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MARTIN LUTHER ON GRACE, LAW, AND MORAL LIFE: PROLEGOMENA TO AN ECUMENICAL DISCUSSION OF *VERITATIS SPLENDOR*

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I. INTRODUCTION

EVERY DISCUSSION of the relationship of Martin Luther's thought to moral life and moral discourse necessarily lies under the shadow of a long-standing tendency of the Lutheran theological tradition that has been well described by the Anglican moral theologian Oliver O'Donovan:

> The Lutheran tradition, which of all theological traditions has most strongly cherished the Pauline dialectic of law and gospel, has usually found it difficult to accept that an *ordered* moral demand can be, in and of itself, evangelical. The antithesis between Moses and Christ has been widened to encompass a total opposition between order and transcendence. The liberating activity of God is marked by its insusceptibility to characterization in terms of order, while order, even the order of creation, has been classed with law rather than gospel, and so assigned a purely provisional and transitory significance.[1]

The outcome is, as O'Donovan shows, that for most Lutheran theologians morality and grace are disjointed and even opposed themes; even when a normative moral order is affirmed-and most Lutheran theologians have in fact affirmed a normative moral order-that order is viewed as having nothing to do with the gospel. Moral order is necessary where grace is *absent:* it subjects the unruly flesh to a needful rough governance, and

[1] Oliver O'Donovan, *Resurrection and Moral Order: An Outline for Evangelical Ethics* (Grand Rapids, 1986), 153.

prepares the heart for grace by the stringency of its demands. But when grace arrives on the scene, moral order has reached its limit and termination; the gospel initiates a relationship between God and human beings which is not only *more* than moral, but altogether *other* than moral.

O'Donovan rightly pinpoints the divergence between grace and morality with the concept of *order:* for most Lutheran theologians, grace is grace precisely because it in no way seeks to put the life of the sinner "in order"-if it did so, it would be law, not grace. On the contrary, grace simply embraces the sinner in God's unconditional favor, an acceptance and affirmation that are wholly indifferent to right and wrong, good and evil, order and disorder.

It seems apparent, on the face of it, that between such a Lutheranism and *Veritatis Splendor* there can be no dialogue, only fundamental, principled opposition. The Pope declares that the gift of God's grace "does not lessen but reinforces the moral demands of love.... One can 'abide' in love only by keeping the commandments." [2] It seems clear that a Lutheranism that defines grace by its disconnection from and indifference to the moral could have no very interesting conversation with this teaching.

I want to suggest, however, that on this point, as on many others, Lutheranism's reception of Martin Luther's theology has been only partial, and in this case profoundly misleading. It is possible, and I shall argue preferable, to read Luther as proposing not the *separation* of grace from moral order, but their thorough *integration.* The morality that grace terminates, the law that the gospel overcomes, is precisely and specifically a moral order alienated from grace, a morality which is therefore alienated from the true end of human existence and can only issue in the twin evils of presumption and despair. Far from being indifferent to good and evil, order and disorder, the bestowal of God's grace through the gospel is for Luther the only true formation of the human heart, that which alone sets the heart truly in order.

Read in this way, I would suggest, Luther becomes an ecumenical resource and challenge for Lutherans and Catholics alike,

[2] *Veritatis Splendor* §24.

neither the patron saint of Lutheranism-as-usual nor the antithesis of authentic Catholicism. Despite his undeniable and extraordinary creativity, he stands in a tradition, with deep roots in the Fathers and especially, though not exclusively, the monastic writers of the Latin Middle Ages. We should read him as a highly original representative of this older theological tradition, who contributes to Lutheran-Catholic convergence precisely as a critic of the separation of grace and moral life that has more recently been persistent in both traditions, although in different ways.

The opposition between grace and moral order in standard Lutheranism has a dear historical origin: the tendency of Lutherans to take a particular existential situation, the situation of the penitent seeking absolution, as the exclusive interpretive context within which notions such as grace and commandment, law and gospel, are to be understood. It is easy to see how grace and moral order can be construed as antithetical to one another against this background. The penitent comes overtaxed by the demands of moral order, conscious of failure, anxious and self-condemning. What the penitent seeks is precisely to be *absolved*, that is, "cut loose" from the unmanageable burden imposed by the law, set free from the unendurable pressure of a demand which he or she cannot satisfy. In this context, the gospel, the word of absolution, the word of grace, inevitably appears as a word that forbids the law to destroy the conscience of the penitent. That is, the gospel is the word that sets a limit to the sway of the moral order and its demands, and just so brings the penitent into a relationship with God that is not defined by issues of demand and deserving, reward and punishment.

This is, of course, the famous "problem of the troubled conscience" which looms so large in nearly all modern Protestant interpretations of the Reformation. There is no doubt that there was a real pastoral problem of this sort in the sixteenth century, and that Luther's reforming theology owed much of its persuasiveness to its success in addressing it. The question is whether Luther in fact addresses this problem by developing the theology of grace in terms that are exhaustively defined by the experience of the troubled conscience. Lutheran theology has often assumed so, which is why the increasingly short supply of troubled

consciences in the twentieth century has seemed so threatening to Lutheran theologians.

I want to suggest an alternative possibility: Luther addresses the problem of the troubled conscience, not by making it the defining framework of his theology of grace, but by placing it within a broader framework, within a reading of the biblical story of creation, fall, and redemption. Luther's understanding of the relationship of grace and moral order, gospel and law, is not, therefore, exhausted by the simple conflict between the two in the experience of the penitent; that experience is itself part of a larger narrative, a complex story of divine purpose and its realization, and it is to this narrative context that we must look to understand his account of divine law and its place in the work of the gracious God.

Grace and moral order within a narrative of creation, fall, and redemption: what this most obviously adds to the picture is the dimension of creation, which is entirely absent from standard Lutheran oppositional accounts of law and gospel, moral order and grace. It is, I want to argue, from the perspective of creation, specifically the human being's creation in the image of God, that Luther affirms the *unity* of grace and the moral life, a unity that transcends and embraces the penultimate bitter opposition of law and gospel in the experience of the penitent sinner. It is only from this perspective, moreover, that we can make sense of the full complexity of Luther's account of the relationship between faith and good works in the life of the justified, a complexity which has not often been fully appreciated.

II. SIN, GRACE, AND ORIGINAL RIGHTEOUSNESS

Luther's most extensive exposition of the first three chapters of Genesis is found in the great *Commentary on Genesis* which occupied his teaching in the last decade of his life; the lectures on the first three chapters date from 1535.[3] In his exegesis of Genesis

[3] Except where otherwise noted, the citations of Luther are taken from D. *Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (Weimar, 1883ff.), hereafter referred to as *WA.* In a table-talk from the beginning of November 1536, Luther says that he must lecture in the morning on Noah's drunkenness (Genesis 9:21); this suggests that he must have finished the first three chapters in 1535. On dating, cf.

1:26, "Let us make the human creature to our image and likeness," Luther defines the "image" in terms of the "spiritual life" for which Adam was created: he was created "having a twofold life, animal and immortal, but the latter not yet revealed in full clarity, but in hope."[4] Adam lived a spiritual life from the moment of his creation, a spiritual life whose consummation would have been an ultimate transcending of the "animal" plane of existence altogether: "Moreover, the theologians rightly say that if Adam had not fallen through sin, then when the number of the saints had been completed, God would have translated them from an animal life to a spiritual life."[5]

While "spiritual life" thus contained within itself the certain hope of immortality, its heart was communion with God, the total attunement of all Adam's powers to love for God and trust in God:

> Therefore, I understand the image of God in this way: that Adam had it in his substance that he not only knew God and believed him to be good, but that he also lived a life that was entirely divine *[vitam vixerit plane divinam],* that is, he was without fear of death and all dangers, content with the grace of God.[6]

Two points about this definition need a bit more comment. First, Luther's talk of the image of God in terms of "an entirely divine life" and the grace of God is by no means merely incidental. There is more than sufficient evidence in the text that Luther is quite deliberately describing the image of God as *theosis,* the deification of the human creature by God's gracious love.[7] Thus

the editor's preface to *WA* 42:vii-xviii. The *Lectures on Genesis,* which were published in full only after Luther's death, are controversial; there have been (in my opinion exaggerated) claims in modern scholarship of tampering by the editors. But the exegesis of Genesis 1-11 was published in Luther's lifetime with his approval (and with a preface from his own hand); the exegesis of Genesis 1-3 may therefore be taken unproblematically as his own.

'WA 42:43.

'WA42:42.

[6] *WA* 42:47.

[7] On this text in the broader context of Luther's thought, see Simo Peura, "Die Teilhabe an Christus bei Luther," in Simo Peura and Antti Raunio, eds., *Luther und Theosis: Vergottlichung als Thema der abendliindischen Theologie* (Helsinki and Erlangen, 1990), 121-61. The contemporary Helsinki school of Luther interpreters has drawn attention to the importance of the *theosis-theme* in Luther; see Tuomo Mannermaa, "Theosis as a Subject of Finnish Luther Research," *Pro Ecclesia: A Journal of Catholic and Evangelical Theology* 4:37-48. I have examined the Christological roots of *theosis* in Luther's thought

immediately following this definition, Luther presents God as saying to our first parents: "Adam and Eve, you now live secure, you neither experience death nor see it; *this is my image, by which you live as God lives.* But if you sin, you shall lose this image and you shall die."[8] Likewise, says Luther, the special divine deliberation over the creation of Eve shows "that the human being is a unique creature, and is meant for *fpertinere ad]* participation in deity and immortality."[9]

This becomes even clearer when Luther interprets the image of God in which Adam and Eve were created by reference to the restoration of the image in Christ. Adam's life in the image of God already looked forward to a final consummation when the animal life he shared with the beasts would have been transcended in his translation to a purely spiritual life in God; in Christ, the hope of this consummated spiritual life has been restored to us, and thus we have begun to recover the *imago dei.* We may therefore understand the image of God at the beginning in terms of the beatitude now promised us in Christ, and this means understanding the image of God in terms of *theosis,* shared life with God by grace:

> However, the gospel now brings it about that the image is repaired. Intellect and will have indeed survived, but both have been exceedingly corrupted. Therefore the gospel brings it about that we are re-formed to that image, or rather to a better one, because we are reborn by faith to eternal life, or rather to the hope of eternal life, that we may live in God and with God, and be one with him, as Christ says.[10]

This is the heart of the image: "to live in God and with God, and to be one with him," and therefore, as Luther also says, "to be like God in life, righteousness, holiness, wisdom, etc."[11]

A second point may require somewhat more extended exposition: Luther's ecumenically notorious claim that Adam had this spiritual life, this deification by grace, "in his substance."

in "The Bread of Life: Patristic Christology and Evangelical Soteriology in Martin Luther's Sermons on John 6," *The St. Vladimir'sTheologicalQuarterly* 39:257-79.

[8] *WA* 42:47; my emphasis.

[9] WA42:87.

[10] WA 42:48.

[11] WA42:49.

Luther discusses this claim at length in terms of the traditional notion of *original righteousness,* which he identifies with the *imago dei;* his contention is that original righteousness was "truly natural" to Adam, so that "it was Adam's nature to love God, to trust God, to acknowledge God, etc."[12] This claim is ecumenically notorious because of its apparent implications for the significance of original sin, the *loss* of original righteousness: if original righteousness was part of Adam's nature, then original sin would seem to involve a transformation of the original created humanness into something else, in which what it means to be human has come to be defined by sin.

Protestants have often applauded this as authentic seriousness about human corruption, while Catholics have denounced it as Manichaean. Both parties have badly misunderstood Luther's position, because neither has been willing to entertain the possibility that Luther is thinking in essentially *traditional* terms. Luther's polemic against certain later medieval Scholastic views has been taken as evidence that his view is an innovation over against the whole preceding Christian tradition; thus certain of his formulae have been seized on and developed with very little attention to the detail of his own exposition of them. This is indeed, I believe, a crucial juncture in Luther's thought, and the failure of subsequent Protestant and Catholic polemics to grasp its significance has had catastrophic consequences precisely for the way in which the ecumenical problem of law and gospel, moral order and grace, has been defined.

The crucial question is surely in what sense Luther describes original righteousness, deification by grace, as part of Adam's "nature." Once this question is asked, moreover, as it almost never has been, the answer is not in fact difficult to determine. Luther writes:

> These things [loving, trusting, and acknowledging God] were natural in Adam just as it is natural for the eyes to receive light. But because, if you render an eye defective by the infliction of a wound, you would rightly say that its nature has been damaged, so after the human being has fallen from righteousness into sin, it is rightly and truly said that the nature is not whole *[integral* but

[12] WA42:124.

corrupted by sin. For as it is the nature of the eye to see, so it was the nature of reason and will in Adam to know God, to trust God, to fear God. Now since it is agreed that these things are lost, who would be so crazy as to say that things belonging to the nature *[naturalia]* are still whole?[13]

It should be sufficiently clear what Luther is doing here: he is speaking of Adam's "nature" in terms of its *finality,* in terms of the acts that are its *telos,* its fulfillment. "For as it is the nature of the eye to see, so it was the nature of reason and will in Adam to know God, to trust God, to fear God." The act of seeing is the finality proper to the eye, and in that sense its "nature"; in the same way, the acts of knowing, trusting, and fearing God constitute the finality proper to the human mind and will, and in this sense original righteousness was "Adam's nature."

Luther's habit of speaking about natures in terms of their finality is, it should be noted, quite deliberate; we do not need merely to infer that this is what he is doing, he tells us so. In his exegesis of Genesis 2:21, the story of Eve's creation from Adam's rib, Luther argues that the distinctively theological knowledge of creatures, the knowledge of creatures provided by Holy Scripture, is a knowledge precisely in terms of efficient and final causality. Apart from Holy Scripture, he says, "all our understanding or wisdom is located exclusively in the knowledge of the material and formal cause, although with respect to these too we are subject to many shameful delusions."[14] The philosophers have some knowledge of the formal principles of human nature, and some understanding of the material substance of the human body. But the source and purpose of our lives can only be known from the word of God:

Therefore let us learn that true wisdom is in the Holy Scripture and in the word of God. For it teaches not only about the matter, not only about the form, of the whole creation, but also about the efficient and final cause, about the origin and goal of all things: *who* has created us and *to what end* he has created. Without the knowledge of these two causes, our wisdom is not much different from that of the animals, who also make use of their eyes and ears, but are entirely ignorant of their origin and goal.[15]

[13] Ibid.
[14] WA42:93.
[15] WA42:94.

This is a constant view of Luther's, from as early as the *Lectures on Romans* of 1515-16; [16] thus when Luther talks about what is "natural" to the human creature in terms of *finality*, in terms of that for which God created humankind, he is being consistent with his own settled and explicit view of the theological knowledge of creatures.

The interpretation of Luther's thought on this point needs, therefore, to be brought out from under the shadow of the Flacian controversy. In the generation after Luther's death, the Lutheran theologian Matthias Flacius Illyricus taught that since the Fall, original sin has become the nature of the human creature, a position condemned in the *Formula of Concord.*[17] It is fair to suggest that Luther's account of original righteousness and original sin has almost always been read with primary reference to the controversy over Flacius's views. But if the reading of Luther given here is correct, then Luther and Flacius use the term "nature" in essentially different ways. Flacius does indeed seem to have taught that original righteousness was part of the substantial form of human nature, so that its loss left humankind with a different nature, one for which original sin is constitutive. Luther, by contrast, speaks of nature in terms of final, not formal, causality: the loss of the grace of original righteousness leaves humankind not with a different nature, formally considered, but with a nature permanently frustrated, unable to attain its own proper *telos.* Human nature is damaged and corrupted by original sin just as the nature of the eye is damaged and corrupted by a blinding wound: it cannot do what it was created to do, it cannot do what it is *good* for it to do.

This account, it should be noted, only makes sense if the formal principles of human nature remain unchanged: one would not say that an eye was "damaged" by blindness if it was so transformed that it was no longer an organ intended to receive light.

[16] Cf. the exegesis of Romans 8:19, *WA* 56:371ff.

[17] "If one wants to speak properly, a distinction must be made between our nature, as it has been created and preserved by God, in which sin dwells, and original sin itself, which dwells in our nature" *(Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration,* art. 1, para. 33, in *Die Bekenntnisscbriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche,* 11th ed. [Giittingen, 1992], 854-55). Hereafter cited as *BSELK.*

Flacius's view, that original sin is a constitutive principle of the nature of fallen humanity, leaves us with no reason to regret the loss of original righteousness except the external threat of damnation; if sin is an essential principle of our nature, then we cannot say that our nature is frustrated or corrupted by our inability to love and trust God. Luther's account is quite different: "The nature remains, to be sure, but it is corrupted in many ways, since confidence towards God is lost, and the heart is full of diffidence, fear, and shame." [18]

We can also see, from this perspective, why Luther rejects so vigorously the definition of original righteousness as a *donum superadditum,* a "gift added on" to created nature. Here again, it is important to pay close attention to the precise terms of his critique and not get sidetracked into misleading generalities about Luther and "Scholasticism." Luther describes the view he is rejecting in these terms:

> The Scholastics argue that original righteousness was not connatural, but a sort of ornament added to the human being as a gift, as though someone placed a wreath on a pretty girl. The wreath is certainly not part of the nature of the maiden, but something separate from her nature, which accrued from without and can be taken away again without damage to her nature. Thus they argue concerning human beings and demons that even if they have lost original righteousness, still the things that pertain to nature have remained pure, as they were constituted in the beginning. But this view, because it mitigates original sin, should be avoided like poison. [19]

What Luther is rejecting is the late medieval use of the notion of original righteousness as a "gift added on" in the service of extrinsicist views of nature and grace. That is, he is rejecting views according to which the communion with God granted by the grace of original righteousness is only extrinsically related to human nature, so that when original righteousness is lost, human nature simply returns to normal functioning. On the contrary, Luther wants to say, human nature "as it was constituted in the beginning" has and can have no other fulfillment, no other finality, than communion with God by grace. Losing grace,

[18] *WA* 42:125.
[19] *WA* 42:123-124.

therefore, we do not simply lose an adventitious and artificial ornamentation, like a girl losing a wreath; we lose precisely the normal and "natural" actualization of our human capacities, and are condemned to a life of futility.

As Luther's view of the relationship of created human nature and the grace of original righteousness emerges from this reading of the *Commentary on Genesis,* those who are familiar with the history of twentieth-century Roman Catholic theology may find themselves experiencing a bit of *deja vu.* Luther argues that the finality of human nature, the end for which we were created and in which we find our only possible fulfillment, is deifying communion with God: "to live in God and with God and to be one with him." The natural *telos* of our created nature cannot, therefore, be reached except by God's grace, for only grace can bring us into deifying communion with God. For this reason, the loss of the grace of original righteousness cannot be viewed as merely the loss of an extrinsic addition to normal human existence; it is the loss of the very possibility of normal human existence, since for the human creature normal existence *is* existence by grace.

It is surprising to begin with to find that Luther actually has an account of the relationship of nature and grace, since this whole pattern of thinking is widely assumed to be alien to his thought. But even more surprising, perhaps, is the character of his account: it turns out to be largely identical in substance with the teaching recovered in our own century, and described as the classical teaching of the western Augustinian tradition, by the great Roman Catholic scholar Henri Cardinal de Lubac.[20]

Three points of comparison are especially important. First, Luther's theology of the human creature in the image of God is plainly a version of what de Lubac called "the Christian paradox of the human creature": the finality or goal of our created nature cannot be attained by the innate powers of our nature but only by the help of God's merciful and undeserved grace, since the only

[20] See Henri de Lubac, *The Mystery of the Supernatural,* trans. Rosemary Sheed York: Herder, 1967).

goal which is actually appointed for us is to be deified, to be one with God, to love and trust God and thus to cling to him.[21]

Second, de Lubac's description of Augustine's way of talking about human nature, in terms of finality rather than form, matches Luther's procedure to the letter; as St. Thomas already pointed out, "Augustine speaks of human nature considered not with respect to its natural being *[in esse naturali]* but insofar as it is ordered to blessedness."[22]

Third, Luther and de Lubac are in a sense fighting the same opponent: a late-medieval construal of the relationship of nature and grace as purely extrinsic, so that the loss of original grace would in principle leave nature in a state of intact and indeed "normal" function. It is interesting that the villain of de Lubac's historical narrative tends to be Luther's old adversary, Cardinal Cajetan; for de Lubac, Cajetan is the most important originator of a catastrophic misreading of St. Thomas on nature and grace that led much of post-Reformation Scholasticism down essentially barren paths. At the same time, it is striking that de Lubac pays no sustained attention to the nominalist writers in whom Luther probably encountered this view, even though the *via moderna* surely seems a more likely seedbed for extrinsicism than the *via antiqua*.

In any event, if such commentators as de Lubac and Otto Herman Pesch are right about the authentic teaching of St. Thomas, then he and Luther are materially much closer at this crucial starting point than either Catholic or Protestant scholars have typically imagined. Luther does indeed reject certain conceptual moves that are to be found in Aquinas, but these moves arguably function quite differently in St. Thomas's thought than in the late-medieval extrinsicism that Luther has in view.

III. LAW IN THE CONTEXT OF NATURE AND GRACE

Now we are now in a position to consider how Luther's understanding of the law of God, the divine commandment, is related to and shaped by this underlying theology of nature and

[21] Ibid., chap. 6, entitled "The Christian Paradox of Man."

[22] St. Thomas Aquinas, *De spiritua/ibus creaturis*, a. 8, ad 1.

grace. We can begin to see this by considering his exegesis of Genesis 2:9 and 16, which deal with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and God's command that Adam not eat of it.

Luther is well aware of the importance of the issues implicit in these verses: here we have divine law, divine commandment, prior to the entry of sin into the world, and this raises fundamental questions about the very idea of law, especially for a theology in which the accusing law that exposes sin plays such a large role. Indeed, Luther writes that he was once "harassed" by a "fanatic spirit" who argued thus: St. Paul says that no law is laid down for the righteous. Adam was righteous. Therefore this was not a law or commandment but only an admonition: God urged but did not command Adam to refrain from eating of the tree of knowledge. But St. Paul also says that where there is no law, there is no transgression; therefore Adam and Eve did not sin when they ate of the fruit of the tree. Thus there is no original sin.

Notice that this is precisely the sort of antinomian logic to which modern Lutherans have been especially attracted. Law has no role except as the accuser and tormentor of the sinful conscience; there could thus be no place for law and commandment in the sinless and grace-filled relationship of God to unfallen humanity. The further ironical consequence, that, since a gracious God would never impose commandments on us in the first place, the notion of sin finally falls altogether by the wayside, has perhaps also not been unfamiliar to either Catholics or Protestants in recent times.

It is important therefore that Luther simply rejects the logic of this argument, which fails to make the proper distinctions: "Adam after sin is not the same person as before sin in the state of innocence, and yet they make no distinction between the law promulgated before and after sin."[23] We will return to this connection between the change in Adam and the change in the law, but what is immediately significant is Luther's affirmation that there was law and commandment, properly so-called, in the state of innocence, before sin's entry on the scene. Luther points out

[23] *WA* 42:82.

that according to Scripture commandments are given even to the good angels:

> These are truly commandments which are proposed to an innocent nature. In the same way, Adam here is given a commandment by the Lord before sin, not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; he would have done this willingly and with the greatest pleasure, if he had not been deceived by Satan.[24]

The notion of law is, in effect, analogical; the concept does not have exactly the same meaning before and after sin, but in either case it is used properly.

What was the purpose of the law given to innocent Adam? Luther's answer is of considerable importance for his theology of the law as a whole:

> And so when Adam had been created in such a way that he was, so to speak, drunk with joy towards God, and rejoiced also in all other creatures, then there was created a new tree for the distinction of good and evil, so that Adam might have a definite sign of worship and reverence towards God. For since all things had been handed over to him, so that he might enjoy them at his will, whether for necessity or pleasure, God finally required of Adam that at this tree of the knowledge of good and evil he demonstrate reverence and obedience towards God, and that he observe this as an exercise of the worship of God, that he not taste anything from this tree.[25]

The commandment is not given to Adam so that he might *become* a lover of God by keeping it; Adam already *is* a lover of God, "drunk with joy towards God," by virtue of his creation in the image of God, by the grace of original righteousness. The commandment is given, rather, in order to allow Adam's love for God to take form in an historically concrete way of life. Through the commandment, Adam's joy takes form in history as *cultus Dei*, the concrete social practice of worship.

Thus Luther begins his comment on the commandment not to eat of the tree of knowledge "Haec est institutio ecdesiae" ("This is the foundation of the church").[26] That is, the commandment makes possible the concrete enactment in visible social practice of

[24] WA 42:83.
[25] *WA* 42:71.
[26] *WA* 42:79.

Adam's identity as lover of God. Indeed, Luther imagines that, had our first parents not fallen, the tree of knowledge would have been the church of paradise in quite a literal sense. The tree of knowledge, or perhaps a grove of trees of that kind, would have been the gathering-place for Adam and his descendants on the Sabbath, where "Adam would have proclaimed the supreme blessing that he was created along with his descendants in the image of God." The commandment conferred on unfallen humanity an "external place, ritual, word, and cult" which would have given human life a historically embodied focal point "until the predetermined time was fulfilled, when they would have been translated into heaven with the greatest pleasure."[27]

The importance of this cannot be overstated, particularly in view of conventional Lutheran assumptions: here Luther is describing a function of divine law, divine commandment, which is neither correlative with sin nor antithetical to grace; indeed, it presupposes the presence of grace and not sin. This function of the divine commandment is, moreover, its original and proper function. The fundamental significance of the law is thus neither to enable human beings to attain righteousness nor to accuse their sin, but to give concrete, historical form to the "divine life" of the human creature deified by grace.

It is from this perspective that we can begin to understand Luther's statement that the meaning of the law changes before and after sin, precisely because *Adam* changes: "Adam after sin is not the same person as before sin in the state of innocence." The commandment is given originally to a subject deified by the grace of original righteousness, a subject living as the image of God; it calls for specific behaviors as the concrete historical realization of the spiritual life of the deified, God-drunken human being. What happens after sin comes on the scene is simply that this subject presupposed by the commandment is no longer there; the commandment no longer finds an Adam living an "entirely divine life," "drunk with joy towards God," but rather an Adam who has withdrawn from God, who believes the devil's lies about God and therefore flees and avoids God. It is precisely the anomaly of this

[27] *WA* 42:80.

situation that causes the commandment to become, in Luther's terms, "a different law" *(alia lex).*[28]

IV. How THE LAw BECOMES A PRISON ...

What happens when the law, which originally proposed certain patterns of behavior as the appropriate historical concretion of grace-given love for God and all creatures, now encounters a human being who has departed from God and flees God?[29] Luther suggests that there are two possibilities.

On the one hand, it is possible in this situation for the sinful human creature to *separate* the commandments of God from their larger context in God's gracious purpose; more specifically, this means focusing on the particular behaviors called for or forbidden in the law, while forgetting or ignoring the fact that the law presupposes a graced and deified subject. When the law is thus abstracted from its place within the relationship of nature to grace, it becomes what Luther calls the *lex literae,* the law understood as "letter" or external code. The law thus understood is a law fundamentally misunderstood, a law fundamentally distorted by the distorted perceptions of sinful human beings.

This distortion of the law into an external code has three dimensions.[30] First, the commandment of God came to Adam in the state of innocence as a gift of a concrete form of life appropriate to his existence as a deified lover of God and all creatures; in a surprisingly "Barthian" turn of phrase, Luther says that the commandment was "gospel and law" for Adam and Eve in the state of innocence. When sinful humans distort the law into an external code, however, the commandments are experienced as sheer demands which simply stand over against us; in the Pope's language, we no longer discern the relationship between the

[28] *WA* 42:83.

"For a very different departure, which nonetheless seems to me to undergird the basic conclusions reached here, see the Finnish scholar Antti Raunio's study of Luther's understanding of the Golden Rule: *Summe des christlichen Lebens: Die "Go/dene Regel" als Gesetz der Liebe in der Theologie Martin Luthers von 1510 bis 1527* (Helsinki, 1993).

[30] Here I draw on Otto Hof's excellent description of the *lex literae* in "Luthers Lehre von Gesetz und Evangelium," in Hof, *Schriftauslegung und Rechtfertigungslehre: Aufsiitze zur Theologie Luthers* (Karlsruhe, 1982), 75-108, here 79-82.

commandments and our freedom, precisely because we have rejected the grace that orients our freedom to its true goal, the love of God and all his creatures.

Second, because the law understood as external code loses its connection with grace, it loses both its unity and its inner dimension of depth. It appears as a mere bundle of demands and prohibitions related to external behavior: do this, don't do that. Understood in this way, Luther says, it is perfectly possible for sinners to fulfill the law: none of the external behaviors commanded in the law are impossible for us. "There is no human being on earth who cannot keep all the commandments in some degree."[31] God *uses* the law thus misconstrued to prevent the human community from falling into utter destruction; the law understood as external code is the basis of the so-called civic or political use of the law. But it is nonetheless clear that this is a mode of observance of the commandments that is fundamentally irrelevant to the real purpose and point of the divine law, because it ignores the relationship of the law to the perfection of nature by grace.

Third, because the law understood as external code presents us with a mere bundle of injunctions, it is inevitably abused as a means of self-justification. The commandment was originally addressed to a human subject who was already righteous by grace; when this is forgotten, the notion is almost irresistible that we can make ourselves righteous by fulfilling the "letter" of the law, by conforming our bodily and mental behavior externally to its demands. What this means is a catastrophic misunderstanding of the very idea of "righteousness." For Adam in the state of innocence, as for the redeemed in Christ, "righteousness" means grace-given, deifying friendship and communion with God; it means being drunk with joy towards God and rejoicing in all God's creatures. By contrast, says Luther, the works-righteous "think that righteousness is only a moral matter *[tantum rem moralem]."*[32] Note that Luther does not deny that righteousness contains a moral dimension; what he objects to is its definition in terms that are *only* moral, in terms of a morality abstracted from

[31] *WA* 1:399.

[32] *WA* 40/1:413.

grace and from the deifying fulfillment of human existence by grace.

This reception of the law of God as a mere external code is typical for sinful humanity; not only the law of Moses (as in Jesus' critique of the Pharisees), but also the natural law, is subject to this distortion. Following St. Paul and much of the Christian tradition, Luther believes that the law of God is inscribed in the heart of every human being, but it is written in the heart of the sinner only *objective,* "objectively," that is, it is present as a objective moral given with which we must reckon. Luther distinguishes this from the Holy Spirit's inscription of the law in our hearts *formaliter,* which should probably be translated "formatively," that is, in such a way that the will of God expressed in the law actually becomes the form of our existence.[33] Thus the natural law inscribed in the sinful heart is likewise distorted into an interior "letter," a kind of code that remains "external" to us even when it is inscribed within the heart.

The alternative to this distortion of the law into an external code is what Luther calls the "spiritual" understanding of the law. When the law is understood spiritually, it is understood truthfully, that is, in its relationship to the perfection of nature by grace. This means that one who understands the law spiritually remembers that all God's commandments presuppose a subject deified by grace, a human being who is drunk with joy toward God and rejoices in all God's creatures. This is after all precisely what Jesus teaches: the law and the prophets hang on the double commandment of love, the commandment to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength and our neighbor as ourselves.

Luther's usual way of making this point is to talk of the relationship of all the commandments to the first commandment of the Decalogue: "I am the Lord your God; you shall have no other gods before me." Luther presents this as so to speak the primal commandment, the inner form and meaning of every commandment. Thus in the *Large Catechism* he writes, "The first commandment should shine and give its splendor to all the others. Thus you must let this one penetrate all the com-

[33] Cf. Raunio, *Summe des christlichen Lebens,* 297-304, and the texts assembled there. Raunio's treatment of Luther's theology of the natural law breaks important new ground.

mandments like the clasp and the hoop in a wreath which joins the end to the beginning and holds everything together, so that it is always repeated and not forgotten. "[34] Following precisely the pattern which we have seen in his exegesis of Genesis, therefore, Luther argues that every other commandment is designed to give concrete historical form to the fear, love, and trust towards God called for in the first commandment.

This is constitutive of the meaning of every commandment: we cannot rightly understand what is called for by any commandment of God except in terms of the first commandment. Thus it is in a certain sense a misunderstanding of the divine commands to say that they demand particular behaviors; it is more accurate to say that they *demand* a heart that fears, loves, and trusts God, and that they *offer* such a heart the concrete form of life appropriate to it. This is by no means to say that the concrete behaviors are therefore optional; it is hardly possible to fear, love, and trust God and at the same time refuse to enact this fear, love, and trust as he enjoins. Luther's point is rather that talk of particular behaviors, though necessary, is never sufficient to describe the content of any divine commandment. Every commandment implicitly but also intrinsically calls for a particular sort of *person*, a particular mode of human existence within which the specific behaviors also called for can play their proper role.[35] Or as Luther likes to put it, God's law demands not only "works," but hearts:

> You must not understand the little word "law" in a human way, as though it taught what sort of works to do or not do, as in the case of human laws, where one can satisfy the law with works even though the heart is not engaged. God judges according to the ground of the heart *[des hertzen grund],* and so his law also calls for the ground of the heart and cannot be satisfied with works, but

" *BSELK,* 643.

[35] The nominalists also held that grace was required to keep the law in a way that pleases God. But for Biel and others, the infusion of grace does not change the species of acts performed by the human subject; grace is thus not intrinsically called for by what the law enjoins but is required by God as a consequence of sin. Indeed, in a sense, the necessity of grace is part of the punishment of sin, a consequence of the nominalist view that Luther thought abominable. Luther holds by contrast that each of the commandments demands a subject who loves and trusts God *secundum substantiam facti,* with respect to the substance of the act enjoined, not simply *secundum intentionem legislatoris,* as an additional stipulation of the lawgiver.

rather punishes works done without the ground of the heart as hypocrisy and deceit.[36]

Three further points about the spiritually understood law are of particular importance. First, the law understood spiritually is the law that *accuses,* the law that terrifies. The law as mere code does not terrify in any deep sense, for the bundle of injunctions with which it presents us is not beyond our power to fulfill. The spiritually understood law is what accuses and damns us, because it calls for a subject, an agent, who is no longer available. That is, it calls for an certain kind of person, a human creature who is drunk with joy towards God and rejoices in all God's creatures. As the German Lutheran scholar Otto Hof has put it, "The law demands from us a mode of being in which we do not stand and into which we cannot enter of ourselves."[37] I can, to be sure, refrain from particular crimes and perform particular works, but I do not even know how to begin becoming an entirely different person, a person who lives, moreover, in a way that I cannot imagine; yet it is this, finally, that God's commandment requires of me. In a very real sense, then, the spiritually understood law also encounters me as "letter," as external code--only in this case it is the "letter that kills" of which Paul speaks. That is, the spiritually understood law also stands over against me and imposes on me a demand that I cannot begin to satisfy: "Die and live again in an entirely different way. Become an entirely different sort of person."

Second, the reason we cannot enter of ourselves, by our own strength, into the mode of being which the law calls for is that the law calls for a person who lives and is deified by God's grace. There is thus a catch-22 here for the works-righteous. It is not that it would be a good thing in principle for us to be righteous by our own works, but that we have gotten too weak to pull it off; according to Luther, the term "righteous" in Christian theology means "dependent on God's grace." To be righteous by our own strength is thus a contradiction in terms; "righteousness"

[36] "Vorrede auf die Epistel S. Pauli an die Romer," in *Martin Luther: Studienausgabe,* vol. 1, ed. Hans-Ulrich Delius (Berlin, 1979), 391.

[37] Hof, "Luthers Lehre von Gesetz und Evangelium," 85.

means friendship and communion with God by grace, and it would mean this even if we had not fallen into sin. Thus, according to Luther, the law of God says to us, "I am spiritual, that is, I require a pure and spiritual heart. I am not satisfied by anything less than a cheerful heart and a spirit renewed by the Holy Spirit." [38] Here again we see Luther's refusal to define law and righteousness in moral terms alone; the moral dimension is present, but must be integrated into the larger context of human nature's elevation and fulfillment by God's grace. The meaning of the moral is to give concrete social form to the deified life of God's images in space and time; morality abstracted from grace can only invite presumption or impose despair. [39]

But, third, we must press this line of thought one step further. What does it mean concretely to say that the law of God calls for a subject who is drunk with the love of God and the creatures of God? Luther answers: within the concrete order of salvation, it means that the law of God calls for Jesus Christ. In his 1525 *Postil* for Epiphany and Lent, Luther writes that the law "calls for more than we are capable of, and it wants to have another person than we are, who can keep it."

> That is, it calls for Christ, and presses us towards him, so that we first become different people through his grace in faith, and become like him, and then do genuine good works. Therefore this is the authentic understanding and point of the law, that it leads into knowledge of our incapacity and presses us away from ourselves to another, to Christ, to seek grace and help. [40]

Jesus Christ is the *only* actual doer of the spiritually understood law; that is, he is the only human being whose obedience to God's commandments simply gives historical form to the sort of person he is, a person consumed with love of God and neighbor. Christ is the *impletor legis*, the fulfiller of the law, and so, as Luther put it in the *Lectures on Romans*, what the law says to us in the actual

[38] *WA* 39/1:460.

[39] The more-than-moral dimension of the law is, to so speak, marked by the *hilaritas cordis* which it demands in addition to *recta vo/untas,* according to St. Paul's saying, "hilarem enim datorem diligit Deus" (2 Cor 9:7). This is, it should be noted, why Luther insisted that postbaptismal concupiscence was properly to be called sin: because it inhibits perfect *hilaritas* in the obedience even of the faithful. The likely Augustinian/Bernardine roots of this teaching need further study.

[40] *WA* 17/2:70.

order of salvation is, "You must have Christ and his Spirit!"[41] For Luther, this is as much as to say that the law calls for faith, since faith is precisely the New Testament name for the bonding of our lives with Christ and the Spirit.

V.... AND THE PRISON BECOMES A PALACE

This brings us finally to the point at which we can see the rationale for the claim with which this paper began, that for Luther the bestowal of God's grace through the gospel is the only true formation of the human heart, that which alone sets the heart truly in order. Clearly everything depends on what faith is, on what it means to "have" Christ and the Spirit.

Here I must simply contradict a misreading of Luther, widely shared by Protestants and Catholics, which it would require at least another article to refute properly. It is not the case, for Luther, that the relationship to Christ established by faith is essentially *forensic,* a relationship in which I merely gain legal title to the merit of Christ promised me in the gospel. That is a rough description of Philip Melanchthon's understanding of faith, not Luther's. For Luther, the forensic relationship is secondary to a relationship of *union,* the union of the believer to the person of Christ as a living member of Christ's body, the church. As he puts it in the great *Commentary on Galatians,* true faith is that "through which we become members of his body, of his flesh and bones."

> Therefore in him we live and move and are. Thus vain is the speculation about faith on the part of the sectarians, who dream that Christ is in us "spiritually," that is, speculatively, but that he is really in heaven. It is necessary that Christ and faith be joined together utterly *[omnino coniungi],* it is necessary that we dwell in heaven and that Christ be, live, and work in us; however, he lives and works in us not speculatively, but really *[realiter],* most presently and most efficaciously.[42]

For Luther, what is called "justification" is just this utter joining-together of Christ and the believer, by virtue of which we

[41] *WA* 56:338.

[42] *WA* 40/1:546.

live in heaven and Christ is, lives, and works in us. The righteousness by which we are saved is Christ himself, living in us; the forensic relationship, in which God forgives our sins "for Christ's sake" is dependent on this primary relation of union:

> Therefore faith justifies because it grasps and possesses this treasure, the present Christ.... Therefore the Christ who is grasped by faith and dwells in the heart is the Christian righteousness on account of which God reckons us righteous and gives us eternal life.[43]

God reckons believers righteous because they become, in certain significant respects, one reality with the Righteous One, Jesus Christ; "imputation" does, in Luther at least, have that ontological basis the absence of which in certain kinds of Protestant theology has always seemed so incomprehensible to Catholics.[44]

It is because faith is union with Christ that it is the true ordering of the human heart. For Luther, grace is not, as it is for many Lutherans, antithetical to order; on the contrary, grace is the merciful bestowal on our hearts of their true formation, the formation for which they were created. The faith that receives God's grace is not only release from accusation and fear; it is also the constitution of a new human subject, a new person existing in a new way. As Luther writes in his exposition of Galatians 2:20 ("it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me"):

[43] *WA* 40/1:229.

