to postulate creation *ex nihilo-Divine* will constituting Nature from nothingness." [31] And physicist Edward Milne, reflecting on the expanding universe, concludes: "As to the first cause of the Universe, in the context of expansion, that is left for the reader to insert, but our picture is incomplete without Him." [32] The scientific evidence for purpose and the implications of the Big Bang contradict Provine's declaration that "there are no gods and no designing forces that are rationally detectable."

## ETHICS

Provine denies any causal role to ethical values because he believes all human behavior is mechanistically determined. However, this exclusive insistence on mechanistic causes is an arbitrary narrowing of the scientific method and has been rejected by physics, humanistic psychology, and neuroscience. In physics, rigid mechanism was overthrown by relativity and quantum theory. Einstein writes: "Science did not succeed in carrying out the mechanical program convincingly and today no physicist believes in the possibility of its fulfillment. "[33] Physicist Paul Davies observes the incongruity between current trends in biology and the direction of the new physics: "It is ironical that physics, which led the way for all other sciences, is now moving towards a more accommodating view of mind, while the life sciences, following the path of last century's physics, are trying to abolish mind altogether." [34]

[31] Edmund Whittaker, quoted in Robert Jastrow, *God and the Astronomers* (New York: Norton, 1978), 111-112.

[32] Edward Milne, quoted in Jastrow, 112.

[33] Albert Einstein and Leopold Infeld, *The Evolution of Physics* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1966), 121.

[34] Paul Davies, *God and the New Physics* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983), 8.

Psychologists in touch with the new physics have rejected behaviorism with its mechanistic account of human beings. Psychologist Frank Severin: "Behavioristic theories of science are based to a large extent upon nineteenth-century assumptions which are no longer considered valid. . . . By incorporating the new insights of physicists and philosophers, psychologists should be able to devise methodologies more in keeping with their unique subject matter."[35] Carl Rogers echoes the same sentiment: "In an attempt to be ultrascientific, psychology has endeavored to walk in the footsteps of a Newtonian physics. Oppenheimer has expressed himself strongly on this, saying that the worst of all possible misunderstandings would be that psychology be influenced to model itself after a physics which is not there any more, which has been quite outdated .... I think there is quite general agreement that this is the path into which our logical-positivist behaviorism has led us."[36] Rollo May expresses the same caution.[37] Rogers affirms that values are among the subjects specific to nonmechanistic psychology: "In the light of inner meanings it can investigate all the issues which are meaningless for the behaviorist-purposes, goals, values, choice, perception of self, perceptions of others, the personal constructs with which we build our world, the responsibilities we accept or reject, the whole phenomenal world of the individual with its connective tissue of meaning."[38] Severin adds: "Any science that imagines itself to be value-free is long outdated."[39]

Modern neuroscience has also rejected narrow behaviorism and mechanistic determinism.[40] As a consequence, ethical values resume their rightful place in accounting for human behavior.

[35] Frank T. Severin, *Discovering Man in Psychology: A Humanistic Approach* (New York: John Wiley, 1973), 6.

[36] Carl Rogers, "Toward a Science of the Person," in *Behaviorism and Phenomenology: Contrasting Bases for Modern Psychology,* ed. T. W. Wann (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 119.

[37] Rollo May, "Toward a Science of the Person," in *Behaviorism and the Human Dilemma* (New York: Norton, 1979), 182.

[38] Rogers, 119.

[39] Severin, 6.

[40] Roger Sperry, "Interview," *Omni* (August, 1983): 72.

Neuroscientist Roger Sperry explains: "According to our new views of consciousness, ethical and moral values become a very legitimate part of the brain science. They're no longer conceived to be reducible to brain physiology. Instead, we now see that subjective values themselves exert powerful causal influence in brain function and behavior. They're universal determinants in all human decision making, and they're actually the most powerful causal control forces now shaping world events."[41] Sperry concludes: "A synthesis of science with moral values, despite previous views to the contrary, is today logically feasible, humanistically compatible and scientifically sound."[42] Hence, evidence from physics, psychology, and neuroscience challenges Provine's claim that "there are no inherent moral or ethical laws, no absolute guiding principles for human society."

## CONCLUSION

We have seen that Provine's five denials are not proven in any science, are not necessary as assumptions to make science work, and that, according to many eminent scientists, there is scientific evidence to support the contrary of each denial. Hence, Provine cannot plausibly maintain that his denials are scientific.

I do not claim to have demonstrated the contraries of Provine's five denials, but simply to have shown that the denials are less probable than their contraries. It is important to note that the above evidence cannot be rebutted merely by citing other scientists divulging their personal disbelief in God, immortality, free will, and the rest. For the testimony I have quoted is from scientists giving plausible scientific evidence from within their own fields of expertise. It does not represent merely private opinion. To rebut, Provine would have to furnish citations from scientists arguing for the five denials *from scientific evidence*, not merely expressing their personal views on the issue. After all, in science, one counts evidence, not heads. In the same article we began with, Provine claims that "very few truly religious evolu-

[41] Sperry, "Interview," 71.

[42] Roger Sperry, *Science and Moral Priority* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 5.

tionary biologists remain. Most are atheists, and many have been driven there by their understanding of the evolutionary process and other science."[43] Unfortunately, he neither names nor quotes any of this alleged majority, and gives his readers no reason, beyond his own authority, to think they are a majority or that they are atheists for scientific reasons rather than for cultural or personal reasons.

But if the five denials are not derived from science, whence do they originate? Provine founds his entire position on current trends in evolutionary biology, apparently unaware that these trends are out of touch with the new physics. Molecular physicist Harold Morowitz out that "biologists, who once postulated a privileged role for the human mind in nature's hierarchy, have been moving relentlessly toward the hard-core materialism that characterized nineteenth-century physics. At the same time, physicists, faced with compelling experimental evidence, have been moving away from strictly mechanical models of the universe to a view that sees the mind as playing an integral role in all physical events. It is as if the two disciplines were on fast-moving trains, going in opposite directions and not noticing what is happening across the tracks."[44]

Thus, it is not from any scientific reasoning but from a materialist interpretation of science that the five denials arise. Materialism asserts that only matter exists and that everything is explainable in terms of material causes. And from materialism the five denials follow with logical necessity. Thus choice must be an illusion, since matter cannot choose freely and we are nothing but matter. And since matter cannot plan or aim at anything, purpose cannot exist in the universe. All things occur only by the mechanical necessity of physical laws. With no control over our own actions and with no natural human purposes, ethics, of course, becomes meaningless. What sense does it make to speak of what we *ought* to do if we have no freedom to do it? Likewise, it follows that immortality is excluded, since if every part of us is

[43] Provine, 28.

[44] Harold Morowitz, "Rediscovering the Mind," *Psychology Today* 14 (August 1980): 12.

matter, then every part of us is mortal. And finally, materialism has no need of a God. If matter is the only reality, then it must have always existed and a creator is superfluous. Thus a whole world view flows from the unspoken assumption of materialism, a world view indeed fraught with meaninglessness and despair. Only if materialism is true, do all these things follow. But the materialism so aggressively proclaimed by Provine is never examined, proven, or subjected to the scientific method. It is assumed gratuitously, *a priori*, and in the face of contrary evidence. This is hardly science. Thus, science does not say that human existence is pointless: Provine does; the parascientific philosophy of materialism does; but not science. Good science calls us to humility, not to the hybris of materialism.

# THOMISTIC EXISTENTIALISM AND THE PROOFS *EX MOTU* AT *CONTRA GENTILES* I, C. 13

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I

IN HIS ARTICLE, "The Start of Metaphysics," Theodore Kondoleon gives witness that Aquinas's proofs for the existence of God from motion remain a stumbling block hindering acceptance of the "existential" interpretation of Aquinas.[1] Jacques Maritain and Etienne Gilson spearheaded the existential interpretation, while Joseph Owens has provided its most explicit formulation.[2] In this interpretation, the existence of the thing does not mean the fact of the thing; nor does it mean the fact of some union of matter and form or substance and predicamental accident. Rather, the existence of the thing means a central and primordial act *(esse)* of the thing. An intellectual operation, traditionally called judgment, distinctly grasps the act of *esse*.[3] And since *esse* plus the thing compose a being *(ens)*, then one's judgmental appreciation of this existential act is the *sine qua non* for entering metaphysics whose subject is *ens qua ens.*

[1] Theodore Kondoleon, "The Start of Metaphysics," *The Thomist* 58 (1994): 121-30.

[2] On the sources for "Thomistic existentialism," see Joseph Owens, *St. Thomas and the Future of Metaphysics* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1973), 74 n. 24. Pages 36-50 provide a sketch of what Owens means by the "existential" interpretation of Aquinas's doctrine. See also Owens's *An Elementary Christian Metaphysics* (Houston: Center for Thomistic Studies, 1985).

[3] On judgment and its use in Thomistic metaphysics, see my "The Fundamental Nature of Aquinas' *Secunda Operatio Intellectus*," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* 64 (1990): 190-202.

Owens has gone on to argue that philosophical knowledge of God *(esse subsistens)* is an exclusively metaphysical affair.[4] In that respect Owens has lavished copious attention on the way to God from motion.[5] Yet, in Kondoleon's reading, the type of approach. found in Owens merits the labels "eccentric" and "excessive."[6] Kondoleon bases these charges on what he sees as two problems for the thesis that in Aquinas philosophical knowledge of God's existence is metaphysical. Both problems stem from Aquinas's inclusion of proofs from motion in his philosophical way to God. First, a metaphysical reading of the proof from motion understands motion itself to have its own *esse.* But since in Aquinas what has existence is in some way something complete or actual and since motion is something incomplete, motion cannot be conceived as participating *esse.*[7]

Owens has met this criticism head-on, and no need exists for a labored reply. There are abundant Thomistic texts asserting

[4] In his *An Introduction to Philosophy* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1962), 190, Maritain assigns philosophical knowledge of God to natural theology, the highest branch of metaphysics. Yet Maritain's descriptions of the *quinque viae* in his *Approaches to God* (New York: Collier Books, 1962), 27-66, make little apparent use of Aquinas's metaphysics of *esse.* To be noted is that for Maritain natural philosophy, without proving an immaterial being, is still a "materialn presupposition for metaphysics. For an explanation, see Raymond Dennehy, "Maritain's Realistic Defense of the Importance of the Philosophy of Nature to Metaphysics,n in *Thomistic Papers VI,* ed. John F. X. Knasas (Houston: Center for Thomistic Studies, 1994), 107-30. On the "intuition ofbeingn as the formal condition for Maritain's metaphysics, see my *The Preface to Thomistic Metaphysics* (New York: Peter Lang, 1990), 9-16. Gilson appears to regard each of the *viae* as sufficient to reach God, but not God in the profound sense of *esse subsistens.* To do the latter, one must "retranslaten the *viae* in light of the essence/existence distinction *(The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas* [New York: Random House, 1956], 81). One conducts the retranslation in virtue of a metaphysics already founded on judgmentally grasped *esse* (see my "Does Gilson Theologize Thomistic Metaphysics?n *Thomistic Papers* V [Houston: Center for Thomistic Studies, 1990], 3-24).

[5] See Owens's three articles on the *prima via* in *St. Thomas Aquinas on the Existence of God: the Collected Papers of Joseph Owens,* ed. John R. Catan (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1980); also Owens's "Aquinas and the Proof from the 'Physics,m *Mediaeval Studies* 28 (1966): 119-50.

[6] Kondoleon, 127 and 129.

[7] Ibid., 127.

an *esse* for accidents, among which would be the thing's motion.[8] No fear should exist that this position turns existing accidents into full-fledged beings. While still giving an *esse* to accidents, Aquinas qualifies this *esse* as an *"inesse."*[9]

Kondoleon's second problem with the thesis that for Aquinas philosophical knowledge of God is metaphysical is that the thesis is "contradicted by the thoroughly Aristotelian character of Aquinas's argument in *Summa contra Gentiles* 1, Chapter 13, for an Unmoved Mover (whom he will identify as God)."[10] The two arguments from motion at *ScG* I, c. 13, are saturated with natural philosophy terminology. Hence, it is a dubious mental stretch to say that the reader should understand the arguments, not physically, but metaphysically.

In this paper, I want to address Kondoleon's second criticism. Does the natural philosophy character of the proofs *ex motu* at *ScG* I, c. 13, pose an insuperable obstacle, a "contradiction," to their metaphysical interpretation and hence to Thomistic existentialism?

[8] Commenting on Aristotle, Aquinas refers to motion along with quality as an accident: "Ideo dicit quod [accidentiae] non dicuntur simpliciter entia, sed entis entia, sicut qualitas et motus" *(In XII Meta.,* lect. 1, no. 2419 [Cathala ed.]). Also: "alia sunt inseparabilia, scilicet accidentia, quia passiones et motus et huiusmodi accidentia non possunt esse sine substantiis" *(In XII Meta.,* lect. 4, no. 2475). For Aquinas's personal expressions of this view of motion as an accident, see *infra,* n. 29 and also n. 28. In his *Elementary Christian Metaphysics,* 203, Owens explains why motion is not listed as a separate category: "Regarded merely in itself, the motion or change is specified by its term and is placed reductively in the category to which it belongs (substance, quantity, quality, place), or is looked upon as a postpredicament." See *In XI Meta.,* lect 9, no. 2291: "Et propter hoc motus non est aliquod unum praedicamentum distinctum ab aliis praedicamentis; sed sequitur alia praedicamenta."

[9] "It may well be that the objections in the more recent Thomistic tradition against the really distinct being of accidents will disappear under more careful clarification. The common objection seems to be that to give an accident an existence of its own is to turn it into a substance. But a substance is an independent nature in respect of receiving existence, while an accident can receive existence only in dependence upon a substance. There is no question of an accident being given an existence that would be naturally independent of another substantial existence. The accident is not being given *esse* without qualification. It is given only *inesse"* (Joseph Owens, "Actuality in the *Prima Via,"* in *St. Thomas Aquinas on the Existence of God,* 195; for Thomistic texts, see 195 nn. 7-9, as well as *infra,* n. 27).

[10] Kondoleon, 128.

## II

It is some consolation to the existential Thomist that one finds in chapter 13 no assertion that natural philosophy proves God. That assertion would have settled the matter. Hence, the thesis that the proof of God from motion is physical is as much an interpretative conclusion as the thesis that the proof is metaphysical. Nevertheless, the former thesis appears well-grounded. As mentioned, the texts are suffused with *primafacie* natural philosophy terminology-motion, its divisions, mover, unmoved mover-and explicit references to the *Physics.* On the other hand, the texts are notably lacking Aquinas's metaphysical lexicon: *ens qua ens, esse, esse subsistens.* An exception is the reference to Aristotle's *Metaphysics* late in the second proof.[11] Yet this mention remains a part of a general strategy. The first portion of the second proof appears to reach God without any reference to the *Metaphysics.* The same is true for the first proof. Hence, it is a most fair question to ask why a reader would take the texts in any way other than as natural philosophy. What considerations could possibly arise to shake the certitude of this conclusion?

Yet it also seems to be a fair question to ask if any reader would take up chapter 13 just by itself. Is it too much of an imaginative strain to envisage the reader as perusing the earlier chapters of Book One? Surely not. What, then, would the wider reading find?

In chapter 3 Aquinas holds that philosophers, guided by the light of natural reason, have demonstrated the truth that God, the *primum principium,* exists. Aquinas emphasizes that the demonstration begins from sensible things. This starting-point

[11] "Now, God is not part of any self-moving mover. In his *Metaphysics,* therefore, Aristotle goes on from the mover who is a part of the self-moved mover to seek another mover - God - who is absolutely separate" *(Summa Contra Gentiles* I, c. 13, no. 108 (in the paragraph numbers of the Marietti edition [Turin, 1961]),*Sed quia;* English translation by Anton C. Pegis (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), 94, para. 28. Henceforth *Summa Contra Gentiles* will be abbreviated *ScG* and the citation (including the paragraph number from the Marietti edition) will be followed by the reference in parentheses to the English (ET), including page number and paragraph number.

suffices to know that God is, *quia est,* but it does not suffice to see the nature of the divine substance, for sensible things fall short of the power of their cause. The talk of natural reason and sensible things should not be identified with items proper to natural philosophy. Natural reason is used by all the branches of philosophy, and for Aquinas metaphysics also reasons from sensible things.

In chapter 4 Aquinas explains why a truth like God's existence, though knowable by natural reason, is fittingly revealed by God for our belief. Were this truth not so revealed, a number of awkward consequences would follow. The first is that for three reasons few would come to possess this knowledge. The reasons are: lack of the physical disposition for such work, lack of the leisure time to devote to contemplative inquiry, and finally indolence. This last reason is explicated as follows:

> For almost all of philosophy is directed towards the knowledge of God, and that is why metaphysics, which deals with divine things *fpropter quod metaphysica, quae circa divina versatur]* is the last part of philosophy to be learned. This means that we are able to arrive at the inquiry concerning the aforementioned truth *fpraedicta veritatis]* only on the basis of a great deal of labor spent in study."

This text is striking. The *praedicta veritas* is the truth about God reachable by human reason. Admidst this truth is knowledge of God's existence. Such truth is difficult to attain because it belongs to metaphysics, the last part of philosophy. In a text with the various parts of philosophy in mind, among which is natural philosophy, Aquinas appears to assign knowledge of God's existence to metaphysics. The text would certainly cause a reader to pause and to ask if indeed for Aquinas knowledge of God's existence is metaphysical. **It** would lead the reader to wonder if such an impression is confirmed by any *pre-Contra Gentiles* writings. But before pursuing that interest one other text from chapter 12 is worth noting.

There Aquinas argues against the opinion of those who say that the existence of God cannot be demonstrated but is held by

[12] *ScG* I, c. 4, no. 23, *Quidam autem* (ET, 67, para. 3).

faith alone. As one general reason for the falsity of this opinion, he says:

> Then it is shown to us from the order of the sciences *[ex ipso scientiarum ordine]*. For, as it is said in the *Metaphysics,* if there is no knowable substance higher than sensible substance, there will be no science higher than physics.[13]

The reason provided is ambiguous. However, the ambiguity is fortuitous because it invites the reader to look more widely. The ambiguity derives from the fact that the text does not explain how higher substances are knowable from sensible effects. In other words, one way to gloss the reason is as follows: if there are no higher substances knowable *by natural philosophy demonstrations* from sensible effects, then physics is the highest science. According to this reading, Aquinas's conclusion would have the existence of God as the terminus of the science of physics. God in himself would be the subject of the science of metaphysics.

The other way of glossing Aquinas's reason is: if there are no higher substances knowable from sensible effects other than those studied by natural philosophy, then natural philosophy is the highest science.. Another science is excluded because these effects not studied by natural philosophy would have specified another distinct scientific consideration of sensible things from which higher substance is attained.

In sum, Aquinas's reason could be taken to mean physics proves God or to mean metaphysics proves God.[14] *Inprimafacie* favor for the second interpretation is our passage from chapter 4. There Aquinas strongly appears to assign philosophical knowledge of God's existence to the metaphysical part of philosophy. He is not dividing up philosophical knowledge of God into natural philosophy and metaphysics as the above first interpretation does.

These introductory texts to chapter .13 suggest that to Aquinas's mind the philosophical knowledge of God's existence

[13] *ScG* I, c. 12, no. 77, *Thm ex ipso* (ET, 84, para. 6).

[14] The ambiguity is maintained in parallel passages; for these, see Knasas, *Preface,* 30 and 34.

belongs to the science of metaphysics. The proofs *ex motu* at chapter 13 should, then, be read in a metaphysical context, not one of natural philosophy. At the very least, the reader's honest reaction should be to wonder if any *pre-Contra Gentiles* passages even more unambiguously assign knowledge of God's existence to metaphysics. I want to pursue that interest next.

## III

Since the above two passages from the early chapters of the *Contra Gentiles* spoke of the "parts" of philosophy and of the "order" of the sciences, Aquinas's earlier brief and incomplete commentary on Boethius's *De Trinitate* (1258-59) comes immediately to mind. Questions five and six are a *locus classicus* for Aquinas's thoughts on the divisions and methods of the speculative sciences. Given our reader's concern with determining what philosophical science attains knowledge of God's existence, two articles from the commentary should catch the reader's eye.

The first is article 2 of question 2. It is entitled, "Can there be a Science of Divine Realities?" Aquinas answers affirmatively by distinguishing two ways of knowing divine things. The first is from our perspective. In this way, divine things are knowable only through creatures known by the senses. The second way is from divine realities themselves. Such is how both God and the blessed know divine realities.

Of these two divisions the first is important. It reiterates a point Aquinas made back in question 1, article 2. There, while asking whether the human mind can arrive at a knowledge of God, Aquinas argues that, since in this life the human intellect has a definite relation to forms abstracted from sensible things *(determinatam habitudinem ad formas quae a sensu abstrahuntur),* we know God only through the form of his effect *(solummodo per effectusformam).* This point is just what q. 2, a. 2 asserted. But q. 1, a. 2 goes on to explain that, since the effect here is not equal to the power of its divine cause, the human mind only knows that the cause exists *(an est),* not what the cause is *(quid est).* In other words, the first way of knowing divine things at *In de Trin.* q. 2, a. 2 includes, if not is restricted to, the existence of God.

Q. 2, a. 2 goes on to associate the first way of knowing the existence of the divine with what philosophers call primary science and divine science:

> Accordingly there are two kinds of science concerning the divine. One follows our way of knowing, which uses the principles of sensible things in order to make the Godhead known. This is the way the philosophers handed down a science of the divine, calling the primary science "divine science."[15]

In philosophy, "primary science" and "divine science" are other names for metaphysics.[16] At *In de Trin.* q. 2, a. 2 Aquinas appears to be assigning philosophical knowledge of God's existence to metaphysics.

My second text from the *De Trinitate* commentary is the *responsio* of question 5, article 4. Aquinas is explaining how we can study "divine beings," later identified as God and angels or separate substances. We can study them in two ways: as they are the common principles of all things; and as they are beings in their own right. No further ways are mentioned. The second way belongs to the theology taught in Sacred Scripture. Sacred Scripture contains self-revelations of these beings. This a way of religious faith and is not philosophical. The first way is glossed as knowing causes to the extent that their effects reveal them. It belongs to the "light of natural reason" and is identified as the way of the philosopher.

Aquinas further describes the philosophical way to study divine beings:

> Philosophers, then, study these divine beings only insofar *[nisi prout]* as they are the principles of all things. Consequently, they are the object of the science that investigates what is common to all beings, which has for its subject being as being. The philosophers call this divine science.[17]

[15] English translation by Armand Maurer, *Faith, Reason and Theology: Questions I-IV of His Commentary on the De 1Hnitate of Boethius* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1987), 41.

