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REPRESENTATION AND AGENCY INTHE EUCHARIST

GUY MANSINI, O.S.B.

Saint Meinrad School of Theology
Saint Meinrad, Indiana

IN SEVERALRECENT ARTICLES on how to understand the presbyteral *ministerium* within the Eucharist, Dennis Ferrara proposes to return us to a core doctrinal commitment of Catholic Eucharistic theology that he thinks compromised by bad arguments both for and against the ordination of women.[1] This core commitment is that the realization of the sacramental presence of the true body and blood of the Lord is first of all and principally the work of the Lord himself. Whatever we want to say about whatever it is that the ordained priest does or effects in the celebration of the Eucharist, therefore, is to be governed by this principle, which makes of the priest a strictly instrumental agent of the realization of the true body and blood. Ferrara finds, however, that the standard symbolic or "iconic" argument against the ordination of women (as well as some rejoinders to it) in fact obscures the primacy of the agency of Christ.

In sorting out questions of agency and representation, agency and its signification, Ferrara furthermore proposes that we be guided by a strict attention to the visible rite of the Eucharist. Whatever we want to say about the priest's representative function within the Eucharist, about who and whose agency is

[1] I will deal principally with his "Representation or Self-Effacement? The Axiom *In Persona Christi* in St. Thomas and the Magisterium," *Theological Studies* 55 (1994): 195-224 (hereafter RSE); and *"In Persona Christi:* Towards a Second Naivete," *Theological Studies* 57 (1996): 65-88 (hereafter SN). But see also his "Reply to Sara Butler," *Theological Studies* 56 (1995): 81-91; and *"In Persona Christi:* Representation of Christ or Servant of Christ's Presence?" *CTSA Proceedings* 50 (1995): 138-45.

signified, and how and in what manner it is signified, must be supported by the rite as actually celebrated.

In all of this, moreover, Ferrara thinks himself to be recovering St. Thomas's understanding of what it means-and what it does not mean-to say that the priest consecrates the elements at Mass *in persona Christi*.

It is of course difficult to take exception to a concern for the primacy of Christ's agency and the priority of the rite as evidence for what we say about sacramental signification. And it is almost just as difficult (for some of us) to resist an appeal to St. Thomas. Unfortunately, Ferrara's development of his position, especially in "Second Naivete," compromises the very things he wants to make good about Christ's agency and the priority of the rite. Moreover, his reading of St. Thomas cannot be sustained.

In what follows, I first present Ferrara's position. Second, I argue that, when pressed, his position paradoxically leads him where he does not want to go: it obscures the agency of both the principal and instrumental agent, Christ and the priest, and offers a construction little consonant with the immediate signification of the visible rite. Third, I raise the question of his reading of St. Thomas. [2]

I. FERRARA'S POSITION

In the article "Representation or Self-Effacement," Ferrara says he will propose a wholly nonrepresentational view of the priest. [3] The priest is indeed an instrument of Christ, and rendered such by the reception of the character that ordination imparts; however, instruments do not have to be representations of the principal agent using them.

[2] See also the criticism of Sara Butler," A Response to Dennis M. Ferrara," *Theological Studies* 56 (1995): 61-80; and *"In Persona Christi," CTSA Proceedings* 50 (1995): 146-155. Her rebuttal of Ferrara's charge that the symbolic argument against the ordination of women remains covertly an appeal to the natural subordination of women is important. As to the differences between Ferrara and Butler on the argument from tradition, Ferrara's remarks on the texts in question, though arguably just, are also beside the point that Butler is making.

[3] RSE, 196.

Formal to Ferrara's argument is an appeal to St. Thomas according to which there need be no likeness between instrumental and principal agent.[4] On the contrary, the minister's own "form" is indifferent to his instrumentality. The instrumental power of the priest, moreover, is something invisible, residing in his soul.[5] It therefore follows that whatever is visible and sensible about the priest is indifferent to the ministerial instrumentality effected by orders.[6] Even more, since the form of the instrument is immaterial to its functioning as instrument, St. Thomas's position "excludes in principle any representation of Christ in the sacramental minister."[7]

Nor does the assertion that the priest acts *in persona Christi* argue the contrary, according to Ferrara. In its "technical sense," the phrase has an "apophatic" sense relative to the minister and means that Christ alone is signified as speaking or acting.[8] Further, since this signification is accomplished by word alone, by pronouncing the *forma sacramenti* of the Eucharist, it requires nothing more in the priest (given his having been made an instrument by ordination) than the ability to quote.[9] To act in the person of Christ means not the representation of Christ, therefore, but on the contrary the priest's self-effacement.[10] If to act *in persona Christi* means to act in such a way that only the word and act of Christ is signified, which happens through the quotation of the word alone, the priest's maleness is evidently irrelevant.

In a footnote, Ferrara distances himself not only from the view that women can be priests because they can image and represent Christ but also from the view that a woman can be a priest because the priest's representation of Christ is grounded on a prior representation of the Church-he acts *in persona Christi*

[4] Ibid., 201. See especially *STh* III, q. 64, a. 5; and *STh* suppl., q. 19, a.4, ad 1.
[5] RSE, 204; SN, 68-69.
[6] RSE, 213-14.
[7] Ibid., 202.
[8] Ibid., 212; see also 206.
[9] Ibid., 211.
[10] Ibid., 212.

because he first acts *in persona Ecclesiae.*[11] On the contrary, for Ferrara the priest is not a representation of anything at all, of either Christ or the Church.

But, he continues, if the priest is not a representation, this does not mean he is not a representative.[12] He is an ambassador, a representative speaking the word of Christ. The distinction Ferrara is drawing is plain enough. To say that X is representative of Y may mean may mean that X is a good example of Y: this oak is a good example of the oaks you will find in this forest; the particular oak will look a lot like the other oaks; it will share many properties with them. But if X is *a* representative of Y, we will fill the blanks with persons: George is a representative of Bill because George is charged to speak or act for Bill. Of course, George might also be representative of members of his family, and so, looking at George, you will see some of the same features you would if you looked at Bill, his brother (e.g., all the brothers are tall). Here, in some measure, George is a representation of Bill. And whether he is a representative or a representation of Bill, we will say that he "represents" Bill. But as a representative, George rather *makes* a representation for or on behalf of Bill, and is not himself a representation of Bill. He makes a representation on Bill's behalf by speaking Bill's mind or conveying his intention, or pleading for him. The priest, Ferrara wants to say, makes a representation for Christ, and is his representative, but is by no means his representation. The representation he makes is to speak the words of Christ that he quotes within the institution narrative.

In the article "Second Naivete," Ferrara speaks of the priest as also a representative of the Church, and grounds his being a representative of Christ on that fact. But again, the priest is not a representation of the Church. He is a representative of the Church as speaking her word of faith, because sacramental acts are first of all acts of the believing Church.[13]

[11] Ibid., 196 n. 3.
[12] Ibid., 215.
[13] SN, 71.

Why this development of the second article? Ferrara says he wishes to allay the impression that the priest is "hanging in midair between Christ and the Church." [14] We might say: the priest, even as the pure and nonrepresentational instrument the first article has made of him, is not distinct from the Church as standing over against her in the celebration of the Eucharist. [15] The only thing standing over against the Church is Christ. The second article, therefore, undertakes to insert the priest firmly within the Church, not just in the sense that the priest is himself of course a believer, but in his ministerial signifying function, even as speaking the words of institution. And indeed this seems to be required by the nonrepresentational line Ferrara embraces in the first article, for if the priest were between Christ and the Church, then to that extent it would be possible to think of him as representing Christ precisely in Christ's own distinctness from the Church.

The second article accomplishes this placement of the priest by observing that the sacraments are first of all acts of the Church. [16] Further, they are acts of the Church in that the Holy Spirit, the principle of the union between Head and members, is the agent of the sacramental action. [17] However, because the Spirit is the Spirit of Christ and as such the basis of the union of Christ and the Church, [18] the Eucharistic word is not only a word of the Church but also becomes a word of Christ, spoken *in persona Christi,* spoken by the priest as representative of Christ. This occurs in that the Spirit transforms the priestly word of the Church into the word of Christ. This bears quoting at length.

> In the midst of the ecclesial proclamation [of the Eucharistic Prayer], that which is recalled out of the past becomes actual in the present: the living word

[14] Ibid., 70.

[15] I mean here to recall *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 16: "Quatenus repraesentat Christum Caput, Pastorem et Sponsum Ecclesiae, sacerdos non tantum in Ecclesia, sed etiam erga Ecclesiam ponitur." The priest occupies a place *coram &clesia* through his *ministerium,* "quod non nisi signum et continuatio sacramentalis et visibilis est Ipsius Christi, qui coram Ecclesia et mundo unus auctor et origo est Salutis."

[16] SN, 70-72.

[17] Ibid., 77-79.

[18] Ibid., 76.

of Christ supervenes upon the priestly anamnesis to change the elements into his body and blood. This Christ does by the agency of his sovereign Spirit, the fire from heaven that transforms the gifts, as Eastern theology insists, an agency exercised by the Spirit not "from below," as *anima Ecclesiae*, but "from above," as sent by the heavenly Christ from the Father of Lights, for, like the creation of the world, it is a strictly divine act. And in this supervening word of Christ, this descending fire of the Spirit, lies the true meaning and the true mysteriousness of *in persona Christi*, for in virtue of this divine fire, the priestly word of the Church is transformed and sacramentally identified with the word of Christ. [19]

Evidently, speaking anamnestically ("On the night before he died … "), the priest speaks in the person of the Church, with the faith of the Church. Because of this anamnestic frame, the words of consecration remain a word of the Church. [20] While this seems to mean that the priest acts *in persona Christi* because he acts *in persona Ecclesiae,* Ferrara wishes to avoid this implication for the Eucharistic word. He seems to grant the implication for the sacraments generally, [21] but wishes to deny it for the Eucharist. He maintains that, in the Eucharist, to speak in the one person is complementary, and not opposed, to speaking in the other, [22] and he affirms the magisterial teaching that the priest celebrates the Eucharist in the person of the Church because he first celebrates it in the person of Christ. [23] It is the activity of the Spirit of Christ which ensures this priority.

Finally, as to the texts of St. Thomas that seem unmistakably "representational," and that seem to make of the priest a representation of Christ as Head and Spouse of the Church, Ferrara undertakes already in the first article to deny of them any

[19] Ibid., 86.

[20] Ibid., 83: "That the priest consecrates *in persona Christi* pertains solely to his recital of the words of Christ. It does not pertain to the anamnestic form in which Christ's words are recited. But it is precisely this anamnestic form which makes of the eucharistic recital the act of the Church's faith."

[21] Ibid., 79, 82.

[22] Ibid., 81.

[23] Ibid., 82: "the priest, as the magisterial texts … state, does celebrate the Eucharist as representative of the Church *(in persona Ecclesiae)* only because he first celebrates it as representative and minister of Christ *(in persona Christi)."*

gender-specific symbolic significance for the Eucharist.[24] In the first place, he notes that nuptial imagery does not enter expressly into the form of the Eucharist, or into the *sacramentum tantum;*[25] there is therefore no need in the Eucharist of such a symbolic resonance as provided by a male priest. Second, the hierarchical and pastoral function of the priest, apropos of which some of these texts appear, is subordinate to his sacramental function, and not vice versa.[26] Fitness for pastoral ministry, in the sense of acts bearing on the *corpus Christi mysticum,* should be determined solely by the requirements for discharging sacramental acts bearing on the *corpus Christi verum,* and not the other way round. Since males are not required for the latter, neither are they for the former.

II. WORDS AND SPEAKERS, ACTIONS AND AGENTS

While he intends to maintain and indeed bring to the fore the agency of Christ in the Eucharist, Ferrara in fact obscures it because of a confusion about the consecratory word and who speaks it. This is of course highly paradoxical in view of his emphasis in the first article on the fact that the priest does nothing except quote Christ. However, in order to avoid the possibility that the priest may be taken to represent Christ precisely in His distinction from the Church, Ferrara is led to attribute this word to the Church as well. But it is this very attribution, such that the consecratory word is also said to be spoken *in persona Ecclesiae,* that both is refractory to the plain sense of the. quotational form of the consecration that Ferrara

[24] *STh* III, q. 8, a. 6 (prelates and as well those who take Christ's place by preaching and by binding or loosing are called heads); *SI'h* III, q. 65, a. 1 (orders generally are said to be for ruling); IV *Sent.,* d. 8, q. 2, a. 3, ad 9 (the priest, in express distinction from the Eucharistic word, is said to play to role of Christ); IV *Sent.,* d. 24, q. 3, a. 2, qcla. 1, ad 3 (every minister is in some way a type of Christ, and the bishop especially is said to be *sponsus&:clesiae);In I ad Tim.,* c. 3, lect. 1, n. 96 (presbyters and bishops [seen. 87] are to be the husband of one wife "propter repraesentationem sacramenti, quia sponsus ecclesiae est Christus").

[25] RSE, 214; SN, 69-70.

[26] RSE, 219, appealing to the well-known texts on binding and loosing.as the secondary act of the priest.

himself emphasizes and obscures the agency of both Christ and the priest.

The way Ferrara attributes the consecratory word to the Church in "Second Naivete" presents a number of contradictions. We start off unexceptionally enough: Christ and the Church are "other" but "inseparable";[27] the Bride is always united to her Spouse and the Spirit is the bond of their union;[28] the Head works through the Body.[29] Beyond this we are warned of the danger of a "formally 'ecdesial' view" that "threatens the uniqueness of the Eucharist" as differing not only in degree but in kind from the other sacraments.[30] How then can one say that the consecratory word is spoken *in persona Ecclesiae?* "In the foundational act of consecration ... the priest does not speak 'in the person of the Church' ... as an active subject distinct from Christ, but in the very person of Christ."[31] The priest is therefore a passive subject, indistinct from Christ. Will this not preserve the uniqueness of the Eucharist? Again, "the consecrating word of Christ is uttered through and in the Church"; it belongs to the Church; it "is also the word *of* the Church, indeed its supreme word."[32] To say that it is a priestly but not an ecdesial word would deny that the priesthood is the Church's priesthood.[33] After all, the consecration is framed by the anamnesis of the Eucharistic Prayer, spoken for and by the Church, in the faith of the Church.[34] Further, if we say that the priest "utters the consecratory words" not only *in persona Christi* but also *in persona Ecclesiae,* these must be taken as "complementary rather than opposed assertions."[35] All of this is undertaken in order to avoid the consequence of agreeing with John Paul II in *Pastores Dabo Vobis,* for did we not affirm that the consecratory word is

[27] SN, 76.
[28] Ibid., 77.
[29] Ibid., 79.
[30] Ibid., 80.
[31] Ibid., 82.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid., 82-83.
[34] Ibid., 83.
[35] Ibid., 81.

spoken *in persona Ecclesiae*, there is the danger we would so identify the priest with Christ "that he faces the Church as Christ does, as Head of the Body."[36] And that would mean the priest is a representation of Christ, and *that* might mean we cannot ordain women.

We will examine more closely three of Ferrara's assertions: the invocation of complementarity ("complementary assertions"); the idea of a speaking subject, the Church, that is at once indistinct from another subject, Christ, and passive; last, the appeal to instrumentality (Christ speaks the word through the Church).

First, complementarity. Truly, it is not contradictory to assert that "the Church says X" and then again to assert that "Christ says X," and this is so whatever X is. But it may be that the Church and Christ contradict one another, and this depends very much on what they are saying. Christ and the Church might be said to speak the same word, as for instance in the Mass both Christ and the Church (especially the present congregation), the whole Christ, offers itself, the whole Christ, to the Father. However, this is not how the *consecratory* word can be understood. The consecratory word is "This is my body." But the people do not say "this is my body," for the very good reason that the bread does not become their body, but Christ's (and it is rather that they become the Body, sacramentally, at communion). It cannot be that it is "complementary" to say the consecratory word is spoken in both persons. It is simply false.

Next, there is the idea of a passive speaker or subject indistinct from another speaker or subject. As for the indistinction: as already said, two speakers can speak the same thing, depending on what they are saying. Once again, however, the deictic "my" in the consecratory word prevents this here. What is new at this point is the idea of passivity, the idea of a passive speaking, that is, the idea of a passive acting. This, if not straightforwardly contradictory, leads to the idea of instrumentality.

Therefore, what Ferrara envisages is a situation of one word, two speakers, where the speakers are related as principal and instrumental speaker. Even where Christ and the Church are

[36] Ibid., 80; see note 15, above.

offering the sacrifice, moreover, we might think that this is a better way to describe things. So, Christ speaks through the Church, and the word of consecration is the speaking of both, just as in the action of making the bed, there is one action of both carpenter and saw, not in the way two men pull on the same rope, but in that the saw is moved by the carpenter.

But this will not do either, for, while speaking may be an action, words are not. The consecratory word is not the word of the Church, once again for the simple reason that the Church does not say that "this" is *her* body. That is the point, one would think, of drawing attention to the fact that the priest is quoting. The one who quotes, though he may agree with the statement quoted (part of the point of saying that the priest quotes *significative* and not just *recitative),* [37] indicates that it is not his word, the one who quotes, but another's, the quoted person's. Nor is the speaker's *word* the instrument of the one quoted. The speaker is the instrument-his voice, the speaker intending to quote and signifying that he is quoting. My word might be said to be an instrument of another's when I explain another's word; a commentary on a text, a commentarial word, might be called an instrument of the word of the author of the text. But the consecratory word is nothing like that. It is not the priest's word, nor the Church's word; it is Christ's word. That it is not the priest's word, which Ferrara seems to want to say in his first article, means that it is not the Church's word, either, though that is what he does want to say in the second article. And this is true because of the order of signification: the priest's quotation signifies that it is the word only of the one he is quoting, Christ. [38] The attribution to the Church, moreover, is an easy enough, though mistaken, slide from the attribution of a quotation to the Church to the attribution of what is quoted to the Church.

Now, to make it the Church's word is to make problematic the agencies involved. So that the priest cannot appear as signifying the distinction of Christ from the Church, Ferrara holds that the

[37] *STh* III, q. 78, a. 5.

[38] This, moreover, is the "technical sense" of speaking *in personaChristi* in the Eucharistic context picked out by Bernard Dominique Marliangeas, *Clespour une tMologie du ministere: In personaChristi, In persona&clesiae* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1978), 98-99.

consecratory word is "also" the word of the Church. In fact, the *persona* of the Church would seem to be first in the field as a speaker, from the beginning of the Eucharistic Prayer. Ferrara thus finds himself in the position of having to explain how the word of the Church becomes the word of Christ. To this newly invented problem, the solution is a new and unwonted invocation of an agency bearing on the word of the Church. Just so, "the priestly word of the Church" (the words of consecration) is "transformed" by the fire of the Holy Spirit to become the word of Christ.[39] There is first a word and so an action of the Church speaking through her representative, the priest. Second, Christ sends the Holy Spirit onto this word of the Church to make it his word. Third, this word of Christ effects the transformation of the elements.

How are we to think that Christ through the Holy Spirit makes a word that is not his own into his own? One person can make the word of another his own by repeating ("Yes, I think that X is Y too") or otherwise signifying that he adopts the word as his own. But there is nothing like that in the Mass. The word is already signified as Christ's: it is a quoted word. What agency is signified bears on the elements, not on the words. The Holy Spirit is invoked indeed-but to transform the elements, not the words of the priest.

On the contrary, St. Thomas's point in saying that the priest speaks *in persona Christi* is that since it is the real body and blood of Christ, Christ himself, that is made present on the altar, the principal agent of this making present is Christ; and for this reason, the instrument, the priest, speaks purely as Christ's representative, and not in his own person.[40] Speaking purely as a representative, he also perforce represents Christ precisely in distinction from the Church. Here, indeed, the word is the word of Christ in a simple and straightforward manner: the priest is quoting Christ. And since it is Christ's word, and not the Church's word, the priest speaks in the person of Christ, and not in that of the Church.

[39] SN, 86.

[40] *STh* III, q. 78, aa. 1 and 4.

As the agency of Christ, so that of the priest is obfuscated by Ferrara. This agency is by way of a word, by way of quoting, but it is more than the proffering of an ordinary declarative word: it effects something. It is not just a matter of the ability to speak, of the ability to manifest the real, or even to quote. Anybody can quote; but only the priest can quote and (instrumentally) effect now at the celebration what first was effected at the Last Supper.[41] Two things follow from Ferrara's position. First, he cannot really make good why the character of orders is required to speak the confecting words. For St. Thomas, priestly character is required-it is known to exist in the first place-because the priest *does* something not every baptized person can do, namely, confect the Eucharist. But for Ferrara, all the priest does is produce a sort of word-material that it is the part of the Holy Spirit to consecrate and so make effective. The priestly doing is collapsed into a mere speaking. Furthermore, if the word of the priest is also and necessarily a word of the Church, it should follow that the Church can remove a priest's sacramental power, just as she can withdraw his mandate to preach in her name. But she cannot. The distinction between *potestas ordinis* and *potestas jurisdictionis,* maligned or misused as it may be, recovers here its point.[42]

III. FERRARA'S READING OF ST. THOMAS

Ferrara's appeal to St. Thomas is in two steps: first, an argument about instrumentality, and second, an argument from the form of the Eucharist.

The argument bearing on instrumentality proceeds as follows. Generally, agents act so as to produce a likeness of themselves. But we must distinguish principal and instrumental causes. In *STh* III, q. 64, a. 5, St. Thomas tells us that an instrument does not act in accordance with its own form, but by the power of the

[41] *STh* III, q. 82, a. 1 and ad 1. This is the other part of the point of saying that the priest says the words not just *recitative* but also *significative;* see Sara Butler, "Response to Ferrara," 70-73.

[42] See *STh* III, q. 82, a. 7, ad 3; and a. 8, ad 2. Ferrara does see this implication and denies it (SN, 87), but his denial does not refute the logic of his position.

principal agent. Therefore, as the reply to first objection has it, a sacrament likens its recipient not to the instrument, but to Christ, the principal agent. Congruently with this, the Sentences commentary, whose material reappears in *STh* suppl., q. 19, a. 4, ad 1, tells us that just as there is no requirement of similarity of form between an instrument and its effect, so there is no such requirement between the instrument and the principal agent. Whence Ferrara concludes that St. Thomas excludes similarity between the priest, an instrumental cause, and Christ the principal agent of the Eucharist: the priest cannot be a representation of Christ. This conclusion is stronger than warranted: strictly, one can conclude only that there need be no similarity of form, not that there cannot be. The modesty of this conclusion is important.

In a second step, Ferrara observes that St. Thomas says that the only thing the priest does in the confection of the Eucharist is to quote the words of Christ *(STh* III, q. 78, a. 1). There is nothing else that the priest does or may do that is relevant to the confection of the Eucharist and upon which some argument for representation (in addition to being a representative) might be built.

Moreover, according to Ferrara it is in the Eucharist that we find St. Thomas's "technical" and "theoretical" sense of the instrument-minister's action *in persona Christi.*[43] Those texts in a Eucharistic context that relate acting in the person of Christ to being a representation of Christ are nontheoretical and ad hoc remnants of an earlier and uncritical style of symbolic theology (e.g., St. Bonaventure). Moreover, when texts that speak of pastoral power make the same connection, it is to be remembered that the theology of orders finds its formal essence in its relation to the *corpus verum,* not to the *corpus mysticum.* Therefore, neither are those texts coercive.

Ferrara's reading requires certain unwarranted moves. First, he claims that St. Thomas uses the locution *in persona Christi* in technical and nontechnical senses back to back, as it were. In *STh* III, q. 82, a. 1, St. Thomas refers back to q. 78, a. 1, and argues from this "technical" sense of the phrase. But in the reply to the

[43] RSE, 212; see Marliangeas, *Cles pour une theologie,* 97, 98-99.

fourth objection, in the same article, where the bishop is said to exercise pastoral power in the person of Christ, we have an ad hoc sense of the phrase that Ferrara dismisses as nontechnical.

Second, he ignores the limited context for which St. Thomas invokes the principle that an instrument need have no similarity of form with the principal agent. The issue of *STh* III, q. 64, a. 5, is whether wicked ministers can confer the sacraments, and the "form" in question, the likeness at stake between instrument and effect, is therefore that of habitual grace (see also *STh* suppl., q. 19, a. 5). Just so, in *STh* suppl., q. 19, a. 4, the issue is whether the personal sanctification of the instrument-minister is formal to the use of the keys, and the answer is that it is not. It is quite a stretch to argue from the nonnecessity of this kind of likeness to the irrelevance of any likeness whatsoever and in all cases between instrument and effect.

In fact, St. Thomas's "technical" consideration of sacramental agency calls for just such a likeness in the visible, properly sacramental order. The argument is quite simple. In *STh* III, q. 62, a. 1, St. Thomas asks the foundational question whether sacraments are causes of grace. The first objection argues that, since the sacrament is a sign of grace, it cannot also be a cause of grace. The reply is as follows.

> A principal cause cannot properly be called a sign of an effect, though hidden, even if this cause itself be sensible and manifest. But an instrumental cause, if it be manifest, can be said to be a sign of a hidden effect, for the reason that it is not only a cause, but in some way also an effect, insofar as it is moved by the principal agent. And according to this reasoning, the sacraments of the new law are causes and signs.

Thus, for instance, baptismal washing, an instrumental cause of the cleansing of the soul, is also a sign of that cleansing, insofar as it is moved by God.[44] If it were true, as Ferrara thinks, that instruments cannot represent or signify the effect they are ordered to producing, then St. Thomas's sacramental theology would be at odds with itself at a quite fundamental level. For that is

[44] See *STh* III, q. 66, a. 10.

precisely what a sacrament is: an instrument that is a sign of its effect; a sign that is an instrument.

Ferrara is well aware, of course, of such texts that assert a likeness between the sacrament and the effect of the sacrament.[45] He does not gainsay the similitude of sacrament to sacramental effect, yet he circumscribes it quite carefully: the likeness is absolutely not any likeness to the mysteries of Christ. Rather, appealing to *STh* III, q. 65, a. 1, where the number of the sacraments is made intelligible by an argument *ex convenientia* from human life both individual and in community, we read that, as natural signs, the sacraments "represent the basic structure and dynamism of human existence." This is true enough, as far as it goes. But the exclusion of the relation of the natural symbolism to the mysteries of Christ is false. Speaking of the matter of baptism in *STh* III, q. 66, a. 3, St. Thomas argues its suitability both as signifying the effect of the sacrament, as spiritual cleansing, and as signifying the mystery of Christ's death and burial, by which we are saved. For Ferrara these two things must be really distinct, the second being a hold-over of precritical, pretheoretic mystical and symbolic theology. Of course it is nothing of the sort. Spiritual cleansing *is* conformation to the death of Christ, and dying with Christ in baptism *is* the dying to sin that is spiritual cleansing,[46] and the faith required for the sacrament of faith is faith in the saving passion and death of Christ.[47] To drive a wedge between the effect of the sacrament and its signification of conformity to Christ's death is to see St. Thomas taking his leave not only from the entire patristic tradition but from St. Paul himself.[48] But why the wedge? Why such a huge effort to separate St. Thomas not only from his tradition but from his own text? Only so that there can be no argument contrary to the ordination of women on the basis of a

[45] See his "Reply to Sara Butler," 86.

[46] See *STh* III, q. 66, a. 12: "Passio Christi operatur quidem in baptismo aquae per quandam figuralem repraesentationem"; q. 69, a. l; and the *Lectura* on Romans, c. 6, lect. 2, nos. 473-74.

[47] *STh* III, q. 61, a. 4.

[48] I am grateful to Professor Lawrence Welch of Kenrick Seminary for this point.

relation of natural resemblance between the ministerial priest and the unique High Priest.

If it is kept well in mind that sacramental instruments are likenesses of their effect, St. Thomas's next premise is easily anticipated: the priest is an instrumental cause of consecration. He is rendered an instrument in virtue of the character, the instrumental power, imparted at ordination, as we discover in *STh* III, q. 63, a. 1, and q. 64, a. 1. The priest's instrumentality in the consecration of the Eucharist is explicitly affirmed at *STh* III, q. 82, a. 1, ad 1. The instrumental cause that the priest is, however, is a manifest and visible one, and so he can also be a sign of the hidden effect, which in the case of the Eucharist is the true body and blood, that is, Christ, insofar as he is moved by the principal agent. Lastly, it is to be noted that the "effect" of this exercise of agency is not distinct from the principal agent, Christ. Therefore, in the Eucharist, the priest can be a sign-a representation-of Christ.

The foregoing argument concludes with a possibility; it induces an expectation that St. Thomas will affirm the symbolic, iconic, representational function of the priest in the Eucharist. The expectation is realized in *STh* III, q. 83, a. 1, ad 3:

> the priest bears the image of Christ in whose person and power he pronounces the words to consecrate, as is evident from what was said above. And so in a certain way the priest and the victim are the same.[49]

That is, the minister is the same as the victim of the sacrifice, Christ, in that he is a representation of Christ. The reference to "what was said above" is to *STh* III, q. 83, a. 1 (and a. 3), which itself refers us back to *STh* III, q. 78, a. 1, on the form of the Eucharist, where Ferrara finds the "technical sense" to be displayed. In other words, there is no gap, not the slightest

[49] "Sacerdos gerit imaginem Christi, in cuius persona et virtute verba pronuntiat ad consecrandum, ut ex supra dictis patet. Et ita quodammodo idem est sacerdos et hostia." This is even stronger in IV *Sent.* d. 8, q. 2, a. 3, ad 9, where there is a comparison of the word and the priest as instruments: "quiasacerdos est similior principali agenti quam verbum, quia gerit eius figuram, ideo, simpliciter loquendo, sua virtus instrumentalis est m:;iioret dignior, uncle etiam permanet."

crevice, between the representational and the representative senses of *in persona Christi.*

The above text from *STh* III, q. 83, moreover, is not the only one where it is either stated or implied that the priest is a representation of Christ. In the *Lectura* on 1 Timothy, commenting on the requirement that an *episcopus* be the husband of one wife (3:2), we read: [50]

> But what is the reason of this institution? ... I answer that it must be said that the reason is not because of incontinence alone, but on account of the representation of the sacrament *[propter repraesentationem sacramenti;* cf. the *magnum sacramentum* of Eph 5:32], because the spouse of the Church is Christ, and the Church is one, as it says in the fifth chapter of the Song of Songs, "my dove is only one."

Furthermore, St. Thomas explains earlier that "presbyters are to be understood with bishops" here, since the names, though not the realities, are interchangeable. [51] It is hard not to see in this text a recognition of an "iconic" value to priests and bishops that includes more than the quite narrow representative function, manifested in quotation alone, that Ferrara recognizes. There are more "Bonaventuran" patches in St. Thomas, it would seem, than *STh* III, q. 83, a. 1.[52]

Is not this witness from the *Lectura* on 1 Timothy a "hierarchical-regitive" text, however? Indeed it is. But then it is to be observed, first, that however one wishes to relate the *munera* of sanctifying-sacramental ministry and hierarchical pastoral rule, whether giving primacy to the first or to the second, there is no difference between them as to the matter of representation: for St. Thomas, sacramental action *in persona Christi* not only does not exclude, but rather calls for, the priest as a representation of Christ, and so there is no warrant for

[50] C. 3, lect. 1, no. 96.

[51] C. 3, lect. 1, no. 87. The same holds good for deacons; they are to be husbands of one wife on account of the *significatio sacramenti* (c. 3, lect. 3, no. 120).

[52] On the basis of this text from the *Lectura* on 1 Timothy, one easily erects the same argument against the ordination of women as St. Bonaventure offers, IV *Sent.* d. 25, a. 2, q. 2. For a contemporary presentation of the argument, see Sara Butler,, "The Priest as Sacrament of Christ the Bridegroom," *Worship* 66 (1992), 498-517.

dismissing the same implication of the hierarchical-regitive texts because they do so as well.

Second, and more importantly, Ferrara evidences a sort of suspicion of hierarchy that hardly seems theological. So he asks rhetorically in the first article: "Is the priest first and foremost the hierarch, among whose ruling powers the sacramental power is included? Or is the priest first of all and formally Christ's servant and instrument whose hierarchical authority is grounded in and normed by this Christ-derived and Christ-directed service?"[53] Let the priest be first and foremost the instrument of Christ in the Eucharist; but it is hard to understand the fateful consequence Ferrara seems so evidently to feel-unless "ruler" and "hierarch" are being taken in some extra-ecclesial sense according to which they are synonyms for "oppressor" and "tyrant."

Of course, when all is said and done, it might be the case that while St. Thomas affirms a representationalist view of the priest in the Eucharist, Ferrara is right about the devastating and harmful consequences of such a view. Ferrara thinks assigning such a role to the priest is "out of place" in the Eucharist, "since, both symbolically and functionally, it interposes the priest between Christ and that Church which is, after all, Christ's and not the clergy's bride."[54] But then, it must be added that St. Thomas does not himself think these deleterious consequences follow. He does not think representations function the way Ferrara does. In *STh* III, q. 25, a. 3, taking up the question of whether images are to be adored latreutically, he writes:

> there is a twofold motion of the soul to an image: one to the image itself according as it is a certain thing; in another way, to the image insofar as it is the image of another .... the second motion, which is unto the image insofar as it is an image is one and the same with the motion which is unto the thing [of which it is the image].[55]

[53] RSE, 219.

[54] SN, 81.

[55] "Duplex est motus animae in imaginem: unus quidem in imaginem ipsam secundum quod est res quaedam; alio modo, in imaginem inquantum est imago alterius. Et inter hos motus est haec differentia, quia primus motus, quo quis movetur in imaginem prout est res quaedam, est alius a motu qui est in rem: secundus autem motus, est in imaginem inquantum est imago, est unus et idem cum illo qui est in rem."

Reverencing the image of Christ as an image of Christ is "one and the same" with reverencing Christ.[56] This holds for icons, pictures, crosses, and crucifixes (see a. 4). It is hard to see why it does not hold for the priest when, moved by the Principal Agent, he bears the image of Christ *(gerit imaginem Christi)* in the Eucharist, unless one takes "representation" in a typically Cartesian and modern sense, one that has nothing to do with the ancient and medieval context.[57]

IV. CONCLUSION

Ferrara pretends to show us a rigorous but hitherto unnoticed implication of St. Thomas's sacramental theology according to which there can be no representational function of the priest relative to Christ, and therefore no argument for the exclusion of women from orders on that basis. It is to be feared that he has rather kidnapped than read the text. Contrary to Ferrara, instrumental causes can be representations of their effect, and indeed must be if a sacrament is to be a sacrament. Contrary to Ferrara, sacraments do signify the mysteries of Christ. Contrary to Ferrara, representations or icons or symbols or signs of Christ are presences of Christ, not blocks to the faithful and adoring Christian mind.[58]

[56] Here it is useful to consult Robert Sokolowski, "Picturing," in *Pictures, Quotations, and Distinctions* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), 3-26.

[57] See Robert Sokolowski, *Eucharistic Presence* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1994), 179-86, 198-200.

[58] I would like to thank Dennis Ferrara for a lengthy review of an earlier draft of this paper. It may not appear to him that I benefitted from his effort, but in fact I did and am grateful for his careful attention.

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APOPHATIC THEOLOGY'S CATAPHATIC DEPENDENCIES

MARK JOHNSON

Marquette University
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

DARING TO SPEAK of the God "who dwells in light unapproachable" (1Tim6: 16),[1] systematic theologians in the Western tradition regularly employ the twofold methodology of apophatic and cataphatic theology regarding knowledge and discourse of God. The former mode of theological discourse emphasizes that in knowing God we know more 'what-God-is-not,' rather than 'what-God-is.' And in the latter mode we associate with God terms about which we have solid understanding in our this-worldly experience, terms we apply first to this-worldly things, but whose signifying core we attribute to God as well. But even to this cataphatic mode of discourse-analogical naming of God-we are compelled to add a rectifying dose of apophasis, since in attributing to God a particular property by means of a name we also claim *not* to know the mode of that property's existence in God, even as we are sure that such-and-such a property *is* in God. Thus even analogy when used of God must genuflect before God's hiddenness, God's incomprehensibility,[2] and it is fair to say that apophatic theology

[1] "<j><il; o!KwY dupocrtTOY." Hinting at my theme, I note that, grammatically, the prefixed alpha-privative modifies upoc; ("towards") + 1 ("go" [coming from: dµ1 / iEYat]) + TOY ("capable"), and so signifies by presupposing the positive content of "can-be-gone-towards" (upocrtTOY), which it then denies (d). At first this is but a lexical point, but it points towards epistemological underpinnings, to be discussed below.

[2] Catherine LaCugna, "The Trinitarian Mystery of God," in *Systematic Theology: Roman Catholic Perspectives,* eds. F. Schiissler-Fiorenza and J. P. Galvin (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 1:151-92, notes that "one sees the apophatic dimension underlying the way of analogy" (158); or, as she notes in *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (San Francisco:

appropriately has ascendancy in the Western tradition, despite the nuanced complexities of its Scholastic history. [3]

But for all that, is it possible that cataphatic theology might be being sold short? Could our familiarity with apophatic theology and claims of God's utter incomprehensibility do a certain injustice to the hard-fought of the human mind as it struggles to put together some 'composite picture' of what God is, however imperfect that likeness may be? My goal is not to suggest that we could abandon apophatic theology-as though the human mind could put God in a hammerlock! [4]-but is rather to ask whether in our confident use of apophasis we may be employing cataphatic theology more than we acknowledge, creating a dialogue of sorts between these two modes of discourse. In short, if it is true that sound cataphatic theological naming needs apophasis, could it also be true that apophatic theology depends in some genuine way upon positive, cataphatic knowledge of what God is? Might such cataphatic theological naming be epistemologically prior to apophatic naming, and might we accordingly be compelled to devote more attention to our assessment of the act of positive reasoning regarding God? Could it be the case that-to alter and rearrange what the late

HarperCollins, 1991), 324-35, "At the base of analogical predication lies apophasis" (330).

[3] See Elizabeth Johnson "Classical Theology," in idem, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad, 1992), 104-20. Johnson's strong emphasis upon apophasis, and the virtual agnosticism that her book's delivery sometimes suggests to me (e.g., 117), sparked my interest in this topic, though my comments here do not bear upon her larger project regarding gender-based naming of God. See also her earlier "The Incomprehensibility of God and the Image of God Male and Female," *Theological Studies* 45 (1984): 441-65, containing in germ the thesis of *She Who Is.* For background on the relationship between East and West on this topic, see D. Carabine, "Apophasis East and West," *Recherches de theologie ancienne et medievale* 55 (1988): 5-29.