[44] This is especially clear in the following from the 1519 *Commentary on Galatians:*

> Because he has said that we have put on Christ and become one with Christ, therefore the same thing *[idem]* that has been said about Christ is also understood to be said about us on account of Christ. For Christ cannot be separated from us, nor we from him, since we are one reality *[unum]* with him and in him, as the members are one reality *[unum]* in the head and one reality *[unum]* with the head. Therefore, just as the promise of God cannot be understood of any other than Christ *[de alio quam Christo]*, so, since we are not something other than Christ *[aliud quam Christus]*, it is necessary that it also be understood of us. Truly therefore we are the seed of Abraham and heirs, not according to the flesh, but according to the promise, since we are they of whom mention is made in the promise, namely the Gentiles who are in the seed of blessed Abraham. (WA 2:531).

The person [of the believer] indeed lives, but not in himself or by virtue of his own person, but "Christ lives in me." But who is this "I" of whom he says "Yet not 'I'"? This "I" is one who has the law and is obligated to perform works, and who is a certain person separated from Christ. It is this "I" which Paul rejects, because "I" as a person distinct from Christ belongs to death and hell. Therefore he says, "Yet not I, but Christ lives in me": he is my form, adorning my faith as color or light adorn a wall. ... Therefore Christ, he says, thus inhering in me and glued to me and abiding in me lives in me this life which I carry on, or rather, the life by which I thus live is Christ himself.[45]

Thus faith is both the death of the old subject, defined as a subject "separated from Christ," and the birth of the new, whose "form" is the present Christ himself; the believer is one in whose life Christ lives and in whose actions Christ acts, and therefore one whose life and actions are formed by Christ's presence in the Spirit. Thus Luther paraphrases Paul:

He says: However insignificant this life I live in the flesh may be, I live it in faith in the Son of God. That is, this word which I sound forth bodily is not the word of the flesh, but of the Holy Spirit and of Christ. This vision which goes in and out of my eyes does not come from the flesh, that is, my flesh does not govern it, but the Holy Spirit. So too my hearing is not of the flesh, although it is in the flesh, but it is in and of the Holy Spirit.... [The Christian's true life is hidden from the world, Luther says, because] that life is in the heart by faith, where the flesh has been rooted out and Christ reigns with his Holy Spirit and now sees, hears, speaks, works, suffers, and in sum does all things in the believer, even though the flesh fights back.[46]

Luther speaks about this new life in Christ, it should be noted, in the same terms in which he speaks about Adam's creation in the image of God: "'There is a twofold life,' says Paul, 'my natural or animal life, and another person's life, that is, Christ's life in me. I am dead according to my animal life, and now I live another person's life.'"[47] The spiritual life given to Adam at the beginning is, after the Fall, "the life of another person" *(aliena vita),* the life of Jesus Christ; faith, by which we share in that life, is thus the beginning of the restoration of God's image.

[45] *WA* 40/1:283.
[46] *WA* 40/1:289-90.
[47] *WA* 40/1:287.

It follows, therefore, that the new person constituted by faith relates to God's law and commandments quite differently from the sinner who flees and distrusts God. Luther summed this up most succinctly in an epigram in his first *Commentary on Galatians* from 1519: "Thus to live to the law is to fail to fulfill the law, while to die to the law is to fulfill the law; the latter takes place by faith in Christ, the former through works of the law."[48] We live to the law by works and thus fail to fulfill the law; we die to the law by faith in Christ and thus succeed in fulfilling the law. How is it that dying to the law by faith is the fulfillment of the law?

When Luther says that we die to the law by faith, what he has in mind is the law in the forms in which we encounter it after the Fall, the law as mere code and the accusing, spiritually interpreted law. By faith, through the grace bestowed by the gospel, we die to the law misunderstood as a manageable collection of injunctions through which we might achieve righteousness, and we likewise die to the law as the inexorable, accusing demand for a total personal transformation that we cannot begin to accomplish. The gospel puts an end to these forms of the law, which we might collectively call the "old law," simply by bestowing on us what the law demands; it gives us the new and deified mode of being for which all of God's commandments call when it brings Christ to us, whom we grasp by faith when we trust the gospel's promise. To cite another epigram, and to complete a quotation, Luther says in the *Lectures on Romans:* "The old law says to the proud in their righteousness: You must have Christ and his Spirit! The new law"-that is, the gospel-"says to those who have been humbled in their poverty: Look! Here is Christ and his Spirit![49]

Thus faith, which dies to the law, fulfills the law, because by faith there comes into being the graced and deified subject that God's law most deeply demands. This is the point at stake in Luther's apparently paradoxical insistence that we cannot fulfill the commandments by doing good works; on the contrary, the commandments must already be fulfilled before we can do the good works they enjoin:

[48] *WA* 2:499.
[49] *WA* 56:338.

For works, since they are mindless things, cannot glorify God, although they may be done to God's glory if faith is present. But now we are asking not what things are to be done, what sort of works they are; we are asking about the doer, the one who glorifies God and produces works. This is the faith of the heart, which is the head and substance of all our righteousness. Thus it is a blind and dangerous doctrine which teaches that the commandments are fulfilled by works, since it is necessary for the commandments to be fulfilled before all works and for the works to follow the fulfillment. [50]

The commandments are fulfilled when the *doer* for which they call is present; the only such doer is, in Augustinian terms, the *totus Christus*, Jesus Christ in his unity with his people, head and body together.

If dying to the law is fulfilling the law, however, then the believer who dies to the law is not lawless; to die to the law is not to transcend the very idea of an order of life, nor is it the happy discovery of a God with no intentions that bear on us. On the contrary, the believer really does fulfill the law, not merely by imputation but because his existence really does begin to be formed and ordered as the law intends.

In an exegesis of Galatians 3 from 1522, Luther makes this point rather strikingly with a parable. Suppose that some great lord had thrown you in prison, a prison that you loathed exceedingly. There are, says Luther, two possible ways in which you might be liberated. The first is the obvious, "bodily" way: "the lord might break down the prison and make you free bodily, and let you go where you will." The other, less obvious way is the spiritual way; in this case

the lord would so bless you in the prison, make it so pleasing, bright, spacious, and richly decorated for you that no royal dwelling or kingdom was so desirable; in this way he would so break down and transform your perceptions *[mutt]* that you would not leave that prison for all the world's treasure. Instead you would pray that the prison might remain standing and that you might remain in it, for to you it would no longer be a prison, but would have become a paradise. [51]

[50] *WA* 7:56.
[51] *WA* 10/1/1:459.

It is this sort of freedom Christ has given us in relation to the law; he has not "broken down and done away with the law, but has so transformed our heart, which was at first unhappy under the law, and so blessed it, and made the law so delightful to it, that the heart has no greater pleasure or joy than in the law."[52]

The law is thus the prison that becomes a paradise to those who believe in Christ. In light of Luther's theology of grace and original righteousness, moreover, we should perhaps take this reference to paradise quite seriously: for believers, the commandments begin to become once again what they were for Adam in the state of innocence, neither a means of self-justification nor a terrifying accusation, but a divinely granted opportunity to give concrete historical form to their identity as God's children and images. Just as the law became a word of deadly accusation because Adam changed, so now in Christ we are changed once again and the law becomes something delightful, a paradise that we would not leave for all the world's treasure. This is surely the principled *opposite* of the antinomian suspicion and resentment of order and commandment in which Protestant tradition, in modern times, has so often been so deeply ensnared.

Christians can delight in God's commandments in this way because they have been changed by faith in Christ; it is central to this change that they now know God's law in a new form, in the form of the "law of Christ" or the "law of the Spirit of life" of which Paul speaks in Romans 8. This form of the law, Luther writes, is faith itself, as the bond of our hearts to Christ and his Spirit; faith is, he says,

> that living and spiritual flame inscribed by the Spirit in human hearts, which wills, does, and indeed *is* that which the law of Moses commands and requires verbally.... And so the law of Christ is properly not teaching but living, not word but reality, not sign but fulfillment. And it is the word of the gospel which is the ministry of this life, reality, and fulfillment and the means by which it is brought to our hearts.[53]

This is from a fairly early text (1521); later on, Luther is less willing to use the term "law" to talk about faith and the gospel,

[52] Ibid.

[53] *WA* 8:458.

even though it is unarguably Pauline. This pastorally motivated decision left him with fewer resources for making dear his understanding of the relationship of grace and law, but it did not change that understanding. It is important to see that he could in principle describe that relationship in this perfectly traditional formulation which he shares with St. Thomas and Pope John Paul II: the notion of the "new law" which is "primarily the very grace of the holy Spirit which is given to those who believe in Christ."[54]

VI. CONCLUSION

This article is only a prolegomenon to dialogue between the Reformation traditions and *Veritatis Splendor;* it is enough, therefore, that we have identified a point of profound and startling consensus between Luther and Pope John Paul II as a starting-point for future discussion. This point is the project shared by both of integrating the moral and the mystical, and therefore of relocating the notion of divine law within the context of the perfection of nature by grace. Thus the Holy Father writes:

> Only in the mystery of Christ's redemption do we discover the "concrete" possibilities of man.... God's command is of course proportioned to man's capabilities, but to the capabilities of the man to whom the Holy Spirit has been given; of the man who, though he has fallen into sin, can always obtain pardon and enjoy the presence of the Holy Spirit. *(Veritatis Splendor,* §103)

This consensus reaches very far, and includes fundamental agreement concerning the intrinsically more-than-moral scope of divine law: "But if God alone is the good, no human effort, not even the most rigorous observance of the commandments, succeeds in 'fulfilling' the law, that is, acknowledging the Lord as God and rendering Him the worship due to Him alone. This 'fulfillment' can only come from a gift of God: the offer of a share in the divine goodness revealed and communicated in Jesus" *(Veritatis Splendor,* §11).[55]

[54] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 1-11, q. 106, a. 1.

[55] The dialogue with Luther could be even more fruitful if the remarkable Trinitarian theology of conscience and moral objectivity which the Pope sketched in *Dominum et Vivificantem* (1986) were more fully brought into play than it is in *Veritatis Splendor* (see *Dominum et Vivificantem,* §33-38). It is

The discovery that Martin Luther and John Paul II struggle together from a shared starting-point against the twin foes of legalism and antinomianism could and should finally bring to birth an ecumenical discussion of fundamental moral theology, a parturition long overdue. The power of *Veritatis Splendor* to provoke new readings of the Christian tradition, even of so unlikely-seeming a conversation partner as Martin Luther, is not the least part of its significance.

understandable, but perhaps regrettable, that in the controversial third section of *Veritatis Splendor* the Pope has chosen only to call the contemporary disciplines of "moral theology" and "religious ethics" to order, rather than call their very foundations into question, which is the unmistakable tendency of the earlier encyclical.

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THE LIBERTARIAN FOUNDATIONS OF SCOTUS'S MORAL PHILOSOPHY

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CONTEMPORARY LIBERTARIANS typically claim that their conception of freedom is necessary to safeguard our commonsense understanding of moral responsibility, but beyond that claim little is said about the implications of libertarianism for moral philosophy. Perhaps philosophers generally do not think it *has* any other such implications. Duns Scotus, however, made his libertarianism the cornerstone of his system of ethics. Unfortunately, commentators have failed to show how his theory of freedom unites various elements of his thought. They have failed to trace (and consequently, they have failed to defend) the inferences that Scotus drew from his account of freedom. They have, in short, failed to treat Scotus's moral philosophy as a system at all, and have written as if Scotus had nothing more to offer than disjointed observations about the will and a few other subjects of interest to moral philosophers. [1]

[1] Not only have commentators sometimes written *as if* they believed this, they have occasionally stated it outright. In the recent Scotus number of the *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* (67 [1993]), for example, Mary Elizabeth Ingham says flatly that "It is well known that Scotus presents nowhere in his writings a full-blown ethical theory" (128). Gilson says of his book on Scotus, "On n'y trouvera pas non plus un 'systeme' de Duns Scot ... la seule raison est que nous ne l'avons pas trouve nous meme" <*Jean Duns Scot: Introduction a ses positions fondamentales* [Paris: Libraire Philosophique J. Vrin, 1952], 7).

Other interpreters, most notably Allan B. Wolter, have insisted strongly on the systematic character of Scotus's moral thought; Wolter indeed identifies Scotus's account of freedom as the key to the system, just as I propose in this paper. But as Hannes Mllhle rightly notes, a good deal of Wolter's work has involved editing, translating, and commenting on discrete passages rather than substantiating his claim that those texts present a systematic moral theory. Speaking in particular of Wolter's collection *Duns Scotus on the Will and Morality*, Mllhle writes,

A single paper can, of course, only begin the task of exhibiting Scotus's moral philosophy as a system based on a libertarian conception of freedom. I shall not say anything at all in this paper about the implications of Scotus's libertarian view of *divine* freedom, or about the intricate relationships between those implications and the views I shall discuss below. Instead, I shall concentrate entirely on his libertarian view of *human* freedom. After setting out in part 1 Scotus's libertarian account of the will, I shall discuss two of the most important implications Scotus understood his account to have. First, according to Scotus, the Thomist understanding of the will as intellective appetite is inadequate to provide a libertarian account of freedom. He therefore rejects that understanding and offers an alternative moral psychology. In part 2 of the paper I therefore draw attention to the passages in which Scotus offers his reasons for rejecting Aquinas's account in order to show that they arise directly out of the libertarian account of the will stated in part 1. I then ask whether Scotus is in fact justified in supposing that Aquinas's conception of will is incompatible with freedom as Scotus understood it. In parts 3 and 4 of the paper I shall argue that he is, since Aquinas's conception of possibility at best allows him to make room for diachronic alternatives, whereas Scotus insists on synchronic alternatives.

The second implication of Scotus's libertarian understanding of freedom is his distinctive conception of choice and of rationality in action. In part 5 of the paper I explain this conception and show why Scotus associates it with a libertarian understanding of freedom.

> Die ausfiihrliche Einleitung, die Wolter den Texten voranschickt, ist wesentlich davon gepriigt, die von ihm edierten Texte im einzelnen einzuleiten und zu kommentieren. Die als wichtig bezeichnete innere Systematik der scotischen Lehre als Ganzes kommt also nur bedingt in den Blick und ist deshalb weiterhin als ein Desiderat der Scotusforschung zu begreifen. *(Ethik als scientia practica nach Johannes Duns Scotus: Eine philosophische Grundlegung,* in *Beitriige zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters: Texte und Untersuchungen, Neue Folge* 44 [Miinster: Aschendorff, 1995])

Mohle himself argues at length for a systematic understanding of Scotus's thought, but he takes practical science rather than freedom to be the central notion.

I. Scorus'S LIBERTARIANISM

According to Scotus, the fundamental distinction to be made among active powers has to do, not with their objects, but with the way in which they elicit their acts.[3] There are only two possibilities. First, a power might be determined by its very nature *(ex se)* in such a way that it cannot but act, so long as it is not impeded by any external object. Second, a power might not be determined by its very nature. Such a power can do this act or that; it can even act or not act. The first sort of power is called a natural power, or simply "nature," and the second is called a rational power, or "will."

In one respect, at least, the two sorts of causes are alike: one cannot sensibly ask why they behave as they do. For example, if one asks "Why does heat heat?" the only sensible answer is "That's just the sort of thing heat does." And similarly, if one asks "Why does the will will?" the only sensible answer is "That's just the sort of thing wills do." In Scotus's terminology, "Heat heats" and "The will wills" are *immediate* propositions; they are not derived from any more basic propositions that explain or account for their truth.

[2] Not everyone agrees that Scotus was a libertarian. Douglas C. Langston, in *God's Willing Knowledge: The Influence of Scotus' Analysis of Omniscience* (University Park, Penn.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1986), argues that Scotus was in fact self-consciously a compatibilist. I cannot in this paper respond in detail to Langston's arguments; the interested reader should consult Wolter's review of Langston in *Theological Studies* 48 (1987): 182-85, as well as Simo Knuuttila, *Modalities in Medieval Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 1993), 144-45. For a helpful survey of the dispute over Scotus's libertarianism, along with interesting suggestions about how to adjudicate between competing interpretations, see Joseph M. lncandela, "Duns Scotus and the Experience of Human Freedom," *The Thomist* 56 (1992): 229-56. Despite the many merits of his essay, Incandela is obviously not at all sympathetic to libertarianism, and his picture of Scotus's theory is an unkind caricature; in section 5 of this paper I explicate what I take to be the real significance of Scotus's libertarianism.

In any case, I shall in this paper assume the standard interpretation of Scotus as a libertarian. This interpretation is confirmed by the reasons Scotus offers for rejecting Aquinas's account of the will as intellective appetite, since they are precisely the sort of reasons only a libertarian would find persuasive.

[3] *Quaestiones subtilissimae super libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis* 9, q. 15, n. 4 (W 4:797b). References to the Wadding edition (Lyons, 1639) are indicated with a "W" and references to the Vatican critical edition with a "V." The translations of Scotus throughout the paper are my own. Latin texts are reproduced exactly as they appear in the Vatican critical edition. Wherever possible, I have edited the Wadding edition on the basis of manuscripts as well as Walter's edition in *Duns Scotus on the Will and Morality* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1986). I have indicated those sources in the notes.

Of course, an act of will might prompt a slightly different kind of question. Since the will is not determined to this or that act, one could well ask not merely why the will wills, but why the will wills *this* as opposed to *that.* But even here Scotus insists that the same sort of answer applies:

> Aristotle holds that opinion can be either *propter quid* (on the basis of immediate propositions) or *quia* (on the basis of mediate propositions). And so it is in the case of the proposition "The will wills A." If there is no cause between the extremes, my point [viz., that "The will wills A" is an immediate proposition] is made. If there is a cause-say, that the will wills B-one will go further. But one will come to a halt at some point where the only reason why the will wills something is that it is a will.[4]

Hence, the will's acts are contingent.

In order to understand what Scotus means by "contingent," we must look at Scotus's understanding of modality. In *Modalities in Medieval Philosophy,* Simo Knuuttila argues that diachronic and statistical-frequency models of possibility dominated medieval discussions of modality well into the thirteenth century. According to Knuuttila, it was Scotus who first systematized a theory of modality that involved synchronic alternatives, a theory that is in many respects similar to contemporary possible-worlds semantics. Scotus's explanation of what he means by "contingent" encapsulates this new insistence on understanding modal expressions in terms of synchronic alternatives: "By 'contingent' I do not mean whatever is non-necessary or non-sempiternal, but a thing of which the opposite could have been brought about when that thing itself was brought about."[5] Scotus clearly affirms that this sort of contingency is characteristic of our volitions:

> This logical possibility [of willing different objects] does not exist according as the will has acts successively, but in the same instant. For in the same instant in which the will has one act of willing, it can have an opposite act of willing

[4] "vult Aristoteles quod contingit opinari *propter quid,* scilicet per immediata, et *quia,* per mediata; ita in proposito, voluntas vult A. Si non est causa inter extrema, habetur propositum. Si est causa, puta voluntas vult B, procedetur ulterius. Alicubi stabitur, ubi quare voluntas illud volet nulla est alia causa nisi quia est voluntas" (ibid., n. 5 [Wolter, 152]).

[5] "non voco hie contingens quodcumque non-necessarium vel non-sempiternum, sed cuius oppositum posset fieri quando illud fit" *(Ordinatio* I, d. 2, p. 1, q. 1-2, n. 86 [V 2:178]).

in and for that very same instant .... Corresponding to this logical potency is a real potency, for every cause is prior in understanding with respect to its effect. Thus, the will, in the instant in which it elicits an act of willing, is prior in nature to its volition and is related contingently to it. Hence, in that instant in which it elicits a volition, it is contingently related to willing and has a contingent relation to willing-against-not because at some earlier time it had a contingent relation to willing, since at that time it was not a cause; but now, when it is a cause eliciting an act of willing, it has a contingent relation to the act, so that what is willing *a* can will-against *a*.[6]

With this understanding of possibility in mind, we can characterize more precisely the fundamental difference between rational and natural powers. A rational power is such that, at the very moment at which it acts, it can act otherwise. A natural power is such that, at the moment at which it acts, it cannot act otherwise. Note that this understanding of natural powers does not imply that a natural power always acts in the same way (as it would if Scotus adopted a statistical-frequency model of modality) or that a natural power cannot at one time act otherwise than it acts at some other time (as it would if Scotus adopted a diachronic model of modality). This point will be of considerable importance when we examine Scotus's reasons for rejecting Aquinas's account of the will.

II. WHY SCOTUS REJECTS AQUINAS'S ACCOUNT OF FREEDOM

For Scotus, an account according to which the will is intellective appetite does not preserve contingency in this strong sense. Indeed, such an account makes of the will a merely natural power rather than a rational power. So if the will is to be free, it must be more than merely intellective appetite.

[6] "Haec autem possibilitas logica non est secundum quod voluntas habet actus successive, sed in eodem instanti: nam in eodem instanti in quo v.oluntas habet unum actum volendi, in eodem et pro eodem potest habere oppositum actum volendi.... Et huic possibilitati logicae correspondet potentia realis, nam omnis causa praeintelligitur suo effectui-et ita voluntas in illo instanti in quo elicit actum volendi, praecedit natura volitionem suam et libere se habet ad earn; unde in illo instanti in quo elicit volitionem, contingenter se habet ad volendum et contingentem habet habitudinem ad nolendum; non quia prius habuit habitudinem contingentem ad volendum, quia tune non fuit causa, sed nunc-quando est causa eliciens actum volendi-contingentem habethabitudinem ad actum, ita quod 'volens in *a*, potest nolle in *a*'" (*Lectura* 1, d. 39, q. 1-5, nn. 50-51[V17:495]).

Scotus's name for that "something more" is *affectio iustitiae.* [7] This is the "ultimate specific difference of a free appetite"; [8] in other words, it is what distinguishes a free or rational appetite from an unfree or natural appetite. In addition to the *affectio iustitiae* the will possesses another inclination, the *affectio commodi.* Scotus repeatedly insists that if the will possessed only the *affectio commodi,* apart from the *affectio iustitiae,* the will would be merely intellective appetite. Moreover, he claims that intellective appetite as such cannot be free. For example, consider his discussion in the *Ordinatio* of the fall of Satan:

If, along the lines of Anselm's thought experiment in *On the Fall of the Devil,* one imagines an angel that had the *affectio commodi* and not the *affectio iustitiae-i.e.,* one that had intellective appetite merely as that sort of appetite and not as free-such an angel could not refrain from willing *[non posset non velle] commoda,* [9] or from willing such things in the highest degree. Nor would this be imputed to the angel as a sin, since that appetite would be related to its cognitive power in the same way that the visual appetite is in fact related to vision, in following necessarily the presentation of that cognitive power and its inclination to the best thing presented by such a power, since it would not have the wherewithal to restrain itself. [10]

He puts the same point more economically in the parallel passage in the *Reportatio:* "Hence, an intellective [appetite], if it lacked the *affectio iusti,* would naturally desire what is suited to the intellect, in just the same way that the sensitive appetite desires

[7] Or, in the *Reportatio parisiensia,* "affectio iusti."

[8] " --- affectio iusti est ultima differentia specifica appetitus liberi" *(Reportatio parisiensia* 2, d. 6, q. 2, n. 9 [W l 1.1:289a]).

[9] *Commoda* are whatever things the *affectio commodi* wills. More precisely, *commodum* is the description under which the *affectio commodi* wills whatever it wills. I leave the word untranslated so as not to beg any questions about just what these *commoda* are, since this is a matter of dispute among interpreters of Scotus. See John Boler, "Transcending the Natural: Duns Scotus on the Two Affections of the Will," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 67 (1993): 109-26; and Thomas Williams, "How Scotus Separates Morality from Happiness," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 69 (1995): 425-45.

[10] "Si enim intelligeretur-secundum illam fictionem Anselmi *De casu diaboli-quod* esset angelus habens affectionem commodi, et non iustitiae (hoc est, habens appetitum intellectivum mere ut appetitum talem et non ut liberum), talis angelus non posset non velle commoda, nee etiam non summe velle talia; nee imputaretur sibi ad peccatum, quia iste appetitus se haberet ad suam cognitivam sicut modo appetitus visivus ad visum, in necessario consequendo ostensionem istius cognitivae et inclinationem ad optimum ostensum a tali potentia, quia non haberet uncle se refraenaret" *(Ordinatio* 2, d. 6, q. 2, n. 8 [W 6.1:539-540, Wolter 468, Codex P 162va, Codex Q 121va-b]).

what is suited to the sense, and it would be no freer than the sensitive appetite." [11] Similar discussions can be found at *Ordinatio* 2, d. 25, nn. 22-23 (W 13:221-23), where intellective appetite is said to act *per modum naturae* and is identified with the *affectio commodi; Ordinatio* 2, d. 39, q. 2, n. 5 (W 13:415-16); and *Ordinatio* 3, d. 26, n. 17 (W 15:340-41). In all these passages Scotus illustrates his point about intellective appetite by appealing to a comparison with the sensitive appetite: if the will were merely intellective appetite, he says, it would be no freer than the sensitive appetite. And since the sensitive appetite is a natural power, not a rational power, intellective appetite would also be a natural power.

It is here that the defender of Aquinas's account would surely demur. Aquinas, after all, goes to no little trouble to differentiate between the sensitive appetite and the intellective appetite, and to show how the intellective appetite is free. The Thomist could well argue that when Scotus puts the will on the same level as the sensitive appetite, he misrepresents what is distinctive about intellective appetite.

If this charge could be made to stick, Scotus's moral philosophy would be in real trouble, for his rejection of intellective appetite is, as I am arguing in this paper, a central feature of his system. Scotus uses his understanding of intellective appetite as one of his principal arguments against eudaimonistic ethics.[12] If Aquinas can establish that intellective appetite is free, Scotus loses one of his major weapons against eudaimonistic ethics. Furthermore, as I shall show later in this paper, Scotus uses his attack on intellective appetite in order to make room for his own positive moral psychology. A successful Thomistic defense here would therefore make Scotus's positive views seem both unappealing and unmotivated.

Scotus need not do violence to Aquinas's careful explanation of the difference between intellective and sensitive appetite in order to establish that intellective appetite as such is not free. A

[11] "Uncle intellectivus, si careret affectione iusti, ita naturaliter appeteret conveniens intellectui, sicut appetitus sensitivus conveniens sensui, nee esset magis liber quam appetitus sensitivus" *(Reportatio* 2, d. 6, q. 2, n. 9 [W ll.1:289a]).

[12] On this point see the articles cited in note 9.

close look at the ways in which Aquinas tries to differentiate the intellective from the sensitive appetite will show that there is nothing in his account to guarantee that the will is free in the libertarian sense. Indeed, much of what Aquinas says on this score suggests that our volitions are determined by antecedent intellectual cognition, which would mean that they are free, if at all, only in a compatibilistic sense.

III. How INTELLECTIVE APPETITE DIFFERS FROM SENSITIVE APPETITE [13]

It is important to bear in mind that appetite is supposed to be a very general feature of Aquinas's view-and of Scotus's too, for that matter. The medieval universe is teleologically rich. Everything in it has an end, and corresponding to that end is some sort of inclination. In some things this inclination functions in the absence of any cognition. Stones "seek" the center of the earth, and plants draw water and nutrients from the ground, without in any way realizing what they are doing. But in other beings the appetite for their end is consequent upon some sort of cognition. When appetite follows upon sense cognition, it is sense appetite; when it follows upon intellectual cognition, it is intellective appetite. The most basic way of distinguishing intellective from sense appetite will be to examine the different sorts of cognition upon which they follow.

Sense perception is limited to the concrete particular, whereas intellectual cognition involves the understanding of universals. This at first looks rather unhelpful, as Aquinas admits in raising an objection to the distinction between sensitive and intellective appetite: "But this distinction has no place in the appetitive power. After all, since appetite is a movement of the soul towards things, which are singulars, every appetite seems to be for a singular thing." [14] What Aquinas means, though, is that intellectual

[13] My account of intellective appetite in Aquinas owes a great deal to David Gallagher, "Thomas Aquinas on the Will as Rational Appetite," *Journal of the History of Philosoplry* 29 (1991): 559-84.

[14] "Praeterea, cognitio intellectiva est universalium, et secundum hoc distinguitur a sensitiva, quae est singularium. Sed ista distinctio non habet locum ex parte appetitivae: cum enim appetitus sit motus ab anima ad res, quae sunt singulares, omnis appetitus videtur esse rei singulari.s. Non ergo appetitus intellectivus debet distingui a sensitivo" *(STh* I, q. 80, a. 2, obj. 2).

cognition, although directed at particular things, involves a certain apprehension of a universal.[15]

A) Intellective Appetite and Universal Intelligible Features of Objects

We can look at three complementary ways of putting this difference and see that in each case the difference between intellective and sense appetite is not such as to guarantee the freedom of intellective appetite. First, intellective appetite is aimed at things insofar as they are apprehended as having a certain intelligible feature, namely goodness. In more modern terms, we can say that it is aimed at things under the description "good." Sense appetite, by contrast, simply takes things (or refuses to take things) as it finds them, without recognizing them as falling under any particular description. On this understanding of the difference between the two sorts of appetite we must attribute to human beings the possession of some purely formal concept of the good.

Our question is this: does the fact that human beings can desire things under a description-that is, can desire things *as good* rather than simply desiring them--guarantee freedom in the libertarian sense? Clearly not. Even supposing that Aquinas is right to claim that we have a formal concept of the good, and that we can therefore desire things as falling under that concept, it could still be that our desire for those things is causally determined by our cognition of them.

This point becomes quite dear when we consider two cases, one in which intellective appetite is at work and one in which only sensitive appetite is at work. I eat a hot-fudge sundae; my dog eats his bowl of Alpo. We will suppose, as Aquinas does, that the dog's sense perception of the Alpo in a given set of circumstances is causally sufficient for the dog's being moved to eat the Alpo. Now suppose I do not engage my intellect in my

[15] "Ad secundum dicendum quod appetitus intellectivus, etsi feratur in res quae sunt extra animam singulares, fertur tamen in eas secundum aliquam rationem universalem; sicut cum appetit aliquid quia est bonum" (ibid., ad 2).

pursuit of the sundae; only sense perception is involved.[16] By parity of reasoning, this perception is causally sufficient in a given set of circumstances for my eating the sundae. Somehow, though, when my intellect gets involved and cognizes the sundae, freedom is supposed to enter the picture. How?

We get different answers from different passages of Aquinas. In one place he explains it in this way. Sense perception involves a form that is particular. The appetite that follows upon it can therefore be directed only toward a particular object of desire. Intellectual cognition, however, involves a universal. Since a multiplicity of objects falls under this universal, intellective appetite can be directed to any of a number of different objects. It therefore has alternative possibilities available to it, which sense appetite cannot have.[17]

This response does not establish the point at issue. Let us grant, for the sake of argument, that I cognize the sundae as good, whereas the dog does not cognize the Alpo as good. That does not even begin to show that I have alternative possibilities and the dog does not. Obviously the dog's desires will be directed to objects *insofar as* they have certain features, even though (on our assumption) it will not be directed to objects *on the grounds that* they have those features. This is enough to guarantee our dog a variety of objects to choose from: this or that bowl of Alpo, the Alpo or a yummy dog biscuit, and so on. But no one supposes that the dog is free in the libertarian sense. So mere multiplicity of objects is not sufficient for freedom.

Aquinas puts this same argument somewhat differently when he claims that the will tends primarily not to the object that is desired, but to the reason for its desirability.[18] When I will that hot-fudge sundae under the description "good," what I primarily

[16] In fact Aquinas denies that this is ever the case. Although a human being can of course act in the way that a sense desire prompts him to act, he can do so only if his will consents. See *STh* I, q. 81, a. 3 and 1-11, q. 77, aa. 1-2. I mean to introduce this as a thought experiment, not as a representation of **Aquinas's own view.**

[17] For this way of distinguishing the intellective from the sensitive appetite, see in particular *De Malo* q. 6, a. 1: "Forma intellecta est universalis sub qua multa possunt comprehendi. Unde cum actus sint in singularibus, in quibus nullum est quod adequet potentiam universalis, remanet inclinatio voluntatis indeterminate se habens ad multa." See also *STh* 1-11, q. 13, a. 2.

[18] There is an extended discussion of this way of distinguishing the intellective from the sensitive appetite at *De Veritate* q. 25, a. 1.

will is not the sundae itself but goodness, which I find to be instantiated in the sundae. And since goodness is instantiated elsewhere as well, my will is not necessitated to will the sundae. It is necessitated only to the good in general. In other words, if I will anything at all, the primary object of my willing will be the goodness of that thing, and I will will it as a good; but there is no particular good thing such that I necessarily will that thing.

As Aquinas explains it, the sensitive appetite is not necessitated to any thing before that thing is apprehended under the formality *(sub ratione)* of pleasant or useful. But once the pleasant thing has been apprehended, the sensitive appetite is drawn to it necessarily. A brute animal, on seeing something pleasant, cannot fail to desire it. But the pleasantness of the object, as opposed to the object itself, is something that does not enter into the animal's mind. That is, the animal's attention is completely captured by the particular object; it is not aware of any general feature in virtue of which it is willing the object. By contrast, a being with reason perceives not only the desirable object but also the formality under which it is desirable. The will is necessitated only to that formality; it is not necessitated to any particular thing that is apprehended as good.

Once again, it is a mistake to suppose that this distinction makes any relevant difference to the freedom of the agent. Let us take a particular sense appetite-the appetite for food-as a comparison. Under certain circumstances, a dog will eat his bowl of Alpo, and under other circumstances he will not. Sometimes he will go for a doggie biscuit, and at other times he will not. We do not (or at least the medievals did not) take this as evidence that the dog is free. We could perhaps say, if the fancy took us, that the dog is necessitated to food in general but not to any particular food, but we would hardly be tempted to suppose that this implied anything about canine libertarian freedom. In fact, since we are committed to the view that the sense appetite operates deterministically, we would have to say that in any given set of circumstances there are causally sufficient antecedent conditions for the dog's doing whatever he does.

Does it make any difference that we human beings, unlike our dog, know what we are doing? I do not see why it must. It is

perfectly conceivable that we are in exactly the same position as the dog, except for the fact that unlike him we can say to ourselves, "Ah, that's a bit of food right there," as the laws of nature take their invariable course. Mere awareness of the fact that the hot-fudge sundae falls under a more general class (food, source of pleasure, good thing) does not imply libertarian freedom. Libertarians would not be such a disheartened bunch if their pet position could be established as easily as all that.

B) Intellective Appetite and Conceptions of the Good Life

Aquinas of course resists the thought that our eating of the hot-fudge sundae is on a par with a dog's eating of his bowl of dog food. One reason for this resistance is that he tends to think of the dog as overwhelmed by the canine equivalent of "My, doesn't that look yummy," while he pictures us seated in our recliner thinking over the question "What sort of life shall I lead?" when the butler brings in a hot-fudge sundae. Then, in the light of a general plan for our lives, we can either dismiss Jeeves with a haughty gesture or dig into the sundae while calling imperiously for more whipped cream and an extra cherry.

It is true, I suppose, that dogs do not form conceptions of the good life, and that some of us human beings do. But the question recurs: Does this difference in itself show that we are free in a way that dogs are not? Aquinas certainly thinks so, since he uses our ability to form a general conception of the good life as a second way of distinguishing intellective from sensitive appetite and (as he thinks) of showing how the intellective appetite is free and the sensitive appetite is not. Here is the argument: A human being is necessitated to will happiness, where happiness is understood as the purely formal concept of a complete and perfect human life.[19] Consequently, if the intellect conceives of the life of, say, aesthetic experience as the complete and perfect human life, then the will necessarily wills such a life. But the intellect does not necessarily conceive of this or of any other sort of life as embodying happiness, and so the will is free to the extent that the

[19] *STh* I, q. 5, a. 1; 1-11, q. 1, a. 5; q. 1, a. 7; q. 5, a. 8.

intellect is not necessitated to any particular concrete conception of happiness. [20]

This argument leaves the libertarian unsatisfied, for two different reasons. First, the argument again rests on a confusion. It shows only that there is no object (this time the "object" in question is a plan of life rather than a particular thing) such that the will is necessitated to will that object. But the libertarian wants a stronger claim. The libertarian wants to say that *even in a completely specified set of circumstances* it is sometimes the case that the will is not necessitated to an object. Not only does Aquinas's argument not establish this stronger claim, it actually presupposes the very opposite. For it presupposes that, once the intellect has presented an object as the concrete instantiation of the formal concept of happiness, the will cannot help but will it.

Second, the argument simply pushes the problem back a step. As Aquinas argues, actions are determined by inclinations, and inclinations are determined by judgments. So we must ask whether the intellect itself is free with respect to its judgment about which of the available conceptions of happiness it will adopt. The answer is "Of course not." The intellect, as everyone in this debate would admit, operates deterministically. To put it in more modern terms, in a given set of circumstances, we have no control over how things look to us. If in a given set of circumstances my intellect presents the life of aesthetic experience to me as the perfect and complete human life, it is not physically possible for it in that set of circumstances to present any other life to me as embodying happiness. Scotus would here insist that one cannot build freedom out of a deterministic agent; one cannot turn the intellect into a sort of super-will. If in fact we are free in the libertarian sense, it will not be because we control how things appear to us, but because, however things appear to us, we control how we act on that information. [21]

[20] *STh* I, q. 82, a. 2; 1-11, q. 1, a. 1; q. 5, a. 8, ad 2.

[21] David M. Gallagher, "Free Choice and Free Judgment in Thomas Aquinas," *Archiv fur Geschichte der Philosophie* 76 (1994): 247-77, argues that Aquinas does leave room for just this sort of freedom. It would require a whole article to deal adequately with Gallagher's intriguing exposition, so unfortunately I cannot do so here. I will, however, make two points relevant to our present purposes. First, it seems to me that the view Gallagher attributes to Aquinas in this paper does not cohere well "'.ith his arguments in "Will as Rational Appetite." In fact, in "Free Choice and Free Judgment" the will turns out to be

C) Intellective Appetite and Relating Ends to Means

We can therefore deal very quickly with the third contrast Aquinas draws between intellective and sensitive appetite. The intellect, unlike the senses, can relate ends to means. Thus, having willed one's plan of life, one can examine further objects and actions in the light of that plan and determine which of them are suitable means to, or constituents of, happiness as one conceives it. Now unless there is only one available means to realizing one's end, one can freely choose among a variety of alternatives. For example, having determined that the aesthetic life is the best, I can then decide whether to take organ lessons, join a choir, become an art buyer, or sign on as a newspaper theater critic. My will is not necessitated to any of these, since none of them is the sole possible means of attaining happiness as I conceive it.[22]

The response outlined above is in order here as well. First, mere multiplicity of objects is not sufficient for freedom. Second, this account of the contrast between sensitive and intellective appetite still leaves open the possibility that the will is necessitated to an object, not *tout court*, but given the results of deliberation. That is, once the intellect has deliberated and seized on one of the available options as the best, the will cannot fail to will that object. And since the intellect operates deterministically, there is no room for freedom here.

In fact, given what we have seen already, it should be clear that Aquinas does in fact think of the will as necessitated to the option that the intellect presents as best. Recall that he claims that in any volition the primary object is not the concrete particular but its goodness. So if from among a number of options the intellect presents one as the best, the will must choose that one,

something rather different from intellective appetite. If the earlier paper is correct about Aquinas'sview, the criticisms of that view that I have offered on Scotus's behalf would be cogent. But if the later paper is correct, those criticisms would appear to leave Aquinas's view unscathed, and the dispute between Aquinas and Scotus would have to be fundamentally recharacterized. In this paper I have directed Scotus's criticisms against what I take to be a fairly standard interpretation of Aquinas's understanding of the will, one that is presented in "Will as Rational Appetite."

Second, even in "Free Choice and Free judgment" it is not altogether clear that Aquinas's understanding of the will would count as a libertarian one, since it is not clear whether the alternative possibilities Gallagher allows for are to be understood synchronically or

[22] *STh* I, q. 18, a. 3; 1-11, q. 6, a. 2; *De Veritate* q. 22, a. 4.

since it is in that particular that the will's universal object is most fully realized. It could fail to choose that particular only if it could will in view of something other than goodness-which Aquinas of course denies.

IV. SOME COMPLICATING FACTORS

There is one other feature of Aquinas's view that is worth mentioning. According to Aquinas, the will can always turn the intellect away from considering a given object. If the will is free to avert the intellect, then obviously the will is free not to will that object.[23]

The libertarian might wonder about this averting of the intellect. Averting the intellect is, obviously, an act. So one can ask about this act, as about any other, why it takes place. Now if the will is indeed intellective appetite, it would seem to follow that it can only avert the intellect if the intellect judges that this course of action is best. Obviously this just moves the problem back a level. If the averting of the intellect is intellectually determined, then the will's not willing the object is intellectually determined, although at one remove, so to speak. But perhaps in this case Aquinas could say that the will can act on its own steam. The will can simply avert the intellect at its discretion. If he can say that here, however, why could he not say it anywhere else? That is, why must he restrict this libertarian freedom to one sort of volition? One gets the picture of a will that can only avoid being determined by the intellect if it asserts itself first and prevents the intellect from doing its job.