[16] See *infra,* nn. 17 and 18.

[17] English translation by Armand Maurer, *The Division and Methods of the Sciences: Questions V and VI of His Commentary on the De 1Hnitate of Boethius* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1963), 44.

A few lines later, Aquinas acknowledges that the divine science of the philosophers is also named metaphysics. [18] The point of the above quote is unambiguous: philosophers know both God and the angels *only* in metaphysics. Aquinas's use of *"nisi prout"* excludes from philosophy any non-metaphysical study of these immaterial beings.

To the above reading two possible objections exist. First, it is sometimes said that one can construe the above quote as saying that metaphysics studies *what* these beings are while another branch of philosophy, i.e., natural philosophy, studies *that* these beings are. For three reasons, this interpretation is highly unlikely. First, for the metaphysician to study these beings as causes of being as being is to come to know that they exist. Second, with its talk of reaching divine realities "by the light of natural reason only to the extent that their effects reveal them to us," q. 5, a. 4 parallels cited remarks from q. 1, a. 2 and q. 2, a. 2. But, as I noted, in those earlier cases the issue was knowing God's existence. Third, to support his claim that by the light of natural reason philosophers came to know these beings, Aquinas cites *Romans* 1:20:"The invisible things of God are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made." But earlier in the commentary, at q. 1, a. 2, *sed contra*, Aquinas quotes the same passage to introduce his position that the *existence* of God can be demonstrated. [19] One confidently assumes that the use of the *Romans* text at *In de Trin.* q. 5, a. 4c indicates again that Aquinas is speaking of a metaphysical knowledge of God's existence.

The second objection to my reading of q. 5, a. 4 is that back at q. 5, a. 2, ad 3 Aquinas in fact gives natural philosophy a demonstration of immaterial being. Aquinas is replying to the objection that natural philosophy does treat what exists apart from matter and motion because it considers the First Mover that is

[18] "Accordingly, there are two kinds of theology. There is one that treats of divine things, not as the subject of the science but as the principles of the subject. This is the kind of theology pursued by the philosophers and that is also called metaphysics" (ibid.).

[19] See also *ScG* I, c. 12, no. 77, *Tum etiam* and *Summa theologiae (STh)* I, q. *2,* a. *2, sed contra.*

free from all matter *(immunis ab omni materia).* In reply, Aquinas admits that natural philosophy treats the First Mover that is "of a different nature from natural things." But it does this as the terminus of its subject that is about material and changeable things. This remark seems to catch Aquinas giving natural philosophy proof of an immaterial being.

Not necessarily, however. The reader surely would wonder how Aquinas could contradict himself two articles later. Since for the above reasons the interpretation of q. 5, a. 4 is secure, some ambiguity at Q. 5, a. 2, ad 3 is escaping the reader's eye. Where is the ambiguity located? The reader should note that the reply does not name the First Mover, *primus motor,* as God. Moreover, the reader knows from *ScG* I, c. 13, that Aquinas uses a similar phrase, *"Primus movens,"* to refer to the outermost celestial sphere.[20] Could the third reply's *primus motor* be a celestial sphere? At first thought it seems not. The *primus motor* is "free from all matter," but a sphere is a body and so is material. Is this reasoning conclusive? Not completely. Earlier, at *In II Sent.* d. XII, q. 1, a. le, Aquinas asks if the matter of all bodies is the same. He says no. As ungenerable and incorruptible, the heavens lack the prime matter of terrestrial bodies. Considered in itself, the prime matter of terrestrial bodies is in potency to all natural forms, both inferior ones and superior ones. Hence, any terrestrial body is corruptible. The matter of the heavens, however, is in potency only to the form of the heaven. With that form, the matter is in potency to no other, and so the heaven is incorruptible. This distinction between terrestrial and celestial matters provides the interpretative possibility that the *primus motor* free from all matter is a celestial sphere free from all terrestrial prime matter. Since this reading of q. 5, a. 2,

[20] *ScG* I, c. 13, no. 101, *Quia vero* (ET, 92, para. 21). *"Primum agens"* has the same equivocity: "Thus, we see that all things potentially existent in the matter of generable and corruptible entities can be actualized by the active power present in the heavenly body, which is the primary active force in nature *[primum activum in natura].* Now, just as the heavenly body is the first agent *[primum agens]* in respect to lower bodies, so God is the first agent *[primum agens]* as regards the totality of created beings" *(ScG* II, c. 22, no. 985, *Amplius;* English translation by James F. Anderson [Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975], 66, para. 5)

ad 3 removes the contradiction with q. 5, a. 4c, in my opinion, a reader is justified in making it.

In sum, I do not think that in the light of wider reading there can be any doubt that Aquinas's mind is that philosophical knowledge of God's existence is exclusively metaphysical. The reader of *ScG* I, c. 13, need plead no excuse to approach the proofs *ex motu* with a metaphysical mindset.

## IV

The existential Thomist is not yet in the clear. The next issue is to determine just what it is to take up the proofs *ex motu* metaphysically. The present section pursues that matter. If our reader was attentive and thorough in looking at *In de Trin.* q. 5, a. 4, the reader would have encountered the following reply to objection 6:

> The metaphysician deals with individual beings too *[de singularibus entibus* ], not with regard to their special natures, in virtue of which they are special kinds of being, but insofar as they share the common character of being *[participant communem rationem entis* ]. And in this way matter and motion *[materia et motus]* also fall under his consideration."

The metaphysicici.ndeals with everything, including matter and motion, insofar as everything falls under the notion of being, the *ratio entis.* This text affirms a metaphysical consideration of motion. By understanding what Aquinas intends, our reader should be well-prepared to grasp the metaphysical presentation of the proofs *ex motu* at *ScG* I, c. 13.

What is the *ratio entis?* Using the immediate context of *In de Trin.* q. 5, a. 4, our reader can glean these points. First, *ens* seems to be something common shared by many. In short, *ens* is an *abstractum.* In fact, the previous reply to objection 5 compared being to animal:

> being *[ens]* and substance are separate from matter and motion ... because it is not of their nature to be in matter and motion, although

[21] *Division and Methods,* 49.

sometimes they are in matter and motion, as animal abstracts *[abstrahit]* from reason, although some animals are rational.[22]

Second, as just quoted, *ens* is open to realization in immaterial as well as material things. Yet in the *responsio* Aquinas ascribes this characteristic to substance, potency, and act also.[23] Evidently, it is not a characteristic distinctive of and proper to *ens.* Third, as already mentioned, the *responsio* also identifies *ens* as the subject of metaphysics to which God is related as a cause.

*In de Trin.* q. *5,* a. 4, as well as the remainder of the commentary, has little more to say about the *ratio entis.* Yet the connection made by the *responsio* between knowing *ens* and grasping the existence of God as the cause of *ens* is an enticing one. If our reader can determine in more detail what Aquinas means by *ens* and how motion shares in it, then the reader should have gone a long way toward understanding how the proofs *ex motu* at *ScG* I, c. 13 are to be read metaphysically, i.e., *sub ratione entis.*

*In de Trin.* q. *5,* a. 4 motivates the reader to survey other *pre-Contra Gentiles* passages that would provide more information on the *ratio entis.* A text that leaps out is the very first article of the *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate* (1256-59). There Aquinas takes great pains to spell out his understanding of *ens.* The intellect conceives *ens* as most known *(notissimum)* and as that into which it resolves all its concepts. For every nature is essentially a being. Aquinas further concludes that other concepts add to being, not by bringing in something extrinsic, but by expressing something already implicitly contained within the meaning of *ens.*

This expression takes two general forms. First, certain special modes of *ens* can be what is expressed. Examples are the diverse genera of things *(diversa rerum genera),* namely substance and

[22] Ibid., 48-9.

[23] "Second, because by its nature [the thing called separate] does not exist in matter and motion; but it can exist without them, though we sometimes find it with them. In this way being *[ens],* substance, potency, and act are separate from matter and motion" *(Division and Methods,* 45).

the various kinds of accidents, such as quantity, quality, relation, action, and so forth. Both substance and accidents express special regions within the larger notion of *ens.*

Second, some of our concepts can express different meanings true of every being. These are general modes of being. These general modes are of two kinds: those true of every being of itself and those true of every being in its relation to another. Regarding the first, Aquinas says that we can speak affirmatively or negatively. Affirmatively speaking, essence is found in every being. At this point Aquinas makes some remarks about *ens* that draw upon his metaphysics. Aquinas distinguishes the meanings of the terms *ens* and *res* in the following manner:

> being *[ens]* is taken from the act of being *[actu essendi]* but the name of thing *[res]* expresses the quiddity or essence of the being.[24]

What is meant by *actus essendi?* Aquinas's reply to the third objection of the second set is relevant. There Aquinas says:

> In the statement, "To be *[esse]* is other than that which is *[quod est],"* the act of being *[actu essendi]* is distinguished from that to which that act belongs. But the name of being *[ens]* is taken from the act of existence *[actu essendi],* not from that whose act it is.[25]

By *actus essendi* Aquinas means *esse. Esse* is the act of the *quod est* to which *esse* belongs. The *quod est* is what he called quiddity or essence and with which he identified thing *(res).* This leads to an important conclusion. The term *ens* is given to the various genera of things *(diversa rerum genera),* e.g., substance and accident, on the basis of the *esse* that belongs to them. In other words, by *ens* Aquinas is referring to a composition of *essentia* and *esse* that can be specialized into compositions of substance and *esse* or the various accidents and their *esse.*

Our reader's look at *De Ver.* q. 1, a. le, indicates that by the *ratio entis* Aquinas refers to a composite intelligibility drawn from a field that includes as its instances various substances and

[24] English translation by Robert W. Mulligan, *The Disputed Questions on 1'ruth* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1952), 6.

[25] Ibid., 8.

accidents actuated by their existences.[26] This classic discussion of the *ratio entis* clearly implies an *esse* for accidents. This implication is reiterated by the *De Ente et Essentia.* The work begins by locating itself within the meaning of *ens* that is divided by the ten categories. Consequently, in its last chapter, the *De Ente* takes up accidents. There Aquinas assigns the accident a secondary being, *esse secundum.* He says:

> But that to which an accident is added is a complete being in itself, subsisting in its own being *[ens in se completum, subsistens in suo esse];* and this being *[esse]* is by nature prior to the supervening accident. That is why the supervening accident, by its union with the subject to which it comes, does not cause that being *[illud esse]* in which the reality subsists, and through which the reality is a being in itself. Rather, it causes a secondary being *[esse secundum],* without which we can conceive the subsistent reality to exist, as what is primary can be understood without what is secondary.[27]

The *esse secundum* of the accident is compared to the *esse primum* of the subsisting subject. But the latter is a distinct act of that subject, hence the *esse secundum* should be a distinct act of the accident. Distinct as the accident's *esse* is, that *esse* is still a secondary *esse.* The accident is not a complete being. Aquinas explicitly calls it a being in a qualified sense, *ens secundum quid.*

In light of the above from the *De Veritate* and *De Ente,* is it clear how *motus* shares in the *ratio entis?* I think so. Reflection on experience seems to categorize motion as an accident of substances. Just as a substance can acquire and lose a color or an extension or a relation and so have these marked as accidents, so too the substance can acquire and lose a motion. After being still, a man can be running; while ill, he can be undergoing a rising temperature. Both of these changes behave just like the other accidents of the man. In fact, Aquinas lists motion as an accident. At *In de Trin.* q. 5, a. 3c, he says:

[26] For the procedure to set up this field, see *Preface,* 131-40.

[27] English translation by Armand Maurer, *On Being and Essence* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1968), 67.

But accidents *[accidentiae]* befall substance in a definite order. Quantity comes to it first, then quality, after that passivities *[passiones]* and motion *[motus].* [2].

Then back in the *De Ente* 's last chapter discussion of accidents, he remarks:

In cases like these the aptitude is an inseparable accident, whereas the completion that comes from a source external to the essence of the thing, or that does not enter into its constitution, will be separable from it like movement *[moveri]* and other accidents of this kind. [2].

As an accident, motion should fall under *ens* and therefore be composed with its own *esse,* secondary as that *esse* is. This view should characterize the metaphysician's consideration of motion. [30] It is a viewpoint to which Aquinas's texts inexorably lead. The argued-for metaphysical character of the proofs *ex motu* at *ScG* I, c. 13, will mean that the motion is considered in light of its own *esse.* That is what it means to be considered *sub ratione entis.*

## V

Before taking up the proofs, another issue needs exploration. Just how does the metaphysician prove the existence of God and angels from his subject matter of *ens inquantum ens?* As was noted, what is distinctive of *ens inquantum ens* is *esse,* for it is by the addition of *esse* that something is denominated *ens.* Apparently, causal implications are contained in the *esse* component of *ens* that enable the metaphysician to prove the existence of God and finite immaterial beings. In fact, Aquinas remarks regularly in the *Sentences* commentary that God is reached from

[28] *Divisions and Methods,* 31.

[29] *On Being and Essence,* 69-70.

[30] The metaphysician 's consideration of matter *sub ratione entis* is in light of the *esse* that actuates the bodily substance of which matter is a principle. On matter as "pertaining" *(pertinet)* to this *esse,* see *STh* I, q. 44, a. 2c and ad 3.

the *esse* of created things.[30] The *De Ente* contains a classic exposition of the thinking involved. In a chapter devoted to the question of how essence is found in separate substance, Aquinas reasons that whatever belongs to a thing *(omne autem quod convenit alicui)* in the sense of being other than the thing's essence belongs to it from a cause. The *esse* of the thing is such, but *esse*'s cause must be something other than the thing to which the *esse* belongs. The given reason is that otherwise "the thing would then be its own cause and would bring itself into being, which is impossible."[32] Ultimately this something other that is the cause of *esse* is a reality that is pure *esse, esse tantum.* Aquinas regards this first cause as God. The identification's rationale appears to lie in Aquinas's existential reading of *Exodus* 3:14. There God reveals his name to Moses as *"Ego sum qui sum,* I am who am." Aquinas took this to mean that God is subsistent existence.[33]

Joseph Owens has extensively investigated the text's reasoning.[34] Owens's investigation shows that the reasoning has two bases. The first is the glossing of "whatever belongs to a thing" as the accidental.[35] That gloss introduces into the mind the idea of dependency, for the accidental is something present not by itself. The second basis is the "priority" of *esse.* This characterization underlies the reasoning's insistence that the thing cannot cause its own *esse.* The "priority" of *esse* is Aquinas's teaching

[31] For the remarks from the *Sentences* commentary, see Joseph Owens, "Quiddity and Real Distinction in Aquinas," *Mediaeval Studies* 27 (1965): 18 n. 32. At *STh* I, q. 44, a. 2c, the "causa rerum inquantum sunt entia" is described as a cause of "omne illud quod pertinet ad esse illorum quocumque modo." And at *In VI Meta.,* lect. 3, n. 1215, God's causality is said to extend itself "ad omnia inquantum sunt entia" because God is "agens per modum dantis esse."

[32] *On Being and Essence,* 56.

[33] *In I Sent.* d. 8, q. 1, a. 1, *sed contra;* ScG I, c. 22, no. 211, *Hane autem.*

[34] Joseph Owens, "The Causal Proposition-Principle or Conclusion?" *The Modern Schoolman* 32 (1955): 329; see also Owens, *An Element11,ryChristian Metaphysics,* ch. 5, and *An Interpretation of Existence* (Houston: Center for Thomistic Studies, 1985), 77-85. For my summary, see *Preface,* 140-6.

[35] For the texts on this "broad" sense of accident and its application to *esse,* see Owens, "Causal Proposition," 325-6 n. 76

elsewhere.[36] In sum, as accidental, the *esse* is dependent; as prior to the thing, *esse* cannot completely depend upon the thing.

Given what has been said about the *ratio entis,* the *De Ente* reasoning certainly seems to explain how the metaphysician goes from the subject matter of the science, *ens qua ens,* to its cause, God. The metaphysician effects the transition in virtue of certain considerations connected with the *esse* component of *ens.* But the situation is more complex. As mentioned, Aquinas asserted a plurality of causes for *ens inquantum ens.* "Divine beings" that are "supremely in act, ... having no potentiality whatsoever, or the least possible; hence free from matter and free from motion"[37] are said to be the causes of"being as being." Later Aquinas identifies this plurality with God and the angels. How does a consideration of being *qua* being break out into a consideration not only of God but of angelic beings as well? As it emphasized the priority of *esse,* the *De Ente* reasoning can lead the mind straightway to a cause whose nature is *esse.* Only such a cause has the wherewithal to effect *esse.* Evidently, though, *esse* can be further considered and be made to reveal other causes.

The reply to the third objection at *In de Trin.* q. 5, a. 4, furnishes a lead:

> In the divine science taught by the philosophers, however, the angels, which they call the Intelligences, are considered from the same point of view as the First Cause or God, insofar as they are also secondary principles of things, at least through the movement of the spheres.[38]

In metaphysics, the intelligences are considered from the same point of view as God. This point should mean that both are causes of *ens inquantum ens.* But God is a cause of *ens* by causing *esse.* Hence, the intelligences in some way cause *esse* also.

[36] For the texts on the priority of *esse,* see Owens, "Causal Proposition," 324 n. 75.

[37] *In de 1Hn.* q. 5, a. 4c; *Division and Methods,* 43.

[38] *Division and Methods,* 46-7; also *ScG* m, c. 23 and *STh* I, q. 70, a. 3. These texts contradict Kondoleon's claim that "for Saint Thomas, angelic beings are not 'metaphysically reached' by any *a posteriori* argument having to do with motion or change" (128).

The text answers that they are secondary principles through the movement of the spheres.[39] What does this mean?

The motions of the heavens accounted for the processes of generation and corruption on the earth. With univocal generators, the heavens were the causes of the substantial forms of generable and corruptible things.[40] Evidently causing the forms of those things has something to do with causing the *esse* of those things. Yet in light of the emphasized priority of *esse* to the thing, how could any principle of the thing cause *esse?* As far as I can tell, a reader of the *pre-Contra Gentiles* texts would not find in the obvious parallel texts any help in answering this question. What the reader could then do is scan the *Contra Gentiles* itself. The reader would immediately notice Book Il's discussion of creation. Talk about *esse* is everywhere, though curiously Aquinas introduces it as if the reader is already familiar with it.[41] If patient, the reader will unearth the following gem of a text:

> For in things composed of matter and form, the form is said to be the principle of being *[principium essendi],* for this reason: that it is the complement *[complementum]* of the substance, whose act is being *[ipsum esse].*[42]

Aquinas insists that *esse* is the act of the material substance. This insistence reiterates the priority of the *esse.* But the point is now congruent with the substance's form being a principle of the *esse.* To understand the congruence, one must take seriously *what* the *esse* is. The *esse* is the act *of the material substance.* Such is its basic character, its entire metaphysical mission. So understood, the *esse* cannot be in any other way.[43] For this rea-

[39] For an exposition of the cosmology here, see Thomas Kuhn, *The Copernican Revolution: Planetary Astronomy in the Development of Western Thought* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956), ch. 1.

[40] *In II Sent.,* d. 15, q. 1, a. 1, and *De Ver.,* q. 5, a. 9c.

[41] One notes the same presumed familiarity with *esse* at *ScG* I, c. 13, no. 112, *Et ad hoc;* c. 15, no. 124, *Amplius;* and c. 22. On how Aquinas's theological procedure would delay an explicit mention of *esse* until the topic of the divine simplicity is reached, see Owens, "Actuality in the *Prima Via,"* in *St. Thomas Aquinas on the Existence of God,* 196-202.

[42] *ScG* II, c. 54, no. 1291, *Deinde;* (ET, 157, para. 5).

[43] The judgmental grasp of *esse* underwrites this appreciation of *esse;* see my *Preface,* 112, 77-88.

son, *esse* needs the thing whose act it is. In that sense it depends upon the thing. Hence, any factors that contribute to the material substance are in a sense principles of *esse.* These factors start with substantial form. As it determines the matter, it completes the material thing. Extrinsic factors, e.g., univocal and non-univocal causes (viz., the spheres and intelligences), can also be regarded as *principia essendi. H* the priority of *esse* also means that *esse* is the act *of something,* then the priority is compatible with beings other than God playing some role in the realization of the *esse.*

In sum, from *ens* two causal paths open before the eyes of the metaphysician. The keys to both lie in two views on the *esse* component of *ens.* In one view the priority of the *esse* is emphasized. This view can lead immediately to *esse tantum* as the only cause with the wherewithal to cause *esse* as its proper effect. In the other view, the relation of the *esse* to the thing is emphasized. *Esse* is through and through the act *of the thing.* This view brings out a measure of *esse*'s dependency on the thing. The metaphysician can enlist as causes of *ens inquantum ens* any intrinsic and extrinsic causes of the thing. But the second view never cancels out the first view. The priority of *esse* remains present to be adverted to at any time. Hence, any causal points uncovered along the second path remain open to immediate reduction to *esse tantum.*

I want to insist that the second path is metaphysics. form, generation, the motion of the spheres, and the intelligences are all mentioned in the book called the *Physics.* This location suggests a natural philosophy procedure. Though some of these items, but not all,[44] are items originally delineated in natural philosophy, now they are being taken up in metaphysics because, let us not forget, we are proceeding *sub ratione entis.*

[44] The second stage of *STh* I, q. 44, a. 2c, presents causal reasoning in natural philosophy as attaining only a first *physical* cause, a celestial sphere. For commentary, see my *Preface,* 74-7 and "Materiality and Aquinas' Natural Philosophy: A Reply to Johnson," *The Modern Schoolman* 68 (1991): 248-9.

## VI

A reader of *ScG* I, c. 13 is poised to consider the proofs *ex motu.* Given the above considerations engendered by the Thomistic texts, the reader can expect the following to be occurring in the proofs. Since for Aquinas philosophical knowledge of God's existence is metaphysical, the proofs will be considering motion *sub ratione entis.* Since *ens qua ens* is a composite notion whose parts are some nature plus the *esse* actuating that nature and enabling the nature to be denominated *ens,* then one can rightfully expect that motion is being considered in the light of its *esse.* If the priority of that *esse* is stressed, the consideration can go immediately to *esse tantum* as the cause of the motion. If *esse* as the act *of the motion* is called attention to, then a different path opens up. As the act *of the motion, esse* is in a manner dependent upon the motion and any causes of the motion will be causes of the *esse.* Natural philosophy has much to say about these causes. As the metaphysician proceeds *sub ratione entis,* the findings of natural philosophy about the causes of motion are there for the metaphysician's taking.[45]

As a caveat I emphasize that this section confines itself to determining if the wording of the *viae* can be read along the lines just sketched. Because of space considerations, I am defending only a metaphysical interpretation of the arguments. I am not defending the arguments themselves.[46]

The first way from motion at *ScG* I, c. 13, (3)[47] begins with an evident instance of something in motion (e.g., the sun in the sky) and with the thought that whatever is in motion, or is moved, is so by another. From these two points Aquinas concludes to a mover that is either unmoved (i.e., God, the sought-after conclusion) or moved. The argument has the resources to attain imme-

[45] Hence, there is no "natural philosophy part" (Kondoleon, 128) to the metaphysical reading of the first two *viae* of *ScG* I, c. 13. The *viae* are metaphysical from beginning to end, since they are proceeding *sub ratione entis.*

[46] For such a defense, see Vincent Edward Smith, *The General Science of Nature* (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1958), ch. 19.