[4] Johnson, describing Aquinas, puts it deftly *(She Who Is,* 109): "No created mind can comprehend the essence of God, that is, understand perfectly so that *nothing is hidden from view"* (emphasis added). My concern with "Johnson's agnosticism" (above, note 3) is that I suspect that in practice she, on the basis of the claim just quoted-with which any Thomist would be in general agreement-infers its contrapositive, thereby incorrectly changing the predicate's quantity from 'all' ("to understand God perfectly") to 'none' ("not to understand God at all"), when the median quantity of 'some' remains a genuine possibility. See *She Who Is,* 117, where 'he' when used of God is thought to be subject "to all the limitations found in *any other positive naming of God,* and in the end *does not really tell us anything* about the divine" (emphasis added). Is God alone able to have any knowledge of God?

Catherine LaCugna wrote [5]–"at the base of apophatic predication lies cataphasis"? In raising these questions with greater precision, and in working towards some answer for them, I will. use the doctrine of St. Thomas Aquinas as a springboard, both because he is a key figure in Western Christian theology's use of theological language, and because of my debt to his work. [6] I will begin by considering what negation is, turn to the process of naming God, and close with some remarks concerning our reasoning about God.

[5] See LaCugna, *God for Us,* cited above, n. 2.

[6] Though I do not attempt a strict exegesis of Thomas's teaching on the divine names, I have benefited from the following exegetical works: Lawrence Dewan, "St. Thomas and the Divine Names," *Science et Esprit* 32 (1980): 19-33; Brian Davies, *The Thought of Thomas Aquinas* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 40-184; Ralph Mcinerny, *Aquinas and Analogy* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1996), 152-63; idem, "Can God be Named by Us?," in *Being and Predication: Thomistic Interpretations* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1986), 259-86; Mark D. Jordan, "The Names *of* God and the Being of Names," in *The Existence and Nature of God,* ed. A. J. Freddoso (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983), 161-90; and of course David Burrell, *Knowing the Unknowable God: Ibn-Sina, Maimonides, Aquinas* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986). More specialized studies that I have consulted are: Thomas S. Hibbs, *Dialectic and Narrative in Aquinas: An Interpretation of the Summa contra gentiles* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), 36-51; Armand Maurer, "St. Thomas on the Sacred Name 'Tetragrammaton'," in *Being and Knowing: Studies in Thomas Aquinas and Later Medieval Philosophers* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1990), 59-69; John F. Wippel, chap. 9, "Quidditative Knowledge of God," in *Metaphysical Themes in Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1984), 215-41; idem, *Thomas Aquinas on the Divine Ideas* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1993); Anton Pegis, "Penitus Manet Ignotum," *Mediaeval Studies* 27 (1965): 212-26; J. B. M. Wissink, "Aquinas: The Theologian of Negative Theology. A Reading of ST I, qq. 14-26," *in]aarboek 1993* (Utrecht: Thomas Instituut, 1994), 15-83; T.-D. Humbrecht, "La theologie negative chez saint Thomas d'Aquin," *Revue Thomiste* 93 (1993): 535-66; Albert Patfoort, "La place de l'analogie dans la pensee de S. Thomas d'Aquin: Analogie, noms divins et 'perfections'," *Revue des sciences philosophiques et theologiques* 76 (1992): 235-54; Joseph De Finance, "Le double piege des noms divins selon saint Thomas," in *Noetica, critica e metafisici in chiave Tomistica: Atti del IX Congresso Tomistico Internazionale* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1991), 2:275-81; Gregory Rocca, "The Distinction between *res significata* and *modus significandi* in Aquinas's Theological Epistemology," *The Thomist 55* (1991): 173-97; idem, "Aquinas on God-Talk: Hovering over the Abyss," *Theological Studies* 54 (1993): 641-61; Juan Alfredo Casaubon, "Nuestro conocimiento real de y los enunciados teol6gicos," *Sapientia* [Buenos Aires] 46 (1991): 247-52; Michael B. Ewbank, "Diverse Orderings of Dionysius's *Triplex Via* by St. Thomas Aquinas," *Mediaeval Studies* 52 (1990): 83-109.

I. How Do WE NEGATE?

In a list of non-biblical, entitative, and operative attributes of God-simple, perfect, good, infinite, ubiquitous, immutable, eternal, one, knowing, living, willing, provident, omnipotent- one notices straight off that some of the attributes are negations; the negating Latin prefix *in*, found in 'infinite' and 'immutable', is a giveaway. Yet the notions of some other attributes betoken a negation, even though the word's structure does not reveal it. To say that God is 'simple', for instance, is really to say that God is not composed of parts. God is said to be 'ubiquitous' in part because God is not bound to any one place by being a body. And to say that God is 'eternal' is really to say that God is not time-bound. A negating, a denying, seems central, then, to much of our speech about God, though it is too much to say that it covers all our speech, since terms such as 'perfect', 'good', 'knowing', 'living', and 'willing' seem to be manifestly affirmative, both in form and content. [7]

How do we negate? There is no sustained treatment in Thomas's writings on the subject, or in those of his medieval predecessors, [8] and most mention of the topic is found in texts concerning formal logic, distribution of terms, the square of

[7] It remains intriguing that Thomas, having insisted in the prologue to q. 3 of the *Prima pars* of his *Summa Theologiae* that we are more able to know "how God is not *[quomodo non sit]"* than to know "what God is *[quomodo sit],"* almost immediately discusses the attributes of God's perfection and goodness (qq. 4-6), and that the rationale for predicating perfection of God is principally that God is the first efficient cause-hardly a negative concept! I wonder whether the doctrinal strength of Thomas's prologue here might need to be attenuated; the Latin text seems to have an impressive, almost liturgical, *cursus* (i.e., punctuated sentence-length in syllables) of 9-9-9, 14-4, 14-4. And of course Thomas has to make provision for the authority of Dionysius and St. John Damascene. For a thorough account of the need for the 'way of remotion' *(via remotionis)* see *Summa contra Gentiles* I, c. 14.

[8] A possible exception seems to be Anselm's *De casu diaboli,* c. 11, in P. Schmidt, O.S.B., ed., *Obras Comp/etas de San Anselmo* (Madrid: BAC, 1952), 1:622-28, who struggles mightily with the intention 'nothing' *(nihil).* For more on theological language in the twelfth century, see M.-0. Chenu, *La theologie au douzieme siecle,* 3d ed. (Paris:]. Vrin, 1976), 90-107 ("Grammaire et theologie"), 366-85 ("Le vocabulaire theologique").

opposition, and so on.[9] But the concern here is that of material logic, of seeing what the mind's warrant is as it denies one characteristic or attribute of another thing. And here there is not much to go by.

But there is an adage or "tag" that will be of help, which Thomas on an occasion or two takes the time to explain. In more than one place in his writings he employs the premise that "every negation has its basis in some affirmation" *(omnis negatio fundatur in aliqua affirmatione).* The adage and some variants are common enough in his writings,[10] and he uses it both in his personal teaching and in presenting difficulties to be addressed in the course of determining a particular question-the "objections" that are found in the beginning of a Scholastic article. But in no text does Thomas provide any reference to the proposition's precise source,[11] and the manner of its use suggests that he took

[9] As, for instance, in Peter of Spain's *Summule logicales,* in L. M. De Rijk, ed., *Peter of Spain (Petrus Hispanus Portugalensis) Tractatus* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1972), tr. 8, nos. 13-14 (pp. 190-91); tr. 12, nos. 23-25 (pp. 224-25), all calling to mind Aristotle's *On Interpretation.* Thomas has an incomplete commentary on the latter work, which addresses in detail how negation is related to distribution of terms, etc., in the formal syllogism. See *Expositio libri peryermenias* in *Sancti Thomae de Aquino Opera Omnia,* vol. 1/1, 2d ed., Leonine ed. (Rome: Ad sanctae Sabinae, 1989).

[10] A version of the premise pertaining to formal logic was deemed useful enough by Nunzio Signoriello to make its way into his *Lexicon Peripateticum Philosophico-Theologicum* (Naples: Bibliotheca Catholica Scriptorum, 1906), N, no. 13, p. 231, as "negatio reducitur ad genus affirmationis," followed by some texts of Thomas that explain it, to be discussed below. See also the medieval Dominican Peter of Bergamo's (tl 482) *Tabula Aurea,* s.v. *negatio,* nos. 3-6, in his *In opera sancti Thomae Aquinatis index seu tabula aurea eximii doctoris f. Petri de Bergamo* (Rome: Editiones Paulinae, 1960), p. 651a, who seems to be the source for Signoriello's references to Thomas.

[11] The Leonine source editors for Thomas's *De Malo,* A. Kenzeler and A.J. Peters, refer us in *De Malo,* q. 2, a. 1, arg. 9 and ad 9, to Aristotle's *Prior Analytics* l.46 (5lb34) and to *Categories* 10 (12b 12-15)-perhaps something of a stretch. The passage is found *ad sensum* in Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics.* See Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* l.25 (86b27-8; 86b33-35), trans. H. G. Apostle (Grinell, Iowa: Peripatetic Press, 1981), 39-40: "a negative [demonstration] is made known through an affirmative [demonstration] ... an affirmative is prior to and better known than a negative [premise] (for a denial is known through an affirmation, and an affirmation is prior to a denial just as being is prior to nonbeing)." Another Aristotelian locus is *On Interpretation* 5 (17a8-9).

its truth to be undisputed. [12] A look at a couple of texts will show how the proposition functions in his thinking.

Among the several passages in which Thomas uses the principle, [13] there are two in particular where he spells out its import, both generally having to do with the divine names, and both addressing Thom!IS's sense that the solutions of Moses Maimonides are insufficient. [14] In his *scriptum* on Book 1 of Peter Lombard's *Sentences* he faces the question whether 'knowledge'

[12] For Thomas's detailed exposition of the passages in the *Posterior Analytics,* see his *Expositio libri posteriorum* 1.39 (86a35-86b37), 2d ed., Leonine ed. (Rome: Ad sanctae Sabinae, 1989), 1/2:146-47. As a matter of historical interest, Thomas's teacher, St. Albert, invokes the principle in his commentary on Pseudo-Dionysius's *De divinis nominibus,* a copy of which we possess in the student Thomas's own hand (cf. Leonard E. Boyle,"An Autograph of St. Thomas at Salerno," in *Littera, Sensus, Sententia: Studi in onore de/ Prof. Clement]. Vansteenkiste, O.P.,* ed. A. Lobato [Milano: Massimo, 1991], 117-34). See Albert's *In Dionysii de divinis nominibus,* c. 1, no. 50, obj. 3 (Miinster: Aschendorff, 1993), vol. 37/1:31.43-46: "Preterea, sicut docet Philosophus, omnis negatio ab affirmatione causatur; si igitur aliquid dicitur de deo negative, oportet etiam aliquid nominare affirmative."

[13] Arranged chronologically with their dates *Q.-P.* Torrell, *St. Thomas Aquinas: The Person and His Work,* trans. R. Royal [Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1996], 330-59), the texts are the following: I *Sent.,* d. 35, q. 1, a. 1, ad 2 (1256); *De Potentia,* q. 7, a. 5; ibid., q. 10, a. 5 (1265); *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 33, a. 4, ad 3 (1266); ibid., I-II, q. 71, a. 6, ad 1; q. 72, a. 6; q. 75, a. 1 (1269-70); *De Malo,* q. 2, a. 1, ad 9 (1269); *Summa Theologiae* II-II, q. 79, a. 3, ad 1 (1271). In Thomas's recently discovered "Roman Commentary" on Peter Lombard's *Sentences* there are four articles dealing variously with the divine names, none of them addressing the issues at stake here. See my '"Alia lectura fratris Thomae': A List of the New Texts of St. Thomas Aquinas found in Lincoln College, Oxford, MS Lat. 95," *Recherches de theologie ancienne et medievale* 57 (1990): 34-61, where I transcribed the beginning and end of each of the ninety-four new articles. John Boyle, who is preparing the critical edition of these texts, very kindly sent me his edition of texts numbered 2, 20, 89, and 90.

[14] On Thomas's relationship to Maimonides generally, see David Burrell, "Aquinas's Debt to Maimonides," in *A Straight Path: Studies in Medieval Philosophy and Culture: Essays in Honor of Arthur Hyman,* ed. R. Link-Salinger (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1988), 37-48. See also Alexander Broadie, "Maimonides and the Way of Negation," in *Historia Philosophiae Medii Aevi,* ed. B. Mojsich et al. (Amsterdam: Griiner, 1991), 1:105-13; and, on Thomas's use of Maimonides, Neil A. Stubbens, "Naming God: Moses Maimonides and Thomas Aquinas," *The Thomist* 54 (1990): 229-67; Isaac Frank, "Maimonides and Aquinas on Man's Knowledge of God: A Twentieth-century Perspective," in *Maimonides: A Collections of Critical Essays,* ed. J. A. Buijs (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988), 284-305. There are those who think that Thomas simply got Maimonides wrong on the subject of the divine names. See Seymour Feldman, "A Scholastic Misinterpretation of Maimonides' Doctrine of Divine Attributes," in Buijs, ed., *Maimonides,* 267-83.

ts m God, and has to field a particular difficulty, which he recognizes as really posing the question of how the divine names signify.[15] As a possible answer Thomas entertains the position he elsewhere assigns to Maimonides,[16] for whom names such as 'knowledge' do not signify that God actually has knowledge, but signify rather that God is not ignorant, as a rock would be. In short, the divine names, even the ones whose structure does not imply negation, still signify what God is not, rather than what God is.

But this explanation is not up to the task for Thomas, and his response rest:s on the adage concerning the relationship of negation to affirmation. Every negation concerning some thing, he points out, is based upon something existing in that thing. An example would be what happens when we make the denial: "a human being is not a donkey." The truth of this claim depends upon the nature of being human, a nature which is not compatible with that of being a donkey-Thomas seems to have in mind here the irrevocable opposition between the human being's specific difference of 'being rational' and the absolute lack of rationality in a donkey. Applying this logic to the case at hand, Thomas notes that when we deny ignorance of God-Maimonides, he thinks, holds that the term 'knowledge' used of God means 'not ignorant'-we are able to do so only because of something, some characteristic, that exists in God, which is opposed to ignorance. That, of course, is knowledge.[17]

In his disputed question *De Potentia Dei,* in another passage dealing with the divine names, Thomas suggests a kind of thought-experiment to bring out that the understanding or truth of a negation depends upon some affirmation. Suppose-to use

[15] I *Sent.,* d. 35, q. 1, a. 1, arg. 2.

[16] *De Pot.,* q. 7, a. 5; *STh* I, q. 13, a. 2.

[17] I *Sent.,* d. 35, q. 1, a. 1, ad 2: "quando dicitur Deus sciens, intelligitur non esse ignorans, sicut lapis: … Sed hoc non videtur sufficiens … quia ornnis negatio de re aliqua fundatur super aliquid in re existens, ut cum dicitur, homo non est asinus, veritas negationis fundatur supra hominis naturam, quae naturam negatam non compatitur. Unde side Deo negatur ignorantia, oportet quod hoc sit ratione alicujus quod in ipso est: et ita oppositum ignorantiae oportet in ipso ponere."

an illustration he gives elsewhere[18]-that we made the claim that "Ethiopians are not white," and that we were compelled to justify it. Since postulating the claim as a basic truth of reason is not an option, the only way to prove that "Ethiopians are not white" is to show that Ethiopians are endowed with a characteristic that is not convertible with, or compatible with, being white. And being black, of course, is such a characteristic. Hence we would not be able to prove the truth of the claim "Ethiopians are not white" without using the affirmation "Ethiopians are black" as the warrant for the truth of the negation.[19]

Therefore on Thomas's account affirmation is epistemologically prior to negation, so much so that it is in some way the 'cause' of negation. And in one passage he says just that, seemingly meaning that the causality the affirmation exercises is more than just a material causality (i.e., providing the 'parts' of the negation, the terms of which it is composed), but is formally the cause of why the negation's predicate is disjoined from its subject.[20]

[18] *De Pot.*, q. 10, a. 5: "pater quod veritas cuiuslibet negativae in existentibus supra veritatem affirmativae fundatur: sicut veritas huius negativae 'Aethiops non est albus' fundatur supra veritatem huius affirmativae 'Aethiops est niger.'"

[19] *De Pot.*, q. 7, a. 5: "Et preterea intellectus negationis semper fundatur in aliqua affirmatione: quod ex hoc patet quia omnis negativa per affirmativam probatur." Thomas implicitly uses this principle in his discussions on whether God knows the bad through the good. See *Quodl.*, 11, q. 2, a. 1: "In cognoscibilibus autem quedam sunt que habent propriam rationem absolutam, ut homo et lapis, quorum propria ratio non dependet ex alio; quedam uero sunt que non habent propriam rationem absolutam, set ex alio dependentem, sicut est in relatiuis et priuatiuis et negatiuis, quorum ratio dependet ex ordine quern habent ad alia: nam ratio cecitatis non est absoluta, set dependens, in quantum habet ordinem ad uisum, cuius est priuatiua." See also I *Sent.*, d. 36, q. 1, a. 2; *De Verit.*, q. 2, a. 15; *ScG* I, c. 71; *STh* I, q. 14, a. 10; q. 15, a. 3, ad 1; q. 18, a. 4, ad 4.

[20] *STh* I-II, q. 72, a. 6: "Semper enim in rebus negatio fundatur super aliqua affirmatione quae est quodammodo causa eius; uncle etiam in rebus naturalibus eiusdem rationis est quod ignis calefaciat, et quod non infrigidet."

Thomas draws his account of the demonstrative syllogism from Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*, and more specifically employs the philosopher's four modes of *per se* predication in the formation of the major or minor premise (Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* l.4 [73a35-73b24]). The Latin preposition *per* ("through") always carries the aspect of a cause, so *per se* in the first way indicates that the predicate is a formal cause of the subject (e.g., "rational" is a formal cause of being human in the proposition: "humans are rational animals"), while in the second way of saying *per se* the subject is materi;i.llythe cause of the predicate, for the definition of the predicate would always include the subject, in which it

He finishes his thought-experiment by applying his logic of negation to the case of making negations of God, concluding naturally enough that our ability to make negations of God depends on our ability to make affirmations of God, because we could not be said to know anything of God at all were we not able to verify it affirmatively[21]—a conclusion whose emphasis upon the sequence of propositions regarding God calls to mind the process of how we name God.

II. THE PROCESS OF NAMING GOD

While in our personal histories we receive &om our faith traditions or theological education a host of divine names "ready-made," as it were, and usually in varying arrangement, it is interesting to note that Thomas presents each of the divine attributes or names to his readers in a very carefully worked-out order. Actually, the treatment of the divine names in his *Summa Theologiae* is located thirteen questions into the work, treated under the rubric of God's knowability, itself but one of many divine attributes or names. So, much studied discourse and

inheres (e.g., "rational" is included in discussing the ability to laugh in the proposition: "rational beings are risible"). The third way does not apply to the demonstrative syllogism (for *per se* here means "exists by itself," and is therefore an existential, not causal, enunciation), but the fourth way is important, because in it the subject is the efficient or productive cause of the predicate through the form by which the subject is named (e.g., in the proposition "the doctor is healing," the doctor heals precisely as a doctor, not insofar as the person who is the doctor is tall, left-handed, or a Cubs fan). The second and fourth ways sometimes coincide, because it is possible for a subject that is always included in the definition of the predicate to be also the productive cause of the predicate. A good example is the case just given for the second way: defining the ability to laugh requires one to include "rational being" or "human being" as the subject, but in reality it is rationality that produces laughter in human beings. See Thomas's I *Post. Anal.*, lect. 10 (ad 73bl-25) (Leonine ed., 1/2:38-41). See also *STh* I, q. 77, a. 6, ad 2.

To expound the example Thomas gives concerning fire *(STh* 1-11, q. 72, a. 6), one would say that fire's heating is a property of fire (second way) that is caused immediately by fire's nature (fourth way), and that, since heating and cooling are opposed actions, fire's inability to make things cold follows directly from its nature of making things hot-in order to cool fire would have to become something other than what it is. In a less mundane way certain things would be denied of God.

[21] *De Pot.*, q. 7, a. 5: "unde nisi intellectus humanus aliquid de Deo affirmative cognosceret, nihil de Deo posset negare. Non autem cognosceret, si nihil quod de Deo didt, de eo verificatur affirmative."

predication about God has already taken place long before Thomas introduces a formal discussion of discourse about, and predication of, God; even the treatment of divine names. must wait its turn until other attributes of God, about which we speak via a divine name, have been dealt with. For Thomas there is no mere naming of God in a list whose contents have no other interconnection save that they are all predicated of the self-same God, and whose contents could be rearranged into any other order at will. For him there is an intelligible flow from one attribute to the next, just as a negation's intelligibility flows from a prior affirmation.

It is easy to see where, in the *Summa,* this intelligible flow begins: namely, with Thomas's famous 'five ways' for proving God's existence. Thomas chose to provide these five different arguments because the conclusion of each way gives him information-a premise, eventually-from which he can proceed to investigate God further.[22] Thus, while the conclusion of each way is, in one sense, "God exists," in another sense it is "there exists a first, unmoved mover," or "there exists a first efficient cause," and so on.[23] And these five conclusions-all of them affirmations-form the basis of a number of the arguments Thomas later uses to show that God has the attributes traditionally assigned to him by the Christian tradition, both east and west.

The very first question following the arguments for God's existence is a perfect illustration of Thomas's practice and strategy. Beginning his consideration of God with an investigation into God's simplicity, Thomas has to consider whether God has 'parts,' a multiplicity of elements out of which he might be composed. The first item to be considered is whether God is a body, a material reality, and Thomas wastes no time in providing his determined answer to the question: "Without any quali-

[22] I made a case for this view in my "Why Five Ways?," in *Religions and the Virtue of Religion: Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association,* vol. 65 (Washington, D.C.: The American Catholic Philosophical Association, 1992), 107-21.

[21] *STh* I, q. 2, a. 3. See also Cajetan's commentary *ad locum,* where he claims that the five ways arrive at five distinct predicates, each of which is proper to God.

fication whatsoever, God is not a body." [24] Yet this negation, stated at the very outset of his response, is in fact the conclusion of three arguments that Thomas rehearses in the body of his response, and in each argument one of the premises used to support the conclusion is itself the affirmative conclusion of one of the five ways for proving God's existence-more precisely, from the first, third, and fourth ways. Hence, for instance, God cannot be a body because all bodies, when they move other things, are moved movers, and God had been demonstrated in the 'first way' to be the prime mover, unmoved by anything.

Neither can God be a being consisting of matter and form, because God's having any matter at all, even in addition to form, entails his being in potency, something ruled out by the conclusion of the 'third way.' [25] Nor can God be a composite of both matter and form, because that contradicts his being the first good and best being, for which Thomas argued in the conclusion to the 'fourth way.' So what is left is that God is pure form, with no admixture of matter, and the minor premise for this argument, it perhaps comes as no surprise, is the conclusion of another of the five ways, in this case the second, claiming that God is the absolutely first efficient cause.

Thomas continues his investigation into God's simplicity with other combinations of both negations based upon the affirmations in the five ways and new affirmations based derivatively upon the conclusions of the five ways. Eventually he claims that God is utterly simple, which then allows him to claim that God is perfect or all complete (q. 4), and, because things are called 'good' to the extent that they are complete, to claim that God is most good of all (qq. 5-6). And when he then turns to address God's infinity or not-being-bounded, Thomas bases his contention that God is infinite by referring his reader to the prior affirmations of God's being the most formal (q. 4, a. 1) self-subsisting being (q. 3, a. 4). Having successfully shown that God is infinite he is then able claim that God is present to all things, once again based on an affirmation (q. 4, a. 1) that itself was the conclusion of one of the five ways. Discussions of God's immutability, eternity, and unity

[24] *STh* I, q. 3, a. 1: "Dicendum quod absolute Deum non esse corpus."

[25] *STh* I, q. 3, a. 2.

then follow in questions 9-11, all of them weaving together as premises in argument the various conclusions that have been garnered from the preceding questions. And with all of this consideration of how God is *in se* in tow, Thomas in question 12 considers how God is "in our knowledge" *(in cognitione nostra),* turning only then in the famous question 13 to a formal, official consideration of the divine names. But the predication of divine names does not cease there, for in subsequent questions Thomas serially addresses God's knowledge (qq. 14-18), from which follows God's will (q. 19), and from God's will follow love (q. 20), justice, and mercy (q. 21), providence and predestination (qq. 22-23), with omnipotence (q. 25) following from both God's knowledge and will, and blessedness (q. 26), finally, being the fruit of the divine essence.

III. REASONING ABOUT GOD

This cascade of argumentation suggests that naming God is not a discrete event, as when we say "God is good" in a single sentence, and stop. Rather, it hints that names predicated of God in single phrases or sentences are, in reality, the result of a process of our mind, by which it moves from one item, known through human experience or from God's self-revelation, [26] expressed in notions garnered from human experience, [27] to another item with which it is directly related. In short, we are reasoning about God, and the success of the whole process underlies each of our predications as its foundation. Thus we cannot let the seemingly self-contained character of our predications about r:;od lure us into thin kin6 that our accomplishment lies in using correct theological grammar. And this is especially true of our negations, if the foregoing holds. The apophatic utterance "God is incomprehensible" sounds right to Christian ears, but it implicitly calls

[26] See *STh* I, q. 1, a. 7, ad 2: "Dicendum quod licet de Deo non possimus scire quid est, utitn\lr tamen eius effectu, in hac doctrina, *vel naturae vel gratiae,* loco definitionis, ad ea '!WK de Deo in hac doctrina considerantur" (emphasis added).

[27] See *In Boet. de Trin.,* q. 6, a. 3: "Uncle quamvis per revelationem elevemur ad aliquid cognoscendum, quod alias esset nobis ignotum, non tamen ad hoc quod alio modo cognoscamus nisi per sensibilia." This is also why Thomas says that sacred Scripture must use visual images and metaphors. See *STh* I, q. 1, a. 9; *In Boet. de Trin.,* q. 2, ·ı. 4.

for a warrant, a justification that details what it is about God that precludes comprehensibility. And the warrant we provide for that will likely have its own warrant, and so on. So while our reasoning about God appears never ending, and while it is true that even our best knowledge and speech of God comes up short, [28] the detection of apophatic theology's cataphatic dependencies may be a small but genuine accomplishment, for it helps to clarify one of the systematician's many tasks: precisely in order to express 'what-God-is-not' the systematician must try to detail 'what-God-is', even if the endeavor forever proves humbling.

[28] I hope that my emphasisupon affirmation will not be taken to indicate that I believe the systematician capable of knowing God in such a way that "nothing is hidden from view." See *STh* I, qq. 12-13, passim, for Thomas's many epistemological genuflections in the presence of God's supereminence (for more on Thomas's confident use of pseudo-Dionysius's ways of causality, negation, and eminence, and his creative ordering of the Dionysian ways, see Michael Ewbank's article [above, n. 6]). The very fact that we must use multiform language to speak of God indicates that our knowledge is a far cry from representing God as he is, who is "altogether one and simple" *(STh* I, q. 13, a. 12), while by constitution our language is not altogether one and simple. Even the affirmative name we use of God shows its distance from the God it attempts to attain; we need to name him via an abstract name (e.g., goodness, truth, justice), in order to indicate that he does not enter into the composition of other things. But no sooner do we do that than we realize that abstract names in our experience cover the domain of things that don't subsist or have separate existence! So we are then compelled to name God with a concrete name (e.g., good, true, just) in order to insist that he does, indeed, enjoy a separate existence. But existing things in our experience that are good, true, and just are composed of many elements, are not essentially good, true, and just, and can therefore cease to be thus-something Christians could not tolerate in the case of God! *Marana tha!*

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TRINITARIAN *ANALOG/A ENTIS* IN HANS URS VON BALTHASAR

ANGELA FRANZ FRANKS

Boston College
Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts

I. INTRODUCTION

Being, in its hierarchical stages and degrees of interiority (existence, life, feeling, thinking, and loving) simply cannot be anything but a trace, an image, of eternal, triune Being; and the more vibrant, communicative, and fruitful it is, the more dearly it manifests this relation. [1]

In the October 1995 issue of *The Thomist,* James J. Buckley raises some questions concerning Hans Urs von Balthasar's use of the theology of Thomas Aquinas. He notes that von Balthasar brings to light features in Aquinas that many Thomists have not sufficiently understood or developed, and he calls for a "dialogue" between the two. [2] He questions what form such a dialogue should take, in light of the fact that von Balthasar published no systematic treatment of Aquinas. However, in a footnote Buckley raises the possibility, drawing from a clue in von Balthasar's *My Work in Retrospect,* that von Balthasar might have tried to develop such a form using the *Distinctio realis* as the starting point. [3] Indeed, in *The Glory of the Lord* von Balthasar calls the real distinction Thomas' s "major creative achievement.""

[1] Hans Urs Von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama,* vol. 3: *The Dramatis Personae: The Person in Christ,* trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press. 1992), 325. Hereafter ID 3.

[2] James J. Buckley, "Balthasar's Use of the Theology of Aquinas," *The Thomist 59* (1995): 517-45; see especially 518, 520.

[3] Ibid., 521 n. 4.

[4] Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord,* vol. 4: *The Realm of Metaphysics in Antiquity,* trans. Brian McNeil, C.R.V., et al., ed. John Riches (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989), 393. Hereafter *GL* 4. See also Buckley, "Balthasar's Use of Aquinas.," 527-28.

I would like to suggest that a starting point for evaluating von Balthasar's use of Thomas should be the real distinction, as the former transposed it into his theory of analogy.[5] This theory, which has repercussions for both the philosophical and the theological realms, is a fundamental feature of his theology, and it could be the best way for Thomists to approach von Balthasar, in that its vocabulary is familiar, while its development is innovative. An understanding of his presentation of analogy introduces the reader to von Balthasar's larger theological aims, which are often difficult to grasp when appr3aching his enormous corpus. At the very least, it provides a point of departure for further dialogue between followers of Thomas and disciples of von Balthasar. This essay will focus on von Balthasar's theological development of analogy, in order to serve as an invitation for further thought on the part of Thomists.

Throughout his enormous body of work, von Balthasar repeatedly makes reference (often implicitly) to the analogy between finite and infinite being. His use of this metaphysical doctrine could be interpreted as implying a certain removal from the concrete realities of faith. Yet, as the opening quotation shows and as I intend to demonstrate in more detail, the concept is not an abstract principle but rather one that entails existential experience as the image of the Trinitarian life. Most puzzling to many readers is the claim that the otherness between the Trinitarian Persons is the most fundamental otherness which founds all other distances, even the distance between God and creation. For von Balthasar, however, only this radical claim can make sense of the unity and multiplicity of being, without falling into either univocity and pantheism on the one hand or pious agnosticism on the other; the analogy of being is possible only through the Trinitarian features of unity and distance, which provide the basis for the analogous relations of similarity and dissimilarity. The Christocentric way to this conclusion leads through the revelation of God's glory (explored in theological aesthetics) and the dramatic action of the Trinity, concluding with important applications to our contemplative life in Christ.

[5] Von Balthasar followed Erich Przywara's union of the doctrine of the real distinction with that of the analogy of being.

Von Balthasar does not devote a separate work solely to analogy, but in a brief section in *Theo-Drama* 3 entitled "'Analogia Entis' in Christology" he summarizes the philosophical distinctions made between various kinds of analogy [6] and focuses on analogy's fundamental importance: "However *analogia entis* may be defined in philosophical detail, it means that the terms employed cannot be traced back to a generic concept. "[7] He then enumerates the criteria of the Fourth Lateran Council regarding the subject. In 1215, this council, in combating Joachim of Fiore, stated, "For between Creator and creature no similitude can be expressed without implying a greater dissimilitude." [8] Von Balthasar's use of analogy indicates a rejection of "a generic concept," or, in Lateran terminology, he rejects the abolishment of the "greater dissimilarity." The council's document provides an example of the appropriate use of analogy when it quotes Jesus's prayer "that they may be one in us as we also are one" Oohn 17:22), commenting, "The word 'one' as applied to the disciples is to be taken in the sense of a union of charity in grace, but in the case of the divine persons in the sense of a unity of identity in nature." [9] Thus, the word "one" indicates a similarity between the "one" of the Trinity and the "one" of the disciples, but with a greater dissimilarity. [10] Von Balthasar summarizes the criteria of the council as follows: analogy must be universally applicable, meaning that it must not be limited to any abstract structure of "pure nature" but must include the supernatural elevation of the creature by grace, as the council's example demonstrates. It must, therefore, apply to the "highest union between divine and created

[6] See ID 3, 221 n. 52, in which von Balthasar distinguishes *analogia attributionis, analogia proportionis,* and *analogia proportionalitatis,* rejecting the second but retaining the first and last in their respective situations. Cf. Georges de Schrijver, *Le merveilleux accord de l'homme et de Dieu: Etude de l'analogie de l'etre chez Hans Urs von Balthasar* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1983), 52-57.

[7] ID 3, 221.

[8] J. Neuner, S.J., and]. Dupuis, S.J., eds., *The Christian Faith* (New York: Alba House, 1982), 109.

[9] Ibid., 108.

[10] See ID 3, 525: "The trace, the image of this primal Life is hard to see in the realm of naked creatureliness. Dissimilarity predominates, for even the highest creature lacks the most divine attribute; it lacks self-subsistence." We will see later how central this appropriation of the Thomistic "real distinction" is for von Balthasar.

being, in the God-man himself,"[11] meaning that the application of analogy must be able to make sense of Christ. To understand analogy, we must be able to see it in the light of theology as a whole.

Let us start where von Balthasar starts, with contemplation of form, or beauty, manifested in God's revelation. In this light, analogy between man and God is necessary for God's revelation to be comprehensible to man.[12] Moving from aesthetics to dramatics, the "dramatic" content of analogy centers on the relationship of finite and infinite freedom, which involves the economic activity of the Trinity. Here, the distinction between the infinite God and the finite world is revealed as "the fundamental mystery. It grounds everything that comes after [i.e., the relationship of these two worlds], while not being deducible from anything."[13] As the possibility for any theological thought and even for any relationship to the Creator, analogy must be understood as the precondition for revelation and redemption.

But does not this statement elevate an abstract philosophical principle above God's personal and salvific revelation? More precisely: does not "the analogy of being" subsume even God under a metaphysical process, thus making him subject to a higher principle and reducing his mystery to a simple formula? To answer these questions, we must view the whole pattern of von Balthasar's thought and weave together the different threads of his theory of analogy, utilizing his "theological aesthetics" and "theological dramatics," as well as some other writings selected from his body of work.[14]

This task demands a Christocentric approach. Even more, we must ultimately retrace theological meaning to its Trinitarian ground. As von Balthasar says, "Theological proof must go even

[11] TD3, 221.

[12] GL 4, 14.

[13] Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama,* vol. 2: *The Dramatis Personae: Man in God,* trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1990), 119. Hereafter *TD* 2.

[14] A complete treatment of this topic would necessitate incorporating the *Theo-Logik* as well, in addition to his works on Maximus the Confessor, Gregory of Nyssa, and Erich Przywara. Yet in order to set some (fairly artificial) limits to a topic that is *je-mehr,* I have chosen to focus on the theological aesthetics and dramatics for the purposes of this essay, reserving the theo-logic for a future work.

farther back [than economic Christology], to the eternal generation of the Son."[15] The Trinity, as the ground of being, remains the model and basis for the development of unified theological thought, if theology's form is to be faithful to its content, that is, the economic revelation of the immanent Trinity. "The model of union is established by God. . . . The unity is God's trinitarian, salvific decision, which manifests itself as the 'mystery' of the Son in the unifying power of the Spirit."[16] Only the doctrine of the Trinity (as revealed through Christ) can unify into one tapestry the many strands of theological categories. Accordingly, our approach will be to explore von Balthasar's conception of analogy in light of its Christological and Trinitarian aspects, in order to determine its place within his theology as a whole.

II. REVELATION OF CHRIST: AESTHETICS

Let us begin, not with *The Glory of the Lord,* but with Von Balthasar's *The Theology of Karl Barth,* which introduces the topic of analogy from the perspective of its formal contribution to revelation. Barth's influence on von Balthasar is considerable, entailing "the vision of a comprehensive biblical theology, combined with the urgent invitation to engage in a dogmatically serious ecumenical dialogue."[17] A fruit of this dialogue is his book on Barth, which tries to be an example of the Church's "dialogue with the thought of the age-of every age," in this case "going back explicitly to the point of departure in Idealism."[18] Von Balthasar confronts Barth's contention that Catholicism emphasizes "an overarching systematic principle that is merely an abstract statement about the analogy of being and not a frank assertion that Christ is the Lord."[19] As a Christocentric

[15] *1D* 2, 126.

[16] Ibid., 128.

[17] Hans Urs von Balthasar, *My Work: In Retrospect* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993), 89-90.

[18] Ibid., 40, 42.

[19] Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Theology of Karl Barth,* trans. Edward T.'Oakes, S.J. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1992), 37. Hereafter *TKB.*

theologian, von Balthasar is sympathetic to Barth's concerns, even while disagreeing with the latter's presentation of the analogy of being.[20]

The question in this book centers around the relationship of nature and grace, and it is in this context that the Christological significance arises. For how else is the relationship between creature and Creator understood and mediated except by and through Christ? Barth's early work contends that this relationship is taken over by the abstract terminology of *analogia entis*, reducing the concrete Christological center of faith to Scholastic wordplay.[21] The issue at hand is a formal one which provides a structural point of contention that underlies all material difficulties between Catholicism and Protestantism.[22] The controversy centers around the form of God's revealing act, and accordingly around Christ as the perfect revelation of God.

Von Balthasar recognizes that Christ cannot be squeezed into any independent formal structure: "He himself as this concrete, unique, personal and free being, simply *is* his own form."[23] And if he is a unique form, then "the form of his revelation and the form of the creation that has emerged from him and from whom it takes its being"[24] must depend on this unique form of Christ. Thus, as we saw above, "the problem of analogy in theology must finally be a problem of christology."[25]

Since this question involves the form of Christ's revelation, let us now turn to the realm of aesthetics, which provides the tools necessary to understand the appearance of the form.