These arguments do not show that Aquinas was really a compatibilist. What they show, I think, is that his understanding of the will as intellective appetite does not entitle him to regard the will as free in the libertarian sense. Its association with the intellect cannot make the will free; it can at best make the determination of the will more elaborate and interesting. So if Aquinas wants to be a libertarian, he must do so by postulating

[23] See, for example, *STh* 1-11, q. 10, a. 2; and *De Malo* q. 6, a. 1, ad 15.

something in the will itself that allows for such freedom, rather than trying to build freedom out of the intellect.

But does Aquinas want to be a libertarian? Unlike Scotus, he takes no pains to safeguard a notion of freedom that would satisfy the libertarian. It is even arguable that the attempt to categorize him as a libertarian is hopelessly anachronistic because full-fledged libertarianism involves modal concepts that differ significantly from Aquinas's. In particular, libertarianism involves a conception of possibility as involving synchronic alternatives. When a libertarian claims that it was possible for an agent to act otherwise, he typically means that it was possible for the agent to act otherwise at that very time and in those very circumstances. As we have already seen, there is nothing in Aquinas's discussion of intellective appetite that would permit us to attribute such a conception of possibility to him. In fact, his arguments that intellective appetite is free suggest that he thinks of possibility diachronically rather than synchronically. The alternative possibilities to which he appeals are not actually available to the agent at the very moment of choice, but only prospectively. Since there is nothing in the nature of the various human potencies, independently of the actual circumstances of deliberation and choice, that constrains the will always to choose one thing rather than another, the will's choices can be regarded as contingent or free. Nonetheless, the will's choice could still be necessary given the various causal factors at work in a particular situation of choice. As Knuuttila says in discussing Aquinas's view,

> Although every effect is necessary with respect either to its proximate or to its remote cause, the causal necessity of an event is qualified in terms of the nature of its proximate cause. If the proximate cause is generically contingent, its actual effect can be called contingent as well. A particular cause is here considered necessary or contingent, depending on how causes of the same type usually behave. Similarly an actually necessitated event can be called contingent by referring to what happens in other similar cases.[24]

So in order to show that the will's activity is free, Aquinas need only argue that the will is the sort of cause that has alternative

[24] Knuuttila, *Modalities,* 133. I have omitted his references.

possibilities open to it prospectively, that it is not of its very nature necessitated to every object that it in fact wills. And that is exactly how he argues in the passages I have already discussed. What he does not show, and given his own conception of possibility does not need to show, is that those alternatives are open to the will synchronically.

It seems that Aquinas could not have been either a libertarian or a soft determinist, since in order to adopt either of these positions one must have a conception of possibility as involving synchronic alternatives. Scotus, by contrast, has such a conception, and so there is nothing anachronistic about calling him a libertarian. Like most libertarians, Scotus regards any non-libertarian account of freedom as wrong-headed, quite apart &om the details of the account. He is therefore satisfied with pointing out that Aquinas's account of the will as intellective appetite is not a libertarian account; whether Aquinas's account is soft determinist or not is of no importance for his purposes.

V. LIBERTARIANISM AND MORAL THEORY

Nevertheless, when Scotus says that the will is not merely intellective appetite, he does not mean to imply that the possession of intellect is irrelevant to the exercise of our freedom. If one tries to imagine a dog that possessed just the cognitive faculties that dogs generally possess, but unlike other dogs possessed libertarian freedom as well, this becomes quite clear. Any exercise of this freedom-if indeed it is conceivable that the dog could exercise it-would have to be totally arbitrary. He could not choose one thing over another in view of a plan, or because of a reason, or as a means to something else, or on the grounds that it possessed a certain desirable feature. He could do nothing but choose, pointlessly and inexplicably.

This understanding of the intellect's contribution to choice may seem rather minimalist; it is just this sort of conception that gives rise to the objection that libertarianism makes choice inexplicable. To a certain extent libertarians themselves are responsible for the prevalence of this objection. the crux of the dispute over freedom is the role of causal determination,

libertarians are tempted to concentrate their energies on explaining why they think freedom is incompatible with causal determinism. They thus devote all their attention to closing off the most obvious possible explanation for choice, and so it seems that the inexplicability of choice is not just an embarrassing consequence of their view but the whole motivation for holding the view in the first place.

If the only point of libertarianism were to secure a place in our ontology for actions that are not determined by antecedent causal conditions, this charge would surely have some merit. In fact, however, libertarians are looking to get more out of their theory than just that. For Scotus, free actions are valuable because in them we express our likeness to the Creator, whose "superabundant sufficiency" is mirrored, though imperfectly, in our own freedom.[25] The paradigmatic instance of freedom is God's creating the universe. As every medieval Christian philosopher agreed, there was nothing about this universe that constrained God to create it. And as Scotus takes pains to emphasize, there can be no finally adequate explanation of why God willed to create as he did.

Freedom thus conceived is a pure perfection, and like every other pure perfection it can, for Scotus, be predicated univocally of God and creatures. So for Scotus free creatures (that is, creatures who have wills) are free *in exactly the same sense* in which God is free. It is their likeness to God's unconditioned creative activity that makes free actions valuable and noble. And for those free actions, as for God's, there can be no fully adequate explanation.

It is important here to point out two implications that the libertarian does *not* wish to draw. First, a free action is not an unintelligible, arbitrary, or random action. The fact that I freely chose to write this paper does not imply that there were no reasons why I chose to write it. There were any number of reasons. The libertarian simply wishes to insist that those reasons can provide only a partial explanation for my choice, since it was possible for me, even in exactly the same circumstances, with

[25] See *Quaestiones subtilissimae super libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis* 9, q. 15, n. 5 (W 4:798a).

exactly the same reasons, to choose differently. Second, not just anything can count as a reason. We do not find ourselves in a position in which we can regard just any old thing as valuable. Being creatures of a determinate sort, we will (so long as we are not pathological) draw our reasons from a fairly limited pool of possibilities.

Scotus endorses this conception of freedom in a number of places. The most striking, perhaps, occurs where he is asking whether the will necessarily enjoys *ifrui)* the end when that end is apprehended by the intellect.[26] He considers an argument for the affirmative:

"Delight is the conjunction of something suitable with that for which it is suited" (Avicenna, *Metaphysics* 8). The end is necessarily suitable to the will. Therefore, when it is conjoined with the will there is delight, and therefore enjoyment *(fruitio).*[27]

Against this Scotus argues thus:

I say that a given thing is either aptitudinally suitable or actually suitable. An *aptitudinally* suitable thing is that which is suitable (i) in virtue of what it itself is and (ii) insofar as it is [suitable] in virtue of the nature of the thing [to which it is suited]. Such a thing is *actually* suitable to everything that has no power over whether something is suitable or unsuitable to it. Therefore, whatever is naturally or *aptitudinally* suitable to the natural or sensitive appetite[28] is also *actually* suitable to it. By contrast, it is in the will's power whether something is actually suitable to it or not. For no thing is actually suitable to the will unless that thing actually pleases the will. Consequently, I deny the minor

"Ordinatio l, d. 1, p. 2, q. 2. For similar passages see J. R. Cresswell, "Duns Scotus on the Will," *Franciscan Studies* 13 (1953): 147-58, esp. 154-56.

[2]· "Avicenna VIII *Metaphysicae:* 'Delectatio est coniunctio convenientis cum convenienti'; finis **necessario convenit voluntati; ergo ex coniunctione eius cum voluntate est delectatio, ergo fruitio"** *(Ordinatio* 1, d. 1, p. 2, q. 2, n. 77 [V 2:59)).

[28] The expression "natural or sensitive appetite" might need explaining, since Scotus's usage differs from Aquinas's. Aquinas typically uses "natural appetite" to designate an inclination that does not follow upon cognition of any sort, and so it is to be distinguished from sensitive appetite, which follows upon sensitive cognition. For Scotus, however, "natural appetite" can be used to designate any appetite that operates deterministically. In other words, it includes any appetite that is a "natural" rather than a "rational" power in the sense explained in part 1 of this paper. The expression "natural appetite" therefore encompasses natural appetite in Aquinas's sense, sensitive appetite, and ,even intellective appetite. The only rational appetite is the will.

premise, where it is said that "the end is necessarily suitable to the will." For that is true only of aptitudinal suitability, not of actual suitability.[29]

Here again we see the contrast between the sensitive appetite and the will. The sensitive appetite has no power over what will be actually suitable to it; therefore, whatever is aptitudinally suitable to it is also actually suitable to it. The same stricture would apply to a purely intellective appetite, as Scotus makes clear at *Reportatio* 2, d. 6, q. 2, n. 9: "An intellective [appetite] . . . would naturally desire what is suitable to the intellect, just as the sensitive appetite desires what is suitable to the sense, and it would be no more free than the sensitive appetite."[30] The will, by contrast, has power over whether what is aptitudinally suitable will also be actually suitable.

Commentators unsympathetic to libertarianism often charge that on this sort of view the will is wrenched apart from the rest of human nature and left dangling in an abyss of untrammeled choice. For example, Patrick Lee compares this view unfavorably with that of Aquinas, who unlike Scotus "keeps the will integrated with the rest of man."[31] Joseph Incandela says that on Scotus's view "the will is truly isolated from and independent of prior attachments or commitments,"[32] and he implies that Iris Murdoch's complaint about the "giddy empty will" of modern moral philosophy applies to Scotus's view.[33]

[29] "dico quod aliquid est aptitudinaliter conveniens, vel actualiter conveniens. Conveniens aptitudinaliter est quod convenit alicui ex se et quantum est ex natura rei, et tale convenit actualiter omni ei in cuius potestate non est quod ei actualiter aliquid conveniat vel disconveniat; et ideo quidquid convenit alicui naturaliter vel aptitudinaliter, appetitu naturali vel appetitu sensitivo, convenit etiam actualiter. Sed in potestate voluntatis est ut ei aliquid actualiter conveniat vel non conveniat; nihil enim convenit sibi nisi quod actu placet. Propter hoc nego minorem, cum dicitur 'finis necessario convenit voluntati'; hoc enim non est verum de convenientia actuali, sed aptitudinali" *(Ordinatio* 1, d. 1, p. 2, q. 2, n. 56 [V 2:106]).

[30] "Uncle intellectivus ... ita naturaliter appeteret conveniens intellectui, sicut appetitus sensitivus conveniens sensui, nee esset magis liber quam appetitus sensitivus" (W 11.1:289a). Scotus uses the subjunctive because he does not in fact believe that any merely intellective appetite exists. The *affectio commodi,* which is intellective appetite, is always associated with the *affectio iustitiae,* in virtue of which the will is free.

[31] Patrick Lee, "Aquinas and Scorns on Liberty and Natural Law," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* 56 (1982): 76.

[32] Incandela, "Experience of Human Freedom," 233.

[33] It is no accident that both Lee and Incandela wish to defend Aquinas's account of freedom as superior to Scotus's and that they do so on the basis of exactly the sort of criticisms that nonlibertarians typically raise against a libertarian conception of freedom. I take this fact to confirm my thesis that

In fact, however, the will's power to set its own ends does not imply that its choice is completely unfettered. *As* I said before, not just anything can count as a reason; or, in Scotus's terminology, not just anything is aptitudinally suitable to the will. The class of aptitudinally suitable things is delimited, not by the will's choice, but by the nature of the agent and the nature of the object. The will, however, does determine which of these aptitudinally suitable things will count as actually suitable. Libertarians are apt to find such a claim perfectly obvious; nonlibertarians are apt to find it perfectly obviously false.

This libertarian conception of freedom leads Scotus to hold a distinctive view of what it means for action to be reasonable. "Reasonable" action might be contrasted with self-frustrating action, or with chaotic action, or with arbitrary action, or with action undertaken on the basis of insufficient deliberation or incomplete information. In any of these senses, Scotus can agree that there is such a thing as reasonable action, and that we have some interest in acting reasonably. But there is a stronger and more morally loaded sense of "reasonable" that we expect from medieval philosophers working in the Aristotelian tradition. In this sense of the word, the reasonable action is the one that has reason on its side, in something like the following sense. While one might have reasons to commit adultery, and reasons to refrain from committing adultery, the conflict between these two sets of reasons could not be resolved *within reason* by anything other than a judgment in favor of refraining from adultery. In this sense of "reasonable," I think Scotus would have to deny that there is any such thing as reasonable action. Where there are competing considerations in favor of incompatible courses of action, the conflict cannot be resolved by reason. It can be resolved only by an act of will by which I decide to regard certain considerations as having a claim on me.

Bear in mind that the paradigmatic case of freedom is God's decision to create this world. Was that a reasonable decision? The concept of "reasonable" in the morally loaded sense does not even seem to apply here. It was not as if the divine intellect pointed out that creation was the reasonable thing to do, and the

Scotus is doing no injustice to Aquinas by rejecting his account precisely on libertarian grounds.

divine will fell in line. It would certainly have been unreasonable for God to create this present world if, for example, his aim had been to produce a world full of unicorns. But apart from questions of divine self-frustration, does it even make sense to ask whether God's free volition to create was a reasonable act on his part?

In just the same way, I think, "reasonable" falls out of moral theory in its distinctive use as a term of all-things-considered commendation. To recur to the case of adultery, Scotus must deny that there is any morally significant sense in which it is unreasonable to commit adultery. It could lead to bad consequences, certainly: disease, illegitimate children, eternal damnation. And of course it would be morally wrong. On the other hand, it could be a lot of fun, and one could very well decide to do it for that reason. Reason points out that it would be fun; reason points out that it would be dangerous. The conflict is not resolved by reason, and so neither committing adultery nor refraining from it could properly be called unreasonable. If one claims that reason tells us that such an action would not be in accordance with the human good, Scotus would simply say that this is mistaken. Reason tells us nothing of the sort. The human good is a loving union with the Triune God, and it is perfectly possible to have such a union even if one commits adultery. Scotus does not simply mean that adulterers can repent and be forgiven. He means (indeed, he explicitly says) that God could easily have set up the moral law in such a way that adultery was not forbidden, and his doing so would in no way have diverted us from the attainment of our ultimate end.[34]

To give another example that Scotus throws out in perfect seriousness: Since God created us in the first place, he would have been well within his rights to impose upon us obligations extending to the whole of our conduct. But he did not do so. Instead he confined himself to imposing the Ten Commandments. So long as we do not violate those commandments, we are free to do as we please. Scotus immediately proceeds to derive from this the conclusion that one is free to sell oneself into slavery.[35] This

[34] *Ordinatio* 3, d. 37, q. un., n. 5 *(W* 7.2:898).
[35] *Ordinatio* 4, d. 26, q. un., n. 10 (W 9:583).

sounds, and is meant to sound, quite extreme.[36] Such a use of one's freedom would be stupid, Scotus admits,[37] but it is no more a violation of the moral law than is marriage, which similarly involves giving up certain rights to one's own body.[38]

VI. CONCLUSION

There is much to be gained by thinking of Scotus as attempting to work out the implications for moral theory of a libertarian understanding of human freedom. We can understand more fully why Scotus rejected Aquinas's account of the will as merely intellective appetite, and consequently why he felt the need to posit an additional inclination, the *affectio iustitiae,* in virtue of which the will could be free in the libertarian sense. We can also understand how Scotus leaves room for the will to choose its own ends, without thereby falling into that caricature of libertarianism according to which the will's choice has no anchor in human nature or the moral order. And finally, we can understand why Scotus adopts his distinctive and un-Aristotelian conception of what it means for an action to be reasonable.[39]

[36] While Scotus did not have quite the attitude toward slavery that we have, he certainly had a profound distaste for it; see Wolter, 114-23.

[37] *Ordinatio* 4, d. 36, q. 1, n. 2 (W 9:755). "Talis subiectio esset fatua." In this passage Scotus is speaking specifically of "that vile servitude" in which the master can sell his slave like cattle.

[38] *Ordinatio* 4, d. 26, q. un., n. 10 (W 9:583). In the context of this passage the comparison between marriage and slavery is not as striking as it seems here. Scotus is considering the argument that God would have to give explicit approval of marriage, because marriage involves giving over one's body into someone else's control. Since by right of creation every body belongs to God, God would have to approve of any such transfer of dominion. In response to this, Scotus argues that it is licit for someone to sell himself into slavery even though Scripture gives no special divine approval for such an action. Now selling oneself into slavery involves a transfer of dominion over one's body just as marriage does. So if it is licit to sell oneself into slavery even though there is no special divine approval for doing so, no special divine approval is required for entering into marriage.

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THE IDEA OF LIMBO IN THOMAS AQUINAS

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LIMBO WAS posited by Christian thinkers initially as a place for the Fathers of the Old Testament, and later as a place for unbaptized infants. In time, thanks largely to the efforts of Albertus Magnus,[1] the single realm of limbo was eventually considered as two places, the *limbus patrum,* or limbo of the Fathers, and the *limbus puerorum,* or limbo of children.[2]

Aquinas's treatment of the idea of limbo is no less systematic than one would expect; he analyzes its distant origins in the questions of original sin and the incarnation, considers in a detailed way the harrowing of hell, and treats extensively the plight of unbaptized infants and the *limbus puerorum.* Although he is less preoccupied with the actual geography of the afterlife than other Scholastics, he is correspondingly more focused upon the theological and philosophical understanding of the various states, and the status of the souls within them.

For the purposes of this article, we shall only examine excerpts from a select few works of Aquinas's vast literary corpus. The first work of importance is his commentary on Peter Lombard's *Sentences,* which dates from the period 1252-56 when he lectured as a *sententarius* at the University of Paris. Another work to be considered is the disputed question on evil *(De Malo).* Its dating is still a subject of controversy,[3] but it was most probably completed before 1268. Finally, there is Aquinas's *magnum opus,*

[1] Albertus Magnus, *In III Sent.,* d. 22, a. 4, and elsewhere.

[2] See A Gaudel, "Limbes," *Dictionnaire de theologie catholique* 9 (Paris, 1926), 760-71; J. Le Goff, "Les limbes," *Nouvelle revue de psychoanalyse* 34 (1986): 151-73.

[3] J. Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas d'Aquino* (Oxford, 1977), 363-64.

the *Summa Theologiae,* begun in 1266 and left unfinished at his death.

I. ORIGINAL SIN

Before considering the complexities of Aquinas's arguments about limbo, we should examine his views on original sin. Aquinas covers the question of original sin in depth in the *Summa Theologiae,* but fortunately he does so with a view to uncovering its simplest elements.[4] Aquinas has a particular view of the state of prelapsarian man. Man was created to enjoy the full beatific vision, but he did not enjoy this in Eden, even though he retained there a greater ability to perceive God than we do. Adam possessed many other special graces from God. He had virtues that directed his reason correctly and enabled him to keep the elements of his will and body in harmony and under the control of reason.[5] Furthermore, he was immortal, by virtue of divine gift, as long as he remained subject to God.[6] Sadly, Adam fell into sin, which Aquinas defined as action contrary to God's eternal law. With Adam's disobedience, sin entered into the world and into human nature.

Several earlier theories about the transmission of original sin were rejected by Aquinas. He denied the idea that a tainted soul is passed on from father to son as a seat of sin, that a soul receives sin from contact with corrupted flesh, and that guilt is passed along through reproduction in the same way that bodily defects could be passed along. Concupiscence is a by-product of original sin, not its primary transmitter. Aquinas placed himself in the Anselmian tradition that original sin was a privation of original justice.[7] Original justice, as Aquinas defined it, was "a definite gift of grace divinely bestowed upon all human nature in the first parent."[8] When it was removed, man became subject to all

'For a detailed study of these matters, *see* the appendices in volume 26 of the Blackfriars edition of the *Summa Theologiae.*

[5] Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 95, a. 3.

'STh I, q. 97, a. 1.

'STh 1-11, q. 85.

[8] "erat quoddam donum gratiae toti humanae naturae divinitus collatum in pdmo parente" *(STh* 1-11, q. 81, a. 2). All quotations from the *Summa* are taken from the Blackfriars edition.

manner of ills, both in mind and in body: "just as human nature was injured in the soul by the disordering of the powers, so also it became corruptible by reason of the disturbance of the body's order. "[9] Original sin was thus a shattered harmony of bodily powers as well as a corrupted habit of souls. All of the divine gifts that come with original justice were meant to be passed along with human nature, but after sin their absence was passed along instead.

Adam's sin could affect all of his progeny in part because of shared human nature. The whole human race is in Adam, with regard to nature: "All who are born of Adam can be considered as one man by reason of sharing the one nature received from the first parent." [10] Thus we all share in the nature of Adam. For Aquinas, all human beings share in a kind of unity: a person can be considered as a single person, but also as a part of a group or "college." One could consider men as being like parts of a body. Since what the head does affects every part of the body, what Adam, the head of the human race, did could affect all mankind. Furthermore, when one considers man according to this corporate principle, the question of individual guilt for original sin is resolved. I may have done nothing personally to merit original sin, but if I am part of a body that sins, I share in the body's guilt and in that body's condemnation. [11] This represents Aquinas's historical consciousness, which is more than the notion of "all men being in one man" that was common to Western theologians since Augustine. Rather, as the Blackfriars editors point out, "it is a unity that may be called continuity." [12] My act of sinful will is intimately connected with the motion of my body that carries it out. Similarly, there is a connection between the disordered nature in all mankind and the act of sinful will in the

[9] "sicut vulnerata est humana natura quantum ad animam per deordinationem potentiarum ... ita etiam est corruptibilis effecta per deordinationem ipsius corporis" (STh 1-11, q. 85, a. 5).

[10] "omnes homines qui nascuntur ex Adam possunt considerari ut unus homo, in quantum conveniunt in natura quam a primo parente accipiunt" *(STh* 1-11, q. 81, a. 1).

[11] Aquinas, *De Malo,* q. 4, a. 3. Note that most of the argument stems from *De Malo,* q. 4. In the *Summa Theologiae* Aquinas merely relies on the idea of the common origin of man, and does not stress the collegiate analogy.

[12] See Blackfriars edition, volume 26, appendix 7.

past that caused it. Hence original sin is a real and intimate continuity of ourselves with our father Adam.

Aquinas notes that what Adam lost in the deprivation of original justice were things that were *supernatural* to him. Original sin is thus the privation of superadded grace, not anything that was meant to be strictly proper to human nature. Human nature is left to itself; it is the source of its own disorder. [13] Original sin is not the addition of a positive evil but rather the loss of something supernatural which would have helped keep the human faculties in balance. Thus postlapsarian mankind is not intrinsically any different from a hypothetical man created merely with the endowment of nature (although practically he is, since he needs something extra to place his person in balance again). It is then not unjust of God to deprive us of something which was meant to be over and above our nature. Nor has the situation remained permanently insoluble. What mankind needs is grace. Aquinas makes little distinction between concepts of healing grace *(gratia sanans)* and elevating grace *(gratia elevans).* For him, grace is necessary both to cleanse and to elevate, since it exists not to heal the basic human nature, but rather to make up for superadded gifts. In the Christian dispensation, that grace is conveyed through the sacrament of baptism. As Aquinas explains:

> It is basic that according to the Catholic faith, we are bound to hold that the first sin of the first man passes to posterity by way of origin. On this account, children are brought to baptism as needing to be cleansed from some infection of sin. The contrary is part of the Pelagian heresy, as Augustine points out in many of his books. [14]

Baptism acts to convey grace, which removes the habit of original sin. The disordered impulses still remain, but they are not sinful *per se.*

[13] Cf. *STh* 1-11, q. 82, a. 1, ad 1 and 3; a. 2, ad 2; a. 4, ad 1 and 3.

[14] "Dicendum quod secundum fidem catholicam est tenendum quod primum peccatum primi hominis originaliter transit in posteros. Propter quod etiam pueri mox nati deferuntur ad baptismum, tanquam ab aliqua infectione culpae abluendi. Contrarium autem est haeresis Pelagianae utpatet per Augustinum in plurimis suis libris" *(STh* 1-11, q. 81, a. 1).

II. THE INCARNATION

The question of original sin leads directly to that of the incarnation, as Aquinas himself states in quite bald terms: "Everywhere in sacred Scripture, the sin of the first man is given as the reason for the incarnation." [15] Aquinas was not sure that this was the only reason for the salvation of man, "since by his infinite power God had many other ways to accomplish this end." [16] Nevertheless, in a way that is dearly strongly influenced by Anselm, he believed that the incarnation was the "most fitting" way to this end. Aquinas gave several reasons for the importance of the incarnation, but the most important was that of making satisfaction for sin. His way of examining this issue is again very dose to that of Anselm. When one has sinned, it is not enough simply to stop sinning. If one has walked away from someone one loves, in order to restart one's relationship with him it is not enough simply to stop walking. One has to return to him. Furthermore, one must make satisfaction for one's actions. In the case of sin, man's satisfaction is all the more important, since sin transgressed divine justice and as such demands punishment as compensation to restore the balance of justice.[17] The sinner must either choose a penance or endure a penance selected by God. However, with regard to original sin, satisfaction by man is impossible, since it is a sin against God, and a sin against God "has a kind of infinity from the infinity of divine majesty." [18] How, then, can satisfaction be made?

Aquinas's solution was that of Anselm; what was needed was the intermediary of a God-man. In a passage that could have come out of *Cur Deus homo* Aquinas says:

> Justice demands satisfaction for sin. But God cannot render satisfaction, just as he cannot merit. Such a service pertains to one who is subject to another. Thus

[15] "Uncle, cum in sacra Scriptura ubique incarnationis ratio ex peccato primi hominis assignetur" *(STh* III, q. I, a. 3).

[16] "Deus enim per suam omnipotentem virtutem poterat humanam naturam multis aliis modis reparare" *(STh* III, q. I, a. 2).

[17] *STh* 1-11, q. 87, a. 6.

[18] "Tum etiam quia peccatum contra Deum commissum quandam infinitatem ex infinitate divinae majestatis" *(STh* III, q. I, a. 2, ad 2).

God was not in a position to satisfy for the sin of the whole of human nature; and a mere human being was unable to do so.... Hence divine wisdom judged it fitting that God should become human, so that this one and the same person would be able both to restore the human race and to offer satisfaction. [19]

Thus Jesus himself was the God-man, able to render fitting satisfaction for man's transgression. Since the sin was against the infinite majesty of God, what was needed was a satisfaction of infinite efficacy, such as could only be rendered by Christ. Furthermore, since Christ was sinless, he alone could satisfy for sin properly. His dignity in himself alone was greater than that of all humanity combined, and thus capable of satisfying for all humanity. Christ's actions were thus the most fitting way that satisfaction could be made, although they were by no means the only way. "God could have freed man otherwise than by Christ's passion, for nothing is impossible with God, "[20] Aquinas insists, in contrast to Anselm, who believed that there could have been no other means of salvation.

Christ's sacrifice does more than make satisfaction, however. Satisfaction alone is of limited worth, since a person could hear of it and still remain unchanged in their sinful actions. It is not enough that we be saved. We must also be restored. This is done through merit and grace. Christ possessed a fullness of grace, which flowed from him to others, uplifting them. This grace is conveyed through the intermediary of the Church:

Grace was in Christ ... not simply as in an individual man, but as in the Head of the whole Church, to whom all are united as members to a head, forming a single mystic person. In consequence, the merit of Christ extends to others insofar as they are his members. [21]

[19] "divinae iustitiae ordo, secundum quam exigitur satisfactio pro peccato. In deo autem satisfactio non cadit, sicut nee meritum, hoc enim est sub alio existentis. Si igitur neque deo competebat satisfacere pro peccato totius narurae humanae, nee purus homo poterat ... conveniens igitur fuit deum hominem iieri, ut sic unus et idem esset qui est reparare et satisiicere posset" (Aquinas, *Compendium Theologiae* 200).

[20] "possibile fuit Deo alio modo hominem liberare quam per passionem Christi, quia *non est impossibile apud Deum omne verbum" (STh* lll, q. 46, a. 2).

[21] "Dicendum quod ... in Christo non solum fuit gratia sicut in quodam homine singulari, sed sicut in capite totius Ecclesiae, cui omnes uniuntur sicut capiti membra, ex quibus constituitur mystice una persona. Et exinde est quod meritum Christi se extendit ad alios inquantum sunt membra ejus" *(STh* III, q. 19, a. 4).

Thus in salvation as in sin, Aquinas refers to the collegiate model of humanity. As the body of human nature shares in the sin of its head, Adam, so the mystical body of humanity, the Church, is saved by the salvation of its head, Christ. The means of salvation is hence incorporation in that body, which was possible only through baptism. As Aquinas says further:

> Adam's sin is communicated to others only through bodily generation. In similar fashion Christ's merit is communicated to others only through the spiritual regeneration of baptism, by which we are incorporated into Christ.[22]

Sin and salvation are intimately connected. As we are condemned through another, so we are saved by another. The merits Christ possessed are extended to us, and the grace that he was given overflows to us. Original sin is thus cleansed by baptism in the Church.

III. CHRIST IN LIMBO

But what of those who died before the advent of Christ? To deal with them, Aquinas chose to include in his system a careful examination of the actions of Christ during his descent into hell. This is considered in greatest depth in question 52 of the *Tertia Pars*, which is divided into eight articles, not all of which are germane to our investigations. The first article asks, "Was it right for Christ to descend into hell?" Aquinas concludes that it was appropriate, for three reasons. First, since Christ came to bear our sins and our human nature, he had to experience everything humans do. Thus, not only did he have to experience death to liberate us from death, he had to descend to hell to deliver us from hell. Such an action was "most fitting" *(conveniens)*. Second, it was again fitting for Christ to descend to hell to free the prisoners of hell, since he had defeated their captor, the devil, by his passion. Third, Aquinas adopts the idea of Christ's illumination of hell. Christ wanted to show his power in hell "by

[22] "sicut peccatum Adae non derivatur ad alios nisi per carnalem generationem, ita meritum Christi non derivatur ad alios nisi per regenerationem spiritualem, quae fit in baptismo, per quam Christo incorporamur" (ibid., ad 3).

visiting and enlightening it."[23] Christ did not go there to be punished, but rather to liberate those who were being punished. To the second objection, Aquinas draws out an unusual notion of the sacraments. Christ's death was a "universal cause of salvation."[24] But universal things have to be applied in particular ways. The living have the sacraments to configure them to Christ's passion, but the dead needed his descent to configure them to his passion. This reason should not be taken to mean that Aquinas approved of universalism, of course; Christ's descent only applied to specific categories of the dead, as we shall see below.

Next Aquinas asks, "Did Christ descend to the hell of the damned?", and the investigation is somewhat more involved. The objections mainly come from Scripture or Augustine, as Aquinas notes the many passages in both sources that refer to a descent to hell. He even speaks of the sorrows of hell (Acts 2:24), observing that

> there is no suffering in the hell of the patriarchs *(inferno patrum)* and of the infants *(inferno puerorum),* for these were not punished by the pain of sense, but only by the pain of loss which traces back to original sin.[25]

It is odd that here (and, indeed, throughout the body of this question) Aquinas does not choose to use the word "limbo," since he had done so years before in his *Commentary on the Sentences.* Nevertheless, it is clear that even in the objections he maintains the idea that those in the limbos are punished only by the pain of loss. Aquinas's solution revolves around a complex description of how a thing occupies a place. He suggests two ways: by the effect the thing produces, and by its essence. In the former way, Christ descended to "each of the hells": to the hell of the damned, to chastise its occupants; to purgatory (Aquinas classes purgatory alongside hell), to bring hope to its occupants; and to the hell of

[23] "etiam potestatem suam ostenderet in inferno, ipsum visitando et illuminando" *(STh* III, q. 52, a. 1).

[24] "causa universalis humanae salutis" *(STh* III, q. 52. a. 1, ad 2).

[25] "Sed dolores non sunt in inferno patrum, neque etiam in inferno puerorum, qui non puniuntur poena sensus propter peccatum actuale, sed solum poena damni propter peccatum originale" *(STh* III, q. 52, a. 2, obj. 2).

the Fathers, where "he brought the light of eternal glory,"[26] again making use of the theme of illumination. With regard to the second way, Aquinas gives the following answer:

> Christ's soul descended to that place only in hell where the just were being held, so that he might, as to his soul, visit in their place those whom he had, according to his divinity, inwardly visited by his grace. Thus while he was in one part of hell, the effects of his presence were felt in all parts of hell, just as, by suffering on one spot on earth, he by his passion delivered the whole world.[27]

Christ did not move locally, but extended the effects of his power. From one place he radiated his effects and power to many places. He loosed sorrows in hell: the sorrows of punishment (from which Christ had already preserved the Fathers, "as a physician is judged to have cured a disease which he has prevented by medicine"),[28] and the sorrows of glory deferred, which he cured by bringing that glory. Aquinas rejects the theme of Christ's preaching in hell (cf. 1Pet3:19) entirely. His actions in hell were powered by his passion, not his preaching; the reference in 1 Peter is to a "manifestation of his divinity,"[29] or, perhaps, following Augustine, it envisages metaphorically those in the prison of this life. Aquinas also address the troublesome image of the bosom of Abraham, with which Augustine had had such problems (cf. *Letter* 164 to Evodius). Aquinas considers the image in two ways. It can mean a place of rest, with no pain of sense, and as such it is not hell; or it·can mean the loss of a yearned-for glory, which would make it a place of suffering, a hell. Since that glory has been fulfilled by Christ's advent, there is no further connotation of suffering in the image of the bosom of Abraham, and since the time of Christ it is taken entirely to mean the repose of the blessed.

[26] "lumen aeterne gloriae infundit" (*STh* III, q. 52, a. 2).

[27] "anima Christi descendit solum ad locum inferni in quo justi detinebantur, ut quos ipse per gratiam interius visitabat secundum divinitatem, et eos secundum animam visitaret et loco. Sic autem in una parte inferni existens, effectum suum aliqualiter ad omnes inferni partes derivavit, sicut et in uno loco terrae passus, totum mundum sua passione liberavit" (ibid.).

[28] "sicut medicus dicitur solvere morbum, a quo praeservat per (ibid., ad 2).

[29] "potest quam manifestatio divinitatis ejus" (ibid., ad 3).

The third article asks, "Was the whole Christ in hell?" Aquinas concludes that the whole Christ was indeed in hell, making use of the distinction between nature and person and between *totus* and *totum.* Christ was more than the sum of his parts: "All places taken together could not contain his immensity. Rather, his immensity contains all things."[30] The fourth article asks, "Did Christ remain in hell for any length of time?" and considers specifically Christ's words to the good thief in Luke 23:43. Aquinas concludes that Christ was in hell as long as his body was in the tomb, "so that his soul might be led forth from hell at the very same moment his body was issuing from the tomb."[31] Aquinas uses the associated themes and imagery from the *Gospel of Nicodemus:* Christ shattered the gates of hell immediately, and freed the Fathers immediately, but they all remained together in hell until the resurrection. While they waited, Christ shone the light of glory over the Fathers, making a kind of paradise for them. It was this form of paradise that Christ promised to the good thief.

Having considered the nature and background of Christ's descent into hell, Aquinas spends the next half of the question 52 dealing with the four categories of people detained in penal realms: the Fathers, the damned, unbaptized infants, and those in purgatory. The fifth article deals with the Fathers, and whether Christ released them. Aquinas's response reiterates the idea that in his descent Christ "was acting by the power of his passion,"[32] a power that freed humanity from both sin and the debt of punishment. Men have a debt of punishment for two kinds of sin: the actual sins they commit and original sin. The debt of punishment of original sin was "bodily death and the exclusion from the life of glory";[33] it was by this that the Fathers were held and from this that they were liberated by Christ's passion and descent. Aquinas here again addresses Augustine's confusion over the bosom of Abraham.[34] It is clear that the nature of that image had

[30] "sed nee omnia loca simul accepta ejus immensitatem comprehendere possum quinimmo ipse sua immensitate omnia comprehendit" *(STh* III, q. 52, a. 3, ad 3).

[31] "ut simul anima ejus educeretur de inferno, et corpus de sepulcro" *(STh* III, q. 52, a. 4).

[32] "operatus est in virtute suae passionis" *(STh* III, q. 52, a. 5).

[33] "mors corporalis, et exclusio a vita gloriae" (ibid.).

[34] Augustine, *Epistola 167,* 3.7 *(PL* 33:711).

changed dramatically. Aquinas has to go through elaborate ratiocinations to adapt Augustine's authority to his own cause. Aquinas maintains that Augustine really was arguing against those who maintained that the Fathers had undergone "sufferings of a penal nature." [35] Aquinas believes that the Fathers did indeed experience a beatific presence, but that it was merely a hope of the real thing, and not the genuine presence, that the Fathers were "blessed in their hope, although not yet perfectly blessed in actual fact."[36] He also recurs to the idea of the twin debts of punishment. During their lives, the Fathers were freed by Christ from all actual and original sins. He also freed them from the debt of punishment for actual sin, but not from the debt of punishment of original sin. Hence, the Fathers needed his descent. The same applies to us today: through baptism and belief in Christ we are forgiven everything except the debt of punishment for original sin, which is bodily death. The Fathers thus had to remain in hell until Christ's presence there brought them the fruit of his passion. His presence with them was part of their glory.

The sixth article deals with whether Christ freed some of the damned from hell, chiefly with regard to the evidence of passages from Scripture that use the same infernal terminology that Aquinas applied to the hell of the Fathers. Aquinas's response is to arrange the texts in such a way that the authoritative ones indicate that only the elect were released. The operative idea here as before is that Christ descended into hell by the power of his passion, and only those who were joined to that passion were released. Those in hell either had no faith in Christ's passion, or, if they had faith, they "had no likeness in charity to the suffering Christ."[37]

Similar arguments are used in the seventh article, which asks whether infants who died in original sin alone were freed, since, like the Fathers, they had only original sin. Aquinas's answers are concerned with faith and charity, and provide a more thorough development of an idea presented earlier. Christ's descent into

[35] "doloribus poenarum fuisse subjectos" *(STh* III, q. 52, a. 5, ad 1).

[36] "erant beati in spe, licet nondum essent perfecte beati in re" (ibid.).

[37] "nullam conformitatem habebant ad charitatem Christi patientis" *(STh* III, q. 52, a. 6).

hell "freed only those who by their faith and charity were united to his passion."[38] As children unfortunately do not possess reason, they were unable to make the choice that the Fathers did to gain faith, and thus could not claim the same reward. Nor did they profit from the faith of their parents, since they did not possess baptism, the "sacrament of faith" *(sacramentum fidei).* The Fathers, on the other hand, possessed faith, and through faith, grace. Only through grace can one enter heaven, and children lack this necessary grace entirely. Infants are not among the "many" to whom Christ's grace extends: Adam's sin is passed physically through physical generation, but Christ's grace is passed spiritually through spiritual regeneration, a regeneration that infants do not share. The descent of Christ does not count as baptism for them, despite being powered by the same source, since baptism is only administered in life, and change is impossible after death. Lacking baptism and life, infants lack all possibility of change.

Finally, Aquinas considers "Whether Christ's descent into hell freed the souls in purgatory?" Clearly, by the question and his answer to it, Aquinas shows that he considered purgatory as a realm coexisting with the other realms of the afterlife, even alongside the limbo of the Fathers. By considering it where he does, it is also clear that he views it more in a penal light than did other Scholastic authors. His answer to the question hinges on an idea he derived from Gregory's *Moralia:* Christ "does not allow us to go to that place from which his descent has set others free."[39] That is to say, after his descent Christ sealed off the hell of the Fathers, but he must have left purgatory alone, since people still go there. On the other hand, Christ's descent to hell was powered by his passion, and this passion was an eternal power. It did not cease to have effect after his descent, but is still as powerful today as it was then. Thus, if at the time of Christ's descent to hell there were some souls in purgatory who were sufficiently purified to be like the souls who in our time are freed from purgatory by Christ's passion, "there is no reason why they

[38] "in illis solis effectum liberationis habuit qui per fidem et charitatem passionis Christi conjungebantur" *(STh* III, q. 52, a. 7).

[39] "nosillo ire non patitur, unde jam alios descendo liberavit" *(Gregory,Moralia* 13.43 [PL 75: 1038]).

were not delivered from purgatory when Christ descended into hell."[40] This would only be for a specific set of souls, however; souls are not delivered from purgatory *en masse* because they are there for individual personal defects, and undergo individual penances. Christ's descent was an act of atonement which had to be applied to those in purgatory on an individual basis. "Exclusion from the glory of God was a general defect, pertaining to all human nature"[41]: the Fathers were delivered from their realm *en masse* because they possessed only the general defect and no personal ones.