[47] All numbers in parentheses refer to the paragraphs of the Pegis translation of *Contra Gentiles* I.

diately an unmoved mover identifiable with God. *Sub ratione entis,* this capacity of the argument is easily understandable. Because of the priority of motion's *esse,* that *esse* does not depend upon the motion, rather the motion depends upon it. Upon what, then, does the *esse* depend? Clearly a thing that is *esse.* Such a thing has *esse* as its proper effect. It is also uncaused and identifiable with the God of Christian belief who revealed his name to Moses as "I am who am."

But as the act *of the motion,* the *esse* of the motion is in some sense dependent upon it. If this measure of dependency is stressed, then it is not immediately clear that one must go further. Is it obvious that the motion needs to be caused by another? It certainly is not obvious to the metaphysician who is considering the motion only *sub ratione entis.* The particular nature of the motion and any exigencies contained in it escape him. As noted at *In de 'l'rin.* q. 5, a. 4, ad 6, the metaphysician fails to deal with the special natures of beings.[48] The natural philosopher, however, has thought long and hard about motion and has many things to say about it. Hence, brought to confront motion in virtue of its *esse's* dependence upon it, the metaphysician can enlist the reflections of the natural philosopher.

Hence, Aquinas goes on to give three arguments culled from the seventh and eighth Books of the *Physics* for motion's being caused by another. *Sub ratione entis* these arguments pertain to the above-mentioned second path that opens from *ens.* This second path emphasizes *esse*'s dependence on the nature insofar as the *esse* is the act *of the nature.* The first argument (5, 6) claims that a body *qua* body cannot be the cause of its motion because the motion is obviously dependent upon the motion of the body's parts. The second argument (8) is a survey of the results of studying the various types of motion. A body in violent motion, i.e., motion *contra naturam,* is obviously moved by another. Likewise a body in motion accidentally, e.g., the pen in my pock-

[48] Also: "[Metaphysical considerat omnia inquantum sunt entia, non descendens ad propriam cognitionem moralium, vel naturalium. Ratio enim entis, cum sit diversificata in diversis, non est sufficiens ad specialem rerum cognitionem" *(In I Sent.,* prol., q. I, a. 2, ad 2)

et as I stroll about the office, is also obviously dependent on another. Not as obviously, the motion of living things is caused by one of their parts, the soul.[49] Finally, the motions of natural bodies, e.g., fire rising and earth falling, have the generators of these things as their causes. The third argument (9) focuses on the potential character of the thing in motion versus the actual character of the mover. This opposition entails that the moved *qua* moved is not the same as the mover.[50]

Proceeding along the second causal path out of *ens*, the metaphysician has seen that the motion whose *esse* he is investigating is dependent on something else. Natural philosophy also shows that this something else cannot be an infinite regress of things each in motion. The metaphysician can take advantage of these arguments also. Aquinas gives three arguments against an infinite regress of moved movers. The first argument (12, 13) notes that an infinite regress of moved movers would engender the paradox of an infinite body moving in a finite time. The second (14) and third arguments (15) note that in an ordered series of movers and things moved, the moved depends on the mover so that if the mover is removed, then so too are the moved. But an infinite regress removes the mover and makes motion impossible.[51]

In these ways the metaphysician 's reasoning from *esse* that is the act *of some motion* terminates in some unmoved mover. According to the second line of logic in which the metaphysician is proceeding, the character of this unmoved mover will not be *esse tantum.* The reflections employed here are from natural philosophy, and natural philosophy knows nothing of *esse.* For

[49] See para. 22 and 23 for the reasoning.

[50] Owens notes that unlike the first proof that applies only to divisible things and the second proof that is merely an induction, the third proof has "full probative force" ("The Conclusion of the *Prima Via,"* in *St. Thomas Aquinas on the Existence of God,* lSS). I understand this to mean that the third way is open to a reading that applies it to *esse directly.* For such a gloss, see my *P.,eface,* 156-8.

[51] At *In VIII Phys.,* lect 9, n. 1041, Aquinas explains more fully the basis for distinguishing the second and third arguments. Owens notes that these arguments are "unrestricted in their demonstrative scope" ("The Conclusion of the *Prima Via,"* lSS). Again, I take this to mean that they can be directly applied to *esse.*

the metaphysician, the end point of the proofs will be some unmoved nature that has *esse* belonging to it. At that stage, though, the metaphysician can advert to the priority of *esse* to that nature in order to conclude to *esse tantum.* In that fashion the second path of the first proof *ex motu* joins with the conclusion of the first path.

The starting-point of the second way is to determine whether the proposition "every mover is moved" is true. This starting-point situates the second way amidst the regress of moved movers delineated in the first way's second path. In other words, the second way does not begin with a consideration of the priority of motion's *esse.* Rather, it begins from a point well along in the consideration of the causes of motion *of* which *esse* is the act and so upon which *esse* is in some measure dependent.

Understandably, then, the metaphysician begins by enlisting the further reflection of the natural philosopher. The reflection is quite lengthy. A summary that highlights the sense of the texts *sub ratione entis* is as follows. "Every mover is moved," if true, is true either by accident or by itself. But the proposition cannot be true in either way; therefore it is false. The proposition cannot be true by accident (17). If the proposition were so, it would be possible that nothing is moved. Motion, however, is necessarily eternal.[52] Neither can "every mover is moved" be true by itself (19). That view would have a mover moving and being moved in the same respect and at the same time. 1\vo possible ways to save the proposition as essentially true fail to work. First, to say that the mover moves by one type of motion but is moved by another still encounters an unmoved mover because the types of motion are finite. Second, to say that the mover moves because of the finite types of motion cycling to infinity returns us to the first difficulty. Ultimately, the mover is moving and being moved in the same respect and at the same time.

[52] At *ScG* I, c. 13, no. llO, *Et ad hoc,* Aquinas clarifies that for purposes of a most effective proof the second way is proceeding by granting as an assumption *(ex supposi-tione)* the eternity of motion. This stated procedure is also evidence for a metaphysical reading of the second way, for on the level of natural philosophy motion's eternity is not an assumption but a strict conclusion.

Shown to be true in no way, "every mover is moved" must be false. Hence, not every mover is moved by something else. At this point Aquinas says (21) that either this mover is the unmoved mover that he is seeking or it is a self-mover. *Sub ratione entis* this disjunction makes sense. For the metaphysician, the last motion to which the latter half of the second way (19) regresses has an *esse.* If the priority of that motion's *esse* is focused upon, we immediately go to *esse tantum.* This is the absolutely unmoved mover. On the other hand, if the dependency of motion's *esse* on the motion is adverted to, then the cause of the motion could be a nature that is a self-mover.

Aquinas continues by explaining that reflection upon how a self-mover moves still leaves an unmoved mover an inescapable conclusion. First, a self-mover moves in virtue of an immobile part, its soul (22). Second, in light of the everlastingness of motion, there must be some endlessly self-moving being (24, 25). Its soul is not moved either through itself or by accident. This unmoved mover is identified with the soul of the outermost celestial sphere. Third, Aquinas moves the argument further along (28) by explaining the need for an absolutely separate unmoved mover that functions as an object of appetite, a final cause, for the first self-moving being. That this separate unmoved mover is *ipsum esse* is clear from Aquinas's thoughts on the Beatific Vision. Since being is the good, but the heart of being is *esse,* then only an item that is *ipsum esse* can transfix a self-mover in such a way that the eternity of motion is preserved.[53]

## VII

Along the above lines Thomistic existentialism understands the proofs *ex motu* at *ScG* I, c. 13. The metaphysical reading is not, as Kondoleon claims, in contradiction to these texts. Nor is the metaphysical reading something excessive and strained like a thesis in search of supporting texts. Without any artificiality or contrivance, the metaphysical reading issues from the texts. To

[53] Later at *ScG* m, c. 23, and *STh* I, q. 70, a. Jc, Aquinas says that it makes more sense to regard the mover of the sphere as an intelligence separate from the sphere. This intelligence could be God alone or God acting through a created separate intelligence.

borrow the words of *Aetemi Patris,* it is a doctrine of Thomas drawn from his own fountains and not from strange and unwholesome streams. If anything, the natural philosophy approach appears quaint. In sum, earlier chapters of the *Contra Gentiles* contain remarks creating at least the strong suspicion that Aquinas considers philosophical knowledge of God's existence to be metaphysical. Texts from the earlier *De Trinitate* commentary confirm the suspicion. Moreover, the commentary acknowledges a metaphysical consideration of motion *sub ratione entis.* The texts from *De Veritate* on the *ratio entis* and from *De Ente et Essentia* on accidents show that the metaphysician's consideration of motion is in the light of motion's *esse.* Furthermore, Aquinas amply explains how from *esse* the metaphysician reasons to God and at least to the possibility of other immaterial beings. Finally, one can apply these considerations to the *esse* of motion in such fashion that our two proofs *ex motu* can be read *sub ratione entis.*

# PROPORTIONALITY, CHARITY, AND THE USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS: A RESPONSE TO TIMOTHY RENICK

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IN THIS year of the fiftieth anniversary of the dropping of nuclear weapons on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, there are many reasons for American moralists to look carefully at the morally problematic actions which the U.S. government undertook in order to end the war in the Pacific. For this reason, the provocative article of Timothy Renick, "Charity Lost: The Secularization of the Principle of Double Effect in the Just War Tradition," which appeared in the July 1994 issue of *The Thomist*, deserves to be welcomed, even though the author and I are clearly in disagreement about many points. I note that we agree in regarding the bombing of these cities as morally wrong since it involved the deliberate targeting of civilian populations and so failed to meet the test of discrimination. This is a conclusion that I would also apply to the obliteration bombings of German and Japanese cities which used conventional explosives and incendiaries as well as to the German attacks on British cities, whether these were carried out by bombing raids or by missiles. Renick, however, believes that just war moralists should also have condemned the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki because these actions failed to meet the test of proportionality. It is his view that Elizabeth Anscombe, Paul Ramsey, and I have been relying on an "adulterated version of the principle of double effect."[1] It is clear both from the general construe-

[1] Timothy M. Renick, "Charity Lost: The Secularization of the Principle of Double Effect in the Just War Tradition," *The Thomist* 58 (1994): 444.

tion of his article and from his language in particular passages that he does not regard the changes he records as constituting a legitimate development, but as a "corruption"; they amount to a tragic forgetting and a profound weakening of the original principle of double effect as this was interpreted in the light of charity. He also argues that the "adulterated version of the principle of double effect" is a crucial element in contemporary defenses of nuclear deterrence proposed by Paul Ramsey and myself.[2]

Now I will not contest Renick's general historical view of the development of Christian uses of the principle of double effect with regard to the moral '}>roblemsinvolved in conducting war. I will not even reject the claim that there has been in the literature of international law and in the moral assessment of military strategy a significant long-term secularization. Given the general tenor of Western culture over the last four centuries, I would not expect anything else. Rather, I would like to raise some questions about the interpretation of proportionality that Renick claims to find in Augustine, Aquinas, and Suarez. I will argue that this interpretation relies on a way of thinking about proportionality that is both unintelligible and inapplicable and that it imposes artificially rigorous standards on the conduct of warfare. Renick makes the further claim that his corrected version of the principle of double effect would proscribe the use of nuclear weapons "anywhere at any time."[3] This, of course, amounts to an alternative way of establishing a universal proscription without arguing that the act in question is intrinsically evil or is evil because of its object or kind. Such an argument, we should note, sets itself the challenging task of establishing the disproportionality of all acts within a given class without consideration of particular circumstances and without appealing to the nature of the act in itself.

## I

The first major element in Renick's position he derives from his reading of the views of St. Augustine, who interpreted chari-

[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.

ty as forbidding killing in self-defense but often requiring killing in defense of others. The unjust assailant is to be resisted, but is not to be killed "if it is possible to secure the desired end only by injuring him."[4] In Renick's view, this illustrates the point that charity requires us "to minimize the evil done" even while we discharge the obligation of defense against the unjust assailant, and it exemplifies what he calls "the principle of minimum means."[5] Renick finds the same principle at work in Aquinas, although he acknowledges that Aquinas, unlike Augustine, does allow killing in self-defense and not merely in defense of others. It is clear that in this part of his discussion Renick treats "doing no more violence than necessary" and "minimizing the evil effect" as equivalent expressions. But he also makes a further remarkable claim about Aquinas's position with regard to all moral choices, namely, that "the (most) perfect act is to be sought" and that "to settle for anything less is to forsake the charity which demands perfection and alone directs us toward God."[6] The sweeping character of Renick's view is most clearly manifest in the following formulation:

> Infused charity demands the perfection of all human acts. If one faces two options, both of which create more good than evil, one must choose that option which creates the most good. To act otherwise is to choose (and hence to intend) the commission of some degree of avoidable evil.[7]

In Renick's interpretation of the history of just war doctrine, secularizing tendencies manifested by Gentili, Grotius, and Bynkershoek in the early modern period, when combined with the drawing of a distinction between justice and charity, led to an interpretation of proportionate action which was confined to meeting the demands of justice rather than the "obligation of charity." He puts his concluding assessment of the corruption of the tradition in the following terms: "But the moral obligation to

[4] Paul Ramsey, *War and the Christian Conscience* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1961), 42; cited in Renick, 447.

[5] Renick, 447.

[6] Ibid., 449.

[7] Ibid.

perform only the most proportionate act-the obligation to minimize evil-consistently present in the pre-1700 virtue literature, has been largely, if at times unconsciously, dismissed." [8]

Now it seems to me that part of Renick's view is not to be challenged, namely, that avoidable evils are not to be done. The practical implication of this, that efforts ought constantly to be made to reduce the level of violence in conflict situations, also seems to me to be correct. But there are two aspects of Renick's view which seem to me to be implausible. The first is the strong perfectionist tendency that runs through his interpretation of charity. The second is his conception of the way in which moral decision-making is related to the activity of war. In practice, I think, the two difficulties are interconnected.

With certain important exceptions (of which the decision to drop the atomic bombs on Japan in 1945 is clearly one), most of the morally significant decision making in a war setting involves the application of rules of warfare (which can range from the military's own rules of engagement to the norms of international law) to actions which have to be carried out in an adversarial process in which the other side is making the most strenuous efforts to impede our side's efforts and in which the outcome of our own efforts is highly uncertain. Experienced and sagacious military commanders will normally want to have a certain margin for responding to unforeseen developments and to have decisive superiority at points of contact with enemy forces. The field of combat is not usually a setting which admits of precise calculation in the application of force; talk of "surgical strikes" is most often profoundly misleading. It is, however, still possible in such settings to speak of certain exercises of force as disproportionate, as excessive in relation to the military benefits they are likely to produce.

But the fact that the adversary resists one's efforts and that not merely in a way that makes them slower or more difficult or more costly but in a way that would make them unsuccessful in

[8] Ibid., 457.

achieving their objectives and even impossible to continue and the fact that the situation, at least locally, is highly uncertain combine to produce a considerable gray area in which participants and subsequent evaluators are often quite unsure about just what course of action would have produced the least evil or harm. In many situations, it is quite difficult to know just what evils or harms are genuinely avoidable; for some harms are known to be avoidable only in retrospect or after we gain access to the decisions and procedures of the adversary. Indeed, part of what makes the decision to enter into a war so terrible is that it opens up a whole range of harms which can be affirmed to be very likely but which cannot be shown to be strictly necessary. War is an activity which is only imperfectly within the control of participants and of national leaders; and it is never more than an imprecise and brutal instrument for the attainment of justice.

If this general characterization of warfare is correct, then it will seem that there is some place for a conception of proportionality which allows as prima fade proportional those actions which produce more good than evil, to borrow the language which Renick employs later in his paper.[9] Such a conception would allow us to separate the grosser violations of proportionality from those cases in which significant good has been achieved but in which there is room for dispute about whether particular evils could have been avoided through alternative courses of action. The inherently violent character of warfare and its tendency to get beyond control remind us of the necessity of putting in place beforehand procedures and personnel that will be committed to reducing the level of violence, e.g., the use of the white flag to indicate surrender by troops who are no longer able to resist effectively and whose lives are to be protected thereafter.

The perfectionist tendency in Renick's approach is manifest in his failure to distinguish two ways of conceiving the requirement to minimize evil or harm. In the first of these ways, minimizing is seen as equivalent to reducing evil to the extent possi-

[9] Ibid., 461.

ble, where the extent possible is specified by the nature or kind of the activity and by a variety of contextual factors. In the setting of war, these factors will include the resources and attitudes of the adversary. In the second way, minimizing is equivalent to bringing about the least amount of evil. This, I take it, is akin to a requirement of non-maleficence but goes beyond it by allowing only the least amount of evil and rejecting courses of action which might otherwise be legitimate. If one entertains grave doubts about the moral acceptability of war under modern conditions (which is not an unreasonable view to take), one may welcome this further stringent requirement as a way of disallowing possibilities that one has no general argument against without resorting to pacifist principles. But if one thinks that war, even under modern conditions, may in certain circumstances be morally justifiable and even obligatory, then one will be reluctant to accept the second and stronger interpretation of what minimizing is. If one is sceptical about the requirement of minimizing in relation to practical life in general, then one will, I think, have even less reason to think that Renick's perfectionist interpretation is the correct one.

My own view is that Renick's position derives much of its plausibility from two facts. One has to do with a deeply problematic aspect of the notion of proportionality, and the other has to do with what I take to be the characteristic American posture for discussing decisions about the use of force. The first point is that in our comparison of alternative strategies for the use of force we can readily understand evil in the form of casualties and deaths, which are in principle readily quantifiable. If course A produces 10,000 deaths of soldiers on the other side and course B produces 20,000 deaths of soldiers on the other side and both courses of actions produce equivalent moral and political outcomes, then it is clear that the 10,000 additional deaths of course B are avoidable, unnecessary, and unjustifiable. Course B produces a large number of deaths which cannot be justified either in terms of a morally important goal or by comparison with course A. This would give us a clear case in which there is a violation of the principle of proportionality without a violation of the principle of discrimination.

A certain kind of realist might want to claim that killing a larger number of enemy soldiers would itself produce a better political and moral outcome, since it would punish those who had committed unjustifiable aggression, would weaken the opposing state, and would deter future aggression. Such a view is not completely foolish; but even from a prudential standpoint it is highly dangerous, given the way in which it gives grounds for future hostilities and efforts at retribution. But it is also clearly incompatible with just war theory, since it would commit those who held it to regarding deaths on the other side as good rather than evil.

But, if we put such tough-minded and repellent views aside and come back to the task of assessing alternative strategies for the use of force in relation to the test of proportionality, we find that once we move beyond such simplistic examples the test brings us back to large questions of moral theory and more specifically back to some of the classic difficulties that confront utilitarianism. I am not claiming that just war theory is a form of utilitarianism, but rather that if one relies on such general categories as minimizing harm or evil in elucidating the notion of proportionality, one is bound to stir up some of the same problems that affect utilitarianism. There are, for instance, the problems of comparing different sorts of outcomes, even when these fit within the same broad genus. How does one compare nonfatal casualties with deaths? How does one compare such different sorts of casualties as the loss of one or more limbs, psychic traumatization, permanent respiratory damage produced by poison gas, serious shortening of the life span? How does one compare actual and potential harms, especially when a smaller actual harm is to be compared with larger potential harms?

But these problems take a special shape because they arise within the context of a complex cultural practice (war) carried on by differentiated institutions (the military). So, for instance, it is not clear how we should measure deaths on the other side and deaths on our side. On the one hand, Christian universalism as well as important aspects of both Kantianism and utilitarianism point us toward giving them equal value in any calculus of proportionality that we might legitimately propose. But such a view

seems to be incompatible with the ethos of military institutions and with the adversarial character of warfare. It fails to take seriously the difference in moral status between aggressor and victim. It would almost certainly be politically untenable in any political community that we can imagine. On the other hand, the presuppositions of just war theory do not allow us to make utilitarian calculations merely from one side of the divide created by the fact of war so that we need only count harms and benefits, goods and evils as these affect our own side. The tendency in popular assessments of the Gulf War to regard the heavy casualties on the Iraqi side as a positive outcome illustrates the difficulty here and is something which needs to be criticized and modified.

I would not argue that Renick must offer a comprehensive resolution of these problems; but it seems to me that much of the plausibility of his position rests on our implicitly translating his talk of minimizing evils into more or less likely estimates of lower casualty figures. This would indeed be one way to apply the principle of minimum means, but it is far from being the only one; and it does not seem to be logically required as the only action informed by charity. But if one attempts to apply the principle of minimum means across the whole range of evils that may be produced by the conduct of warfare or that may be present in the outcome of a war, then one runs into considerable theoretical and practical difficulties; and it is not at all clear that the principle can be applied in a consistent way to such disparate evils as deaths, non-fatal casualties, damage to infrastructure, destruction of goods needed for subsistence, disruption of communities and families, loss of political self-determination, sexual violence, looting and the loss of property, fear and psychological distress, violations of human rights and of just claims.

The other factor that contributes to the plausibility of Renick's argument is the posture which the good fortune of American history has led us to assume as somehow the natural and appropriate one for making moral and policy judgments about the use of force. This is a posture of comparative security, in which one can pull back from engagement with the enemy and make decisions without having to cope with immediate

threats to the survival of one's primary military forces. This posture is a predictable result of the protection afforded by two oceans and by the technological advantages which this country has customarily enjoyed. It is, as I indicated earlier, the posture in which our leaders were able to plan the end of the war with Japan. It is a posture which makes it more likely that there will be some opportunity for extended discussion which may or may not include moral considerations; but as this example makes clear, it does not guarantee that these considerations will be correctly understood or will prevail in the deliberations. But it is important to recognize that for most other countries at most points in their history it has not been an easy or natural posture to assume.