[20] *TKB* presents an elaboration of von Balthasar's thought on nature as oriented towards supernature from its creation, as well as his treatment of the relation between nature and grace. These questions, while relevant to von Balthasar's conception of analogy, cannot be directly addressed here because of the limits of this essay.

[21] Von Balthasar does show that Barth's later writing on the *analogia fidei* overcomes his earlier opposition to a principle of analogy. See *TKB* 163-66, 382-85.

[22] Ibid., 47-48.

[23] Ibid., 55.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid.

"Theological aesthetics has as its object primarily the perception of the divine self-manifestation. "[26] Such a statement is rooted in an understanding of man's nonabsolute character; it implies a distinction between God as revealing and man as receiving the divine revelation. Utilizing Thomas's "real distinction," von Balthasar emphasizes man's contingency, man's possession of being *ab alio,* not as the fullness of being. As nonabsolute, man "is not a speaker, but an expression governed by the laws of beauty."[27] As the (the "image") of God, man is form and understands being through form.

The revelation of God must, therefore, have a form if man is to comprehend it. This form is introduced in the covenant of the Old Testament, but it is only completed by the supreme form of God's revelation, which is Christ: "Jesus is the Word, the Image, the Expression, and the Exegesis of God. . . . He *is* what he expresses."[28] Yet, Christ was not sent to bear witness to himself but to his Father: "he is not whom he expresses-namely, the Father."[29] Elsewhere von Balthasar states, "The Father is ground, the Son is manifestation. The Father is content, the Son form."[30]

This manifestation of the Father takes place not in some abstract, formless realm but in the concreteness of being, since God himself is concrete Being. "God is not a particular existent; rather, he reveals himself out of and within the depths of Being, which in its totality points to God as to its ground."[31] If creation is a manifestation of the Creator, "it follows that this manifestation takes its form from the form of the world itself. It is the Being of things-and not something alongside or behind it–

[26] Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord,* vol. 1: *Seeing the Form,* trans. Brian McNeill, C.R.V., et al., ed. John Riches (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989), 13. Hereafter *GL* 1.

[27] Ibid., 22.

[28] Ibid., 29.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid., 611. See Michael Waldstein's summary of "the roots of beauty in the Trinity": beauty is "founded on the movement of expression from interior to exterior," which images (analogously) the Son's expression of the Father (Michael Waldstein, "An Introduction to von Balthasar's *The Glory of the Lord," Communio* 14 [1987]: 22).

[31] *GL* 1, 244-45.

which is the revelation of God's eternal and omnipotent Being."[32] Thus, Christ's revelation is not something external to the Being of the world, but something that takes place within the world's form, which follows from the hypostatic union: if God becomes man, then Absolute Being enters into created, contingent being and becomes visible. Moreover, the form of revelation is inseparably joined to the source: "the form of revelation does not present itself as an independent image of God, standing over against what is imaged, but as a unique, hypostatic union between archetype and image."[33]

Therefore, insofar as the Word becomes incarnate (i.e., enters history), revelation takes a historical form. "This historicity must be expressly understood and explained as analogy."[34] Why? Because the unique event of the Incarnation is not merely historical (and thus subsumed by history) but both historical and transhistorical. The form of Christ as analogy encompasses history while dwelling within it: "God's actual revelation enters into this history, and it announces its own transhistoricality and becomes the judge and measure of all worldly history only by becoming a real part of that worldly history."[35]

The Incarnation's historicity, then, does not preclude the activity of Christ's divinity. In fact, "the proper and most intimate form-quality of Christ's revelation comes to light only in Christ's divinity, that is to say, in the relation in him between the two natures."[36] The hypostatic union is not only the possibility of revelation-by providing a connection between God and man-but itself the actual form of revelation.[37]

This revelation calls for a response in man, one which von Balthasar describes as "Christian attunement" to God. Citing Thomas, he says, "what is involved here is an attunement to

[32] Ibid., 430.

[33] Ibid., 432.

[34] *TKB,* 368.

[35] Ibid.

[36] *GL* 1, 432.

[37] Von Balthasar was greatly influenced by Maximus the Confessor's Christocentric and Trinitarian reflection on the Chalcedonian formulas. See the summary provided by Cyril O'Regan, "Von Balthasar and Thick Retrieval: Post-Chalcedonian Symphonic Theology," *Gregorianum*77 (1996): 227-60.

Being as a whole."[38] The creature is oriented to God, as the Fount of Being, not with a vague, "objectless ... disposition" but "rather [with] a deliberate attunement of self to the accord existing between Christ and his mandate from the Father, in the context of salvation-history's assent, which the Holy Spirit *is* in Christ and effects in him."[39] Man allows himself to be caught up in the inner-Trinitarian life when he is formed in the form of Christ's accord with the Father.

Christ's "mandate" from the Father is placed within the context of "the Christological movement," namely, Christ's descent *from* and his return *to* the Father in the Spirit. Christ's experience of God involves an experience of the human, creaturely distance from God, which is "an expression and function of his Trinitarian experience," since it depends on the distance between the Son and the Father.[40] We will explore this connection in greater detail when we turn to the Theo-Drama. For now, it is important to note that this experience of the Father is given to man to experience for himself (within the context of theological aesthetics), as an attunement to the dynamic character of Christ's form.[41]

Now the Christological basis for the analogy of being is clearer: only Christ, as both divine Son and man, can express absolute Being within a worldly form.[42] Only Christ is the "measure" between God and man,[43] the "hypostatic union between archetype and image."[44] Here von Balthasar's affinity to Barth's Christological thought is reinforced, by locating the formal principle of all theology-indeed, of the entire relation

[38] *GL* 1, 244.

[39] Ibid., 253.

[40] Ibid., 328.

[41] Ibid., 331.

[42] Ibid., 458.

[43] Ibid., 472. Schrijver compares the idea of the measure of God's revelation to the measure of the creature's elevation by grace; the latter, through the loving obedience prompted by grace, can be elevated to the measure and proportion of God's measure (Schrijver, *Le merveilleux accord,* 62).

[44] *GL* 1, 432.

between God and man[45]—in Christ alone. But von Balthasar is quick to stress the ontological and analogical implications of his Christocentrism: "the event [of revelation] itself possesses Being and presupposes Being."[46] The appearance of revelation presupposes some similarity between created being and God's Being, or else revelation could not be seen or even occur at all. This relation of similarity is taken up in Christ.

If the hypostatic union is the form of the relation of God and creature (Christ-as-analogy), and also the form of the revelation of the Trinity, then the hypostatic union provides an "entry" for the creature into the Trinitarian relations. For, as the relation between the Father and the incarnate Son is the basis of the Incarnation,[47] so also the Trinity becomes the basis for the analogy between God and man, of which the Son's incarnate body "is and remains the point of union."[48] "The relation between God and creature in this way comes to participate in the natural indissolubility of the love between the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit."[49]

The relation between God and creature, then, is caught up through the Incarnation into the inner-Trinitarian relations. The analogy between the two relations is made possible by the unity and difference within the Trinity. "The otherness of creatures is essentially justified by the otherness that exists within the identity of God himself."[50]

Von Balthasar continues to explain that creation derives its existence from the freedom of God, so that the world is thereby not necessary in itself, yet it is justified in its existence as an expression of the love between the Trinitarian Persons. The

[45] "He takes the creature's measure with the yardstick of divinity and with it he also measures, not actually his eternal Godhead, but rather his eternal relation to man and to the world" (ibid., 474).

[46] Ibid., 473.

[47] Ibid., 436-37.

[48] Ibid., 433.

[49] Ibid., 480.

[50] Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord,* vol. 5: *The Realm of Metaphysics in the Modern Age,* trans. Brian McNeil, C.R.V., et al., ed. John Riches (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989), 506. Hereafter *CL* 5.

introduction of freedom provides a transition into theological dramatics.

III. REVELATION OF CHRIST: DRAMATICS

In the first volume of his *Theo-Drama* ("The Prolegomena"), von Balthasar summarizes his trilogy by describing theological aesthetics as "Theo-phany," theological dramatics as "Theo-praxy," and theological logic as "Theo-logy." The second ·category, theo-drama, prevents the other two disciplines from becoming purely static.[51] Theo-drama is "fundamentally the event of God becoming man and his action on the world's behalf."[52]

But what does this have to do with our exploration of analogy? Theo-dramatics is the realm of the expression of revelation's material content, the form of which is expressed in theological aesthetics. "For God's revelation is not an object to be looked at: it is his action in and upon the world."[53] Revelation itself is dramatic, not merely aesthetic, as is its theological exploration, which must take into account the dramatic tensions inherent in revelation.[54] Von Balthasar insists on the living, dramatic characteristic of the God-man relationship, as expressed in the dynamism of Christ-the-measure's relation to the Father as Son and to the world as man.

> The Son of God did not become man solely to represent and to be the definitive analogy between God and the creature in general terms. His mission was more concrete than that: he took on the form of the concrete analogy between the God of wrath and grace and between the creature both condemned and redeemed.[55]

The dramatic activity of redemption, then, is encompassed by Christ's analogical character and, as will be shown, by the

[51] Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama,* vol. 1: *Prolegomena,* trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1988), 15-16. Hereafter ID 1.

[52] Ibid., 112.

[53] Ibid., 15.

[54] Ibid., 125-28.

[55] *TKB,* 376.

dramatic realm of the inner-Trinitarian relationships.[56] Now analogy takes on a deeper significance: it is the relation between the dramatic action within the Godhead and the drama of man on earth (hence the constant references to the "world theater").[57] Nor is the relation simply static, removed from the dramatic content of its two poles; rather, analogy itself takes on a dynamic character that becomes salvific.

Since it is founded on the mystery of Christ's relations to the Father and to the world, while dependent on God the director who "cannot be defined," the "distinctively µramatic quality of theo-drama" cannot be defined with finality.[58] "Here, basically, theatre is the self-actualizing analogy between creation and redemption; the analogy is discovered and beheld in the full seriousness of truth made manifest but keeps an awareness of the fluidity of meanings."[59] Theology, then, is "full of dramatic tension, both in form and content."[60] A theology of analogy can be expressed dramatically, because it also embodies these tensions and dialectic.[61]

Underlying all theo-drama is the free activity of the characters: "If there is to be Theo-drama, the first presupposition is that, 'beside' or 'within' the absolute, divine freedom, there is some other, nondivine freedom."[62] A second presupposition is that "God has given this *play of freedoms* a central meaning called

[56] I am endebted to Professor Margaret Turek at the University of Dallas for much of what follows concerning the dramatic activity of the inner-Trinitarian relationships.

[57] "The analogy between God's action and the world drama is no mere metaphor but has an ontological ground: the two dramas are not wholly unconnected; there is an inner link between them" (ID 1, 19).

[58] ID 2, 53.

[59] ID 1, 117.

[60] Ibid., 128

[61] This appreciation of "dynamism" and "oscillation" is due in part to Erich Przywara's theory of analogy. James Zeitz comments, "Analogy for Przywara is a way of typifying this relation of opposite tendencies and tensions. Balthasar accepts this view of analogy and therefore when he characterizes Przywara's work, he describes its 'opposite tendencies,' its balance of an 'irrational and unsystematizable element,' with the systematic elements of a philosophical system" Games Zeitz, "Przywara a,nd von Balthasar on Analogy," *The Thomist* 52 [1988]: 477).

[62] ID 2, 62.

Jesus Christ. "[63] Already we can see that Christ as the central form of theological aesthetics is presupposed by theo-drama, and his central meaning as analogy of being incorporates an analogy of freedom as well. Indeed, "the relationship between uncreated and created freedom . . . is the concrete thrust of the *'analogia entis'.*"[64] Thus, *analogia entis* must be made concrete in an analogy of freedom, just as Christ concretizes analogy by his salvific activity.

The positing of freedom in Christ, however, immediately returns us to the realm of Trinitarian theology, just as the positing of measure in Christ took us back to Trinitarian questions of otherness and unity. Von Balthasar asserts that the form of Christ "points to the source of all true freedom: the Son's readiness to perform the Father's will."[65] By looking at the form of Christ's freedom, the Christian sees the fundamental dramatic "attitude" that his own finite freedom must take: obedience to the Father.[66] Thus, the analogy revealed in Christ takes on a Trinitarian, obedient character; as we will see, it has moral as well as metaphysical importance.[67]

Let us now examine the "two pillars of freedom"[68] (viz., created and divine) encompassed by the form of Christ and examine them theo-dramatically. The theological aesthetics has already shown some metaphysical aspects of the Persons within the Trinity, namely, the Father as ground and the Son as image.[69] This "static" conception can now be extended by a dramatic description. First, the foundation for metaphysical otherness ("dissimilarity") will be examined through the revelation of

[63] Ibid., 63.

[64] Ibid., 123.

[65] Ibid., 86. See also his commentary on Maximus the Confessor in the *Theo-Drama:* "the entire theo-drarna has its center in the two wills of Christ, the infinite, divine will and the finite, human will" (ibid., 201). This point emphasizes the central role of freedom in theo-drama.

[66] Ibid., 87. See also ibid., 85.

[67] Von Balthasar quotes Erich Przywara: "The natural relationship between creature and Creator [appears] in the supernatural trinitarian One" (Erich Przywara, "Reichweite," *Scholastik* [1940]: 339f.; quoted in *1BK,* 328).

[68] ID 2, 207-13.

[69] *GL* 1, 611.

Christ, especially that of the Cross; next, the basis for unity ("similarity") will be explored. Finally, the implications for Christian life that follow from von Balthasar's concept of analogy will be explored.

For man to have true freedom, he must be allotted a "space" in which he can exercise that freedom, an "area" that will allow him to be himself, that is, "other" than his fellow creatures and also "other" than God. But this distance from God cannot become a dualism, or else man could not receive or comprehend God's revelation. [70] In addition, any distance from God with no mediating unity would be impossible in light of the Christian revelation of Christ as the central point of union between God and man, in whom all things were created. How can finite freedom exist vis-a-vis infinite freedom? More to the point for our explorations, what provides the ultimate foundation for a distance between Creator and creature that can still be overcome in unity?

The answer must be found in Christ, as the central form of creation. Indeed, von Balthasar finds the creature's basic meaning in the Son's relationship to the Father: as the Son is "Other" to the Father, so the creature is (analogously) "other" to the Creator. Naming the Son as the basis of all separation does not identify the Son with any innerworldly separation but rather maintains him as both the presupposition and the surpassing of all otherness. Thus, worldly separation is analogously, not univocally, equivalent to the Son's separation from the Father. [71] Only in the Trinitarian "area that has been made available" by the Other-ness of the Son to the Father can the "whole intramundane drama" be found: "in and through the 'dia-logos' between the Father and the incarnate Son in the unity of the Spirit, the world-which is created free-is allotted its space where the Son is (for he is its prototype, fashioner, and goal: Col 1:14-16). "[72]

How can the mystery of the inner-Trinitarian relations be approached? Again, Christ's revelation provides the way. The

[70] TD 2, 119.

[71] Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama,* vol. 4: *The Action,* trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1994), 325. Hereafter *TD* 4.

[72] Ibid., 87-88.

person of Christ provides accessibility to the Trinity, because the "theological persons cannot be defined in isolation from their dramatic action,"[73] especially the final revelation of the Cross as showing forth the kenotic love of the Trinitarian Persons. Reflecting on the paschal mystery, von Balthasar observes, "The decisive revelation of the mystery of the Trinity is not . . . something which precedes the *Mysterium Paschale* itself."[74]

The revelation of the Cross first of all testifies to the mystery of the divine "Other in the Not-Other, "[75] for "it is only from the Cross and in the context of the Son's foresakenness that the latter's distance from the Father is fully revealed."[76] The cry of abandonment on the cross and the Son's mission to the dead on Holy Saturday point to the distance between the Father and Son that underlies the abandonment, a distance that Christ honors by his kenotic obedience to the Father, emptying himself to do the Father's will in all things.

This distance is established by the Father's "initial 'kenosis'" within the Trinity, by which he empties himself of his divinity and hands it over to the Son. The term "kenosis" is not meant to be interpreted in a patripassianist sense, but as dramatic dynamism: The Father *"is* this movement of self-giving that holds nothing back..*m* In the freedom of his love, he establishes the Son as Other, who in turn receives the divinity of the Father and responds with his filial kenosis, returning his entire self to the Father. This mutual recognition of an-Other, establishing a "distance" between Father and Son, grounds all other possibilities of otherness, induding, as we will see, the otherness of sin.

[73] ID 3, 508.

[74] Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Mysterium Paschale* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1990), 212.

[75] ID 2, 194; ID 4, 319, 324. Von Bathasar borrows the term "Not-Other" from Nicholas of Cusa.

[76] ID4, 320.

[77] Ibid., 323. Of course, the "initial" character of the Father's kenosis is not to be understood in a temporal fashion; rather, it signifiesthe character of the Father as origin and ground. On the question of the "pain of God" (understood analogously) and God's immutability, see G. F. O'Hanlon, S.J., *The Immutability of God in the Theology of Hans Urs von Balthasar* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), esp. 69-73, 76-78, 114.

The divine act that brings forth the Son, that is, the second way of participating in (and of *being)* the identical Godhead, involves the positing of an absolute, infinite "distance" that can contain and embrace all other distances that are possible within the world of finitude, including the distance of sin.[78]

The original kenosis of the Father and the kenosis of the Son (imaging the Father) point to the reality of God as love.[79] God's immanent being is "constituted" by his eternal self-giving, which pours itself out economically in the world's creation and redemption.[80] This self-giving presupposes the real separation between Father and Son, for the Father really gives himself to an-Other Person, who is established in his own dignity, and the Son responds by an imaging kenosis.[81] This means that the union of love between Father and Son relies on the interpersonal distance, in that love presupposes an Other. Distance, then, is not opposed to love but a necessary facet of it.[82] Love bridges the distance without closing the gap, and this love is the third person of the Godhead.

[78] ID 4, 323. This passage points to von Balthasar's thought that the inner-Trinitarian distance is greater than that between Creator and creature. While exploring this question would fall outside the limits of this paper, it certainly points to the seriousness with which von Balthasar takes the Lateran dictum of "ever-greater dissimilarity," for even the separation between God and man must be surpassed by its Trinitarian archetype. A greater distance between God and creature would be susceptible to Barth's objection that no formal structure should be set above God (cf. *TKB,* 162), for such a construct would imply that God is subsumed by a greater metaphysical principle (the Creator/creature distance), instead of encompassing all distances within himself. Cf. ID 3, 530.

[79] Cf. von Balthasar's development of the promise of being-as-love (fulfilled in God) within the framework of the child recognizing love in his mother's smile, in *GL 5,* 615-19 (and other works as well).

[80] ID 4, 323. On the archetypal role of Trinitarian self-giving and self-being, Bieler comments: "[Being] is more proximately the likeness of the triune God, in that it reflects the unity of the self-being *(completum et simplex)* and self-giving *(sed non subsistens)* of the three Persons, as this is carried out in the sending of Jesus" (Martin Bieler, "Meta-anthropology and Christology: On the Philosophy of Hans Urs von Balthasar," trans. Thomas Caldwell, S.J., *Communio* 20 [1993], 140).

[81] ID4, 331.

[82] "The hypostatic modes of being constitute the greatest imaginable opposition one to another (and thus no one of them can overtake any other), in order that they can mutually interpenetrate in the most intimate manner conceivable" (ID 2, 258), Here, von Balthasar indicates a (nontemporal) priority to Otherness, but only for the purpose of unitive love.

Proceeding from both, as their subsistent "We," there breathes the "Spirit" who is common to both: as the essence of love, he maintains the infinite difference between them, seals it and, since he is the one Spirit of them both, bridges it.[83]

The "We" is more than unity: it is the identity of the kenosis of the Father and the reception of his self-gift by the Son, a gift which both perpetuates and unites the distance between Father and Son. "Thus, within the distinction, the gift is not only the presupposition of an unsurpassable love: it is also the realized union of this love."[84] The "We" of the Trinity is not exclusively a statement of the unitive aspect of the Trinity but mysteriously encompasses both Other-ness and Not-Other-ness.[85] By analogy, the unitive activity of the Spirit is necessary for the Christian life, because the unity of the Spirit grounds the "similarity" of analogy. Only through this similarity to God can man have any understanding of revelation and any participation in the divine, Trinitarian life.[86]

As loving kenosis, God is powerlessness and poverty, while simultaneously power and the fullness of Being without limit. These characteristics not only constitute but also ground God's economic activity: "This primal kenosis makes possible all other kenotic movements of God into the world," namely, creation, covenant, and Incarnation.[87] But if the source of Being and his activity is so characterized, then created being must share an;ilogously in these traits: "God-given Being is both fullness and poverty at the same time."[88] Thus, a tension or oscillation between poverty and fullness is established in the source of Being, a tension imaged in finite being. This opens up the (kenotic) "positive aspect" of analogy.

[83] ID4, 324.

[84] Ibid., 326.

[85] "[Ibe Holy Spirit) is, as it were, their 'We,' which is more than the sum of their 'I' and 'Thou'" (ID 3, 511).

[86] "This unity of the Spirit is indispensable if the world is to be given an inner participation in God's sphere" (ID 2, 121).

[87] ID 4, 331.

[88] *GL* 5, 626.

> Here, through the greater dissimilarity of the finite and the infinite existent, the positive aspect of the *analogia entis* appears, which makes of the finite the shadow, trace, likeness, and image of the Infinite ... in such a way that the finite, since it is subject, already constitutes itself as such through the letting-be of Being by virtue of an *ekstasis* out of its own closed self, and therefore through dispossession and poverty becomes capable of salvaging in recognition and affirmation the infinite poverty of the fullness of Being and, within it, that of the God who does not hold on to Himself.[89]

Such an oscillation between poverty and fullness, in the kenosis of the source of being, opens a space for the dynamic freedom of the creature. This dynamism can only be grounded in "absolute freedom which sanctifies the oscillation as such."[90] Once again, we see that the analogy of being, now enriched to include a sense of oscillation between poles, encompasses an analogy of freedom.

The question concerning the possibility of a finite freedom vis-a-vis infinite freedom can now be answered. Within the Trinity "otherness" is not a privation but the possibility for kenotic, loving union: "the 'not' ('the Son is *not* the Father', and so forth) possesses an infinitely positive sense."[91] From this positive character, the creature's freedom as "not God" is dependent in the Son's freedom as "not the Father," and just as the latter's freedom is not absorbed by the Father, so the creature's freedom remains ontologically stable, as the pre-condition for kenotic union.

Is the creature's "not" the same as the Son's "not"? Such a univocity would paradoxically destroy the otherness between God and creature at the very moment that it was asserted! At this point, the analogy of being must be invoked, and von Balthasar does so, explicitly linking the analogy of being (incorporating an analogy of freedom) and Trinitarian theology.

> The "not" which characterizes the creature-it is "not" God and cannot exist of itself-is by no means identical with the "not" found within the Godhead. However, the latter constitutes the deepest reason why the creaturely "not" does not cause the analogy of being between creature and God to break down.

[89] Ibid., 627.

[90] Ibid., 630.

[91] TD 2, 261.

The infinite distance between the world and God is grounded in the other, prototypical distance between God and God.[92]

The hypostatic (inner-Trinitarian) distance not only makes the creaturely distance possible; it also makes the latter good. If the ground of the creature's distinction from God is found in God himself, then how can creaturely otherness be anything but good?[93] In biblical terms, man is created "in God's image" as "the created mirroring of uncreated freedom."[94]

The kenotic outpouring of being in God's creative act, then, establishes the creature in an analogous relationship to his Creator. The analogy between God and man provides the latter, as the image of God, with access to the unlimited Being of God. At this point, von Balthasar calls upon Thomas's "real distinction" between *esse* and *essentia* as the philosophical explanation of the *je-mehr* of God towards the world: as a particular entity, the creature cannot grasp the unlimited fullness of Being, but he does have an analogous approach to it.[95] This approach opens up the dynamic possibilities latent in the real distinction, for man is called to move closer to the source of real being. As Schrijver says, "Viewed in this manner, the notions of *esse (Dasein, etre-la)* and *essentia (Sosein, etre-tel)* evoke the idea of a dynamism."[96]

This approach to Being cannot be initiated by some kind of intellectual will-to-power, which examines Being only to control it. Rather, the space between God and man remains open only to

[92] Ibid., 266.

[93] Ibid., 288. Cf. *GL* l, 339: "nature ... is good in its radical otherness to God."

[94] *TD* 2, 397. Cf. *TKB*, 285: "this decision [to create the world] can only take the form of the analogy of being, which is grounded in God's very 'essence' itself. Created being must be by definition created, dependent, relative, nondivine, but *as* something created it cannot be utterly dissimilar to its Creator."

[95] *TD* 2, 398. Bieler makes explicit the trinitarian roots of von Balthasar's use of the real distinction: "the theological notion of being *(Sein)* which Balthasar is using can be seen only in a philosophy which recognizes the basis of the difference between Being *(Sein)* and that which is *(Seienden)* in the *trinitarian difference*. For it is only the inner-trinitarian difference that can throw light on the possibility of the difference between creator and creature (and thus between being *[Sein]* and that which is *[Seienden])"* (Bieler, "Meta-anthropology and Christology," 135).

[96] Schrijver, *Le merveilleux accord*, 67.

be filled by God's revelation, ultimately in "the divine Son who became man . . . 'the concrete analogia entis.'"[97] The obedient nature of creaturely distance from the *je-mehr* of God can only derive "ultimately from the *divine* Son's readiness to empty himself in service and obedience to his Father," [98] and so can be fulfilled only in an imaging of the Son's obedience. [99]

> Thus the distinctions as such are obediently at the disposal of God's revelation. And they are so in so far as the highest distinction (between God and the Being of the existent) is only the oscillation between the giver and the gift, whereby gift signifies the being given (and being received) of the giver. [100]

Thus, analogy implies a certain attitude on the part of the creaturely pole of the relationship, a kenotic response to the original kenosis of the Creator. The creation of finite freedom vis-a-vis infinite freedom implies a "risk" on God's part (grounded in the Father's "risk" in begetting an-Other infinite freedom in the Person of the Son)[101] that finite freedom will rebel against its ground. [102] Indeed, the Fall is precisely this rebellion. What meaning does the analogy of being have within the concrete situation of man as fallen and redeemed?

IV. LIFE IN CHRIST: ANALOGY

Von Balthasar says that man's sin signifies ontologically the denial of man's "character as analogy and image, a character that arises necessarily from its position within the trinitarian

[97] ID 2, 267.

[98] *TBK,* 287.

[99] Cf. Schrijver, *Le meroeilleuxaccord,* 57: "The central preoccupation which dominates all of his thought situates itself on the existential plane where the analogy of proportionality … develops itself in a mystique of obedience (correspondence, *Entsprechung).*"

[100] *GL* 5, 631. The language of "oscillation" again evokes Przywara. In this context, the hypostatic union is the concrete manifestation of the God-man oscillation, a key theme of Przywara's thought. Von Balthasar often treats the "oscillation" of the Son as "eucharistic," that is, as embodying the Son's simultaneous receiving and giving back of being in thanksgiving. Cf. ID 2, 268.

[101] ID 4, 328.

[102] See ID 2, 260-84.

relations." [103] This concept should be clear from what we have developed already, namely, that the space of creaturely freedom is founded on distance from the Other, analogous to the Trinitarian distance; man, as the image of the Son in Christ, lives in a tension analogous to that of the hypostatic union. [104] The polarities operating within human nature between matter and spirit, microcosm and macrocosm, man and woman, individual and community, all point man beyond himself to find fulfillment in God, [105] a motion that highlights the fundamental tension in being between fullness and poverty. When not distorted by sin, this polarity becomes an analogy of the inner-Trinitarian relations (as was shown above). But, as von Balthasar's explication of Pascal shows, polarity can become a paradox between *grandeur* and *misere* that fixates on one pole of the analogy and thereby leaves man homeless, oscillating between delusions to grandeur and disordered despair. [106]

Such a paradoxical situation arises as a result of sin, which is possible only within the space of human freedom analogous to the inner-Trinitarian distance.

> We must remember that the creature's No, its wanting to be autonomous without acknowledging its origin, must be located within the Son's all-embracing Yes to the Father, in the Spirit; it is the refusal to participate in the autonomy with which the Son is endowed. This negation, however, is restriction. [107]

Sin is a blindness to the proper relation between God and man, expressed in the analogy of being, a relation that provides for both similarity and dissimilarity. Sin tends to cling to one pole or

[103] ID 4, 328-29.

[104] Dissimilarity still predominates in this analogy: "Every sign of similarity is always canceled by a contrary sign of dissimilarity. In fact, this arises from the very nature of the creature: 'No living thing is one/Always it's the many'" (ID 3, 525).

[105] ID 2, 346-94. Of course, I do not mean to imply (nor does von Balthasar) that "matter" and "spirit" are analogous to the human and the divine natures in Christ respectively.

[106] Ibid., 359, 400. Cf. *GL* 3, 188-205, von Balthasar's analysis of Pascal.

[107] ID 4, 329.

the other, initiating a slide "hither and thither between nothingness and infinity." [108] Analogy becomes instability.

The only way, according to von Balthasar, to gain "a new foothold, as it were, a concrete system of coordinates" [109] in this unstable situation is to ding to Christ as the proof "that existence in this tension is livable, in fact, that is the solution." [110] Jesus Christ, as the God-man, encompasses the tension in man by standing "on both sides of the analogy," so much so *"that the analogy goes right through the center of his consciousness.* "[111] The incarnate Son returns the analogy to its source within the Godhead by redeeming sinful man, and so becomes the concrete form of Christian life, to be followed and imitated. The tensions within man are not diminished but heightened [112] as a function of maintaining the "ever-greater dissimilarity" of the analogy. [113]

Does redemption occur by Christ simply encompassing the analogy of being in himself and thereby redeeming it? Yes, but his redemptive activity does still more: it encompasses not merely the metaphysical structure of the God-creature relationship but also the "historical" [114] situation of the God-sinner relationship.

The concrete analogy of Christ takes the form of the Cross and Resurrection. It is a "death in obedience to the Father" that takes up the foresakenness of the sinner in the foresaking of Jesus by the Father. [115] The Paschal mystery, then, is the most complete expression of the Christological movement of the Son. In theo-

ws ID 2, 406. Cf. Walker Percy's description of "the lost self": "With the passing of the cosmological myths and the fading of Christianity as a guarantor of the identity of the self, the self becomes dislocated … is both cut loose and imprisoned by its own freedom … so that in the end the self becomes a space-bound ghost" (Walker Percy, *Lost in the Cosmos* [New York: Washington Square Press, 1983], 16-17). Percy asserts that the two poles of man's existence in a post-Christian/non-religious age become worldly "transcendence" and "immanence," with the result that man oscillates between "orbiting" the world in moments of superior intellectual or artistic transcendence, and undergoing painful "reentry" into the immanent world-in other words, living an unresolved paradox (ibid., 113-58).

[109] ID 2, 406.

[110] Ibid.

[111] Ibid., 407.

[112] Ibid., 411.

[113] See ibid., 416.

[114] *TKB,* 368.

[115] ID 4, 501.

dramatic terms, the kenosis of the Son vis-a-vis the Father entails the realization of the Son's infinite freedom in a "Eucharistic" movement, because his freedom is fully expressed in his giving of self to the Father and to the world in the Incarnation, which the Eucharist expresses in a perpetual sacramental form.[116]

The Christian is called to an *imitatio Christi,* by taking on the Eucharistic form of Christ. Yet the Christian must always keep in mind that this form is Christ's, not one's own to dispose of in any way. *"In tanta similitudine major dissimilitudo.* The contrast cuts across the similarity in such a way that the more the similarity comes to the fore, the more profoundly does the contrast stamp itself on the follower of Christ."[117] The life of Christian imitation is a life of living out the analogy between God and man (which is expressed most perfectly in Christ), paradoxically consisting in imitation (the element of similarity) while realizing the inimitability of the form (the ever-greater dissimilarity).[118] As we saw in the section on theological aesthetics, this consists in "attunement" to the form of Christ; now we can understand the dramatic element of attuning one's freedom to the kenotic obedience of the Son. Such self-giving can only arise from the gift of grace, which provides not the mere outward appearance of holiness (as in the Lutheran conception of forensic justification) but rather a unity of external and internal form: sanctity is a true participation in Christ's hypostatic union that ontologically transforms the receptive believer into the form of Christ, the concrete analogy.[119] "May we come to share in the divinity of Christ," as the Church prays in the Mass.[120] The analogy of being becomes more than a philosophical datum; it becomes a call, a striving for the *je-mehr* who is God-a way of life that becomes concretely, paradoxically possible through grace.

[116] Cf. *TD* 3, S27-28.

[117] Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Explorations in Theology,* vol. 2: *Spouse of the Word,* trans. A. V. Littledale with Alexander Dru (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1991), 124. Hereafter *ET.*

[118] Cf. *TD* l, 89-112, 136-39 on the (Theo)drarnatic theory of imitation.

[119] *ET2,* 99.

[120] "Throughout the history of Christology, the purpose and meaning of the Incarnation of the Logos has been portrayed as the transcendent, inner elevation of the image: it is lifted up into the primal, divine Image; or the latter is implanted into the former" *(TD* 3, 223).

The life of the Christian as participating in the analogy who is Christ points to the mission of the Christian, a philo-sopher in the sense of a contemplative lover-of-wisdom. [121] The believer has an understanding of being that, because of the "real distinction," emphasizes the contingency of created being while pointing to the absolute love that creates. [122] The Christian must make God's love visible by loving his neighbor.

> His faith teaches him to see within the most seemingly unimportant interpersonal relation the making present and the "sacrament" of the eternal I-Thou relation which is the ground of the free Creation and again the reason why God the Father yields His Son to the death of darkness for the salvation of every Thou. [123]

Thus, each relationship becomes the opportunity for making concrete the divine pole of the analogy of being (the internal Trinitarian relations): Christian charity takes the form of sacramentalizing being through participation by grace in the divine nature, taking up all human relations (by analogy!) into the inner-Trinitarian relations. The Christian is called to be the living analogy and expression of God. As Schrijver says, "In offering himself in obedience ... the Christian becomes the means of expression and the language which God uses to proclaim his kenosis of love." [124]

The Christian expression of analogy is imaged in the activity of the lover of wisdom, who must live the analogy of truth.

> Thus, just as one can grasp finite Being only in the tension between essence and existence ... so the truth too ... will always be held in a tension in which the essential and the existential truth are the poles that demand one another and explain one another. [125]

[121] This topic is discussed in several places by von Balthasar. Cf. "On the Tasks of Catholic Philosophy in Our Time," trans. Brian McNeil, C.R.V., *Communio* 20 (1993): 147-87; *TKB,* 199-219, 267-325, 391-96; the bulk of *GL* 4 and 5.

[122] *GL* 5, 646.

[w] Ibid., 649.

[124] Schrijver, *Le merveilleux accord,* 72.

[125] Von Balthasar, "On the Tasks," 185.

In other words, Christian reflection on Being must incorporate the poles of the analogy of truth, just as Christian living must not fasten onto one pole or the other but incorporate both, in imitation of Christ. This entails "a new integration in which Christians must lead the way, [the] integration of the service of the world into the all-embracing openness of man to Being."[126] Metaphysics, in other words, must work to integrate knowledge of being with living in accord with the font of Being.

The metaphysics of the real distinction is essential to this endeavor, in that only the gap between the poverty of being in the creature and its fullness in God can point to the necessity of God as the world's absolute ground.[127] Ultimately, man's desire to understand being and thus to philosophize can only be satisfied within the humble perspective of a creature, who recognizes the distance and similarity between man and God imaging the Trinitarian relations. This perspective leads man to the heart of the mystery: "The trinitarian interpretation of human existence, the cosmos, and world-history ... provides man's intellect and will to love with a progressive satisfaction of the most exalted kind which derives from the very heart of the ever-greater mystery of Being."[128]

V. CONCLUSION

Von Balthasar, exploring the Pauline theme of being *en Christoi* in *Theo-Drama* 3, observes that this state is an "event achieved by Christ" that demands a Christian response.[129] A positive response to grace brings the Christian into the sphere of Christ's activity, so that Christ becomes not only goal of life but the archetype as well.[130] This sharing in Christ's mission occurs in the Church, as Christ's body, which points to the role that ecclesiology plays in our discussion of analogy: the Church is the

[126] *GL* 5, 654.
[127] Ibid.
[128] *GL* 1, 507.
[129] ID 3, 246.
[130] Ibid., 248.

"space" in which the Christian can actively share m Christ's personal mission.

This participation is described as the fulfillment of image in likeness.

> The *"imago"* has been created for the sake of the *"similitudo,"* not in order to develop toward it by its own self-perfection or through a dialectical process, but to serve as a place where the divine Archetype *[Urbild]* can be implanted. [131]

The image, as it moves closer to the divine pole, becomes more similar to it, while the ever-greater dissimilarity insures that man does not grasp at divinity but rather empties himself to allow the primal form of Christ to fill the space of the difference between man and God. In this process, man becomes a man of the Church, analogously "Eucharistic" in that "he can be shared out with Christ as nourishment for the Mystical Body." [132]

We have now come full circle. Von Balthasar, by firmly basing the *analogia entis* in Christology and Trinitarian theology, has kept his metaphysics from becoming a static structure that encompasses and shackles God. Rather, analogy is a vibrant principle that expresses the relation of creature and Creator, based solely in the Creator's triune life. Even more, analogy is a call to the Christian to fulfill his image in an ever-increasing similarity to God, "more clearly manifest[ing] this relation." [133] Analogy points us to the truth that "created man ... is given his true purpose in the divine, triune life." [134]

Obviously, such a rich development of *analogia entis-from* the Fourth Lateran Council's definition to man's end in the Trinitarian life-is not found explicitly in Thomas, nor does von Balthasar intend to imply that it is. The exact points of convergence and divergence between the two thinkers cannot be detailed here. The present essay is less ambitious in scope, intending only to show what von Balthasar thought about the question of the analogy of being. This much can be said, however:

[131] Ibid., 527.
[132] Ibid., 527-28.
[133] Ibid., 525.
[134] Ibid., 528.

the question was of fundamental importance for both thinkers, and it remains a point of possible dialogue between the students of both.