IV. MORE PRECISE EXAMINATIONS OF THE AFTERLIFE

The *Summa Theologiae* gives involved theological reasons for the actions of Christ, but does not detail the realms of the afterlife in great depth. Aquinas died before he could complete the final questions of the *Summa,* which would deal with otherworldly matters, but a *Supplementum* to the *Tertia Pars* was stitched together out of his *Commentary on the Sentences* some time after 1274. This was done by some of his students. Since, as we have noted, there is remarkable consistency in Aquinas's thought, we can go back to his *Commentary* as his students did for the information that is lacking in the *Summa.* His treatments of limbo, which in the *Commentary* he names as such, rather than *infernus puerorum* or *infernus patrum,* are found largely in distinction 45 of book 4. We may begin by examining the terminal segment of the distinction, in which Aquinas asks whether so many realms of the afterlife ought to be distinguished. His arguments on this point detail a number of ways in which the realms of the afterlife can be multiplied. One curious one envisages the possibility that there is a special realm for the Fathers after their delivery from limbo: since they had to wait for the glory of their soul in a special place, should they also have to wait in a special place for the glory of their bodies (viz., during the

[40] "tales nihil prohibet per descensum Christi ad inferos a purgatorio esse liberatos" *(STh* III, q. *52,* a. 8).

[41] ""exclusio a gloria Dei erat quidam defectus generalispertinens ad totam humana!ll naturam" (ibid., ad 3).

final resurrection)? Addressing all of these objections leaves a bewildering variety of places in the afterlife: how many should there be?

Aquinas numbers the realms of the afterlife according to the varieties of *status* of the individual souls therein. He considers them according to the qualities of merit in a way that is again very similar to that of Albertus Magnus. The categorization is worth quoting in full:

I respond that it should be said, that the receptacles of souls are distinguished according to the souls' diverse statuses. For a soul joined to a mortal body is in a state of meriting; but having exited from the body it is in a state of receiving good or evil for its merits. Therefore after death either it is in a state of receiving its final reward, or it is in a state of being impeded from it. But if it is in a state of receiving its final reward, this is twofold: either with regard to good, and so it is paradise, or with regard to evil, and so by reason of actual sin it is hell, but by reason of original sin it is the limbo of children. But if it is in a state where it is impeded from receiving final reward, this is either on account of a defect of person, and so it is purgatory, in which souls are detained such that they do not receive their rewards straightaway on account of sins which they have committed; or on account of defect of nature, and so it is the limbo of the Fathers, in which they were detained from obtaining glory on account of the guilt of human nature, which was not yet able to be expiated. [42]

A diagram of these categories may assist in clarifying them:

The soul receiving its final reward:

with regard to good — paradise

with regard to evil
for actual sin — hell

[42] "Respondeo dicendum, quod receptacula animarum distinguuntursecundum diversosstatus earum. Anima autem conjuncta mortali corpori habet statum merendi; sed exita corpore est in statu recipiendi pro meritis bonum vel malum. Ergo post mortem vel est in statu recipientis finale praemium, vel est in statu quo impeditur ab illo. Si autem est in statu recipientis finalem retributionem, hoc est dupliciter: vel quantum ad bonum, et sic est paradisus; vel quantum ad malum; et sic ratione actualis culpae est infernus, ratione autem originalis est limbus puerorum. Si autem est in statu quo impeditur a finali retributione consequenda; vel hoc est propter defectum personae; et sic est purgatorium, in quo detinentur animae, ne statim praemium consequantur propter peccata quae commiserunt; vel propter defectum naturae, et sic est limbus patrum, in quo detinebantur patres a gloriae propter reatum humanae naturae, qui nondum poterat expiari" (Aquinas, IV *Sent.*, d. 45, q. 1, a. 3).

for original sin	limbo of children

The soul impeded from receiving its final reward:

due to defect of person	purgatory
due to defect of nature	limbo of the Fathers

By this scheme Aquinas comes up with five realms of the afterlife, three permanent ones (paradise, hell, and the *limbus puerorum),* and two transitory ones (purgatory and the *limbus patrum).* The decisive factor is merit, and thus he is able to reduce the proliferation of realms that he presents in the objections. Thus there is not merely one realm in the afterlife, since good happens in one way but evil happens in many ways: there is one realm for reward, but several for punishment. Similarly, though there is one state of merit or demerit, there are several states for receiving according to demerit, hence the need for several penal realms. Since there are different places of punishment for original sin, "on that account a twofold limbo corresponds to that sin."[43] The *aer caliginosus* of the demons is a place in which demons are assigned to try us, not a place granted to them as a result of merit, so it is not a realm; neither is the terrestrial paradise, since it "pertains more to the state of the traveler than to the state of those receiving for their merits,"[44] nor is the earth itself despite the fact that souls undergo purgation here, since they do so only as an example for our edification. There are not an infinite number of realms of the afterlife, since "diversity in punishment or rewards does not diversify the state, and it is according to diversity that receptacles are distinguished."[45] Finally, with regard to the curious objection about the Fathers, Aquinas notes that they have to wait no longer for their rewards. The reward of the body is an overflowing from the reward of the soul, and the Fathers have earned their reward. Aquinas fixes the number of the receptacles of the afterlife firmly at five.

[43] "et ideo illi culpae respondet duplex limbus" (IV *Sent.,* d. 45, q. 1, a. 3, ad 3).

[44] "pertinet magis ad statum viatoris quam ad statum recipientis pro meritis" (ibid., ad 5).

[45] "quod diversitas graduum in poenis vel praemiis non diversificat statum,; secundum cujus diversitatem receptacula distinguuntur" (ibid., ad 7).

V. THE INFERNAL REALMS

We can, however, go on to determine how Aquinas positions the realms of the afterlife, that is, how he determines what I have called their geography. He does this during his examination of the descent of Christ into hell in distinction 22 of book 3 of his *Commentary.* Many of the issues dealt with here are repeated and amplified in question 52 of the *Tertia Pars* of the *Summa Theologiae* and as such do not need repetition, but there are a few places where Aquinas's earlier arguments in the *Commentary* are more detailed, and as such worthy of attention. We see here more of Aquinas's thoughts about salvation history. Aquinas believes that because of the debt of original sin, all men descended to "hell" *(infernus)* before the passion of Christ, grouping all the non-heavenly realms of the afterlife under that title. However, he makes several distinctions about hell, with regard to both place and punishment. He conceives of hell as being fourfold:

> To the second question it should be said, that hell is fourfold. One is the hell of the damned, in which are darkness and the lack of the divine vision, both with regard to the lack of grace, and the fact that there is sensible punishment there; and this hell is the place of the damned. Another is the hell above that, in which are darkness both because of the lack of the divine vision and because of the lack of grace, but there is not there sensible punishment: and it is called the limbo of children. Another is above that one, in which are darkness with regard to the lack of the divine vision, but not with regard to the lack of grace, but there is there the punishment of sense; and it is called purgatory. Another is greatly above it, in which is darkness with regard to lack of the divine vision, but not with regard to the lack of divine grace, nor is there sensible punishment there; and this is the hell of the holy fathers; and to this place alone Christ descended with regard to place, but not with regard to the experience of darkness. [46]

[46] "Ad secundam quaestionem dicendum, quod quadruplex est infernus. Unus est infernus damnatorum, in quo sunt tenebrae et quantum ad carentiam divinae visionis, et quantum ad carentiam gratiae, et est ibi poena sensibilis; et hie infernus est locus damnatorum. Alius est infernus supra istum, in quo sunt tenebrae et propter carentiam divinae visionis, et propter carentiam gratiae, sed non est ibi poena sensibilis; et dicitur limbus puerorum. Alius supra hunc est, in quo sunt tenebrae quantum ad carentiam divinae visionis, sed non quantum ad carentiam gratiae, sed est ibi poena sensus; et dicitur purgatorium. Alius magis supra est, in quo est tenebra quantum ad carentiam divinae visionis, sed non quantum ad carentiam gratiae, necque est ibi poena sensibilis; et hie est infernus sanctorum patrum; et in hunc tantum Christus descendit quantum ad locum, sed non quantum ad tenebrarum experientiam" (III *Sent.,* d. 22, q. 2, a. 1, qcla. 3).

First and most importantly, this formulation tells us how Aquinas arranges the realms of the afterlife, as follows:

[heaven]
hell of the Fathers
purgatory
limbo of children
hell of the damned

Presumably heaven, although not mentioned in the quotation above, is at the top of this scheme, but we should notice how Aquinas places the *limbus patrum* closest to it, "greatly above" the other penal realms. Here again he chooses to view purgatory as a penal rather than a heavenly realm, but it does lie exactly in the middle between heaven and the hell of the damned. Curiously enough, the two "temporary" realms, the *limbus patrum* and purgatofy, are in the middle and next to each other. When they are undone, the order will be as follows:

heaven
limbo of children
hell of the damned

This results in the *limbus puerorum* being placed closer to heaven, the middle ground between heaven and hell. With regard to the qualities of the four penal realms, a chart can be constructed as follows:

Realm	Elements Present			
	Punishment of Sense	Darkness	Grace	Beatific Vision
Hell of the Fathers	NO	YES	YES	NO
Purgatory	YES	YES	YES	NO
Limbo of children	NO	YES	NO	NO
Hell of the damned	YES	YES	NO	NO

Clearly, with respect to these categories, the realms get better as one moves "up," gaining the vital quality of grace and losing the punishment of sense.

Curiously, Aquinas elsewhere describes paradise as threefold as well: the earthly paradise, where Adam was placed; the empyrean, the celestial paradise of the body; and the beatific vision, which is the paradise of the soul.[47] It is this threefold distinction that enables Aquinas to posit that Christ stayed in the *limbus patrum* until the resurrection and yet could still make good his promise on the cross to Dismas, the good thief. Aquinas does not itemize the celestial realms here as he does the infernal ones; the empyrean and beatific vision seem to be place and quality, respectively, but it is worthwhile to record that he does consider them.

Returning to distinction 45 of book 4 of the *Commentary,* we see Aquinas considering each of the limbos in detail. He first asks if the limbo of hell *(limbus inferni)* is the same as the bosom of Abraham. It seems not: the chief reason being Augustine's famous remark about never finding hell in a good sense in Scripture.[48] Aquinas's overall answer to the problem is complex, but he maintains that the terms "limbo of hell" and "bosom of Abraham" are synonymous. The solution has to do with merit and with faith: "after death the souls of men are not able to find rest except by the merit of faith."[49] The first man to have faith was Abraham, and hence the name of the repose of the Fathers is called the bosom of Abraham in his honor. However, their status has changed over time, with respect to the advent of Christ. Before Christ's coming, their status involved "a certain rest through exemption from punishment,"[50] hence it was called the bosom of Abraham. Yet at the same time it also involved a lack of rest, with regard to the delay of the beatific vision, hence it was also called the limbo of hell. It is called the former because of "what was

[47] III *Sent.,* d. 22, q.2, a. 1.

[48] Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram* 12.64 *(PL* 34:482).

[49] "animae hominum post mortem ad quietem pervenire non possunt nisi merito fidei" (IV *Sent.,* d. 45, q. 1, a. 2a).

[50] "quidem quietem per immunitatem poenae" (ibid.).

good in it" and the latter because of "its deficiencies."[51] However, for Aquinas the two terms are no longer synonymous:

> Therefore before the advent of Christ the limbo of hell and the bosom of Abraham were one place accidentally and not essentially, and consequently after the advent of Christ nothing prevents the bosom of Abraham from being entirely distinct from limbo, since things which are one accidentally may be separated.[52]

Thus the bosom of Abraham is today a positive term, since it connotes the Fathers' enjoyment of the beatific vision; and since that enjoyment is what all Christians seek, the Church may pray for her faithful to be brought there.

The next question considers whether the limbo of hell is the same as the hell of the damned, contending that either "limbo is the same as hell, or a part of hell."[53] Aquinas's solution to the difficulty comes from a consideration of two factors: quality and situation. If one considers the qualities of limbo and hell they are distinct. Both places involve some form of punishment, but in hell there is the punishment of sense which lasts forever, while in the limbo of the Fathers there was no punishment of sense, nor did the realm last after the passion of Christ. The location becomes a little easier to understand considered according to the factor of situation. The situation in both cases involves punishment. Aquinas's view is that

> it is probable that hell and limbo are in the same place, or that they are continuous as it were, yet so that the limbo of the Fathers is called a certain higher part of hell.[54]

Here he adapts the old formulation about a "higher hell" almost entirely, not specifying the complex relationship between the hells we saw above. Doubtless the important word here is

[51] "quod habebat de bono … quod habebat de malo" (ibid., ad 1).

[52] "Limbus ergo inferni et sinus Abrahae fuerunt ante Christi adventum unum per accidens, et non per se; et ideo nihil prohibet post Christi adventum esse sinum Abrahae omnino diversum a limbo: quia ea quae sunt unum per accidens, separari contingit" (IV *Sent.*, d. 45, q. 1, a. 2a).

[53] "ergo limbus est idem quod infernus, vel pars inferni" (IV *Sent.*, d. 45, q. I, a. 2b, obj. 1).

[54] "sic probabile est quod idem locus, vel quasi continuus, sit infernus et limbus; ita tamen quod quaedam superior pars inferni limbus patrum dicatur" (IV *Sent.*, d. 45, q. 1, a. 2b).

"continuous," limbo being in some sense a continuation of the infernal realms. In this question, the accent is on the notion of gradation of punishment: those who have the greatest guilt obtain a "darker and deeper place in hell," while the Fathers had a "higher and less dark place."[55] Christ either "bit" or went to hell (d. Hos 13:14; the Creed) considered to be the same place as the limbo of hell with regard to situation.[56] Job Ooh 17:16) bewailed the fate of hell when he was bound only for a part of it. "All penal places are included under the same heading,"[57] Aquinas concluded.

Aquinas's third question asks whether the limbo of children is the same as the limbo of the Fathers; it would seem so, given that those in both suffer original sin alone. (Here he considers the two limbos simultaneously, and refers to the limbo of the Fathers as such, rather than as the limbo of hell.) However, he concludes that the two realms are not the same. He maintains that since for actual sin both hell and purgatory are owed, and for original sin both the limbo of the Fathers and the limbo of children are owed, and given the fact that hell and purgatory are not the same place, neither should be the two limbos. With regard to quality, the limbos must be different, since the Fathers had faith and grace, while children do not. However, with regard to situation:

> it is probably believed that the place of both was the same, unless the repose of the blessed was in a higher place that the limbo of children, as has been said about limbo and hell.[58]

Here again Aquinas seems to be considering all penal places under one location. The limbo of the Fathers and that of children are

[55] "obscuriorem et profundiorem locum ... supremum et minus tenebrosum locum habuerunt" (ibid.).

[56] The quotation from Hosea ("0 death, I willbe thy bite") was taken by many authors to mean that Christ metaphorically "bit" hell, taking away a number of the people who were in it (i.e., the Fathers of the Old Testament). He could not have "bit" the entirety of hell, lest he get a "mouthful" of sinners righteously in hell; therefore the Hosea quotation was taken to mean that the Fathers were in a place on the edge of hell, where they could be "bitten off" separately from the rest of the souls in hell. The Creed ("He descended into hell"), on the other hand, implies that Christ went to hell proper, and does not imply a special place on the rim of hell for the Fathers.

[57] "quia sub eodem includitur omnis locus poenarum" (ibid., ad 3).

[58] "probabiliter creditur utrorumque idem locus fuisse; nisi quod requies beatorum adhuc erat in superiori loco quam limbus puerorum, sicut de limbo et inferno dictum est" (IV *Sent.*, d. 45, q. 1, a. 2c).

both "limbos"; the former is closer to heaven, as we have seen. The Fathers and children are different by situation, since their original blame was different. By their faith the Fathers had made up for original sin with regard to infection of person, but it remained attached to their nature, until Christ made satisfaction for it. Original sin remains in person *and* in nature for children. Since the Fathers had only a slight defect of person, their punishment was the lightest: for them "the very delay of glory is called a certain kind of punishment." [59] However, infants are impeded eternally, and as such, they require a different location.

VI. THE LIMBO OF CHILDREN

Having seen how Aquinas views the geography of the afterlife, the effects of the descent of Christ, and the nature of the limbo of the Fathers, it is time to address his views on the state of unbaptized infants in the afterlife. The *Summa Theologiae* does deal with the *limbus puerorum*, but does not present detailed views of the status of the children therein. Such views can be found largely in distinction 33 of book 2 of the *Commentary on the Sentences.*[60] The theme is the penalty for death for those dying in a state of original sin alone, and thus the distinction is functionally a treatise on the *limbus puerorum*, although the term is not used there.

It begins with the question of whether those dying in original sin alone should be punished by the pain of sense, which seems plausible for a number of reasons. Aquinas, however, believes they should not. He appeals to the *poena mitissima* idea of Augustine,[61] to indicate that children do not suffer sensible punishment. Such would be illogical: since punishment is equal to enjoyment of sin (d. Rev 17:7), a sin in which there is no pleasure entails no sensible punishment. Aquinas invokes the ideas of Gregory Nazianzus, who distinguishes between several classes of

[59] "ipsa dilatio gloriae quaedam poena dicatur" (ibid., ad 2).

[60] This in turn was edited into the *Tertia Pars* of the *Summa* between question 70 ("On the condition of the soul separated from the body"), and question 71 ("On suffrages for the dead") by Nicolai, one of Aquinas's students. Modern editions of the *Summa* tend to include this in an appendix, if indeed they include it at all.

[61] Augustine, *Contra Julianum* 5.44 (PL 44:809).

the baptized: those who reject baptism, those who neglect baptism, and those who fail to receive it through no personal fault.[62] Gregory indicates that the last group will not be damned, since they have no personal sin "and have suffered rather than caused their loss [of baptism]."[63] However, neither will they be saved. Gregory invokes the idea of a mean: such people are worthy of neither punishment nor honor. It is clear that this latter idea is what motivated Aquinas, leading him elsewhere to speak of the *limbus puerorum.* But here he speaks of original sin, and its nature and effects. This sin comes to us via our origins, and not through personal fault. As a result, it does not deprive us of anything in nature, but rather of something superadded to nature, which is to say the beatific vision. Aquinas states his conclusion quite baldly: "the loss of this vision is the proper and only punishment of original sin after death."[64] There is no pain to this loss; it is a loss of a superadded gift, and one which by ordinary human nature we could not have reached anyway.

Aquinas, however, goes on from this point to develop another idea:

> On the other hand, those who are under sentence for original sin will suffer no loss whatever in other kinds of perfection and goodness which are consequent upon human nature by virtue of principles.[65]

Unbaptized infants may still maintain the sum total of their human goods (he expands upon this idea below). The only pain they suffer is the pain of loss. Original sin is the least sin, and because it is not voluntary it is not punished greatly; the pain of loss is enough. Pain in the afterlife is different from pain in this life. Although there is sensible punishment for original sin in this life, it is caused by natural things; pain in the afterlife is caused by divine justice. Furthermore, since the concupiscence of original sin conveys no pleasure, as such it deserves no sensible pain. Finally,

[62] Gregory Nazianzus, *In Sanctum baptisma* (PG 36:359-427).

[63] "atque hanc jacturam passi potius fuerint, quam fecerint" (ibid. [PG 36:390]).

[64] ""et ideo carentia hujus visionis est propria et sola poena originalis peccati post mortem" (II *Sent.*, d. 33, q. 2, a. 1).

[65] "In aliis autem perfectionibus et bonitatibus quae naturam humanam consequuntur ex suis principiis, nullum detrimentum sustinebunt pro peccato originali damnati" (ibid.).

Aquinas concludes with an important idea about postresurrection bodies. Infants will enjoy the privilege of impassibility as do saints, but not for the same reasons. Saints will lack the capacity to suffer, given as a gift of God, but unbaptized infants will be shielded from all active agents that can cause suffering. This is an action of divine mercy, rather than a divine gift. Aquinas is here in conformity with an established theological idea, in this case, that of William of Auxerre.[66]

Aquinas next asks whether unbaptized infants suffer any kind of spiritual affliction (over and above physical pain) from their state. It would seem that the deprivation of the beatific vision is a serious thing, worse even than the pain of hellfire. Aquinas's response to this question gives us a very clear portrait of his view of the status of these infants. He considers the nature of the things that cause sorrow. In the afterlife, one feels sorrow because of sin or because of punishment. The damned despair over sins which they have committed which can never be cleansed (this is part of the "worm of conscience"), but on this point Aquinas reiterates Augustine's *poena mitissima* idea, and notes that in no way can the souls of unbaptized infants share the same punishment as the damned, since such a punishment is not *mitissima.* Furthermore, one cannot grieve over punishment per se; it has been instituted by the will of God, and is part of divine justice. Finally, since reason does not allow one to be disturbed by something one could not avoid, unbaptized infants will not be disturbed, since "in these children there is right reason disturbed by no actual sin."[67] Thus, unbaptized infants suffer no sorrow with regard to their state.

Aquinas considers three possible explanations of a state that would allow unbaptized infants to feel no sorrow. The first is that they will suffer no sorrow because their reason will be so very much in the dark that they will not know what they have lost. This seems unlikely to Aquinas, since he believesthat a soul, freed from the burden of its body, should be able to know the things

[66] William of Auxerre, *Summa aurea* 4.18.3 (ed. J. Ribaillier, *Spice/egium Bonaventurianum* 16-20, 4 vols. [Rome, 1980-87], 4:495).

[67] "Sed in pueris est ratio recta nullo actuali peccato obliquata" (II *Sent.,* d. 33, q. 2, a. 2, sc 2).

"reason is able to explore, and many more besides."[68] Thus, Aquinas stands very firmly in the tradition, established by William of Auvergne, of the capacity of infants to use natural reason.[69] The second explanation is that they have a perfect knowledge of all things subject to reason. This allows them to come to know God, and by so doing feel a little sorrow for not being with him, although this sorrow is mitigated, since they will also be able to know they are not being punished for any act of their own will. This explanation, too, seems unlikely to Aquinas: there can be no little suffering for so great a loss, so it would not be a *poena mitissima.* Furthermore, he reiterates, "since original sin is free of all pleasure its punishment is free from all pain."[70] The third argument is the one Aquinas seems to favor: that unbaptized infants "will know perfectly everything subject to natural knowledge."[71] They will know they are deprived of the beatific vision, and they will know why, but their knowledge will not cause them any pain. Aquinas's examination of the reasons for this continues an idea developed in the previous article, that one cannot grieve for the loss of that which one was not meant naturally to have, any more than normal people grieve because they do not have wings or are not kings. Normal adults who have the use of free will can prepare themselves to receive the grace by which they can attain eternal life. Infants, however, are different from adults in this: they were "never adapted to possess eternal life."[72] Such an end is beyond both their nature and their abilities, since they can perform no action to gain it for themselves. They need the help of others to attain salvation, through baptism, which operates from superabundant grace, conveying to them what they have not merited on their own. They will not grieve in their state; on the contrary, Aquinas maintains:

[68] "ratione investigari possint, et etiam multo plura" (II *Sent.*, d. 33, q. 2, a. 2).

[69] William of Auvergne, *De vitiis et peccatis* 7 (ed. *Guilielmi Alvemi opera omnia,* 2 vols [Frankfurt-am-Main, 1963], 1:278).

[70] "unde delectatione remota a culpa originali,omnis dolor ab ejus poena excluditur" (II *Sent.*, d. 33, q. 2, a. 1).

[71] "in eis est perfecta cognitio eorum quae naturali cognitioni subjacent" (ibid.).

[72] "pueri nunquam fuerunt proportionati ad hoc quod vitam aeternam habe;ent" (ibid.).

they will in nowise grieve for being deprived of the divine vision, nay, rather, they will rejoice that they will have a large share of God's goodness and their own natural perfections. [73]

Thus their state is a positive one, in which they remain constantly conscious of God's goodness.

VII. LATER CONCLUSIONS ON THE LIMBO OF CHILDREN

Fifteen years later, Aquinas returned to this question in his treatise *De Malo.* In it he reiterated substantially the three arguments just rehearsed, but added to them the question of supernatural knowledge. What sort of knowledge do unbaptized infants possess? Certainly they have natural knowledge, but what of supernatural knowledge? Aquinas believes that they do not possess supernatural knowledge, which comes only through faith, a faith which they lack of their own energies, and which is not conferred to them through the sacrament of faith, baptism. All this has been established, but the question remains: under what form of knowledge does knowledge of the final end of man fall? Is knowing that we are destined for the beatific vision natural or supernatural knowledge? It would seem to be the former, but if it is so, it would seem unbaptized infants would thereby be saddened. In contrast to his position in the *Commentary,* Aquinas here insists (following 1 Cor 2:9, "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man, what things God has prepared for those who love him") that the full knowledge of the supernatural end of man is proper only to the saints, and is a glory "above human thought." Full knowledge of the final destiny of man is a gift of the Holy Spirit, and is a revelation of faith. Since unbaptized infants have no faith, they lack this knowledge.

And therefore, the souls of children do not know themselves to be deprived of such a good, and on that account they are not sad, but they possess what they have from nature without sadness. [74]

[73] "et ideo nihil omnino dolebunt de carentia visionis divinae; immo magis gaudebunt de hoc quod participabunt multum de divina bonitate, et perfectionibus naturalibus" (ibid.).

[74] "Et ideo se privari tali boni, animae puerorum non cognoscunt, et hoc noll dolent; sed hoc quod per naturam habent, absque dolore possident" *(De Malo,* q. 5, a. 3; ed. *Quaestiones disputatae* 2 vols. [Turin/Rome, 1965], 2:549-50).

Thus, unbaptized infants possess a certain kind of ignorance, at least of higher things.

Aquinas's response to the objections raised clarify the issue further. In distinction 33 of book 2 his *Commentary on the Sentences,* he allows that being deprived of the beatific vision is a worse punishment than hell, but only for those who have free will and know they have lost heaven. Lacking free will means that unbaptized infants do not suffer. They have no capacity to reach such an end. We here on Earth can certainly grieve over the loss of a limb or an inheritance, but we can do so because these are things over which we have some kind of claim; we do not have a claim on salvation. While being without what we desire can certainly cause pain, unbaptized infants are separated from God only with regard to the beatific vision. It should be noted that

> they are not wholly separated from him: in fact, they are united to him by their share of natural goods, and so will also be able to rejoice in him by their natural knowledge and love.[75]

The nature of their knowledge is further clarified in *De Malo:* unbaptized infants know a certain beatitude, but only according to common reason, not in specific reason, so they are not saddened.[76] They have every natural good:

> children dying in original sin, although they are separated from God forever with regard to the absence of glory which they do not know, yet are not separated with regard to the participation in the natural goods which they do know.[77]

Aquinas's more mature reasoning preserves the unbaptized infants from a superior knowledge which would cause them disquiet, but preserves for them every natural good. What does that make them like? He concludes, "it is the natural state of the separated soul

[75] "Non tamen ab eo penitus sunt separati, immo sibi conjunguntur per participationem naturalium bonorum; et ita etiam de ipso gaudere poterunt naturali cognitione et dilectione" (II *Sent.,* d. 33, q. 2, a. 2, ad 5).

[76] *De Malo,* q. 5, a. 3, ad 1.

[77] "pueri in originali decedentes, sunt quidem separati a Deo perpetuo quantum ad amissionem gloriae quam ignorant, non tamen quantum ad participationem naturalium bonorum quae cognoscunt" (ibid., ad 4).

that it should flourish not less, but more, in thought than souls which are here."[78] Thus in Aquinas the ideas of William of Auvergne reach their conclusion, and we have infants capable of philosophy.

Furthermore, such infants are capable of philosophizing eternally. The limbo of children is a permanent realm, like heaven or hell. It will not end, and there is no altering the condition of those within it. Suffrages are of no utility for them, since suffrages do not work for those who die without faith. Aquinas stresses again the static character of the post-mortem soul, since "the *status* of the dead is not able to be changed through the works of the living."[79] Unbaptized infants are deficient in grace, and after death one cannot gain grace. Augustine's theories on the *non valde malus* status of unbaptized infants are meant to be applied to the baptized *non valde malos,* not unbaptized infants. They are forever static in their nature. Indeed, it seems that they serve no useful cosmic purpose, although they retain natural knowledge. Yet their existence is not a waste. In their own limited way they participate in the divine goodness, and for Aquinas that is better than not to exist at all. Thus, unbaptized infants do serve a useful cosmic purpose. Knowing God is sufficient reason for their existence. In the words of B. Gaullier, "these infants manifest the glory of God, by participating naturally in divine goodness."[80]

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

The very position Aquinas acquired, not only in his own lifetime, but also in later centuries, demonstrates the importance of his ideas about limbo. By virtue of his stature, his ideas were very influential. Doubtless they would have been much more so had Aquinas been able to complete the sections of his *Summa Theologiae* concerning the afterlife.

He helped to continue the adoption and support of Anselm's ideas, with his own additions. He presented a more positive view

[78] "Est autem naturale animae separatae, ut non minus, sed magis in cognitione vigeat quam animae quae sunt hie" (De *Malo,* q. 5, a. 3).

[79] IV *Sent.,* d. 45, q. 2, a. 2.

[80] B. Guallier, *L'etatdes enfants marts sans bapteme d'apres saint Thomas d'Aquin* (Paris, 1961), 137.

of original sin and the incarnation. His ideas on the descent of Christ into hell and the condition of the Fathers are in harmony with the body of thought on these matters of his time, though presented with a great deal of in-depth examination. It is his treatment of the condition of unbaptized infants that represents an original contribution, as he adapts the ideas of William of Auvergne and extends them into a positive view of the status of these infants. This positive view would, after the Jansenist controversy in the seventeenth century, come by and large to become the popular opinion of the Catholic faith from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. In that regard, the ideas of Aquinas can be said to have triumphed.

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THE FIVE WAYS AND THE ONENESS OF GOD

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WHAT ARE St. Thomas Aquinas's philosophical reasons for thinking that his five separate ways for demonstrating the existence of God in the *Summa Theologiae* are all demonstrations for the existence of the *same* being? To answer this question, it is necessary to search the texts beyond the brief demonstrations themselves. Specifically, I will piece together an answer through a careful reading of questions 3, 4, and 11 of the *Prima Pars.* Pursuing this guiding question through these texts will lead to an understanding of what *kind* of being St. Thomas thought God to be, and to an understanding of how St. Thomas thought human beings are best able to use their limited rational abilities to think and to speak about God.

The point of this inquiry is not to approach the demonstrations as strict logical proofs which can stand completely on their own. Rather, my aim is to see these demonstrations as part of a broader effort to think about God philosophically. Moreover, I will argue that the coherence Thomas achieves in his thinking about God gives greater strength to his demonstrations than can be appreciated if they are examined in terms only of themselves. The five ways play into a way of understanding God that has a many-sided explanatory power but is at the same time profoundly simple.

Insofar as the five ways aim to demonstrate the existence of God, their philosophical and theological importance can hardly be overestimated. Nonetheless, within Thomas's larger thought, their role is easy to overestimate insofar as they are drawn from

philosophy and not from faith. This point is very important for gauging at the outset the kind of understanding the demonstrations are aimed to produce. For Thomas, it cannot be a goal of philosophy to achieve a full and dear vision of the highest truths, for a better vision of these truths can be gained through faith. However, philosophy can show how the parameters within which faith operates are philosophically respectable. Therefore, whether or not the demonstrations are philosophically persuasive is neither the sole nor the final issue. It is not the sole issue, for even short of being philosophically persuasive, the demonstrations can still fulfill a philosophically proper purpose if they demonstrate a way of thinking about God that is coherent with other major parts of Thomas's philosophy and theology. The demonstrations can help us to connect our understanding of the God of faith with philosophy. But philosophy also can serve a wider goal extrinsic to itself, for the philosophical understanding can be stretched beyond itself to serve faith. A secure and properly philosophical understanding of God is not the highest goal for the human intellect; that goal is an enriched understanding of God through faith. Therefore, to approach the five ways simply with the purpose of evaluating their strength as logical arguments in one way greatly overestimates their importance, for philosophy does not yield the highest knowledge; yet at the same time it greatly underestimates their importance, for Thomas has other philosophical and theological purposes for these demonstrations.

My question of how the five ways are all arguments for the same being is raised in light of Thomas's claims that the arguments neither begin nor end in an understanding of God's essence. Right away there is a problem. How could we know that different arguments prove the existence of the same thing if we do not know *what* that thing is? As I hope to show, Thomas's answer is to be found in terms of his position that, although we are incapable of knowing God's essence in a positive way, there are many things we can know about what God is *not.* My claim will be that the various things we can know about what God is not will also inform us of the way in which Thomas's demonstrations

for the existence of God were all meant to point our minds to the same being.

As far as I know, the question being raised here about the five demonstrations was never explicitly treated by Thomas himself. Thus, I am raising a question for the text that the text does not directly cover. I believe, nevertheless, that the text itself does provide more than enough resources to answer this question. To bring these resources to light is to elucidate many of the implicit assumptions in Thomas's thinking, thereby shedding further light on what the five ways were meant to establish, not just about God's being, but also about God's nature. Because Thomas's way of thinking was highly synthetic, many of the connections between different parts of his writings were left implicit. To make those connections explicit can help us better to appreciate this highly synthetic quality of his thought.

I. THE LIMITATIONS IN REASONING FROM EFFECTS TO CAUSE

. The question being raised here takes us almost directly into the way Thomas himself was thinking. For the question is closely connected with *STh* I, q. 2, a. 2, obj. 2 and 3, the article immediately preceding the one in which the five ways are presented. The question of this article is the basic one of whether the existence of God can be demonstrated at all. Obviously, any such demonstration would need God as the subject term of the conclusion. Furthermore, the argument somehow would need to connect the subject term with the middle term of the premises in such a way that the middle term informs us about the subject-from a knowledge of what something is, we can draw conclusions about it. As Thomas puts it in objection 2, "the middle term of a demonstration is that which something is."[1] But because Thomas believes we cannot know what God is, there is a simple, yet far-reaching, problem. For if we are not able to know what God is, we could never use a knowledge of what God is as the middle term of a demonstration. How, then could the information collected in the premises be connected to God?

[1] "medium demonstrationis est quod quid est."

Assume that the premises are well formed and do in fact support some kind of true conclusion; still, how could the subject term of that conclusion ever be identified as God?

Given this difficulty, it is clear that Thomas is indicating that much more will need to be said about how God is to be understood in these demonstrations. In objection 2, Thomas poses the problem in a general way, as one that arises for *any* demonstration for the existence of God. My question, therefore, about the five ways can be seen as a specific explication of Thomas's own general problematic. If Thomas can recognize a general problem for understanding God as the subject of the conclusion in any *one* demonstration, then all the more can we ask the question more specifically and conjunctively with his five *separate* demonstrations.

Thomas's immediate answer to objection 2 is very sketchy, and should be taken as merely a preliminary to the discussion that is to come later. He introduces here the distinction between demonstration *propter quid* and demonstration *quia.* Demonstration always begins from what is better known, and moves to what is less well known. Absolutely speaking, what is best knowable is the essence of God, and any demonstration that could begin from a certain knowledge of such an absolute starting point would count as demonstration *propter quid.* But, unfortunately, God's essence is not best known to us. What is better known to us is the world we encounter through our sense experience. So, for us, demonstration must begin by taking this world as an effect, and from there argue that God must exist as the cause of that effect. Demonstrations from known effects to the existence of a remote cause count as demonstrations *quia.*

In demonstration *propter quid,* the middle term is the essence of the conclusion's subject term. We draw a conclusion about the subject based upon a knowledge of what it is. But in demonstration *quia,* the middle term is an effect and the conclusion's subject term is considered the cause. Demonstration *quia* is how we come to know the subject term to exist in the first place. According to Thomas, "it is necessary to use the effect in place of

the definition of the cause in proving the cause to exist."[2] The subject term of the conclusion is the cause, and the arguments have roughly the following form: a certain series of effects exists (major premise); a first cause is required by such a series of effects (minor); a first cause exists (conclusion). To prove the cause exists, the effects have been used in place of the definition of the cause.

Arguments that prove the existence of a first cause, however, are only the first step in arguments for God. The final step would take this form: a first cause exists (major premise); God is a first cause (minor premise); God exists (conclusion). Arguments of this form take as their middle terms not the essence of God, but certain ways in which God can be named, that is, certain ways of naming God *as a cause.* In the rough argument form just given, the middle term is "first cause"; this term is a way of naming God, but does not give us God's essence. Thus, even though demonstration *quia* does not allow us to draw conclusions about what God is, it does allow us to place certain names upon God. Given the nature of the effects, God can be named one way or another. "Names are assigned to God from the effects."[3] The effects taken as effects give us distinctive ways to name their cause.

These names of God can then be used as the middle terms in demonstrations for the existence of God. In order for God to appear in the conclusion of the demonstration, God must be in some way already present in the premises. Demonstration *quia* gets us to the existence of God because God can be known in the premises as signifying, or naming, the cause of certain known effects. This is what Thomas means, I take it, when he says that "in demonstrating God to exist through the effect, we are able to take for the middle term what this name God signifies."[4] What the name God signifies here is the cause of certain effects. God is known to exist because a first cause can be known to exist, and a

[2] "necesse est uti effectu loco definitionis causae ad probandum causam esse" *(STh* I, q. 2, a. 2, ad 2).

[3] "Nomina autem Dei imponuntur ab effectibus" (ibid.).

[4] "demonstrando Deum esse per effectum accipere possumus pro medib quid siS!lificethoc nomen Deus" (ibid.).

first cause can be known to exist from its effects. However, neither God nor first cause is known through the essence or definition. This is the hallmark of demonstration *quia*.

The objection Thomas is trying here to answer is that if we do not know what God is, then we should not be able to draw any conclusion about God. Has the objection been answered? Thomas's answer is, I think, at best sketchy and incomplete. We are being told that we can demonstrate that God is without knowing what God is. We are being told further that we can identify this being as God because we can name God from his effects. But if the name of God is taken from the effects, what must follow from the fact that those effects are themselves finite and limited? It would seem that the name of God could turn out to name a being who is only great enough to account for just those effects. In other words, howsoever the effects are limited, so too could the being who is named from those effects be limited. Thus, to get Thomas's fuller answer to this question, one must search the texts further.

Thomas himself recognizes this same problem in objection 3 from this same article. But, again, it seems to me, the response he gives to the objection, taken simply by itself, will not go far enough to meet the objection fully. He states the objection simply by pointing out that the effects of God are not proportionate to God, since God is infinite, and the effects are finite. But, as the objection continues, "a cause is not able to be demonstrated through an effect which is not proportionate to itself."[5] Therefore, God cannot be proven to exist through these effects. But Thomas's response to his own objection simply concedes the point that "through the effects we are not able to know God *perfectly* according to God's essence."[6] He then reiterates his claim that "nevertheless, from an effect we are able to demonstrate that a cause exists."[7] But he has still not shown that the cause must be a being who is as great as God.

The foregoing discussion shows that the question of why Thomas thought all five of his demonstrations were demonstrations for the same being is very dose to the questions Thomas

[5] "causa non possit demonstrari per effectum sibi non proportionatum" (*STh* I, q. 2, a. 2, obj. 3).

[6] "licet per eos non perfecte possimus ipsum cognoscere secundum suam essentiam" (ibid., ad 3).

[7] "tamen ex quocumque effectu manifestu nobis potest demonstrari causam esse" (ibid.).

himself was thinking about in the article immediately preceding his presentation of those five ways. Thomas thought that from a finite set of effects we could conclude to the existence of an infinite God. Thomas also thought that this kind of enlargement in the conclusion is possible not just in one single argument, but in five separate ones. But Thomas was a great synthetic thinker, and I believe that those five ways are not completely separate. By taking Thomas's own question and applying it to all five ways, I will be able to show why he thought he could argue from finite effects to an infinite cause. Alternatively, by exploring these arguments, I will be able to show why he thought all five ways were demonstrations for the same being.

II. WHY NOT FIVE DIFFERENT CAUSES?

Each of the five demonstrations begins by finding in this world, *in hoc mundo,* a pervasive feature which is then explained as an effect of God. Now, from the effects of God we are supposed to be able to name God. In a general sense, the world God has created is, all of it taken together, just one world. Generally speaking, the total world is a single effect of a single God. However, the arguments do not begin from a consideration of the world in so general a sense. Each demonstration begins from a consideration of its own special feature of this world. Therefore, since God is to be named from God's effects, the different ways of characterizing the world as an effect should produce different ways God can be named from God's effects. But if we are going to say that, why do we not say instead that there are five different names because there are five different causes? These five causes could represent five separate beings or substances, or they could represent five different principles of a single complex being or substance.[8] In either case, the subject named would not be a transcendent monotheistic God.

[8] In twentieth-century process philosophy, God is complex. Although I have taken some trouble to show that my main question is close to Thomas's questions, he does not, as far as I know, consider the possibility of the five ways as arguing for many beings, or even for a complex being such as we find in process philosophy. His own problematic had more to do with synthesizing a and often competing collection of philosophical principles and religious intuitions. See David B. Burrell, *Freedom and Creation in Three Traditions* (Notre Dame, 1993).