## II

But Renick's article is not confined to theoretical claims about proportionality and charity and the requirement of minimum means. He uses these claims to address both the actual use of the bombs by the U.S. military at the order of President Truman and the hypothetical cases for legitimate use of nuclear weapons proposed by Paul Ramsey and myself. These cases were constructed so that use of nuclear weapons would not produce enormous civilian casualties (whether these were directly intended or were accepted as a bonus for the credibility of nuclear deterrence or were thought to be justifiable through application of the principle of double effect) and so that the use of the weapons would still have a readily understood military point.

Renick's treatment of Truman's decision is substantially correct insofar as he sees Truman's remarks about using "the bomb against those who attacked us without warning at Pearl Harbor, against those who have starved and beaten and executed American prisoners of war" as indicating a confusion of civilians and combatants and thus as preparing the way for a major violation of the principle of discrimination; this is in fact what I have always taken to be the fundamental difficulty with the use of the atomic bombs by the United States but which Renick himself regards as a seriously incomplete basis for criticism of Truman's decision. He goes on to make the historically mislead-

ing observation that "he [Truman] can attempt to justify the bombing as an effort to eliminate legitimate military targets within Hiroshima only because he is blind to the double effect stricture that one employ the minimum means necessary to attain one's legitimate moral end." [10] What is misleading about this as a matter of history is that the U.S. concern in selecting Hiroshima and Nagasaki as targets for the atomic bombs was not to eliminate military targets found within those cities, but to find targets which were comparatively intact and which had not already been so heavily hit because of their military importance that the effects of the new weapons would be discounted as a result of prior destruction. [11] The primary objective in dropping the bombs was, of course, to bring the war to an end without the necessity of invading the home islands of Japan. This was itself a morally acceptable objective and has not been seriously challenged by the subsequent critics of the decision.

The first of the two major difficulties with the American decision arises from the violation of non-combatant immunity, a violation which can be seen as following from the criteria for target selection, since these criteria virtually insured that any target chosen at such a late point in the bombing campaign against Japan would not be a major military target. The second difficulty is that alternative ways of ending the war were not sufficiently explored and that needless harm and evil were done. The crucial point in achieving the primary objective of ending the war was that this objective was not to be achieved by making it totally impossible for the Japanese to continue the war, for example, by killing all Japanese soldiers or by disarming them; rather, the objective was to be attained by actions that would induce the Japanese to surrender. Determining what actions would do this requires a judgment about the psychology and political processes of the adversary society and its leadership, a judgment which

[10] Ibid., 458.

[11] Barton Bernstein, "The Atomic Bombings Reconsidered," *ForeignAffairs* 74 (1995): 147. Bernstein makes it clear that President Truman did not want the bomb to be used against women and children but suggests that he "may have been engaging in self-deception to make the mass deaths of civilians acceptable."

in this case had to cross the considerable cultural divide between Japan and the United States. Negative stereotypes which antedated the beginning of the war but which had been renewed and widely disseminated in the course of the war, the strident character of Japanese declarations of continuing resistance to the Allies, the encounters of the U.S. Navy with kamikaze pilots, and the recent experience of fierce Japanese resistance to Allied attacks on Iwo Jima and Okinawa created a widespread and not unreasonable belief that the Japanese would not surrender until the Allies had established physical control over substantial portions of the home islands.

The question about just what actions would bring about the desired and morally acceptable outcome of surrender by the Japanese, when it is asked in the course of a war under conditions of uncertainty and in the face of a freely self-determining adversary, does not normally yield one obvious answer clearly superior to all others. Rather, it provokes a spread of answers, some of which may overestimate the obduracy of the opponent and some of which may seriously underestimate it. By the middle of July 1945 it was obvious to American strategists and to outside observers that Japan had lost the war and did not have the military or economic resources to repel an Allied invasion of the home islands. But the hard questions remained about when the Japanese leadership would be ready to acknowledge this situation and to accept the drastic consequences of a comprehensive defeat and about whether a leadership group willing to accept the Allied demand of unconditional surrender would be able to make its decision effective, given previous Japanese coups and assassinations directed at non-extremist leaders over the previous twenty years. Not surprisingly there was considerable divergence among U.S. decision makers about the answers to these questions. Some moves which were logically possible and which in some cases would have been well worth exploring were given scant consideration or were left out of the discussions entirely.

Now the answers to these questions may seem to be of more interest to the strategist and the historian than to the moralist. But it is crucially important to remember that answers to these

and similar questions need to be given before one can determine what evils are in fact necessary to achieve the morally acceptable goal of terminating the war and before one can make the further judgments about what other evils are therefore unnecessary and so are avoidable and unjustifiable. Judgments about proportionality are not arrived at simply by imagining alternatives in which fewer evils might be done, but also involve determining whether the evils proposed are effects of means which are truly necessary for the attainment of the end.

In the light of these considerations, I would modify what I wrote on this matter in 1982 in *Theological Studies,* when I observed that the dropping of the atomic bombs "probably passed the test of proportionality.,,[12] I believe that in comparison with the alternative of conducting an invasion of the home islands of Japan the dropping of the bombs was a prima facie less damaging course of action. There has recently been a vigorous controversy about the casualty estimates for an invasion, a controversy which I lack the expertise to resolve. The controversy, however, focused on the number of Allied and, more specifically, American casualties; this was understandably the figure about which U.S. policy makers were most concerned. But it is not a satisfactory focus for moral analysis, which must also take seriously in a judgment of proportionality the casualties suffered by the Japanese military and by Japanese civilians. It is highly plausible to think that these casualties would be minimized by any process that led quickly to a comprehensive and speedy conclusion of hostilities and that the number of casualties would be increased by a process in which Allied control of territory and population was only established gradually and in the face of determined resistance. I have always believed that other alternatives (demonstration explosions, etc.) should have been explored more carefully and in a way that was less driven by the political anxieties of the moment. I have never believed that the

[12] John Langan, "The American Hierarchy and Nuclear Weapons," *Theological Studies* 43 (1982):454; cited in Renick, 442.

dropping of the bombs was the best alternative available at the time; this is even more true for the dropping of the bomb at Nagasaki, since three days hardly seems to constitute an adequate period for the exploration of reactions and alternatives produced by the use of an admittedly revolutionary weapon. So I think that what I should have said is that the dropping of the bomb at Hiroshima met the test of proportionality prima fade, but that there are also serious reasons for doubting whether it would satisfy a more rigorous and comprehensive working out of the demands of proportionality. But this admission supports my view that in complex situations the principle of discrimination enjoys a practical priority, because application of it is less likely to require the settling of military and political questions which are extremely difficult to answer under war conditions. This still allows observers and participants to judge that some proposed courses of action fail to meet even a prima fade test of proportionality.

## III

With regard to the possible use of nuclear weapons and the justification of nuclear deterrence, Renick relies on the principle of minimum means and argues that this principle rules out any use of nuclear weapons. He grants that the cases proposed by Ramsey and myself "do indeed provide instances of justifiable nuclear use by the standards of the modern rendering of double effect."[13] They might, he observes, meet both the requirement of discrimination and the requirement of proportionality "as long as the strategic worth of the target outweighs the evil of collateral civilian deaths." This is not surprising, since the cases were constructed precisely for this purpose. But the greater complexity and ambiguity of cases arising in actual warfare should remind us that cases designed to elucidate principles will often involve drastic and potentially misleading simplifications. But Renick is dissatisfied with these cases, not because they are not faithful to the actual complexities and confusions of warfare, but

[13] Renick, 460.

because they do not meet his test of minimum means. It is not enough in his view to bring about a greater sum of good over evil. Rather, "we must minimize the evil done, and we must be willing to sacrifice to do so, if we are meaningfully to call our actions moral." [14]

When he examines specific aspects of the proposed cases, his crucial claim seems to be that using nuclear weapons will never minimize the evil done in a given situation. This is not a claim that he makes explicitly, though he comes very close to it in a rhetorical question which he asks: "Could, for example, we ever claim that the use of nuclear weapons to wipe out a battery of enemy tanks *minimizes* the evil involved?" [15] He admits that such cases could be designed so that few noncombatants would be killed and so that catastrophic nuclear radiation would not be unleashed on the environment. But he offers the opinion that "each of these concerns would be eliminated or greatly reduced by the use of conventional weaponry in destroying those same tanks." [16] In arguing this way, he relies on one point which is clearly correct and on one point which is highly dubious.

The correct point is that if equivalent military results can be produced by conventional and by nuclear weapons our preference should always be for using the conventional weapons rather than the nuclear weapons. This acknowledges the point made in standard forms of the "firebreak" argument, which is that it is normally in the interest of all the parties to a conflict to avoid crossing the line between conventional and nuclear weapons. This is a consideration which helps in the vitally important task of restraining escalation. But because the development of tactical nuclear weapons produced a situation in which there was some overlap in destructive capability between conventional high explosives and nuclear weapons with small yields, it turned out to be difficult to formulate this point in a way which would yield a strictly exceptionless moral rule. Because of the cata-

[14] Ibid., 461.
[15] Ibid. (emphasis in original).
[16] Ibid.

strophic character of the outcomes produced by nuclear escalation and because of the political perceptions and additional risks that would be introduced into a military conflict by a first use even of tactical nuclear weapons with limited destructive capability, there have always been serious reasons against the first use of nuclear weapons. Renick's argument, I should add, does not turn on considerations about first or second use; he does not seem to be greatly interested in possible processes of escalation. Second use confronts both the policy maker and the moralist with special problems, since our intuition that an equivalent exercise of force is allowed in defense against aggression points in the direction of allowing the use of nuclear in response to a prior use by the adversary, while second use seems to increase the risk of escalation to catastrophic levels.

The dubious point is the assumption that in any given combat situation it would always in fact be possible to substitute conventional for nuclear force. Proportionality requires not merely that the means to a morally important and acceptable end be likely to produce more benefits than harms but also that it be an effective means to the end. A means which produces less harm than a proposed alternative but fails to achieve the end may, despite the good intentions of those who employ it, fail to meet the test of proportionality as Renick understands it, since the harms are produced while most of the benefits (those dependent on actually achieving the end) are not produced. Often a planner or a military decision maker will not be in a position to determine precisely what is the least amount of force that will actually be needed to achieve the objective. In some cases it is reasonable to think that conventional forces, especially if themselves confronted with the possibility of nuclear response from the other side, will not be sufficient to respond to the enemy attack and thus will not be sufficient to attain the desired end. If we were in a position where we knew that conventional forces would be sufficient, then it would be needlessly dangerous and morally imprudent to turn either to the threat of using nuclear weapons or to the actual use of them.

Almost at the end of his paper, Renick directs the two following questions to Ramsay and myself:

Do nuclear weapons represent the option that introduces the *least* amount of real and potential evil and the *greatest* amount of good into these situations? Could not conventional weapons achieve the same military objectives while minimizing the risks of escalation and dangers inherent in introducing nuclear arms into the physical and psychological environment? [11]

To the second question I have to reply that in many, even most, cases conventional weapons can accomplish what nuclear weapons might accomplish and with lower levels of risk and that therefore they are clearly preferable. But, to show that they can never be used, Renick needs to show that this is always the case. Given the underlying tensions between the notion of proportionality and the logic of exceptionless prohibitions, I do not think that he will be able to do this; and I am not sure why anyone would want to try.

In responding to the first question, I have to admit that I am not sure what can be meant by "the least amount of real and potential evil" and "the greatest amount of good." But.I would point out that many of those who constructed and attempted to justify the system of nuclear deterrence thought that that was precisely what they were doing, even though they probably would not have made such claims for the actual use of nuclear weapons. Formulations of the requirements of charity which rely on fundamentally utilitarian assessments can, despite the intentions of their proponents, become equivalent to the utilitarian supersession of the moral content of the law of war which rightly alarmed Michael Walzer.[18] This, of course, is not Renick's intention. Rather, I propose the point as an illustration of the dangers of endorsing apparently higher standards without sufficient attention to the circumstances in which they will have to be applied and without sufficient care for the internal coherence of these higher standards.

[17] Ibid., 461 (emphasis in original).

[18] Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars* (New York: Basic Books, 1977), 263-268.

# ON THE "READING METHOD" IN ROREM'S *PSE UDO-DIONYSIUS**

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LIKE A MEDIEVAL palimpsest, the persona of the one whom modern scholars call Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite has been scraped away many times only to reveal a new mask hitlden underneath each time. For almost nine centuries most Western Christian theologians looked upon him as an Athenian (sometimes confused with a bishop of Corinth of the same name) whom St. Paul converted in Acts 17. Along with this assumed identity went the claim that the Areopagite influenced Platonism in the post-Christian era, especially that of Proclus. Modern scholarship, following the lead of skeptics who arose in the East as early as the ninth century and in the West among humanists in the quattrocento, was able to prove that the relationship between Dionysius and Proclus was exactly the opposite. The view that he was simply a Neoplatonist posing in the garb of Christian doctrine goes back to Martin Luther and has proven even harder to dispel since his definitive unmasking by modern historians. Today scholars in the history of Christian thought are often more eager to elaborate upon his pseudonymous identity than to decipher the obscure style of his theological treatises and letters.

The same cannot be said about Paul Rorem, a professor at Princeton Seminary, for he showed in an earlier work, *Biblical and Liturgical Symbols within the Pseudo-Dionysian Synthesis*, [1] that the texts of Dionysius were, *pace* Luther,

*Paul Rorem, *Pseudo-Dionysius: A Commentary on the Texts and an Introduction to Their Influence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

[1] In the series *Studies and Texts* 71 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1984).

detailed anagogical exegeses of traditional Christian symbols. The present work supplements his earlier study by attempting to make the Dionysian corpus accessible to a broader audience. In *Pseudo-Dionysius* Rorem aims to avoid a narrowly focused, technical argument and instead "present the contents of the corpus, both in their details and as a whole" (3).

The subtitle of the book neatly summarizes its dual aim: to provide a running commentary on the texts and to introduce the reader to the history of their reception in the Christian tradition, particularly the medieval tradition, which is the subject of the book's own afterword. The five parts of the book are divided up according to the extant corpus: the letters, *The Celestial Hierarchy, The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, The Divine Names,* and *The Mystical Theology.* Each part takes the reader by the hand through the text explicating Dionysius's notoriously and sometimes deliberately cryptic writing, noting his frequent play on words, highlighting possible inconsistencies, and drawing connections between the texts of the extant corpus as well as to works by Dionysius that are alluded to in the corpus but have never been discovered.

The *Wirkungsgeschichte* which comprises the second part of each chapter examines the varied interpretation of Dionysian notions of hierarchy, allegorical interpretation, angelology, aesthetics, liturgical commentary, procession and return, and apophaticism. Even those who consider themselves knowledgeable in the history of medieval theology are still going to be educated by these sections of the book. Not nearly enough attention has been paid to the considerable influence of the Dionysian corpus in the medieval West (it is cited by St. Thomas over 1700 times!), and Rorem's history of its reception delineates lines of influence that have often been overlooked, e.g., Dionysius's role in bestowing apostolic authority on the story of the dormition of the virgin.

If I could suggest one small but not insignificant addendum, I would amplify Rorem's claim that "there was no significant doubt about the apostolicity and therefore the authority of the corpus until the sixteenth century" when Erasmus circulated

"some brief, stray comments" that Lorenzo Valla had made in 1457 (16). In fact, Erasmus cites not only Valla as one of his predecessors in the discovery of the forgery but also the English scholar William Grocyn. More significantly, Rorem seems not to be aware of the fact that Valla's discovery was not *sui generis* in the fifteenth century. Valla lived in proximity to a number of humanists in Rome who not only had already hit upon the idea that Dionysius might be a fake but probably were also circulating Greek arguments against his apostolic authenticity. At least two such scholars from the 1450s have already been identified, Pietro Balbi and Theodore Gaza, and there may be more.[2]

*Pseudo-Dionysius* is intended to introduce, not substitute for, a reading of the Dionysian corpus (4). With the addition of an index, it might serve as a handy reference work for readers who have only a minimal familiarity with these difficult texts. But what sort of audience does Rorem have in mind? He makes no bones about the fact that the commentary is intended for a "modern reader." In justifying his "reading method for 'an obscure style,'" Rorem alludes to what he calls "the complexity of the corpus" and maintains that the author's own interpretative guidelines "are not definitive and do not dictate the best plan of introduction for a modern reader" (6). This hermeneutical presupposition leads one to surmise that with Rorem's critical apparatus the "modern reader" will be equipped to understand Dionysius better than he understood himself. This is the key to the entire commentary and is in many senses justifiable. Even St. Thomas warned his thirteenth-century contemporaries that Dionysius's "obscure style" was partly due to "a manner of speaking which the Platonists used, which is unfamiliar to modern readers."[3] But the attempt to transfer Dionysius's avowedly hidden doctrines into an idiom that is plain to "modern readers" also has its pitfalls, as Rorem himself sometimes notes.

[2] For more details, see the thoroughly researched article by John Monfasani, "Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite in Mid-Quattrocento Rome," in *Supplementum Festivum: Studies in Honor of Paul Oskar Kristeller,* ed. James Hankins et al. (Binghamton: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Series, 1987), 189-219.

[3] *In librum De divinibus nominibus expositio,* ed. C. Pera, 1-2, as cited in Rorem, 40 n. 6.

In order to evaluate Rorem's "reading method," I will examine his treatment of three crucial theological issues in the Dionysian synthesis: christology, symbolism and real presence, and mystical theology. In each case, we will see how Rorem balances his own modern interpretative lens with the actual teachings of Dionysius.

In his fourth letter Dionysius offers as technical a summation of his christology as one can find in the corpus:

> As one considers it all in a divine manner, one will recognize in a transcending way that every affirmation regarding Jesus' love for humanity has the force of a negation pointing toward transcendence ... he was neither human nor nonhuman; although humanly born he was far superior to man, and being above men he yet truly did become man. Furthermore, it was not by virtue of being God that he did divine things, not by virtue of being a man that he did what was human, but rather, by the fact of being God-made-man he accomplished something new in our midst-the activity of the God-man. (1072BC)[4]

Before examining this controversial passage for its christological content, let us take a look at Rorem's interpretation. Rorem correctly notes that this very passage, or at least some version of it, was used around 532 A.D. by Monophysite opponents of the Council of Chalcedon to claim apostolic authority for their own, non-Chalcedonian views (10). They took the reference to the *new* activity of the God-man to refer to just one activity, thereby obviating the need to assert a distinctly human one. Their misquotation may derive from a corrupted text, or they may have corrupted the text themselves. In any case, one of Dionysius's earliest and most fervent pro-Chalcedonian defenders, John of Scythopolis, took great pains to show that neither in this passage nor elsewhere in his corpus does Dionysius deny that Christ possessed not only a divine but also a human nature.[5] To this degree, Rorem does not express disagreement with John of

[4] *Pseudo-Dionysius: The Complete Works,* trans. Colm Luibheid (New York: Paulist Press, 1987), 264-265. Here we follow the translation on which Rorem collaborated, for this is the one which he employs in his commentary

[5] Happily, Rorem 's commentary makes liberal use of John's *Scholia in Dionysium.* He is currently preparing the first English translation of this highly influential work.

Scythopolis. His concluding remark on the passage, however, may say as much about Rorem 's own hermeneutics of suspicion as about the actual text of Dionysius:

> Nevertheless, even though *Letter4* does assert both the divinity and the humanity of Christ, it gives supportive examples *only of a composite divine-human activity* (the miracles) and not of a human nature as such (as evidenced, for example, by eating or by suffering). This *composite portrait* and lack of emphasis on the human nature of Christ is consistent with the rest of the corpus and has often given pause to its defenders. (10-11, italics added)

In two brief sentences Rorem effectively writes off the Dionysian christology as heterodox.[6] The phrase "composite activity" is not to be found in the passage cited but is a well-known formula in the Monophysite christology of Severus, Patriarch of Antioch (ca. 465-538). To be sure, many noted theologians (including Severus himself) have often consigned Dionysius 's thought to the category of Severan monophysitism, but for Rorem to do so in a somewhat clandestine manner and without further elaboration seems precipitate.

Although there are passages which speak of a visible, "composite" appearance of Christ in the sacraments (e.g., *EH* 3, 444A), the passage in question is simply not about a "composite divine-human activity." Its main emphasis is on the uniquely human orientation of the Saviour's love *(philanthropia tou Iesou,* 1072B, cf. Titus 3:4). According to Dionysius, a philanthropic principle originating in God (and not a contingent truth of history, to invoke Lessing's celebrated phrase) is the truest explanation of the incarnation (Ep. 4, 1072B; Ep. 3, 1069B; *CH* 4, 181B; *EH* 4, 437A, 441A, 444A, 444C; *DN* 1, 592A; *DN* 2, 640C, 648D; *DN* 11, 953A). Dionysius frequently notes that the fact that God truly became man is not in any way a diminution of God's utter mysteriousness and transcendence of all things *(EH* 1, 372AB; *EH* 3, 440B, 444A, 484A; *DN* 1, 592B; *DN* 2, 648C). Nor was Jesus' humanity in any way defective by virtue of his remaining divine. "The philanthropy of God took upon itself in a most authentic way all the characteristics of our

[6] Cf. 106.

nature, except sin" *(EH* 3, 441A). For Dionysius, Christ's humanity is the point of intersection of the transfiguration and what modern Biblical scholars call the messianic secret. God's self-communicating divine nature (what the Areopagite calls "most divine is poured out onto Jesus' flesh to delight the intelligence and to sustain spiritually those who can perceive and understand God's sacrament in the Christ *(EH* 4, 480A). When Dionysius speaks about Christ, it is often in the context of this wholly present but still eschatological *(pace* Rorem, cf. 122) self-disclosure of God in our very midst. Even in the fourth letter, a fortiori in the t]:iird,there is a strong hint that the humanity of Christ, "possessing the force of a negation pointing upwards towards transcendence," should be treated as a sacramental symbol of the real, self-giving activity of God in and beyond this world. One recent commentator even claims that the plain meaning of this passage is the gift of deification that discloses itself in and through the Church. [7]

I do not want to deny that there are good reasons for allying Dionysius's thought with that of certain Monophysites. As Balthasar writes, "the unknown author, on account of his christological language, must be set in a Monophysite ambience, without having himself to be accused of Monophysitism." [8] *H* his true identity were ever discovered, it would not be surprising to find that Dionysius either belonged to or was closely associated with a non-Chalcedonian party in late fifth-century Syria or Palestine. In his rush to follow the canons of modern Dionysian scholarship, Rorem nevertheless does not give the Areopagite a chance to speak for himself on the issue of christology. Although he does mention the possible influence of Peter the Fuller (d. 488), Rorem fails to take seriously the attempt by late fifth-century Eastern Christians, epitomized in the so-called *Henoticon* (482), to circumvent the Chalcedonian decree by returning to a more primitive Nicene faith and drawing upon Cyrilline formu-

[7] Hieromonk Alexander (Golitzin), *Et /ntroibo Ad Altare Dei: The Mystagogy of Dionysius Areopagita, with Special Reference to its Predecessors in the Eastern Christian Tradition* (Thessaloniki: Analecta Vlatadon, 1994), 224.