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ON THE FUNCTIONS OF SEXUAL ACTIVITY

JOHN R. T. LAMONT

The Queen's College
Oxford, England

"WHY HAVE SEX?" is not a question that people ask themselves very often. Less rarely, but still not very often, they may ask themselves "What is sex for?" These questions are worth asking, however, if only in an academic context, because the answers to them will give answers to central concerns of sexual ethics.

Moral theologians used to have a clear answer to the second question. They agreed that human sexual activity has two functions or purposes: the unitive function and the generative function. The generative function consists simply in the fact that sexual intercourse is the means by which new humans are brought into being, and the human race is carried on. The unitive function derives from the fact that sexual intercourse is a means of expressing and promoting love between sexual partners. Furthermore, the theologians agreed that the generative function was the primary one, and that it took precedence over the unitive one.

Where they began to have difficulties was over the question of what can be a good reason for having sex. The Augustinian view that procreation is the only good reason, and that all other reasons, including the expression of love, make the at least venially sinful, lost support in the twentieth century, but was not replaced by any other view of equivalent coherence. Confusion over the answer to this question has now been extended to the question of the functions of intercourse. Most Catholic moralists now reject the view that the procreative function of intercourse is the primary one, but they do not offer a satisfactory account of

the relations between these functions. In this paper I will argue that the generative function of intercourse is primary in a certain respect, and I will maintain that an understanding of this primacy can help us to answer the question of when we can have a good reason for having sex.

I

The most important thing to remember, in any argument about the primacy of anything, is that "primary" is an incomplete expression. It is like "more." The question "Which is more, Smith or Jones?" cannot be answered, unless one is given an indication of what property "more" is supposed to refer to.

Similarly, "primary" by itself is an incomplete expression. "Being primary" is not a property that can exist on its own. Just as "being more" is relative to some particular property, so "being primary" is relative to some particular ordering.[1] If we are to argue about which of the purposes of sexual intercourse is primary, then, we must begin by stating what ordering we are applying to them. There are various types of ordering that might be considered. One way of ordering the ends of sexual intercourse would be in order of importance. But "important" itself can be understood in different ways, and it is better to include these different ways in a list of more specific descriptions, such as (1) what depends on what; (2) what should be done first; (3) what should be chosen over what; (4) what is better than what, that is, what will result in a greater good.

The relationships between these kinds of orderings are complicated. For instance, if it is true that opening a door depends on lifting its latch, we can say that we ought to lift the latch before we try to open the door. But if diving for pearls depends on being able to hold one's breath for a long time, that does not imply that before diving for pearls we should hold our

[1] Aquinas points this out in discussing the order of priorities in charity. "Dicendum quod, sicut Philosophus dicit, in *Meta., [Metaphysics* V, 2 (1018b9)] prius et posterius dicitur secundum relationem ad aliquod principium. Ordo autem includit in se aliquem modum prioris et posterioris. Unde oportet quod ubicumque est aliquod principium, sit etiam aliquis ordo" *(STh* II-II, q. 26, a. 1 [Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1956], 188-89).

breaths for a long time, nor does it imply that holding our breaths for a long time is a better thing than diving for pearls.

The ordering that I will apply to the ends of intercourse is the ordering of "what depends on what." I maintain that the reproductive good of intercourse comes before the unitive good, in the sense that the unitive good depends on the reproductive good. The unitive good depends on the reproductive good because it is the reproductive aspect of sexual intercourse that makes intercourse a unitiye act.

Unitive acts are those which express and promote love between persons. If we are to describe what makes sexual intercourse unitive (when it is), we must be able to show how it expresses and promotes love. To love someone is to will his good, and to act towards someone in a loving way is intentionally to do him good; the more good one intentionally does someone, the more one expresses one's love for him-the more one loves him.

If unitive acts are acts that express and promote love between persons, and to love someone is to will his good, then unitive acts must be acts which somehow do good to the person loved. An act that does not benefit a person in any way cannot be an expression of love, and thus cannot be unitive. Suppose you come across a man dying of thirst in the desert. If you give him water, and thus save his life, you will have benefitted him greatly. Giving him water is thus an important unitive act (provided that the object of your action is to give him water, and your intention is to save his life; "object" and "intention" will be explained below). If on the other hand you do not give him any water, but instead give him a bus ticket that is past its expiry date, you will not have done a unitive act.[2] An expired bus ticket is perfectly useless to a man dying of thirst in the desert. Because it does him no good in any way, and is known to do him no good, giving it to him cannot be an expression of love, and cannot be an unitive act.

There are various ways of contributing to the good of a person you love. You can do him good directly, as in the case of giving water to the man dying of thirst. You can enable him to achieve

[2] This of course assumes that your object is to give him the bus ticket, and that you know that the bus ticket is useless to him-you do not have any beliefs about the magical powers of expired bus tickets, or anything like that.

some good, by teaching him some skill, for instance, or by removing an obstacle to his achieving a good. You can promise to do good, as bride and groom do in the marriage service. You can do something that represents or symbolizes a further good that you have brought about, or intend to bring about. You can cooperate with the person you love in the achievement of some good.

Now, it is agreed that sexual intercourse between married people is (or can be) an unitive act. (I prescind from the question of whether intercourse between unmarried people can be unitive.) If it is a unitive act, this must be because the partners, in doing the act, bestow upon each other some important good. This raises the question: what is the good bestowed that makes sexual intercourse an unitive act? I maintain that (A) the generative function of intercourse can enable it to be unitive, and (B) only the generative function of intercourse can enable it to be unitive.

These two statements together entail that it is the generative function of intercourse that makes it unitive, and thus that the unitive aspect of intercourse depends on the generative aspect. I undertake to establish both (A) and (B) by giving arguments for them, and rebutting objections against them.

II

In order adequately to discuss reproductive acts and the purposes they serve, it is necessary to have a right conception of the nature of human acts in general, and to clarify what is meant by "purpose."

Moral theologians have traditionally held that human acts are specified by their objects. I accept this position, which is central for any consideration of the nature and goodness of sexual activity (and of any other kind of activity). Yet it is necessary to explain and justify this position, which has been the subject of debate and misrepresentation among moral theologians.

An exposition of the position that acts are specified by their objects should start from the fact that a voluntary human act that is amenable to moral evaluation is the willed bringing about of some reality, whether that reality be a thing, an or a state

of affairs. The reality that is brought about by the act can be considered on its own, and as such is susceptible of many descriptions. A well-known illustration of this fact is the action of pumping water from a pump. This falls under the descriptions "pumping water," "moving a handle up and down," "making a squeaky noise," "giving yourself blisters"; these all truly describe it. But not all the descriptions that the reality brought about by an act falls under are ones that the agent intends to bring about. Suppose my car breaks down and I have to walk thirty kilometers to the nearest gas station. In walking to the gas station, I wear out my shoes. I can be truly described as wearing out my shoes, just as truly as I can be described as walking to the gas station, but wearing out my shoes is not something that I choose to bring about. The object of an action is the description that the agent chooses to bring about. This description can be called the formal description of the reality brought about by an act, and the descriptions of what the agent does that do not describe what the agent chooses to bring about can be called the material descriptions of that reality.

Theologians have traditionally distinguished between the formal object and the material object of acts of knowledge. [3] There is an analogy between this traditional distinction and my distinction between formal and material objects of acts of the will, because we can distinguish between the formal character of the reality brought about by an act of the will and the reality considered in itself, just as we can between the formal character

[3] A good account of this traditional meaning is given by Fr. Romanus Cessario:

> In order to see how specification by object works, consider the experience of seeing a red apple .... A material object designates the term of an action; it signifies the specifying reality, the thing, from the point of view of its givenness or facticity. In our example, the apple itself. Formal objects, on the other hand, denote the psychological and formal interest that engages the action with the material object. In the example of sense perception, we identify some aspect or aspects of a thing as a formal object when it specifies the formal character (such as colour) that allows the thing to be known (in this example, as visible). In our example, the apple precisely as red. (Romanus Cessario, O.P., *Christian Faith and the Theological Life* [Washington, D.C.:· The Catholic University of America Press, 1996], 53)

of an object known and the object considered in itself. But there is also a disanalogy, because we cannot draw any such distinction when it comes to the act itself, as opposed to the reality that the act brings into being. Such an act just is the realizing of the formal description, the description that the agent chooses to bring about. There is thus no such thing as the act in itself, independent of the formal description. The material descriptions of the reality brought about by an act are coextensive with the formal description-that is, exactly the same state of affairs falls under them-but they do not identify the act, or any act, since the agent does not will and choose to bring them about, and acts are what are willed and chosen. Acts have to do with intention and choice; one's action is what one intends and chooses to do. Another way of putting this is by saying that willing and choosing to do an act are propositional attitudes.

A consequence of this is that it is wrong to assert (as moral theologians traditionally have asserted) that the material descriptions of what is brought about by an act are indirectly intended by the agent. The material descriptions are not indirectly intended by the agent, because they are not intended at all. Some of the material descriptions will be known to the agent, and some will not. Of the material descriptions that are known, some will please the agent or be approved of by him, some will displease him or be disapproved of, and some will leave him indifferent. A stoker shoveling coal into a steam locomotive, or a mailman delivering the mail, will also be taking exercise. He can enjoy taking exercise, and approve of it as being good for his health, without having the intention of taking exercise; he can simply intend to do his job in order to be paid for it. The fact that an agent is pleased by a material description or approves of it does not mean that he chooses it.

Having given an account of what is meant by the object of an act, we can clarify what the intention of an action is. Voluntary acts are always done for a reason. A reason for doing an act, that gives the answer to the question "Why did you do this?," consists in some good that the agent believes will be obtained by doing the act. All acts are done for the sake of some good; this does not mean that all acts are entirely good, or are believed by those who

do them to be entirely good-only that they must be believed to be good in some respect by those who do them. The reason that an agent has for doing an act has traditionally been called the "intention" of the act. This terminology is somewhat unfortunate, since we speak of the object of an act as being intended, or as being done intentionally. The intention of an act is not the object of the act, but the feature of the object that motivates the agent to do it. If someone chooses to eat a sandwich, "eating a sandwich" would be the object (whereas "moving one's jaws and swallowing" would only be a material description), and "satisfying hunger" (or perhaps "nourishing one's self") would be the intention.

Intentions can be multiple and varied. The good for the sake of which an object is chosen may be a feature of the object itself, or it may lie in the fact that the object promises to bring about some further state of affairs that is sought as good. Different acts, that have objects of the same kind, can have different intentions. For example, one person may choose to feed the poor out of love for them, while another chooses to feed the poor for the sake of display. As this example illustrates, the intention of an act makes a difference to its moral evaluation.

There is a connection between the position that all acts are done for a reason and the position that acts are specified by their objects. It lies in the fact that the goodness of an act, which provides the reason for doing it, is attached to a particular description of what it is that an agent does. "Eating a ham sandwich" is a description of an act that can motivate one to do it, because eating a ham sandwich is a tasty and hunger-satisfying sort of thing to do. "Chewing and swallowing," on the other hand, is not in itself sufficient to motivate one to act, because there need not be anything good about chewing and swallowing (think of, e.g., chewing and swallowing pencil erasers). Since an act is always done for the sake of some good that is a feature of it, and the good is a feature of a particular description of what the agent does, not of just any description of it, the act consists in the realization of that particular description.

Having analyzed the structure of human acts, we are in a better position to understand what is meant by the purpose of sexual

intercourse. "Purpose" can mean the function a thing has by its nature, or it can mean the object or the intention of an act. In the former sense, we can say that the purpose of a razor blade is to shave, or that the purpose of respiration is to provide the body with oxygen; I will use "function" to express this sense of "purpose." When we say that Jane's purpose in working as a lawyer is to earn money, we are using "purpose" in the latter sense.

It is possible for types of acts to have a purpose in the first sense of having a function that belongs to them by nature, and that is independent of the intentions with which they are done. Eating is one such type, and sexual intercourse is another. Sexual intercourse is the sort of act that leads to human reproduction. It is naturally designed to do so; sexual desire, sexual organs, and sexual intercourse all evolved for the purpose of reproduction. If humans reproduced like yeast cells, by budding off new individuals, none of these things would exist. It is the only sort of act that naturally leads to human reproduction. Human reproduction considered in itself is obviously a great good, for it involves bringing into existence new humans, beings with immortal souls who are capable of eternal bliss. Since reproduction is a great good, generative acts-acts whose function is to lead to reproduction-are a good type of act. Human reproduction of course requires a partner; so partners in sexual intercourse are both cooperating in a good type of act, and enabling each other to take part in a good type of act which could not be achieved alone. To do good is to be good-those who intentionally do good actions are themselves better persons. Thus, to participate in generative acts is to confer a good on one's partner (provided that the acts are not evil in some other way). If one's intention in doing the act does not exclude doing good to one's partner, the act will be a unitive act. Since it belongs to the nature of intercourse to be reproductive, and a generative act in itself confers a good on one's partner, it belongs to the nature of intercourse to be unitive; doing good, and expressing love, is a function of intercourse.

A generative act does not have to be an act that actually results in reproduction, as Elizabeth Anscombe points out:

In order to be an intrinsically generative sort of act, an act need not itself be actually generative; any more than an acorn needs to produce an actual oak tree in order to be an acorn. (In fact most acorns never produce oaks, and most copulations produce no offspring.) When we characterize something as an acorn we are looking to a wider context than can be seen in the acorn itself. Acorns come from oaks, and oaks come from acorns; an acorn is thus as such generative (of an oak), whether or not it does generate an oak.... In the same way, we may say that eating is intrinsically nutritive, the eye is as such an organ of sight; consider how we would identify eating or the eye from one species to another. And it is in this sense that copulation is intrinsically generative. [4]

It would be a mistake to maintain that an act must have the intention of reproduction if it is to be an act of a generative sort. To do so would involve confusing the two senses of "purpose." This intention is not required for reproduction actually to take place, and it can be present without reproduction ensuing. Not only do acts of a generative type not have to result in reproduction, they cannot have reproduction as their object, as Anscombe further points out. We can only intend to do what we think we are able to do, and since most acts of intercourse do not result in actual reproduction, we cannot think that we can actually reproduce in having intercourse, any more than we can think that we can win a lottery in buying a lottery ticket. No one who knows that a single act of intercourse is unlikely to produce offspring can decide "I will now reproduce" in choosing to have intercourse. We can only have actual reproduction as an intention in having intercourse-we can intend that intercourse have the result of reproducing.

III

Unitive acts involve doing good to someone. If there is no good other than the good of doing an act of a generative sort involved in intercourse, it is only the generative aspect of intercourse that can enable it to be unitive. I maintain that there is no other such good, and my grounds for doing so are simply that no other good can be identified.

[4] Elizabeth Anscombe, "You Can Have Sex without Children," in *Collected Philosophical Papers*, vol. 3: *Ethics, Religion and Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981), 85. I am greatly indebted to Anscombe's discussion in this paper.

In considering the good that can result from intercourse, one can distinguish between good involved in the object of the act, in the intercourse itself, and good that is brought about by the intercourse but is not a feature of the intercourse itself. Relief of concupiscence is an example. Intercourse itself does not relieve concupiscence, but rather stimulates it (if it is at all satisfactory); so an act of intercourse that is done for the sake of relieving one's partner's concupiscence is not done for the sake of a good present in the object of the action, but is done for the sake of a good that the object is intended to bring about. Having a child is another example; the conception of a child is caused by the act of intercourse, but is not itself the act.

I will leave aside the question of whether intercourse can be unitive that is done for the purpose of conferring a good to the partner that is not present in the intercourse itself, but is a result of the intercourse. It is not relevant to most of the discussion on the subject, which has assumed that it is the intercourse itself that is supposed to be unitive. Nor is it relevant to the vast majority of acts of intercourse, which are done for their own sake and not for the sake of some good that is not a feature of the object of the act.

Considering solely the object of an act of intercourse, then, we can ask ourselves: what features of this act could make it an act that does good to one's partner, aside from its being a generative act? The act could be described as an act of bringing one's partner to orgasm. But having an orgasm isn't something that is good in itself; there is nothing intrinsically good about masturbation. The most likely response to this question is that one does good to one's partner in intercourse by giving him or her pleasure. But contrary to what utilitarians say, pleasure is not something that is good in itself. We can only describe pleasure as a good if it is pleasure in something that is good in itself. Taking pleasure in worshiping God, for example, is good, whereas taking pleasure in tormenting people is evil. The fact that intercourse is pleasurable is not therefore enough to make it good. The pleasure experienced in intercourse can only be good if the intercourse is good in some further way, which has yet to be specified.

One might respond that one benefits one's partner in intercourse by satisfying his or her desires. But the same points

can be made about satisfying desire as about giving pleasure. People only benefit from satisfying their desires if those desires are 'for something good in itself. In selling drugs to a drug addict, I am helping to satisfy his desire, but I am not benefitting him; instead, I am harming him. The fact that nonreproductive intercourse satisfies desire can only be held to be good if we assume that such intercourse is good for independent reasons. It thus cannot be used as evidence for it being good.

These points about the giving of pleasure and the satisfaction of desire can be generalized to apply to many other criteria that have been proposed for evaluating the goodness of sexual acts. For example, the book *Human Sexuality* states that sexual behavior should be "self-liberating," "other-enriching," "socially responsible," "life-serving," "joyous." [5] Obviously such properties cannot exist simply by themselves. Instead, actions are made "self-liberating," "other-enriching," and so on by their bringing about other goods that can be described in more specific terms. Attributions of these properties are like promissory notes, which only have value if it is possible eventually to cash them in. The equivalent of "cashing them in" would be showing that there are concrete goods brought about by actions that make those actions "self-liberating" or "other-enriching."

Although there are many descriptions that can truly be applied to acts of intercourse (e.g., "expending energy," "moving back and forth"), only a limited number of them could be properties that make intercourse good, and thus unitive. All of these descriptions have been considered, and the only one that stands on its own feet is the generative aspect of intercourse. The other aspects (being pleasurable, etc.) are all promissory notes that depend on intercourse being good in some other respect. Since the generative aspect of intercourse is the only feature of interGourse that can make it good without depending on some other" aspect, it is this aspect that makes intercourse a good and unitive act (when it is so).

One might object that, although actual reproduction is a great good, the simple doing of a generative act isn't, since it only

[5] Anthony Kosnik et al., *Human Sexuality: New Directions in American Catholic Thought* (New York: Paulist Press, 1977), 92-95.

rarely leads to actual reproduction. This can be conceded. I would not maintain that the doing of a single generative act is a great good, only that it is a good. This does not mean that a sexual relationship as a whole cannot be a great good, any more than the fact that there is no great good involved in a carpenter's banging in one nail while building a house need imply that the building of a house as a whole is not an important good. There is a difference between the goodness, and thus the unitive nature, of a sexual relationship and that of a single generative act, because a sexual relationship and a single generative act are differently related to the good of reproduction. A single generative act is not very likely to lead to reproduction, but a sexual relationship is very likely to do so, provided that the sexual acts that make up the relationship are ones of a generative sort. Choosing to enter into a sexual relationship can thus be a choice to have children.

It is in fact misleading to concentrate on the goodness or badness of single acts of intercourse, while abstracting from the sexual relationship of which they are a part. This point was made by critics of the encyclical *Humanae vitae*, who felt that Catholic sexual teaching should judge sexual activity by looking at sexual relationships as a whole. In choosing to have a sexual relationship, we can choose to have children, and we can choose to be faithful to one another for our whole lives. But what critics of *Humanae vitae* overlook is that it is the generative nature of the acts that make up a sexual relationship that make it possible for the sexual relationship to do these things. Nongenerative sexual acts can make no contribution to these features of sexual relationships, since they are not unitive.

An important feature of the unitive aspect of intercourse is its capacity to symbolize what is good. It was pointed out above that one can do good to someone by doing an act that symbolizes a further good one bestows on him. Generative acts are natural symbols for reproduction itself, and by extension for a partnership intended for the begetting and raising of children. Marriage is such a partnership, so intercourse between spouses can thus symbolize the entire relationship that exists between them, as well as being a part of it. In virtue of this symbolic feature, spouses can

use intercourse to express their love for one another. [6] Dr. Jack Dominian mentions gratitude, hope, reconciliation, sexual identification, and acceptance as meanings that can be conveyed by sexual intercourse. [7] However, he neglects to consider that it is the generative nature of intercourse that makes it capable of expressing these meanings. If this generative feature is not present, intercourse will not be unitive. It will not be an expression of love, and will not represent the relationship as a whole.

IV

A traditional view of the morality of sex would not allow for the account of the unitive nature of sexual intercourse that is given above. That view asserts that sexual desire as found in fallen humanity is intrinsically evil, and hence that sexual intercourse even between spouses is sinful, although not seriously so, unless it is excused by the intention of reproducing. [8] Given the very

[6] The symbolic nature of marital intercourse is discussed, in a way somewhat different from here, by Cormac Burke, "Marriage and Contraception," in Janet E. Smith, ed., *Why Humanae Vitae Was Right: A Reader* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993). He points out that the symbolic aspect of marital intercourse depends on its generative nature: "Now if one deliberately nullifies the life-orientation of the conjugal act, one destroys its essential power to signify union" (158). He is however mistaken, it seems to me, in holding that this fact implies on its own that contraceptive intercourse is a bad kind of activity. Actions need not symbolize union, or symbolize anything at all, in order to be an expression of love between spouses, so the absence of such symbolism does not mean that there is anything wrong with contraceptive intercourse. In order to see this, it is helpful to recognize an ambiguity in the term "to express." In a narrow sense, "to express" means to do a communicative act of some sort. In a broader sense, it simply means to show, or to make manifest. In this broad sense, I express my embarrassment by blushing, or express my malice towards someone by poisoning . thein, although neither of these. is a communicative act. The fact that contraceptive intercourse is not an expression of love in the narrow sense does not imply that it is not an expression of love in the broader sense.

[7] Jack Dominian, *Prospects for a New Sexual Ethic* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1977), 62-63.

[8] Some believers in this view support it by giving an argument that they claim to find in St. Augustine: (1) sex, in the form it takes in fallen humanity, is what propagates original sin; (2) therefore, sex and sexual desire are bad and shameful in themselves; (3) therefore, all acts of sexual intercourse between married couples are venially sinful, unless redeemed by the intention of actually reproducing.

The first premise of this argument is highly doubtful, and in any case does not imply the second. As an interpretation of St. Augustine, moreover, it is questionable. Augustine claimed

wide acceptance of this view by holy and intelligent people in the past, we need to say something about why it is wrong, and make some attempt to explain why it was accepted.

The analysis of intercourse given above shows what is wrong with the traditional view. Generative acts are a good sort of act, as we have seen, because they have a good function. But a desire to do a good sort of act is itself a good desire, provided that the intention that leads one to desire the act is not a bad one. (There are circumstances under which it would be wrong to act on a desire of a good sort--e.g., when the time, or the place, or the person, is wrong-but that does not affect the goodness of the desire in itself.) Thus sexual desire, when it is a desire to do generative acts, is good in itself, not evil.

The view that sexual desire is evil in itself is a mistake that has had far-ranging and unfortunate consequences. It is important, however, to realize that it is a natural mistake to make; that is why it has been so generally accepted in the past. It is a natural mistake for two reasons.

The first reason is that there is a sense in which the traditional view is true. This view states that although having sex with the intention of reproducing is good, having sex for the sake of pleasure is evil. "Pleasure," in this statement, is ambiguous. To clarify it, we must specify what sort of pleasure it is referring to, by specifying the feature of intercourse that we take pleasure in. One sort of pleasure in intercourse is purely physical pleasure, the pleasure one takes in the body of one's partner and in having an orgasm. Another sort of pleasure is the pleasure one takes in participating in a good activity with one's partner, and in expressing one's love thereby. The former sort of pleasure can be part of the latter pleasure, but it is not the same as the latter; the

that sexual activity between spouses is venially sinful if done for its own sake, and only redeemable through the further intent of procreation, in the course of his debate with the Pelagians. He would hardly use original sin to justify this claim when engaged in polemics with opponents who denied the existence of original sin. Instead of arguing from original sin to the shamefulness of sexual desire and the sinfulness of sexual activity that is not redeemed by the intention of reproducing, he assumed the intrinsic shamefulness of sexual desire and used it to support his argument for original sin. He faced the difficulty of explaining how original sin could be propagated, and used the supposedly evil nature of sex to cover this difficulty. He was able to do so because the shamefulness of sex was taken for granted by most people in his time, as it was subsequently.

former can obviously exist without the latter, as in the case of intercourse with a prostitute.

The traditional view is right, for a Kantian sort of reason, in thinking that to have sex only for the sake of physical pleasure is wrong, even with one's spouse. Sexual desire is unlike other bodily appetites in that it naturally has persons as its object. To have sex with someone purely for the sake of physical gratification, and not for the sake of doing good to or expressing love for him or her, is to use the person as a means to one's pleasure. (It is also destructive of the natural purpose of intercourse as an expression of love, and as such is evil.) This is the sense in which the traditional view is true. Unfortunately, two mistakes have been added to this true sense. The first is the inference that since sexual acts motivated purely by physical desire are bad acts, physical desire is a bad desire. But this does not follow. What makes such sexual acts evil is not the presence of the physical desire, but the absence of the recognition of the other as a person. Physical desire is compatible with recognition and love of the other as a person, and in such cases its indulgence, under the right circumstances, is good, not evil. The second is the assumption that acts of intercourse that are done simply because the parties concerned want to do them, and not for some further purpose such as reproduction, are motivated only by purely physical desire. This is not a stupid mistake, because people who have sex because they want to are prompted by physical desire. It requires thought to see that doing an act when prompted by physical desire is not the same as doing an act with the sole intention of satisfying physical desire. If we consider whether an act that physical desire prompts us to do is a good act, in circumstances where such consideration is called for, and are disposed to refrain from it if it isn't, then physical desire cannot be said to be the sole motive for our doing the act.

The second reason why the traditional view's mistake is a natural one has to do with the nature of human sexual desire. Most instances of sexual desire occur in circumstances where it would be wrong to act on them. The presence of a sexually attractive member of the opposite sex (or of the same sex, as the case may be) is enough to provoke desire. But it is usually wrong

to act on such desires. People who try to do so, and try (within the bounds of possibility) to have sex whenever they feel like it, and with whomever they find attractive, are destructive of their own lives and of the lives of others. It is natural to generalize: sexual desire in most cases is a desire for what is wrong, so sexual desire is inherently shameful. This conclusion is greatly reinforced if we act on our wrong desires, as most of us do at one time or another. Such action leads us to identify sexual desire with sinful desire, and condemn sexual desire in consequence-a process exemplified by figures like St. Jerome and Malcolm Muggeridge. [9]

This feature of sexual desire does not prove the traditional view, since the fact that it is generally wrong to act on sexual desire does not mean that sexual desire is a bad thing in itself. But it does bring out the considerable element of truth and realism in the traditional view. The traditional view accurately describes much of the sexual desire that actually exists. It is right in stressing the evil nature of this desire. The indifference of sexual desire towards the good, or its actual bias towards evil (whether innate or acquired), has a central importance in human lives, because persons are the natural object of sexual desire. Distortions in sexual desire thus inevitably entail distortions in one's attitude to other persons (and vice versa). The traditional view is superior

[9] The most positive view of sexual desire must admit that it does not discriminate between situations where its indulgence would be good and situations where its indulgence would be evil. There is however a less positive view, which has been presented by Peter Geach. In *The Virtues* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977) he asserts: "Apart from the good of marriage that redeems it, sex is poison. It is not a matter of lower animal appetites, shared with ancestral apes, that overcome a weak will; the radical perversion or misdirection of the will is what deforms animal appetite" (147). On this view, sexual desire is innately directed more towards evil forms of sexual activity than toward good forms, or even directed towards evil forms partly because they are evil and thus forbidden. This would explain the widespread association between the forbidden and the erotic, an association that cannot be explained as a reaction to strict sexual codes, since it thrives in cultures and subcultures where sexual morality is rudimentary or nonexistent. It would also explain the great difficulty experienced by individuals and cultures in channeling sexual desire towards good objects, a difficulty that would not be so great if sexual desire were merely indifferent between good and evil. If this view is correct, it would help to account for the wide acceptance of the traditional view of the shamefulness of sexual desire, although it would not justify that acceptance; the assertion that our wills are naturally inclined to desire forms of sexual intercourse that are wrong does not imply that sexual desire per se is a bad thing. (It should be noted that this less positive view is not the same as the view of St. Augustine, since it does not imply that marital sex that lacks the intention of reproducing is venially sinful.)

in this respect to the sexual morality that dominates contemporary Western society. This latter morality makes great play of the goodness of the body and sexuality. But this emphasis is of dubious sincerity. Indeed, since current sexual morality does not recognize what it is that actually makes sexual activity good, and fails to distinguish rightly between good and bad forms of sexual activity, it is almost impossible for someone who accepts it and practices it sincerely to believe in the goodness of sexuality. Talk about the goodness of sexuality is usually meant to drown out doubts and stifle guilt, rather than to express conviction-something that is apparent in the very insistence of its tone. Understanding of the true goodness of sexuality is thus even more important in present-day conditions than it would be if the traditional view were still generally (explicitly) accepted.

V

Once we understand the connection between the unitive and the procreative functions of intercourse, the Catholic position on contraception becomes easier to understand.

We can see why Pope John Paul II can say that "the innate language that expresses the total reciprocal self-giving of husband and wife is overlaid, through contraception, by an objectively contradictory language, namely, that of not giving oneself totally to the other." [10] This is related to the Kantian point made above. Supporting the Pope's contention is the reasoning that if intercourse is contraceptive, it is not generative, and thus is not unitive. Intercourse with a person that is not unitive, that does not benefit or express love for the person, that does not treat the person as an end rather than a means, does not recognize the person as a person. There is a connection between this argument and the Catholic understanding of human nature, which rejects substantival dualism. On this understanding, we cannot say that we use people's bodies in intercourse, but that we do not use the persons themselves. Human persons are not immaterial spiritual beings that are not identical with their bodies. Human persons are

[10] *Familiaris Consortia* 32, in *The Pope Speaks* 27, no. 1 (1987): 27.

their bodies; they are bodies with rational souls. In using their bodies, we are using the persons themselves.

We can also understand how it is that Catholic teaching can proscribe the use of contraceptive pills, but allow periodic abstinence as a means of controlling reproduction. Some forms of contraceptive intercourse, such as intercourse using a condom, are clearly not generative acts in any sense, so their rejection is unproblematic, given Catholic premises. But the case of intercourse when the woman is taking contraceptive pills is not so straightforward. These pills act by suppressing ovulation, and thus preventing conception. [11] But in so doing, they simply cause the woman to be in a state she is in naturally much of the time. Whether or not a woman is fertile is a circumstance of an act of intercourse, which therefore does not change the nature of the act itself. There is no difference, in terms of material descriptions, between acts of intercourse engaged in when the woman is fertile, acts engaged in when the woman is not fertile due to some natural cause, and acts engaged in when the woman is not fertile due to measures that have been taken on purpose to prevent ovulation. [12] Since there is no material difference, and intercourse with a fertile woman is certainly an act of a reproductive sort, all of these three cases can be materially described as acts of a reproductive sort. The circumstance of the woman's being fertile is necessary for this act to carry out its function, but not for it to have its function. Calling out for help when sinking into a bog is an act that has the function of communicating, even if it cannot carry out that function because there is no one within earshot.

[11] To simplify the example I will ignore the fact that many oral contraceptives contain abortifacients that are meant to serve as a backup if ovulation is not prevented, and assume that the pill in question works only through suppressing ovulation.

[12] These measures need not be artificial in order to be contraceptive. Women often cease to menstruate when their bodies are stressed by exercise; a woman could exercise for seven hours a day and diet in order to stop her menstrual cycle and become infertile, thus preventing ovulation by natural means. The intercourse she engages in would then be materially reproductive, but her object in acting could not be to do an act that has the function of reproducing, and the act would thus not be unitive. It is a confusion to see the evil of contraception as lying in its artificiality. Artificiality need not be evil; consider cases where artificial means, such as drugs or penile implants, are needed in order .to enable sex to take place.

But although taking contraceptive pills does not prevent intercourse being generative, it does prevent the generative aspect of intercourse from being the object of the action, as Anscombe has pointed out.[13] The generative feature of intercourse cannot be the feature that one intends to bring about, if at the same time one is taking measures to prevent the intercourse from resulting in generation, or consenting to those measures being taken. Generativeness is a material description of such intercourse, but it is not a formal description-it is not what the people having sex choose to happen. If they do not choose to do a reproductive act, the material reproductiveness of what they do cannot make the act unitive. In the case of periodic abstinence, however, there is no choice made to prevent intercourse from carrying out its generative function. The circumstances that prevent intercourse from leading to conception arise through natural processes, and are not willed or chosen by the couple. When they do an act that is by its nature generative, there is nothing to stop them from willing to do a generative act.

The most deeply rooted opposition to the position that has been presented above will not come from difficulties with the reasons that have been given for it, but from its total incompatibility with present-day attitudes and practices.

One objection liable to come to mind is that it flies in the face of experience. The vast majority of married people (at least in developed countries) engage in contraceptive intercourse; yet they generally experience such intercourse as an expression of love, and find that it is a major factor in building their relationship.

Answers to this objection are not hard to come by. First, it is undeniable that one tends to become attached to those who give one pleasure and satisfy one's desires, whether or not that pleasure and those desires are actually for something good. This explains how contraceptive intercourse can strengthen the affection between sexual partners. It implies a certain instability in the relationship, since one will be inclined to break it off if one can find someone who can give more pleasure and satisfy stronger desire; but no one can say that this instability is uncommon. Second, because of the approval of contraception in modern

[13] Anscombe, "You Can Have Sex without Children."

society, it is hard for most people to realize that there is a good involved in generative intercourse that is lacking in nongenerative intercourse. This confusion makes it easy to attribute the good of generative intercourse to nongenerative intercourse. The love of married people who engage in contraceptive intercourse can thus be strengthened by their belief that they are giving and receiving a good, although this belief does not correspond to the truth.

Third, one can point out that the acceptance of contraception has been accompanied by a vast increase in divorce. Divorce was rare amongst both Catholics and Protestants when the members of these confessions rejected contraception as immoral, but became widespread after contraception was accepted and practiced.[14] It would be difficult to use this fact as a decisive argument for a connection between the unitive and procreative functions of sex, because of the possibility of a common cause for the rise in contraception and the rise in divorce, but it provides some support for this connection. It is predicted by the Catholic position, and thus gives inductive confirmation for it.

However, even those who find the reasoning for the Catholic position to be cogent, and the objections to it weak, may experience a feeling of incredulity in contemplating it. It is very hard to believe that a view that is utterly at odds with the beliefs and the lives of practically everyone one knows could be true. I would urge those with this feeling, which I experience as strongly as many, to consider whether it is reasonable. Do these beliefs, and these lives, bring happiness? Do their results justify the confidence that is placed in them? Does the witness of Christian tradition, both Catholic and Protestant, not have something to say to them? I believe that if these questions are considered carefully and objectively, this witness will in the end reveal itself as a true one.

[14] For data on acceptance of contraception and increase in divorce among Catholics, see James McCarthy, "Religious Commitment, Affiliation, and Marital Dissolution," and Charles F. Westoff, "The Blending of Catholic Reproductive Behavior," in *The Religious Dimension: New Directions in Qualitative Research*, R. Wuthnow, ed. (New York: Academic Press, 1979).

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THOMAS'S AUTHORITY FOR IDENTIFYING CHARITY AS FRIENDSHIP: ARISTOTLE OR JOHN 15?

ANTHONY W. KEATY

St. John's Seminary
Brighton, Massachusetts

IN HIS INTRODUCTORY question in the *Summa Theologiae* on the nature and extent of sacred doctrine, Thomas states that the canonical Scriptures function as the primary authority for sacred doctrine *(STh* I, q. 1, a. 8). Indeed, unlike the principles derived from philosophers and from the Doctors of the Church which yield probable conclusions only, arguments based upon sacred Scripture result in incontrovertible conclusions (ibid., ad 2). However, it is not always evident how, if at all, in the questions and articles of the *Summa Theologiae* Scripture does indeed function as Thomas's chief authority. [1]

A case in point is Thomas's description of charity in terms of friendship *(STh* 11-11, q. 23, a. 1). Two recent interpreters have emphasized in their reading of Thomas the influence of Aristotle's treatment of friendship, leaving unclear the influence of such scriptural references as John 15:15; 1 Corinthians 1:9; Philippians 3:20; and Revelation 22:3-4. [2]

[1] Relatively few studies have been done on Thomas's use of Scripture in the *Summa Theologiae.* For such studies see Rosaire Bellemare, "La Somme de Thfologie et la lectura de la Bible," *Eglise et Theologie* 5 (1974): 257-70; W. G. Valkenberg, *"Did not our Hearts Burn?" Place and Function of Holy Scripture in the Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Utrecht: Thomas Institut, 1990); idem, "The Function of Holy Scripture in Aquinas' Theology of the Resurrection of Christ," in *Storia del Tomismo (fonti e riflessi): Atti del IX Congresso Tomistico Internazionale VI* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1992); Marc Aillet, *Lire la Bible avec St. Thomas: La passage de la littera a res dans la Somme Theologique* (Fribourg: Fribourg S. Ed. Universitaires, 1993).

[2] See L. Gregory Jones, "The Theological Transformation of Aristotelian Friendship in the Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas," *New Scholasticism* 61 (1987): 373-99; Paul Wadell, *Friends of God: Virtues and Gifts in Aquinas* (New York: Peter Lang, 1991).

This paper analyzes the first two articles of *STh* II-II, q. 23, which is the first question in Thomas's treatise on charity.[3] Concerning the first article I hope to show that in calling charity friendship it is Scripture, especially John 15:15, rather than Aristotle that governs Thomas's interpretation of charity. Concerning the second article I hope to show how Thomas uses Scripture, again John 15: 15, as his first premiss in a particular argument concerning the created nature of charity.

This paper seeks to make two contributions. First and more narrowly, I hope to bring to light in a more adequate way the significance of Thomas's calling Christian charity friendship. Second, and more generally, by examining how Thomas uses Scripture in a specific instance, I hope to illustrate a way of reading the questions and articles of the *Summa Theologiae* that allows Scripture to function as Thomas's principal authority. As a parenthetical remark, in limiting the following analysis of *STh* II-II, q. 23, aa. 1and2 to the role played by John 15:15, I do not intend to deny the importance of the other Scripture passages cited by Thomas in these two articles; the limitation is necessary due to the constraints of space.