The first demonstration begins by considering the things of this world *ex parte motus,* from the side or part of motion. Clearly, then, the world is not being considered as an effect in its totality, but only as containing things that are moving. From this starting point, the demonstration progresses to its conclusion in a fairly straightforward fashion. Since whatever is moved is moved by another, and since there cannot be an infinite regress of movers, there must be a first mover. Now, since God is to be named from God's effects, the way Thomas describes motion as an effect is crucial for a proper understanding of the demonstration's intended conclusion. Thomas says that "to move is nothing else that to lead something out from potentiality to actuality." [9] The verb here, *educere,* "to lead out," suggests, perhaps, a note of Aristotle's final causality, an activity of drawing something out.

Thomas believes that in order for a mover to effect such an action of moving, the mover must be prior in actuality; "it is not possible for something to be brought from potentiality to actuality except by some actual being." [10] Here the verb is *reduci,* which, like *educere,* is built from *ducere,* suggesting a simple motion of leading, drawing, bringing forward or guiding. Thus, the mover is actually prior to the motion of the moved thing, and its action is to draw that motion out. Thomas uses the example of wood catching fire; the wood that is not yet hot is drawn into the fire that is already hot. This may be understood as similar to the way even mild-mannered persons can get "drawn into the heat of battle"; in order for the passion to ignite, the heat of battle must already rage, and one literally feels *pulled* to join in. So too with many other emotions.

Since God is to be named from God's effects, this argument would allow us to name God as an actuality that is prior to all motion, and that draws out motion in the first instance. But our question here is whether the name "First Mover" must name the being who is God. Thomas has already used the example of fire, so why could it not name something like the fire of the ancient Greek elements? Or maybe it could be added to Empedocles'

[9] "movere enim nihil aliud est quam educere aliquid de potentia in actum" (*STh* I, q. 2, a. 3).

[10] "de potentia autem non potest aliquid reduci in actum nisi per aliquid ens (ibid.).

principles of love and strife. Or, if not a being all to itself, perhaps it could be a constitutive principle of some kind of complex universal being.

Let us now turn to the second way, which begins "from the rational pattern of the efficient cause."[11] Nothing can be the efficient cause of itself, since the efficient cause of a thing is always prior to that thing. Furthermore, Thomas thought that in the order of efficient causes there had to be one that was simply first. So, whereas the first way argues for a being who draws motion out of something, this second way argues for a being who simply *makes (efficere).* But the action of making suggests an agent imparting or thrusting forward its own force, or infusing or transferring its own energy to bring about the very presence or existence of the thing made. In principle, this kind of action can be construed as different from that of leading or drawing motion out of a thing that is in some form already present, already "made." Therefore, insofar as these arguments suggest different kinds or principles of causality, it would seem possible to construe them as arguments for different beings, or possibly even as arguments for different constitutive principles of the same complex being. One side pushes, the other side pulls, but the two sides are apart.

Turning now to the third way, one may ask why the kind of causality being invoked could not be construed along the lines of material causality. Indeed, if the causality of the first way is similar to final causality, and that of the second is clearly efficient causality, then material causality would seem a likely way to continue filling out the picture. Like material causality, the causality of the third way is very indefinite, or further removed from our senses than that of the first two. Although it begins with the sensory observation of things coming to be and passing away, it seems to search for an underlying permanent basis for *all* such coming to be and passing away. When Thomas asks us to consider the possibility of everything of this sort passing away at once, he is not asking us to imagine some feature of things we

[11] "ex ratione causae efficientis" (ibid.).

might be able to sense. Therefore, the kind of causality he is invoking is more obscure to us.

Thomas seems to think that to be corruptible means to have a tendency towards nonbeing. If everything had this tendency, we could not explain why there is anything now. Corruptible beings come into being only "through some other thing that is."[12] Since an endless backward chain of corruptible beings coming from earlier ones is impossible, "there must be something that is necessary,"[13] or some permanent thing underlying the generation of new corruptible beings. Exactly what kind of "something" *(aliquid)* this is is rather hard to say.

Thomas's fourth way argues that because some things are found to be more or less good, true, noble, and so on, there must be some other being who is these qualities maximally. Things are more or less a certain quality by somehow approximating *(appropinquant)* some other thing that is maximally those qualities.[14] Thomas cites Aristotle's example of the relation of hot things to fire. Fire is that which is maximally hot, and other hot things are hot insofar as they approach or approximate fire. Thomas generalizes this kind of causality to other qualities besides heat, such as goodness, nobility, truth, and even being *(esse).* Things good get their goodness by approximating that which is most good, and so on for the other qualities and perfections. Therefore, something that is most good, most noble, most true, and even most being *(maxime ens)* must exist.

Assuming that this argument grants us a maximally good, a maximally true, and so on, how do we know all these maximal things are one and the same? In other words, the general question about the five ways together (viz., how are they all arguments for the same being?) arises for this way taken alone. This argument, taken on its own terms, could easily conclude to the plurality of Platonic forms. The one point in the argument where it seems to come closest to granting one overarching thing is where it mentions something that is most being, *maxime ens.* Here there is a suggestion of a numerically one highest being, from which

[12] "per aliquid quod est" (ibid.).

[13] "oportet aliquid esse necessarium" (ibid.).

[14] Ibid.

everything else receives its being by approximation. But why could there not be many things each of which is most being? The point could be made by reconsidering Aristotle's example of heat coming from fire. To be sure, fire is maximally hot, and all other hot things come from being near to fire, but there are many fires. So too, has a similar point been made regarding the Aristotelian category of substance. Substance is what is most being, and all other things get their being in relation to it,[15] but there are many substances.

Granted that this argument has special difficulties of its own, let us assume that it somehow does get us to a single being who is maximally good, maximally true, and so on for the other qualitative perfections.[16] What kind of causality is being invoked by this argument? Let me suggest that the argument is meant to explain how things have certain *fomial* qualities.[17] This argument would then give us a highest formal cause. Moreover, the way this cause is supposed to operate is that as things approach *(ap-propinquant)* this highest formal cause, they take on their defining qualities, similar to the way hot things become hot as they approach a fire. Therefore, the fourth way concludes to a radiant source of formal determination. One may then ask, why could not a radiant formal cause be numerically different, either as a self-standing entity or as a constitutive principle, from a first moving cause, from a first efficient cause, and from a necessary or permanent cause which underlies the process of generation and corruption?

Turning, lastly, to the fifth way, we can see that once again Thomas invokes a different kind of causality. The fifth way begins with the observation that things lacking their own intelligence are found consistently to work towards an end, or towards bringing

[15] See G. E. L. Owen, "Logic and Metaphysics in Some Earlier Works of Aristotle," in *Logic, Science and Dialectic: Collected Papers in Greek Philosophy,* ed. Martha Nussbaum (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 180-99.

[16] It would also be most being, *maxime ens,* but not the only such being.

[17] It is said also to cause the being or *esse* of things *(STh* I, q. 2, a. 3). This could be taken to mean that it causes them to be beings or *entia* by way of giving them their formal determinations. Thus, *esse* is not some property on top of other properties. Relying on Thomas's own words, one could say simply that "being is the actuality of every form or nature" ("esse est actualitas omnis formae vel naturae") *(STh* I, q. 3, a. 4). If something causes formal determination, it also causes *esse.*

about the best result. Since these things act this way always or nearly always, it cannot be by chance. Rather, they must be directed towards their ends by the causality of an intelligence, that is, by the kind of causality at work when an archer directs an arrow. By acting on a plan, the archer redirects the order of efficient causality already in place toward a consciously chosen end. This is the only time in the five ways when Thomas explicitly suggests that he is arguing for a being who has intelligence. But just as the being or beings argued to exist in each of the other four ways could seem to lack intelligence, so too could the being argued for here seem to lack the full causal powers of the other ways.

III. THE IDENTIFICATION OF GOD

My use of Thomas's texts to answer my main question will be divided into two major steps. First, I will show how Thomas develops an understanding of God whereby God can be uniquely identified. Second, I will return to each of the five ways to show how a being who is so uniquely identified easily is read into the demonstration's conclusion. The result will be an understanding of God that is at once full and unified. In carrying out the first step, I will show how Thomas builds upon some, but not all, of the ways themselves. I will show how this construction draws into the analysis philosophical concepts and distinctions from outside the ways as well. For those ways which so figure into the uniquely identifiable way of understanding God, the second step of showing how such a being can be read into the demonstration's conclusion will be fairly straightforward. For the remaining ways, the task of showing how this same God can be read into the conclusion will take some additional analysis. The result of such analysis will be an understanding that should provide links to other major sections of the *Summa Theologiae*.

My first step of showing how God is to be uniquely identified has itself two main parts. In the first part, I will show why Thomas thought that some of the ways point to a being or cause who must be identical with its essence. The way Thomas arrives at this conclusion is by arguing that this cause must lack a material

suppositum. Since it lacks a material *suppositum,* its *suppositum* must be identical with its essence. But first we will have to see why he thinks the cause must lack a material *suppositum.* In the second part of my effort to show how God is uniquely identified, I will explain why Thomas thought some of the ways pointed even further to a being or cause in whom there can be no distinction being essence and existence. I will then show how Thomas argues that the absence of a distinction between essence and existence cannot occur in more than one instance, or, in other words, that it can occur only once. This final argument is not explicit in these texts, but I plan to show that it is dearly implicit.

A) Identity and the Lack of Material '"Suppositum"

My inquiry into how God is to be uniquely identified is situated within Thomas's more general inquiry into the manner, *quomodo,* in which God exists.[18] Thomas says that after we know of something whether it exists, we inquire next into the manner of its existence, in order that we might know its essence. However, since, as he will show later (question 12), knowledge of God's essence for us is impossible, he will have to inquire into the manner of God's existence by showing what God is not. My question therefore becomes whether Thomas' sway of saying what God is not allows us to identify God uniquely.

The procedure for knowing what God is not is to remove from our understanding of God common structures and characteristics of our normal understanding. The first set of removals aims cumulatively at the removal of all composition, resulting in the conclusion that God must be absolutely simple. At various points through these first removals, Thomas builds explicitly upon the first, second, and fourth ways.

Building upon the first way, Thomas argues, first, that God cannot be a body, because God is an unmoved mover, and bodies move only by themselves moving. Second, Thomas appeals to the idea, also taken from the first way, that God is pure actuality, and

[18] *STh* I, q. 3.

has no potentiality. Therefore, God cannot be a body, because every body has potentiality, at least the potentiality to be divided. This second argument appeals also to the fourth way, because Thomas characterizes the being who is pure actuality as the first being, *primum ens.*[19] He adds a third argument that appeals to the fourth way exclusively by claiming that God cannot be a body because God is the most noble being, and we already know from our own animate nature that body is less noble than soul. So far, therefore, we may conclude that the first and fourth ways converge at least in that each argues for a being that is not a body.

Next, Thomas argues that God is not composed of matter and form. Again, he appeals in a first argument to the first way: God cannot have any matter because God has no potentiality. In a second argument, he appeals to the fourth way by arguing that God is the first good: if God had form and matter, then God's matter would participate the goodness of God's form, but God's goodness is essential, not participated. Finally, in a third argument, he appeals to the second way, arguing that efficient causality acts through the form, not the matter; thus, since God is the first agent, God is essentially form. Therefore, the first, second, and fourth ways all can be said to converge on the point that they do not argue for a being composed of form and matter.

Having removed the composition of form and matter, Thomas argues next for removing the composition of essence or nature, on the one hand, and a *suppositum* or an individuating principle upholding such an essence or nature, on the other. In things composed of form and matter, the particular identity of an individual is due to the particular matter, and not to the form. Because the individual contains particular matter, it has something not included in the definition of the form. Thus, there is a difference between a particular human person and the essence of humanity. "There is something in the particular human person that is not contained in the essence of humanity, and because of this something the particular person is not identical with the essence of humanity."[20] The identity of a person derives from

[19] *STh* I, q. 3, a. 1. Actually, the fourth way does not identify God as *primum ens*, but as *maxime ens.* However, the two expressions are so close as to be practically equivalent.

[20] "homo habet in se aliquid quod non habet humanitas, et propter hoc non est totaliter idem homo et humanitas" (*STh* I, q. 3, a. 3).

something other than the form, and this something is the matter, serving as the *suppositum* for the form. What, then, is to be said for an individual that lacks a material *suppositum?* Thomas answers that such individuals are individuated through their forms alone, in which case these forms are subsisting *supposita.* Finally, since God is such a form, God is identical with God's own essence or nature *(deitas).* Thus, in attempting to understand God's simpleness, Thomas has begun to understand God's unique identity. Just as the first, second, and fourth way converge in arguing for a being that lacks the composition of form and matter, so too does each argue for a being that is identical with its own essence.

In question 11, article 3, Thomas argues that the identity of God with God's essence implies that there can be only one God. In the case of things that are composed of an essence and a *suppositum,* it is possible for two or more individuals to share that same essence, but only because the plurality of those individuals differ in their *supposita.* So, even though they can thus share their essence, they cannot share their *supposita.* This is because the *suppositum* is that which makes each individual to be an individual, and "that by which something individual is *this* something is in no way communicable to many."[21] In the case of beings that lack a composition of essence and *suppositum,* what makes such beings to be individual is the essence itself. Therefore, just as it is impossible for composite beings to share their *supposita,* so too is it impossible for noncomposite or simple beings to share their essence. Therefore, there can be only one being with the essence of God. Furthermore, if the five ways all argue for a being with the same noncomposite essence, then they all argue for the same being.

B) The Unique Identity of God

In question 3, article 4, Thomas argues that we can know *something* about God's particular essence, for he argues in three ways that God's essence is identical with God's existence *(esse);*

[21] "illud uncle aliquid singulare est hoc aliquid nullo modo est multis communicabile" *(STh* I, q. 11, a. 3).

in question 3, article 5, he argues in four ways that God does not belong to a genus. I intend to show that these arguments dearly imply that there can be only one being whose essence is identical with its existence. Thus, the essence of God can be uniquely identified.

Thomas's arguments for the identity of God's essence and existence draw, once again, from the first, second, and fourth ways. Drawing first from the second way, he argues that "whatever is in something over and above its essence must be caused."[22] Assuming, for argument's sake, that God's existence were somehow caused, logically speaking there would be only two places to look for such a cause: the essence itself, or some other being altogether. But, of course, neither alternative is really possible, since God's essence cannot *cause* God's existence, and neither is there any other being besides God who could cause God's existence, since, as the second way has shown, God is the first cause. Therefore, God's existence cannot be separate from God's essence. The second argument is that if existence is other than essence, then "existence compares to essence as does actuality to potentiality."[23] But since, according to the first way, in God there is no potentiality, there is in God no distinction between essence and existence.

Thomas's third argument draws from the fourth way by working towards the conclusion that in order for something to be a first being, *primum ens,* it must not be a being *(ens)* through participation. A first being must be a being through its essence, and this can occur only if the essence is identical with existence *(esse).* So, Thomas argues that since God is, according to the fourth way, first being, God's essence is identical with God's existence.

It is helpful here, I think, to contrast Thomas's view of first being, *primum ens,* with Aristotle's concept of first substance, *proto ousia.* In Thomas's terms, it would seem that those things which Aristotle calls first substance are beings, *entia,* by partici-

[22] "quidquid est in aliquo quad est praeter essentiam ejus oportet esse causam" (ITh I, q. 3, a. 4).

[23] "oportet igitur quad ipsum esse comparetur ad essentiam quae est aliud ab ipso sicut actus ad potentiam" (ibid.).

pation,[24] whereas Aristotle seems to make no such claim, holding only that such things are substance or being, *ousia,* through their own substantial forms. For Thomas, first substance (as opposed to first being) is "being through participation and not through essence."[25] Therefore, in first being, *primum ens,* there is identity of essence and existence. Now, the only place in the five ways where Thomas speaks explicitly of first, or highest, being, *maxime ens,* is in the fourth way. These observations should be kept in mind when we return to reexamine the fourth way. For now we can summarize the conclusion of question 3, article 4 as follows: God's essence does not receive existence either as caused, nor as actuality, nor through participation. In a word, although God's essence does exist, it does not in any way *receive* existence. Rather, it is identified with its existence.

It is now time to show why there could be only one such being whose essence is identical with its existence. Thomas has four arguments as to why God cannot be in a genus. Three of these arguments show why God cannot be in a genus the way a species is in a genus. First, the genus is potential with respect to the principles by which the species are differentiated, but in God there is no potential. Second, the only genus God might be said to be in would be the genus being *(ens).* But genera all have differences, by virtue of which they can include many members. But there can be no way of having differences outside of being. Thus there would be no real differences, and hence no genus. Third, members of a genus differ from each other in their existence *(esse),* though not in their essence. Therefore, "it is necessary that whatever things are in a genus have a difference between their own existence and what they are, namely their essence."[26] But, if the essence is identical with the existence, then there could not be a difference between members in their existence. To these three arguments, Thomas adds a fourth, namely, that God cannot be in a genus as falling under some

" For a detailed study of how these concepts appear throughout Thomas's writings, see Rudi A. te Velde, *Participation and Substantiality in Thomas Aquinas* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995).

[25] "ens per participationem et non per essentiam" *(STh* I, q. 3, a. 4).

[26] "oportet quod quacumque sunt in genere differant in eis esse et quod quid est, idest essentia" (ibid.).

general principle: there is no way to identify a principle that does not already come under the principle of existence *(esse),* so God cannot be a specification of some more general way to be.

The upshot of these four arguments is that if God were in a genus, there would have to be some way to specify the difference between God and whatever else is in the genus. Any attempt to specify such a difference would have to draw from some notion outside God's essence. But, since God's essence is existence, anything that would not be contained in this essence would have to be something not sharing existence, and, of course, there can be nothing which does not share existence. Therefore, since God's essence is identical with God's existence, there can be only one being with such an essence. Thomas clearly implies that the essence of God has been uniquely identified.

It is important to note that through this effort to show how God's essence can be uniquely identified, we have not violated Thomas's claim that we are unable to know what God's essence is. To identify God's essence, all we have done is to remove the various forms of composition that we use to understand the ordinary things of our experience. Our normal way of understanding things is to analyze them into their component principles, dimensions, or elemental parts. Since our way of identifying God's essence has been through removing from God all these forms of composition, we have acknowledged God to be beyond our understanding.

IV. THE SINGLE CAUSE

Having thus discovered this way in which God, or the essence of God, can be uniquely identified, I would now like to return to the five ways. If all five arguments can be interpreted, with little or no difficulty, as arguing for a being in whom there is no distinction between essence and existence, then it will be easy to see how all five ways are arguments for the same simple being.

Earlier we considered two alternative possibilities: (1) the different ways argue for different completely self-standing and fully constituted beings, and (2) they merely argue for separate constitutive principles of a single composite being.'! would like to

address the second possibility first. Thomas clearly thinks that a being who would be constituted out of separate principles could not be a *first* being. If within a single being there is any distinction at all between its constitutive principles, then the existence of that being would depend upon those principles being brought together into one being. Therefore, the existence of such a being would have to be caused, for as Thomas says, "every composite thing has a cause; indeed things which are according to themselves diverse are not brought together into one thing unless through some cause uniting them into one."[27] Therefore, if the five ways are taken to argue for different constitutive principles of a single composite being, they do not offer the kind of comprehensive explanation they are clearly intended to provide. Moreover, because the existence of such a being would have to be caused, the existence of a composite being would have to be distinct from its essence. Therefore, because the five ways are aimed to argue for a highest cause, they should not be interpreted as arguing for separate constitutive principles of a composite being. Instead, each one should be interpreted as arguing for a being who is absolutely simple. Clearly, Thomas's highest intuitions aim for synthetic unity.

Turning now to the remaining possibility, namely, that of the different ways arguing for different fully constituted beings, what needs to be shown is that they argue for a being whose essence does not receive existence. We need to reexamine Thomas's use of the first, second, and fourth ways in removing from God the composition of essence and existence. Thomas argued that God's essence cannot receive existence as caused, nor as actuality, nor by participation. Taking these three impossibilities one at a time, the reason God cannot receive existence as caused is that, as the second way shows, God is the first efficient cause. Secondly, the reason God cannot receive existence as actuality is that, as the first way shows, God is pure actuality, and lacks all potentiality. Finally, the reason God cannot receive existence by participation is that, as the fourth way shows, God is the highest being. Therefore, the first, second, and fourth ways should all be

[27] "omne compositum causam habet; quae enim secundum se diversa sunt non conveniunt in unum nisi per aliquam causam adunantem ipsa" (*STh* I, q. 3, a. 7).

understood as arguing for a cause in whom there is no distinction between essence and existence, and only one such being can possibly exist, and this being is named God.

Some analysis might be needed to see why the fourth way denies existence by participation, since participation is not mentioned in the fourth way explicitly. The fourth way argues that "diverse things are said to be more or less according to the diverse ways in which they come near to what is most." Thomas concludes that "there must be something which is most true, best, most noble and therefore a highest being."[28] When we first examined this way, we considered the possibility that the phrase "most being," *maxime ens,* might be interpreted along the lines of Aristotelian "first substance," *proto ousia,* and thereby refer to a plurality of beings. Since then, however, we have seen how Thomas argues that if the essence of a certain being is distinct from its existence, then it is a being by participation, and therefore is not a highest being. Thus, when the fourth way speaks of a highest being, it means a being who exists solely through its own essence.

What remains to be shown, then, is that the third and fifth ways also can be interpreted as arguing for a being in whom the distinction between essence and existence would be absent. Considering, first, the being who is argued for in the third way, if we try to assume a fully constituted being in whom there is a distinction between essence and existence, the result is a contradiction. For the third way argues for a being who is necessary in the sense that it can be subject neither to generation nor to corruption. But a being in whom there is supposed a distinction between essence and existence is subject to generation and corruption (or at least annihilation), insofar as its existence has to be caused, and can be also lost. Therefore, the only kind of fully constituted being that the third way can be interpreted as arguing for is one in whom there is no distinction between essence and existence.

[28] "magis et minus dicitur de diversa secundum quod appropinquant diversimode ad aliquid quod maxime est.... Est igitur aliquid quod est verissimum et optimum et nobilissirimm et per consequens maxime ens" *(STh* I, q. 2, a. 3).

The fifth way points to the orderliness of the world as evidence for the existence of a being who intelligently directs the world towards an end. Therefore, it must be shown, first, that a being in whom there is no distinction between essence and existence is one in whom there is something like human intelligence. Second, it must be shown that the kind of orderliness found in the world is the kind that requires not just a being who is an intelligent being, but one who is in fact the highest being.

Thomas argues explicitly, in question 4, article 2, that because in God there is no distinction between essence and existence, God contains the full perfection of being. He describes God in a very special way as "being through itself subsisting."[29] God subsists through God's own self, which, I take it, means something like, God exists through God's own essence. From this fact about God, Thomas argues that "it is necessary that God contains in God's own self the total perfection of being."[30] Thomas's thinking here is that the perfection of something derives from the manner of its being *(essendt).* Thus, the more fully something is in the manner of its being *(essendi),* the more perfect it is. Therefore, since God is a being most fully, God is fully perfect. Or, to express the point in terms of what God is not, "since God is God's own self-subsisting existence, nothing of the perfection of being can be lacking in God's existence."[31] Thomas further concludes that because God cannot lack any perfection, God cannot lack wisdom *(sapientia)* or intelligence.

Granted, therefore, that a being in whom there is no distinction between essence and existence would in fact have the wisdom or intelligence that would make it capable of directing the orderliness which the fifth way invokes as evidence for an intelligent designer, why should Thomas have supposed further that this order actually was brought about by a being as great as this, and not by some lesser intelligent being? Why do we need to assume that the natural world, that is, the world we know through our senses, actually is directed by a being who is most perfect, most intelligent?

[29] "esse per se subsistens" *(STh* I, q. 4, a. 2).

[30] "ex quo oportet quod totam perfectionem essendi in se contineat" (ibid.).

[31] "Unde cum Deus sit ipsum esse subsistens nihil de perfectione essendi potest ei deesse" (ibid.).

This question is very important for understanding the synthetic unity of the entire *Summa.* One of the places where a connection is suggested is in *Prima Pars,* question 11, article 3. Thomas argues there for the unity of God by reflecting upon what he sees as the ordered unity of the world: "All things are found to be mutually ordered since certain things subserve other things."[32] He concludes that this unity must derive from what is first and most perfect, and thus from what exists not through accident, but through itself. He follows this observation with the same kind of expression as is found at the end of each of the five ways: "And this is God."[33]

To further the connection of this point with the broader project of the *Summa,* we may remember that Thomas's whole inquiry in the *Summa* presupposes a context of faith. Although the orderliness of which the fifth way speaks is one in which humans and all other natural things are directed towards their natural ends, Thomas also firmly believes that humans are directed by God to a much higher supernatural end. The natural end to which we are directed by nature is subservient to the supernatural end to which we are directed by God. Thomas introduces his concern about our supernatural end in the very first article of the very first question of the *Summa.* The question is posed whether there is a need for any other kind of teaching *(doctrina)* besides philosophy. At first sight, this question might appear (especially to a philosopher) as though it were being posed for philosophy to answer. But Thomas does not answer this question with philosophy at all; he answers it instead with faith. Thus, the reason that there is a need for another kind of teaching besides philosophy is that "humans are directed by God to a certain end that exceeds the comprehension of reason."[34] From the very beginning of the *Summa,* this higher end, grasped by faith, is assumed. Thus, when Thomas speaks later in the fifth way of the natural world being ordered towards an end, it is only

[32] "Omnia enim quae sunt inveniuntur esse ordinata ad invicem dum quaedam quibusdam deserviunt" *(STh* I, q. 11, a. 3).

[33] "Et hoc est Deus" (ibid.).

[34] "homo ordinatur a Deo ad quemdam finem qui comprehensionem rationis excedit" *(STh* I, q. 1, a. 1).

appropriate that he should be thinking also about this natural order as serving the higher supernatural end that has been set aside for humans.

V. CONCLUSION

Each of the five ways invokes its own special form of causality, and then argues for the being who in the order of that special form of causality is first. But we can now see that all five of these different kinds of causality are united in a single being who exercises them all. In this process of explanation Thomas achieves a high degree of coherence, of explanatory unity, in his theory. The reason these five different kinds of causality work together to produce a single unified world is that all five spring from-indeed, each one in its own way is-the working of a single highest causality. If, however, the five ways are considered apart from an appreciation of how they are all arguments for the same simple being, then this greater coherence will be lost from view. In order fully to understand and evaluate Thomas's five ways, one must study them in light of Thomas's fuller discussions of the kind of being for whom he thought he was arguing. Moreover, if one acknowledges also Thomas's religious belief that humans are directed by a loving God to a supernatural end, then the coherence that can be found in these five ways is all the greater, since it includes also a synthesis of faith and reason.

We began with the question of Thomas's philosophical reasons for thinking his five ways were all arguments for the same simple being. We analyzed the five ways themselves to show how each one invoked its own special form of causality. Next, we followed Thomas's approach to discover what kind of being God is by considering the ways in which he argues that God is not. By examining how Thomas removes from our understanding of God various forms of composition, we argued that by removing from God the particular composition of essence and existence Thomas in effect provided us with a way in which God can be uniquely identified. We then returned to the five ways to show that each could easily be interpreted as arguing for a being of just that sort. Finally, we argued that to see all five ways as arguing for this

same simple being is to appreciate that these five ways combine to have great explanatory coherence. This explanatory coherence is all the more notable when one considers how nicely it harmonizes with Thomas's religious faith that God is directing humans to a final resting place in God.

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THE ARGUMENT FROM MOTION AND THE ARGUMENT FOR ANGELS: A REPLY TO JOHN F. X. KNASAS

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IN A RECENT ARTICLE that appeared in *The Thomist* John F. X. Knasas reargues certain positions which he had already set forth in his book *The Preface to Metaphysics* and which he believes can be textually established as part of Saint Thomas's philosophical teaching.[1] He does this apparently in light of some briefly stated objections I had raised in a discussion-review article appearing in an earlier volume of the same journal.[2] While his opening paragraph would have me basically disagreeing with Fr. Joseph Owens, I think it only fair to say that, inasmuch it was his book (despite its degree of indebtedness on certain points to Fr. Owens) that I reviewed, it was his views with which my review was directly and primarily concerned.

Among the positions to which I took exception and which he returns to defend in this article are the following:

1) Aquinas did not allow to natural philosophy the privilege of concluding, by way of an argument from motion, to the existence of separate (immaterial) substance or being. (In his book Knasas argues this position against the "natural philosophy" Thomists who maintain that one way to reach immaterial being is by establishing its existence through an argument from motion.)[3] As the weight of texts preponderantly shows, it belongs

[1] John F. X. Knasas, "Thomistic Existentialism and the *Proofs Ex Motu* at Contra Gentiles I, C. 13," *The Thomist* 59 (1995): 591-615; idem, *The Preface to Metaplrysics: A Contribution to the Neo-Thomist Debate on the Start of Metaplrysics* (New York: Peter Lang, 1990).

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

[3] Knasas, *Preface,* chap. 2.

to metaphysics alone to treat of God and the angels.[4] This restriction is particularly to be applied to the question of their existence *(an sit).*

(In my review I had noted that the argument from motion for God's existence appearing in *Summa contra Gentiles* I, c. 13 seems, for the most part, to be a physical one--one drawn almost entirely from Aristotle's natural philosophy-and its conclusion to be an Unmoved Mover which Saint Thomas calls God.)[5]

2) Motion is a being *(ens)* having its own nature, namely, that of an accident. Moreover, as an accident it has its own act of existence distinct from that of the substance in which it (supposedly) inheres.[6]

(My review had pointed out that, since motion is something non-actual, it cannot be said to participate existence and that, for Saint Thomas, only what is actual or complete can have actual being.)[7]

3) St. Thomas's argument from motion can be interpreted "existentially" as an argument from the *esse* of motion whose proper cause is necessarily the Self-Existing Being, God.[8]

(I had labeled this approach "eccentric" since it seemed to me so out of line with the ordinary way in which Aquinas's *prima via* has been understood, that is, as an argument simply from motion.)

4) Finally, according to St. Thomas, angels can be "metaphysically" reached by an a posteriori argument from motion to their existence as secondary causes of the movement of the heavenly spheres. Moreover, since angels cause these movements, which, in turn, cause substantial change, they are also remote causes of the *esse* of generable things.[9]

[1] Ibid., 34-41. Cf. also Knasas, "Thomistic Existentialism," 594-601.

[5] Kondoleon, "The Start of Metaphysics," 128.

[6] Knasas, *Preface,* 157-58; cf. also Knasas, "Thomistic Existentialism," 604-5.

[7] Kondoleon, "The Start of Metaphysics," 127.

[8] Knasas, *Preface,* 157-58; cf. also Knasas, "Thomistic Existentialism," 608-12. In the latter article Knasas focuses upon *ScG* I, c. 13 for his "existential" interpretation of Aquinas's argument from motion, possibly in response to my claim that the argument there seems to be largely one drawn from Aristotle's physical philosophy.

[9] Knasas, *Preface,* 111-13; cf. also Knasas, "Thomistic Existentialism," 607.

(In my review I had asserted that, in St. Thomas, there are no arguments from motion for the existence of angels, that his arguments for their existence are truly metaphysical [i.e., they prescind entirely from motion or change], and that they are based upon what is required for the completeness or perfection of the universe. As I had cause to discover, I was, but only in a certain literal sense, wrong on this point.) [10]

In what follows I propose to argue at greater length against the above positions espoused by Knasas and to show that, for the most part, they are textually mistaken. Since the debate between us is mainly along textual lines, my major concern will be to determine what the texts themselves can, reasonably, conclusively show to be St. Thomas's teaching on these issues. However, that will not prevent me from moving from the question of what is true textually to the more philosophical question concerning the truth of what the texts actually say. This latter concern will lead me to comment upon the soundness of Aquinas's argument from motion to God's existence and also to examine the very nature of motion itself (i.e., whether it is, as Knasas believes, an accidental form or mode of being). Finally, I will also examine the nature and cogency of Aquinas's arguments for the existence of angels.

I

The major difference between Knasas's treatment in his book and in his article of the scope of St. Thomas's natural philosophy is to be found in the fact that the *Thomist* article introduces a number of new texts into his discussion while omitting others included in his book. [11] As would be expected, the texts are used to confirm his position that only metaphysics can establish the existence of immaterial being. While these texts clearly state that the philosophical study of God and angels belongs properly to metaphysics, the question can be fairly raised whether what they affirm, namely, that the subject of first philosophy is universal and separate (i.e., immaterial) being, necessarily rules out the

[10] Kondoleon, •The Start of Metaphysics," 128.

[11] Knasas, Existentialism," 595-99. The texts to which he principally refers in this article are St. Thomas's *In Boet. de Trin.*, q. 5, a. 2; and *ScG* I, c. 4.

position that natural philosophy can conclude, from an argument from motion, to the existence of an Unmoved Mover, evidently neither a physical agent nor a material substance. On this point Knasas honestly admits that there are a number of Thomistic texts which, taken at face value, could be said to support the "natural-philosophy" Thomists' side of this question.[12] Nevertheless, since they appear to contradict the texts he cites on behalf of his position, he interprets the former in such a manner that they do not say what, to any unbiased reader, they obviously do.

In the *In Boet. de Trin.*, q. 5, a. 2, Aquinas acknowledges, in a reply to an objection, that natural philosophy does establish the existence of a "First Mover free of all matter." The article itself inquires, "Does natural philosophy treat of what exists in matter and motion?," and the second objection argues (on the authority of Aristotle, *Physics* 8.) that a First Mover free of all matter is considered in natural philosophy and that, consequently, this science does not treat only of *ens mobile.* In his reply Aquinas points out that while natural philosophy reaches (by an argument from motion, understood) a "First Mover free of all matter," this Mover does not belong to its subject but stands related to it (i.e., to motion and *ens mobile)* as its principle and cause. Therefore, he argues, it still remains true that this philosophical science has for its proper subject only what exists in motion and matter.

Knasas, however, to avoid a contradiction with his own position on the scope of natural philosophy in Thomas and which he himself evidently philosophically defends, chooses to interpret this "First Mover free of all matter" as a First Mover "free of all terrestrial (prime) matter."[13] He can then proceed to identify it with the outermost celestial sphere, which, as he points out, Aquinas sometimes spoke of as a *primum movens.*[14] However, on close inspection this interpretation noticeably fails to pass muster since the celestial spheres were regarded by both Aristotle and St. Thomas as moved movers. (For Aristotle, the efficient cause of the

[12] Knasas, *Preface,* 31-35; see also Knasas, "Thomistic Existentialism," 599-601.

[13] Knasas, *Preface,* 123; Knasas, "Thomistic Existentialism," 599-600.

[14] Knasas, *Preface,* 123; Knasas, "Thomistic Existentialism," 600. In these two places, Knasas has Aquinas regarding Aristotle's first self-mover, namely, the animated outermost sphere, as a *primus movens* or as a *primum motor.* However, this is inaccurate since Aquinas himself.did not regard the outermost sphere as a self-moved mover.

outermost sphere's motion was its intellectual soul; for St. Thomas, who rejected the idea of animated spheres, the outermost sphere's proximate mover was an angel to whom God had assigned the instrumental role of moving this sphere.)[15] Moreover, since Aquinas regarded the outermost sphere as a "first mover" only in a relative sense, that is, a first *physical* agent, and since the Aristotelian text he cites does not view it as a mover but rather as something moved, it could not possibly be the "First Mover" that he actllally had in mind in his reply. Finally, Knasas's interpretation fails to explain in his reply, Aquinas should remark that natural science does not treat of the First Mover as its subject or as part of its subject when, in fact, it does consider as part of its subject matter the celestial spheres (viz., their properties and incorruptible nature) and, in astronomy, their motions (this latter science was viewed as being partly physical and partly mathematical in character).[16] Thus we are left with the one conclusion that is textually acceptable, namely, that Aquinas regarded the First Mover of whom he speaks in this text as a separate substance, one free of the potency of matter and of any bodily change. Whether this Mover was also understood to be God is not at all dear from the text itself. Obviously, however, it was considered to be an incorporeal substance and this fact alone would be sufficient to refute Knasas's position on the scope of natural philosophy according to St. Thomas's stated teaching.

There are, however, other texts in which Aquinas expressly identifies his First Mover with God. In his "first way" from motion in *ScG* I, c. 13 he uses Aristotle's arguments in the *Physics* to show that an Unmoved Mover exists, a First Efficient Cause of motion or change which he calls God. Moreover, in a subsequent chapter of *ScG* I, in establishing that there is no passive potency in God (something already implicitly established in c. 13) he presents the following argument:

[15] See *STh* I, q. 66, a. 4; and q. 70, a. 3.

[16] For St. Thomas's discussion of natural philosophy's knowledge of the heavenly bodies see *In Boet. de Trin.*, q. 5, a. 3, ad 5; and II *Phys.*, lect. 3 (158-63; parenthetical numbers in references to Aquinas's commentary on Aristotle's *Physics* refer to section numbers in the Blackwell translation).

Then, too, we see something in the world that emerges from potency to act. Now it does not educe itself from potency to act, since that which is in potency, being still in potency, therefore cannot act. Some prior being is therefore needed by which it may be brought to act. This cannot go on to infinity. We must therefore arrive at some being that is only in act and in no wise in potency. This being we call God.[17]

While this argument simply restates what has already been argued in a similarly concise fashion in the first section of the "first way" from motion inc. 13, it does have the obvious advantage of not being adduced by St. Thomas as an Aristotelian proof. These arguments, then, would appear to be along physical lines right up to their conclusion. Nowhere is reference made to moved movers moved by God as secondary causes of motion (i.e., to finite intellectual substances acting as instrumental causes of the movements of the supposed incorruptible heavenly spheres).

However, in *ScG* III-I, c. 23 Aquinas argues that the movement of the heavens is caused by an intellectual substance. While this substance is not specifically identified as God, it would ultimately have to be He even if angels were postulated as possible (secondary) causes of the heavens' movements.[18] Finally, in *STh* I, q. 75, in an article concerning whether the soul is a body, St. Thomas, faced with an objection which reasons (falsely) that, since the soul is a moved mover and every moved mover is a body, the soul must evidently be a body, answers:

As everything which is in motion must be moved by something, a process which cannot be prolonged indefinitely, we must allow that not every mover is moved. But as shown in Physics VIII, 6 there is a mover altogether immovable, and not moved either essentially or accidentally.[19]

While St. Thomas does not say here that this Mover is God, in light of what has been argued earlier in this work this identification would hardly be necessary. It seems unnecessary to note

[17] *ScG* I, c. 16; translation by Anton C. Pegis (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), . 100,para. 7.

[18] This text is an important one for Knasas since he will cite it as one of the texts which he sees as actually (or possibly) confirming his position that the angels' existence can be "metaphysically reached" by an a posteriori argument having to do with motion.

[19] *STh* I, q. 75, a. 1; Dominican translation.

further that while reference is again made to Aristotle's *Physics* the argument is unquestionably one accepted by Aquinas himself.