[8] *The Glory of the Lord* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1984), 2:146-47 n. 11.

lations which did not represent outright contradictions with the Council of 451.[9]

Even though the commentary is only meant to be introductory, a great deal more clarity could have been brought to bear on the issue of christology. Instead we find scattered remarks that Dionysius's christology was "peculiar" (9) and "ambiguous" (92) and that he favored a composite portrait and lacked an emphasis on the human nature of Christ. In sum, Rorem's treatment of christology is insufficient and often misleading.

Turning now to the question of symbolism, I would like to begin with another representative passage from Rorem's commentary. In the context of an otherwise admirable treatment of the liturgical rubrics which undergird the synaxis or communion in *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy,* Rorem states:

> This introduction to the Dionysian eucharistic liturgy and its interpretation raises several crucial questions. Does the author presuppose Christ's real presence, or is the synaxis only a set of symbols? The final chapter refers to a bodily communion, but with the "symbols" *[EH,* 565B].[10]

Once again Rorem's thoroughly modern approach to the text betrays presuppositions that may not get us closer to the true meaning of Dionysius' theology. Before offering a critique of Rorem's understanding of the relationship between sacrament and symbol, two qualifications should be made. First, it would be foolhardy to search in the Dionysian corpus for notions of real presence which conform to Western conceptions of either a real transformation of the material elements or the mechanics of transubstantiation. Dionysius is much less interested than later medieval theologians in the West in what happens to the elements and much more interested in the sacred activity of God symbolically disclosed in the ecclesial performance of the rite. Furthermore, Rorem is absolutely correct to note the real paral-

[9] Rorem mentions the *Henoticon* briefly but only to dismiss its relevance to the entire corpus: "While this speculative scenario for the origins of the corpus is certainly a possibility, it applies only to certain of the Dionysian comments on Christology..." (12).

[10] Rorem, 104.

leis between Dionysius 's sacramental theology and the Neoplatonic theurgies of, for example, Iamblichus.

With those qualifications we can now try to understand Rorem's "crucial questions." In posing these questions, Rorem suggests that it is appropriate to make a choice between symbolic and real presence. The problem with these questions as well as the whole of his understanding of symbols and sacraments is that Rorem measures the Dionysian corpus by the modern standard of a subjective understanding of symbolism. Moderns understand symbols to be projective systems of the human mind that bear no real content that is of their own making. [11] Crudely put, symbols express in concrete forms some idea which we can grasp mentally in a more abstract way. In a manner similar to the Neoplatonists, Dionysius understands the sacramental rite in terms of the objective, divine reality of God's work on behalf of humanity. The clear Neoplatonic leaning leads Rorem to suspect "that for Dionysius the crucial factor in the sacrament was the conceptual interpretation of the rite, not a bodily communion with Christ's body and blood" (115). A supposed denial of real presence is identified by Rorem with Neoplatonic intellectualism.

In a certain sense, Rorem's questions are well-put. Dionysius demands that the participants in the divine liturgy grasp the deeper, spiritual sense of what is happening. Unreflective, mechanical following of the rite is precluded. An ascetical rigor of both life and thought is required. But only when filtered through the lens of a post-Kantian view of symbols does it seem fair to pose a question such as the following to Dionysius: "When he considers the Eucharistic elements, does he believe in the real presence of Christ contained within them or is he more interested in understanding the symbols in terms of concepts which we grasp in our heads?" Such a question presupposes a modern separation of symbolic and real presence and is, in effect, the way in which Rorem understands Dionysius 's view of symbols.

No alternative between symbolic and real presence exists in the Dionysian corpus so long as by presence one understands the

[11] See, for example, Kant's *Critique of Judgment,* par. 59.

dynamic activity of God rather than a static, worldly object. In the words of Andrew Louth, "Denys seems to take for granted that [the elements] are changed into Christ-'He offers Christ to our view.' "[12] When Dionysius writes that the hierarch (a bishop presiding over the Eucharistic celebration) "offers Jesus Christ to our view" *(EH* 3, 444C), he is valorizing neither Western medieval conceptions nor modern, subjective ones. Dionysius takes the liturgical actions of the hierarch to be an unannounced disclosure of the power of God in our midst *(EH* 7, 565C), a real presence not completely unlike the new theandric activity mentioned in the fourth letter. Perhaps Rorem 's questions were only a goad to stimulate further reflection on the part of readers who share modern preconceptions about the bifurcation of symbolic and real presence. That notwithstanding, further clarification of the difference between ancient and modern symbolism would have been in order.[13]

Finally, I would like to comment upon a principal thesis in Rorem's otherwise admirable interpretation of *The Mystical Theology* and the history of its reception. As is often the case in *Pseudo-Dionysius,* Rorem's historical erudition outstrips his philosophical insight. He correctly notes that the word *eros* does not appear in *The Mystical Theology* and that Christ is referred to only once. But he makes a different sort of claim when he characterizes *The Mystical Theology* as "loveless" and "mostly Christless" (220). The first point raises a question about the relationship between *The Mystical Theology* and those passages in the other works which accentuate *eros* and Christ. The second claim suggests that something of weighty significance is missing in *The Mystical Theology.*

We learn more about the missing element when he contrasts Dionysius 's approach with the mystical theology of the Victorines, St. Bonaventure, Hugh of Baima, and the author of the *Cloud of Unknowing,* each of whom in varying degrees drew heavily upon the Dionysian corpus but interpolated his own

[12] *Denys the Areopagite* (Wilton, Conn.: Morehouse-Barlow, 1989), 63.

[13] Cf. Robert Sokolowski, *Eucharistic Presence: A Study in the Theology of Disclosure* (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1994), 198-99.

brand of love mysticism in the process. To this rich Cistercian and Franciscan tradition of following Christ's concrete example of self-emptying love, Rorem juxtaposes two putatively intellectualist Dominicans, St. Albert the Great and Meister Eckhart. Rorem 's personal preference for love mystics is not hidden when he states that Hugh of St. Victor's claim that love is superior to knowledge supplies "a crucial amplification" of the Western Dionysian tradition (217).

To be sure, Rorem warns against treating affective and intellective tendencies in the Western mystical tradition as mutually exclusive (216, 228-29 n. 19), but it seems that this is exactly what he has done to *The Mystical Theology.* Rorem notes Eckhart's remark from the fourteenth century: "Knowledge is better than love. But the two are better than one, as knowledge carries love within itself' (224). Eckhart assumes that knowledge and affect are separable, and that union with God will come about through the subsumption of the latter under the former. Dionysius, however, makes neither this claim nor does he even distinguish between affect and intellect. When Rorem places Dionysius within the intellective tradition of the West, he seems to assume not only the Eckhartian distinction just mentioned but even the stricter modern one between feeling and thinking. These categories are all terra incognita to the Areopagite. Whatever the term "mystical" means in *The Mystical Theology* (Rorem is judiciously circumspect in his use of this notoriously polysemic term), it depends ultimately upon a union with God which leans neither in the affective nor in the intellective direction.

For Dionysius, union with God as the Supreme Cause "cannot be grasped by the understanding since it is neither knowledge nor truth" *(MT 5,* 1048a). Obviously both language and concepts falter at this point. The peak of *The Mystical Theology* is, as Rorem correctly notes, utter silence:

> In the work's last words, God is "also beyond every denial." Negation is negated, and the human mind, *befuddled,* falls silent. The treatise, the corpus, its author, and this commentary have nothing more to say (213, italics added).

This passage shows that Dionysius is not privileging either intellectualism *or its abandonment* over affective mysticism. Something altogether different takes over. Rorem's interpretation of *The Mystical Theology* as "loveless" and based upon "conscious cognitive techniques" (200) is therefore highly dubious from the perspective of texts in *The Mystical Theology* which he interprets adequately.

But even his treatment of the negation of negations in the passage just cited is marred by the statement that the human mind falls into silence "befuddled." Dionysius sees a much smoother transition between knowing and unknowing than Rorem acknowledges. The negation of negation is not so much a technique of purely epistemological self-abandonment as a fulfillment of the prayer which opens *The Mystical Theology*. In light of this prayerful obedience, one can perhaps speak (without interpolation!) of the unspoken place of *divine eros* (as opposed to human affect) in *The Mystical Theology*. Divine *eros* is neither a representation of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit nor a notion (qua notion) of God's goodness. These conceptions, Dionysius assures us, were already treated in *The Theological Representations* and *The Divine Names* respectively. *The Mystical Theology* signals rather an erotic attachment in non-affective prayer to a "brilliant darkness" *(MT* l, 997B) that is eloquently described in *DN* 3 as "a great shining chain hanging downward from the heights of heaven":

> We grab hold of it with one hand and then another, and we seem to be pulling it down toward us. Actually it is already there on the heights and down below and instead of pulling it to us we are being lifted upward to that brilliance above. (680C)

This spiritual exercise of ascetical, silent prayer surpassing mind and heart through the unannounced pull of divine yearning is, in my opinion, a more adequate explanation of Dionysius's own path to mystical theology than will ever be permitted by the Western distinction between intellect and affect.

Exactly one hundred years have elapsed since "modern Dionysian scholarship" commenced with the simultaneous publication of two articles by German scholars documenting the

Areopagite's dependence upon Proclus's understanding of evil. With this double-fisted blow, Dionysius the apostolic witness was definitively unmasked as a fraud. Balthasar writes of these ambiguous scholarly achievements: "After their tank formations have laid waste his garden, there is for them not a blade of grass left: all that remains is PSEUDO-, written in bold letters, and underlined with many marks of contempt." [14] To that we can add that the view of Dionysius that has dominated modem scholarship has failed to do justice to the synthetic union that can be found in the Dionysian corpus of symbolic and real presence, Neoplatonic metaphysics and the creedal confession of faith, epistemology and mystagogy, eschatology and *theosis,* and created hierarchies and the dynamic, spirit-filled manifestation of the triune God.

The personae of the Areopagite will continue to multiply with time. Rorem 's commentary can be added to the ranks of modern Dionysian scholarship, and among such works it represents a significant achievement. But perhaps we have arrived at a point at which the bulky layers of interpretation that have accumulated around the modem reading of Dionysius need to be peeled away slowly. We in the West do not have the option of going back to the pre-critical view held by Hugh of St. Victor, Aquinas, or Bonaventure. Modem Dionysius scholarship is a good example of how modernity has changed our view of the past in a decisive, irrevocable manner. The modern critical unmasking of the Dionysian corpus, however, need not be the last word on the matter. If a new, "post-modern" persona is allowed to emerge, this Dionysius, as Hieromonk Alexander (Golitzin) has forcibly argued in a new study, will probably bear a strong resemblance to the Eastern Christian fathers and especially the Syriac monastic tradition. [15] But do we have the courage to loosen our ties to our current prejudices and allow the Spirit of Christ proclaimed in these traditions to come to the fore?

[14] *The Glory of the Lord,* 2:144.
[15] Cf. *Et Jntroibo Ad AUare Dei.*

## BOOK REVIEWS

*The Assurance of Things Hoped For: A Theology of Christian Faith.* By AVERY DULLES, S.J. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994. Pp. xii + 299. $35.00 (cloth).

The world of Roman Catholic theology has benefited enormously from the impressive and always impeccable scholarship of Jesuit Father Avery Dulles. His most recent effort offers a comprehensive account of the theological virtue of faith. Thirteen of the chapters discuss the main elements of biblical (chap. **1),** historical (chaps. 2-7), and systematic (chaps 8-13) understandings of faith. The final chapter supplies a concise synthesis of the hook's contents. Anyone unfamiliar with the complex issues that fuel theological debates about faith, its act, and its object might find it helpful to read this chapter first. Since the thirty-six theses that make up chapter fourteen summarize the hook's systematic structure in an illuminating way, the reader will know beforehand the main themes that are treated in the hook, and so will profit more from the wealth of erudite research that Father Dulles has garnered into this little classic. In short, this volume represents Jesuit pedagogy at its best. Father Dulles remains eminent both for his learning and for his clarity of express10n.

At the 1995 convention of the Catholic Theological Society of America, many scholars, after hearing Father Dulles speak on the nature of Catholic theology, agreed that he ranks among the great Jesuit theologians of the period, whose contributions to the theology of faith, moreover, Dulles carefully explains in the present volume. More than a few members of the Society of *Jesus-Nostri,* as they call themselves-figure prominently in Dulles's account of the theology of faith. This review will focus on the hook's historical overview of the development of the theology of faith in which Jesuit theologians played a crucial role in the post-Reformation era. Let me cite some of the major figures: Luis Molina (1536-1600), who advanced innovative views about "acquired faith," for example, that it is essentially the same as supernatural faith; Francisco Suarez (1548-1617), who, besides producing the first treatise on faith not in the form of a commentary on Lombard or Aquinas, taught that "the immediate object of faith ... is not the infinitely simple divine essence hut created truths, such as those contained in the creed and others defined by popes and councils" (p. 56); Saint Robert Bellarmine (1542-1621), who, as a curial cardinal, vigorously defended the truths of the Catholic religion in the turbulent post-Tridentine period; and Juan de Lugo (1583-1660), who held that "faith rests on a kind of *rational discourse"* (p. 57, emphasis mine) wherein God makes his authority present

and known. The view that human reason grounds Christian belief affected the way in which later theologians developed their rational apologetics, a story that Father Dulles has chronicled in one of his earlier books, *A History of ApologetU:s*(1971). It moves from personal to propositional theology.

De Lugo's concern "to ground the act of faith in speculatively certain knowledge that would infallibly guarantee the truth of the assent" (pp. 57-58), it should be noted, was taken up by other seventeenth-century Jesuits, such as Juan Martinez de Ripalda (1594-1648), who elaborated on the theme of naturally knowable truths in order to provide a plausible explanation as to how God saves unevangelized pagans. He argued that such persons are saved through faith in a broad sense *(fides late dU:ta),* even though they do not accept any revealed truth on the authority of God as witness. Not much creative theology occurred in the eighteenth century. But de Lugo's emphases re-appear in the writings of nineteenth-century Jesuits, such as Johann Baptist Franzelin (1816-1886) and Joseph Kleutgen (1811-1883), both of whom were professors at the Roman College, now known as the Gregorian University. This is the same Joseph Kleutgen whom Alasdair Macintyre considers "the single most important influence upon the drafting of *Aetemi Patris" (Three Rival of Moral Enquiry,* p. 73). As Dulles dryly observes, "The Jesuit theologians of the Roman College made an important contribution to the theology of faith in the nineteenth century, not because of their originality but rather because of their learning, their prudence, and their influence with the Holy See" (p. 86). Bernard Lonergan in his essay "The Subject" (1968) finds their syllogisms "embarrassing" today.

The Jesuit genealogy of views about the nature of theological faith represents a distinctively modern approach to the virtue. In sum, it teaches that, as much as the veracity of God remains a true cause of the act of faith, the credibility of the witness constitutes a preamble for faith that requires explicit argument. It comes, then, as no surprise that a theologian like Matthias Joseph Scheeben (1835-1888), who had studied with the Jesuits in Rome, "argued that de Lugo and Kleutgen wanted to keep faith too much under the control of human reason" {p. 91). We see that their view also influences the early twentieth-century Jesuit Louis Billot (1846-1931), who, though he accentuated the divine truthfulness in the act of belief, denied that the divine truthfulness entered into the formal object of faith. Rather, "supernatural faith differs from natural faith by reason of the eliciting principle-a faculty elevated by grace" (p. 106). This means that what makes faith "the substance of things to be hoped for" (Heb 11: 1) is not the theological virtue itself, but something extrinsic to it, namely, an enabling grace that moves the psychological capacities of the believer. Theology, then, had moved far away from Aquinas's unequivocal assertion that "with regard to faith, then, if we look to its formal object, it is First Truth, nothing else" *(Summa theologiae* 11-11, q. 1, art. 1).

Billot's treatises on the Church of Christ (1898) and the infused virtues (1901), illustrate what, it may be argued, can rightly be termed the "turn to the subject" in the theology of faith. Dulles himself uses the term "anthropocentrism" (p. 91) to describe the position of de Lugo, Franzelin, and Kleutgen. This anthropological turn, which had been developing since the late sixteenth century, may help explain some of the interesting debates about faith that took place in the pre-conciliar decades of the present century. Again, the Jesuits stand out as principal players. In the early part of the century, there are the English Jesuit George Tyrrell (1861-1909), one of the Catholic Modernists who made private experience the predominant criterion for belief, and the French Jesuit Pierre Rousselot (1878-1915), whose premature death during World War I makes it difficult to render a definitive judgment on his controversial work, *The Eyes of Faith.* Then, at mid-century, there is the *nouvelletheologi,e,*represented by the French Jesuits of Lyon-Henri de Lubac (1896-1991) and Jean Danielou (1905-1975). Father Dulles also reminds us of the influence that Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955) had on the enthusiasms of the immediate post-conciliar generation of Christian believers.

The elenchus of Jesuit theologians that Father Dulles draws up embodies a particular view of faith, one that had already crystallized in the thought of Francisco Suarez. Faith accepts the God who reveals by and in the believer's acceptance of what is proposed by the teaching Church as the *depositum fidei.* Recall that Sulirez taught that "the immediate object of faith ... is not the infinitely simple divine essence but created truths, such as those contained in the creed and others defined by popes and councils" (p. 56). Thus, we can comprehend the typically Jesuit concern to ensure the "reasonableness" of the believer's acceptance. In the wake of confessional disputes over doctrines, which occurred in unruly and oftentimes destructive ways during and after the Reformation, we can perhaps appreciate why the Jesuits insisted that Church teaching formed the immediate object of faith. The historian, I suspect, must also recognize that this mentality achieved a certain success in the enormous educational and missionary efforts taken on by the Society as part of the Catholic Reform. After all, even the intellectually vain Descartes, who had spent eight years at the Jesuit *college* at La once wrote in a letter to another savant: "I wouldn't want to publish a discourse which had a single word that the Church disapproved." (Are we permitted to wonder how many of today's alumni and alumnae of Catholic universities would echo Descartes's disposition toward theological faith?) But there is also the interesting question of the extent to which this post-Tridentine view of faith, with its emphasis on rational discourse, can explain the fact that dissent has now become such a preoccupation among some theologians. When Aquinas treats the sins against theological faith, he discusses disbelief, heresy, apostasy, blasphemy, blindness of mind, and dullness of sense, but it

would never have crossed his mind to enquire whether someone, with good conscience, could "dissent" from First Truth.

The historical research that Father Dulles so expertly presents, including the important contribution made by Jesuit theologians at Vatican I, prompts another response, at the level of systematics. There is a significant difference between a view of faith as a virtue that unites us immediately to God, as First Truth, and a view of faith that embraces immediately the truths that God reveals. The only thing that I find missing in the hook is a fuller account of theologians who develop the first view of faith, such as those of the Toulouse school.

For example, during the scholastic year 1959-1960, at the Dominican *studium* in Toulouse (France), Father M.-Michel Lahourdette, O.P., lectured on questions 1-16 of the *secunda pars* of the *Summa theol<>giae.* (The class notes, entitled simply "La F!>i," are still available in mimeograph form.) The bibliography of Lahourdette's published works runs to almost forty pages in the 1992 *Revue Thomiste,* where many of his articles on faith first appeared. Dulles refers only in passing to this important French Dominican who, in the years following World War II, was among those who raised certain cautions with respect to the initial proposals of the *rwuveaux theol<>gien.s* {now more commonly referred to as *ressourcement* theologians). He does not then sufficiently inform us about Labourdette's view of faith, which continues the tradition begun by the sixteenth-century Dominican theologians Melchior Cano (1509-60) and Domingo Banez (1528-1604). This view of faith stresses that God speaks his word about himself as our saving beatitude and about the way whereby we are to reach him. Banez had grasped the significance of what Aquinas says in *Summa theologiae* 1-11, q. 113, a. 4, ad 3: "In the justification of the sinner there is required an act of faith whereby a person believes that God is the justifier of man through the mystery of Christ." The emphasis here is that faith produces an immediate union with God, so that the believer attains to the material object of faith (the propositions of faith) through the mediacy of faith's formal object, which is God First Truth in Being and Speaking. The sixteenth-century Carmelite Saint John of the Cross captures this view of faith when he exclaims: "As our faith grows more intense, so does our union with God" *(The Ascent of Mount Carmel,* bk. 2, chap. 9). The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* seems to point toward a return to Aquinas's view when it affirms that "the theological virtues relate directly to God. They dispose Christians to live in a relationship with the Holy Trinity. They have the One and Triune God for their origin, motive, *and object"* {no. 1812, emphasis mine). We are clearly moving away from a rational theology to a personalist one, which Father Dulles clearly identifies as his own position.

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*In the LikeMss of Sinful Flesh: An Essay on the Humanity of Christ.* By THOMAS G. WEINANDY, O.F.M. Cap. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1993. Pp. 168. $29.95.

In this present work Thomas Weinandy, Tutor and Lecturer in History and Doctrine at the University of Oxford, seeks to identity and forge more clearly the link between a classical christology and the soteriological centrality of the cross. He does this by arguing that a consideration of both the theological tradition and scriptural sources reveals "that Jesus was born of the fallen race of Adam and that such a condition was absolutely indispensable for our salvation" (21).

While applauding the renewed concern for the full humanity of Jesus in contemporary christology, Weinandy resolutely refuses to oppose such a concern with the classical "high" christology embraced at Chalcedon. He therefore rejects the impulse found in much contemporary "christology from below" or in Kenotic approaches to play off the humanity of Christ against the tradition's view of his possession of a divine nature in the name of avoiding Docetism. Rather, while beginning "from below" with the humanity of Jesus, it should be recognized that such a point of departure is gnoseological, pertaining to our "coming to know" Jesus' identity. From an ontological perspective, the Incarnation begins "from above" with the preexistent Word.

To buttress his analysis, Weinandy first examines precursors of his thesis in the theological tradition. He argues that the majority of patristic writers were concerned to express the full reality of Jesus' humanity, including its susceptibility to weakness and temptation, against Docetic and Apollinarian impulses to the contrary. Such an awareness in turn led to the formulation of the essential soteriological principle that "what is not assumed is not healed," a theme which Weinandy sounds throughout the book (e.g., 27, 70, 122). Hence to redeem us from sin, Jesus must have assumed "not merely a generic humanity of the same species as ours, but a humanity inherited from and tarnished by sinful Adam" (27).