I. THOMAS'S AUTHORITIES IN STHII-II, Q. 23, A. 1

A) Aristotle as Thomas's Authoritative Source?

In Thomas's identification of charity as friendship, L. Gregory Jones finds an ambiguous reliance by Thomas on Aristotle. "[W]hile it can be justly said that Thomas 'baptizes' Aristotle's account of friendship, it must also be admitted that Thomas's indebtedness to Aristotle's 'Unmoved Mover' constrains his account of the moral possibility and significance of friendship with God."[4]

By identifying charity as friendship with God *(STh* II-II, q. 23, a. 1), Thomas, according to Jones, indicates that "the telos of the

[3] The eight articles of *STh* 11-11, q. 23 are divided into an identification of the genus to which charity belongs, namely virtue, and into an identification of the specific difference of charity with respect to the other virtues, namely the form of the virtues.

[4] Jones, "Theological Transformation of Aristotelian Friendship," 373.

Christian moral life is friendship with God."[5] In such an understanding of the moral life Thomas depends upon, or "baptizes," Aristotle's understanding of the relation between friendship and the moral life. For Aristotle, Jones argues, friendship not only makes the moral life more enjoyable but, more significantly, it makes the moral life possible: "for friendship is the locus of the kinds of virtuous activities whereby one who delights in the good actually becomes good."[6] Since charity as the form of the virtues informs all virtuous activity with its proper telos (*STh* 11-11, q. 23, a. 8), Thomas, by identifying charity as friendship, follows Aristotle and takes friendship to provide the locus for moral activity.

While drawing upon Aristotle's account of friendship, Thomas at the same time transforms, or attempts to transform, Aristotle's account of friendship by placing the moral life within the context of friendship with God, a form of friendship Aristotle could not envision. However, according to Jones, the lack of attention by Thomas in his discussion of charity to its Trinitarian dimension impoverishes his account.[7] As Trinity, the most sublime divine activity is friendship; to identify charity as friendship should signify a participation by the human person in the divine activity of Trinitarian friendship. OnJones's reading, though, "Thomas's exposition is impoverished by his indebtedness to Aristotle's Unmoved Mover and his consequent lack of attention to the Trinitarian dimension of friendship with God."[8] It is ambiguous, then, according to Jones, whether Thomas in his account of Christian charity transforms Aristotle's account of friendship or whether Aristotle transforms the "Christian" understanding of charity as taught by Thomas.

Although less critical of Thomas than is Jones, Paul Wadell also sees the primary element in Thomas's description of charity as friendship to be Thomas's debt to Aristotle.[9] On Wadell's

[5] Ibid., 382.

[6] Ibid, 378.

[7] Ibid., 398-99.

[8] Ibid., 399.

[9] Wadell, *Friends of God,* 5-15. Unlike Jones, who faults Thomas for not making explicit the Trinity as the foundation of charity, Wadell sees the Trinity as an indispensable element in Thomas's account of charity. See ibid., 18-23.

reading of Thomas, it is Aristotle's discussion of friendship in the *Nicomachean Ethics* that provides for Thomas the fundamental dynamic in his description of Christian charity. "By identifying charity as friendship, Thomas is claiming that not any relationship of the Christian with God is acceptable, but only a relationship of friendship." [10] Furthermore, to make more precise the kinds of activities required by charity friendship, Thomas turns to Aristotle's two central activities in friendship, benevolence and reciprocity. A friend is benevolent, or wishes well, to the friend. Indeed, Wadell interprets benevolence to imply that the true friend makes the active seeking of the friend's true good "the sustaining project of the lover's life." [11] Benevolence, though, is not sufficient for friendship. True sustaining friendship requires reciprocity among friends, a reciprocity that results in a union of affections between the friends. Through this union of affections, the friend loves the friend as another self.

When Thomas calls charity friendship, according to Wadell, he means to build his account of the Christian life of charity upon Aristotle's insights regarding friendship. It is true that Thomas has in mind in his discussion of charity a specific form of friendship that Aristotle did not consider attainable, namely, friendship with God. Nevertheless, the goal and activities of Christian friendship with God still remain the goal and activities of friendship as described by Aristotle. Just as a friend through activities demanded by benevolence and reciprocity comes to love the friend as another self, so also in charity the Christian through benevolence and reciprocity is to love God as another self, thus becoming like to God. [12]

On both Wadell's and Jones's reading, Aristotle provides the primary lens through which to interpret Thomas's identification of charity as friendship. To argue, though, that as Thomas's primary authority Aristotle's account of friendship governs Thomas' s account of Christian charity suggests that Thomas in his discussion of charity has forgotten the methodological observations that he himself made in the opening question of the *Summa*

[10] Ibid., 2.

[11] Ibid., 31.

[12] Ibid., 40.

Theologiae on the nature of sacred doctrine *(STh* I, q. 1).[13] If he is not using Aristotle's understanding of friendship as his primary authority, how might we conceive his use of Aristotle in a manner consistent with his methodological statements?

Aristotle's categories of benevolence and communication can provide a heuristic definition concerning friendships. I find myself in many different types of relationships. I interact over the course of a week with my auto mechanic, my sister, a colleague at work, a student, a lifelong friend, and an acquaintance from a hiking club. If I am to act appropriately in these different relationships, I need some awareness that these relationships differ in kind as well as some understanding of how they differ. I would be advised by Aristotle to focus my attention on the categories of benevolence and communication. Is there good will, or benevolence, in the relationship? What good is being willed by the participants in the particular relationship? How does one appropriately acknowledge or communicate this good will in this relationship? While Aristotle's categories of benevolence and communication would help to guide the inquiry, the actual content for the appropriate benevolent and communicative activity would be determined by the particular form of friendship in question. Thus, Aristotle's categories of benevolence and communication serve a heuristic purpose.

Thomas uses these categories to identify the genus and species of charity. In the corpus of *STh* 11-11, q. 23, a. 1, he notes that according to Aristotle love is either wishing well to another (benevolence) or wishing some good for myself (concupiscence).[14]

[13] Mark Jordan calls into question the view that in the *Summa Theologiae* Thomas sought to cast Christian belief in Aristotelian form. Although not directly concerned with Thomas's discussion of charity, Jordan's argument further weakens the plausibility of the view that Thomas bases his account of Christian charity on Aristotle's understanding of friendship. See Mark Jordan, "The Alleged Aristotelianism of Thomas Aquinas," in *The Etienne Gilson Series* 15 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1990).

[14] G. G. Meersseman states that Prevostin de Cremona (+1210) was the first to employ the distinction between love of friendship and love of concupiscence. Prevostin's source, according to Meersseman, was the *Liber de Amicitia* which was a partial translation of the *Nicomachean Ethics* containing the first third of book 8. See Meersseman, "Pourquoi Le Lombard n'a-t-il pas corn;u la charite come arnitie?" *Miscellanea Lombardiana* (Novara: Instituto Geografico de Agostini, 1957), 171. Geoffrey of Poitiers distinguished in the *dilectio voluntaria* the love of concupiscence and the love of benevolence. Geoffrey held that in the

By identifying charity as friendship, Thomas places charity in the genus of benevolence. Within the genus of benevolence or friendship love, the various forms of friendship love-the pleasureful friendship, the useful friendship, the virtuous friendship, and now charity friendship-are themselves distinguished according to the good that is shared in common, or communicated, between the friends. Charity is the specific form of friendship love that it is due to the shared good upon which the friendship is based, namely the communication by God of divine happiness to the human creature. Thus, while Aristotle provides Thomas the categories with which to define charity, the content of the benevolence and the communication that make charity to be the distinctive form of friendship that it is Thomas takes from Augustine and ultimately from John 15--or so the next section will argue.

B) Augustine and]ohn 15:15 as Thomas's Primary Authorities

By way of setting the context for Thomas's use of John 15: 15, we must first make more explicit Augustine's influence on Thomas's identification of charity as friendship. This requires a

natural state the human person could love God with a love of concupiscence so as to possess and to enjoy God. It is not clear whether Geoffrey held that the human person could naturally love God with a love of benevolence. William of Auxerre admitted to the possibility of a natural love of friendship for God by the human person. For these two theologians the distinction between love of friendship (or benevolence) and love of concupiscence helped them to ask in a more precise manner the limits of the human person's natural love of God.

While Thomas himself takes up the issue of whether the human person in a natural state could love God above all things *(STh* 1-11, q. 109, a. 3), he does not employ the distinction between love of friendship and love of concupiscence in this context but rather in his treatise on charity.

Thomas is not the first to understand charity in terms of friendship. Hugh of St. Victor connects charity and friendship when considering whether charity can be lost: Proverbs 17 notes that a true friend is always a friend, leading to the conclusion that once possessed charity cannot be lost (Hugh of St. Victor, *De sacramentis,* 2.13.11). See Richard Egenter, *Gottesfreundschaft: Die Lehre von der Gottesfreundschaft in der Scholastik und mystik des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts* (Augsburg: Dr. Benno Filser, 1928), 53. Meersseman suggests that Lombard did not refer to charity as friendship with God since many charitable lay associations emphasized the fraternal love common among the members. Possibly Lombard did not want to associate too closely Christian charity with the fraternal bonds of these lay associations. See Meersseman, "Pourquoi Le Lombard n'a-t-il pas com;u la charite comme amitie?", 171.

consideration of the nature of the generic distinction between love of friendship and love of concupiscence. Some interpreters have ascribed this distinction in Thomas to the disinterest of the love in question.[15] On this account, insofar as a person wishes good to another with no intent of personal gain we may call the love love of friendship, and in so far as the love is motivated by personal gain the love is a love of concupiscence. It is true that Thomas's manner of distinguishing love of friendship and love of concupiscence in this first article on charity implies that disinterestedness provides the principle for the distinction: benevolence involves wishing good to another, and concupiscence involves wishing the good for ourselves: However, Thomas's discussion of friendship and concupiscence in his treatise on the passions *(STh* I-II, q. 26, a. 4) suggests that these two loves are

[15] Pierre Rousselot took this to the point of claiming that the central problem in love is whether love that is not egoistic is possible at all. Furthermore, if a pure love of another is possible, what is the relation between this pure love of the other and the love of self? The Middle Ages addressed this central problem of love by asking whether the human person can love God naturally more than himself. See Pierre Rousselot, *Pour l'histoire du probleme de l'amour au moyen age,* Beitriige zur Geschichte de Philosophie des Mittelalters 6 (Munster, 1908), 1-2. Garrigou-Lagrange refines Rousselot's question by pointing out that Bernard of Clairvaux and Richard of St. Victor analyzed the problem of human love within the context of the concrete fallen existence of the human person. Within this context, the problem of love is indeed whether a love that is not egoistic is possible. However, one can analyze the human person from a more abstract, metaphysical point of view, as Thomas did according to Garrigou-Lagrange. From this more abstract, metaphysical point of view, the problem of love is better phrased as whether the love of one's own proper good or the love of God is more primordial to our nature. See P.R. Garrigou-Lagrange, "Le probleme de !'amour pur et la solution de saint Thomas," *Angelicum* 6 (1929): 83-124. L.-B. Gillon, like Rousselot, sees in Thomas's distinction between love of friendship and love of concupiscence a distinction between a disinterested love and a self-centered love. See Gillon, "Genese de la theorie thomiste de !'amour," *Revue Thomiste* 46 (1946): 322-29. Van Ouwerkerk and Wadell interpret Thomas in the same way. See C. A. J. Van Ouwerkerk, *Caritas et Ratio: Etude sur le double principe de la vie moral chretienne d'apres S. Thomas D'Aquin* (Nijmegen: Gehr. Janssen, 1956), 25-26; Wadell, *Friends of God,* 31. According to Th. Deman, charity does not consider any return or advantage as the motive for loving God, but loves God for God's sake alone. In this sense, charity is a disinterested love. However, Deman cautions against stressing the disinterested qu:'ilityof charity since in lovingGod disinterestedly we find our true good. See Th. Deman, "Eudemonisme et charite en theologie morale," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 29 (1953): 53.

not distinguished principally according to the disinterest of the love but rather in terms of their ordered relationship. [16]

In the treatise on the passions, Thomas takes as his working definition of love Aristotle's definition from the *Rhetoric* that to love signifies to wish well to someone (ibid.). He goes on to identify from Aristotle's definition two aspects to love. First, there is the love that a person has for the friend whereby he wishes well to the friend. In addition, there is the love that a person has for the good that is wished to the friend. Properly speaking, then, love of friendship refers to the love that a person has for the friend. Love of concupiscence refers to the love that a person has for the good that is wished to the friend.

How are we to understand the relationship between these two forms of love? Thomas describes it as the relationship between primary and secondary love.[17] The love that a person has for the friend is called primary love since in the love of friendship we love the friend "simpliciter et per se."[18] The love that a person has

[16] Several scholars emphasize the different ways that love of friendship and love of concupiscence are related to the end in order to understand Thomas's distinction. H. D. Simonin identifies the three elements of subject, object, and term or end that are present in love. In love of concupiscence, the object is loved only in view of some further end, while in the love of friendship the object loved and the term or end coincide. See H. D. Simonin, "Autour de la solution thomiste du probleme de !'amour," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et litteraire du moyen age* 6 (1931): 174-272. Louis Geiger argues that for Thomas love of friendship and love of concupiscence parallel spiritual love of the good as known by reason versus sensible love of the good as known by the senses. See Louis B. Geiger, *Le probleme de /'amour chez saint Thomas D'Aquin* (Paris: Libraire J. Vrin, 1952), 75. According to Servais Pinckaers, love of friendship is a love directed at a final good, while the love of concupiscence is a love directed at an intermediate good. See Servais Pinckaers, "Der Sinn fiir die Freundschaftliebe als Urtatsache der thomistichen Ethik," *Sein und Ethos: Untersuchunger zur Grundlegung der Ethik,* ed. Paul Engelhardt (Mainz: Matthais-Griinewald, 1963), 232. Finally, Albert Ilien argues that love loves some good. The two loves of friendship and concupiscence are distinguished according to the relationship between the good loved and the end. In love of friendship, the love is fixed upon the end itself, while in love of concupiscence, the love loves a good for the sake of some other end and not for the sake of the good itself. See Albert Ilien, *Wesen und Funktion der Liebe bei Thomas von Aquin* (Freiberg: Herder, 1975), 114.

[17] "Haec autem divisio est secundum prius et posterius" *(STh* I-II, q. 26, a. 4).

[18] Albert Ilien stresses in his analysis of love of friendship that only persons can be the object of such love, since only persons can be loved simply and per se. Ilien rightly emphasizes that love of friendship is a love whose proper domain is human relationships. See Ilien, *Wesen und Funktion der Liebe,* 116. Thomas follows Aristotle in situating love within the context

for the good that he wills his friend is called secondary love since in the love of concupiscence we love the good "alteri," as good for something or someone else.[19] As a secondary love, concupiscence love presupposes as prior, or as its principle of intelligibility, friendship love, since particular goods become lovable, and hence become the subject of concupiscence love, as something good for the friend.[20]

Indeed, the context of friendship love makes intelligible those instances when concupiscence love is disordered. In *STh* I-II, q. 26, a. 4, ad 3, Thomas argues that in the useful and pleasureful friendship as well as in virtuous friendship friendship love involves well-wishing to the friend. Concupiscence love in the pleasureful and useful friendship need not undermine these friendships as long as the love for the pleasurable or useful good is subservient to the well-wishing that characterizes love of friendship.[21] However, when the lover no longer wishes the

of human relations. Concerning Aristotle's understanding of the primary locus of human love, see Martha C. Nussbaum, *The Therapy of Desire: Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 90.

However, the "simpliciter et per se" quality of friendship love as well as the fact that friendship love is always love for a person does not imply on Aristotle's or on Aquinas's account that the three forms of friendship-pleasurable, useful, and virtuous-must be accorded equal value. Reducing friendship love to a love for persons, as Ilien does, denies any significant distinction between the three forms of friendship described by Aristotle since all three forms of friendship involve love of persons. As we shall see, charity for Thomas is a friendship that is to be distinguished from other forms of friendship due to the good upon which the friendship is based.

[19] Thomas compares the relationship between love of friendship and love of concupiscence in *STh* I-II, q. 26, a. 4 to the relationship between substance and accident. While the substance possesses being simply, accident possesses being only in so far as it adheres in a substance. Just as accidents rely upon substance for existence, so concupiscence love relies upon friendship love for its being.

[20] That love of friendship is ordered to no higher good presupposes that Thomas considers virtue friendship as the paradigm for all friendship since the good shared by friends in the pleasurable and useful friendship is by no means an ultimate good. John Cooper argues that for Aristotle, virtue friendship does provide the paradigm for interpreting all forms of friendship. See John Cooper, "Aristotle on Friendship," in *Esscrys on Aristotle's Ethics,* ed. Amelie Oksenberg Rorty (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980), 301-40.

Thomas seems to suggest the same. It is only in virtue friendship, and ultimately in charity, that the friends share in goodness per se.

[21] "Ad tertium dicendum quod in amicitia utili et delectabi.!i, vult quidem aliquis aliquod bonum amico; et quantum ad hoc salvatur ibi ratio amicitiae" (STh I-II, q. 26, a. 4, ad 3).

friend the pleasurable or useful good as his primary aim but instead desires the pleasurable or useful good for himself, then the character of friendship or benevolence is lost.[22] The disorder of concupiscence love appears within the context provided by friendship love.

Returning to Thomas's discussion of charity in *STh* 11-11, q. 23, a. 1, we can now see that concupiscence love and friendship love are distinguished not according to the disinterest of the love but according to the ordered relation of primary and secondary. What then does Thomas intend to say about charity when he calls charity friendship love (primary) as opposed to concupiscence love (secondary)? Augustine's discussion of charity in the *De doctrina christiana* illuminates Thomas's own.[23]

Augustine compares our mortal condition to that of a wanderer in a strange land *(De doct. chr.* 1.4.4.). The wretched condition of life in this strange land impels the wanderer to seek happiness by returning to her homeland. This homeland as the source of the wanderer's happiness is loved or enjoyed for its own sake. Yet, to make the journey, the wanderer must make use of some means of travel. These means of travel and indeed the traveling itself are to be loved not for themselves but with respect to their usefulness in enabling her to return home. Should the wanderer come to enjoy *(frui)* what is only to be used *(uti),* she will not hasten to her true home. Employing the distinction between *frui* and *uti* as developed in the story of the wanderer, Augustine identifies charity as an instance of *frui* insofar as charity is a movement of the soul by which God is enjoyed for his own sake. Charity, then, is that love which directs the wanderer's affections toward her final end, the triune God.

The similarity between the ordered relation of Augustine's terms *(frui* and *uti)* and Thomas's terms ("friendship love" and "concupiscence love") becomes evident. To enjoy *(/rut)* is to love that good which is one's final good ("diligere propter se" *[De*

[22] "Sed quia illud bonum refert ulterius ad suam delectationem vel utilitatem, inde est quod amicitia utilis et delectabilis, inquantum trahitur ad amorem concupiscentiae, deficit a ratione verae amicitiae" (ibid.).

[23] See Oliver O'Donovan, *"Usus* and *Fruitio* in Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana* I," *The Journal o(Theological Studies* n.s. 33 (1982): 361-97, esp. 383-84.

doct. 1.22.20]), and to use *(uti)* is a properly ordered love when goods are loved only insofar as they are useful for attaining one's final good ("diligere propter aliud" [ibid.]). Similarly, in friendship love the friend loves the friend "simpliciter et per se" and concupiscence love is properly ordered to the further good of friendship *(STh* I-II, q. 26, a. 4).

That Thomas in identifying charity as friendship love is drawing upon Augustine's understanding of charity as *frui* becomes more plausible when we note his use of Augustine in other articles in *STh* II-II, q. 23, and in later questions in the treatise on charity. For example, in a. 8 Thomas calls charity the form of the virtues insofar as charity directs all other virtuous acts to their final end. Here he associates charity with that love appropriate to one's final end. In a. 7, adopting the language of Augustine, Thomas says that "the ultimate and principal good of man is the enjoyment of God, ... and to this end man is ordered by charity." Furthermore, in a. 2 Thomas explicitly cites Augustine's definition of charity in the *sed contra.* As we shall see below, this article is devoted to the proper interpretation of Augustine's definition of charity.

Augustine's discussion of charity from the *De doctrina christiana* appears in later questions in Thomas's treatise on charity. When discussing growth in charity in *STh* II-II, q. 24, Thomas, in a manner reminiscent of Augustine's designation of the Christian as a wanderer in a foreign land, calls the Christian a wayfarer (aa. 4, 7, 8). Thomas again turns to Augustine when discussing whether God is to be loved for himself. "Augustine says that to enjoy *[frui]* is to adhere to someone by loving him for his own sake. But it is necessary to enjoy God *[Deo fruendum est].* Therefore God is to be loved for His own sake" *(STh* 11-11, q. 27, a. 3).

Again, Thomas turns to Augustine's book 1 of the *De doctrina christiana* to help structure his account of the object *(STh* 11-11, q. 25) and order *(STh* 11-11, q. 26) of charity. Thomas cites as his authority the *De doctrina christiana* four times in his discussion of the object of charity *(STh* 11-11, q. 25, aa. 5, 6, 10, 12). Indeed, he summarizes his discussion of the object of charity by citing Augustine's formula from the *De doctrina christiana* that we are

to love four things out of charity: God, ourselves, our neighbor, our body.[24] Finally, Thomas cites the *De doctrina christiana* twice more when discussing the order of charity *(STh* II-II, q. 26, aa. 3 and 5).

Thus, while Thomas does not cite Augustine explicitly in *STh* 11-11, q. 23, a. 1 when he identifies charity as a friendship, Augustine's discussion of charity in the *De doctrina christiana* permeates Thomas's own treatise on charity. Combining this with the formal similarity between Thomas's distinction between friendship love and concupiscence love and Augustine's distinction between *frui* and *uti,* we may reasonably surmise that in identifying charity as friendship love Thomas means to incorporate Augustine's understanding of charity as *frui.*[25] Thus, when Thomas says that charity is friendship love or well-wishing, he means to say that in charity the friend wishes to the friend that good which promises to be the friend's final good or happiness. If, though, Thomas does indeed base his account of charity on Augustine's authority, why would he recast Augustine's language of *frui* into the language of friendship?[26]

[24] I am indebted for this observation concerning Augustine as the source for Thomas's discussion of the object and order of charity to informal discussions with and a paper by Michael Sherwin, O.P.

[25] Albert the Great, like Thomas, used Augustine's distinction of *frui/uti* to distinguish two forms of love. We love God in that we seek to enjoy God. We love creatures in that we seek "to use" creatures in our efforts to attain God. However, Albert displays a greater reserve than does Thomas in calling love of God "friendship." Albert cautions that even though friendship is a love forgetful of personal advantage we should call love of God "friendship" only with great reserve. See A. Stevaux, "La doctrine de la charite clans!es Commentaires des Sentences de Saint Albert, de Saint Bonaventure, et de Saint Thomas," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 24 (1948): 73.

[26] There seem, in fact, to be several reasons why Thomas might find the language of friendship advantageous in his account of charity. First, Thomas notes that acts of justice are done under the aspect of legal due, while acts of friendship display gratuitous favor *(STh* II-II, q. 23, a. 3, ad 1). Charity, understood as acts of friendship, embodies and communicates the gracious favor received by the disciple from God. Calling charity "friendship" hearkens back to Thomas's previous discussion in the *Summa Theologiae* on grace.

Fergus Kerr suggests that Thomas turns to Aristotle's category of friendship to counter a view of Christian asceticism that emphasized detachment from particular relationships. Through Aristotle's concept of friendship, Thomas emphasizes a brand of asceticism that accepts external goods as valuable in the life of the human person. See Fergus Kerr, "Charity as Friendship," in *Language, Meaning and God: Essays in Honor of Herbert McCabe, O.P.* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1987), 1-23.

The due for answering this question lies in the *sed contra* of *STh* 11-11, q. 23, a. 1 where Thomas cites the words of Christ from John 15: "I no longer call you servants but my friends." Here Thomas indicates that the paradigmatic case and indeed the source for the friendship love that he is calling charity is the friendship love exhibited by Christ.[27] As he explains in the corpus of this article, friendships are specified by the communication upon which they are based. The friendship that is charity is a friendship specified by the good willed and communicated by Christ to his disciples. Indeed, the text from John 15:15 cited by Thomas continues with the reason why Christ now calls the disciples friends: "because I have told you everything that I have heard from my Father."[28]

[27] The communication of God's love in Christ described here anticipates similar themes found in Aquinas's discussion of the fittingness of the Incarnation and of Christ's passion. When discussing the fittingness of the Incarnation *(STh* III, q. 1, a. 1), Thomas observes that just as it is the essence of goodness to communicate itself to others, it "belongs to the essence of the highest good to communicate itself in the highest manner to the creature," that is, through the Incarnation.

Thomas goes on in the first question of *Tertia Pars* to point out that through the Incarnation God restores the human race *(STh* III, q. 1, a. 2). The Incarnation, among other things, strengthens hope, as Thomas points out citing Augustine: "Nothing was so necessary for raising our hope as to be demonstrated to us to what extent God loved us. And truly what could manifest the evidence of this more than that the Son of God has considered our nature worthy to enter into partnership."

Finally, the communication of God's love in Christ's Passion has for its express purpose to enkindle charity, or friendship, on the part of the rational creature. "The human person knows how much God loves men and women, and is incited to love God, in which the perfection of human salvation consists" *(STh* III, q. 46, a. 3).

[28] In *STh* 1-11, q. 26, a. 4, where Thomas discussesthe distinction between friendship love and concupiscence love, he cites for his definition of love Aristotle's *Rhetoric* which associates friendship love with well-wishing. The role of communication in friendship love is not raised in this context.

In *STh* 11-11, q. 23, a. 1 Thomas, drawing upon Aristotle's discussion of friendship from the *Nicomachean Ethics,* now includes in his account of friendship love the role of communication. This coincides with his concern here to show the distinctive nature of charity, since the good upon which charity friendship is based is communicated to the disciples by Christ.

In the *Summa contra Gentiles,* Thomas also emphasizes the importance of communication for friendship. "Of course, this is the proper mark of friendship: that one reveal his secrets to his friend" *(ScG* IV, c. 21, no. 5). He goes on to give as an example of the importance of communication for friendship the words of Christ from John 15: "and so our Lord says to His disciples: 'I will not now call you servants but friends, because all things whatsoever I have heard of My Father I have made known to you'" (ibid.).

We can say, then, that in charity the disciples are to display a benevolence toward others, which, in the context of charity as understood by Augustine, is a benevolence that wishes to others that good which proves to be the friend's final good or happiness. More specifically, though, the disciples as friends of Christ are to wish to others that final good 'or happiness as that final good or happiness is known and loved by Christ and manifested to the disciples by Christ.[29]

John 15: 15 is the primary authority for Thomas's discussion of charity, then, since the love which is charity is revealed in and made possible for the disciples only through Christ's own love for his disciples. While Aristotle's categories of benevolence and communication are used to construct a definition of charity, the content for the benevolence and the communication that define charity are displayed paradigmatically only in Christ's friendship love for the disciples described in John 15: 15.[30]

II. JOHN 15:15 AS CONTEXT AND FIRST PREMISS FOR *STH* II-II, Q. 23, A. 2

Thomas follows his interpretation of charity as friendship with an article on charity as something created in the soul *(STh* 11-11, q. 23, a. 2). In this second article Thomas, correcting Lombard's

In the *Lectura super Joannem,* when discussing John 15: 15, Thomas describes the servant as "quasi extraneus a domino" *(In Joan.* c. 15, lect. 3, no. 1). The servant is foreign to the master since the master has not entrusted his secrets to the servant. "Extraneis autem secreta committenda non sunt" (ibid.).

Thomas however goes on to point out that despite having the "secrets" of Christ revealed to them, the disciples still serve Christ. This is so since the disciples do not act "propter se" but seek what Christ wills, "sed non operatur propter se: quia caritas non quaerit quae sua sunt, sed quae sunt Jesu Christi et salutis proximorum" (ibid.). While possessing the status of friends, the disciples nevertheless serve the goal that is properly Christ's.

[29] We must recall from Thomas's previous discussion of happiness in the *Prima Secundae* that not all people agree on what good constitutes happiness *(STh* I-II, q. 1, a. 7). Some people pursue riches while other pursue pleasures. Only the well-ordered person can act as a trustworthy guide for determining that good in which happiness consists. "In like manner that good is most complete which the man with well-disposed affections desires for his last end." By identifying charity as friendship with Christ in *STh* 11-11, q. 23, a. 1, Thomas makes explicit who this well-disposed person is.

[30] Of course, the Father is ultimately the source of charity, as Christ's words in John 15: 15 indicate.

teaching that in acts of charity the soul is moved directly by the Holy Spirit, argues that charity is a habitual form superadded to the natural power. I hope to show in the following analysis of this article that the first premiss from which Thomas argues his position is John 15: 15.

A) Lombard's Interpretation of Charity as the Holy Spirit

Thomas begins the corpus of this article with a brief summary of Lombard's position as presented in I *Sent.,* d. 17.[31] Here Lombard concludes that charity is not something created in the soul but is the Holy Spirit dwelling in the soul. Thomas points out in his summary that according to Lombard the movement that

[31] Thomas takes up another problem from this distinction in the first objection of article 2. He cites two passages from Augustine used by Lombard. The first is "He who loves his neighbor, consequently loves love itself." The implication of this text, as Augustine himself goes on to point out, is that since God is love, the person who loves his neighbor loves God.

To reinforce this point, Thomas cites a second Augustinian text: "It was said God is charity, even as it was said God is a Spirit" (De *Trin.* 15.17.27-28). The implication of this text, as Thomas goes on to point out, is that just as the Holy Spirit is not something created since God is Spirit, neither is charity created since God is charity *(STh* II-II, q. 23, a. 2, obj. 1).

With these two Augustinian citations, Thomas summarizes in the first objection of article two what is a more extended argument in Lombard's distinction 17. In this more extended argument, Lombard first shows by citing texts from Augustine that the Holy Spirit is charity. He then raises a possible objection to his teaching by pointing out that God is referred to in Scripture as patience and hope (I *Sentences* d. 17, c. 3). Nevertheless, no one identifies our patience and our hope with God. Should not Scripture's references to charity be understood in the same way as Scripture's references to patience and hope? Lombard responds to this question, again citing Augustine *(De Trin.* 15.17.27-28), by arguing that while Scripture often uses phrases like "Lord my hope," "My God my mercy," and "You are my patience," it never refers to charity in these terms. Instead Scripture says God is charity, just as it says God is spirit. Thus one must distinguish the relationship between charity and God from the relationship between patience and God. By responding to these objections Lombard confirms his interpretation of Augustine that charity is the Holy Spirit.

In Thomas's response to objection 1, he modifies Lombard's argument. Lombard concluded, following Augustine, that charity in us is God, comparing Scripture's use of charity with Scripture's use of patience and hope. Thomas proposes as more apt the comparison of charity with wisdom and goodness. "The Divine essence is charity, even as it is wisdom and goodness." The wisdom with which we are wise, or the goodness by which we are good, is not the divine Wisdom or the divine goodness but is a participation in the divine wisdom and divine goodness. In the same way, Thomas concludes, the charity with which we love God and neighbor is not itself the divine charity but is a participation in divine charity.

we call charity is not simply the Holy Spirit, since the Holy Spirit is immutable, but that in the movement of the soul to love God and neighbor the Holy Spirit moves the soul directly without any intermediary habit. It is Lombard's understanding of charity as an immediate result of the Holy Spirit's action rather than as a habit created in the soul that Thomas seeks to correct.

By way of background, we should observe here that Lombard's I *Sent.,* d. 17 has for its subject the invisible, temporal mission of the Holy Spirit. The presentation of this mission occurs within a set of distinctions which teach that the eternal and temporal processions of the Son and Holy Spirit do not negate the coequality of Son and Holy Spirit with the Father.[32] As a temporal mission of the Holy Spirit, charity does not, according to Lombard, imply the loss of divine status by the Holy Spirit. Thus, the charity with which we love God and neighbor, as a temporal mission of the Holy Spirit, is the Holy Spirit.

More specifically, Lombard considers as something of a challenge to his teaching the definition of charity given by Augustine in the *De doctrina christiana,* "I call charity the motion of the soul in order to enjoy God in Himself."[33] As a motion of

[32] Distinction 17 forms part of Lombard's presentation on the difference and yet equality of the divine persons (d. 9-d. 21). This section is divided into three sections: the difference and yet "coeternity" of the divine persons (d .9-d. 18); the difference and yet coequality in "greatness" (d. 19); and the difference and yet coequality in power (d. 20-d. 21).

The section on the difference and yet coeternity of the divine persons is further subdivided into a presentation of the eternal processions of Son and Holy Spirit (d. 9-d. 13) followed by a presentation of the temporal processions of the Son and Holy Spirit (d. 14-d. 18). Throughout dd. 9-18, Lombard teaches that the equality of the divine persons is consistent with the eternal and temporal missions of the divine persons.

Marcia Colish claims that Lombard does not identify the Holy Spirit withthe charity with which we love God and neighbor. "In speaking of the Holy Spirit as the love bonding believers to each other, and to God, therefore, Peter means strictly the effects of the Holy Spirit, which assist man in developing the virtue of charity and other virtues" (Marcia Colish, *Peter Lombard,* vol. 1 [Leiden: New York, 1994], 261). Within the context provided by dd. 9-21, to deny that charity is the Holy Spirit would affirm the inequality of the Holy Spirit to the Father in the temporal mission of charity. It is this seeming opposition between eternal procession and temporal mission, on the one hand, and equality of persons, on the other, that Lombard is combatting.

[33] Lombard, I *Sent.,* d. 17, c. 6. As mentioned earlier, Thomas cites this Augustinian text in the *sed contra* to *STh* II-II, q. 23, a. 2.

the soul, charity would not seem to be the Holy Spirit, since as a divine person the Holy Spirit is immutable. [34]

In response to this problem, Lombard appeals to the authority of Scripture as his model for interpreting Augustine's text. The Book of Wisdom identifies God's wisdom with motion: "in the book of Wisdom it is said about the spirit of Wisdom that it reaches from end to end." [35] Wisdom here is said to be something mobile since by its immobility it reaches all things. [36] In the same way, charity is called by Augustine the motion of the soul not because it itself is moved but because by charity the soul is moved. [37]

This interpretation of Augustine's texts becomes, however, the source for another problem for Lombard. Since faith and hope are motions of the soul and are brought about in the soul by the Holy Spirit, why are they not also identified as charity? [38] Lombard distinguishes faith and hope from charity by arguing that the Holy Spirit brings about acts of faith and hope by means of the virtues of faith and hope. However, with respect to charity the Holy Spirit is present without the medium of a virtue but moves the soul directly. [39]

[34] Lombard divides his presentation in d. 17 into two parts. In the first part, he interprets Augustine as teaching that the charity whereby the Christian loves God and neighbor is the Holy Spirit (I *Sent.*, d. 17, c. 1-5). In the second part, he critically examines a series of texts from Augustine that some would say contradict the doctrine presented in the first half of d. 17. The text of Augustine cited here is one such text. Lombard shows in the second half how properly to interpret these controversial texts. Both M. Grabmann and J. Ghellinck make note of Lombard's dialectical method of reconciling contradictory texts, seeing in it Abelard's influence on the *Sentences.* See M. Grabmann, *Die Geschichte der scholastischen Methode: Nach gedruckten und ungedruckten Quellen* (Graz: Akademische Druck-und Verlagsanstalt, 1957), 378-83; *]*. de Ghellinck, Le *mouvement theologique du XII siecle: Sa -preparation lointaine avant et autour de Pierre Lombard, ses rapports avec /es initiatives des canonistes* (Bruges: De Tempel, 1948), 232.

[35] "in libro sapientiae dicatur de Spiritu Sapientia quae attingit a fine usque ad finem" (Lombard, I *Sent.*, d. 17, c. 6).

[36] "sed quia immobilitate omnia attingit" (ibid.).

[37] "Sic ergo caritas dicitur motus animi: non quod ipsa sit motus vel affectus vel virtus animi; sed quia per earn, quasi esset virtus, afficitur mens et movetur" (ibid.).

[38] "quare non sic dicitur caritas motus vel affectio mentis ad credendum vel sperandum, sicut ad diligendum?" (ibid.).

[39] "Diligendi vero actum per se tantum, sine alicuius virtutis medio.operatur, id est diligere" (ibid.).

While Thomas acknowledges in *STh* 11-11, q. 23, a. 2 that Lombard intended to point out the prominence of charity relative to the other virtues, nevertheless he maintains that Lombard's teaching on charity unwittingly diminishes rather than exalts charity's excellence by denying its voluntary and meritorious character. *As* we shall see, Thomas is able to link charity's excellence with its voluntary character because of Christ's words in John 15:15.

B) Thomas's Interpretation of Charity as a Voluntary Act

Since Thomas seeks to correct Lombard's teaching on charity by presenting charity as a voluntary act, we will need to take note of two important features of Thomas's account of a voluntary act. First, the principle of the act must be intrinsic to the agent who acts. For example, in the free fall of the stone, the principle of movement is intrinsic to the stone, while, in the movement of the stone thrown upward, the principle of movement is extrinsic to the stone *(STh* 1-11, q. 6, a. 1). In addition, we must distinguish, according to Thomas, between those agents perfectly moved by an intrinsic principle and those not perfectly moved. To be moved perfectly by an intrinsic principle requires that the agent possess some knowledge of the end for which the agent acts (ibid.). Thus, even in the downward motion of the stone, the stone does not possess in a perfect manner the intrinsic principle of its motion since the stone possesses no knowledge of the end for which it moves.