Knasas, as I have indicated, would reject the position that a natural-philosophy argument from motion can conclude to the existence of an unmoved Mover. In his view the efficient causality considered in physical philosophy is limited to the exercise of the purely material powers of natural agents. Thus an argument from motion could not progress, in any series of moved movers, beyond a first corporeal mover (e.g., in Aquinas's cosmology the outermost sphere). But as Aquinas himself has noted in this connection, in referring to the movement of a heavenly sphere:

> If it be moved by an extrinsic mover [and not by an intellectual soul] this latter would be corporeal or incorporeal. Now if it is corporeal it will not move unless it is moved. Therefore it will also have to be moved by another. And since there should be no process to infinity in the order of bodies, we will have to come to an *incorporeal* first mover. Now that which is utterly separate from body must be intellectual. Therefore the motion of the heavens comes from an intellectual substance.[20]

The conclusion of a natural-philosophy argument from motion would therefore appear to be a Mover which is an intellectual substance. (Whether this Mover would be self-existing or not would be a question which only metaphysics could settle.) Indeed, there would seem to be no reason why, in principle, this science could not arrive at an intellectual substance "utterly separate" from matter given Aquinas's celestial physics. Surely the natural philosopher is himself aware that, in seeking the truth about motion and its causes, he is acting for an intelligible good consciously apprehended as such. The natural philosopher could also assume, by analogy, that the agent which moves the heavens (be it one mover or several) is a substance which acts in a similar fashion and therefore is intellectual. Finally, to cut short his argument from motion at a mover which he knows must itself be moved in order to cause motion, and to do so because of a rigidly conceived division between the subject of physics and the subject of metaphysics, would be to thwart the natural philosopher's

[20] *ScG* III-I, c. 23; translation by Vernon j. Bourke (New York: Doubleday and Company Inc., 1956), 89, para. 3. Emphasis added.

desire for a complete causal knowledge of *ens mobile.* In knowing himself and his own good as an efficient and a final cause, respectively, of his own knowledge, the physicist would surely know, if perhaps only inchoately, that the notion of cause extends beyond the order of material agents.[21]

Yet, as we have seen, Aquinas was prepared to identify the Unmoved Mover, whose existence is indeed the conclusion of the argument from motion, with God. How can we explain his position here when it seems so apparent to us that an Unmoved Mover need not immediately be seen as self-existing? Perhaps one could reply that Aquinas was historically disposed to make such an identification in light of his familiarity with Augustine's teaching that immutability is one of the divine attributes whereby God is most distinguished from his creatures, all of which (save those in heaven) are subject to change. Even so, this would not account for his own personal philosophical reason for identifying the Unmoved Mover, admittedly a being of pure act and not in potency to change, with the Self- Existing Being Who is the author of the universe (namely, God). Indeed, without additional argument such an identification would seem highly unwarranted. While an argument from motion can indeed establish a first cause of motion, it cannot establish a first cause of *existence.* Existence, as such, does not belong to its subject and so neither does its first cause. All we can know from this argument (and from natural philosophy) is that the Unmoved Mover is an incorruptible (because incorporeal) substance which knows itself and, somehow, also the bodies whose motions it causes. One could therefore inquire about such a being, does it exist by its very nature or

[21] It may be noted here that according to both Aristotle and Aquinas the natural philosopher considers the final cause. Thus, in his *Commentary on the Plrysics* we find Aquinas remarking: "Hence it is clear that nature is nothing but a certain kind of art, i.e., the divine art impressed upon things, by which these things are moved to a determinate end.... Finally, he [Aristotle] concludes by saying that it is clear that nature is a cause and that it acts for the sake of something" (II *Phys.,* lect. 14 [268];. translation by Richard J. Blackwell [London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963], 124). While Aristotle would acknowledge an unconscious teleology at work in natural agents, he would not see nature, as Aquinas his great medieval commentator would, as the product of divine art. However, properly understood, a final cause can only exert its influence within the intentional order (i.e., in the order of mind). Moreover, the argument from design can also be understood as an argument from natural since there is nothing to prevent any "naturalist" (even an evolutionist) from intuiting that nature's products are the result of goal direction and that natural agents act for ends which they themselves have not preconceived.

not? To be sure, only on the hypothesis that this being is also a Creator could one explain how it could know the beings whose motions it causes, a necessary condition for a first agent's agency or efficient causality.[22]

One contemporary Thomistic metaphysician has argued that, since it was clear to Aquinas that changing beings are also participated beings, he could readily identify the Unmoved Mover with a Self-Existing Being who creates the universe and also concurs with his creatures in their actions.[23] In other words, St. Thomas understood that beings which are composed of potency and act on the levels of substance (which explains substantial change) and accidents (which explains accidental changes) would also be composed of potency and act on the more fundamental metaphysical level of essence and existence. Without the acknowledgment of this metaphysically prior composition of potential existence and actual existence in these changing beings, their unity or oneness would be left radically unexplained. As Aquinas well knew, unity must find its source in unity, not in composition; the being's unity, therefore, is consequent upon its essence receiving an undivided and indivisible act of to be *(unum sequitur* esse).[24]

From this fundamental metaphysical composition of essence and existence in the beings of immediate experience, or from the participated nature of their acts of to be as indicated by the fact that each possesses existence in a limited degree (and thus would

[22] Knasas recognizes this problem and this is one of the reasons he denies that natural philosophy can reach a First Mover which is an incorporeal substance. For the First Mover would have to know the bodies which it moves and this would not be possible if it were not the !=reator or a created Intelligence which knows material things through infused species from the Creator (see Knasas, *Preface,* 36-37). The only solution to this difficulty is to acknowledge that while natural philosophy cannot, by itself, prove God's existence, it does prove an incorporeal substance as the First Mover. It would need to look to metaphysics for the answer as to how the First Mover is able to know the bodies which it moves.

[23] Charles A. Hart, *Thomistic Metaphysics: An Inquiry into the Act of Existence* (Englewoods Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1959). See particularly pp. 271-79. Hart also argues that the composition of substance and accidents offers a very strong proof for the real distinction between essence and existence; for he contends that, without the prior acknowledgment of such a composition, the substance-accidents composition could not be explained as reconcilable with the being's unity. Thus, without the limitation of the accidents by their subject (the finite substance), a limitation which implies that the substance is a limiting principle for its original first act of to be, the accidents could not be truly integrated into the being without a loss of its essential unity.

[24] See *STh* I, q. 11, a. 1; and also IV *Sent.,* d. 10, a. 3.

also be in potency to further complement of act), Aquinas could readily infer the existence of a Being who is Pure Act of Existence, an Unparticipated Being who is to all other beings the First (or proper) Cause of their existence. Since the argument from motion has, in fact, established the existence of an Unmoved Mover, a being of pure act and no potency (so far as change is concerned), Aquinas could then legitimately identify this Unmoved Mover with God. He could do so because otherwise this Unmoved Mover would not be self-existing, and thus would require an extrinsic cause for its existence, and also for its action. Thus any argument from motion in which St. Thomas concludes to God's existence presupposes, on his part, his argument from participation (or some form of his *quarta via).*[25]

II

Knasas maintains that for St. Thomas motion is a real accident of being and that, concretely considered, it has its own act of existence as does each of the real accidents which are placed within certain of the traditional categories of accidental being: "As an accident motion should fall under *ens* and therefore be composed with its own *esse* secondary as that *esse* is."[26] (He goes on to add that this view should be one that characterizes the metaphysician's consideration of motion, thus paving the way for his "existential" interpretation of Aquinas's "proofs *ex motu* at *ScG* I, c. 13.")[27] There are two points at issue here: the first is whether motion is an accident; the second is whether each accident has its own act of existence distinct from that which comes to the finite substance throughout the course of its entire history. Here I will only deal with the first question, namely, whether motion is an accident.[28]

[25] The "fourth way," as Aquinas presents it in *STh* I, q. 2, a. 3, would have to be revised to show Aquinas's principle, manifested elsewhere, that participated beings (i.e., beings which do not have existence intrinsic to their essences or natures as indicated by the fact that they have it in a limited degree) must be efficiently caused. Thus the *quarta via* must be understood as a proof from efficient, and not from exemplary, causality.

[26] Knasas, "Thomistic Existentialism," 605; see also Knasas, *Preface,* 156-58.

[27] Knasas, "Thomistic Existentialism," 605.

[28] In opposition to Knasas on this question, I do not think that Aquinas generally maintained the real composition of essence and existence in accidents. In fact, there are two texts in which he explicitly denies this composition: *STh* III, q. 77, a. 1, ad 4; *De Verit.,* q. 27, a. 1. In the former text, he maintains

The texts which Knasas cites to support his view (one apparently shared by Fr. Owens) do not reveal clearly what St. Thomas has in mind when he speaks of movement or motion *(motus)* as an accident of being.[29] As I will soon indicate, he could be thinking in terms of the categories of action and passion. Moreover, as he mentions in his *Commentary on the Physics,* and also elsewhere in his writings when drawing a distinction between operation and motion:

> Without exception all operations are called motions. Even Aristotle in *De Anima* III says that sensation and understanding are motions insofar as motion is the act of the perfect. But here we are speaking of the act of the imperfect, the act of that which exists in potency.[30]

Thus, the term "motion" could be loosely applied to the act of something perfect (or of something which actually exists and is in act) and then it would refer to immanent acts such as understanding and loving and to transient acts such as teaching, healing, and building.[31] However, properly understood, motion, for Aquinas, is not the act of something perfect but rather of something imperfect, that is, of something that does not yet have actual existence, or is still not completely made (or made actual). Moreover, motion, unlike action, is not a category of being. It is

that the accidents of the bread and wine do not have a composition of essence and existence before the miracle of consecration but are conserved in existence by their respective substances, as receiving their acts of to be from God. After consecration, however, the accidents (at least the quantities of what were formerly bread and wine) are conserved immediately in existence by God. For an opposing position on this question see Barry Brown, *Accidental Being: A Study in the Metaphysics of St. Thomas Aquinas* (New York: University Press of America, 1985), 109-15.

[29] Knasas cites a number of texts in which St. Thomas does refer to motion as an accident. Thus, in XII *Metaphys.,* lect. 1 (2419), Aquinas notes, "Hence Aristotle says that accidents as quality and motion *[motus]* are not called beings, in an unqualified sense, but beings of a being" (translation by John P. Rowan, *Commentary on the Metaphysics of Aristotle* [Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1961]). Aquinas also says, in *In Boet. de Trin.,* q. *5,* a. 3, "But accidents befall substance in a certain order. Quantity comes to it first, then quality, after that passivities *[passiones]* and motion *[motus]"* (translation by Armand Maurer, *The Division and Method of the Sciences* [Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1963), 44). Finally, in *De Ente et Essentia,* c. 6, Aquinas 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 *[movenl* and other accidents of this kind" (translation by Armand Maurer, *On Being and Essence* [Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1968), 69-70).

[30] VII *Phys.,* lect. 1 (890); Blackwell, 245. See also *STh* I, q. 58, a. 1, ad 1; and q. *95,* a. 1, ad *5.*

[31] See III *Phys.,* lect. *5* (325); Blackwell, 152.

not a category or something reducible to a category (as prime matter can be reduced to the category of substance) but it is, in fact, something that takes place with respect to a category when something potential in that category is being made actual.[32]

Neither, as we shall see, can motion be identified with the category of passion, even though passion results from something being acted upon or reduced to act by an agent. Passion (the category) refers rather to the completed or actualized state of a passive power's potency for a particular kind of change or actuality. (This passive power is a proper qualitative accident of the finite substance, which is said to be the ultimate subject of the change, or the "patient," as its operative power is said to be the immediate subject of the finite substance's operation, with the substance itself as the ultimate subject, or the "agent.") When the change is a gradual one (e.g., learning or being healed or heated) and does not take place instantaneously but in a series of successive stages or degrees, then we are more apt to think of passion as a motion or process. However, when the change is instantaneous, as in the case of the human mind's enlightenment by a superior intellect or even by its own intellectual light (not excluding the action of the First Mover), the passion (which results from this movement from potency to act) is not thought of as a motion or becoming process but, as it should be, as the (even momentarily) actualized state of the passive power.

In discussing motion in his *Commentary on the Physics*, particularly in his commentary on book 3, the *locus classicus* for his discussion of this subject, Aquinas defines motion as the act of what exists in potency, and mentions, as examples, learning, healing, rolling, dancing, and maturing.[33] In the following passage he describes quite well what it is and why, intellectually, it is so difficult to grasp or capture its meaning or reality:

> He [Aristotle] explains why motion is among the indeterminates. He says that motion cannot be placed under potency or under act. For if it were placed under potency, whatever would be in potency, e.g., to quantity, would be moved according to quantity, and if it were placed under act, then whatever

[32] See VII *Phys.*, lect. 3 (898); Blackwell, 431.

[33] See III *Phys.*, lect. 2 (287); Blackwell, 137.

would be a quantity in act would be moved according to quantity. Indeed, it is true that motion is an act but it is an imperfect act, a *mean* between potency and act. Hence it is difficult to grasp what motion is.... Hence only the above way of defining motion remains, namely, that it is an act such as we have said, i.e., the act *[actualization]* of that which exists in potency. However, it is difficult to understand such an act because of the mixture of act and potency. Nevertheless, the existence of such an act is not impossible, but may occur.[34]

However, in view of what he has previously noted in the same text, Aquinas would want the following italicized words added to this definition to complete it: "motion is the actualization of what exists in potency *insofar as it remains in potency.*"[35] The definition I have just given is the one familiar to all "scholastics" and, in light of this fact, it is difficult to see how Knasas (and Owens) could consider motion as a being *(ens),* albeit an accident, when it has no complete actuality or indeed is not a form. Surely *being* is not the same as *becoming* and what exists and is placed in a category must have being in some form and not be a *mean* between potency and act.[36]

Aquinas does say in the text we have been following that motion can be placed by reduction in that genus (category) which terminates the motion "as the imperfect is reduced to the perfect."[37] However, as he indicates elsewhere, this need only mean that the various species of motion are taken from the categories of being in which motion occurs, or in which a potentiality is being actualized.[38] Again, in discussing the various categories in this text, he does not include motion among them

[34] Ibid., lect. 3 (296); Blackwell, 141-42. Emphasis added.

[35] See ibid., lect. 2 (285); Blackwell, 136-37.

[36] It may be objected that the finite substance is itself a mean between potency and act since, in essence, it is a *potential existence* principle which exists in order to be actualized or made complete with respect to its full measure of existence, yet it is placed in a category; to which my reply is that the finite substance is always, that is, so long as it exists, complete *qua* substance.

[37] III *Phys.*, lect. 5 (324); Blackwell, 152.

[38] See V *Phys.*, lect. 3 (661). To quote Aquinas on this point: "For motion takes its denomination and species from its terminus, as we said above. Hence the categories are divided into ten genera of things. . . . and if motion is found in three of them, then there must be three species of motion-namely, motion in the genus of quantity, motion in the genus of quality, and motion in the genus of where, which is called motion in respect to place. Hence it is sufficient here to say briefly that any motion is in the same genus as its terminus, not in the sense that motion to quality is a species of quality, but by reduction. For just as potency is reduced to the genus of act, likewise motion, which is an imperfect act, must be reduced to the genus of perfect act" (Blackwell, 298).

but says only that it will be shown later how motion is related to the categories of action and passion.

This is what he [Aristotle] means when he says that motion is not "over and above" the genera [categories] of things in respect to which motion occurs, as if it were something extraneous or something common to these genera. He makes this clear by the fact that everything that is changed, is changed according to substance, or according to quantity, or according to quality, or according to place, as will be shown in Book V.... Hence there is no motion or mutation outside the above-mentioned genera, since they divide being [analogically] sufficiently well. He will later show how motion is related to the category of action and passion.[39]

While Aquinas does say later that motion belongs to the predicaments of action and passion, it is certainly not the case that he actually thought of these categories as modes of *motion* (as opposed to modes of *being).* This would be impossible since both categories are described by him in terms of actual states of being:

Now the act of the active is called action, while the act of the passive is called passion.... For that which is the work and end of each thing is its act and perfection. Hence, since the work and end of the agent is action, and since the work and end of the patient is passion, it follows that action is the act of the agent and passion is the act of the patient.[40]

He makes this observation, then, because the agent in act is a mover and the patient's passive power is what is moved or reduced to act by the agent's action (or efficient causality). As he says:

For a thing is not reduced from potency to act except by some agent cause, and in respect to this motion belongs to the predicament of action and passion. For these two predicaments are taken in respect to the *ratio* of agent cause and effect.[41]

[39] III *Plrys.,* leer. 1 (281); Blackwell, 134-35.
[40] Ibid., leer. 5 (309); Blackwell, 146.
[41] Ibid., (324); Blackwell, 152.

In this same discussion he explains how the "motion" of the agent and that of the patient constitute a single motion.[42] This is so because at the moment of efficiency the agent is in some way in the patient *(actio est in passo)*. In other words, the motion is from the agent, as its principle, and terminates in the patient, whose passive power is reduced to act by it. At the moment of finite efficiency the action of the agent and the passion of the patient are in some way the same act or motion, even though they are in separate categories of being. But, again, it should be stressed that, strictly speaking, action and passion are not motions. Action is not a motion but, rather, the finite substance's second act or completing perfection. Nor is passion a motion but the termination of the finite agent's action, some new form of existence in the patient or finite subject of change. To conclude what has already become perhaps too lengthy a discussion, motion according to St. Thomas's teaching in this *Commentary* is not a category of being or something reducible to a category (as matter and form, the actual and potential principles of the material substance, are properly reducible to the category of substance).

In opposition to Knasas's (and apparently Owens's) position, it can now be said that there is no argument, at least no one that could accurately claim to be Thomistic, from a supposed *esse* of motion to the existence of God as the proper cause of that *esse* (a spurious one, as we have seen). Since, for St. Thomas, motion has no *esse* (i.e., it is not a form or an accident), any construction of the argument from motion along the "existential" line proposed by Knasas is not in keeping with either the mind or the texts of Aquinas.

In his article Knasas argues that the proof from motion in *ScG* I, c. 13 can be understood from the standpoint of the motion upon which the (supposed) *esse* of motion depends as well as from the standpoint of the motion's (supposed) *esse* (in this latter case one could immediately conclude to God's existence as the proper cause of *esse*).[43] When approached primarily from the

[42] See ibid. (314). As Aquinas says in this connection: "It is clear from what was determined above that action and passion are not two motions, but are one and the same motion. For insofar as motion is from the agent it is called action, and insofar as it is in the patient it is called passion" (Blackwell, 309).

[43] See Knasas, "Thomistic Existentialism," 610.

standpoint of motion, the metaphysician can use the "findings" of natural philosophy to construct a proof which leads to the first cause of motion. However, in his actual development of this argument Knasas presents it in its Aristotelian form and concludes to an Unmoved Mover which moves as a final cause of motion, that is, to one which "moves," as an object of appetite, the intellectual soul which animates the outermost sphere.[44] What a Thomist would find objectionable, however, in Knasas's "Thomistic" reconstruction of the Aristotelian argument from motion is that it directly contradicts St. Thomas's position concerning the animation of the heavenly spheres by intellectual souls.[45]

III

In the final section of this article I would like to address the question of St. Thomas's arguments for the existence of angels. Knasas contends that angels can be "metaphysically reached" insofar as they are causes of the *esse* of generable things through their movement of the heavenly spheres.[46] However, such an argument would have to be from motion and not from the *esse* of generable things. Only God can be metaphysically reached from the *esse* of generable things since only God is the proper cause of *esse.* In his book Knasas argues, supposedly following Aquinas, that an Intellectual Principle is required to account for the movement of a heavenly sphere.[47] However, he offers no reason here why this Intellectual Principle could not be God rather than a created Intelligence. The only text he mentions in this discussion, *STh* I, q. 70, a. 3, presupposes the existence of angels as already established.[48] Nor is the argument for the angels' existence found in this earlier text an argument from motion but

[44] Ibid., 611-14.

[45] See *STh* I, q. 70, a. 1.

"See Knasas, *Preface,* 112; see also Knasas, "Thomistic Existentialism," 607-8.

"Knasas, *Preface,* 110.

"STh I, q. 50, a. 1. In keeping with his customary philosophical-theological methodology, Aquinas, at the very outset of his treatise on the angels, considers first the pivotal question of the angels' existence and offers a philosophical argument to support this belief which is initially on faith. Thus the *sed contra* in this article argues from the authority of Sacred Scripture.

one which is truly metaphysical and based upon God's purpose in creating, namely, the reflection of his own perfection.

In his article, Knasas returns to defend his position that the existence of angels can be established by an a posteriori argument from motion and cites in his support the following passage from St. Thomas's *In Boet. de Trin.:*

> 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 thing at least through their movement of the spheres. [49]

In his footnote citing this text (and certain other texts as well, viz., *ScG* III-I, c. 23 and *STh* I, q. 70, a. 3) Knasas comments: "These texts contradict Kondoleon's claim that 'for St. Thomas, angelic beings are not metaphysically reached by an a posteriori argument having to do with motion. '"[50] Actually, they do no such thing! In the first passage, no argument is offered for the existence of angels; rather the passage merely asserts that angels are "secondary principles of things through their movement of the spheres." It would be a patent *non sequitur* to argue that because Aquinas allowed that angels were secondary causes of things through their movements of the heavenly bodies he thereby had a *causal* argument for their existence. Yet this would appear to be the sole basis for Knasas's position on this issue.

Admittedly, there is one text he cites, *ScG* III-I, c. 23, that does seem to be relevant to his contention here. In this text Aquinas offers several "proofs" to establish that an Intellectual Principle is required to account for the movement of the heavens.[51] However, as the chapter's conclusion dearly points out, these arguments prove only that some Intellectual Principle (it would, ultimately, have to be God) is responsible for the celestial movements:

[49] Knasas, "Thomistic Existentialism," 607.

[50] Ibid., n. 38.

[51] I have put the word "proofs" in quotation marks here because we would not consider them such today, based as they are on a false cosmology regarding the motion of heavenly bodies.

Nor does it make any difference as far as our argument is concerned whether a heavenly body is moved by a conjoined intellectual substance which is its soul or by a separate substance; nor whether each celestial body is *immediately* moved by God or whether none is so moved because all are moved through *created* intellectual substances [Aquinas's position]; nor whether the first body alone is immediately moved by God, and the others through the mediation of created intellectual substances-provided it be granted that celestial motion comes from an intellectual substance.[52]

It is to be noted that again, in this text also, St. Thomas appears to be assuming the existence of angels by referring to them as "created" intellectual substances. In this connection it should be said-and this point of his teaching is generally known-that Aquinas maintained that the divine goodness grants to certain of the lower angels a participatory role in the governance of the universe by moving then to act as instrumental causes of the celestial movements. But this point of his angelology hardly warrants the inference that he thought that the angels' existence could be demonstrated by an a posteriori argument from motion.

In another footnote in his article Knasas cites once again two of the texts he has claimed are relevant to his position on this question but then adds the following revealing comment:

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.[53]

Thus it would seem that even Knasas is aware that two of the texts he has mentioned (I can omit here the already-quoted passage from *In Boet. de Trin.)* to support his position of a causal argument, in Aquinas, for the existence of angels do not contribute at all to this purpose. It should now be clear that none of the texts to which Knasas points to show that St. Thomas had indeed an a posteriori argument for the angels' existence demonstrate any such thing and that all that they do indicate is that he assigned to certain angels the task of moving, as his instruments, the heavenly spheres.

[52] *ScG* III-I, c. 23; Bourke, 93, para. 12. Emphasis added.

[53] Knasas, "Thomistic Existentialism," 614.

Yet in fairness to Knasas let me mention and even briefly discuss a text (one which he has, apparently, overlooked) in which Aquinas *does* argue to the existence of angels by way of an a posteriori argument from motion. The text inquires whether there are intellectual substances not united to bodies; Aquinas offers several arguments to establish that there are, and one of them is nonmetaphysical in character and based upon motion. It should be pointed out that the argument is, in part, the same as that developed by Aristotle in *Metaphysics* XII in resolving the question as to the number of unmoved movers (again, he saw them as final causes of motion) that must be required to account for the various movements observed in the heavens in addition to the first movement. In view of the importance of this text to our discussion I must quote it at some length:

> Again in *Metaphysics* XI Aristotle reasons as follows: Movement that is continuous, regular and in its own nature unfailing must be derived from a mover [Aristotle's Unmoved Mover] which is not moved either through itself or by accident as was proved in Book I of this work. Moreover, *a plurality of movements must proceed from a plurality of movers.* The movement of the heaven is in its nature unfailing and, besides the first movement, there are many such movements, as the study of the astronomers show. But, as we have proved in the same book, no body moves unless it itself is moved; and an incorporeal mover united to a body is moved accidentally in keeping with the movement of the body, as we see in the case of the soul. Hence there must be a number of movers which are neither bodies nor united to bodies. Now the heavenly movements proceed from an intellect, as we have shown. We therefore conclude to a plurality of intellectual substances not united to bodies.[54]

In this argument Aquinas lays down the premise I have placed in italics ("a plurality of movements must proceed from a plurality of movers") as though it were self-evidently true. However, this premise is unquestionably borrowed from Aristotle and reflects the Stagirite's attempt to account for each different movement in the heavens (which he held to be animated) by postulating a number of unmoved Movers which "move" as final causes. It should not, therefore, have been used in an argument for the

[54] *ScG* II, c. 91; translation by James F. Anderson (New York: Doubleday and Company Inc., 1956), 34, para. 9. Emphasis added.

existence of angels since, at least in Aquinas's own teaching, angels are not said to be final causes of motion nor, as I have already indicated, are the heavenly spheres held to be animated. Moreover, in a later chapter of this work, Aquinas will reject, as in any way necessary, a plurality of created spiritual substances to account, as efficient causes, for the movements of the heavens.[55] Since, therefore, a key premise in this argument is highly suspect as representing St. Thomas's true view on the matter-he allows, as we have seen, that God alone could account for the heaven's movements-the argument itself should be completely discounted as a bona fide Thomistic one for the existence of angels. Most likely, St. Thomas included it among his arguments in this chapter in order to enlist Aristotle's support for the view that a plurality of completely spiritual substances do actually exist. That St. Thomas regarded them as created substances whereas Aristotle did not was an important metaphysical difference that Aquinas chose to ignore. Again, it is our position (one upheld by traditional Thomists) that there are no a posteriori arguments for the angels' existence-at least ones that can be reconciled with St. Thomas's metaphysics-to be found in his writings. I think it can be fairly said that in resorting to this argument Aquinas let his zeal for establishing a truth, one already ably established elsewhere in this chapter, get the better of his reason.

Since, obviously, there are no a priori arguments (arguments from cause to effect) in St. Thomas's writings for the existence of angels (this would have contradicted one of his most strongly held convictions, viz., that in this life the human intellect cannot know, *in se,* the mind and will of the creator), the question naturally arises as to the nature of the arguments which Aquinas did, characteristically, put forth for their existence. Moreover, inasmuch as they are not strictly demonstrations, one may also inquire what intellectual force or cogency they can be truly said to possess. Some of St. Thomas's followers have described them as *argumenta ad convenientiam-literally,* arguments from convenience, whose conclusions are accepted as being in keeping with the divine purpose (or with the divine wisdom and goodness) in

[55] See ScG Ill-I, ch. 23.

creating. For the Thomistic metaphysician they hold a highly persuasive value since they lead to the conclusion that angels should exist. First, they should exist if God's creation is not to be without the highest reflection of himself possible in the universe he creates.[56] Second, they should exist if the universe is to be complete or not lacking in any possible grade of finite being.[57] Third, they should exist if the perfect in the genus of intellectual substance is to exist, a grade of beings whose actual existence would seem to hold a metaphysical priority over the existence of the human intellectual soul (a spiritual substantial form which is received into matter).[58]

Let me conclude this discussion of St. Thomas's arguments for the existence of angels as well as my reply to Knasas's article by quoting what one preeminent contemporary Thomistic metaphysician has said on this subject:

> As immaterial substances angels do not come within the range of our sense experience, and so we cannot have any intuitive knowledge of their existence. As we have already proved, there can only be one self-Existing Creator, who alone having existence proper and intrinsic to His nature, alone can give existence itself to His creatures .... Hence the human intellect cannot establish by inference the actual existence of any other beings [beings other than God] which are outside the range of sense experience, and at the same time cannot give existence itself to other things. The most we can say is that such separate intellectual substances are conceivable, and in view of the generally hierarchical order of the immediately experienced beings, it is convenient that angels should exist to complete the known hierarchy. Further, if they did not exist, there would be absent an important grade of being, an absence which occurs nowhere else in the hierarchy. Such a lacuna would seem to be out of harmony with the order one should expect of an infinitely intelligent Creator Who had everywhere else established an unbroken hierarchy. In a word, there should be

[56] See *STh* I, q. 50, a. 1. The argument here implies that angels would reflect God's complete immateriality and would represent the most perfect assimilation of effect to Cause possible to any creature.

[57] See *ScG* 11, c. 91. As Aquinas observes here: "But all possible natures are found in the order of things; otherwise the universe would be imperfect" (Anderson, 314, para. 6). Elsewhere he remarks: "First, it therefore appears, from the perfection of the universe, that there are some substances wholly free of matter. For such is seen to be the universe's perfection that there is not absent from it any nature which is possible to be. On this account (in Genesis 1) each thing, singularly, is said to be good, however the whole is said as well to be exceedingly good" *(De Spiritualibus Creaturis* [Rome: Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana, 1938], a. 5).

[58] See *ScG* II, c. 91; also see *De Spiritualibus Creaturis,* a. 5.

a grade of angelic beings. Their non-existence would create an enigma where none is expected. Divine revelation is needed to establish absolutely the existence of these simple intellectual substances completely devoid of any material principle in their essences and therefore incapable of any numerical multiplication within a species.[59]

I believe I have completed my needed reply to Professor Knasas on some of the more important debatable issues concerning St. Thomas's teaching to which his book and his article gave rise. I hope that in doing so I have been fair to him and true to the thought of St. Thomas.

[59] Hart, *Thomistic Metaphysics*, 164-65.

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WHATEVER COMES TO BE HAS A CAUSE OF ITS COMING TO BE: A THOMIST DEFENSE OF THE PRINCIPLE OF SUFFICIENT REASON

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ABOUT 1,500 YEARS AGO, John Philoponus, [1] a Christian Neoplatonist, proposed the following simple argument to prove the existence of God:

(1) Whatever comes to be has a cause of its coming to be.
(2) The universe came to be.
∴ The universe has a cause of its coming to be.

Revived interest in this argument, especially in the Kalam version championed by William Lane Craig, [2] has met with a surprising reception. Inclined to grant the truth of premise (2) on the grounds of the empirical evidence of Big Bang cosmology, Quentin Smith [3] has attempted to avoid the argument's theistic conclusion by denying premise (1). In other words, he flatly denies the age-old dictum that *ex nihilo nihil fit.*

[1] For the battery of arguments Philoponus advances for the finitude of the past, see *Philoponus: Against Aristotle, on the Eternity of the World,* trans. Christian Wildberg (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co., 1987). In this paper I do not defend premise (2) of Philoponus's argument; for my contribution to that debate, see "The Finite Past," forthcoming.

[2] William Lane Craig, *The Kalam Cosmological Argument* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1979); also see Craig and Quentin Smith, *Theism, Atheism, and Big Bang Cosmology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

[3] See for example essay 6 in Craig and Smith, *Theism, Atheism, and Big Bang Cosmology.* Also see Smith's "Can Everything Come to Be Without a Cause?", *Dialogue* 33:2 (Spring 1994). It should be noted that Smith is committed to rather more than the bare *possibility* of something coming to be from nothing, for he believes that the universe itself came to be *ex nihilo* yet was uncaused.

Thomas Sullivan notes in a recent article that it is difficult to construct an argument in favor of the principle of sufficient reason (of which premise [1] is one expression) by appealing to a principle more obvious than the principle of sufficient reason itself.[4] Sullivan is surely right about this. However, it is often the case that those who would dispute the truth of a fundamental axiom themselves hold more complex and tentative propositions to be true. A good example of this would be a person who, while agreeing with Smith, embraces (perhaps for good independent reasons)[5] a metaphysics of substances. It is to just such a person that my reply is directed.

My response is rooted in the traditional Scholastic understanding of the principle of sufficient reason. To avoid some of the confusion that has grown up about this principle since the time of Leibniz, I will call the (weak) principle I defend simply "the reason of being."[6] The full formula for this ontological principle is as follows:

Every being has the reason of being of that which belongs to it in itself or in some other: in itself, if that which belongs to it is a constituent of itself; in another, if that which belongs to it does so without being a constituent of itself.7

[4] Thomas D. Sullivan, "On the Alleged Causeless Beginning of the Universe: A Reply to Quentin Smith," *Dialogue* 33:2 (Spring 1994): 328.

[5] For example, the ability of such a metaphysics to resolve the problem of change, to explain continuity of identity over time, and to provide a metaphysical ground for the natural necessities that science investigates.

[6] Jn what follows it might be thought that I run together two things contemporary philosophy keeps distinct: "explanations" and "causes." I plead *nolo contendere.* Contrary to the fashionable idiom, the Latin word *causa,* like its Greek counterpart *aitia,* preserves the important conceptual point that a "cause is always explanation-affording and *aitia qua* explanation is always cause-specifying" (Alasdair Macintyre, *First Principles, Final Ends and Contemporary Phi/osophicallssues* The Aquinas Lecture, 1990 (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1995), 4). When we consider the beginning of the universe, and ask for an explanation of how it came to be, the natural way of understanding this is as a search for the cause of the universe. For this reason, I will stick to the language of causation and leave the notion of explanation in the background.

[7] R. P. Phillips, *Modem Thomistic Philosophy: An Explanation for Students* (Westminster: The Newman Press, 1962), 2:236. Aquinas's formulation and application of the principle of the reason of being may be found in *Summa contra Gentiles* II, c. 15.

One need not limit oneself to saying that this principle applies across all possible worlds. Possible worlds ontologies (e.g., David Lewis's counterpart theory, the modal systems of Alvin Plantinga and Robert Adams) and the quantified modal logics that go with them are philosophical monstrosities: not only are the modal analyses offered of questionable value, they are positively harmful to the development

In defense of this principle I will offer two types of argument. First, I will argue that denying the principle of the reason of being is unscientific, and leads directly to skepticism regarding our ability to know the world. Second, I will argue that the principle of the reason of being, while not susceptible of direct demonstration, is justifiable by means of a *reductio ad absurdum.*[8] In both types of argument my strategy is the same: I wish to eliminate the third disjunctive possibility which is not mentioned in the principle of the reason of being, namely, that being might accrue to a thing while that thing's reason of being is neither in the thing itself nor in some other thing.

I

Denying the principle of the reason of being is unscientific on at least two counts. First, doing so flies in the face of our constant experience, for we directly observe the workings of efficient causality in the world.[9] The induction from particular causal instances to the general principle of the reason of being has to be one of the best-confirmed hypotheses in science. What scientific principle could be more ubiquitous?

The second reason why denial of the principle of the reason of being is unscientific is that renouncing this principle effectively undercuts our ability to account for the regularities of Nature. A

of a healthy metaphysics. For inoculation against this particularly virulent strain, see the work of James F. Ross, particularly "The Crash of Modal Metaphysics," *Review of Metaplrysics* 43 (December 1989).

[8] This warning envisages, for example, an intuitionist who might not admit *reductio-style* proofs, or a staunch defender of trivalent logic who might point out that • p.

[9] *Contra* Hume *(Treatise* 1.3.14.), we have both *external* and *internal* impressions of causation. For an example of an external impression of causation, see Elizabeth Anscombe's "Times, Beginnings and Causes," in *The Collected Philosophical Papers of G.E.M. Anscombe* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981), 2:148-62; see especially 150-51. As for an internal impression of causation, almost any case of conscious volition will do: the point of my consciously willing something (e.g., that I am going to think about the problem of causation) is precisely that I expect, and in fact do experience in accordance with my expectations, the continuous, successive responsiveness of my thoughts to the directions of my will. As DeWitt Parker remarks: "In the daydream, for example, we are eyewitnesses of the emergence of the dream images *under the control* of desire, and see that not only this existence but their character is such as to fulfil its intention. One wonders what stronger tie, what more obvious necessitation could be sought than is found here" *(Experience and Substance: An Essay in Metaplrysics* [Westport: Greenwood Press, 1970], 59-60).

suitable explanation for any physical state of affairs whatsoever would be: this state arose by coming to be from nothing.

To this Smith might offer the rejoinder that he is only committed to the position that *"x* came to be and *x* was uncaused" is the right explanation for *some* states of affairs. This response will not work. Smith could never formulate a criterion by which those states of affairs in which coming-to-be-without-being-caused is possible can be distinguished from those states of affairs in which it is not possible. For, as I argue below, it makes no sense to place limits on the creative power of Nothing once we abandon the principle *ex nihilo nihil fit.* If, as Smith would have us think, the universe itself came to be without being caused, then surely less grand suppositions than this are feasible.[10]

Let us draw out the position. Let us suppose, for the moment, that the universe came to be *simpliciter* without being caused. This means that something (i.e., the universe) came to be out of nothing. But, if it is really possible that something can come to be out of nothing, there is no reason why we should assume that this spontaneous coming to be isn't happening all the time. How could any Being possibly condition Nothing in such a way that Something is produced only rarely? We might well ask: Why does *this* Nothing produce Something when *that* Nothing does not?[11] How could spatial location possibly impact the fecundity of Nothing? How could time? And why should Nothing produce Something on a limited scale? Perhaps one might venture to say

[10] Moreover, if one believes (as Smith appears to believe) that at least one contingent being is such that necessarily its coming to be has a cause, then one should believe the same of all contingent beings whatsoever. As Sullivan argues: "For all contingent entities agree with respect to the relevant property-being a contingent entity. It would be entirely arbitrary to say that a contingent entity needs a cause for its emergence provided it is blue, but not if it is red. The relevant property is not its colour or its size but its contingency" ("On the Alleged Causeless Beginning of the Universe," 330). For a fuller defense of this point, see Sullivan's "Coming To Be Without a Cause," *Philosophy* 65:253 Quly 1990): sect. 6.

[11] This manner of speaking is somewhat tongue in cheek. Of course I do not mean to reify "Nothing." As St. Anselm notes, the proper interpretation of "from nothing" *("ex nihi/o")* is 'not from anything' *(Mono/ogium* ch. 8.) One could rephrase the above sentence as follows: Why did something come to be *ex nihi/o* at time t_0 (i.e., the universe's first event-state) while there was not something coming to be *ex nihi/o* at time t_1 (i.e., last Tuesday)? The qualification could also be made in terms of spatial location: Why here and not there? Rewording the objection in either manner is legitimate since creation is simultaneous with the coming into being of both space and time; there really is a time t_0 and a "this place here" to compare with a time t_1 and "that place there."

that Nothing is intrinsically conditioned in such a way that it is not continuously productive. But how can Nothing possess intrinsic limiting factors? If these intrinsic limiting factors are Something, then we have all the problems outlined above; and if instead they (i.e., the limiting factors) are not Something, then they are Nothing. Which is to say that Nothing is conditioned by Nothing. Now, this either means that Nothing is not intrinsically limited, but *ex hypothesi* we have assumed it to be, or else we have an infinite regress, with Nothing always being intrinsically limited by further Nothings. But all this is absurd: there is no intermediary between Being and Non-Being, which appears to be what is required for this position. [12] And finally: If Nothing can be the source of Being, why then don't we find existing things blipping away into Nothing? For what has the power to create should have an equal power to destroy. But again, this is unacceptable: the law of the conservation of matter/energy is fundamental to the physical sciences. One doesn't, in other words, get Something for Nothing. [13]

[12] One possible way out is to claim that Nothing is really Something. In a rather curious work, Fridugisus of Tours takes this very route. On the authority of Scripture he asserts

> that the things first and foremost among creatures are produced out of nothing. Therefore, nothing is a great and distinguished something. It cannot be assessed how great is that from which so many and so distinguished things come, since not one of the things generated from it can be assessed for what it is worth or be defined. For who has measured the nature of the elements in detail? Who has grasped the being and nature of light, of angelic nature, or of the soul? Therefore, if we are unable to comprehend these things I mentioned, how shall we [ever] reach [the knowledge of] how great and what kind of thing it is from which they draw their origin and their genus? (On *the Being of Nothing and Shadows,* trans. Paul Vincent Spade, 1995)

One could stretch the point a bit and say that Meinong is a latter-day Fridugisus.

[13] As Craig points out, it would be a mistake to countenance Quentin Smith's suggestion that the Heisenberg uncertainty principle gives us ground for supposing that something can come to be out of nothing (Craig and Smith, *Theism, Atheism, and Big Bang Cosmology,* 143-44 and 121-23 respectively. Smith has since retracted this objection: see "Can Everything Come to Be Without a Cause?", 320.) The spontaneous arising of virtual particles (which possibility is admitted by the Heisenberg uncertainty relation) does not violate the principle of the reason of being because the quantum vacuum is very different from the void of Newton: the quantum vacuum is a soupy morass of energy and particles in constant flux; and virtual particles derive their existence from the surrounding quantum gumbo. So, whatever the full causal account of virtual particles might be, it is clear that their arising is not a case of something coming to be out of nothing.

II

The *reductio-style* proof of the principle of the reason of being has a serious methodological limitation in that it assumes a metaphysic of substances. Such a metaphysic I suggest on its own merits, and will not defend here.

To begin, we must note that there is a real distinction between essence and existence. As Aquinas puts it:

> whatsoever does not belong to the concept of essence or quiddity is something accruing from without and effecting a composition with the essence, since no essence can be conceived without those things which are parts of essence. But every essence or quiddity can be conceived aside from the condition that something be known concerning its existence, for I can conceive what a man or a phoenix is and still not know if it has existence in the nature of things. Therefore it is clear that existence is something other than essence or quiddity, unless perhaps there be something the quiddity of which is its very existence.[14]

The point Aquinas makes here is that whatever does not belong to the conception or understanding of an essence is extraneous to that essence, and forms a compound with it; this is because no essence can be understood without those things that are part of that essence. This is why for instance we say that the essence of a man includes both the form of a man-his humanity-and a physical body-that is, some particular lump of matter determinate in three dimensions. If we positively exclude the corporeal aspect of man from our understanding of his essence, we would have the notion of a purely intellectual substance and hence would lack an understanding of man. (The idea we would be left with would, however, be appropriate to an angel.)