In surveying aspects of medieval christology, Weinandy considers some Anselmian approximations of his theme, but focuses on the work of Aquinas. Like many patristic thinkers, Aquinas states clearly that Jesus did not assume original sin or its resulting concupiscence and that he himself never sinned. Yet he states equally clearly that Jesus' nature was touched by the effects of sin such as hunger, thirst, weakness, and death which he freely assumed along with his humanity (cf. *ST* III, q. 14, a. 3). Further, he argues for the fittingness of such an assumption on a variety of grounds. So complete was Christ's identification with us that it is even fitting that Jesus descended into hell in order to deliver us from the same fate (cf. *ST* III, q. 52, a. 1). As in the case of their treatment of patristic thought, later theological manuals

tended to fixate on other parts of Aquinas's presentation at the expense of his realistic appraisal of Jesus' humanity.

In the arena of modem theology, Weinandy samples both Protestant Catholic theological approaches. He considers the pneumatic christology of the nineteenth-century Reformed theologian Edward Irving and its development in the theology of Karl Barth, who sees in the Word's assumption of sinful flesh *(sarx)* the work of a loving God who "puts himself on the side of his own adversary" (62). Barth's Swiss Catholic counterpart Hans Urs von Balthasar likewise argued for the indispensable connection between the Incarnation and the cross because of the eternal Son's assumption of a humanity "afflicted by sin" and hence the concomitant penalties of death and judgment (66). This, in conjuction with von Balthasar's novel theology of Holy Saturday, in which Christ is actually abandoned by the Father to the torments of hell (as opposed to Aquinas's understanding of Christ's descent only to the hell of the just), Weinandy credits with having given new impetus to the understanding of Christ's substitionary death in Catholic soteriology.

The heart of the book's argument is reached in its overview of various NT traditions concerning Jesus' "sinful humanity." Here Weinandy offers a fresh and often insightful reading of biblical christologies, cognizant of much contemporary biblical scholarship hut also willing to approach the text with a hermeneutic horn within the tradition.

Adopting "the order of faith and knowledge" which takes the perspective of NT communities and authors who saw the events of Jesus' birth and life in light of his cross and resurrection (71), Weinandy begins his exposition with Paul. The death to sin and new life in the Spirit which Christians receive through faith and baptism Paul sees as the result of Jesus' partaking of our "flesh," that is "a humanity weakened by sin and cursed by death" (78). In the cross Jesus put this sin-marred nature to death, thus redeeming his own humanity and ours (cf. 75). Once raised, Christ's glorified humanity becomes the source of the Holy Spirit for the redeemed.

Weinandy then considers the mysteries of Christ's life and the Passion. Here he juxtaposes various NT sources to create a mosaic of Jesus' "fallen humanity." It was precisely because of his "humanity in need of transformation and rebirth" that Jesus was obliged to accept John's baptism and required the anointing of the Holy Spirit to carry out his mission as Servant and Son (94). While aware of NT traditions concerning Jesus' sinlessness (e.g., Heb. 4:15-16) and of the later tradition's insistence on his freedom from concupiscence, Weinandy forcefully argues for the reality and saving efficacy of Jesus' experience of temptation. Because of the combination of his interior rectitude and his real assumption of a wounded nature: "temptation confronted him with a sharpness and force that we do not experience" (99). This phenomenon reaches its climax in the cross, where the flesh assumed by the Word (cf. Jn. 1:14) becomes the revelation of both human sin and divine mercy: "Jesus' lifeless body is God's icon of sin and love" (113).

Jesus' assumption of a fallen human nature in NT theologies of the Incarnation completes the OT depiction of a God who even while holy, "consistently entangled himself with fallen man and immersed himself thoroughly in man's sinful history" (129). It is in this light that one can understand the Johannine insistence that the Word did not merely become *soma* but *sarx* (130) or that of the book of Hebrews that Jesus was "of the same stock" as ourselves (Heb. 2:11-p. 131). Thus "the Incarnation must presuppose and intimate the cross, containing within it the seeds of the cross" (133). In regard to the later dispute between Thomists and Scotists concerning a rationale for the Incarnation, Weinandy's biblical analysis yields a via media, arguing that "the primacy of the Incarnate Son is manifested in his taking on our sinful flesh and in his redemptive death on the cross" (148).

As with any book that offers such a sweeping analysis of the theological tradition, Weinandy's work will not satisfy the reader on all of its particular points. His treatment of modem christology, for example, while often insightful, might be faulted for its neglect of some parts of the contemporary debate. In his use of biblical images, while Weinandy is certainly correct in insisting on Jesus' identification with sinners, he seems not to consider adequately the meaning of the biblical insistence on the "unblemished" character of Christ as the Paschal Lamb (1 Pet. 1:19; cf. Ex. 12:5) or of various OT offerings which Christians see as prefigurements of the cross.

On a broader scale, one need not be a fervent Neo-Platonist to wonder at the implications of some the arguments employed. To assert, as the author does repeatedly, that the Son must have assumed a *fallen* rather than a "generic" human nature or we could not be redeemed from such a condition might well be taken to imply that sin and evil *add* something to human nature which it did not previously possess. In other words, it suggests a kind of ontological status for evil. The difficulties of such a position in terms of God's responsibility for evil are well-known and need not be rehearsed here. To avoid such a pitfall and retort that evil has only a privative status would seem to deprive Weinandy's "soteriological principle" of much of its logical force.

This raises another concern which deserves consideration. Namely, there is a certain tension in the book between the rhetoric it uses and the reality which it seeks to describe. One is struck in reading the text by the force of its language and imagery: Jesus' "sinful" flesh, his "fallen" humanity, his nature which derives from "Adam's sin-gnarled family tree" (28). On the other hand the position being defended is rather modest-Jesus' human nature is subject to the exterior effects of original sin (i.e., temptation, suffering, and death). As in the case of his previous book *Does God Change?*, Weinandy is here able to show that the classical theological tradition has untapped resources to address vexing contemporary questions. However,

some readers may wonder why such forceful language is employed in the service of rather modest theological claims.

And even this modest position is not without some tension. It seems that the biblical notion of flesh *(sarx)*, especially in its Pauline meaning of the whole of the human person subject to the power of sin *(hamartia)* would include what the later tradition would call concupiscence. What then is meant by ascribing this to Christ in the Incarnation? Karl Barth, it is true, used John 1:14 to argue for this very idea, but this overlooks that the Johannine use of *sarx* is different from Paul's (which Weinandy recognizes) and that Barth was forced to this position because of his suggestion of a preexistent Incarnation. If the Word is incarnate from all eternity, then his taking "flesh" must mean something other than simply the assumption of a human nature. But such a position is nothing but Monophysitism, albeit on a cosmic scale. Weinandy is careful to maintain distance between himself and Barth's position by keeping his discussion of Christ's preeminence on the level of God's foreknowledge, but there is still a certain tension between his biblical analysis and the conclusions of the later tradition which he wants to defend.

This tension is perhaps most evident, as Colin Gunton observes in the foreword to the book, in regard to the Catholic doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. Weinandy's postscript attempts to reconcile the position taken here with the definition of Pius IX in *Ineffabili, Deus* by arguing that Mary's preservation from sin through the grace of her Son describes her own "subjective and spiritual rectitude" (155)-not the exterior effects of original sin (i.e., life in a fallen world, suffering, temptation, and death). This certainly constitutes a helpful beginning in responding to this question. However, it may also be that there is something more to the tension between Jesus' complete identification with us on the one hand and his sinlessness on the other. Perhaps Weinandy is too quick to dismiss Anselm's intuition that a solution might be found in an exploration of Mary's sinlessness and Jesus' conception by the Holy Spirit (cf. 43).

In spite of such unresolved questions, Weinandy's study is a significant achievement. It demonstrates the contribution of the classical tradition to the contemporary concern with Jesus' humanity. In this, Weinandy's project bears some resemblance to both Jean Galot's attempt to synthesize ancient and modem understandings of "person" and Walter Kasper's ongoing defense of the relevance of the Chalcedonian formula. Like these other approaches, far from simply reacting to the deficiencies of some contemporary versions of christology from below, this study effects its own synthesis of the tradition and its biblical roots without deprecating one at the expense of the other. Further, Weinandy shows a unique ability to integrate lived faith experience into lucid theological analysis. Such features make this a work of particular

importance for both scholars and students of christology. One can only hope this present essay is but a prolegomenon to a longer and more substantive treatment which could respond to some the questions raised above.

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*Aquinas on Human Action: A Theory of Practice.* By RALPH MCINERNY. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1992. Pp. ix+ 244.

*The Question of Christian 'Ethics.* By RALPH MCINERNY. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1993. Pp. x + 74.

Both of these books are cut from the same cloth. In fact, Ralph Mcinerny seems to have quite a bolt of the same fabric in his study. In 1982 he published *Ethica Thomistica: The Moral Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas.* In the past two decades he has produced significant interpretations of Aquinas on natural law, conscience, and the human act. He has also left the theoretical provinces and argued for the practical application of Thomistic principles to various particular moral questions of our day. With the two books at hand, Mcinerny continues to advance the development of a living tradition of Thomistic ethical theory. Readers will not expect to find original moral theory in these books, unless it is that of Thomas Aquinas. What is new is Mclnerny's defense of his way of interpreting Thomas.

There is an edge to both books under review. The summary presentations of Thomas's scholastic doctrine, delivered in Mclnerny's trademark clear, breezy style, are knit together by an interesting series of dialectical interchanges on some of the most important theoretical issues. The more recent *The Question of Christian Ethics* defends the natural or philosophical autonomy of Aquinas's moral theory against the "fideistic" interpretations of Etienne Gilson, Jacques Maritain, and Rene Antoine Gauthier. In so doing, Mcinerny tries to sustain a careful balance between protecting "moral philosophy from being swallowed up by theology [while insisting] that it is within the ambience of the faith that philosophy is best carried on" (ix). The slender volume publishes the text of the 1990 McGivney Lectures of the John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family.

The earlier *Aquinas on Human Action* divides neatly into two parts. Part One carefully guides the reader through a tour of the main elements of the moral theory of *Summa theologiae* 1-11. It is an excellent introduction that in six chapters shows the scope and explanatory power of Thomistic ethics. Although Part One covers much the same ground as his earlier *Ethica*

*ThomistU:a,* the treatment is much more sophisticated, and because of the way it deals with the interpretive and philosophical complexities, it will serve as a standard exposition of Aquinas's theory of moral action. He systematically covers themes such as human acts, happiness and the Good, the structure of the moral act, freedom and coercion, means and ends, exterior and interior acts, the place of reason, conscience, natural law, and practical reasoning. Part Two then leads the reader into six fields of contemporary controversy: fideism (contra Gauthier's dismissal of Thomas's Aristotelianism), the importance *ofusus* in the moral act (contra Donagan), the relevance of nature to moral truth (contra Finnis), the dependence of ethical truth on metaphysical verity (contra the is/ought taboo), the fragile liaison of modern natural rights and Thomistic natural law (as per Michel Villey against Maritain and, presumably, much recent episcopal teaching), and moral absolutes (contra Belmans, Fuchs, Rabner, et al.).

These books represent not only fine moments of philosophical clarity and welcome instances of polemical virtuosity, they are also proffered as instruments in the cause of advancing a particular school of thought. As Mcinerny says in his Preface to *The Qu.estion:*"We stand ... on the threshold of a great forward movement in the history of Thomism ... " (ix). He argues that this advance of Thomistic philosophy accords with Church's *lte ad Thomam,* consistently reiterated from Leo XIII to Vatican II, as the Catholic thinker's inspired way in the contemporary quest for truth (55). Indeed, "the believer who follows the advice of the magisterium and takes Thomas as his chief guide in philosophy has a certainty that participates in the certainty of faith that he is on the right path" (57). Since this is an advantage unknown to Plato and Aristotle, the reader cannot help wondering how Mcinerny defends philosophy's autonomy and Thomas's Aristotelianism without equivocating on the term "philosophical inquiry" when it is predicated of the Thomist and non-Christian philosophers. Would not that dialectical inquiry in which the thinker has in advance certain possession of the truth at issue differ from that in which certain possession of the truth is at issue?

In some ways, the McGivney Lectures make for the most satisfying of the two books. Mcinerny poses the question of the place of philosophical ethics in Christianity, and then develops his Laval line on philosophy's autonomy in a dialectic that recapitulates in a most interesting way the great twentieth-century debate among Thomists on the nature of Christian philosophy. Put in its simplest form, he believes, if I can put it in my own words, that Christian faith englobes reason, but not in a way that makes philosophical ethics impossible. Grace may make you a better person, and the doctrines of faith may complete the unaided understanding of moral matters, but there is a foundational knowledge of ethical reality realistically available to natural reason and prerequisite to theological moral inquiry. As he sums it up in one place: "theology is the upper berth, philosophy the lower and without a foot on the latter you will never get to the former" (38).

One central issue concerns the source of moral obligation. In the Aristotelian eudemonistic theory, it is only in the light of our knowledge of man's end that the directives to moral behavior appear. Now if we cannot know our natural end without the instruction of Revelation, then the pure philosopher lacks the basic orientation necessary for his ethical deliberations. ff one does not have a clear enough fix on the target, then hitting it is as much the result of haphazard as rational decision. The gist of Maritain's pessimistic assessment of philosophy's adequacy was that any adequate philosophical ethics needs to be subordinated to moral theology informed by the faith. In his own way, Gilson also severely limited the philosopher's autonomy in his deliverances of moral truth. Not the least interesting moment in his little book is the way Mcinerny develops the positions of these Thomistic luminaries with a fine appreciation for the subtleties and differences in their explanations.

In making his case to the contrary, Mcinerny argues, in effect, that Aquinas's teaching on natural law amounts to the natural, rational "preambles" requisite to any theological morality. Indeed, if Christian philosophy does not allow for a regional autonomy for philosophical ethics, then "Thomas's teaching on natural law would have to be jettisoned" (40). The chief argument of the book is structured as as analogy: just as in Thomas's complete theology there are *praeambula fiedi* which are the work of the philosopher, so also in his moral theology there are philosophical prerequisites, which in this case are the teachings of natural law concerning good and evil.

All in all, Mclnerny's defense of Thomistic ethics amounts to a brave assertion of the autonomy of philosophical reason at a time in the life of the academy when the very ghost of reason seems to have departed it. However, there have been times when a healthy skepticism has been a truer friend to philosophy than rationalism. But it was not Mclnemy's task to show us the nature of philosophical reasoning. You might say, we have an argument *quia,* that it is. But, nevertheless, until the *quid est* of Mclnemy's philosophical reasoning becomes more clear, we shall have to take it on faith that the revival of Thomistic philosophy does not trade philosophy's fideistic nemesis for one of a different stripe. This worry aside, these books make an excellent case for the restoration of the authority of Thomas Aquinas to a prominent place in contemporary ethical theory, especially among moral theologians.

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*Christ and the Spirit: Spirit-Christology in Trinitarian Perspective.* By RALPH DEL COLLE. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994. Pp. 240. $35.00 (cloth).

Ralph Del Colle has written a conscientious work on Spirit-christology. He attempts both to be faithful to the conciliar Christological tradition (Nicaea and Chalcedon), and yet to advance simultaneously the proper and rightful role of the Spirit within a Christological and Trinitarian setting. As he states:

> What is new and distinctive in Spirit-christology is that, on the level of theological construction and doctrinal interpretation, it proposes that the relationship between Jesus and God and the role of Christ in redemption cannot be fully understood unless there is an explicitly pneumatological dimension. In other words, the relationship between Jesus and the Spirit is as important to conveying the truth of the christological mystery with its soteriological consequences as that of Jesus and the Word. (4)

Without this pneumatological dimension, the full deposit of faith, Del Colle believes, is diminished and even jeopardized. His hope is that his new model of Spirit-christology will not only "preserve the integrity" of the Church's Trinitarian tradition, but will "profoundly enrich" it (5).

Del Colle's study takes place on three interrelated levels-those of the Trinity, Christology, and grace. By clarifying the proper role of the Holy Spirit within the Trinity, he attempts to enhance the appropriate function and position of the Spirit within Christology and the theology of redemption and grace. To accomplish this he examines, in Chapter One, the Western Trinitarian position, specifically the place of the Holy Spirit, in light of the Eastern criticism, especially that of V. Lossky. Chapters Two and Three respectively take up the Neo-scholastic development of the role of the Spirit within the Christology (M. Scheeben and E. Mersch) and within the theology of grace (De la Taille, Rabner, and W. Hill). Having shown the strengths and weaknesses of this Neo-scholastic development, Del Colle, in Chapter Four, studies in depth the Trinitarian, Christological, and soteriological thought of David Coffey, who he believes both advances the tradition and produces a highly creative and fully mature Spirit-christology. In light of Coffey's thought, he then critically examines (Chapter Five) other contemporary Spirit-christologies-such as those of Dunn, Schoonenberg, and Lampe. Lastly, in Chapter Six, he explicates the implications of his Spirit-christology for culture, social praxis, and religious pluralism.

Del Colle's work has many strengths. Firstly, the questions he raises and the issues he addresses concerning the role of the Holy Spirit within the Trinity, in Christology, and in the theology of grace are of inherent and contemporary importance. He rightly perceives that within the Christian tradition the Holy Spirit has not assumed his proper place both within the immanent Trinity and within the economy of salvation. Secondly, he has a good

sense of theological development. He not only creatively critiques the past, but he also, while being faithful to the best of the past, attempts imaginatively to proceed beyond it. Thirdly, with the help of Coffey, he proposes a Spirit-christology that, in many ways, admirably enhances Trinitarian thought, Christology, and the theology of grace. Fourthly, because of the depth of his own Spirit-christology, Del Colle can thoroughly critique the often superficial and revisionist Spirit-christologies of such modems as Schoonenberg and Lampe.

In order to propose a proper role for the Holy Spirit both within the Trinity and in Christology Del Colle, following Coffey, champions a "bestowal model" (most recently renamed by Coffey as the "model of return") of the Trinity that would complement and augment the traditional "procession model." Unlike the "procession model," which sees the Son proceeding from the Father and then the Spirit proceeding from the Father and (or through) the Son, the "bestowal model" understands that the Father bestows his love on the Son and the Son in return bestows his love on the Father. This mutual bestowal oflove is the Holy Spirit (see 107-8). This "bestowal model" adds more dynamism and personalism both within the Trinity and within the economy of salvation. The love of the Father for the Son does not lie dormant in the Son, but rather the Father's love of the Son provokes the love of the Son for the Father. The procession of the Spirit within the Trinity now has a set purpose. He is breathed forth as the mutual love between the Father and the Son.

While the Coffey/Del Colle proposal contains many benefits, I believe it does not go far enough in giving an appropriate role to the Holy Spirit within the Trinity. Firstly, the Holy Spirit still remains passive within the Trinitarian life. He is merely the love that the Father and the Son bestow upon one another. Secondly, because of his passivity it is difficult to see clearly why the Holy Spirit should be designated a "person"-a distinct subject-along with the Father and the Son. This has been a traditional problem within the whole history of Trinitarian development.

I believe that the Holy Spirit will only be properly recognized as a distinct person or subject when his singular activity within the Trinity is perceived. Thus I would propose that the Father begets the Son in or by the Holy Spirit and thus the Spirit proceeds from the Father as the one in whom the Son is begotten. In proceeding from the Father as the one in whom the Son is begotten, the Spirit conforms the Father to be the Father of the Son and conforms the Son to be the Son of the Father. (I develop this thesis at length in my own study: *The Father's Spirit of Sonship: Reconceiving the Trinity.)*

Del Colle verges on my proposal when, speaking of the Incarnation, he quotes Coffey as saying:

> [T]he Holy Spirit is the Spirit precisely ofSonship (cf. Rm 8.15). As such, he constitutes both Jesus and other men sons of God, even if divine sonship changes greatly (though not totally) in meaning and content from the former instance to

> the latter. The Father makes the man Jesus his son, one in person with his eternal Son, by bestowing the Holy Spirit on him in a uniquely radical way. This makes Jesus the very paradigm of divine sonship. (119)

If the Father incarnates the Son through the Holy Spirit-the Spirit of Sonship-then should not the Father also, within the immanent Trinity, beget the Son in the Holy Spirit? This absence of an active role for the Holy Spirit within the immanent Trinity undermines the active role that Coffey and Del Colle rightly wish to attribute to the Spirit within the Incarnation and redemption and within the theology of grace.

Coffey and Del Colle are at their best when articulating the proper role of the Holy Spirit within the life of Jesus and his work of redemption. They likewise demonstrate the implications of this when clarifying the work of the Holy Spirit within the believer through grace. There is some ambiguity, however, in Coffey and Del Colle's understanding of the work of the Spirit in the act of incarnation.

Concerning the act of incarnation, Coffey writes that "the Father bestowed the Holy Spirit on the humanity of Jesus in an act by which at the same time that humanity was created, sanctified and united in person to the divine Son" (119). Del Colle interprets this passage to mean that "The sanctification of the man Jesus is prior to union with the divine Son" (120). Or, again, he states that for Coffey the Holy Spirit "first creates, then sanctifies (habitual grace), and then unites (grace of union) the human nature of Jesus in person to the pre-existent divine Son" (123, cf. 124). I will let Coffey deal with the issue of whether or not Del Colle has interpreted him correctly, since Coffey states that "at the same time" the Holy Spirit creates, sanctifies, and unites the humanity to the Son, while Del Colle speaks of the process sequentially. It is difficult, however, to see how Del Colle's rendition of the incarnation avoids the charge of adoptionism or Nestorianism. It is not possible for the Holy Spirit to sanctify the humanity of Jesus prior to the union, for the humanity never exists separate or apart from the Son. Even on the level of logical priority, it is through the grace of union that the Holy Spirit sanctifies the humanity. In the act of incarnation the Father, in one and the same act, brings the humanity into existence, unites it to the person of the Son, and sanctifies it, all by the power of the Holy Spirit. Del Colle rightly wants to emphasize that the Father bestows the Spirit on Jesus, but this bestowal is given within the act of incarnation itself, and not prior or subsequent to it.

Lastly, Del Colle could have used a good editor. The first chapter, for example, could have been much simpler and more straightforward. He could have simply stated the weaknesses of Western Trinitarian thought without going into a detailed exposition of Lossky and Palamas, which only slowed up the course of the book. Moreover, while scholastic concepts and vocabulary are unavoidable, since they make for clarity, Del Colle could have again simplified his use of such vocabulary for the sake of readers (especially students) who are not familiar with it. Finally, Del Colle is forever telling the reader

what he is about to do or has done. For example, in the course of three brief paragraphs he has the following phrases: "My tack will be"; "I will focus"; "I begin with"; "Our adaptation of that model will seek"; "As has been alluded to"; and "I will begin" (210-211). There are similar phrases on almost every page of the book-pages 110-112 have at least five. Del Colle is obviously attempting to help the reader, but this constant repetition becomes a little much after a while.