Returning to Thomas's discussion of the voluntary nature of charity, we can observe that for charity to be a voluntary act, the principle of movement must be intrinsic to the agent. While the Holy Spirit may be said to move the soul in the act of charity, the principle of this motion cannot lie completely with the Holy Spirit, as if the soul were like a stone moved by some extrinsic principle. "For when the Holy Spirit moves the human mind the movement does not proceed from the motion in such a way that the human mind be merely moved, without being the principle of this movement, as when a body is moved by some extrinsic motive power" *(STh* 11-11, q. 23, a. 2). For charity to be voluntary,

the principle of the motion must to some degree lie within the human agent through the human agent's knowledge of the end for which he acts.[40]

The second necessary feature of a voluntary act is the type of knowledge of the end that the agent must possess. An irrational animal possesses knowledge of the end for which it acts. However, its knowledge of the end is a limited and imperfect knowledge in that it is moved to the end immediately upon perceiving the end *(STh* I-II, q. 6, a. 2). While the irrational creature acts for an end that it knows to be an end, it has no ability to act or not to act for ends that its nature directs it to pursue, and thus acts in an imperfectly involuntary manner.

The rational creature, on the other hand, not only knows the end for which it acts; it also knows the end under the character of an end, or as a worthwhile and valuable end.[41] With this more perfect knowledge of the end, the rational creature can and must deliberate and decide whether to pursue the end or not. Unlike the irrational creature, the rational creature is not moved immediately to the end but is free to act for the end or not to act, depending upon its judgment as to the worth of the end.[42] Thus, with the more perfect knowledge of the end under the aspect of end, the rational creature acts in a more voluntary manner than does the irrational creature.

To return to Thomas's presentation of the voluntary nature of charity, Thomas argues that the Holy Spirit cannot move the will as if the will were an instrument, "for an instrument, though it be a principle of action, nevertheless has not the power to act or not to act" *(STh* II-II, q. 23, a. 2). If the Holy Spirit were to move the will as if the will were an instrument without the agent's more

[40] "The motion of charity does not proceed from the Holy Spirit moving the human soul such that the human soul would be moved only and would be in no way the principle of its movement. This is contrary to its voluntary character in which it is necessary that the principle be in the thing moved" *(STh* 11-11, q. 23, a. 2).

[41] "Perfecta quidem finis cognitio est quando non solum apprehenditur res quae est finis, sed etiam cognoscitur ratio finis et proportio ejus quod ordinatur in finem ad ipsum; et talis cognitio finis competit soli rationali naturae" *(STh* 1-11, q. 6, a. 2).

[42] "Perfectam igitur cognitionem finis sequitur voluntarium secundum rationerr. perfectam, prout scilicet apprehenso fine aliquis potest, deliberans de fine et de his quae sunt ad finem, moveri in finem vel non moveri" (ibid.).

perfect knowledge of the end, under the character of end, then charity would not be a voluntary act.

Clearly, to say as Lombard did that the Holy Spirit moves the will in the act of charity directly and without any enduring habit or disposition in the soul suggests that in acts of charity the human agent is moved either extrinsically or instrumentally and does not act voluntarily. In what way, though, does Thomas's emphasis on the voluntary nature of charity safeguard the excellence of charity?

The words of Christ, "I will not now call you my servants but my friends," cited in the *sed contra* of the previous article, provide an illuminating context or first premiss for Thomas's argument that the excellence of charity requires that charity be voluntary. Servants hold the status of servants, according to John 15, since they do not know what their master is about.[43] In a certain sense, servants act in an involuntary manner when carrying out the master's command since either they do not know for themselves the end for which the master acts or they do not value, as does the master, the end for which he acts. The friend of the master, unlike the servant, grasps the end and appreciates the value of the end for which the master acts. Therefore, the friend of the master acts toward the master's ends in a more fully voluntary manner than does the servant. It is precisely in the voluntary character of the disciple's discipleship that the disciples are now friends rather than simply servants, and it is from the elevated status of being friends with Christ rather than servants that charity derives its excellence.

[43] We have already had occasion to note that in the *Lectura super Ioannem* Thomas characterizes the servant as one to whom the master has not entrusted his secrets. He also, when commenting on John 15: 15, characterizes the servant as one who is to the master "sicut intrumentum ad artificem." For the servant to act of his own will, he must know the purpose of the work undertaken. "[S]ed quando servus operatur ex propria voluntate necesse est quod rationem operis sciat, et quod revelentur ei occulta, per quae ea scire possit quae agit" *(In Joan.,* c. 15, lect. 3, no. 1).

The bad servant is characterized not so much by ignorance as by *superbia cordis,* according to which he attributes to himself rather than to God the good that he accomplishes. "Servus malus ex superbia cordis sui obtenebratus, dum quod facit, sibi attribuit, nescit quid faciat dominus ejus" (ibid.).

Thomas concludes the body of *STh* 11-11, q. 23, a. 2 by calling charity a habitual form. As habitual, charity is "connatural" to the natural power. As flowing from a habitual form which is connatural to the natural power, acts of charity are easy and pleasurable to perform; that is, acts of charity are done voluntarily by the agent. As performed voluntarily, acts of charity are acts done as friends rather than as servants. Nevertheless, charity is a habitual form "superadded" to the natural power insofar as acts of charity surpass the nature of the power of the will. That is, charity is friendship with Christ whose own display of charity surpasses the natural power of the disciple's will.

III. CONCLUSION

In this paper, I have offered an interpretation of the first two articles of Thomas's treatise on charity. We have seen that Aristotle's influence on Thomas's understanding of Christian charity is heuristic in so far as Aristotle provides the categories by which to identify the essential features to any friendship. The specific identity or "content" of Christian charity, however, is displayed in Christ as indicated in John 15:15. The importance of John 15:15 in Thomas's identification of charity as friendship is further seen in his argument that charity is something created in the soul, since it provides the first premiss for that argument. Finally, in addition to presenting what I take to be a more adequate interpretation of Thomas's understanding of charity as friendship than that given by Jones and Wadell, this paper illustrates a manner of reading the articles and questions of the *Summa Theologiae* in which Scripture is seen to be Thomas's primary authority.

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KRETZMANN'S THEISM VS. AQUINAS'S THEISM: INTERPRETING THE *SUMMA CONTRA GENTILES*

THOMAS S. HIBBS

Boston College
Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts

WORK on Aquinas's *Summa contra Gentiles*[1] ends simultaneously to put into question the traditional ssessment of it as a missionary work and to elevate its philosophical and theological significance in Aquinas's corpus.[2] In his recent book, *Metaphysics of Theism: Aquinas's Natural Theology in Summa contra Gentiles I*,[3] Norman Kretzmann rejects not only the missionary thesis but a broadly apologetic one as well. The problem with the latter is that Aquinas is "not answering objections to the faith"; his approach is not "reactive" (46-47).

In this first volume of a projected three-volume study of *Summa contra Gentiles* I-III, Kretzmann sets out to confront the first book on its own terms and in detail. His project is philosophically ambitious, an attempt to reconstruct and clarify

[1] Work on this essay was supported by a grant from the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation through the Institute of Medieval Philosophy and Theology at Boston College, directed by Stephen Brown. I am grateful to John O'Callaghan and the anonymous reviewers of this essay for *The Thomist* for their criticisms of a previous draft of this essay.

[2] See R.A. Gauthier, *Introduction historique au tome I de /'edition bilingue de la Summa contra Gentiles* (Paris: P. Lethielleux, 1961), 7-123; idem, "Introduction" to *Somme Cantre les Gentiles* (Paris: Editions Universitaires, 1993); Mark Jordan, "The Protreptic Structure of the Summa Contra Gentiles," *The Thomist* 50 (1986): 173-209; Thomas Hibbs, *Dialectic and Narrative in Aquinas: An Interpretation of the Summa Contra Gentiles* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995). For a summary of the interpretations of the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, see *L'Initiation a Saint Thomas dAquin: Sa personne et son oeuvre*, by Jean-Pierre Torrell (Paris: Editions Cerf, 1993).

[3] Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997. Unless otherwise noted, page references in the text are to this book.

some of the key arguments in the first book. Indeed, his approach has the advantage of treating the *Summa contra Gentiles* as having a distinctive aim, not one that is merely a stage in the development of Thomas's theological writings. It thus circumvents one of the chief obstacles to uncovering the intention of the *Summa contra Gentiles:* the tendency to read it as an imperfect realization of what is later achieved in the *Summa Theologiae,* as perhaps the penultimate stage in what Michelle Corbin calls the *chemin* of Thomas's thought. [4]

The Metaphysics of Theism offers more than a commentary on ScG I; it also provides an intriguing, if finally unpersuasive, claim about Aquinas's intention and strategy in composing the entire *Summa contra Gentiles.* To state Kretzmann's thesis with introductory brevity, he holds that the work was intended for atheists, to instruct them in generic "perfect-being theism." As we shall see, the problem with this approach is not just the anachronistic supposition about the audience, which Kretzmann readily concedes did not exist in Thomas's own time. The deeper problem has to do with the imposition of a contemporary conception of perfect-being theism upon Thomas's own distinctive theism in ScG I. Coming to terms with these difficulties will aid us in sharpening our reading of Thomas's work.

In order to bring out the strengths and weaknesses of this interpretation, we will take up four issues. First, we will consider Kretzmann's thesis concerning the intention of the work, whose ideal audience, educated atheists, did not exist in Thomas's own time. Second, we will suggest that Kretzmann would have been on surer ground had he followed through on his own comments about the primacy of wisdom in the prologue to the *Summa contra Gentiles.* Third, we will analyze his conception of the meaning of natural theology in the *Summa contra Gentiles* and its relationship to revealed theology. Finally, we will examine Kretzmann's interpretation of the doctrine of the names of God and the significance of his neglect of Aquinas's most important application of that doctrine: God's knowledge of the world.

[4] See Michelle Corbin, *Le chemin de la theologie chez Thomas d'Aquin.* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1972).

I. A PHILOSOPHICAL WORK INTENDED FOR ATHEISTS?

The Metaphysics of Theism is not merely or even primarily a work of sustained exegesis, since its goal is to put the *Summa contra Gentiles* to use in contemporary philosophical debates. Accordingly, the opening chapter addresses, not the long-standing debates about the *Summa contra Gentiles*, but the contemporary proponents and especially critics of natural theology.[5] Having set aside these objections, Kretzmann advances his own thesis about the work.

Any reader of the *Summa contra Gentiles* must come to terms with a set of *aporiae* that arise from its peculiar structure. In the prologue, Thomas introduces the "twofold mode of truth concerning divine things" *(ScG* I, c. 3). The first mode, to which books I-III are devoted, treats of that portion of divine things amenable to rational investigation, while the second mode, to which book IV is devoted, considers teachings like the Trinity and the Incarnation that utterly exceed rational demonstration. Is the first mode then philosophy? Thomas clearly seeks to avoid the deployment of premises from revelation in the first three books. But the issue is not so simple. Unlike the more purely philosophical project of the commentaries on Aristotle, wherein Thomas follows Aristotle's dicta concerning the proper order of philosophy, which culminates in metaphysics, the *Summa contra Gentiles* is metaphysical throughout.[6] Moreover, by beginning with what is first in the order of being rather than what is first in the order of learning, the work follows an order that Thomas typically calls theological rather than philosophical. Finally, although the consideration of God is part of the discipline that Aristotle calls metaphysics and for this reason metaphysics is sometimes called theology, God enters into that science as cause or principle of *ens commune.* By contrast, theology proper treats

[5] Kretzmann focuses on the work of William Alston and especially Alvin Plantinga, the latter of whom has been a persistent critic of natural theology. Kretzmann concludes that Plantinga's "objection ... is a religious objection directed not against natural theology but against only one possible application of it" (20).

[6] Years ago, James Collins made a convincing case for the proper order of philosophical pedagogy: "Toward a Philosophically Ordered Thomism," *The New Scholasticism* 32 (1958): 301-26.

of God in Himself *(ScG* I, c. 9). Now, the first book of the *Summa contra Gentiles* is devoted to God in Himself. What does Kretzmann make of these difficulties?

He distinguishes between a metaphysics of theism and a theistic metaphysics. While the latter operates within the context of an established theism, the former develops a metaphysics to establish and explain theism (6 n. 8). A related distinction is between natural theology and philosophical theology, only the latter of which includes revealed propositions as part of its subject matter (21 n. 26). The first book presents a "metaphysically based natural theology as the first phase of a systematic presentation of the rest of philosophy." Since the *Summa contra Gentiles* begins from what is absolutely first in the order of being, that is, with God, and then turns to created beings, it has the "natural appeal of beginning at the real beginning," of offering a "philosophy from the top down" (26). Kretzmann holds that the work takes Aristotle's conception of demonstrative science as its model (42). This much is clear, even if some of his descriptions of the relationship between philosophy and theology are somewhat less lucid. One finds him putting forth the following sort of terse description, which remains fairly distant from Thomas's texts. Reasonably enough, Kretzmann asserts that both philosophy and theology treat the "first principles and most fundamental aspects of reality." But then he moves quickly to the opaque conclusion that either theology is part of philosophy or both are parts of the "same genus," which he calls the "Grandest Unified Theory" (22).

Beyond these somewhat fuzzy remarks, Kretzmann insists that the first three books are not intrinsically and peculiarly theological, but rather philosophical, since they do not deploy principles that could be known only through revelation. Yet he also thinks that what Thomas develops in those books is not an entirely autonomous philosophy. Aquinas makes a "special, restricted use of revelation" in his citation of scriptural passages at the end of each chapter. Given his emphasis on the properly philosophical character of these investigations, one might expect Kretzmann to treat the scriptural passages as no more than a nod in the direction of revelation, a momentary advertence that shows the compatibility of what reason has proven with faith. He sees

them as something more, however, even as he tries to downplay their importance. His position on this issue is convoluted at best. Having stated that they are "not much more than an aid to investigation," he adds the much stronger claim that revelation determines the "choice of propositions to argue for and a list of specifications" (7). At one point, he states that they are "never more than occasional guides to its agenda" (50), but in a more forceful expression of their normative influence over the inquiry of the whole work, he states that revelation enables us "to see that reason's results . . . are . . . building up a picture of God 'considered in himself.'" If the normative conception of the divine in *Summa contra Gentiles* is not accessible to reason untutored by revelation, then in what sense is the enterprise exclusively philosophical? What these comments add up to is a deeply ambiguous description of the role of revelation in the first three books.

The ambiguity haunts the entire book. At times, Kretzmann retreats from his initial acknowledgment of a crucial guiding and structuring role of revelation. While the theism of the work turns out to be Christian in the fourth book, there is "nothing distinctively Christian about I-III" (48). In fact, these books teach only "generic theism" and their appropriate audience is "non-Christian." Since it is not a missionary work, or a work of revealed theology, or of apologetics, it is unclear what the audience or intent of the work is. In this, Kretzmann departs from the more accommodating view of the work adopted by Anthony Kenny, who states,

> The *Summa Contra Gentiles* is meant as a philosophical work; it is directed to people who are not Christians, who may be Muslims or Jews or atheists. It aims to present them with reasons-reasons that any human being of good will can see to be good reasons-for believing that there is a God, that the soul is immortal and so on.[7]

Kenny's view of the audience is too broad for Kretzmann. Reiterating his rejection of the missionary thesis, he asserts that the Muslims, for whom many have thought that the work was

[7] Anthony Kenny, *Aquinas on Mind* (London: Routledge, 1993), 13.

composed, do not "need an education in perfect-being theism" (50). Kretzmann further circumscribes the audience of the work; it is intended not for non-Christians as a whole but for only a small segment of them-namely, intelligent atheists. Given the decidedly theistic context in which Thomas is writing, whom could Thomas have had in mind as his audience? Kretzmann is driven to ask: "why would a 13th century philosopher-theologian undertake this?" (43). The astounding response, or lack thereof, is that, when it was composed, the work had "no discernible practical purpose" (51). Having begun promisingly by setting aside the now implausible theses about the intention and audience of the text, Kretzmann proceeds to render the intention of the work more conceivable to us than it was to its author!

In spite of his repudiation of the apologetic interpretation of the *Summa contra Gentiles,* Kretzmann's own description of the ideal reader is not easily distinguishable from the ideal reader posited in an apologetic interpretation. His peculiar thesis about the ideal audience raises all sorts of questions, and not just about this work. Given his thesis, one might expect that Kretzmann's own audience would be contemporary atheists. For example, after urging that the work had no practical purpose "when it was written," he states that it "may have acquired one since." He adds, "Unlike Aquinas, I do know lots of intelligent, educated, avowed atheists" (51). Yet his introduction focuses not on atheists but on theists who have questioned the merits of natural theology for Christians. His only reference to atheistic attacks on natural theology is in a passing footnote (4 n. 7) on Flew and Mackie.

The deeper problem with Kretzmann's thesis is that it renders the text an historical anomaly. That his reading should find itself in this bind is surprising, given his obvious knowledge of the best recent interpretation of the purpose of the work, for example, in Gauthier's detailed philological studies or in Jordan's inquiry into the genre of the work.[8] It is all the more baffling in light of his perceptive opening remarks about the goal of the text. He rightly focuses on two features that are peculiar to the *Summa contra Gentiles* and prominent in the prologue: wisdom and the

[8] In his analysis of the structure and intention of the work, he cites Jordan's "ProptreP.tic Structure" and Gauthier's work four times each.

relationship between philosophy and Christianity (44-45). Both Gauthier and Jordan have had much that is of interest to say about these themes, especially about how they enable us to discern Thomas's fundamental intention and to see it in its historical context. Astonishingly, Kretzmann passes over their theses in utter silence.

As the title of Kretzmann's volume indicates, the focus of the *Summa contra Gentiles* is on metaphysics, the last of the disciplines to be studied within Aristotle's philosophical curriculum. Although Thomas has little to say about the disciplines ancillary to metaphysics, he reasonably presupposes many of its principles and conclusions. The ideal audience of the work is not the philosophical novice, but one who has already been trained in the lower Aristotelian sciences. Philosophical pedagogy begins with logic and mathematics, and proceeds through the study of nature to the intermediate inquiries into the soul and the human good. Metaphysics, or first philosophy, is actually the last discipline to be studied. The structure of the *Summa contra Gentiles,* which is sometimes said to mirror the Neoplatonic vision of the cosmos as a going forth *(exitus)* followed by a return *(reditus),* reverses the natural, philosophical order of learning. Thomas typically describes the *exitus-reditus* order as proper to theological inquiry. This -is where Kretzmann's appeal to the structural advantage of the text's beginning at the real beginning can be misleading. The focus on Aristotle's metaphysics means that its method will not be easily translated to an audience of contemporary atheists. How many contemporary philosophers, let alone contemporary atheists, accept the Aristotelian teachings that the first book presupposes: the doctrine of potency and act, of formal and final causes, and of the existence of immaterial powers, either in the human soul or in a separate substance? Kretzmann himself repeatedly refers to Thomas's assumption of Aristotelian principles, arguments, and conclusions (see especially 93).

Kretzmann might have been better off adopting Kenny's broader conception of the intended audience, even if that conception is fraught with problems of its own. In a footnote, he relates Kenny's response to his objection that the first three books would be wasted on Muslims or Jews: "I don't think Books I-III

are wasted even if the whole thing is meant for Jews and Muslims, They can be regarded as a softening-up exercise, designed to show how much the great monotheistic religions have in common. 'You're with me so far? now let me show you the little extra step you have to take in order to be saved"' (50 n. 37). Set aside the dubious suggestion that Jews or Muslims would regard the acceptance of the doctrines of book IV as a "little extra step"; the problem with Kenny's thesis is internal to the *Summa contra Gentiles.* Thomas begins the fourth book by insisting that probable arguments on behalf of revelation should not be put forth to non-Christians, since they would be led to suppose that faith rests on such flimsy rational foundations *(ScG* IV, c. 1).

II. A WORK OF WISDOM?

Instead of trying to make instant capital out of Aquinas for contemporary discussions, we would do well to pause a little longer over his prologue. Its most striking feature concerns claims about wisdom and the office of the wise, whom Thomas describes as ordering parts in relation to the whole and as teaching the authoritative truth about the ultimate end of the universe. Since wisdom is common to both philosophy and Christian theology, the work promises to do more than fulfill the passing needs of the Spanish mission. It promises to consider the relationship between pagan and Christian wisdom. Kretzmann himself sees the subtle combination of philosophical and theological language in the prologue's discussion of wisdom (44-45), but he fails to see its importance. Instead of being historically pointless, as Kretzmann would have us believe, the work addresses the fundamental question of antiquity and the Middle Ages. Among all of Thomas's works, only the *Summa contra Gentiles* focuses extensively on the great debate of antiquity over the best way of life and over who teaches authoritatively concerning the highest good.

The comprehensive consideration of wisdom, which can be seen only if one reads the work as a whole (that is, books I-IV, not just I-III), has properly theological motives, since the pursuit of wisdom is integral to the Christian life. What could be more

timely than a project devoted to appraising, correcting, and extending pagan wisdom in order to show how it is comprehended by Christian wisdom? Although Thomas never deploys the objectionable phrase "Christian philosophy," there can be no objection-textual, historical, or substantive-to the notion of Christian wisdom.[9] Why not see the distinction between the two modes of truth, in accordance with which Thomas separates the first three books from the fourth, as an attempt to distinguish in order to unite the rival traditions of wisdom? Whatever indirect audience Thomas may have had in mind, he clearly composed the book for a Christian audience. Indeed, the distinction between two modes of truth arises from *within* what "we confess about divine things." The use of the first person plural and the presupposition of an underlying unity to truth provides at least *prima facie* evidence that the intended audience is Christian.

This line of interpretation in no way diminishes the importance of philosophy for the work. It is precisely the intention of addressing the questions of the best life and its authoritative teaching and practice that explains the extended engagement with philosophy. The book persistently underscores both the achievements of and the limits to philosophical inquiry about the highest things. Thomas's understanding of Christian wisdom, furthermore, is a salutary corrective to any sort of Christian anti-intellectualism, since it requires at least some believers to appropriate philosophical teaching and cultivate the intellectual virtues.[10] The advantage of the method and structure of the *Summa contra Gentiles* is that it displays the achievements of and limitations to pagan wisdom in relationship to Christian wisdom. Thus it articulates fully the terms of the debate over the best way of life.

[9] Kretzmann seems to like the notion of Christian philosophy, but he appears to be innocent of the detailed debates over that notion and its applicability to Aquinas's thought among Thomists earlier in the century. For a rehearsal of some of the arguments, see John Wippel, "Thomas Aquinas and the Problem of Christian Philosophy," in *Metaphysical Themes in Thomas Aquinas,* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press), 1-33.

[10] More attention to this aspect of Thomas's project might assist Kretzmann's attempt to engage Christian critics of natural theology like Plantinga. Even once one has answered the objections to the practice of natural theology, as Kretzmann has, there remains the question of why a believer should adopt as positive a stance toward philosophy as Thomas does.

The plethora of references to the wisdom literature of the Old Testament in the first three books further illustrates the centrality of wisdom. Kretzmann returns a number of times to the status and function of these scriptural passages, but nowhere more revealingly than in his discussion of the "metaphysics of Exodus" (128-29). In chapter 22 of the first book, after Aquinas argues for the identity of essence and existence in God, he quotes the famous passage from Exodus 3: 13-14, where God tells Moses that His name is "I am Who Am." Kretzmann thinks this marks the first place in the work at which we "might be said to have some warrant to begin replacing the non-committal designation 'Alpha' with the name 'God.'" [11] When Aquinas refers to the denial of the *esse-essentia* distinction in God as "this sublime truth," Kretzmann describes him as stepping "outside the confines of natural theology." This makes it sound as if this were an unusual practice, but, as Kretzmann notes, Aquinas "steps outside" natural theology to adduce scriptural passages in nearly every chapter. This passing from the philosophical to the theological, from reason to revelation, is the very *telos* of the entire work and anticipates the inscribing of the first three books within the fourth. Consider Jordan's alternative view of the role of the scriptural quotations: "complete persuasion to wisdom is accomplished when the reader sees that the intelligibility of argument leads into the intelligibility of scripture." [12]

The office of the wise, as described in the prologue, lies ambiguously between an Aristotelian and a Christian understanding. Although Thomas sees no incompatibility between the two, the latter is more comprehensive and more fundamental to the *Summa contra Gentiles.* Kretzmann ends his discussion of the intention, method, and structure of the work by quoting Thomas on wisdom: "Among all human pursuits, the pursuit of wisdom is the most excellent, the loftiest, the most beneficial, and the pleasantest" *(ScG* I, c. 2, 8). In his explication of these attributes of wisdom, Thomas associates the nobility or loftiness of wisdom

[11] "Alpha" is name Kretzmann giv,es to the being reached by the proofs in chapter 13, since he thinks that the proofs do not reach God. We shall consider his arguments on this issue shortly.

[12] Jordan, "The Protreptic Structure," 192.

with its uniting man to God in friendship and its utility or its beneficial consequences with its leading to immortality. What other evidence for the primacy of Christian wisdom do we need? Consider, moreover, the significance of the quotation from Hilary in the opening chapter: "I am aware that I owe this to God as the chief duty of my life, that my every word and sense may speak of Him." For Aristotle, teaching is a sign of wisdom; for Aquinas, it is a duty, undertaken out of gratitude.

This reading is congruent with other features of the prologue. First, the goal, as we learn in the opening chapter, is to teach the truth and refute the opposed errors. Second, in the chapter on the book's mode of proceeding, Thomas five times uses a variant of the phrase "to convince an adversary" ("adversarius convinci possit" *[ScG* I, c. 9]). Some see these two passages as supporting the apologetic thesis.[13] However, the work of Gauthier on the term *convincere* renders that supposition dubious. *Convincere* does not mean to persuade but rather to destroy totally. It is thus not part of an apologetic project of persuading unbelievers, but is integral to Thomas's depiction of the office of the wise. Gauthier writes,

> The necessity of the double office of the sage is thus founded not on the need to persuade an adversary, but on a requirement internal to the manifestation of truth itself: in order to be in the complete possession of truth, it does not suffice to have accomplished the first task of the sage; to express the truth, it is also necessary to be acquitted of the second task-to show the cause of the opposed error.[14]

Thomas's fulfilling of the dual role of the sage does not quite suit the almost violent etymology of *convincere* stressed by Gauthier, namely, the extirpation of opposed views. Instead, Thomas seeks to show where and why opposed views go wrong and how the

[13] Corbin resolves the apparent tension between "a theological project *ad intra"* and "an apologetic project *ad extra"* in the following way: "the errors are neither epiphenomena exterior to a disinterested contemplation nor a unique object of attack, no longer in need of inquiry after truth .... The response to the question of truth is identically the response to the problem posed by the errors that he knows, the response for him [ad intra) is identically the response for the others [ad extra)" (Corbin, *Le chemin,* 516).

[14] Preface to *Sententia libri de anima,* Leonine edition (Paris: J. Vrin, 1984), 289-94. See also Gauthier's *Introduction* (1993), 147-56.

partial truths contained in fallacious opinions can be salvaged by a more comprehensive account. His practice reflects Aristotle's conception of dialectical reasoning; as he puts it in *Topics* 1.2, the raising of searching difficulties on both sides assists in the detection of truth and falsity. The engagement of conflicting views and the refutation of adversaries are characteristics of dialectical inquiry.

Of course, for Thomas as for Aristotle, the use of dialectic in no way undermines the practice of demonstration. Dialectic is both a prelude and a supplement to demonstration. [15] In the *Summa contra Gentiles*, the most controversial issues (e.g., the nature and scope of divine knowledge, the temporal beginning of the world, the union of soul and body, the ultimate end of human life) contain lengthy dialectical engagements of rival positions and end with a list of the errors that the preceding arguments have refuted. That both are absent from the chapter on God's existence indicates that this was not a matter of serious dispute and that the ideal audience is clearly not, as Kretzmann supposes, atheists.

III. THEOLOGY, NATURAL AND REVEALED

Given Kretzmann's contemporary audience, his emphasis on the opening arguments in chapter 13 is inevitable and perhaps welcome. After all, a countless number of "Introduction to Philosophy" instructors have trotted out the five ways as if they purported to be complete proofs, only to illustrate their logical fallacies and unwarranted assumptions. Kretzmann's discussion of the central argument(s) of the *ScG* I, c. 13 is a salutary corrective to this approach. He see not only that the *Summa contra Gentiles* contains a much longer and more intricate version of the first way but also that this argument presupposes lengthy discussions in Aristotle's *Physics* and *Metaphysics.* He appropriately and helpfully supplements his exposition by recourse to Thomas's commentaries on those Aristotelian texts.

Now, Kretzmann also holds that the arguments in *ScG* I, c. 13 do not attain God, since they fail to prove the existence of a

[15] See the opening discussion of dialectic in my *Dialectic and Narrative in Aquinas* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996), 23-30.

providential governor of the universe. That notion of God, not reached until much later in the first book, operates as a kind of initial and guiding hypothesis. It is not dear, however, what the source of this notion of God is or that Thomas concurs with Kretzmann in thinking that we have to fulfill that notion to assert confidently that the arguments have reached God. At one point, Kretzmann refers to the monotheist tradition as the source of the hypothetical conception of God. That tradition sets these conditions for divinity: God is transcendent, personal, omniscient, omnipotent, and the perfectly good creator and governor of all things (113).

What, then, are we to make of Aristotle's claim, with which Thomas concurs, that he has reached God in *Metaphysics* 12?[16] Immediately before he turns to the topic of God's understanding, Kretzmann comments that what has been reached up to that point attains what a philosopher would call "god," but that "traditional theists require more" (169). While Aristotle dearly holds that God has understanding, he is silent about whether God possesses will, the faculty that Kretzmann calls the precondition for "choice and interpersonal relations with creatures," which are "components of full-fledged personhood" (218). Admittedly, Thomas thinks that he can develop a conception of God as providential ruler from Aristotle's text, but whether he is right about this and, if so, what precisely God's providence entails are highly controversial matters, not only in our time but also in the tradition of commentary on Aristotle of which Thomas was aware. He puts this debate on the side of what God is, a question we pursue after we have established his existence. We can agree on God's existence while disagreeing about these other matters.[17] In fact, Thomas deploys as his starting point in these disputes the very conception of God as first, as cause, and as immutable that Kretzmann denigrates as merely an "explanatory being," as not

[16] Thomas concludes his commentary on book 12 with following comment: "there is one ruler of the whole universe, who is the first mover, the first intelligible, and the first good, which he [Aristotle] calls God, who is blessed forever. Amen" *(Sententia super Metaphysicam.* [Turin and Rome: Marietti, 1950), XII, lect. 12 [2663]).

[17] See David Twetten, "Clearing a 'Way' for Aquinas: How the Proof from Motion Concludes to God," *PACPA* 70 (1996): 259-78.

meeting the conditions sufficient for divinity (112), and as descriptive of a being whose existence atheists could accept (85).

Oddly, Kretzmann's thesis makes revelation bear more directly and crucialiy upon reason's inquiry than Aquinas does. In this, he has been preceded by a host of Thomists, who did not, however, share Kretzmann's confidence about the autonomous exercise of reason in things divine.[18] They were moved to identify what Thomas was up to in the *Summa contra Gentiles* as a Christian philosophy, not a natural theology. The problem with requiring that the richer, Christian conception of God be reached before we can use the term "God" is twofold. First, it seems to collapse completely the "that" and the "what" questions regarding God. The following statement is indicative of Kretzmann's position. Given all that Thomas does in the chapters following 13 "to argue for such a being's possession of traditional divine attributes, we might think of" the proof "as, even in Aquinas's own view, only the first installment of his argument for the existence of a being that theists would recognize as God" (65). But this is contrary to the explicit words of Aquinas, who ends each of the proofs in chapter 13 with the unequivocal affirmation, "this is God." Second, if it does not collapse the "that" and the "what," it nevertheless is not dear where precisely we should draw the line. When do we have an adequate conception of the divine? Perhaps we could stop, as Kretzmann suggests, with a provident God. But how are we to construe God's providence? Is it sufficient that he exercise a general providence over all things or must we be satisfied only with particular providence? Moreover, the God reached in the first book is not yet the Christian God, that is, a triune and incarnate God. Why not insist that anything less than a Trinitarian conception of divinity is inadequate? Is it not a standard Eastern Orthodox criticism of Western Catholicism that it starts with unity rather than Trinity? There are simply too many places to draw the line.

Thomas avoids all of this by beginning with a much more modest, although adequate, conception of the divine, and he does so in accord with Aristotle's strictures concerning the sort of defi-

[18] See ibid., 259-63.

nition necessary to begin a *quia* proof. [19] All we need in this case, indeed all we can get, is a nominal definition of the being whose existence is sought. Of course, the criteria for an appropriate nominal definition must enable us to distinguish the being sought from all others. The criteria in this case are that we reach a being that is above all things, the principle of all things, and removed from all things. These criteria follow from Dionysius's principle that we know God by eminence, causality, and negation. The operative notion of God, the truth of whose existence is reached in chapter 13, is that of the first unmoved mover. That such a being is one, that he is intelligent and volitional (i.e., personal), and that he is creator and provident ruler-all this must be proven from the supposition that the being fulfilling the nominal definition exists. That is, all these attributes fall on the side of the investigation of what God is.

It is undoubtedly the case that the notion of God with which Thomas commences the proof for God's existence pales by comparison with the God of Scripture. The latter conception is certainly normative, as both background supposition and trajectory of discourse, throughout the whole *Summa contra Gentiles.* In that sense Thomas never prescinds from the truths of the faith. By starting, however, with a minimal conception, he is able to engage a broad range of conceptions of divinity and to correct them on the basis of a common starting point. Once we see that the richer conception of God, the one that comes closer to the God of Scripture, cannot be reached except through an extended dialectical engagement of highly reputable philosophical opinions, we can also see that Kretzmann's claims about the scientific and demonstrative method of the *Summa contra Gentiles* must be tempered.

IV. NAMES OF GOD AND GOD'S KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD

Frequently a naive assumption about the power of language to attain the divine accompanies an excessive emphasis on demonstration to the denigration of dialectic. This does not seem to be the case in Kretzmann's reading of *ScG* I, since he ril?htly stresses

[19] See ibid., 264-67.

Thomas's repeated statements about the limitations to our speech about God. In fact, in the conclusions of the arguments for God's existence, we reach not the very being of God but only the being true of the proposition "God exists." Immediately after the discussion of God's existence, Thomas insists that we must use the way of remotion in trying to reach what God is. *As* Kretzmann aptly notes, the discussion of God's perfection marks a transition from the "eliminative method" to saying something more positive about God, but the transition is attended by greater dangers.

> the results of the eliminative method ... are hardly liable to any kind of misinterpretation. But questions of interpretation arise as soon as God is called perfect. For we can, and sometimes do, correctly use the word "perfect" in talking about daisies or memorizations, having learned the word in such ordinary usage, and the cumulative effect of the eliminative method has been to show us how deeply different God is from any ordinary thing that we talk about. (143)

As Kretzmann notes, Thomas describes the divine perfection in intensive terms having to do with its purity and distinction from all things, and in extensive terms having to do with its containing the perfections evident in every genus of being (141). The consequence is instructive:

> The multiplication of attributes for a simple God is motivated practically by natural theology's need to construct an a posteriori, analogical, piecemeal account of the being whose simple essence couldn't be known to us as such... The complexity of natural theology's theory of a simple God is expressly linked with the extensive aspect of universal perfection. (170)

He then refers to Aquinas's claim that, as a result of our cognitive limitations, "we need to give God more than one name. For since we can cognize him naturally only by inferring *[deveniendo]* to him on the basis of effects, the names by which we signify his perfection must be various just as the perfections in things are found to be various" *(ScG* I, c. 31).

Not only must we multiply the names of God, we must also consider each of the positive names in stages. Having identified a perfection in the natural order, it "must be stripped of any ordinary implications that cannot be associated with God" (176).

Next, the term "must be subjected to an incompletely specified extension beyond experience," since God exemplifies each perfection in a more eminent way. The stages in the consideration of the names of God are "designed to filter out imperfections." Kretzmann's account is correct, even if his use of physical language, which in this case cart be no more than metaphoric, may be misleading. References to "stripping away" or "filtering out" might lead one to think that we could actually produce a purified concept in the way we produce a desired physical object by removing its defects. All that we can do at the level of thought and language, however, is multiply acts of reasoning to correct the limitations of one by the other.

Kretzmann's articulation of Thomas's account of naming by remotion may have a welcome effect on the residual tendency among analytic philosophers of religion to construe religious language in univocal terms.[20] It is odd, however, that he fails to note the most important application, which occurs in the discussion of the nature and scope of divine knowledge, of naming by remotion in the first book: God's knowledge of singulars and lowly things. By far the longest section of the first book, embracing chapters 45-72, treats of the divine knowledge. Although Thomas is not especially exercised by the issue to which Kretzmann bends his analytical and reconstructive efforts, namely, that God is intelligent, he is worried about God's knowledge of things other than himself. So he takes up objections both to the compatibility of divine simplicity with God's knowing a multitude of objects and to God's knowledge of singulars *(ScG* I, cc. 51-52 and 63). The latter issue is particularly contentious among Aristotle's commentators, for the variety in conceptions of divine knowledge arises from differences in the understanding of divine perfection. Thomas makes explicit the link between conceptions of divine perfection and knowledge when he notes that "certain persons try to take away the knowledge of singulars from the perfection of the divine knowledge" *(ScG* I, c. 63). Contrary to what Kretzmann supposes, there is no such thing as

[20] In "Eternity, Awareness, and Action," *Faith and Philosophy* 9 (1992): 463-82, Kretzmann and Eleonore Stump attack simplistic attempts to render the notion of eternity incoherent.

"generic theism," unless that be limited to the minimal, incipient theism we reach in chapter 13. His naive assumption of the possibility of generic theism reposes on his equally dubious belief in the existence of generic "perfect-being theism."