If an essence can be understood without some particular characteristic, it follows that that characteristic does not belong to the essence as such. For instance, the color of a man's skin: I have experienced sunburns yet remained what I am-I am still a man and that man which I am. So, if a characteristic that does not belong to the essence as such is attributed to the essence, that attribution must be extrinsic. Now, every essence can be under-

[14] St. Thomas Aquinas, *De Ente et Essentia,* c. 4 (translation in *Concerning Being and Essence,* trans. George G. Leckie [New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1937], 23-24).

stood without anything being understood about its existence: this is the point of Aquinas's man and phoenix example. I can know what a man is and what a phoenix is and still be ignorant as to which of the two has existence *in rerum natura*. Therefore, essence and existence are really distinct, [15] unless there exists some being such that its essence is its very existence. [16] In sum, no part of the essence can be positively excluded from our concept if we are to avoid a misconception of that thing we seek to understand. It would be a mistake, for instance, to exclude either rationality or animality from our notion of man. Similarly, if existence is really a part of the essence of man, it would be a misconception to exclude that characteristic from our notion of man's essence. Aquinas is not saying that our notion of any essence explicitly includes all that is part of that essence-that would imply that we have a perfectly adequate or exhaustive knowledge of the essence in question-rather, he suggests that no part of the essence can be explicitly excluded from the concept of that essence. [17]

What conclusion should we draw from this surprising fact, that a thing's being is really distinct from its essence? Simply this: that

[15] Essence and existence are really distinct for all finite beings: *what* a thing is is really distinct from *that* it is. What, then, are we to make of the Aristotelian claim that it is essence (i.e., substantial form) which confers actuality upon a thing? The answer is that essence is that through which and in which a thing has its act of existing *(esse)*, that is, "it is *in* and *by means of* the essence that the substance receives *esse"* (Armand Maurer, in his translation of Aquinas's *On Being and Essence* [Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1949], 28 n. 12).

[16] Such a being would be vastly unlike all else that exists, for it would of necessity be one and simple, undifferentiated by any form:

> But, should there exist some being which is simply the act of existing, so that the act of existing be itself subsistent, a difference cannot be added to this act of existing. Otherwise, it would not be purely and simply the act of existing, but the act of existing plus a certain form. Much less can matter be added to it, because then it would not be a subsistent, but a material, act of existing. So we conclude that there can only be one such being which is its very act of existing. With this exception, in every other thing its act of existing is other than its quiddity, nature, or form. *(De Ente et Essentia,* c. 4; Maurer's trans.)

[17] This reasoning led Aquinas to reject Anselm's ontological argument. From what has been said it is not possible to prove that God necessarily exists; rather, it is only possible for us to say that *if* God exists, He exists necessarily.

I am much indebted to Phillips, *Modern Thomistic Philosophy,* 2: 197-98, for the expositinn given in the previous two paragraphs.

being is an accident of things. Since existence belongs to things-and certainly a plurality of finite things do exist-and since existence is not part of the essence of things, then it must be said that being is *present in* things: While it remains extrinsic to the nature of a thing, being is *in* that thing; being is the *being of* some thing. But to be *present in* some substantial thing is precisely the character of an accident.[18] Unlike individual substances, such as this tree and that stone, an accident "cannot exist separately from what it is in."[19] In the language of the Schoolmen, accidents are not self-subsisting.

The accidental character of being implies *dependence.* An accident is a perfection of something else; it is incapable of separate or independent existence in its own right. We do not, for instance, find self-subsisting orange; rather, what we find is orange in this self-subsisting, substantial cat. The order of

[18] To understand just what an accident is, and to see how accidents are related to the other features of substances, it is best to quote Aristotle:

> For every predicate of a subject must of necessity be either convertible with its subject or not: and if it is convertible, it would be its definition or property, for if it signifies the essence, it is the definition; if not, it is a property [i.e., a *proprium,* as risibility in man]. . . . If, on the other hand, it is not predicated convertibly of the thing, it either is or is not one of the terms contained in the definition of the subject; and if it is one of those terms, then it will be the genus or the differentia, inasmuch as the definition consists of genus and differentiae; whereas, if it is not one of those terms, clearly it would be an accident, for accident was said to be what belongs to a subject without being either its definition or its genus or a property. *(Top.* 1.8 [103b8-19])

And:

> Again, the things signifying a substance signify of what they are predicated of just what is that thing or just what is a particular sort of it; but the things which do not signify a substance but are said of some other underlying subject which is neither just what is that thing nor just what is a particular sort of it, are accidental, e.g., white of the man. For the man is neither just what is white nor just what is some white. . . . But the things that do not signify a substance must be predicated of some underlying subject, and there cannot be anything white which is not white through being something different. *(An. Post.* 1.22 [83a25-32])

Translations are from *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation,* vols. 1-2, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985).

[19] Aristotle, *Cat.* 2 (la25).

dependency is clear: no cat, no orange. And the dependency of the accident of existence is likewise clear: all accidental being is the being of some thing. As with the color orange, being is dependent on the individual it actuates. Thus, being is the being of this cat, of this tree, or of this stone.

To eliminate the note of dependency from our concept of an accident would be to make our accident into a substance; only substances enjoy independent existence. In the case of color, for example, we would be saying that orange is really separable from the orange cat. This would imply that whenever we talk about an orange cat, what we are really doing is talking about two different things: an orange and a cat.

If we supposed that *being* is independent of the subject it actuates we would immediately run into difficulties. Insofar as being is independent, it is self-subsisting: existence would enjoy the status of a substance. Furthermore, whatever the relative merits of a platonic substantial Orange, there is no way we could concede the possibility of formally qualified self-subsisting being.[20] And if self-subsisting being cannot admit of formal qualification, then it cannot do the job we need it to do: namely, serve as the actuality of a finite essence. Independent existence could never be the *being of* a finite thing.

While being must retain that note of dependency proper to it as an accident, unlike all other accidental perfections the dependency of being is not exhausted by that particular thing in which it inheres, for being is metaphysically prior to what it actuates:

> With existence one has the anomaly of an accident that is, indeed, in and of its subject, but which has to be presupposed before one can have the subject. To have any actuality at all, the subject has to presuppose its own existence. In this respect the subject is dependent upon the existence, and not vice versa. To have any accident at all as in it and of it, the subject has to have its own actuality. Even to have its own existence in it and of it, the subject must presuppose its own actualization through existence. It cannot be viewed as first being there to receive existence and to be characterized by existence .... This means,

[20] "If, then, being is not in a subject, there will remain no way in which that which is other than being can be united to it" (Aquinas, *Summa contra Gentiles* II, c. 52; James F. Anderson, et al., trans. [Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975]). Seen. 16 above.

obviously enough, that on account of its priority there is an important sense in which existence is not dependent upon the subject it actuates .... No other accident is required in order to give the subject the status of something in itself.[21]

Consider a different accident: for example, color. A man can acquire redness of skin (i.e., become sunburned), and later lose that same redness, yet still remain as a man. Yet this is not parallel to the acquisition and loss of accidental being. A man cannot be thought of as losing the accident of existence and still remaining in any way whatsoever.[22] Without existence, there is no subject to be conceived of as losing the accident. So, while we can conceive of a man as dying, that is, of his losing existence, we cannot think of that man as having a place in the world without his existing. "The notion of a subject losing existence negates itself, if it is understood in the same way as losing other perfections. The existence that is being lost is presupposed as still present in constituting the subject that is losing it."[23]

Now, as we have seen, accidental being cannot in any way be conceived of as independent: if independent, then self-subsisting; if self-subsisting, then unsuited to the actualization of finite things. There thus abides a surd of dependency not accounted for: insofar as being is prior to that which it actuates, it cannot be dependent on its immediate subject. We are forced to conclude that the being of any finite thing points to a further dependency upon some other thing besides its immediate subject.[24]

[21] Joseph Owens, *An Interpretation of Existence* (Houston: Center for Thomistic Studies, 1985), 78-79.

[21] This even applies to propositions like "Unicorns are fond of horseradish." The nature "unicorn" has existence at least in the mind of one who judges the truth of the proposition. Though unicorn nature is not instantiated extra-mentally, this is not enough: completely to remove accidental existence from unicorn nature, we must think away the very concept "unicorn" as well. What is at stake here is not the existence of unicorns but, rather, the question, what has *being?* In the case at hand, it is our *idea* of unicorns that has being. We cannot exclude existence from our idea and yet retain that idea. (It is in the idea that unicorn nature has whatever accidental existence it enjoys.) While we may conceive of forgetting about unicorns (i.e., our idea of unicorns goes out of existence, and with it our understanding of unicorn nature), we cannot conceive our *idea* of unicorns as not existing without actually having that very idea.

[23] Owens, *An Interpretation of Existence,* 76.

[24] This argument roughly corresponds to that used by Joseph Owens; however, Owens takes the argument to be a justification of *creatio continuans* (ibid., 108ff.). Much as I wmdd like ro agree with Owens, I am not convinced: even if we could prove that what exists *now* is dependent on another thing

The reasoning may be drawn out a bit further. In an important sense, we cannot locate the dependency of accidental being within that thing in which we find it. This dependency must either be due to some other (which is what the principle of the reason of being affirms), or else accidental being is dependent on nothing. But to depend on *nothing* contradicts the very nature of an accident. To depend on nothing is to have independent, substantial existence; and there can only be one such self-subsisting being. Therefore, if the being found in a thing is accidental, and the thing itself came to be, then, necessarily, existence accrued to that thing from some other. In short, the principle of the reason of being holds.

III

We may now apply this result to Smith's proposal that it is possible for something (namely, the universe) to come to be and yet be uncaused: To say of something that exists that it is uncaused is to assert that it has its reason of being within itself. But to say that something begins to exist is to say that it does not have its reason of being within itself, because it once was not. Now, the universe certainly came to be, as Smith admits. We are left with a blatant contradiction: That which exists of its own nature cannot not exist; that is, that which exists of itself would never not exist, it would always be. The universe came to be; hence its reason of being is not to be found in itself.[25] Therefore the existence of the universe was caused. The type of cause needed to explain the coming to be of the universe must, of course, transcend the universe and have other interesting

now, there is *no* guarantee that this dependence points us to an infinite ground *of* Being. Imagine a group of people standing in a circle in such a way that each person's right shoulder points toward the center of the circle. Now, suppose that everybody squats at the same time in such a way that each person sits in the lap of the person behind himself. The people in the circle will not fall, even though there is nothing external to the circle that is responsible for each member's accidental attribute of not falling. While this scenario is not perfectly analogous to that which I have in mind when arguing for an external 'reason of being', nonetheless it seems safest to leave open this sort of formal possibility.

[25] This contradiction is a reason to avoid the locution *causa sui.* Self-causation is a contradiction in terms, for even God could not cause Himself. If He existed to cause Himself, then He would not need to cause Himself since He would already exist. And if He did not exist, He would not be anything such as to be able to cause Himself.

characteristics-but, for the moment, we will set aside the implications this result has for theistic apologetics.[26]

[26] Here is a brief sketch of how the argument might go. First, we must note that any cause of the universe must be transcendent. Were we to suppose that the cause of the universe is immanent, we would in effect be saying that something which did not yet exist educed itself from pure potentiality to act. This is absurd: *ex nihilo nihil fit*. Second, we note that the coming to be of the universe is quite special, in that it involves coming to be from no preexisting matter. The becoming of the universe is, then, technically not a generation or a making, but rather creation *ex nihilo*. So, the universe was made to be from nothing, from absolute non-being, that is, not from any thing. But the gap between absolute non-being and being is infinitely vast (metaphysically speaking), and the only sort of power proportionate to this gap, that would be able to cross it, is an omnipotent power (cf. Aquinas, *ScG* I, c. 43). Since the universe exists, if it requires an omnipotent cause to bring about its existence, it follows that the transcendent cause of the universe is omnipotent. But the only way a being could be omnipotent would be if it were omniscient (for the only way we could say something is perfectly powerful is if it is knowledgeable enough to use its power perfectly; otherwise, its power would be limited, and it would not be an omnipotent being). So, the cause of the universe is omnipotent and omniscient. And so on. Concede any one of the pure perfections, and the rest quickly follow: the reasoning of Aquinas's *Summa contra Gentiles* and *Summa Theologiae* moves on to its inexorable conclusion, and we arrive at the existence of a supremely perfect Being who is the personal creator of the universe.

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BOOK REVIEWS

AquinasandAnalogy. By RALPH MCINERNY. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1996. Pp. x + 169. $39.95 (cloth). ISBN 0-8132-0848-3.

On 1 September 1498, Dominican friar Thomas Cajetan de Vio completed his *De nominum analogia* at the convent of Saint Apollinaris in Padua and set in motion a tradition of interpretation that would last into our century. Cajetan's doctrine of analogy and his interpretation of Thomas Aquinas's theory of analogy reigned supreme in the minds of most disciples of Aquinas from the latter third of the nineteenth century until the middle of our own. By the 1960s, however, Cajetan's hold on analogy had begun to be loosened by some detailed historical and textual studies demonstrating that he had misinterpreted Aquinas. Ralph Mcinerny played a crucial role in contesting the Cajetanian tradition, especially in *Logic of Analogy* (1961) and *Studies in Analogy* (1968). For some forty years the word has gone out that Cajetan was wrong, and that word has been heeded by many.

Nevertheless, Mcinerny believes that much continues to be said about analogy in Aquinas that remains enthralled with Cajetan's misguided interpretation, and so he has rewritten and updated his earlier works in *Aquinas and Analogy*. The result is a more compact, cohesively arranged and streamlined book shorn of minor internecine Thomist debates and outfitted with newer titles from the secondary literature. The book is a fresh treatment in its structure and organization, and is the better for it, but remains fully concordant with the central theses of Mclnerny's earlier works. *Aquinas and Analogy* argues for one main thesis and two subsidiary theses. The main thesis affirms that Cajetan was fundamentally wrong about Aquinas on analogy because he unwarrantably turned the latter's purely logical theory into a metaphysical doctrine. One subsidiary thesis states that Aristotle never used the Greek term *analogia* to refer to what Aquinas calls analogous names, and the other asserts that Aquinas never used the Latin term *analogia* to refer to what has been called the metaphysical "analogy of being."

According to Mcinerny, Cajetan went astray and dreamt up his famous threefold division of analogy (inequality, attribution, and proper proportionality) because he shackled the meaning of the Latin loan-word *analogia* with the fetters of its original Greek usage and committed the fallacy of the accident in his interpretation of a crucial text from Aquinas's commentary on the Lombard's *Sentences*. Not suspecting that *analogia* itself might be capable of an analogous extension of meaning, Cajetan read Thomas through exclusively Greek lenses which restricted the reference of *analogia* to mathematical

proportions, biological homologies, and other ontological relationships. Fitted with his Greek spectacles, Cajetan was primed to give the *Sentences* text his own metaphysical misreading.

Even so, Cajetan would not have erred if he had been duly attentive to the original texts of Aristotle and Aquinas. Chapter 2 establishes the subsidiary thesis about Aristotle quite persuasively but also shows that, paradoxically, Aquinas's theory of analogous names, while sailing under the *analogia* ensign which Aristotle would never have flown in such a setting, nevertheless amounts to a repristination and refinement of the Aristotelian logical theory of *pros hen* equivocals, nonunivocal words that, in an intelligible and orderly fashion rather than haphazardly and by chance, are "said in many ways." Aquinas is also indebted to Aristotle for the two examples that always appear whenever Aquinas discusses analogous names: *healthy* and *being.*

In his reading of the *Sentences* text, Cajetan trips himself up by committing the fallacy of the accident. In I *Sent.,* d. 19, q. 5, a. 2 (misprints on pp. 5, 6 and 13 replace 2 with 1), Aquinas asks whether all things are true by one uncreated truth. He answers that although there is one divine exemplary and creative truth by which all things are true, nevertheless there are also many intrinsic truths by which created things are called true formally. The first objection counters that there is only one uncreated truth by which all things are true: since both *true* and *healthy* are predicated analogically, and since in the latter case there is only one instance of genuine health, the animal's-whereas urine and medicine are called healthy by reference to the animal's health-so too there can only be one truth (the divine) by which all other things are called true. Thomas's lengthy response to the objection begins by stating that a name may be predicated analogically in three ways: *secundum intentionem tantum et non secundum esse, secundum esse et non secundum intentionem,* and *secundum intentionem et secundum esse.* The point of the threefold division, where *esse* (being or reality) and *intentio* (meaning or intention) are separated in two instances but united in the third, is to show that what the objector holds as essential to analogical predication is in fact only accidental-namely, that the reality signified by the analogous name should actually exist in only one of the entities denominated by it. In other words, according to Aquinas, whatever is biologically true for animal health, urine and medicine are accidental to the status of *healthy* as an analogous name, and it is universally the case that one's understanding of analogous names must remain neutral as to the metaphysical status of the entities denominated by those names. Cajetan's mistake was to think that what is logically true of the analogous name's *meaning* (that the primary meaning is only found in one of the analogates) is equivalent to what may or may not be ontologically true of the analogous name's *referent* (that the reality signified by the name is only found in one of the analogates). Ironically, he commits the fallacy of the accident (Aristotle reminded us long ago that even the wise are sometimes bewitched by it), importing accidental metaphysical conditions into his interpretation of the very response in which Thomas tries point out the fallacy of such accidental conjunctions.

Chapters 3 through 9 demonstrate that Aquinas's theory of analogy is a logical doctrine having to qo.with names, not a metaphysical doctrine having to do with being: analogy, formally and universally as such, remains neutral as regards metaphysical concerns. Chapter 3 explains how the logical realm deals with reflexive second intentions bearing upon how our concepts relate to reality and to one another: we learn about universals and the crucial Aristotelian-Thomistic triad of word/concept/thing; about the signification, supposition, and imposition of words; and about the important distinction between *res signiftcata* and *modus significandi.* Chapters 4 and 5 describe how Thomas, interpreting analogy as a kind of intentional equivocation, always situates it as a mean between pure univocity and haphazard equivocation. Every analogous name involves a plurality of meanings *(rationes)* which are related in an understandable sequence, beginning with the primary meaning and extending to all the secondary meanings *(per prius et posterius).* The primary meaning is only found in one of the analogates *(ratio propria non invenitur nisi in uno),* but it is ingredient in all the secondary meanings, which are always in some way intelligibly related to it. Chapter 6 exhibits the dose connections and differences between analogy and metaphor; Mclnerny shows how, although they remain distinct, metaphor is a kind of analogy and vice versa. Chapter 8 reveals that, for Aquinas, the analogous name, which involves a set of connected meanings, is not to be identified with that discursive process known as the argument from analogy.

Chapter 7 discusses how the word *analogy* is itself analogous. Mclnerny remarks that for Aquinas the first and primary meaning of *analogia* is the determinate mathematical proportion of one quantity to another; but *analogia* can also be extended to signify any ontological relation or proportion of one entity to another, exemplified by the creature's relation of dependence upon the Creator (following Aristotle's lead, Thomas would have been ready to use *analogia* to signify a real relation or proportion between things); finally, at its furthest extension, *analogia* can signify a common name with a plurality of meanings all related (i.e., proportioned) to one primary meaning. The analogy of names, then, is a secondary and extended meaning of the term *analogy,* but it is, paradoxically, the meaning understood when *analogy* itself is said to be analogous.

We are much indebted to the author for his detailed and complicated exposition of the logical nature of Aquinas's theory of analogous names. Mclnerny has amply proven his main thesis that Cajetan was fundamentally wrong because he imported alien metaphysical considerations into Aquinas's logical doctrine of analogy. However, I have reservations when Mclnerny, allergic to any metaphysical considerations that he fears may once again permit the mistaken Cajetanian tradition to gain the upper hand, seems ready and willing to extend this thesis to suggest that Thomas never granted any ontological depth to *analogia.*

Mclnerny bolsters this extended position by maintaining his second subsidiary thesis-that Aquinas never used the Latin *analogia* to refer to what has been called the metaphysical "analogy of being." He qualifies his assertion

to such a degree, however, that it seems in the end little more than a terminological issue: Thomas of course could have understood *analogia* as referring to real relations, "given his account of the way *proportio* is extended from mathematical relations to any kind of relation," nor may one say "that Thomas did not hold what others call the 'analogy of being,' but he could not have confused that with analogous naming" (157, 162).

Further, the one text Mcinerny explicates in support of this subsidiary thesis *(In Boethii de Trinitate,* q. 5, a. 4) is ambiguous and may even be read as a partial counterweight to it. In this text Aquinas notes that all beings, insofar as they share in being, possess certain principles which are the principles of all beings. Following Avicenna, he states that these principles can be called common in two ways: by predication *(per praedicationem,* as when I say that form is common to all forms because it is predicated of all), and by causality *(per causalitatem,* as we say that the sun, which is numerically one, is the principle of all things subject to generation); Thomas then maintains that there are principles common to all beings, both in the first Avicennian way, which is what Aristotle had in mind when he said that all beings have the same principles *secundum analogiam (Metaphysics* 12.4 [1070a31-33]; 12.5 [1071a30-35]), as well as the second, such that there exist certain beings, each numerically one, that are the principles of all things. Thus accidents are reduced to substances, and corruptible substances to incorruptible substances, with the result that all beings are reducible to certain principles in a specific graded order.

Mcinerny notes that in this text Thomas "speaks of analogy when it is a question of predicable community, but ... does not use the term *analogy* to speak of the real hierarchy of being" (156). Granted that the text does not associate *analogia* with an explicit hierarchy of being, this still does not mean that Aquinas repudiates every ontological sense of *analogia.* With his logical interpretation, Mcinerny is obviously linking Thomas's citation of Aristotle's *secundum analogiam* with Avicenna's *per praedicationem.* However, two other points argue for a likely ontological interpretation of *secundum analogiam* on Aquinas's part: (1) the whole thrust of Aquinas's argument situates it in the realm of being rather than logic, for he wants to explain how a philosophical theology and a revelational theology differ in their treatment of the ultimate ontological principles of all beings; (2) and the texts he cites from Aristotle's *Metaphysics* patently refer to the ontological rather than the logical order. In this *In Boethii de Trinitate* text, then, it is likely that Aquinas understands *secundum analogiam* ontologically, despite Avicenna's *per praedicationem.*

Finally, there are other places in Thomas's works which show him sensitive to analogy's ontological depth and in which *analogia* is explicitly linked to real beings and their causes. In the first book of his commentary on the *Sentences* Thomas calls the similarity between God and creatures a *communitas analogiae* which occurs because creatures imitate God as much as they can (I *Sent.,* d. 24, q. 1, a. 1, ad 4). In the prologue to the first book, this imitation is the ontological basis for the creature's names: "The creature only possesses being *[esse]* insofar as it descends from the first being *[ens],* and it is only named a

being *[ens]* insofar as it imitates the first being, and the case is similar with wisdom and all the other things said of the creature" (I *Sent.,* pro!., q. 1, a. 2, ad 2; cf. d. 2, q. 1, a. 2). The logic of analogical predication as regards God and creatures, therefore, is rooted in creatures' ontological imitation of the divine nature.

Moreover, throughout his works Thomas frequently divides the agent cause of metaphysics into the univocal versus the nonunivocal agent, with the latter being divided again into the pure equivocal agent versus the intentional equivocal or analogical agent; and within this overall schema, God as an ontological cause is sometimes described, variously but synonymously, as the nonunivocal, (intentional) equivocal, or analogical agent (l *Sent.,* d. 2, q. 1, a. 2; d. 3, q. 1, a. 3; d. 8, q. 1, a. 2; II *Sent.,* d. 1, q. 2, a. 2; *De Verit.,* q. 4, a. 6; *De Pot.,* q. 7, aa. 5, 6, 10; *STh* I, q. 4, a. 2; q. 13, a. 5, ad 1; q. 25, a. 2, ad 2; q. 45, a. 8, ad 3). Thomas notices an isomorphism between ontology and logic, actions and predications: just as all univocal predications are reduced to the predicate *being,* which is the first, nonunivocal and analogical predicate, so are all actions and agents ultimately reduced to God, who is the universal, nonunivocal, and analogical agent cause *(STh* I, q. 13, a. 5, ad 1).

Mclnerny's two earlier books taught me much about analogy when I first read them over fifteen years ago, and his present volume continues to illumine this difficult and complicated issue. *Aquinas and Analogy* is a well-written, carefully researched, and cogently reasoned indictment of Cajetan's influential misinterpretation of Aquinas's theory of analogous names, and provides a convincing argument for the logical rather than metaphysical nature of that theory. As far as I can tell, Mcinerny is also correct in his assertion that Aquinas does not explicitly use *analogia* to terminologically tag a "great chain of being" a la Lovejoy or an "analogy of being" a la Przywara. Still, as I have tried to indicate briefly, Aquinas can at times use *analogia* with an ontological sense that is not to be confused with his theory of analogous names. That ontological sense is inspired by other rich and profound truths from his philosophy and theology, such as the doctrine of participation, the creature's imitation of God, and the similarity between a cause and its effect (especially between Creator and creatures) disclosed in the maxim *omne agens agit simile sibi.* Due largely to the efforts of authors like Mcinerny over the past forty years, the Cajetanian tradition no longer enjoys a robust life. If there are those who, even after granting Mcinerny his main thesis, still detect in Aquinas an ontological depth to *analogia,* this is not because they are disguised Cajetanians wishing to reissue *De nominum analogia* through the back door, but rather because they realize that in Aquinas's precocious case *analogia* can travel-inclusively and suggestively-between the logical and metaphysical realms.

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The Selfhood of the Human Person. By JOHN F. CROSBY. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1997. Pp. 313. $34.85 (cloth), $19.95 (paper). ISBN 0-8132-0864-5 (cloth), 0-8132-0865-3 (paper).

This book marks a milestone in Catholic philosophical anthropology. It is probably the most significant original contribution to the field, from the perspective of phenomenological personalism, to appear in the English language in recent years. No less important, it is clearly and accessibly written. Any reader who has languished through the iniquitous translation of Karol Wojtyla's *The Acting Person,* or who finds phenomenological approaches frequently impenetrable and mystifying, will be pleasantly surprised by the remarkable clarity and accessibility of Crosby's crisply written and well-organized presentation. Crosby draws from phenomenology (Scheler, Wojtyla, Edith Stein, and his own mentor, von Hildebrand), personalist sources (Kierkegaard, Newman, Wojtyla again, and Josef Seifert), neo-Thomism (Maritain) and the *philosophia perennis,* combining many of the same sorts of perspectives one finds in Wojtyla. Readers of Crosby's painstaking phenomenological analysis of human "selfhood" may find portions of his discussion so penetrating and compelling as to induce an eerie sense of having been conducted into the precincts of that profound, mysterious interiority called the "self" as if for the first time.

The book is divided into three parts. In part 1 ("Selfhood") Crosby argues for the "reception" of modern insights regarding the subjectivity and interiority of the human self by those who stand in the tradition of the *philosophia perennis.* He seeks to show, for example, how far one can go in pursuing profitably the insights of Kant concerning the autonomy and dignity of persons as ends in themselves without departing from the *philosophia perennis* or accepting the whole of Kantian philosophy. In part 2 ("Selfhood and Transcendence") and part 3 ("Selfhood and Theonomy"), he reverses perspectives and endeavors to show how those who stand in the modern tradition of freedom and autonomy stand to benefit from accepting the idea of personal transcendence towards truth, moral good, and ultimately God. Here he addresses the typically modern fear of heteronomy awakened by the idea of such transcendence.

Accordingly, Crosby's argument plays both sides of the coin. He argues, for instance, that

> those who affirm that persons are ends in themselves may rebel against the idea of being subject to God and may be too quick to suspect heteronomy in the religious existence of human persons, just as those who are glad to exist under God may be too slow to assert the selfhood that is their birthright as persons and may even incline to a kind of religiously motivated nihilism with regard to human things and human values.

Thus, like Wojtyla, Crosby seeks to balance a traditional Catholic understanding of transcendence with a deepened appreciation for the interiority of the person, even as he seeks to counterbalance the typically modern appreciation for autonomy and subjectivity with a deepened understanding of the personal transcendence by which such autonomy and subjectivity are properly grounded.

Starting with the assumption that it is in the moral life that we have our clearest experiences of ourselves as persons, Crosby begins his discussion by analyzing the phenomena of moral consciousness associated with depersonalizing ways of treating human beings. Why do we feel outrage at the idea of punishing an innocent person as a scapegoat, even if it serves the socially useful purpose of deterring crime? Why do prostitution, human eugenic experimentation, slavery, and violence against persons offend our moral sensibilities? Many of us would probably echo Kant's assertion that by treating others as means instead of ends in themselves, we do violence to their dignity as persons and moral subjects. Even the idea of God using us and discarding us as instrumental means is repulsive to our moral consciousness. Aquinas himself points out that "rational creatures are subject to divine providence in a special way"-that is, in a way that defers to the dignity of their free agency. In this sense, human persons belong to themselves and to no other. They are incommunicably their own and never mere specimens or means. They are wholes in themselves and never mere parts, even as members of a larger whole such as society. Hence, the Reformation-era principle *cuius regio eius religio,* according to which the religion of a principality was determined by the prince, failed to give proper regard to the integrity of the individual's conscience. Aware that this may sound like an apology for individualism, Crosby argues that such respect for personal selfhood also provides the only possible basis for authentic community, as explicitly recognized by the Vatican II "Declaration on Religious Liberty."

In elaborating upon the uniqueness and "unrepeatibility" of each person's self, Crosby seeks to distinguish between what is communicable and what is incommunicable in the person. A traditional Aristotelian answer would be that a being's act of existence is the only thing incommunicably its own and that all of its essence is universal and common to others of the same essence. Yet no concrete substance seems to have anything general as one of its real, concrete ingredients. Socrates' humanity belongs to his essence, yet this essence is individuated in Socrates as something incommunicably his own. "Essence," as Scheler points out from a phenomenological perspective, "has nothing to do with universality." There are essences that are given only in a particular individual. Aquinas would have recognized this as true of angels, each of which, he said, is its own species. Crosby appeals to a distinction by Josef Seifert between "concrete" and "general" essences, which uniquely combines Platonic and Aristotelian insights. Thus the "concrete humanity" of Socrates is

incommunicably his own, even while participating in "the universal form of humanity" common to all human beings.

This incommunicable concrete essence of each self, far from tending to solipsism, constitutes the basis for genuine communication and encounter between persons. It is the basis for true self-knowledge, love of others, even encounter with God. This is what constitutes the value and dignity of the selfhood, rather than any communicable attribute such as "greatness." Thus, Crosby objects to the "Beethoven argument" against abortion, which says that we are indebted to Beethoven's mother for not aborting him because of his genius. On the contrary, the primary loss is that the world would have been deprived of an incommunicable person.

In his phenomenological analysis of subjectivity, Crosby cites Wojtyla's seminal essay, "Subjectivity and the Irreducible in Man," where Wojtyla argues that the cosmological perspective of the Aristotelian tradition risks "reducing man to the world" by exclusive recourse to its otherwise helpful categories of substance, potentiality, rationality, etc. Hence Wojtyla welcomes the emergence in modern philosophy of a more personalist perspective that can serve as a corrective with its uniquely personal categories of interiority, self-presence, subjectivity, and self-donation (thus, Wojtyla sees beneath the cosmological procreative significance of the marital act the more basic personalist meaning of spousal self-donation).

Taking his cue from Wojtyla, Crosby offers a sustained examination of the phenomena of subjective consciousness. Rejecting the view of Brentano and Husserl that consciousness is essentially intentional, he argues that all consciousness is anchored in the interiority of a nonintentional conscious self-presence. This subjective consciousness is not the intentional reflexivity by which I make myself an object of consciousness, as described by Sartre, but a nonintentional reflexivity by which my subjective interiority is co-presented along with my intentionally-directed object-consciousness. Analogously, we can experience our bodies both objectively from a point outside ourselves (in a mirror), or subjectively from within.

Can we reflect on subjectivity philosophically? There are many, of course, who would deny this possibility. Maritain, for example, insists that "Subjectivity *as subjectivity* is inconceptualizable." Again, Scheler argues that persons can never be made objects without losing them as persons. However, Crosby maintains that, at most, certain elements of my own experiencing are unavailable to me as long as I am having the experience, not before or after having it; and these elements may be available to other observers besides myself. This in no way tells against the possibility of philosophically reflecting on subjectivity and understanding what it essentially is.

Crosby illustrates how personal selfhood presents itself in the experience of "recollecting" ourselves after being ecstatically immersed in our surroundings. The initial state of mind is revealed in the glazed look on our faces, our passivity, our loss of self-presence. Such states of conscim,isness approach a mere succession of impressions in which we are ecstatically lost, living

completely in our present impression. But we always have the possibility of "recollecting" ourselves again, of coming to ourselves so that we gain distance from what we experience, transcending it. "The more recollected I am, dwelling with myself, the more I experience myself from within myself," says Crosby; and the more empowered I am to intentionally transcend myself towards what is given to me. This is particularly true in love for another, in which I enter into his or her subjectivity. Thus, this self-presence is as far removed as it could be from anything resembling solipsism.

Yet while defending the irreducible subjectivity of persons against the cosmological perspective, Crosby insists no less on distinguishing personal being from subjectivity. While personal being "actualizes itself in subjectivity," he says, it "does not exhaust itself in subjectivity." Thus, he maintains, like Seifert, that the metaphysics of substance is capable of a personalist articulation. Against the "subjectivist" objections, he offers two phenomenological arguments. First, the very possibility of recollecting ourselves when we experience ourselves as dispersed in our environment shows that we as persons are *in reality* incommunicably and substantially ourselves and not reducible to the subjective experience we have in the state of dispersion. Second, the fact that wrongdoing is not always experienced as harming ourselves morally shows that we as persons are more than our conscious experiencing. Here Crosby parts company with not only Scheler but Ratzinger, each of whom rejects substantial conceptualizations of personhood. He develops fascinating phenomenological arguments against abortion and euthanasia based on a personalist metaphysics of substance.

Crosby turns from these inward-looking aspects of selfhood in the last two parts of his book to examine the outward-directed aspects, which transcend self-presence toward truth, beauty, moral goodness, and love. Here Crosby makes a number of controversial points that will provoke debate. For example, it is not clear that metaphysical realism demands the rejection of Husserl's theory that intentional acts are in some sense constitutive of their objects, as Crosby suggests. He prefers describing intentional acts as receptive to being; yet it is not clear how this differs from Husserl's notion of "passive synthesis," which would seem amicable to a realist interpretation along lines suggested by Robert Sokolowski. He scores against Scheler's denial that persons can be experienced as objects by explaining how "others see in me what escapes me." But his criticism of Scheler's view of our response to values as excluding any "decision for value" seems to overlook Scheler's distinction between mere *conation* and conscious willing. Nevertheless Crosby's point about the necessity of a decision for value is an important one, reminiscent of Hans Reiner. Most of the discussion in this part of his study focuses on the experience of moral value and obligation, and is substantive and interesting.

In his concluding section on selfhood and theonomy, Crosby shows that it is only through recognizing the finitude of ourselves as creatures that we come to recognize in each other, as persons, something transcending this finitude. Though many aspects of our finitude may be enumerated, "personhood" is not

among them. It is by virtue of our being persons that we resemble God. Though our human personhood is limited in various ways, personhood as such is not limited. In Crosby's words: "we human persons, limited though we are, are not limited because we are persons." We come to know God by knowing the human person, and to know the person through knowing God.

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Free Creatures of an Eternal God: Thomas Aquinas on God's Infallible Foreknowledge and Irresistible Will. By HARM J. M. J. GORIS. Leuven: Peeters, 1997. Pp. 335. 1260 BEF (cloth). ISBN 90-6831-866-7.

The very title of this book raises some immediate suspicions: is there not a contradiction between the claims (1) that God is eternal in the sense of being beyond temporality and (2) that God has infallible foreknowledge of human free choices (where *fore* connotes knowledge that is located temporally prior to its object)? As far as I am able to tell, St. Thomas Aquinas thought them incompatible. Goris's work, however, curiously takes another point of view.

The first part of the book lays out his angle of approach. He wants to contextualize Aquinas's doctrine within the contemporary foreknowledge-freedom problematic wherein it has not been adequately understood for a number of reasons. The first cause of misunderstanding arises from a general failure to recall the essentially *theological* character of Aquinas's treatment. Goris asserts that there are three theological keys to Aquinas's approach: Scripture, the *via negativa,* and a keen sensitivity to the ways in which our creaturely *modus significandi* affects our discourse about God. While the first key does not figure in the rest of the book, the latter two (especially the third) receive extended consideration. With respect to the *via negativa,* Goris argues persuasively that Aquinas's doctrine of eternity is primarily an exercise in negative theology: eternity essentially amounts to a denial of temporal limitation in God. Once this aspect of Aquinas's treatment is taken into account, Goris shows how it is possible to refute the standard contemporary objections to timeless eternity. He emphasizes that the negative approach means that we must continually remind ourselves that we do not have any positive grasp on what eternity, foreknowledge, providence, etc. are really like in God. A major emphasis of the study is the claim that we are perennially prone to getting tripped up in articulating the grammar of the problem by the irreducibly tensed nature of our knowing and our linguistic .usage.

Goris concludes the introductory section with a programmatic chapter in which he alleges that the basic confusion surrounding Aquinas's doctrine is the failure to distinguish the problems of (1) temporal fatalism and (2) causal determinism. "Temporal fatalism has to do with the relation between God's fore-acts [foreknowledge, predestination, providence] and their objects considered from a *diachronic* perspective: it focuses on the prefix 'fore' *(prae)* and deals with the relation between present (or past) and future" (56). The standard interpretation of Aquinas holds that an appeal to divine eternity (the so-called eternity solution) neutralizes this problem by denying that there is any real diachronic relationship between God's knowledge and contingent events. Goris, however, argues that an appeal to divine eternity does not solve the problem of temporal fatalism because "there is still a temporal relation between our present (or past) statement (be it a present-tense or past-tense statement) about God's foreknowledge and the future object of God's knowledge .... the immutability of God's eternal knowledge, signified in human language by a past tense, seems to lead to fatalism" (57, 61). Goris acknowledges that he is not the first person to claim that an appeal to eternity leaves such a problem still standing. He is the first one that I know of, however, to make the claim (on 57) that Aquinas *himself* thought an appeal to timeless eternity left a diachronic divine foreknowledge problem.

I believe Goris to be in error on both counts. While I will not stop to argue for it here, I would claim that our temporal propositional expression of God's eternal knowledge does not engender a genuine problem. More importantly in this context, Goris is misrepresenting Aquinas's position. The central problem in the book is that Goris tends to conflate the problem of temporal fatalism with the problem of foreknowledge. There are really three problems bearing on freedom that need to be distinguished, not two: temporal fatalism, divine foreknowledge, and divine causal determinism. Aquinas keeps these problems carefully distinct; Goris does not. Goris describes the third problem, concerning the causal relationship between God's will and the human will, as *synchronic* rather than diachronic. This is misleading, however, since it seems to imply a temporal synchronicity between God's eternal will and human temporal will-acts; Goris is not nearly careful enough in this regard. It is puzzling that Goris takes the time to develop Aquinas's doctrine of eternity and then seems not to want to allow it to do its work in effecting the modality of divine knowing and causing.

The second and longest part of the study deals with the misguided question of temporal fatalism or infallible foreknowledge. After arguing persuasively that Bafiezianism,Molinism, and Ockhamism are all "wrong-headed" solutions, Goris proposes to show that Aquinas has the resources to solve the problem. I do not understand the logic of his presentation. He begins with a chapter outlining Aquinas's views on the logic of tensed propositions within the larger context of previous medieval views. The next (fifth) and longest chapter in the book is an examination of the irreducibly tensed fashion of human knowing according to Aquinas. There are broad learning and some insightful discussions

in these two chapters, but it is hard to figure out why these merit such extended discussion in the context of the problem of *divine* foreknowledge. Goris inexplicably never provides any extended discussion at all of *divine* knowing and this omission is a serious deficiency. Aquinas spends a great deal of time on the question of divine knowing in an attempt to move beyond the more limited omniscience claims of such figures as Avicenna and Averroes; Goris gives no attention to the thirteenth-century background problem of divine omniscience.

The sixth chapter finally gets to the main issues. Goris begins with a discussion of the intrinsic unknowability of future contingents *qua* future. He then moves on to a fine discussion of Thomas's position on the problem of temporal fatalism through an analysis of the commentary on *De Interpretatione* IX. He argues that it is vital to an accurate interpretation of the text that in a genuine *antiphasis* of future contingent propositions, each of the propositions becomes relatively temporally definite (i.e., for there to be genuine opposition, the contradictory propositions must refer to an event occurring at the same temporal moment). The principle of bivalence does hold for such a pair, but it is not yet determinate which is true and which is false; each is *either-true-or-false* but not yet determinately one or the other. The reason for the indeterminacy of the truth value is metaphysical: future contingents lack determinate being. If there is no fore-truth, then the problem of temporal fatalism is neutralized.