Though I have offered some criticisms of Del Colle's work, they are criticisms of a very respectable and competent work and not condemnations of an unsatisfactory book. Anyone working in the area of Spirit-christology, with its Trinitarian and soteriological implications, must now consider and appraise what Del Colle proposes.

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*The Politics of God: Christian Theologies and Social Justice.* By KATHRYN TANNER. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 1992. Pp. x + 262.

In *Gaudium et Spes* we find the following: "Since all persons possess a rational soul and are created in God's likeness, since they have the same nature and origin, have been redeemed by Christ, and enjoy the same divine calling and destiny, the basic equality of all must receive increasingly greater recognition" (Par. 29). One way to approach Kathryn Tanner's *The Politics of God* is to see it as an extended reflection on just this sort of Christian egalitarian claim in its particular reference to the relation between the transcendent God and God's human creation. It is for the author a claim which authorizes a progressive politics directed toward social justice. By pursuing an "internal" rather than a "totalistic" critique of traditional Christian beliefs, she seeks to expose their progressive potential, all the while conceding that Christian traditions historically have legitimated and masked injustice through appeals to this or that "divinely ordained" social hierarchy. Internal critique aims to "uncouple" Christian beliefs about God and the world from these practices.

Tanner argues that there is a "logical gap" between Christian convictions about God and creation and the actions and attitudes with which they may be conjoined. The gap may be bridged by contingent factors of practical engagement, such as what the beliefs come to mean in a certain period of history, how they are combined with others in Christian discourse, the life-situations, especially power differences, that characterize those to whom the beliefs are

applied, and the scope of the beliefs application. Scope is especially significant, since universal, even-handed application can avoid the employment of beliefs in "power plays," as when the poor are unilaterally designated "sinners" or "blessed" for their "humility" by folks enjoying far greater status and privilege. The project of "uncoupling" belief from unjust practices, however, goes beyond exposing this logical gap; it also demonstrates how belief in God's transcendence positively fosters patterns of cultural self-criticism. Tanner notes, for example, that "[b]ecause ultimate tmth, value and reality reside in a transcendent realm, pretensions to ultimate finality for human understanding of what is real, true, or good are destroyed. The notion of transcendence tends to compel in this way a recognition of (1) the limited and finite nature of human ideas, proposals, and norms; (2) their historical and socially circumscribed basis; and (3) their essentially fallible and defeasible character. The transcendence of God functions as a protest against all absolute and unconditioned claims." So when invoked in a congenial historical setting-where, crucially, social differentiation is present-and when combined with a belief in God's agency as creator, governor, and redeemer, the critical potential of a belief in God's transcendence for the purposes of social criticism may be realized. That belief rules out any strict "matching" between the divine realm and human social orders, or the assertion of a participatory relation between God and human creatures that might support such a match. God is both utterly other than the world and as agent related to it.

But the theological definition of this relation, by way of a doctrine of creation, may still undermine social criticism through the explicit or implicit *Uientificatwn* of divine truth and goodness with human notions of them. Tanner offers a brilliant analysis of appeals to "orders of creation," "natural law," "divine mandates," and "divine institution" that shows how in each case normative conclusions tend ultimately to close down critical questioning through establishment of this kind of identification. God's proper transcendence is impugned by these accounts insofar as they effectively render some created realities utterly immune to question. The preferred conception of God's "universal providential agency" breaks the strong connections between the "natural" and the "social" that are found in "orders" and "natural law" positions, as well as between human and divine norms as discovered in divine "mandate" and "institution" approaches. If God is taken to work in and through all human agencies and natural events, if, that is, God maintains through immediate relation *all* that constitutes creation, then a thoroughgoing critical attention to human orders and to "what is going on" in them is possible and necessary. Tanner adds to this conception a robust understanding of sin that suggests a positive need for social critique throughout the span of temporal life.

Using these beliefs about transcendence, providential agency, and sin, Tanner makes a powerful case for Christian opposition to (1) fixed hierarchies of superiors and subordinates, (2) oppressive relations of dominance and

exploitation, and (3) intolerance toward other human creatures. First, given that God is immediately and invariantly related to everything that occurs, and therefore to human beings across all differences of nature and status, it becomes impossible to defend some mediating idea of a chain of command that establishes hierarchies with respect to God; moreover, a commitment to God's universal agency excludes arguments that would completely limit the divine will by grounding fixed hierarchies on natural law or divine mandate. Thus role relations between persons are construed to be potentially fluid and reversible. Second, human *creatures* are owed an independent and unalterable respect that is never a matter of proof and never earned. This unconditional, indefeasible regard enables realistic appraisal of the virtues and faults of others as the individuals they are, and authorizes rights-claims on their behalf to life, self-deveolpment, and self-determination. Third, Tanner defends tolerance of individual particularity and difference. The irreducible otherness of human creatures is affirmed as such that "other human beings are always potentially breaks, counters, loci of .contestation and disorientation, *vis-a-vis* the selfs need to affirm itself and achieve its ends. Others are not then matters for comfortable presumption but for potentially disconcerting discovery."

The book concludes with a discussion of the links between Christian belief and social activism. "Nonidolatrous self-esteem," which emerges from both a sense of finitude and a sense of one's value before God, provides a proper basis for resistance and creative struggle on behalf of the oppressed. Important in this connection is Tanner's insistence that self-esteem, issuing from a common source, requires different responses by the powerful and the powerless. "The dignity before God that psychologically empowers the oppressed to *claim* their rights psychologically empowers the privileged to *forego* what they possess at another's expense.... Just as identifying one's value with one's value before God corrects the self-denigrating tendency of the oppressed to take their social standing to heart, it corrects the self-congratulatory inclination of the privileged to identify their value with their social prestige." Still, activism for justice remains "an activism of constant repentance"; "one should not let a myth about one's own purity blind one to one's own potential as an oppressor in circumstances where successful agitation for the rights of one's own class gives one the power to make such a potential a reality."

If only for its defense of the moral relevance of the notion of God's universal providential agency, *The Politics of God* is an important book. The clear and highly detailed treatments of respect and tolerance afford valuable resources for Christian ethical reflection. The volume should prompt critical conversation on a number of fronts. There is, of course, the case for the progressive potential of traditional Christian beliefs; but there is also the candid endorsement of the language of rights, the building of a general ethic on the doctrine of creation, and a partial critique of feminist revisionist approaches·

that risk what **H.** Richard Niebuhr called "utilitarian Christianity" in their focus on divine immanence rather than transcendence. Hence questions may and ought to emerge about whether the appeal to rights involves an unacceptable concession to contemporary individualism (Tanner denies that it does), whether the use of creation-talk is hopelessly abstract without a prior grasp of the divine work of redemption as realized within the practices of Christian community, and whether traditional belief in God's transcendence can really be rescued from its historical perils. Suffice it to say that these will be *good* questions to the extent that they will be asked following the inquirer's most careful consideration of this fine book. Kathryn Tanner's argumentation sets a high 'standard for any critical response to it. If that standard is met, then so much the better for theology and theological ethics today.

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*Evil and the Mystics'God: Toward a Mystical Theodicy.* By MICHAEL STOEBER. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992. Pp. ix + 225. $45.00 (cloth).

*Theo-monistic Mysticism: A Hindu-Christian Comparison.* By MICHAEL STOEBER. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994. Pp. x + 135. $49.95 (cloth).

These monographs deserve careful reading and wide use. They are thorough, drawing widely on the available literature in English; their essential points are important and well-argued; they are sensible and fair-minded accounts which state disagreements and criticisms without vituperation; Stoeber's goals-fashioning a more adequate response to the problem of evil and the development of more comprehensive models for understanding mysticism (in *Evil and the Mystics'God* and *Theo-monistic Mysticism,* respectively)-are important; his conclusions, that attention to mystical experience helps us to respond to the problem of evil and that monistic experiences have their place in a larger theistic framework, are generally persuasive and provide a heuristic framework with wide application; they are refreshing in their insistence that the issues of theodicy and mysticisms are best treated in a comparative perspective. Let us review salient features of each study, with particular attention to the comparative issues.

*Evil and the Mystics'God* is imbued with an urgent sense of the problem of evil as it impacts life (with Dostoevsky's Ivan Karamazov setting the tone for the book). Stoeber attends to the most prominent participants in the long

conversation over evil and the goodness of God, and with their help seeks to propose a better theodicy: "the vindication of the beneficent care of God in the context of the existence of evil ... the reconciliation of the divine attributes and evil-what can be understood as its defensive aspect ... [but also] evidence illustrating the active beneficence of the Divine, while at the same time maintaining the negative reality of evil and the obligations of social morality" *(Evil,* 14). Part I reviews nonmystical theodical accounts, with respect to retribution, freedom, aesthetic considerations of the function of parts within the whole, and the teleological perspective "which attempts to explain or justify evil in terms of some future good to which it is ordered" *(Evil,* 2). He explores important versions of this model, as presented by Leibniz, Hume, and Hick, but concludes that the problems of dysteleological evil-the raw sorrows of innocent and large-scale suffering-cannot fit convincingly within even the most refined nonmystical teleology. He therefore goes on to develop a "teleological mysticism," wherein "the mystic purposely undergoes certain processes in order to achieve an encounter with or participation in a reality that is understood to be primary, the source of existent phenomena ... these processes involve negative methods intended to lessen and finally eliminate the debilitating influence of the senses and the will which hinders mystical realization, as well as more positive painful moral, physical and spiritual mortification activities" *(Evil,* 97-8). Though conceding that dysteleological problems persist-extreme suffering, natural disasters-he defends the superior merits of a mystical theodicy which "stresses the potential divinity of the human being, his or her possible participation in mystical union with an active and personal Divine.... Mystical theodicy does not merely point to a further spiritual eschaton that justifies teleology, but emphasises, on the authority of enlightened mystics, experiences of God's purposes in the context of the very transformative processes which are associated with the teleology. Very closely related to this feature of the mystical theodicy is the stress upon the realisation of divine beneficence in mystical experiences of consolation" *(Evil,* 188). Here the comparative perspective comes to the fore (in chapter 10), where Stoeber gives serious consideration to the idea of rebirth, not as retributive ("we suffer now for what we did in the past lives"), but as prospective ("the evil we suffer now will profit us in future births"). Under the category of thf retributive Stoeber takes up but also critizes the non-dualist position of Sankara, the eighth-century proponent of Non-Dualist *(advaita)* Vedanta theology: suffering is always caused by the Lord in response to past deeds; since past lives are not remembered, this suffering does not have any teleological benefit; moreover, "it poses problems of personal identity and raises questions regarding the benevolence of the Divine. It also has dangerous social ramifications; it justifies inequality and inaction, and it blurs the line between compassion and moral condemnation" *(Evil,* 179). One wishes that Stoeber had elaborated more fully the Non-Dualist position on the (non) worth of all finite sorrows-and joys too.

"Retribution" is not quite what the Non-Dualist *karma* system is about; since the Self is not an agent of *any* deed, bad *or good,* the point seems rather to be that neither joys nor sorrows are relevant to one's ultimate destiny-a destiny which requires not a preference for moral activity over the immoral, but acessation of any sense of agency at all. From a Non-Dualist viewpoint, most theodicies are at best only half-explanations, because they agonize over sorrow while taking joys for granted.

At the beginning of *Theo-rrwnisticMysticism* Stoeber defines the boundaries of his study of mysticism by arguing against the *constructivist* and the *essentialist* approaches, particularly at their extremes. The *constructivist* model stresses the socio-religious categories which pre-form mystical experiences; by implication this model precludes the possibility of direct experience of a higher, divine reality, reducing any such experience to its cultural-linguistic expression; the model cannot account for evident similarities in accounts of mystical experience from culture to culture, and leaves little for discussion except the words that happen to be used by one or another mystic. The *essentialist* model tends to the conclusion that although monistic and dualist experiences are real and accessible, they are phenomenologically the same, even if spoken of differently; here language collapses, because we are always talking about the same thing. In developing his *experiential-constructivism,* Stoeber seeks a middle ground: "we must explain mystical experience in terms of *both* variety of experiences and variety of interpretations" *(Theo-rrwnisticMysticism,* 15).

In "lntrovertive Mystical Experiences: Monistic, Theistic, and the Theomonistic" (chapter 2), Stoeber distinguishes monist and theistic experiences as truly distinct, argues that both occur in the life of the mystic, and locates the former as a moment within the latter. Naive theism is displaced in a "monistic identity with an inactive and impersonal source in the Divine in an experience which is literally identification with that potential energy through which arises their essential being as persons" *(Theo-rrwnistic Mysticism,* 32); but fin!}lly there is still a post-monistic stage, in which "mystics move beyond the Interpretive mediums that are necessary in experiencing and expressing the energies and consciousness of pre-monistic theistic encounters, and they themselves become the very mediums of this Real's self-expression. Mystic self-identity is spiritually transfigured in theomonism, as the essence of human personality is integrated into that of the Real. The Divine then becomes the internalized orienting focus of the mystic's dispositions and perceptions" *(Theo-rrwnisticMysticism,* 33-4).

In "Monistic and Theistic Hierarchies of MJ;sticism" (chapter 3), Stoeber focuses on some Hindu mystics, particularly Sankara. Though recognizing his importance in India and for comparativists, Stoeber offers two criticisms. First, in Sankara's Non-Dualist system there is little room for devotional religion, which has no real purpose. A monistic model inevitably demeans the theistic: "those mystics who postulate a Divine who is solely impersonal can-

not grant theistic experiences a legitimacy and authenticity in terms of the nature of the Divine-there is no requirement or affirmation of dynamic and emotionally charged experiences through the higher level static and isolating monistic immersion. Indeed, they are not necessary to the monistic ideal" *(Theo-moni-stk Mysti,ci,sm,* 99). By contrast, since the "Divine, a.1alogous to the human being, is a unified whole who possesses distinctive modes and powers, each of which can be experienced mystically," then theo-monistic transformation-which includes the monistic as a moment within a larger theistic framework-"draws these diverse facets syncretically together, thus bridging the Divine apophatic-cataphatic dialectic" *(Theo-monistic Mystki-sm,* 85). Yet, he insists, to favor a mysticism culminating in the theistic is not to favor any sectarian version of theism: "the Theo-monistic frame is open to a very wide variety of specific theologies and practices. Indeed, there is nothing about the transformative processes and the conception of the Divine in theo-monism that would tend to prop up one particular religious tradition over others," since such preferences require "an appeal to grounds or evidence external to the theo-monistic frame and ideal" *(Theo-monistic Mystki-sm,* 107). One wishes Stoeber had developed his arguments here, since it might well appear that he is slipping into a kind of essentialist theism: except in denominational details, all -theists are talking about the same thing. Perhaps too he concludes too much too quickly, with too little basis. For instance, when he indicates the lack of comprehensiveness of the monist *(advaita,* non-dualist, if these are the same) worldview, he does not sufficiently document what Sankara says (if anything) about Hindu devotionalism, before concluding that there is no room for it; until more evidence is given, it would be easier to hypothesize that Sankara is not talking about popular devotionalism at all or that (true to his probable heritage) his exclusion of deity-talk is *not* an exclusion of a deeper discourse which understands *brahman* as also a supreme Lord.

Second, Stoeber argues that Sankara's Non-Dualism is deficient since it provides little foundation for ethical activity: "the active moral components bound up in personalist theistic mysticism are not reinforced, affirmed or validated in a monistic hierarchy. Rather, they have no place in the monistic ideal" *(Theo-moni-stk Mystki-sm,* 49). But here too something more needs be said for the Non-Dualist position, even if one ultimately disagrees with it. The amorality of the realized sage may be less a failure to apprehend the moral than a consequence of the termination of agent-identity, the dismantling of the familiar apparatus with which we normally think about this-worldly responsibility; when one omits the dense and complex philosophical and religious contexts in which non-agency was presented as intelligible, the Vedanta position inevitably appears skewed and incomplete, so that the reader who is unfamiliar with Vedanta may ironically feel encouraged to dismiss it and the comparative venture as well.

These books provide fruitful ways of framing the entire conversation about theodicy and mysticism: one must concede that in doing this Stoeber had to sketch his positions broadly; and yet one can still wish that he had done more. The point is not that he should have written different books-less broadly philosophical and more Indological, for instance-but rather that he might have been yet more attentive to the possibilities and problems of language. In rejecting the constructivist viewpoint. Stoeber's comparative approach is ultimately undergirded by the same realist expectation with which he informs his study of mysticism, and he leans too far toward an essentialist position: i.e., we know that there are deep similarities in how humans everywhere deal with the real; mystical experience has the same complex features everywhere; its problematization is everywhere the same; and each of us speaks about the same things in a way that the rest of us can understand, even in translation. Regarding the last point at least the constructivists provide a corrective: if experience is mediated through words, and as long as we do not jump to the conclusion that there are *only* words, we can justly value the way in which words provide the education and discipline by which we learn to extend our thinking to what is new and unfamiliar. The particular words of particular cultures, when read in larger contexts and not merely excerpted, train us to understand experience in particular and differing ways; even fundamental issues are differently situated and opened from new vantage points, and one's questions are themselves interrogated as to their sources and motives.

Stoeber's books are best appreciated then as providing a sound and sensible foundation for a larger, more complex comparative project which will get us to think not just more broadly, but also differently, articulating not just more comprehensive frameworks about shared human experiences, but also different approaches and questions fashioned according to what people experience-universally, concretely-in their differing cultural and linguistic settings.

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*The Panther and the Hind: A Theological History of Anglicanism.* By AIDAN NICHOLS, O.P. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1993. Pp. xxi + 186. $19.95 (softcover).

The fable of the four blind men presented with an elephant is well-known. Each examined a part of the elephant, and declared it to be something other than it was; none of the four realized it was an elephant. This story comes to

mind once more after reading Aidan Nichols's recent book, *The Panther and the Hind.* The subtitle *(A Theological History of Anglicanism)* presents the problem: Can anyone, in fact, write a theological history of Anglicanism? Does the final product, accurate as far as it goes, depend upon what evidence one considers, just as what each blind man thought he was touching depended on which part of the elephant he had gotten hold of?

The title is taken from the 1687 "bittersweet" poem of the same name by John Dryden; each chapter begins with a passage from the poem, written after Dryden's conversion to Catholicism, about the relationship between Canterbury ("the panther") and Rome ("the hind"). History suggests that Anglicanism has not been as fierce, nor Rome as defenseless, as this metaphor would suggest.

The strong points of this work are not few. It is a summary of a great deal of information, and both the texts and their context are spelled out. Nichols's style of writing, if occasionally facile and often polemical, is nevertheless clear and economical. This style is also mirrored in the clarity of Nichols's exposition. The bibliographies at the end of each chapter are helpful suggestions for further reading, not all of which agrees with the author's premises.

The weak points, however, are evident as well. The most significant one has to do with the selectivity of this exposition of Anglicanism. The book's consideration is limited almost exclusively to Great Britain, or even more particularly, England. While this limitation may be permissible and effective for the first few centuries, it cannot be maintained in a world where a majority of all Anglicans are not English, or, for that matter, even Caucasian. Even in the matter of the ordination of women controversies, the Church of England seemed to be following some other lead, and the clearly political and propagandistic pressure of American Episcopalians in the process was massive, and must be noted.

Even among writers and theologians of the Church of England, however, Nichols has made a significant selection. While Maurice Wiles and Don Cupitt are clearly major examples of what Nichols calls "Contemporary Theological Radicalism," exactly how representative are they of modern Anglican theology? This question is all the more striking when one notices the absence, or scant mention, of so many other notable Anglican theologians. Eric Mascall, whom Nichols acclaims as a "separated doctor," is occasionally quoted when speaking about some other author, but is not considered as a theologian himself; Austin Farrer is dismissed as eccentric. Archbishop Ramsey is relegated to a footnote on p. 128, and dismissed because of "his role in the abandonment of a classical Christian understanding of the moral life (especially in matters of personal and family morality) while Archbishop of Canterbury," which is a confusing reference to anyone unfamiliar with British politics in the 1960s. Ramsey is excluded, not for anything he wrote, but rather because the author disapproves of his political positions. Bishop Frank Weston, and his part in the Christological and ecclesiological contro-

versies of the first part of this century, is not even mentioned. Archbishop Temple is mentioned in passing with regard to the Archbishops' Committee on Doctrine in the Church of England, but without a word concerning his own theological writings. Among contemporary scholars, Brian Hebblethwaite and Keith Ward are noted primarily as opponents of Cuppitt and Wiles, and not in their own right. While the list of those omitted is bound to be much longer than the list of those included, the fame and weight of scholarship of those left out causes the reader to question the principles for selection.

Those principles are not far to be sought. This book appeared not long after the vote by the Church of England to admit women to the ministerial priesthood, and (particularly in its concluding chapter) has much more importance as a critique of the Church of England's claim to be "both Catholic and Reformed" in the context of modem events, than it has as a dispassionate, scholarly history of Anglican thought. The foreword, by Graham Leonard, former (Anglican) Bishop of London and recently conditionally (re)ordained in the Roman Catholic Church, and the conclusion, by the author, both make a strong plea for a place in the Roman Catholic Church for whatsoever is true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report in Anglicanism. "An Anglican Church united with Rome but not absorbed" (in the words of Cardinal Mercier) is suggested as an appropriate, and almost necessary, response to the anticipated hoards of Anglicans knocking on the doors of the Catholic Church. Fleeing the disintegration of their former home, these exiles can be welcomed "with a religious metaphysic drawn from the Cambridge Platonists, ... a doctrinal and sacramental ethos taken from the Restoration divines, . . . and a missionary spirit borrowed from the Evangelical movement-the whole to be confirmed and, where necessary, corrected by acceptance of the framework of the Roman Catholic communion."