Kretzmann does devote considerable space to the argument establishing that God has knowledge, but he overlooks entirely the most lengthy dialectical segment of the first book, which is devoted to a consideration of received opinions among Aristotle's commentators, opinions that would circumscribe God's knowledge of the world and hence severely compromise his providence. Kretzmann moves quickly from God's knowledge, through his will, to his possession of moral virtues, which fully bring out God's "personhood" (238 and 250). What this occludes is the crucial, intermediate step of showing that God not only is intelligent but also is cognizant of singulars and lowly things. The capacity to love and to exercise the moral virtues entails an apprehension of ultimate particulars. But pagan as well as some Arabic philosophers tend to view the divine perfection as solely contemplative and to model it upon the.life of the philosopher. Crucial objections in *ScG* I, c. 63 to God's knowledge of singulars cite (1) the natural, human ascent in knowledge away from sensible singulars to immaterial universals and (2) the ignobility of lowly singulars. Thomas's response hinges upon a twofold remotion. First, the knowledge of lowly singulars is ignoble only when concentration on lower beings distracts from knowledge of higher things, as is the case with us *(ScG* I, cc. 65 and 70). But God knows all things through one, simple, timeless act of understanding. Thomas quotes Dionysius: "Knowing itself, the divine wisdom knows all things, material things immaterially, divisible things indivisibly, and many unitedly" *(ScG* I, c. 58). Second, not only is God's knowledge simultaneously comprehensive and specific, it is also related to things in a way that is fundamentally different from our intellect's relation to things. Our knowledge is dependent upon and secondary to things and operates by abstracting universals from singulars; God's knowledge, by contrast, is prior to and causative of things. God thus has a practical knowledge of things; his knowledge is akin to the knowledge appropriate to the practical, intellectuaf virtues of art

(ScG I, c. 65). The central teaching here is the doctrine of God as truth *(ScG* I, cc. 59-63).

Throughout the discussion of God's knowledge of things, Thomas's conclusions bring him into apparent conflict with Aristotle and into explicit conflict with his commentators. Thomas must combat the theses that composition and division are essential to truth, that knowledge of lowly singulars is unworthy of the divine, that the infinite and future contingents are unknowable. He does so by insisting upon the proper scope and meaning of terms and by noting their equivocal uses. Thus he uses a number of dialectical strategies from Aristotle's *Topics* 1.

Thomas's dialectical resolution of inherited philosophical problems issues in a more adequate understanding of nobility, perfection, and excellence. The perfection of finite, intellectual creatures, to whom the etymology of "perfection" ("thoroughly made") literally applies, is to move from singulars to universals, from the material to the immaterial. God needs no such process to achieve "perfection." Thomas's response effectively accuses Aristotle's Arab interpreters of an anthropomorphic conception of God, which is a natural result of an insufficient use of remotion in moving from human to divine perfection. This is the crucial and pivotal discussion in the first book of the *Summa contra Gentiles,* the one that paves the way for a provident, Christian God who is active in history. Kretzmann sees the goal of the first book but not the means; he is simply too taken by the contemporary assumption of generic, perfect-being theism to identify the crucial debates and strategies in the theism of Aquinas's *Summa contra Gentiles.*

This does not mean that there is not much to learn from Kretzmann's *Metaphysics of Theism.* Indeed, we should be grateful for his patient reconstruction of some of the arguments of the first book and for his careful articulation of Thomas's doctrine of divine names. But we should not let his agenda determine our reading of the first book, since it obscures from view many of the most important of Aquinas's teachings. The problem is not just that Kretzmann imports anachronistic conceptions of perfect-being theism into his reading. We are unlikely even to begin to appreciate the complex pedagogy of the

Summa contra Gentiles if we begin where Kretzmann does, namely, with the unpromising assumption that the work was composed for an audience of non-existent atheists.

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TORRELL ON AQUINAS

LAWRENCE DEWAN, O.P.

College Dominicain
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

JEAN-PIERRE TORRELL'S recent book [1] is the second volume of his introduction ("initiation") to Thomas Aquinas. The first volume has already appeared in English translation, and was reviewed in these pages. Whereas the first volume had to do with the life and works and general interests of Thomas, this present volume approaches Thomas as a master of spirituality.

This is the work of someone who has spent much of his life frequenting the pages of Thomas, not merely as a source of philosophy or even theology, but, one might say, "the whole Thomas." The method of presentation features lengthy quotation, and the effect is altogether enriching for the reader. Also, the literature, especially but not exclusively that in French, is exploited wonderfully, so that this book is a very precious instrument for further study and meditation.

After an introductory chapter, "Theology and Spirituality," the book is divided into two great parts: "A Trinitarian Spirituality" and "Man in the World and in God's Presence." In other words, the two foci of presentation are God and man. However, since the subject is spirituality, God is being presented as communicating with man, and man as communicating with God.

The role of the introduction is to explain what is here meant by "spirituality," and to show the reader how what is usually and rightly called the "theology" of St. Thomas can be a source of spirituality. I am reminded of the problem described by Etienne

[1] Jean-Pierre Torrell, O.P., *Saint Thomas d'Aquin, maitre spirituel* (Initiation 2), Collection: Vestigia, Pensee antique et medievale, 19 (Paris: Cerf; Fribourg, Editions Universitaires Fribourg Suisse, 1996).

Gilson in his autobiographical work, *The Philosopher and Theology:* how is it that so much *philosophy* is to be found in the works of Thomas, which after all are "pure theology"? Gilson found an answer in what was meant by "theology" in the time of Thomas Aquinas. So also here, Torrell's introduction is spent mainly describing the theology of Thomas, showing why it is a source of spirituality. "Spirituality" here corresponds to the practice of that communion with God here below which leads to life in the vision of God hereafter. Of the many things Torrell says here, the quotation from Gilson seems to me to make the point best: "the *Summa of Theology,* \vi.th its abstract limpidity and its impersonal transparence is, crystalized before our very eyes, the interior life of Thomas Aquinas" (27; quoted from the sixth edition of *Le thomisme* [Paris, 1986], 457).

"A Trinitarian Spirituality." I must admit that this title and this claim seemed to me at first something of an exaggeration. It is true that Thomas has much to say about the Trinity, but should one call his doctrine "Trinitarian," especially if this is meant to contrast with such options as "theocentric" or "Christocentric"? As Torrell says:

> This Trinitarian option has been inscribed in the construction of the synthesis which is the *Summa* ... it is that [option] which permits one to go beyond the simplistic alternatives which are sometimes proposed: Thomas's theology is neither theocentric nor Christocentric to the detriment of one or the other of the divine persons. So also, his spirituality is not solely filial, and no more is it simply Christocentric or Pneumatic, but indeed theologal, Trinitary: each Person is equally present and acting there, and it is the relation to the indivisible Unitrinity which is truly determining. (498)

My reading tends to bear this out. Here, however, I will make a few comments on two areas: (1) the divine names and (2) the Holy Spirit.

I. THE DIVINE NAMES

In the chapter "The Beyond-all" (31-67), the section on the background of positive and negative knowledge of God is

excellent, showing us what Thomas was actually confronted with in formulating his position.

What I notice, however, is the use of texts from different periods when they "come in handy." Thus, the negative approach uses the texts from the *Summa contra Gentiles,* while the *Summa Theologiae* is said to be too brief (39). So also, in a fine paragraph on the importance of Thomas's negative way for one's personal approach to God, a quotation is given from the commentary on the *Sentences* that contrasts the philosophers and the saints as regards contemplation of the divine. This is interesting and helpful, but we are merely given a reference to the parallel in *STh* II-II. I notice that in this latter place, though the doctrine is pretty much the same, there is no longer the reference to the philosophers as contrasted with the saints. One wonders whether St. Thomas thought this smacked too much of "reading the hearts" of the philosophers (43, n. 25).

We seem to hear much more about negativity than would be the case if one gave more attention to the procedure in *S'Th* I, q. 13. Instead, Torrell quickly presents the issue of the primary divine name (45-46), which Thomas only reaches at the end of q. 13. Still, perhaps I am being too hard on Torrell. He stresses the negativity but concludes that, nevertheless, there is an insistence on Thomas's part that we must have some positive knowledge of God, however imperfect, if a negation is to have any worth. [2]

Torrell goes on to talk about the use of the Dionysian threefold approach to God, and uses a passage from Thomas's *In Rom.* I note the care with which Torrell translates; it is the sign of a scrupulous translator that he is obliged to insert, in parentheses, short explanations (a luxury not generally possible from the person doing a translation of a book as a whole).

At p. 54, he says regarding *STh* I, q. 12, a. 13: "at the end of the long question in which he asks about the knowledge of God to which man can expect to come in this life, Thomas sums up thus the results of his proceedings **…** ".Now, in fact, while there are 13 articles in the question, it is established in a. 11 that nothing of what has gone before pertains to knowledge available

[2] Good quotation of *De potentia* q. 7, a. 5 at p. 50, together with a footnote reference to Albert the Great's *Super Dion. Myst. Theo/.* V (ed. Col., 475), contributed by G. Emery.

in this life. Thus, only aa. 11- 13 are about what knowledge one can expect in this life.

To my mind, we might have done better to have more attention paid to aa. 1-6 in q. 13, on the positive, absolute names of God, and how they signify. On pp. 55 and following, we quickly get into the particular names of God which Thomas presents. Torrell speaks of "two privileged names" (55), namely, "God" and "Who is," but his approach seems to obscure the importance of the difference between the two. He begins with the name "a God." However, he is actually rather short on this. Thomas first explains "a God" as the name of a nature, and secondly asks whether it is "communicable," that is, whether it can be said of a multiplicity of things. The answer to this is rather complex, but Torrell rushes with this, speaking only of the case of other things being called "a god" "on the basis of likeness" "according to opinion," thus running together two very different things (55-56).

Thomas actually takes the position that a name can be communicable, that is, sayable of many, either "properly" or "on the basis of likeness." It is said properly when it is said of many according to its complete meaning. It is said on the basis of likeness when it is said of others merely on the basis of something included in the meaning of the name. The name "a God" is not *properly* communicable, save "according to opinion," that is, the *false* opinion of those who think there are many Gods. However, it *is* communicable "on the basis of likeness," not according to its total meaning, but on the basis of something of it: thus, those who participate in something divine through likeness are called "gods." So Psalm 81:6 says, "I say: you are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you."

Thomas goes on: but if you have a name to be applied to God, not on the side of the nature, but on the side of the supposit, that is, considering God as He is a "this something," *as perhaps is the name* Tetragrammaton *among the Hebrews,* it would be incommunicable from every angle.

Next, Thomas asks whether the three uses he has now on the table for the word "god," namely, by participation (i.e., the likeness-based way), according to the nature, and according to

opinion, are said univocally or not *(STh* I, q. 13, a. 10). He answers that the predication is not univocal, but rather analogical. What he means is this. When a believing Christian speaks of the true God, he uses the word to mean the true God; when that same person speaks of the "gods" of the pagans (e.g., "their gods are idols"), he is using the wor'd "god" to mean "what the pagans believe is a God." Thus, the word has a new meaning, but one based on (i.e., including in its signification) the first meaning. Similarly, when God says, in the Psalm, "you are gods" to his saints, He is using a third meaning, but again one including and depending on the first meaning. Thus, the three meanings are analogically related. On the other hand, when a pagan says of the idol: "it is a God," he is using the term in exactly the same sense as the Catholic who denies that the idol is a God. Both speakers are using the word to mean "the true God," and so can contradict each other (cf. *STh* I, q. 13, a. 10, ad 1 and ad 5).

It is only after all of this, in Thomas's q. 13, that we come to the name *Qui est* ("Who is"). The central issue is whether it is the maximally proper name of God. The answer is affirmative. Its propriety is explained by all three arguments: one based on its meaning; one based on its universality, or indetermination or absoluteness; and one based on the "con-signified" time element. The primary reason is clearly the first, since it speaks of what it is to be a name, that is, to be an approach to a thing in function of its form or essence. Since God's act of being is his essence (and this is true only of God), the name based on the act of being is the most suitable name. As Thomas says: "it is evident that, among other names, this [one] most properly names God: for each thing gets its name from its form" *(STh* I, q. 13, a. 11).

It is typical of Torrell's procedure here, highly insistent on "negative theology," that he manages to give this a sort of negative spin, to wit: "no other name could name him with more propriety" (56). It is only in the replies to the objections that "God" and "the Tetragrammaton" come back into the discussion. The name "Who is" is most proper as regards *that on the basis of which* it is imposed. It is true that, if one considers *that upon which* the names are imposed, with a view to signifying that item, then "God" is more proper, since it is imposed to signify the

divine nature itself. And it is in this precise line, that is, the question of "that upon which one is attempting to confer a name," that it is said that the Tetragrammaton is even more proper, inasmuch as one is pointing towards God in his incommunicable singular substance *(STh* I, q. 13, a. 11, ad 1).

I object to Torrell's approach here, which makes it seem as if one goes, as regards propriety, from *"Qui est"* to the Tetragrammaton in a single line of thinking. Rather, it is a secondary aspect as regards the article. The Tetragrammaton is "more proper" than "God" in the line in which "God" is "more proper" than "Who is"; but *that whole line is secondary* as regards the issu.:! of "maximally proper naming." Torrell contrives ultimately to give the crown to the Tetragrammaton (58-59), somewhat in keeping with his insistence on negativity.

One last little criticism: in his presentation of analogy, he tells us that the analogous concept designates a certain resemblance within a *total lack* of resemblance ("une certaine ressemblance a l'interieur d'une *totale dissemblance")* (51; emphasis added), which to me sounds like a contradiction in terms. Though it is true that while creatures can be said to resemble God, God cannot be said to be "like" creatures *(STh* I, q. 4, a. 3, ad 4 and ad 1), and while it is true that creatures are similar to God and dissimilar (ibid.), it does not seem to me right to say that the resemblance is "within" a *total absence* of resemblance.

When all this said and done, the chapter on God as "the beyond all" has much to recommend it, with its ample quotations, beautifully translated, exploiting such a variety of works in Thomas's corpus.

II. THE HOLY SPIRIT

The treatment of the Holy Spirit encompasses three lengthy chapters: "To Speak of the Holy Spirit" (chap. 7); "The Heart of the Church" (chap. 8); and "The Interior Master" (chap. 9). I will confine my remarks to chapter 7.

Chapter 7 can well be singled out as a perfect example of the value of this book and the way it is best read. A first section, occupied with theological considerations, teaches us the nature of

appropriation, as Thomas understood it and practiced it. The rest of the chapter reverts to what Torrell indicates is his "option," that is, to present Thomas by citing texts of Thomas at length.

In what I am designating the first section (203-13), after insisting on how omnipresent the Holy Spirit is in the thought of Thomas, and after mentioning places where the focus is expressly on the Spirit, Torrell says:

> The reminder which we have just made will remain insufficient until we have entered into the texts themselves arid until we have discovered what St. Thomas says about the Spirit and how he says it. But for that one must accept to face the mystery of the Trinity and to inquire about the possibility of saying something well-founded about the particularities of the divine Persons. The theologian must find for us here a discourse which is both subjectively *significant* for our intelligence and *faithful* to the unity of the divine essence. (209)

Speaking of the way to navigate between tritheism and pre-Trinitarian monotheism, he goes on:

> In our Latin tradition, the effort of St. Augustine, carried on by St. Anselm, taken up anew by St. Thomas and the great theologians of the thirteenth century, has been brought by them-at least in what concerns the Trinity-to a level of elaboration difficult to surpass. The theology of the distinction of the persons by their relation of origin is one of the most remarkable examples of that elaboration. There is another which it is important to understand well, because it is one of the rare possibilities that we have to babble the unsayable. It is what is called "appropriation." (Ibid.)

The idea of appropriation is to use a common name in the role of a proper name. Thus, Rome is called "The City" *(par excellence).* In the case of the Trinity, one uses names which are really true of the divine essence (and thus are common to all three Persons), but one applies them to one Person, because of a resemblance of the essential attribute to the personal relation proper to that Person. Thus, "wisdom" is appropriated to the Son or Word, and "goodness" is appropriated to the Holy Spirit. Torrell quotes Thomas as follows:

> With a view to clarifying the faith it was fitting that essential attributes be appropriated to the Persons. For though it is true that the Trinity of Persons

cannot be proved demonstratively, as was shown earlier, it is fitting, nevertheless, that it be clarified by some more evident things. But the essential attributes are more manifest to us through reason than are the properties of the Persons; because [starting] from creatures, from which we acquire knowledge, we can come with certitude to a knowledge of the essential attributes; but not to a knowledge of the personal properties, as was said earlier. Therefore, just as we use the likeness found in creatures whether [at the level] of vestige or of image in order to manifest the divine Persons, so also [we use] the essential attributes. And this manifestation of the Persons through the essential attributes is called "appropriation." (*STh* I, q. 39, a. 7; quoted by Torrell at 210)

Torrell speaks of this text as providing the "subjective" foundation for appropriation, in that it provides the theologian with a certain understanding of the mystery. But he notes the danger that this could lead to fantasy. It is thus important to see what justifies the procedure *objectively.* Here we are given a quotation from I *Sent.,* d. 31, q. 1, a. 2:

Although the essential attributes are common to the three [Persons], nevertheless one [of them] as regards its own intrinsic intelligibility has more likeness to the property of one Person than [to that] of another, and hence can fittingly be appropriated to that Person. For example, "power" has in its notion the intelligible note: "principle," and so it [i.e., power] is appropriated to the Father, who is a principle not from a principle; and "wisdom" [is appropriated] to the Son, who proceeds as a word; and "goodness" to the Holy Spirit, who proceeds as love, whose object is the good. And thus the likeness of the [item] appropriated to the property of the Person constitutes a fittingness of appropriation *in the thing itself* [being discussed][ex *parte rei],* which would be the case even if *we* [who make the association] did not exist. (212)

Thomas is insisting on the objectivity of the procedure. As modest as are the results, the theologian can accord it a limited validity.

All this discussion is to prepare the mind of the reader for the reading of a set of texts presented by Thomas in *ScG* IV, cc. 20-22. After having explained inc. 19 that the Holy Spirit is the love proceeding interiorly from the Father and the Son, Thomas goes on in cc. 20-22 to explain the effects attributed to the Holy Spirit in Scripture: c. 20 discusses the effects applying to the whole of creation, c. 21 those pertaining to the gifts of God to the rational creature, and c. 22 bears on the Spirit moving the rational creature towards God. Torrell takes us through the

chapters, quoting at length from Thomas, and one sees how the property which is love makes sense of the many effects which Scripture traces to the Spirit. Only a reading of Torrell in pages such as these will show just how truly this book is presenting Thomas as a master of the spiritual life.

This is a book which one should own, and thus be able to savor it from time to time. Those who read French can do so now, and it is to be hoped that it will soon be available to the English-reading public.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Word Made Strange: Theology, Language, and Culture. By JOHN MILBANK. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997. Pp. 292. $59.95 (cloth), $23.95 (paper). ISBN 0631-20335-4 (cloth), 0631-20336-2 (paper).

It is the rare work in contemporary theology that generates a sense of intellectual excitement. Without intending to suggest that my own reading has a peculiar, normative status, this is the sort of experience that I think prospective readers of John Milbank's book can anticipate, and for a variety of reasons. In the first place, it is a conspicuously and consistently thoughtful book; the author's keen intelligence is displayed throughout. Moreover, it is highly *opinionated*, a book in which Milbank is not content simply to summarize or explicate alternative perspectives. These are typically portrayed as erroneous perspectives; once submitted to critical scrutiny and exposed as problematic, they are vigorously rejected. Finally, the point of view that emerges as superior and so as preferable to these various alternatives is itself characterized by a certain "strangeness."

This strangeness, as the title of the book serves to indicate, is not regarded by the author as an undesirable quality, as something to be avoided or suppressed. Echoing Hans Urs von Balthasar, Milbank argues for the necessarily strange, even "shocking" quality of the divine revelation, as it is embodied in orthodox Christian tradition and faithfully represented or (as Milbank puts it) "re-performed" by Christian theologians (1). Indeed, if the substance of this "good news," the truth of Christianity, has ceased to seem surprising to us, it is both because modernist sensibilities effectively tend to distort or obscure it and because much of contemporary theology can be judged as inauthentic. Some of the "strangeness" of Milbank's discourse, then, appears to be a designed rhetorical feature of the text, intended, at the very least, to capture the reader's attention. As the Catholic novelist Flannery O'Connor once suggested, when people are hard of hearing, one shouts. (I am not implying that Milbank shares O'Connor's stylistic predilection for hyperbole or for the grotesque. He speaks more softly, but nevertheless waves a big intellectual stick.)

One factor that nourishes this sense of strangeness is the novel (but not unprecedented) interweaving in Milbank's argument of postmodern philosophical with traditional Christian theological perspectives. Here Augustine and Aquinas encounter Derrida, with a result that is frequently quite extraordinary. What is not so novel in all of this is the virtually wholesale

rejection of "modernity." In that regard, Milbank has plenty of company among contemporary theologians espousing a postmodern or a postliberal point of view.

The book consist of twelve essays, organized as pairs into six parts. All except one of the essays have been previously published; of these, all have been significantly revised. Collectively, they represent both the extension and the elaboration of a project that Milbank initiated in an earlier work, *Theology and Social Theory,* a book published in 1990 and subsequently the focus of a good deal of theological conversation.

The scope of this project is enormous and ambitious; the range of Milbank's erudition is comparably impressive. In a review of this sort I can only hope to capture something of the flavor of the whole, to identify several distinctive subplots of his grand narrative, and to offer a few comments in passing.

In one way or another, all of these essays "take language as their subject matter" (2). The postmodern tenet that all meaning is linguistically mediated might be perceived by some theologians as a relativizing threat to the privileged status of distinctively Christian meanings. Rather than reject such a tenet, Milbank embraces it, but recasts it in distinctively theological terms. Reality is always already linguistic. Extending the interpreted insights of Berkeley, Hamann, and others, Milbank attempts to develop a "theory of human being as linguistic being which participates in the divine linguistic being."

While the initial contention about meaning may have a postmodern inspiration, there is nothing postmodern about Milbank's appeal to Christian doctrine or his privileging of the Christian narrative in order to interpret this claim. On Milbank's account, the key to understanding how language works or what "meaning" means is the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. This account culminates in his proposal for a "Christological Poetics" (chap. 5). Not only is Christ the "proper word for God," but the appropriate human response to that word is to regard "our entire lives as nothing but an interpretation of Christ as presented to us in the Scriptures and in the Sacraments" (139).

Along the way to such conclusions, Milbank wastes no opportunity to show how modern thinkers and modernist, Enlightenment perspectives have worked historically to cloak these insights both about the divine nature and about the nature of language. Indeed, the roots of the Enlightenment run deep, so that even the late thirteenth century proves not to be a haven safe from Milbank's critical gaze. I refer, in particular, to his negative portrayal of Duns Scotus and of the legacy of Scotism. This may seem like a minor point in a text so richly populated by historical figures and thick in historical analysis. But this particular figure, it seems to me, plays a pivotal role in Milbank's account; the issue addressed here is an enormously difficult but crucial one.

The argument about Scotus appears in several places, but it constitutes a major theme of chapter 2, within the context of a penetrating (if not always persuasive) critique of the theology of Jean-Luc Marion. Scotus is said to be

guilty of an "idolatry towards creatures" a consequence of his having formulated and embraced the doctrine of the univocity of being (see 44). This doctrine asserts that there is a concept of being that is univocal in respect to both God and creatures. For Milbank, the result would appear to be a threatening of divine transcendence, an elevating of being over God, and "the placing of God within a predefined arena of being." Herein lie the origins of "ontotheological idolatry," the seeds of a thoroughly modernist metaphysics, completely autonomous, independent of theology.

One may or may not share Milbank's agenda here (I do not): to "evacuate" all philosophy as metaphysics in favor of theology, leaving the former "as the empty science of formally possible perspectives and empty *aporias."* (Ironically, this is the sort of "theologism" of which Scotus himself has been mistakenly accused.) My more immediate concern is that this seems to represent a serious misunderstanding of Scotism. Von Balthasar and Deleuze may both be lurking in the background here: the former, because he articulated a similar assessment of Scotus (for example, in the opening pages of the fifth volume of his theological aesthetics); the latter, because he celebrated the univocity of being (in *Difference and Repetition),* while at the same time concluding that it signifies among all things a perfect equality of being; the upshot of this theory is "nomadic distribution and crowned anarchy."

Admittedly, Scotus is a notoriously difficult thinker, vulnerable to misinterpretation. Nevertheless, this interpretation pays insufficient attention to the great care with which Scotus distinguished the "internal modes" of being, its grades of perfection. Being in itself is an utterly simple, empty concept, completely indeterminate. It is determined, indeed perfected, only in its modes as finite or infinite. God is, for Scotus, "infinite being," who exists (as necessary, uncreated, perfect in attributes, etc.) in a manner totally different from finite creatures. Scotus never denied the analogy of being, only the analogy of "to be." Indeed, analogy itself presupposes a univocal concept of being.

Had Milbank traced the legacy of Scotus to its modern development in Peirce rather than to Deleuze's postmodern musings, his story would be different, albeit no less complicated. For Peirce, the concept of continuity (his *synechism)* plays a role similar to that of univocity in Scotus's system: it is the objective basis for human knowledge of God, but this is a highly imperfect knowledge of a perfect being whose transcendence is guaranteed by the divine infinity. For both thinkers, that knowledge is a form of abstraction; in Peirce's philosophy it must also always be analyzed as a form of semiosis. Here a metaphysics of determinacy and indeterminacy, along with the logic of vagueness, function much as the doctrine of analogy did for Aquinas. I belabor this point because I am struck by how Peirce and Milbank represent such dramatically different general perspectives (Peirce is, surely, an "ontotheological idolator"), and yet the former's "theosemiotic" resonates in certain remarkable ways with Milbank's proposed "poetics."

A related, but quite different point: Marion and Milbank both show great insight in linking talk about the indifference of being (to its various modes of determination) to talk about the indifference toward being, indeed, a *boredom* with being (48, 52). Milbank wants to deepen this insight, in considering the possibility of a "boredom about Charity," the essence of *acedia.* His observation is a significant one (although here again it is attached to his distinction between "true being,'" as "intrinsically loveable," and "bare, univocal existence"). At the same time, this indifference can take a more virtuous form *(apatheia),* not opposed to love, but rather one of its essential prerequisites. This last point receives extended consideration when Milbank turns, with impressive results, to the interpretation of Gregory of Nyssa on *apatheia,* in chapter 8.

Much of my attention has been focused on the book's first two chapters, especially the second ("Only Theology Overcomes Metaphysics"), an essay that I will admit to having found as fascinating as it is (for me) problematic. My preoccupations should not obscure, however, the consistently brilliant quality of the various essays in this collection. Milbank's conception of theology as "non-violent semiosis," a theology "without substance," is sketched in the third and fourth chapters. The upshot is not a theology of culture, but rather the absorption of culture into theology, here, a theology that can "think unlimited semiosis" as postmodernism does, but without collapsing into nihilism.

Within these deliberations, one can already detect the outlines of a Trinitarian theology (and a theology of the Trinity), the fuller development of which will occupy the central chapters of the book (in sections labeled "Christos" and "Pneuma"). Here the continuing attack on Christian liberalism and Enlightenment ideology is overshadowed by a sustained, and often dazzling, exercise in constructive theology, to which no brief review could do justice. Especially noteworthy is the ingenious development of the doctrine of the Spirit, Milbank's "theopneumatics," as it unfolds in the essay on "The Second Difference" (chap. 7).

In the final chapters of the book, Milbank turns more directly to issues of ethical and political significance. His meditations on the divine gift and on *caritas* bear fruit in chapter 9, in his proposal to reconfigure the "ethics of virtue" as an "ethics of gift." Here Milbank succeeds in portraying, once again, the wonderful strangeness of a distinctively Christian morality. The book concludes in a more critical tone of voice, taking on Reinhold Niebuhr, eco-theology, and Catholic social teaching in three successive essays. In the chapter on eco-theology ("Out of the Greenhouse"), Milbank displays how a sharp wit and scathing sense of humor can also serve as key tools in his critical arsenal. The treatment of Sallie McFague is a bit harsh and the talk about the cultural hegemony of modernist "Science" may be a bit paranoid; but I found his argument here to be forceful and persuasive.

Even where I am not persuaded by Milbank's arguments, I cannot help but admire the skill and intelligence with which he formulates them. That, again,

is why this book is an exciting one, and to be recommended to anyone who takes the task of contemporary theology seriously.

MICHAEL L. RAPOSA

Lehigh University
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

Nicholas of Gusa: Selected Spiritual Writings. Edited by H. LAWRENCEBOND. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1997. Pp. xxi + 362. $24.95 (paper). ISBN 0809136988.

This book represents a major step forward in the introduction of Cusanus to English-speaking readers. Never before have the major spiritual writings of Nicholas been bound together in such a well-informed single volume. The book contains historical material, interpretive guides, and a brief glossary of terms that will be helpful to future first-time readers of Nicholas's works.

Given the tenaciously neologistic style of Nicholas's philosophical Latin, no translation into Englishwill leave all interpreters satisfied. In comparison to the most prolific and widely respected English translator, Jasper Hopkins, Bond's style is far less literal and more in accord with the fluidity of spoken English. Bond is wise to leave key terms like *possest* and *posse* itself untranslated. Ample footnotes offer variants and justifications in places in which Bond knows no single English rendering is definitive. Masculine personal pronouns which refer to God, however, are generally translated as "God," which is an anachronism introduced without explanation. Similarly, the rendering of *homo* as "human" and "human being" in the third, Christological book of *On Learned Ignorance* has the unintended consequence of making the uniqueness of the God-man's humanity into a more generic abstraction than Nicholas intended.

Nicholas of Gusa also proffers a *comprehensive* mterpretation of Cusanus's life and thought on a scale that few Cusanus scholars have hazarded. Bond's general approach to Cusanus's thought is to see himself as part of an open-ended "quest for the historical Cusanus." He states: "[Cusanus] writes philosophy but more as *therapeia* and as *cura animarum* than as *logica"* (17). One could expect to leave a Scholastic disputation in the Middle Ages with a true proposition in hand, and this was no small accomplishment. Cusanus's style of writing, however, disavows this form of pedagogy. Bond therefore refers to Cusanus's philosophical and theological musings as a "ministry" carried out to heal the soul.

Another central (and more highly problematic) thesis of Bond's introduction is that Cusanus's philosophical position changed considerably in the course of his life. The philosophical notion of progress is a key element in reading Bond's *Nicholas of Gusa.* In his learned preface to the work, Morimichi Watanabe accurately notes that "this 'progressive' interpretation of Cusanus's views on God . . . began to be stressed only relatively recently by some Cusanus scholars" (xvii). Not only does a certain confidence in historical progress structure the introductory essay, but it presumably also guided the selection of texts and the decision to place them in a chronological order.

Bond labels the first stage of Cusanus's writing career as "coincident theology" (1440). Inspired by a shipboard experience of divine illumination, Cusanus in this early period "views the coincidence of opposites as a revealed notion ... that may be characterized as ignorance, or better, sacred ignorance" (21). Recognizing the divine source helps to explain the meaning of coincidence. God grants Cusanus a vision of what it would mean to apply the mathematical notion of the infinite to theology. The infinite, by definition, precedes all plurality and differentiation (22). If at true infinity all differentiated, finite things are one, then the coincidence of opposites can serve as a method "that resolves contradictions without violating the integrity of the contrary elements and without diminishing the reality or the force of their contradiction" (22). This method is then applied to the three principal topics of *On Learned Ignorance:* God, the world, and Christ. In his treatment of *On Learned Ignorance,* Bond emphasizes that God, who is not himself the coincidence of opposites, is nonetheless thought as an absolute maximum in whom opposites coincide antecedently (24).

Most creative in Bond's interpretation is his argument for a method of "coincident theology" which stands apart from the particular applications employed in *On Learned Ignorance.* This method will take into account crucial distinctions regarding the meaning of "coincidence" and offer the theologian three "remedies" for understanding "sacred ignorance." First, the coincident theologian can adopt "the vantage point of *utter simplicity* prior to contradiction" (29). Since all contradictories coincide in God, the theologian must conceive of them as antecedently existing in their own most simple beginning. Second, all theological problems must be formulated in terms of their *relation to infinity.* Third, coincident theology valorizes *symbolic* language. Diagrams and mathematical illustrations can be employed but only to lift the mind to a transcending view, to an "intellectual vision" which seeks to gaze above the meaning *(vis,* which *pace* Bond should not be translated in this context as "force") of words (29).

Bond's interpretation at this first stage is quite innovative. The "method" of coincidence has "clear reformative implications," which "challenge certain conventional ways of constructing and solving theological problems" (32). Closely allied with the impulse for reform is a solid grounding in human expenence:

> To Cusa, the relationship between epistemology and the proper application of the coincidence of opposites is critical. Knowing precedes theologizing, just as experience precedes understanding. (34)

In a word, coincident theology is based on the experience of the infinite, unknown God. Mathematical illustrations and symbolic language are aids in the process of mediating what sacred ignorance can only receive as a self-disclosure from above.

What is genuinely novel in Bond's coincident theology? First, with Ulrich Offermann (but also building on his influential essay from 1974 on the centrality of Christology in Cusanus's reconstruction of theology), Bond emphasizes the Schellingian mediation of the absolute in human history. Second, one cannot help but notice that Bond has transported Cusanus's thought into a world of theological interpretation marked by the influence of Friedrich Schleiermacher. In other words, learned ignorance is given from above in an experience of absolute dependence. That experience is prethematic. It precedes conceptualization and symbolization. The task of theology is to put in discursive and conceptual terms a prior and immediate experience. This elevation of experience as unthematic but capable of being conjecturally expressed represents, I think, a new departure for the interpretation of Cusanus, one which may indeed find itself at home among contemporary Protestant and Catholic theologians whose thought is shaped by Schleiermacher's account of Christian experience.

The second stage in Bond's "progressive" interpretation of Nicholas's thought is marked by "agnostic spirituality." According to Bond, *On the Hidden God* and *On Seeking God* make the case for a theology of *unknowing* God more forcefully than *On Learned Ignorance.* The first treatise, a dialogue, unravels the following enigmatic response of the figure representing Christianity to the so-called pagan: "It is because I do *not* know that I worship." Ignorance is revealed to be something beyond a simple limitation of knowledge. Ignorance can also signify "not knowing by possessing something other than knowing, something greater and fuller and utterly transcendent" (38).

In the treatise *On Seeking God,* Cusanus develops *ocular* metaphors for describing the ascent of unknowing. The highest form of seeing God is devoid of sensible *and* conceptual objects. God is not even known in human subjectivity. The worship of the truth, the theme of the first treatise, is finally disclosed to be "God knowing in us." Contemplation therefore is utter receptivity, an inversion of the traditional understanding of moving from analogies in the world to knowledge of God. In Bond's opinion, even the idea of "God" is a hindrance in this process: "contemplation is receptivity to mystery .. beyond knowing and not knowing, God and not God, never merely God" (43).

Bond maintains that the third stage of Cusanus's development, "mystical theology," begins in 1453 with the publication of the treatise *On the Vision of*

God. This work represents "a fresh application of coincidence, taking the concept to the depths of personal experience with God" (44). In this treatise the method of coincidence and specifically its capacity to employ "iconographic language" is brought to bear on the task of mystical theology. The coincident method has two functions: (1) to evoke the vision of God as knowledge and experience of God and (2) to describe the process and context of what is "seen" through mysticai theology. Bond does not see a wholly new point of departure in the third stage. He says rather that Cusanus applies his "method" to a new set of problems. The self-disclosiveactivity of the infinite in the finite is still the guiding norm. What is perhaps new is that Cusanus now applies his incarnational theory of symbolization in a more *affective* and *emotional* manner. As Bond writes: "the function of language in mystical theology ... is to do more than depict; it is to arouse, to kindle, to stir the soul, not to grasp knowledge, but to receive the presence of God in the rapture of the intellect by submission to the Word" (55).

The fourth stage of Bond's progressive interpretation is entitled, "God without Being." Relying upon the research of the late F. Edward Cranz, Bond argues that a radical shift takes place in 1464 with the composition of *On the Summit of Contemplation.*

> What Cusa attempts to achieve in *On the Summit of Contemplation* is *no mere tinkering* or fine tuning of terminology. For Cusa, this work is intended to complete, to finish, and to redirect his earlier speculations, although not to contradict .... This final composition provides a hermeneutic and a key for unlocking Cusa's theology. (70)

For Bond there are two reasons for believing that a radical shift took place in Cusanus's last work. First, the dialogue introduces a cipher for God which is supposed to surpass all previous symbols and conjectures. From the summit of contemplation, Cusanus is able to view *posse ipsum-* "to be able itself." This vision ("which he considers most secret") is said to be even closer to the ultimate "whatness" of things than the linguistic symbol introduced in 1460, *possest-a* neologism derived from *posse est,* roughly translatable as the actual existence of possibility.

A second phrase in *On the Summit* also indicates a break with the previous writings. Nicholas, having been rapt for several days on the Easter mysteries, asserts that *posse* itself appears to him much more clearly than any of the mystical visions he described elsewhere: "The clearer the truth is the easier it is. I *once* thought that it could be found better *in darkness."* The vision of *posse* itself is so powerful that the Cardinal dispenses with his admonition in *On the Vision of God* that the truth could be known only in darkness. He has reached the summit of contemplation and is putting into words what he sees *clearly* from this vantage point.

The "progressive" interpretation concludes with this final, all-consuming vision. One must enter into the thought process of Nicholas to understand just how radical a step is being made. Anyone can reproduce the thought that if something exists, then it also *can* exist. But Cusanus claims to have "seen" even more than the actual existence of possibility itself. *Posse* itself is the non-existent, self-subsistent exemplar of particular possibilities, for example, the possibility to exist, to live, or to understand. God as *possibility itself* is *not a super-possibility* which makes it possible for other possibles to exist. God is simply *posse* itself, God without the being possible of any possible possible. (As the allusion in the sub-title indicates, this is where Cusanus and "post-Heideggerian" thinkers like Jean-Luc Marion might have some common ground.)

Bond's progressive interpretation may lead Cusanus's reader to adopt the mistaken view that he intended to include temporal, historical progress in his vision of the truth. The progressive interpretation relativizes the importance of any one insight into the truth in any one writing. This viewpoint, however, can also be relativized. Bond quotes a very significant passage from *On the Summit* in which the Cardinal tells his interlocutor: "You should be willing to turn your mind's eye to this secret *[posse ipsum]* with keen attention *and* by means of this analysis *enter our writings* and your other reading and thoroughly work through our book and sermons" (300). From the summit of contemplation, Nicholas tells his scribe the secret to understanding his writings: you will never understand anything unless you attempt to *read* everything. The true notion of progress must assume that there is both a vertical and horizontal dimension to language.