Goris then turns to the freedom-foreknowledge problem, presumably the central problem of the book. His discussion lasts barely twenty pages. He finally concedes that there is really no diachronic problem at all once we take into account God's eternal mode of being and knowing. Any alleged necessity linking God's knowledge and future contingents is conditional, according to the mode of God's knowledge (see *De Veritate,* q. 2, a. 7, ad 12). Although as tensed knowers we are prone to impute a diachronic relationship to God's knowing and its objects, in truth there is none and so there is no genuine foreknowledge problem. So it turns out that despite what Goris claims at the beginning of his study, an appeal to divine eternity does dissolve the foreknowledge problem. Goris then goes on to defend Aquinas from the Scotistic criticism that the eternal presence to God of all of time amounts to at least a B-theory of time, which would contradict Aquinas's apparent A-treatment of time, and at worst an incoherent simultaneity of all "presents" (eternal and temporal). Goris replies that this view fails to take into account Aquinas's use of "present" in an analogical sense. He concludes this section with a critique of the well-known Stump-Kretzmann approach for failing to recognize the radical negativity of Aquinas's view of divine eternity and for blurring the distinction between Creator and creature.

The third and final part deals with the problem of whether God's "irresistible will" rules out genuine contingency and freedom in creation. Goris devotes an entire chapter to an overview of Scholastic modal logic in general and Aquinas in particular. His main purpose is to show that Simo Knuuttila's

statistical interpretation of Scholastic modal notions prior to Scotus is inaccurate. He argues persuasively that Knuuttila's interpretation of Aquinas is wrong. For example, Aquinas does not define necessity in terms of omnitemporality; omnitemporality is an effect of a necessity rooted in the natures of beings. Modal notions for Aquinas are grounded metaphysically in natures and their potencies.

Goris goes on then to a discussion of contingency as rooted in chance, matter, and voluntary causes. When he finally gets around to the central question of the reconciliation of divine causation with creaturely contingency, he devotes only fourteen pages to it(!). Once again the reader is mystified by the short shrift given to what should merit extended consideration. His discussion of necessary being here is rather muddled. He rehearses the standard thesis that there is evolution in Aquinas's thought on how to reconcile God's universal causality with genuine human freedom. The mature solution, perhaps most clearly expressed in the commentary on *De Inter{lretatione* IX (lect. 14), is that God's unique transcendent causation lies beyond the necessary-contingent causal distinction. Causality as applied to God must be considered an analogous notion; God's creative causation enables both contingency and necessity to be what they are. In general, Goris's discussion of divine causality is derivative and lacking in textual consideration.

While I am entirely sympathetic with Goris's aims, the book fails as an adequate presentation and defense of Aquinas's view. As noted earlier, it erroneously conflates the problem of temporal fatalism with the foreknowledge problem. It never gives an adequate account of *how* God knows things and curiously spends an inordinate amount of time on human knowing. The overall logic of the book's treatment is not clear; central problems are given inadequate consideration. The book is not particularly well written; it shows every sign of being a revised doctoral dissertation, including long (and often helpful) footnotes reviewing debates in the secondary literature. My most fundamental complaint, however, is that this study, which purports to be explicitly *theological,* fails to articulate the way in which the doctrine of creation figures as central to Aquinas's treatment. God knows and causes contingency precisely as the Creator. To fail to bring creation into play in treating the foreknowledge-freedom problem is to fail in understanding Aquinas.

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Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism. By JACQUES DUPUIS, S.J. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1997. Pp. 500. $50.00 (cloth). ISBN 1-57075-125-0.

Jacques Dupuis has been writing for more than thirty years about the questions raised for Christians by the facts of religious pluralism. In the work under review here he offers the elements of a Catholic Christian theological account of religious pluralism understood both abstractly (the bare fact that there are non-Christian religious communities), and in terms of some of its particulars (what some of these religious communities proclaim and do). Dupuis understands himself as a Catholic theologian correlating the objective tradition (what has been preserved of what Christians have thought and said about the religiously faithful non-Christian) with a particular context (that of Catholic Christianity at the end of the twentieth century, increasingly faced as it is with the reality of faithful non-Christians), and offering, on the basis of this correlation, a tentative synthetic theological account of religious pluralism.

The first part of the book (25-201) is historical. In it, Dupuis offers an account of the most influential models that have shaped Christian theological evaluations of non-Christian religions. He begins with the Bible, which he reads in search of data capable of providing a "generous theological evaluation of the other religious traditions of the world" (30). He finds these data principally in the traditions about Adam and Noah which emphasize God's covenantal relation with all humanity. He also places stress upon Jesus' positive evaluation of the faith of non-Jews (e.g., the Canaanite woman in Matt 15 and the centurion in Matt 8), and upon the recognition of God's presence in all human communities implied by Johannine Logos-theology and the Lukan Paul of Acts 17. Dupuis then turns to Justin, Irenaeus, and Clement as instances of Logos-theology in the early Church (with some passing comments on Augustine). In them, he suggests, we can see a recognition of the presence of the divine Logos, the Second Person of the Trinity, in the philosophical traditions of non-Christians, and a concomitantly positive evaluation of pagan philosophy as a teacher of partial truth and as a possible vehicle of salvation.

Dupuis then provides a detailed and careful study of the history and use of the axiom *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* ("outside the Church no salvation"). His treatment is nuanced, showing how varied the understandings of this axiom have been between its first use in the late second or early third century, and its recent reinterpretations. He shows how the axiom has provided a focus for discussions of how it might be possible for faithful non-Christians to be saved without baptism or explicit faith in Christ, and surveys the range of traditional responses to this question (implicit faith, baptism of desire, explicit encounter with the gospel at death). But the most detailed historical treatment is reserved for twentieth-century developments, especially those leading up to and flowing from Vatican II.

Before the council, as Dupuis shows, theological interest began to shift from the question of the possible salvation of non-Christians to that of what God

intends by and is doing with the non-Christian religions. Two families of positions on this were evident by 1960. The first (Dupuis calls it "fulfillment theory") is represented by Henri de Lubac and Hans Urs von Balthasar: it judges the non-Christian religions as intended by God only as preparation for the Christian religion, which is their proper fulfillment. The second (Dupuis calls it "the presence of the mystery of Christ") is represented by Karl Rahner: it sees the religions as vehicles of supernatural grace with Christ genuinely (though of course implicitly) present in them, and as proper means of salvation for their faithful adherents. Both had their influence on the council; Dupuis rightly concludes (169-70) that the council was not concerned to (and did not) decide between them. Instead, it advocated a set of attitudes (openness, respect) and practices (dialogue, colloquy) toward the religions that can be accounted for, theologically, by either. Neither does the postconciliar magisterium clearly decide between these alternatives, though both Paul VI and John Paul II have upheld and developed the conciliar claims about the presence of truth in the religions, and about the importance of dialogue.

Dupuis's own sketch of what a Christian theology of religious pluralism might look like constitutes the second half of the book (203-390). He advocates a theology that is properly Trinitarian, which is to say one that is both theocentric and Christocentric (and is the second because it is the first), and yet is also attuned to the universal action of the Spirit in the world. This, he suggests, will go beyond the usual alternatives (theocentrism vs. Christocentrism; exclusivism vs. inclusivism vs. pluralism), and will permit a properly Christian theology of religions. This approach is modulated through a series of theological themes, principally those of covenant, revelation, Christ, and the Church.

His treatment of revelation is representative. He asks whether a Catholic Christian can properly say that there is revelation in non-Christian holy books and utterances, and answers in the affirmative, at least to the extent of saying that, for example, the Veda may be a work inspired by God. If God bears a covenantal relation to all (as Dupuis argues on the basis of his interpretation of the covenants with Adam and Noah) then God addresses all; we can all hear and respond, albeit imperfectly; and it is possible for us to create literary records of God's address to us that preserve (again imperfectly and incompletely) what God has said. This is compatible, Dupuis thinks, with the claim that God's final, unsurpassable address to us is in the Word, the Second Person of the Trinity; in the light of this fundamental Christian claim he says of the scriptures of non-Christians that they "contain initial, hidden words of God" (250), and as a result ought properly to be called scriptures by Christians as well. Dupuis takes this view to permit the use of non-Christian works in the Liturgy of the Word (253). It is worth noting that he makes this claim without, apparently, being aware that such use may not always be acceptable to those communities to which these works belong.

Dupuis emphasizes throughout that Christianity itself requires the affirmation that God is present in non-Christian religious communities; that God

speaks in the holy books of those communities; that sacramental signs of God's presence are found there; and that it is precisely the practice of those religions in all their particularity by their faithful that "expresses, supports, bears, and contains … their encounter with God in Jesus Christ" (319). He wants to hold these claims together with a Christology that affirms that the "Christ-event has a universal impact: in it God has brought about universal salvation" (303). He wants, that is, to say that God's presence in Jesus of Nazareth is of a different order from God's presence elsewhere; but he takes a proper understanding of the theology implied by this claim to require the affirmation that God's saving presence is not limited to Jesus of Nazareth: "the Christ-event," he says, cannot "exhaust God's saving power" (298), even though God's saving power necessarily involves the Christ, the Second Person of the Trinity.

These views raise ecclesiological questions. How, if God's salvific presence in non-Christian communities is affirmed, are Christians to think about the Church? First, argues Dupuis, it must be said (and here he follows *Redemptoris missio)* that the Church and the Reign of God are not coextensive, either in the present or in the eschatological consummation. Both are centered upon Christ; but for the purposes of a theology of religions, argues Dupuis, it must be said that the "Reign of God to which the believers of other religious traditions belong in history is then indeed the Kingdom inaugurated by God in Jesus Christ" (345). But what is the Church for if it is not to be identified with the Kingdom? Dupuis follows the view that the Church is the primary sacrament of the Kingdom, that to which all other manifestations of the Kingdom are ordered. He quotes with approval the formula arrived at by the 1979 Puebla conference: "[In the Church] we find the visible manifestation of the project that God is silently carrying out throughout the world. The Church is the place where we find the maximum concentration of the Father's activity" (354). This way of seeing things implies that interreligious dialogue is an essential part of the Church's mission, for in and through it both Christians and religious others can come to understand better how the coming of the Kingdom is to be fostered; but, as Dupuis clearly sees (disagreeing with Paul Knitter, among others, on this point), dialogue cannot exhaust the Church's mission. Proclamation of Jesus and the gospel that he taught is also essential.

Dupuis has thought deeply about the questions addressed in this book, and has read widely and thoughtfully in the theological literature surrounding them, and in the documents of the Magisterium. His exegesis of the magisterial documents, especially, is thorough, careful, and thought-provoking; the book ought to be widely read for that reason alone. There are, however, some problems of both a constructive and a historical kind in the book's argument. The following are the three most pressing. First, Dupuis assumes throughout that the religions ought to be thought of by Christians as vehicles of God's revelation and graceful activity. But nothing in his own theological perspective or in the magisterial documents he studies requires this view. What is required is the view that the religions *may be* such vehicles; determining whether any of them *are* requires empirical work. A judicious attention .to the difference

between the indicative and the subjunctive moods would have helped Dupuis here.

Second, and related to the first, Dupuis pays almost no attention to an important theme in Christian thinking about the religions, which is that the use by Christians of texts and practices drawn from the religions is (or often can be) both a theoretical and a practical problem. A relatively recent instance of the expression of such a view is to be found in the 1989 letter of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith entitled "Some Aspects of Christian Meditation" *(Origins* 19/30 [28 December 1989]: 492-98), in which it is asked what value non-Christian forms of meditation might have for Christians, and the answer given is at least not unambiguously positive-and, in the mind of this reviewer, for good reasons. That Dupuis does not consider this aspect of Christian thought about the religions is partly to be explained by his lack of distinction between the *is* and the *may be* mentioned in the preceding paragraph (it is also connected with his excessively dismissive treatment of Karl Barth's views).

Third, it is not clear that the distinction between the "fulfillment" schema and the "presence of the mystery of Christ" schema can finally be sustained. On Dupuis's own view, the Church does fulfill the religions in the sense that it explicitly proclaims what they, at best, implicitly proclaim; that the religions are (or may be) in themselves vehicles for Christ's presence is not incompatible with the claim that the Church fulfills them. This suggests that there is more to be said for the merits of von Balthasar's views on these matters than Dupuis allows.

These criticisms notwithstanding, Dupuis's book is a major achievement. It will be an essential point of reference on the topic for a long time to come.

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Collected Essays, 3 vols. By ERNEST FORTIN. Ed. J. BRIAN BENESTAD. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, Pubs., 1997. Vol. 1: *The Birth of Philosophic Christianity: Studies in Early Christian and Medieval Thought.* Pp. 350. $75.00 (cloth), $24.95 (paper). ISBN 0-8476-8274-9 (cloth), 0-8476-8275-7 (paper). Vol. 2: *Classical Christianity and the Political Order: Reflections on the Theologico-Political Problem.* Pp. 390. $75.00 (cloth), $24.95 (paper). ISBN 0-8476-8276-5 (cloth), 0-8476-8277-3 (paper). Vol. 3: *Human Rights, Virtue and the Common Good: Untimely Meditations on Religion and Politics.* Pp. 352. $75.00 (cloth), $24.95 (paper). ISBN 0-8476-8278-1 (cloth), 0,.8476-8279-X

(paper). 3-volume set: $175.00 (cloth), $59.95 (paper). ISBN 0-8476-8317-6 (cloth), 0-8476-8318-4 (paper).

A thousand pages plus don't pose the biggest challenge to a reviewer of Ernest Fortin's collected essays, nor do the varieties of subject tackled by this dazzling polymath. What daunts, rather, is task of summing up the writer himself. Is Fr. Fortin best characterized as a highly original scholar, profound and stubbornly sceptical, or as an adamantly Catholic defender of eternal verities, or as a penetrating and-let it be said-scornful critic of modern foibles and the latest fashion in ideas? He is all of these, and much besides. Let the reader then take his pick.

Yet it seems only natural, given the interest in political theory that has scarcely flagged since the convulsive 1960s, that most who follow Fr. Fortin's work should know him as a political philosopher. Doubtless he shines bright in the constellation of Catholic thinkers who have worked to restore political philosophy to the pinnacle of the practical sciences. And doubtless his declared indebtedness to Leo Strauss, one of the most distinguished political thinkers of our time, has brought him to the attention of secularist scholars who otherwise might dismiss Catholic political thought on principle. But something made abundantly clear by this collection of essays-Fortin has a knack of making things clear-is that he is a theologian first and foremost. However wide he may wander, into the daunting, darkling paths of Dante or the overtrodden fields of ecology, his guiding star is theology. To leaf through these three volumes is to hear repeated echoes of Blaise Pascal's apology for diverting a conversation into theology: "But I was led there without realizing it, and it is hard not to get into it whatever truth one is treating, because it is the center of all truths."

In all probability, Fortin's firm grip on this "center of all truths" comes from his lifelong study of St. Augustine. (He is an Augustinian of the Assumption.) His first major work, *Christianisme et culture philosophique au cinquieme siecle*, dealt with what might be called the century of St. Augustine-as, for that matter, a good half of the millennium that followed might be denominated. Not that he has neglected the other Fathers, or the Scholastics, or for that matter the moderns from Machiavelli and Descartes to our own day. Far from it. While his contribution to the Strauss-Cropsey *History of Political Philosophy* includes an essay on Aquinas as well as, naturally, one on Augustine, a leitmotif of his work deals with the moderns-namely, that their political thought has not grown naturally from classical antecedents but rather constitutes a radical rupture.

Far from taking this Straussian claim at face value, Fortin has scrutinized it and mounted a detailed defense of it in, for example, "On the Presumed Medieval Origin of Individual Rights," "The New Rights Theory and the Natural Law," and, perhaps his most widely circulated essay, "Thoughts on Modernity." He has exploited it in examining not only modern political philosophy but recent ecclesiastical documents as well. There he points to

Lockean roots in some purportedly traditional treatments of property, where his argument is manifestly solid if startling. With less argument-less is needed for those dismayed at the babble of rights talk among Catholic agitators-he spies Immanuel Kant behind much of the recent emphasis on the dignity of the person.

A second Straussian tenet that Fortin champions is the role of esotericism in literature. Such guarded, covert, or downright misleading language is ordinarily conceived as subterfuge against reprisals in the intellectual or political climate of the time, and therefore as historical and merely accidental. Those who take the gospel seriously may see it in a different light. Jesus Christ, away from the crowd and asked about the parables he had been using to teach it, explained his esotericism in terms still more esoteric: "To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables; so that they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand; lest they should turn again and be forgiven" (Mark 4:11-12).

Three decades ago Fortin tackled the esotericism not of the gospel but of the patristic period in his essay "Clement of Alexandria and the Esoteric Tradition." Because he here brings out the role esotericism as moral prudence rather than political caution, and also because he evinces his willingness not only to stand athwart received opinion but to propose a *tertium* between two opposing schools, this essay brings out the temper of the man and deserves a closer look.

The *Stromata* offers a feast to esoterically minded scholars. Clement begins by claiming to be the depositary of a secret tradition drawn from the Apostles. Thus the axe-grinding naifs at the table of Gnostic scholarship are served a tempting appetizer. What we have in Clement is arcane, elitist knowledge *not* gone off the rails, for Clement's full Catholicity has long been established. But Fortin takes that as given, and focusses on Clement's apologia for writing his declaredly esoteric book. Every serious book, Clement explains, is bound to be mangled if it falls into inept hands and therefore, given the naivete of the public, can work great harm. To forestall such damage, he couches his thoughts in obscure language.

This deviousness seems straightforward enough, so to speak, yet some modern scholars, including Jean Danielou, refuse to take Clement at his word. To hold that early Christian doctrine included a store of truths known only to a few initiates not only savors of Gnosticism but even strains credulity. This critical position, of course, stands diametrically opposed to the claim that the oral tradition referred to by Clement is the source of Catholic doctrines not directly deducible from Scripture. This latter notion was widely held in the last century-it can be found in the youthful Newman's *Arians of the Fourth Century-but* lost ground before Newman's later theory on the development of doctrine.

Of the two opposed positions, Fortin opts for neither:

> Contrary to what both gtoups of scholars have assumed, Clement does not state or otherwise imply that there existed two distinct and parallel traditions, one handed down by word of mouth from teacher to student and known only to a small elite within the Church, and another contained in writings that are the property of all. What he does say is that the content of the oral teaching or tradition should find its way into the written text, but in such a way that its presence will be missed by the casual or unprepared reader and sniffed, as it were, by the student who has somehow been made aware of the deeper issues.

The crucial point that the remarkable first chapter of the *Stromata* makes is precisely that the unwritten teaching is revealed "through writing" and not in a purely oral manner.

Five years earlier, while still in his thirties, Fortin had already displayed his willingness to challenge scholarly opinion whether current or classic. The question was of considerable theological import: To what extent if any did the Christological definition of Chalcedon draw upon Neoplatonism? Fortin noted that the most formidable scholars of the day, including contributors to the three-volume *Das Konzil von Chalkedon* of Grillmeier and Bacht, had departed from an older view to interpret the celebrated formula in terms of other philosophies. Though he conceded the presence of Stoic and Aristotelian elements, he maintained that the Fathers of Chalcedon found in the Neoplatonic doctrine on soul and body a mode of union that could account for the dual nature of Christ without prejudice to the unity of personal subject or to the integrity of the two natures concerned. If ever a philosophical doctrine appeared to dovetail into faith, it was this one.

Obviously the quality of the philosophy employed at Chalcedon reflects on the formula adopted there. Was then this perennially governing definition of faith based upon an effete philosophy, as Neoplatonism has been branded by men as diverse as Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Adolph Harnack? Not so fast, says Fortin, characteristically undaunted by the eminence of the adversary. He forthwith springs into a defense of that widely dismissed philosophy and into an account of the role of philosophy in theology that can scarcely, neither of them, be summarized here. Throughout his treatment of all these complex and subtle questions, including the formula of definition, his argument is clarity itself, inspiring confidence in the reader that whatever judgment he may pass on Fortin's solutions, he has understood them.

It is no reflection on the timeless relevance of Chalcedon but rather a reflection on our times to observe that Chalcedon does not excite the passions of moderns as does the ecological question. Fortin tackles this new *punto scottante* however with the same confidence, energy, and precision that characterized his little masterpiece of three decades earlier, when ecology as a science, and for that matter as an ideological bludgeon, had scarcely been born. He adds a good dose of the scorn that has crept into his work in dealing with ideology masquerading as theology, calling his essay on environmentalism "The Bible Made Me Do It." The anti-biblical bias of so much environmental "science," as amply exposed by Fortin, should interest all concerned about

what is being taught in our schools: well over half of the states mandate the incorporation of environmental concepts into virtually every subject at every grade in grammar and high schools. Often what is at stake is not only an economic system but biblically based faith itself.

Because the future of the Church in this country may hinge on the present struggle for authentic Catholic teaching in our colleges and universities, Fr. Fortin's essays on education are probably the timeliest in this collection. A notion of their range can be gathered from some of the titles: "Christian Education and Modern Democracy," "Rome and the Theologians," and-my favorite because it sets John Tracy Eilis's essay on American Catholics and intellectuality in proper perspective-"Do We Need Catholic Universities?", which he wrote for the quarterly of the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars.

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Justice in the Church: Gender and Participation. By BENEDICTM. AsHLEY, 0.P. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1996. Pp. 234. $39.95 (cloth), $19.95 (paper). ISBN 0-8132-0857-2 (cloth), 0-8132-0858-0 (paper).

Fr. Benedict Ashley has followed the debate on the women's ordination closely, and in these pages he offers a well-reasoned defense of the tradition in dialogue with the questions people are really asking: How can the Church preach justice and not practice it? How can it proclaim the equality of women and men and then deny women the possibility of priestly ordination, and thus of equal participation in ecclesial decision making? Why should maleness be a qualification for priesthood in the Catholic Church? Why should masculine symbols be privileged in Christian discourse about God? What is the basis for male "headship" and female "subordination" in the family, and how can this be reconciled with contemporary teaching on women's equality with men? How can women's equal dignity be made visible in the Church?

To each of these Ashley gives straightforward, often unpopular, answers. He tackles this topic by way of "a theoretical theological solution" (68), and relegates to appendix 1 his detailed response-a *tour de force!-to* the usual objections put to the Magisterium's arguments from Scripture, Tradition, and the analogy of faith. He comments on the authoritative status of *Ordinatio sacerdotalis* in appendix 3.

Ashley grasps the force of the feminist critique and recognizes the justice of women's demand for equal participation in the life of the Church. Nevertheless, he takes issue with many of the premises and conclusions of feminist theology. (His extended dialogue with Elizabeth Johnson's *She Who Is* in appendix 2 makes this clear.) He is convinced that androcentric, patriarchal bias and abuse can be corrected without overthrowing the fundamental principles by which society is ordered and without rejecting universal, natural human symbols. Thus, he defends hierarchy, the complementary symbolism of male-female, and the male headship role in the family. In addition, he believes that sexism within the Church can be corrected without abandoning the male-only priesthood, dismissing maleness as theologically irrelevant to the revelation of God in Christ, or eliminating male-gendered language for God. This is a bold book! It is also fascinating, as Ashley, who in many respects follows Aquinas, is forthright in dealing with the chief counterclaims to his position.

The argument is laid out in four chapters: "Equal and Unequal Disciples," "Passive and Active Laity," "Men and Hierarchy," and "Women and Worship." The recapitulation in the conclusion, "Justice in the Church," is somewhat sketchy. The full force of his case is revealed only by reading the appendices.

A seasoned moral theologian, Ashley takes the "justice question" with utter seriousness. He first discusses "justice" and "equality" in terms of political philosophy; these are matters that pertain to the right ordering of any human community. From the outset he is concerned with persons as they coexist in human communities-the family, the state, the Church. By considering ecclesial justice in the larger context of the natural law and politics, Ashley makes a genuinely new contribution to this debate.

In chapter 1 he argues that the "functional inequality" of persons in a hierarchically ordered society is not only compatible with their "personal equality" but is also essential to right order. The need for hierarchy arises from nature, not sin. Not all kinds of inequality, therefore, are unjust. The functional differentiation which confers permanent "status" on some members of a group does not derogate from the personal equality of the rest. Justice is achieved when a hierarchical division of offices makes participation in communal life possible. Even in a community of equals, Ashley maintains, "effective unity of action for the common good is impossible without a hierarchy of authority and obedience" (14). Those who abolish hierarchy are left with anarchy.

Ashley then reminds his readers that Jesus did not abolish the natural structures of authority in the family, state, or organized religion, but reconciled personal equality with functional inequality by calling those who exercise authority in his community to be the slaves of all (Mark 10:44). Functional inequality and difference of status in the Church are not opposed to the personal equality of each of the baptized. Those without status suffer no injustice in this arrangement, unless the pastors neglect the common good and deprive the members of equal access to spiritual goods. Although the Church is not a democracy, ecclesial justice may be measured by the pastors' success in

"bringing about full participation of all its members in the Church's life and mission" (66).

Ashley extends to the family his logic about the need for hierarchical ordering in the state and the Church. Husband and wife are personally equal, but functionally unequal. "Unequal" here refers not only to the complementarity in reproductive capacity by which man and woman differ, but to the natural subordination of the wife's role to the husband's role as head of the family. The husband's "subordinating role," however, must be exercised for the good of the family and sacrificially, in imitation of Christ. Whereas a man's wife and children are subordinated to him by nature, he must voluntarily subordinate himself to them, in mutuality (49).

Ashley's contention that male headship is natural, not cultural, flies in the face of current feminist theory. Even those (myself included) who have assumed that sex complementarity could be interpreted as difference-in-equality calling the Christian husband and wife to mutual-not unilateral-subordination (as the Pope teaches in *Mulieris dignitatem* 24) may be caught up short by this reaffirmation of the wife's *natural* subordination. Ashley's reasoning (46-52) is well worth studying. His treatment of the Pauline "headship" texts and his arguments from natural law are especially helpful. He observes, correctly, that our contemporary inability to depict the positive dimensions of maleness and fatherhood contributes to the rejection of "patriarchy." The Pauline texts affirm "a permanently valid *principle"-the* husband's headship of the family (99 n. 70). Women's complaints about how men fail themselves and their children, he believes, indirectly confirm their legitimate expectations of the family "head" (100-101).

While this argument from natural family structure (hierarchy) supplements the argument from spousal complementarity (difference), it also raises questions. A key concept, subordination, requires further clarification. Using "subordination" in different ways (e.g., 113 n. 92) adds to, rather than removes, the confusion. How is the subordination of the wife to her husband distinguished from that of children to their father? Does not *mutual* subordination of the spouses imply that the wife/mother exercises some kind of complementary authority (if not "headship") in the family? (See Monica Miller Migliorino's *Sexuality and Authority in the Cathplic Church* [Scranton, 1995].)

Why should maleness be a necessary qualification for the office of priest? Ashley responds to seven arguments in favor of ordaining women as priests (69-77). He then makes his own case, not so much by appeal to historical fact Uesus' choice of twelve men to represent him) as by theological reasoning about the meaning of the fact. In a chapter that deftly parries feminist objections and carries on a lively debate in its footnotes, he argues that male gender is required because the priest's essential function is to make Christ present as the head of the community. Inasmuch as this function is "iconic," gender is a relevant qualification for this office.

But what is the theological relevance of Jesus' maleness? The symbols faith applies to God are God-given, natural, universal, and permanently valid; they are also linked to unique historical personages and events. Ashley maintains that the sacramental significance of Jesus' maleness may be understood by means of a complex of mutually interpretative and reinforcing symbols: Father, Son, male slave, Messiah, and Bridegroom. The sections on "Father" and "Son" in chapter 3 are extensive, original, and controversial. According to Ashley, "maleness is essential to Jesus as New Adam, head and father of redeemed humanity" (101). By interpreting the "New Adam" as a father symbol, he intends to establish Christ's headship of the human race and his capacity-as the primal source and "Father of all the redeemed"-to represent all his "children," both male and female. Is this use of the "Adam" symbol warranted by the texts cited (Rom 5:12-21 and 1 Cor 15:21-28, 45-49)? Adam is the source and spouse, but not the father of Eve, and the New Testament calls the baptized Christ's "brothers and sisters" and coheirs, not his "sons and daughters" (see 183 n. 30, and 199). The argument is intriguing but not fully satisfactory.

Ashley's correlation of Jesus' maleness with his mission of revealing God as Creator and God the Father is more persuasive. He defends the "complementary equality" of the sexes, but takes seriously the natural symbolism provided by sexual difference. Since male and female are defined in terms of each other, the preference for masculine over feminine symbols (including the Word's incarnation as a male) must be meaningful. Calling God "Father" does not, of course, imply that God is male. God can be compared to a mother by way of metaphor (or improper analogy), but "father" can be a proper analogy, not just a metaphor, for God as Creator. "As a human father is [the] efficient cause of his child, so God is the efficient cause of the universe" (108). "Father" is also a proper analogy for the First Person of the Trinity; in this case there is no causal subordination, only a subordination of origin, inasmuch as the First Person is the principle of the Second. This proper analogy is not based on outdated "Aristotelian biology," as feminist critics wrongly suppose. (In fact, modern biology supports it [106 n. 84; 198 n. 11].) It relies rather on the fact that a father impregnates the mother, not vice versa.

Because it is Jesus' mission to reveal God's Name (Yahweh, "he causes to be"), Ashley argues, his identity must include "the male gender by which the transcendent creatorship of the Father is symbolized" (110). Women can image Christ in the world insofar as he is human, but because they cannot be fathers they are not qualified to represent him as the New Adam and the image of God as Father. This is why they cannot be priests. Other lines of argument and related topics-married priests, fathers as "priests" of the domestic Church, single men, sexual orientation, celibacy-are taken up in this key chapter. They flesh out Ashley's basic position in important ways, showing that his fundamental thesis rests on a recognition that the complementarity of the sexes, and the consequent differentiation of roles in service to the family community, belongs to God's plan.

In chapter 4, Ashley asks whether there is any office equal in dignity to the priesthood for which only women are qualified. He recalls that only women qualify for the role of consecrated virgin because only women are able to symbolize Mary (the New Eve, the Mother of God and of the Church) and the Church itself as the Bride of Christ. He contends that this vocation to a life of virginity dedicated to contemplative prayer is equal in dignity to the priesthood. He reflects on the other ways women participate in the Church (as prophets, teachers, theologians, vowed "active" religious, wives and mothers), and suggests it might be possible to ordain women to offices that correspond to the present lay ministries. His final recommendation, however, is that women "be consulted on all important matters of Church policy, and that their prophetic role in the Church be highlighted" (165).

The reader should be warned that the book is marred by many typographical and other errors, for example, "Christ" for "the priest" (81 n. 31), "Scotus" for "Bonaventure" (89 n. 48), "Athanasian" for "Nicene" (113), "Christ" for "the Bride" (118), "hypothesis" for "hypostasis" (199 n. 13). An author index would also have enhanced its usefulness. Nevertheless, I recommend this book very highly. It is a wonderful exercise in theological analysis and a well-reasoned, well-informed effort to set out the logic of Catholic teaching which sheds new light on the question.

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God of Abraham. By LENN E. GOODMAN. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996. Pp. 324. $49.95 (cloth). ISBN 0-19-508312-1.

The author of *On Justice: An Essay in Jewish Philosophy* here offers the fruit of twenty years of reflection on issues in philosophical theology, nourished by a prolonged study of Hellenic philosophy and its medieval Muslim and Jewish transformations, at the hands notably of Saadiah and Maimonides. With the stated aim of articulating "the nexus between God and values" (viii), the initial three chapters incorporate the author's earlier monograph *Monotheism,* considerably recast, while the following four chapters articulate, in turn, the relation of person to community (chap. 4), the issue of the plurality of goods (Saadiah) in tension with a unity of focus for action (Maimonides) (chap. 5), and the particular ways in which the Torah, oral and written, contributes to embodying this vision, first in principle (chap. 6) and then in practice (chap. 7). This extended inquiry is then concluded by a more metaphysical reflection on

time, inspired by Bergson and animated by his critics, so as to allow ancient Muslim and Jewish arguments for creation as the "best explanation" to come to life with methodological astuteness:

> [A]bsolute creation will never be verified or falsified conclusively.... The most we can say of any transcendental claim is that it is confirmed or disconfirmed by the evidence, harmonious or inharmonious with the consilience of experience. In these terms we can say that the findings of cosmology and physics tend to confirm the world's origination and to disconfirm its eternal, steady state existence--whatever construction is put upon these facts. (262)

A closing peroration discloses the rabbi in the philosopher, reminding us of the leitmotif of this inquiry: "the complementarity of reason and revelation" (184). Spelled out extensively in chapter 6, "Monotheism and Ritual," and illustrated in an exemplary way in chapter 7, "The Biblical Laws of Diet and Sex," this practice of allowing a faith tradition to direct and illuminate our inquiry, without at any point explicitly arguing from authority (viii), marks this work as at once post- and premodern. For the medievals, whom the author knows well and uses so adroitly as intellectual coworkers, certainly proceeded in the same dialectical fashion, letting faith provide a vision for reason ceaselessly to test. Such a program hardly exemplifies the modernist caricature of medieval philosophy, yet is profoundly congruent with the postmodern discovery that all inquiry is at best fiduciary.

In conventional *tc;;rms,* the first two chapters, with the last, are exercises in philosophical theology, while the five central chapters lead us into ethics. But the separation is artificial; if in fact "the subject of this book is the nexus between God and values," the central thesis consists in showing how God's free creation of the universe finesses many of the conundra of modern analytic ethics, beginning with the celebrated fact/value distinction. It is here especially that Goodman is able to show how fruitfully complementary reason and revelation can be. For it is the Torah, oral as well as written, that provides the vital context within which free creatures can live into and up to their status as created in the creator's image: "the Torah aims to modulate our lives, making the whole life of Israel a symbol of God's holiness" **(211).** The author works to establish this mediating position on two fronts: in the face of an Enlightenment disdain of ritual which easily contends "that once we know the aims of laws we can achieve the same ends by other means and so dispense with the *mitzvot"* (210), and against "our Jewish legal positivists" (184), notably Yesheyahu Leibowitz, whose fear of that very contention leads them (Goodman contends) to a voluntarist emphasis on the divine origin of Torah. What Goodman finds in his medieval tutors, notably Saadiah (whom he has translated), is an understanding of and use of reason that need not set itself in opposition to faith because it does not claim self-sufficiency. Such reason, in postmodern fashion, realizes its own need for an embracing context of practices-for "a congeries of symbolically freighted acts together constituting

a way of life" (226)-which offers a point to one's life by providing a specific set of means leading one to it.

This precise way of spelling out the complementarity of reason and revelation marks Goodman's inquiry as specifically Jewish as well as underscores its relevance to readers of other faith traditions. For in eschewing generalities by moving to the biblical laws of diet and sex, complete with their oral elaboration, he can show how a tradition not only seeks specificity but in the process offers a trenchant critique of human practices as well as of its own inherent tendencies to make an end of the means themselves-in this case, legalism. It is crucial that this chapter, taken together with the more discursive one preceding it on monotheism and ritual, forms the strategic center of this inquiry. For it is not enough to bemoan the poverty of reason which pretends to proceed without a living context; one must also display how ritual and law interact to form a tradition of living which embraces one's inquiry, and, in this case, show how the claim of a transcendent guidance can fructify the initiatives of reason in assessing what a good life for human beings consists in.

In elaborating such a context, and indeed specifying it as the Torah, Goodman effectively retrieves and displays the fertility of a use of reason that animated medieval inquiry but that has long lain inaccessible beneath layers of stereotypical prejudices. Students of Christian ethics will find in his exposition of the role of Torah powerful analogies for faith as a living context for judgment, nicely finessing much recent controversy on what might make ethics "specifically Christian." And the metaphysical linchpin of free creation, shared by Jews, Christians, and Muslims alike, suggests potential ecumenical strategies in the face of a secular ethic which knows no context other than current sociopolitical arrangements and individual satisfaction. Considered as a constructive exercise in retrieving a tradition as well as modeling postmodern inquiry, this work can truly be said to break new ground. Nor should readers begrudge the author his tendency to exploit this restored use of reason to unravel many a current impasse in ethics or metaphysics, for such is the issue of twenty years of reflection on these matters.

With the central chapters focusing on the Torah and those practices which form community, however, it is odd that the book does not even mention the movement that has dominated Jewish life and practice in this century: Zionism. This overwhelming fact of Jewish identity demands that one test his thesis in the light of the state of Israel and the new Jewish identity forged there in the past half-century. One cannot help but contrast the community delineated here, notably with respect to the Torah's concern for "the stranger," with attitudes towards "the other" that predominate in Israel. One could easily respond by appealing to the "ideal vs. real" distinction, of course, but I contend that there is something more specific at stake. It seems to be inherently tied to the dream of a "Jewish state," whose outworking accentuates all the ambiguities in that phrase, replete with its potential for conflicting interpretations. Using Goodman's own discussion of the corrosive influence of a contextless form of reason on the Torah and its hold on the community, and especially its efficacy

in forging a community (184-85), it would seem that fears attendant upon a rational presentation of the Torah, exhibited by Yesheyahu Leibowitz and others, are minor in comparison with the parallel promise of a modern Uewish) state! (And those who know Leibowitz's writings and attitudes toward the pretensions of such a state should be quick to note that just such a context may have motivated his thought quite decisively.)

Faced with the lure of a Jewish state, why not transmute Torah observance into efforts to make that dream a reality? As a young diaspora Jew casually remarked, contrasting his observance in England with his own and others' in Israel, "why go to synagogue in Israel?" But in what does the vision of a Jewish state consist? That vexed question is underscored every day in the Israeli press and displayed in the variety of answers to it. One way to present my analysis is to recall that the conventional polarities in Israeli society- "secular" versus "religious"-are not on all fours with those in the diaspora: "assimilated" versus "observant." For "assimilate" can carry the connotation it does in the diaspora only when it envisages a foreign, that is, a non-Jewish culture. When the context is a Jewish state, the dream or the promise requires a consensus, however overlapping or pluralistic. Yet the 1996 elections told the "secular" community that its dreams were emphatically *not* the consensus-so much so that they feel disenfranchised, divorced from their state, that is, the state of their dreams.

In this case, of course, the "others" who won the right to set the agenda and to define the terms of public debate (by a firm Knesset majority) were not *goyim* but other Jews, notably "religious" Jews with a set of priorities for a Jewish state quite different from theirs. Furthermore, the difference turns decisively on convictions which many have long associated with their Jewish heritage, and which figure prominently in Goodman's depiction of the Torah as a context for human life as well, notably regarding attitudes towards "others" that translate into "peace-making." Elections do not determine who has the more accurate reading and appraisal of that heritage, of course, but the differences the elections display may lead thoughtful people to ask what criteria might decide such a question. They may even wonder whether a "Jewish state" can be a coherent notion, for such a context may inevitably translate the particularity celebrated by Goodman into a political idiom accentuating "we" versus "them." And where "them" has long been "the Arabs," "them" may indeed come to include Jews with conflicting visions for the Uewish) state of Israel.

Tensions and even contradictions latent in the notion of a "Jewish state" can be variously identified, but two curiously cognate temptations emerge: the obvious one of turning the state into a vehicle for the normative Judaism which Goodman has outlined, or, alternatively, the parallel temptation that working to realize a Jewish state can effectively replace what normative Judaism demanded and supplied. The first fairly characterizes the nationalistic "religious right," while the latter offers a "secular" vision for Israel. The presence of both visions clearly portends unending conflict with "others" within or without,

unless or until economic and political realities demand a series of rapprochements with others-within and without-to the point where a Jewish state is forced to become something more inclusive.

How are these reflections germane to Goodman's thesis? His picture of normative Judaism manages to avoid the issue of political Zionism, yet this issue has come to dominate the contemporary Jewish ethos, and an impartial reader can hardly read his winning descriptions of the context the Torah can supply for a humane community without being confronted with conflicting visions in Israel, the erstwhile Jewish state. It would hardly be strange had those who have had to style themselves "secular"-given the polarities generated by the "religious" *(dati)* sector of Israeli society-not assimilated a similar picture of their society, projecting it "religiously," one might say, onto their state, only to find that the majority did not see it their way, or indeed Goodman's. So the project of a Jewish state has taken the intramural debates regarding normative Judaism and cast them onto a political stage where lives are at stake. It is only fair to ask how Lenn Goodman's thesis might address this current impasse.

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