It is thus in Nichols's interest to portray Anglicanism as having wandered far from its roots in a land that is waste, plagued by internecine struggle and characterized by a lack, not only of a sense of direction, but even by a sense of where it is. Nichols's account of the influence of Thomas Aquinas on Richard Hooker, and even Charles Gore on Hans Urs von Balthasar, displays a sense of the integrity of the faith once delivered to the saints which is lacking in the contemporary radicalism plaguing the communion. The villain in this plot is Erastianism: the Reformation was a State Act and a Bad Thing, the ministers of the Church of England must also be officers of state, etc. While Erastianism is partly to blame (and is the standard and rather hackneyed criticism of Anglicanism by Roman Catholics), it cannot be a complete explanation of the current state of the Anglican communion. It is clearly untrue that the Church of England believes it is, as the humorous characterization goes, "The Department of State for Religious Affairs." This is not only the case in the present age; Archbishop Sancroft, in the seventeenth century, is mentioned by Nichols for his important part in the Nonjuror controversy,

but his opposition to James II (which is, ecclesiologically, even more important) is not even mentioned. And if Church and State must be clearly and definitively separate, then we must reject not only "Erastian" Angelican, but most of Roman Catholic and all of Orthodox history. Here the position of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America is instructive, for it is the first Anglican Church which was not an established church. One wonders whether it may be that the Church of England has avoided (or withstood) many of the corrosive agents which have eaten away much of the Episcopal Church precisely because of its relationship to the state. Parliament has pulled the Church of England's irons out of the fire more than once, a safety feature missing from the American Anglican experience.

Nichols also appears to warn his Roman Catholic co-religionists that this path Anglicanism is now treading (or sliding) may be in store for them if they are not careful: "the problems caused by theological pluralism throughout Anglican history have begun to be felt more keenly in other confessions, not least the Catholic.... The inhibition of the emergence of church parties, and the resolute affirmation of what is common to Catholic faith and practice, is the main pastoral desideratum of the contemporary Church of Rome-and it is one for which the development of varieties of Anglican Churchmanship offers an instructive warning." The polemic is never very far from the surface.

The book does not tell Anglicans anything they do not know already. Stephen Sykes's 1978 work on *The Integrity of Anglicanism* made many of the same points, and in a markedly less hostile fashion. Writing a "theological history" (a term which presents its own problems) of a communion of which one is not a member is a difficult business; even with the very best of intentions (and Nichols, a convert himself, displays quite a bit of fondness for much of the Anglican tradition), the work is still an external examination of something which even those who are inside it cannot classify.

The book does not tell Roman Catholics anything they cannot guess. One recent reviewer pointed out that "behind [Nichols's] clarity of exposition, there is a desire for another sort of clarity, a religious clarity." A failure of this book may be that the author cannot help writing it with one eye on his own church, and thus cannot give full attention to his subject. Almost all of the reviews written on this book in its first few months of publication were written by Anglicans, normally in a tone of outrage, warning that most Roman Catholics would really prefer to be more like Anglicans if they could (maintaining internal contradictions, and fostering church parties). Nichols's book is a significant notice that many Anglicans, true to their own tradition, would really prefer to be more like Roman Catholics. The events since the publication of this book seem to be bearing him out, rather than the reviewers.

At the launching party for this book, held in Newman's library at Littlemore (and a few feet from the chapel in which Newman and his companions were received into the Roman Catholic Church), the contemporary setting of this historical work was made quite clear. Bishop Leonard gave the

featured address, and Nichols spoke briefly of his book and particularly of the Anglican Uniate jurisdiction suggested in the concluding chapter. A correspondent for *The Tablet,* sitting in the front row and sputtering (occasionally calling out "rubbish!") during Fr. Nichols's remarks, virtually ignored the address by Bishop Leonard and blasted Fr. Nichols in his column the following week. In some ways the event is a commentary on the book: Anglicans feel it is telling them that all of their problems will be solved if they become Catholics, and Catholics fear it is warning them that if they do not toe the line they will wind up like Anglicans; and the book is, in reality, doing neither.

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*Ratwnal Faith: Catlwlic Responses to Rejorm£d Epistemology.* Edited by LINDA ZAGZEBSKI. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1993. Pp. 272. $32.95 (cloth).

"The hidden things of God," St. Paul writes, "can be clearly understood from the things that he has made." The question of whether this understanding requires the use of natural reason is a central issue in this book. Linda Zagzebski, Professor of Philosophy at Loyola Marymount University, assembles nine essays authored by philosophers well-versed in both Anglo-American philosophy and Catholicism to respond to Christian philosophers in the Calvinist tradition (e.g., Alvin Plantinga, Nicholas Wolterstorff, and George Mavrodes) who have argued that the rationality of religious belief is separate from the allegedly problematic arguments for God's existence. The collection is important both for the questions is raises about reformed epistemology and for the new directions it suggests in defending natural theology.

In "The Foundations of Theism Again: A Rejoinder to Plantinga" Philip Quinn agrees with Plantinga that it is possible for some human beings to be within their epistemic rights in believing the following two propositions without recourse to the arguments of natural theology:

(1) God is speaking to me.
(2) God disapproves of what I have done.

Quinn concedes that there may be conditions in which such beliefs are "properly basic," i.e., not based on other beliefs and not supported by propositional evidence. According to Plantinga, such claims are grounded in experiences that, together with other circumstances, justify one in accepting them.

For example, upon reading the Bible, I may be impressed with a deep sense that God is speaking to me. This experience itself may provide the appropriate justification for my belief. For Plantinga, these properly held basic beliefs self-evidently entail the claim that God exists. Hence, natural theology is not necessary to secure the rationality of religious beliefs.

While Quinn agrees that it is possible that such beliefs are properly basic for believers in special situations, for most believers such beliefs are not properly basic. For instance, intellectually sophisticated adults in our culture could not take (1) or (2) as properly basic, since they are familiar with the tradition stemming from Feuerbach and Freud of explaining theistic belief projectively. This possibility provides a sufficiently substantial reason to reject these properly basic beliefs, i.e., to think that potential defeaters of these religious claims are true.

Plantinga has responded that the theist can have intrinsic defeaters of a defeater like the one that Quinn considers. An intrinsic defeater-defeater is a basic belief that has more by way of warrant than some of its potential defeaters. Plantinga writes,

> When God spoke to Moses out of the burning bush, the belief that God was speaking to him, I daresay, had more by way of warrant for him than would have been provided for its denial by an early Freudian who strolled by and proposed the thesis that belief in God is merely a matter of neurotic wish fulfillment. ("The Foundations of Theism: A Reply," in *Faith and Philosophy* 3 (1986]: 312).

But, having a deep sense that God is speaking to me upon reading the Bible does not carry with it the warrant that having the experience of being spoken to out of a burning bush does. While Moses may have had an intrinsic defeater of defeaters, Quinn correctly observes that the ordinary believer lacks such defeaters of defeaters. According to Quinn, natural theology could play the role of an extrinsic defeater of such challenges to basic beliefs. If there is a sound argument for the existence of God and the theist bases belief in God on that argument, belief in God will come to have a great deal of warrant for the theist. Although natural theology is not necessary for rationally justified theism *simpUciter*, it may, in fact, be necessary for the vast majority of believers who are not blessed with experiences like Moses.

In recent years Plantinga has progressed from arguing for the rationality of religious belief to arguing for the possibility of knowing that there is such a person as God independently of any natural theological arguments ("The Prospects for Natural Theology," in *Philosophical Perspectives 5: Philosophy of Religion*, ed. James Tomberlin [Ridgeview Press, 1991]).

In "Is Natural Theology Necessary for Theistic Knowledge?" John Greco argues that Plantinga's definition of knowledge is mistaken. Plantinga defines knowledge as true belief that has warrant. According to Plantinga, a belief B has warrant for believer S if and only if B is produced in S by his epistemic faculties working properly in an appropriate environment and insofar as the relevant segment of a good design plan is directly aimed at producing true

beliefs *(Warrant and Proper Function* [Oxford University Press, 1993], 46-47). Greco offers the following counterexample to refute Plantinga's account of knowledge:

> Consider Mary, who is in most respects a normal human being. The relevant difference is that Mary's cognitive faculties produce the belief in her that there is a tiger nearby whenever there is a tiger nearby, and even when Mary does not see, hear or otherwise perceive a nearby tiger. Mary's brain is designed so as to be sensitive to an electromagnetic field emitted only by tigers, thus causing her to form the relevant belief in the appropriate situation. We can imagine that this cognitive feature was designed by a natural processes of evolution.... Now suppose that a tiger is walking nearby, and that Mary forms the appropriate belief. Add that Mary has no evidence that there is a tiger in the area, nor any evidence that she has such a faculty. Rather, she has considerable evidence against her belief that there are tigers in the area. Clearly, Mary's belief that there is a tiger nearby does not have a high degree of positive epistemic status in this situation, ... Mary does not *know* that there is a tiger nearby. (176)

I believe Plantinga's account of knowledge is not falsified by this counterexample, since his account envisions a defeater system integral to warrant (see *Warrant and Proper Function,* 41-42). A defeater system is a procedure whereby reasons for not believing certain claims are evaluated. If no other human being except Mary has this faculty for tiger-detecting, then the evidence against her belief that there is a tiger nearby counts as a defeater for Mary. In that situation Plantinga would concede that Mary does not know that a tiger is nearby. On the other hand, if all humans had this faculty, then there would not be evidence against her belief, since the other humans in her party would share her belief. In that case there would be no defeater and Plantinga would agree that Mary knows that a tiger is nearby.

Although Thomas Sullivan's article, "Resolute Belief and the Problem of Objectivity," aims at constructing a response to the charge that the religious believer is immoral since she fails to proportion her belief to the evidence, one of his arguments may be construed as an attempt to falsify Plantinga's account of knowledge. Sullivan argues that if Plantinga's definition of knowledge is correct, then many sincere Christians will have no right to cling to their faith. He notes that many Christians disagree on substantive points. For example, Virginia may believe that the Eucharist is the real presence of Jesus Christ, but George believes the Eucharist is only a symbol of Christ's love. George understands the scriptural words differently from Virginia. For the sake of argument, Sullivan assumes that Virginia is wrong. On Plantinga's definition of knowledge it looks as if Virginia has no right to her belief, since by hypothesis her cognitive faculties are not operating properly as designed by God. Hence she does not know this claim and cannot be warranted in believing it. So, many Christians will be violating their epistemic duty by believing various faith claims.

If Sullivan believes that Plantinga's definition of knowledge by itself entails that many sincere Christians will have no right to cling to their faith, then he is mistaken, for a definition of knowledge by itself cannot entail a

claim about epistemic obligation. Sullivan must be saying something like the following: If Plantinga's account of knowledge is true and one has knowledge if and only if one is deontologically justified, then many sincere Christians will have no right to cling to their faith. One is deontologically justified, if one has not flouted one's epistemic duty, and if one has done no more than is permitted by epistemic obligation. Once this assumption is spelled out, however, it is easy to see that Plantinga's definition of knowledge as warranted true belief is not affected by Sullivan's argument, for the deontological sense of justification is not part of Plantinga's concept of warrant (See *Warrant: The Current Debate* [Oxford University Press, 1993], 44-47). Plantinga argues that deontologic justification is neither necessary nor sufficient for warrant. Therefore, Plantinga would not agree that the lack of warrant in Virginia's claim entails that she is not in her epistemic rights to believe that claim.

But if these arguments do not overturn Plantinga's notion of knowledge as proper function, the question of what deontologically justifies a believer in failing to proportion his belief to the evidence still remains. If knowing a proposition does not entail a deontic justification for believing the proposition, then there must be some other condition added to knowledge that makes it within one's right to believe the claims of faith. Presumably, Plantinga's answer is that these beliefs are properly basic. But if Quinn's worries are correct, most believers cannot count their beliefs as "properly basic." What about the epistemic obligations of these believers?

Sullivan turns to John Henry Newman's work for an answer. To show that a believer is within her rights to believe resolutely without a proof or near proof of the faith claim Sullivan adduces two principles he finds in Newman:

> (0) Acts indispensable to an obligatory end are themselves obligatory.
> (DS) If someone believes there is a better case for than against (1) an end being obligatory and (2) an act being indispensable for achieving that end, then that act is obligatory for that person.

So if I believe that there is a better case for my obligation to unite myself to God than there is against such an obligation, and the act of believing firmly in a divine message is a necessary means of achieving this union with God, then along with (0) and (DS) above, it follows that I have an obligation to believe the divine message. Once we untangle deontic justification from warrani, Sullivan's account of justification can complement Plantinga's externalist conception of knowledge as warrant.

Another essay that points epistemology in new directions is Linda Zagzebski's "Religious Knowledge and the Virtues of the Mind." She argues that knowledge is a property of the believer, rather than a property of belief, since knowledge is true belief grounded in epistemic virtue. Epistemic virtues are habitual processes that reliably lead to the formation of true beliefs and that are consciously motivated by a love of the truth.

While the focus on believers rather than beliefs can illumine ways to become better knowers, I am not sure that the account clarifies knowledge. It

does not seem correct to say that we have knowledge of a claim only if we have epistemic virtue. For example, Aristotle believed that a person could do a just action without having the moral virtue of justice (see *NU:omachean Ethi.cs* 11.4). Similarly, it would seem possible for a person to know a proposition without epistemic virtue.

Not all the essays concern natural theology. Ralph Mclnerny's "Reflections on Christian Philosophy" treats readers to a review of the fascinating debate among French Thomists in the early 1930s on the question of whether there is a Christian philosophy. In "Cognitive Finality" James Ross proposes that the mechanism by which assent is produced in the absence of compelling evidence is tational reliance, which includes reliance on other people.

Because of the high quality of the essays Zagzebski has collected, this book will likely become a valuable reference point as both Catholics and Protestants discuss the rationality of faith.

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*The Feminist Question: Feminist Theology in the Light of Christian Tradition.* By FRANCIS MARTIN. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1994. Pp. xviii + 461. $ 29.99 (paper).

It has been nearly forty years, by the author's reckoning, since the beginning of feminist theology, and it has now become an established school of thought within the guild of professional theologians. But feminism itself is much older, a nineteenth-century movement for the emancipation of women. Already that "first wave" of women's suffrage was not without its religious aspect. The *Womens Bible,* for instance, is evidence of early feminism's simultaneous attachment to and critique of the Christian tradition and its scriptures. In both the late-twentieth and the late-nineteenth centuries, however, feminist Christianity has been largely an American, and Protestant phenomenon. Its matrix was the combination of philosophical liberalism with that evangelical activism meant to ameliorate or combat the evils of industrializing America. As other ethnic and religious groups-Jews, Catholics, Eastern Orthodox-have joined the mainstream of American life, activist and feminist movements have formed within them, too.

Based upon the first wave of feminism, three more recent factors have provided, since 1960, the "moment" for feminist theology, and the subject for Martin's book. The first factor is the continuation and extension of this older, American and Anglo-American movement for social betterment. The second is the critical theology and Biblical scholarship originally coming from

Europe. The third is the series of social and religious upheavals occurring since the Second World War, in which middle-class women have by joining the workforce and participating in the sexual revolution gained a sense of both equality with, and similarity to, men.

These changes have resulted in a very broad challenge to classical Christian theology and the churches defined by it, whether Protestant, Catholic, or Orthodox. Feminist analysis, trained on the history, structure, function, and thought of the churches, has identified inequities-many of them real and intolerably galling-that had been accepted as "natural." Feminist theology, proceeding from a liberationist perspective, has pressed for religious involvement in progressive or revolutionary political movements. Operating with the hermeneutic of suspicion and emphasizing "women's experience" as a basis for evaluating the churches and their theologies, it has relativized the basic texts and interpretations of its own traditions. As criteria for the truth of feminist thought, revelation and theology often have come to occupy second and third place behind the criteria of the experience of women. At its most thorough, feminism has produced spinoff groups which are virtually new and hybrid religions.

*The Feminist Question* has placed this long development of feminism in a wider context, in an effort to listen carefully to the genuinely serious questions that feminist theology poses to contemporary Christian theology. Indeed, one of the strengths of this peaceable book is its evenhanded treatment of this development. Francis Martin, a Biblical scholar, is not a participant in the enterprise of feminist theology. But neither is he a thoroughgoing detractor of it. The book's goal, he states, is to "contribute to church unity," and "to attempt to distinguish what is true from what is false in the feminist question." This means, of course, that a higher criterion must topple the category of experience; for this, Martin returns to the patristic period and its conception of the experience of knowing God *within* the tradition.

*The Feminist Question* seeks an audience far wider than the guild of contemporary professional theologians. He addresses feminists, of course, and the classically liberal theologians who have been receptive to their interpretations. But another potential audience is that to whom feminist theology is not self-evident, hut must be explained. Evangelicals, Catholics, and Orthodox Christians in America are the groups whose unity depends upon common acknowledgement of an authoritative tradition, and of teaching rooted in the tradition. Martin wishes to sift feminist theology using their criteria, in order to retain feminist questions and insights *within* the long tradition of Christian theology.

To that end he provides this handbook, which divides into two unequal parts. The first five chapters sketch out, not merely the development of feminism, but the development and direction of theology in the West from the patristic period through postmodemism as a way of finding a perspective from which to view feminist theology. The second portion of the book, chapters six

through twelve, takes on the questions of foundational hermeneutics before turning to the problematic areas of Trinitarian theology, the nature and structure of the church, and human nature itself; the last two chapters, indeed, are devoted to a discussion of "the body person" in antiquity and in modernity. Throughout the book, Martin considers the feminist question to be "the movement toward a more adequate expression of the dignity and rights of women within the Christian community."

But that is Martin's question, framed in a way that is far-more limited than most feminist theologians would recognize. Feminists will not need long to discover that this recasting of the question does not include the discovery of new truths and language to name God, or the amplification of the Biblical text by means of the speculative recollection of female roles neglected or obscured by the dominant tradition. This book, and probably the great majority of its readers, will remain outside the circle of feminist theology. This alone, however, could make it a valuable contribution to the contemporary discussion. To a large degree the book is really an exercise in sympathetic listening, an attempt to engage in conversation in which feminist theology can be heard in a critical, but not hostile, setting.

But it is the setting, and the parent, of feminist theology that is so flawed, according to Martin. The father of feminist theology is the late-medieval scholasticism out of which developed most of Western theological thought, Catholic and Protestant alike. Martin considers Western theology to have become narrowed and limited not long after Thomas Aquinas. From the first through the thirteenth centuries, theology lived in a "precritical" state. It was a long accumulation and growth of reflection upon the Bible and upon the faith of the church. Ideally, it grew from a "living and personal knowledge of God" gained through reflection upon the rule of faith, the sacraments, and prayer; it was "a knowing discourse about God based on converse with him."

This kind of theology, at once a mode of life and a way of prayer and thought dependent upon intellectual and spiritual receptivity to the divine life and its energies, lasted through Thomas Aquinas. According to Martin's schema, the disposition of the theologian and the elements of theology altered beginning with Peter Abelard and the Nominalists. Early modern and modern theology are seen as outgrowths of this change; after the Enlightenment critical theology has continued to demand a different kind of certitude. No longer based in the acquaintance with God about which patristic and early-medieval authors speak, it has assumed God to be theoretically unknowable and has turned to human experience and knowledge. According to Martin, early Christian and medieval theologians began with where modern theology has required epistemological precision. Thus arose its approach to the Scriptures, and its evaluation of the thinking subject. Common to both periods, however, was the assumption that human experience is a universal experience. In Christianity, God and the Christian life are

experienced in the same way by both genders, notwithstanding the occasional derogations of female capacity.

One of the distinguishing marks of feminist theology, though, is to insist on a *different* experience from that of men, and to propose that this experience and its differences radically qualify any presumed universal character of theology in any of its fields. This startling proposal that the human race is irremediably divided by sexual differences and subsequently by different understandings of the same words and traditions might have been expected to have disconcerted professional theologians more than it has done. But professional theology has often been domesticated by the academic setting in which it is performed, and ironically it has incorporated feminist theology as a subcategory of systematics.

But Martin refuses to domesticate the feminist proposal. He recognizes that its program is an extension of the modern foundationalist project:

> the result is that it has committed nearly all its resources in an effort to legitimate its foundation in women's experience or feminist consciousness. This seriously weakens many of its otherwise valuable insights and programs for actions, and it may result in its becoming so estranged from the rest of the Christian body that dialogue will be practically impossible.

Martin also criticizes feminist theology for carrying out a quest for new metaphors for God to fit the reported experience of women and to amplify the narrowly masculinized tradition. His argument is not against metaphor *per se*, of course, hut with the way in which new, feminist metaphors are both arbitrary and confusing. In feminist theology they often attain the same status as terms for God that come from the sources of revelation, preeminently, the Bible; thus they are both indefinitely expandable and also self-directed. They turn the attention of the theologian away from God and toward the self whom God must (it is assumed) reflect. Lost, according to Martin, is the power of the revealed text and its names for God.

Chapters nine through twelve of *The Feminist Question* set forth further analysis of feminist theology in the light of Trinitarian theology, ecclesiology, and anthropology. Here Martin takes the feminist critique into account as he attempts to make positive suggestions for future directions in theology. The description of God's fatherhood he attempts to rescue from the "androcentric" content of which it stands accused by showing the way in which the tradition, from the Old Testament through the formation of Nicene doctrine, has pictured the Father as source of the divine life and father for human beings, a being who wishes to he known and loved-not merely one who has been the projection of patriarchal society and a tool for its perpetuation.

The final three chapters of the hook try to develop an understanding of human rights within the church, and of human nature as complementarily male and female. The question regarding women's ordination is set within this theory of male and female complementarity. Here Martin tries to move beyond a sterile discussion of male and female roles to a consideration of why

the churches have had the intuition that the office of the priest should be occupied by men only. His sketch depends upon the previous discussion of men and women as human persons existing in relationship, but it is too short and allusive to be very helpful. Much more thought will have to be devoted to the subject of women and men as *human* before a revived theological anthropology can be of much help in discussions such as this. But Martin's approach in looking to the tradition, not for justifications but for reasons for the church's teaching on priestly ordination seems right. Retracing the steps of theological development in a properly theological way should inform discussions and decisions about priesthood and ministry. Ultimately, Martin thinks, secular legislation and developing social custom themselves are to be judged by the eschatological sign that is the life of the church, and not the other way around. The latter habit is to denature the church itself.

This is a helpful book. Martin is fair to his interlocutors, and genuinely curious about their aims and their work. The book has flaws that result from its size and ambitious scale, but those wishing a more thorough discussion of particular points are ably guided by means of the notes. As a map of the feminist question it is unique; and this itself makes it an invaluable guide to the larger theological agenda, which has now appropriated feminist theology, at least as a descriptive enterprise.

Martin's book attests to a sympathetic understanding of those with whom he sharply disagrees on the first principles of theology. His aim of reunifying churches, particularly the Catholic church, that are polarized by adoption or opposition to feminist theology, really springs from a quasi-patristic approach to the life of theology itself. As a footnote to this task the following quotation from the *Paidagogos (Christ the Educator)* of the third-century theologian Clement of Alexandria is appropriate:

> The virtue of man and woman is the same. For if the God of both is one, the master of both is also one ... and those whose life is common, have common graces and a common salvation; common to them are love and training .... [In the world to come] the rewards of this social and holy life, which is based on conjugal union, are laid up, not for male and female, but for man *(anthropos).*

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