The very invitation to "enter our writings" offers a profound insight into Nicholas's thought. Cusanus expressed his vision of the truth *in writing.* Bond acknowledges the importance of language as a theme. For Cusanus, writing on the advent of a book culture, disseminating your conversations in a written form is *not* a pale copy of the genuine Word. True insights *can* be expressed in writing: *"Posse* itself manifests itself in all things just as the *posse* of Aristotle's mind manifests itself in his books" (301). The book is an expressive image of *posse* itself because the mind, "like an intellectual book," looks in itself to find the intention of the author. Progress, then, is nothing other than reading in a truly theo-logical manner. The more we look to the world and ourselves to find the true source of their legibility, the more we are drawn into God's own writing. "God's most perfect appearance, than which none can be more perfect, is Christ leading us by word and example to the clear contemplation of *posse* itself" (303).

God's self-expression in a concrete form is what guides Cusanus to see that the brightness of an invisible *posse* itself illuminates the entire world. In the late work *On the Summit of Contemplation,* Cusanus tells his good friend and scribe, Peter of Erkelenz, that his works *can be read* with .the hope of

progressing from his written words to an infinitely expressive Word which God alone can compose.

PETER J. CASARELLA

The Catholic University of America
Washington, D.C.

The Philosophy of Peter Abelard. By JOHN MARENBON. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997. Pp. 373. $59.95 (cloth). ISBN 0-521-55397-0.

The life and work of Peter Abelard have been variously interpreted by scholars of various ages. His contemporaries viewed and valued him primarily as a logician, and David Luscombe's magisterial work, *The School of Peter Abelard* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), reviews the evidence of Abelard's fame and influence as a teacher. Not long after Abelard's death, however, his philosophical (and, to a lesser extent, his theological) works fell into disuse, and his reputation was shaped, or perhaps deformed, by the reading and rereading of Bernard of Clairvaux's attacks. Renaissance and later humanists, particularly Fran\;ois d'Amboise and Andre Duchesne, the editors of the 1616 *editio princeps* of Abelard's works, opened his work to a wider public (despite those works being on the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum).* By the nineteenth century, Abelard had gained the reputation of an innovator, confident in the power of reason (and especially of his own), a tragic though "daring young man" who "brought religion back to philosophy, morality and humanity" in the words of Michelet's *Histoire de France* (1833).

In all periods since the philosopher's death, however, the main entrance to study of Abelard has been through his correspondence. His correspondence with Heloise began to circulate in the thirteenth century, and was translated into French by the author of the famous *Roman de la Rose,* Jean de Meun. From Petrarch to the present day, Abelard is most often first encountered as a controversialist and a lover: a reputation which has won him not a little sympathy, but which has evoked but limited interest in his philosophical works.

The twentieth century has seen a return to an evaluation of Abelard as a philosopher and a logician: this has, in part, been the result of new editions of Abelard's logical works, beginning with Bernhard Geyer's 1933 edition of Abelard's commentaries on Porphyry and Aristotle, and continuing through the production in the 1950s of editions of almost all of Abelard's other logical works.

One of the most recent assessments of Abelard's philosophy comes from John Marenbon, a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, and a prolific writer on medieval philosophy. His present discussion of Abelard is divided into three parts, two of which conclude with an excursus.

The first part discusses Abelard's life and works, and considers the problems of chronology and canon; the excursus concluding this part deals at length and with a good deal of completeness with the question of the authenticity of Abelard's correspondence with Heloise. Marenbon reviews in turn each claim that the letters are forgeries, as well as arguments that the whole correspondence was produced by Abelard as sole author (the thesis of Chrysogonus Waddell, which Marenbon regards as "implausible"). Of more importance, however, is Marenbon's plea for the letters to be read, not in isolation or abstraction, but within the context of their times and of Abelard's (and Heloise's) own thought.

The second part analyzes Abelard's ontology, epistemology, and semantics, showing how he tried to reconstruct the ideas he found in Aristotle, Porphyry, and Boethius to fit his presumption that there is nothing which is not a particular. Abelard's nominalism is fairly and fully presented, and Marenbon introduces each chapter with a clear survey of the passages in the classical authors on which Abelard is commenting. Noticeably absent from this section, however, is any reference to the writings of Abelard's more recent predecessors or contemporaries. His conflicts with his teachers, particularly his rivalry with William of Champeaux and his abuse of Roscelin of Compiegne, are mentioned in passing in the biographical section of this book, but the economy of the presentation of Abelard's logical writings in this section forces us to see these other masters through Abelard's eyes. The presentation also skips directly from Aristotle, Porphyry, and Boethius to Abelard himself, without touching ground in the middle, which is a dangerous way to set up the state of the question.

The third part analyzes Abelard's ethical theory, claimingthat it is far wider and more sophisticated than has been believed. The excursus in this section deals with the presentation of love and selflessness in the correspondence with Heloise, and Marenbon argues that Abelard's attention was drawn to the idea of selfless love not by any masters of his time, but by Heloise herself. Marenbon tends to limit his presentation of the thought of Abelard's contemporaries in this part as well: this becomes a particular deficiency when discussing Abelard's claim that God cannot do better or differently than he does. The critique of Abelard's position by the Porretans, for example, gives an insight into their ability to think in precise logical terms, and to analyze their sources. The fact that Abelard appears to have aimed his consideration of what was the single most controversial question concerning the divine nature to be agitated in this period at Joscelin of Bourges, the logician and later bishop of Soissons, is an important one, if only to remind us that Abelard's writings were not produced in a vacuum.

Marenbon's treatment of Abelard's *Collationes* (translated into English as *A Dialogue of a Philospher with a Jew and a Christian)* is carefully nuanced,

although at several points Marenbon tries to distinguish between when the Philosopher is speaking for Abelard and when he is not. In a footnote, Marenbon himself realizes that this is a difficult exercise of limited usefulness; given the genre of the dialogue, it is virtually impossible to determine with clarity which extracts are to be regarded as Abelard speaking with his own voice, and which are to be seen as presentations for the purpose of furthering the dialogue's discussion.

Marenbon claims that Abelard was not, as he has usually been presented, a predominantly "critical" thinker, but rather a "constructive" one. Although Abelard's thought and writing are reevaluated and discussed in some detail, the antithesis between "critical" and "constructive" made in the introduction and the conclusion is nowhere spelled out. If by "critical" one is to understand "(merely) iconoclast," then the point is well taken; it is also not particularly startling. If by "constructive" one is to understand "systematic," then the contrast is inaccurate. As Marenbon himself admits, Abelard was systematic in his theological works, but was not so in his philosophical works, principally owing to the organization of his philosophical writings as commentaries on the logical works of the ancients. Even within this sphere, there are problems in attaching the label "constructive" to much of Abelard's works: "From the mid-1120s, Abelard became bolder in rejecting the universal applicability of the semantics of denomination," Marenbon writes (150), and then notes that Abelard still did not go very far in providing an alternative semantic or ontological account. Ultimately, the question of what label to attach to Abelard is just that-a dispute over labels, and a not very instructive one at that. The fact that this characterization of Marenbon's is limited to the introduction and the conclusion shows both the prudence of the author and his ability to evaluate Abelard's writings on their own terms without attempting to impose his own structure.

The issue of how "constructive" Abelard was, and the quotation given above, does raise a further interesting insight into Abelard's life and writings. In chapter after chapter, Marenbon notes that Abelard's writings trace a development of thought which takes a different and more radical trajectory in both philosophy and theology after 1120. Abelard's longest period of uninterrupted teaching lasted from 1122 until about 1127, while he was at the Paraclete, and it was at this time that opposition began from Bernard of Clairvaux and Norbert of Xanten. Prior to his move to the Paraclete, most of Abelard's opposition had come from his fellow schoolmasters; after this time, the polemic is evident, and increasingly virulent, from monastic reformers and ecclesiastical authority. Why Abelard's writings can be so neatly divided into pre-1122 and post-1122 is a question which is not susceptible to an easy answer, but which does bear some further study.

Although the title of this work appears to limit the review of Abelard's work to "philosophy," there are, of course, no hard and fast distinctions between philosophy and theology in this period, and Marenbon only rarely excludes

subject matter as belonging to the other discipline. Abelard's ethics, in particular, seems to straddle both areas, and Marenbon's work is generous in what it includes. Marenbon has produced a work which is at once a splendid review of Abelard's philosophy and a welcome introduction to Abelard's life and work. The author's writing is lucid and succinct, and his presentation flows extraordinarily well from chapter to chapter; his references to contemporary scholarship are quite helpful and complete, although given the rate at which Abelard studies are appearing, it is likely that this book's usefulness as a bibliographical tool will soon be fairly limited. It is not likely, however, that Marenbon's work will soon be superseded as a survey of Abelard's philosophy, and his reevaluation of Abelard's work will surely provoke further discussion for some time to come. But provoking discussion is what one would expect from a book about Peter Abelard.

W. BECKET SOULE, O.P.

Blackfriars
Cambridge, England

Final Causality in Nature and Human Affairs. Edited by RICHARD F. HASSING. Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy 30. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1997. Pp. 282. $59.95 (cloth). ISBN 0-8132-0891-2.

As the title suggests, this book addresses final causality in nature and in humans. Each contribution in some way fits the overall thesis of the editor, Richard Hassing, that human affairs are not reducible to any version of unified science; that is, human experience is irreducible and specific.

In addition to the introduction and final chapter provided by the editor, which together comprise 38 percent of the text, four contributions focus on human beings, two on Aristotle's physics, two on the contemporary anthropic principle, and one short offering on terminology.

Discussions of final causality, difficult at best, are frequently contentious because of misunderstandings about words. Francis Slade's clear, concise essay provides an insightful distinction between end and purpose: "Ends exist independently of our willing them .... Purposes take their origin from our willing them" (84). This reviewer employs the terminology Slade suggests, and laments the inconsistency of the contributors in doing likewise.

The four chapters on final causality in humans are as follows. Ernest Fortin provides a clear discussion of the supposed medieval origin of individual rights.

Richard Velkley addresses teleology in Kant. David White continues with a discussion of unity and form in Kant's notion of purpose. John Burbridge completes this focus on the moderns with Hegel. Unfortunately, this last contribution does the least to advance any sort of mutual understanding between the sciences and humanities, one of the editor's primary purposes. Burbridge draws on Hegel's *Philosophy of Nature* in making the following point: "But we do not simply comprehend nature and leave it there. We appropriate it and integrate it into our individual and cultural lives. We use it as technology; we exploit it to enhance the beauty of our cities; we adapt to it so that we can be genuinely free. *The final end of nature is to be incorporated into, and used by, human society"* (161, emphasis added). Little if any comment moderates this passage, which serves only to play to a view of the natural world as opposed to and for the sake of the human world, a view fairly well discredited today.

Of far greater interest, at least to this reviewer, are the essays on final causality in nature. William Wallace's discussion of nature as a final cause clarifies an ambiguous issue in Aristotle, who defines nature as "a principle and cause of motion and of rest in the thing to which it belongs primarily and essentially, and not merely accidentally" *(Physics* 192b21-23). This definition implies that both the efficient cause and, even more intractably, the final cause cannot be part of nature. However, Aristotle also asserts, as Wallace phrases it, that "the three causes (form, agent, and end) *often* amount to one" (63). Wallace goes on to discuss ways of modeling nature in terms of an Aristotelian causal analysis. He concludes by noting the limitations of such analysis. Nature in Aristotle is an intrinsic principle within a body and tends to conserve and to perfect, not to go beyond, that nature. Such an Aristotelian conception of nature, helpful as it is, is not helpful in understanding evolution, a process in which one nature self destructs and gives rise to a new nature. Wallace proscribes a discussion of an evolving universe made up of all the natures we know as subject matter for metaphysics, not physics.

Allan Gotthelf provides a typology of interpretations of Aristotle's teleology and focuses on an answer to the question whether Aristotle's conception of final causality is still applicable in today's scientific context. He concludes as follows:

> on Aristotle's view a "potential for form" involves a *(mmtttve* directiveness upon an end, not a directiveness that is in any way derivative from any material level "mechanism" or "structure" or "intrinsic efficient cause." The existence of such a *primitive directiveness,* made possible by a strongly irreducible potential for form; is the core of Aristotle's teleology, and what differentiates that teleology from the various modern theories to which some interpreters have tried to assimilate it, and with which it indeed has important generic similarities. (81-82)

John Leslie and George Gale each discuss the anthropic principle. Leslie cites Brandon Carter's first articulation of the anthropic principle: "what we can expect to observe must be restricted by the conditions necessary for our presence as observers" (163). This principle, Leslie asserts, "can counterbalance the 'Copernican' or 'cosmological' principle which states that reality in its entirety is much like what you and I see" (164). After providing an overview of the anthropic principle as the result of fine-tuning among cosmologists, whose study has gained a foothold as credible science, Leslie addresses several misunderstandings of the anthropic principle. He next acknowledges the tautological character of the anthropic principle, but argues that it nevertheless retains explanatory and even predictive value by encouraging, if not making, predictions. Leslie describes the teleological or theistic alternative to the anthropic principle as "the theory that God's power and goodness are responsible for our universe's existence and for its life-permitting properties" (184), then notes that such explanations *"compete with* explanations that appeal to multiple universes and to anthropic observational selection. If we accept the one kind of explanation for the fine tuning, then there is less need to accept the other, and the two kinds tend to lead to different predictions" (184).

Gale, as does Wallace, honors a distinction between physics and metaphysics; however, Gale sees the anthropic principle as bringing "metaphysics back into cosmology just insofar as it brings teleological causality into the physical realm" (188). This conclusion follows an informative overview of the history of cosmology leading to the anthropic principle and a taxonomy of anthropic arguments, in which Gale points to the 'quantum observability principle', that quantum variables have no values until measured, to support a parallel anthropic claim concerning the universe. In this reviewer's opinion, quantum effects are, indeed, interesting; however, extending them to the universe as a whole is more than a bit of a stretch. We cannot escape observing from a human perspective; moreover, we can only observe that which affects our senses or instruments. To take all this, as Gale does, in support of what is called "the participatory anthropic principle (PAP): *Observers are necessary to bring the Universe into being"* (209), is entirely too Berkeleyan to sit comfortably.

Despite Gale's overstatements, two points deserve further comment concerning the anthropic principle and teleology in physics. Use of the final cause, or end, in reasoning and explanation in physics is unavoidable if one is to achieve the necessity required for scientific knowledge, as Aristotle states in *Physics* 199b33-200b9:

> If the end will exist or exists, what precedes it also will exist or exists; but if what precedes the end will not or does not exist, then … the end or final cause will not or does not exist if what precedes it will not or

> does not exist. The final cause here, we may add, is also a starting-point, not of *action*, but of reasoning ....
>
> It is evident, then, that the necessary in natural things is what we call "matter" and also the motions of matter. We may also add that both causes must be stated by the physicist, and the final cause more so than the cause as matter, for it is the former which is the cause of the latter, not the latter, of the end; and we may also add that the end is the final cause and that the starting-point is the definition or the formula. (Trans. Hippocrates Apostle)

Examples may serve to illustrate Aristotle's point here. If an oak tree is to exist (the end of generation for oaks), we may conclude, safely, that an acorn must precede it. Failing an acorn, no oak will come to exist within the ordinary course of nature. Thankfully, not every acorn will produce an oak; however, no oak exists save having come from an acorn. This sort of necessity from the end, and the attendant reasoning, was known to *and used by* Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, *and Galileo;* William Wallace has published on all three. In fact, Wallace has shown this sort of reasoning *(ex suppositione)* to be the methodology Galileo employed in the *Two New Sciences.* While the name suggests a similarity, this methodology is not equivalent to the hypothetico-deductive reasoning of post-Newtonian modern science.

If we look at the first articulation of the anthropic principle by Brandon Carter, quoted earlier, "what we can expect to observe must be restricted by the conditions necessary for our presence as observers" (163), the principle seems to state little more than what Aristotle suggests in the *Physics.* If we are to observe something, that something must exist in a way that is accessible to our presence as observers. In other words, we cannot observe that which requires conditions incompatible with our presence as observers. We cannot see electrons, even with an electron microscope, because they are smaller than the wavelengths used in the observing instrument, just as no humans could determine the cause of infection prior to the development of microscopes capable of enabling us to observe We cannot expect to observe evidence of a universe having initial conditions such that we, carbon-based, Earth-dwelling primates, could not have come to exist. We are here and we observe. We observe that which is compatible with our existence; that which is incompatible with the conditions necessary for our existence cannot and will not be observed by us.

The anthropic principle raises interesting questions about the relationship of observer and observed, and provides a much-needed challenge to the mistaken notion of the totally objective, omniscient, non-invasive observer. We, as humans, cannot escape our perspective as observers; in some instances as well, we modify that which we observe by our very act of observation. To take the anthropic principle further, however, by suggesting, as some people

do, that it betokens a special, or privileged, position for humans is both unwarranted and unhelpful.

In the final chapter of the book Hassing presents an outline of a refutation of reductionism and concludes in support of a Platonic sort of dualism. The argument proceeds by way of elimination and focuses on whole-part relationships. As he correctly observes, "the core of the reductionist conception is the old materialist doctrine that complex wholes are in principle reducible to simple parts. The core of the new conception, in fundamental contrast, is that complex wholes emerge in the course of cosmic evolution in such a way that they are, in principle, irreducible to simpler parts" (212). The former alternative he refers to as physical reductionism, the latter as evolutionary holism. He seeks to eliminate each in turn as not providing adequate explanation for human action, which he describes as a result of opinion causing physical motion, and the good causing opinion. Hassing further maintains that this conjunction as uniquely human.

Hassing correctly observes that *some* wholes exhibit an interdependence of their parts which is adequately accounted for by physical determinism. However, such is not the case with all wholes. For example, "living things, the things we call 'alive,' continue to be the most immediate candidates for compounds enjoying this special type of unity; the phenomena of biology compel us to speak in terms of *organic* unity. Atoms, molecules, chemical substances are another example, involving quantum physics" (226). This reviewer agrees that Hassing has shown the limitation and incompleteness of physical reductionism, but considers his further conviction that he has thereby established that "there *can* be psychic causes of physical motion" (226) inconclusive. Such a result would require showing that animals and other living things, as wholes, differ from atoms, molecules, and chemical substances. While such differences may, indeed, obtain, Hassing has not established them in his argument.

He addresses evolutionary holism by considering, in turn, nonequilibrium thermodynamics, nonlinear mathematics, and molecular biology. In each case Hassing agrees that claims within those disciplines establish that certain wholes exhibit characteristics not reducible to their parts. He nevertheless maintains that, while life might be understood within these contexts, none is adequate to explain life.

Has Hassing succeeded in establishing his claim for a Platonic dualism between human nature and the rest of nature? No; he has shown the inadequacy of physical reductionism. He may have shown that living things have certain irreducible characteristics. He has not shown a point essential to his desired conclusion, that reason is a specific, irreducible characteristic of human beings. To establish reason as a difference in kind, rather than of degree, requires more than merely stating it, especially when attempting to enhance dialogue between the sciences and humanities.

The offerings in this collection are of variable quality and interest. Those addressing natural philosophy and philosophical questions about the natural sciences raise some important and interesting ideas worthy of further consideration.

LAURA LANDEN

Providence College
Providence, Rhode Island

Justification by Faith: Do the Sixteenth-Century Condemnations Still Apply? Edited by KARL LEHMANN, MICHAEL ROOT, and WILLIAM G. RUSCH. New York: Continuum, 1997. Pp. 216. $39.95 (paper). ISBN 0-8264-0896-6.

Justification by Faith is a scholarly and focused collection of essays, translated from their German publication, with a very specific reference. Apart from the introductory articles, which serve to orient the issues discussed to the North American context, the essays in this book are the supporting background research for a previous book, also translated from the German, *The Condemnations of the Reformation Era: Do Ibey Still Divide?* (edited by Karl Lehmann and Wolfhart Pannenberg [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990]). That previous book presents consensus statements of German Catholic and Evangelical (mostly Lutheran) theologians on the modern possibility and desirability of withdrawing the mutual anathemas pronounced between Catholics and Lutherans during the sixteenth-century Reformation in regard to three critical issues of current ecumenical dialogue: the doctrine of justification; the sacraments; and the church's ministry (lay and ordained). The book under review here, *Justification by Faith*, presents the papers supporting only the first section, that on justification. Both of these books, taken together, provide the immediate source and interpretation for the formal ecumenical document "Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification," currently being considered for mutual adoption by the Lutheran churches in the communion of the Lutheran World Federation and by the Roman Catholic Church.

Justification by Faith, then, serves the purpose of providing a detailed theological rationale in support of the document "Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification." From that angle, there are no surprises in this volume. All the essays endorse the "lifting of the condemnations" as set forth in the "Joint Declaration," and all the essays are themselves mutually affirming and balancing. The explicit intention of the book, then, is not to debate the "Joint Declaration" but to defend it. The essays provide. the theological

foundations for the "Joint Declaration," and so, taken together with the section on justification in the Lehmann-Pannenberg book, form something of an official commentary on that document. The usefulness of this book, then, is in the close study and interpretation of what appears to be a major breakthrough in ecumenical agreement between Catholics and Lutherans.

There is little reason to attempt to summarize each essay in this review, as William Rusch and Michael Root provide precisely such an article-by-article summary in their joint introduction (2-9). Nor is the order of presentation of the essays necessarily helpful for the reader unfamiliar with or only passingly acquainted with the discussion over the "lifting of the mutual condemnations." Rather than beginning with the technical hermeneutical essays of Pannenberg and Lehmann, I would propose a different sequence of reading the essays.

A perplexing issue in dealing with the question of mutual anathemas is that of determining just what are the condemnations pronounced by the Lutherans, what authority they carry, and who or what exactly they condemn. Unlike the precise list of anathemas from the Council of Trent, the Lutheran condemnations are spread unevenly throughout the various documents that make up *The Book of Concord*, the collected authoritative confessional documents of sixteenth-century Lutheranism. Thus, both Lutheran and Catholic readers first need clarification on this question: Lutheran readers regarding the authority of the confessional writings and their relative importance; Catholic readers regarding the actual target in Catholicism at which the Lutheran condemnations aim.

A Lutheran reader should begin with chapter 6, "Damnamus? The Condemnations in the Confessions of the Lutheran Church as a Problem for the Ecumenical Dialogue between the Lutheran and Roman Catholic Churches," by Gunther Wenz. Wenz demonstrates that it is the irenic Augsburg Confession, together with the positive instruction in the faith of Luther's Small Catechism, that forms the center of the Lutheran Confessions, and that unites the various Lutheran churches in their fellowship with each other and in their attitude toward Rome. The Formula of Concord (which is not received as a Confessional document by many Lutheran churches) and Luther's Smalcald Articles, both of which contain the most pointed and severe anathemas against Catholic teaching and practice, must be read conditionally in the light of the Augsburg Confession and the Small Catechism. Wenz emphasizes that first Holy Scripture, then the ancient creeds, and third the "binding doctrinal norm" of the Augsburg Confession form the three points of confessional unity within Lutheranism. The condemnations expressed in the Formula of Concord and the Smalcald Articles, then, are not to be taken as normative or authoritative, but conditional and contextual, subordinated to the confession of the faith in the Augsburg Confession. From this perspective, the centrality of the Augsburg Confession norms the Lutheran church in continuity with "the unbroken connection to the faith of the Fathers and the continuous agre.ement with the one, holy, universal and apostolic church" (102). The Lutheran reader is thus

guided to measure the common confession of the faith and so the validity of any condemnations in terms of the irenic and catholic position of the Augsburg Confession, and the inherent continuation of the tradition of the ancient church in Lutheranism through the catholic creeds.

A Roman Catholic reader of these essays should begin with chapter 7, "The Condemnations on Justification in the *Confessio Augustana,* the Apology, and the Smalcald Articles," by Vinzenz 'Pfniir. Pfniir develops a single, simple argument that is crucial for putting the Lutheran condemnations into proper perspective: Luther and the Confessions condemn, not normative Catholic dogma, but the specific teaching and interpretation of a particular school of late medieval theology, namely, that of nominalist Scholasticism as developed by the theologian Gabriel Biel. The more normative foundations of Catholic doctrine in Augustine, Bonaventure, and Aquinas remained basically outside the debate of the sixteenth century. As Roman Catholic theology itself abandoned the method of nominalism and the teaching of Biel at the Council of Trent, the Lutheran condemnations remain now only as salutary warnings against an extreme aberration, but no longer touch the actual doctrinal position of the Catholic Church, either at the time of the Reformation or today. The Catholic reader is thus cautioned not to assume that apparent blanket references to Scholastic theology or to Roman teaching in the Lutheran Confessions are directed at Catholic doctrine rightly understood; what is usually being condemned by the Lutherans are positions either condemned or abandoned by Trent as well.

Although the Council of Trent produced a much tidier list of specific anathemas against Protestant teachings regarding justification, the question of the continuing applicability and even of the original accuracy of those anathemas presents an opening for mutual reassessment among Catholics and Lutherans. Two essays in this collection make important contributions in this regard.

The first, by Erwin Iserloh, "Luther and the Council of Trent: The Treatment of Reformation Teaching by the Council" (chap. 9), comes at the question of the accuracy and applicability of Trent's anathemas from a broad perspective, asking whether the Fathers of the Council of Trent worked with the best possible sources in determining their doctrinal condemnations. His conclusion is that they did not. The Fathers of the Council of Trent drew their understanding of the teachings of Luther and the other Reformers, not from their own writings, but from edited collections of quotations, gathered and published for polemical purposes of debate by Catholic opponents of Luther. These collections tended to lift especially inflammatory statements out of context and represent these disconnected quotes as the full teaching of the Wittenberg Reformers. Moreover, statements from Luther, Zwingli, and even Anabaptist writers were ranged together with no distinctions made between these very different reform perspectives. Thus, the Fathers of Trent relied on inaccurate, incomplete, and biased sources at third hand' to reach their

decisions. Thus the anathemas of Trent can rightly be questioned on the ground that they were based on poor and misleading information. Iserloh concludes by pointing out another important angle for the interpretation of the anathemas of Trent. He notes that no Reformer is named in the anathemas; it is teachings, not persons, that are condemned. The primary purpose of the canons and decrees of Trent on justification, then, was to clarify right Catholic doctrine; the condemnation of errors, in this case, served only a secondary purpose of drawing conceptual boundaries for faithful Catholic teaching. Trent was not interested in condemning Luther per se; it was concerned with stemming manifest errors regardless of their origin. The anathemas condemn only the specific errors they in fact articulate.

From Iserloh's broad treatment of the subject, Otto Hermann Pesch picks up the same line of thinking in chapter 10, "The Canons of the Tridentine Decree on Justification: To whom did they apply? To whom do they apply today?" Pesch undertakes the task of addressing each of the thirty-three canons containing the anathemas regarding justification with a four-part analysis: (1) against whose teaching was this canon addressed? (2) did the canon accurately critique that teaching? (3) does it still critique the actual teaching of the Reformation churches today? (4) if so, what is its modern significance and status? Pesch notes that not all the canons reject a specific teaching of the Reformers; some simply recover or stress a particular catholic truth that had been neglected in late medieval theology. Moreover, Pesch notes that the positive teachings of Trent on justification reflect a return to a strongly Augustinian theology (as shaped by the Council of Orange), so that the anathemas are aimed more at anti-Augustinian positions than Reformation positions. Taken in this light, there is actually considerable convergence between the Augustinian sense of Trent and the foundation in an Augustinian perspective of Luther's full theology. Indeed, rather than attacking Luther, many of the canons can be read as agreeing with Luther, or in sympathy with Luther, or simply supplementing Luther. Although ultimately Luther and Trent "cannot be reduced to a common denominator," says Pesch, nonetheless, there does exist a real option for a hermeneutic that grants different "concepts and forms of language as expressions of the same objective truth, even if with different emphases" (194).

These four essays by Wenz, Pfniir, Iserloh, and Pesch form, in the opinion of this reviewer, the necessary core for understanding the issues related to the "Joint Declaration on the Doctrine ofJustification." The hermeneutical essays by Pannenberg and Lehmann assume a sympathetic reception of the cases made in these four historical-theological articles.

Justification by Faith is a necessary and important addition to any library of Lutheran-Catholic ecumenical relations, and is indispensable for understanding and interpreting the "Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification." The essays provide convenient summaries of a much larger body of research available only in German (research which is amply documented in the copious

footnotes). It is recommended as a text for seminary/graduate-level courses, as well as an authoritative source for scholarly work in ecumenism.

MARKE. CHAPMAN

Lutheran-Anglican-Rnman Catholic Covenant Group
Chambersburg, Pennsylvania

The Service of Glory: The "Catechism of the Catholic Church" on Worship, Ethics, Spirituality. By AIDAN NICHOLS, 0.P. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1997. Pp. 310. $29.95 (paper). ISBN 0-567-08555-4.

In this second volume of commentary on the *Catechism of the Catholic Church,* the author launches immediately into his analysis of the paragraphs which introduce the *Catechism's* treatment of part 2, "The Celebration of the Christian Mystery." Thus one needs to consult the Preface to the first volume of his commentary in order to discover the plan for his second:

> After expounding what the *Catechism* has to say on these vital topics (sacramental, ethical, spiritual), I will go on, in the sequel to the present study, to investigate and respond to some of the criticisms that have been voiced of the *Catechism's* project, and/or the way in which it has been effected. Some words on the artworks used to illustrate the French paradigm of the *Catechism,* and a select bibliography, will close the second book. *(The Splendour of Doctrine,* p. x.)

In fact the author does execute in the second volume the plan he articulated in the first. Almost three hundred pages provide commentary on the last three parts of the *Catechism.* The last chapter addresses some of the criticisms leveled at the *Catechism.* An appendix treats the iconography in the *Catechism.* And a brief bibliography concludes the book.

Before assessing the content of the book, some preliminary observations on the presentation of the material seem appropriate. The author closely follows the outline of the *Catechism.* His commentary proceeds through the last three parts of the *Catechism* in the methodical fashion of an articulate professor anxious to cover all the material. He addresses what the *Catechism* addresses and even, at times, what it neglects. For example, after a rather withering critique of politically correct and pontificating theologians, he reproves the *Catechism* for avoiding a treatment of limbo.

> An even more pronounced reverent agnosticism afflicts the *Catechism* when it comes to speak of the destiny of unbaptized children, for in their case there would seem to be no human act which God *could* regard as an act of conversion. Rather than speak, in their connexion, of a possible *limbus puerorum,* a kind of happy attic, with restrictive prospect, in the house of heaven whose windows look out on the vision of God (an analogy, fundamentally, with the *limbus patrum,* the antechamber of that house where the just who lived before Christ awaited the advent of the Redeemer), the *Catechism* prefers more simply to entrust these babes to the mercy of God. (48)

Quite often, however, the author allows his imagination to lead him and the reader into domains which one would not immediately associate with analysis of Church doctrine. These digressions comprise some of the most engaging and evocative sections of the book. The reader would expect to encounter references to Augustine, Aquinas, Newman, von Balthasar, and John Paul II. But still somewhat surprising are the frequent references to artists and poets, such as Dante, Dickens, Herbert, Milton, and Tolkien. For example, in order to develop his point that the liturgy is a Christocentric sign-system, he turns to da Vinci's *Treatise on Painting* to observe "the motions of the dumb, who speak with movements of the hands and eyes and eyebrows and their whole person, in the desire to express the idea that is in their minds" (30).

The style of the book's composition seems, at times, garrulous and ponderous. Since the *Catechism* is so succinct and lucid, perhaps any commentary would seem wordy. But one is compelled to ask from time to time while reading the book, "Why does it take so many words to explain what the *Catechism* communicates so clearly and concisely?" In addition the repetition of the phrase, "not for nothing," diminishes the otherwise erudite and articulate prose. It seems this good book would have been improved by careful editing.

The first section of the book, "The Covenant of Reconciliation," treats part 2 of the *Catechism* and addresses liturgy and sacraments. In it the author introduces one of the fundamental themes he will develop in each of the other parts of the book: poor practice erodes theological meaning. "A liturgy whose idiom has been affected by secularism, ideology or a misapprehension of its own priorities, will soon come to infect theological culture with its own virus" (26). This is recapitulated in reference to the role of music in the liturgy when he says in a sentence typical of the prose of the book:

> Here the makers of the *Catechism* come down on the side of liturgical musicians over against pastoral liturgists, for by offering as criteria "unanimous participation" understood as participation in the *purpose* of the liturgical words and actions (which can, then, include *silence),* as well as "beauty expressive of prayer" and the "solemn character of the celebration," they evidently set their faces against any (further) dismantlement of the choral patrimony of Catholicism-a liturgically

> devastating development which has followed ineluctably in many places from the misplaced insistence that everyone present should be able to sing absolutely everything.

As the author analyzes the *Catechism's* treatment of each of the sacraments, he points out how heavy a price the Church has paid for the faithful's infrequent, ill-disposed, or incorrectly informed celebration of the rites. He warns of "a tendency to marginalise both the physical location and spiritual significance" of the Eucharist reserved in the tabernacle (62), "the habit of examination of conscience" withering from disuse (70), "the decline of frequent confession in the Latin church" (73), and "an excessively latitudinarian, and thus in the last analysis trivialising, interpretation of when the [Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick] is needful" (78).

The second section of the book, "The Springs of Goodness," treats part 3 of the *Catechism,* "Life in Christ," and addresses ethics. Here the author serves the reader quite well in recognizing some of the more subtle theological themes which underlie the *Catechism's* teaching and holding them up for closer inspection. The fundamental presupposition of a distinctively Christian anthropology which was introduced in part 1 of the *Catechism* is one such underlying theme. Just as it echoes throughout the *oeuvre* of John Paul II, it is woven throughout the *Catechism,* perhaps the most significant achievement of his pontificate. Once the fact that the desire for God is written in the human heart is accepted, the moral imperative of St. Leo the Great, "Christian, recognize your dignity" is a reasonable inference. In fact a distinctively Christian anthropology, epistemology, theology, sacramentology, ethics, and spirituality can be derived from that ontology. The author regularly attracts the reader's attention to the implications that issue from acceptance of such principles and sheds some considerable light on how they form the sophisticated infrastructure of the *Catechism.* For example, in light of the *Catechism's* initial assertion that the Trinity is the basis for a theology of society, the author restates one of the fundamental principles of Christian social ethics which is derived from a distinctively Christian anthropology:

> For the *Catechism,* echoing here the teaching of another twentieth-century Roman bishop, John XXIII, human society is primarily spiritual in its *telos* or goal, and only secondarily material. The development of the potential of matter in economic life may be more foundational-for people must eat to live, but it is not what is ultimate in significance-for people do not live to eat. (152)

The third and final section of the book, "The Treasures of Mercy," treats part 4 of the *Catechism,* "Christian Prayer," and addresses spirituality. Another of the author's helpful techniques employed throughout the book seems especially evident in this treatment of the revelation of prayer. One of this distinguished theologian's skills is a keen insight into the tensions implicit in

doctrinal propositions. For example, he poses the theological equivalent of "which came first, the chicken or the egg" when he asks if it is man's desire for God that prompts him to respond to God's call or is it God's grace that prompts man's desire for God in the first place. Clearly how one resolves this tension has significant implications for a theological system. The author offers a useful analysis:

> We must neither deny that man is truly and impressively in search of God, nor that it is God who calls man first. By creation God has sent out his call, calling man into existence from nothing, and if we think that too obviously a play on words with the lexical item "call," this is no *mere* wordplay, for our creation leaves us with a *desire* for the One who calls into being, a set of antennae attuned, however imperfectly, to the divine wavelength. (230)

When one ultimately comes upon the final chapter of the book, one finds the hermeneutical key to the whole project. It is not a commentary on the text of the *Catechism* but what the author calls a critical conclusion. In it he first recognizes the achievement the *Catechism* represents within a pontificate rich in its legacy of documents. Coining a phrase he asserts:

> The Johanno-Pauline "moment" is one of stabilisation, following close on the heels of a period likened by one ecclesiastical historian to the flight of a runaway horse. It is typical of those epochs when the Church pauses to take stock of her faith in a ruminative way that they leave behind evidence of catechetical consolidation. A proto-Catechism, or the fully fledged article, does not, however, simply "mark the spot." Rather it is a vital reappropriation of the Chufch's tradition which injects fresh energy onto that tradition's self-transmission in the future. (275)

Then the author quickly traces some of the historical roots of the *Catechism,* offers a rationale for its timeliness, and comments on its reception. Each of these concerns could easily take whole chapters to probe and, while the author's observations on each are insightful, they leave something important unstated. Relative to a rationale for the *Catechism's* timeliness, he says, "the *Catechism* was brought into existence as the result of a widespread perception that Catholics below a certain age were, in many parts of the world, ill-informed and confused about their faith." While this assertion is certainly true, the history of the development of this *Catechism* admits of several other compelling reasons for its preparation and is considerably more complex. Relative to the *Catechism's* reception, the author states:

> And if the reception of the *Catechism* has a been a bumpier ride in the Anglo-Saxon world than anywhere else, the reason may not be unconnected with the relative predominance, in that English-speaking

> Catholic Church, of the United States of America. For the ethos of intellectual life in America is deeply unsympathetic to what the *Catechism* represents. (279)

While this assertion may describe the manner in which the *Catechism* was received in the academies, it takes no note of the unparalleled efforts of the bishops of the United States, individually and as an episcopal conference, to provide for the favorable reception and widest possible distribution of the *Catechism* in this country.

True to the author's promise, the book ends with an appendix on the iconography in the *Catechism.* His treatment of the logo and each of the images chosen to introduce, and not merely separate, the parts of the *Catechism* uncovers interesting historical information about the images themselves and helpful clues for their interpretation. Just as the *Catechism* has retrieved the four ancient instruments of catechetical instruction (the Creed, the sacraments, the Commandments and the Lord's Prayer), it has also retrieved the sacred image as a catechetical tool.

In sum one finds *The Service of Glory* a satisfying read. There is much to be experienced here that can be found nowhere else. The aesthetic and evocative associations with doctrinal propositions which made the author's first volume of commentary on the *Catechism* so compelling linger in this second volume. In my review of the first part of his commentary, I said:

> In sum *The Splendour of Doctrine* provides an erudite yet accessible introduction to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church.* The author's use of the metaphor of a diptych alerts the reader to the aesthetic and evocative potential of the *Catechism.* His careful attention to the *Catechism's* fundamental theological themes is the controlling perspective of the work. It is the author's imaginative presentation of the colors, tones, forms and shadows of this first panel of the diptych that prompts the reader to anticipate the second.

The second panel of the diptych is now in place. While some of the luster of the first panel seems somewhat diminished in the second, the whole work shines none the less.

JOHN E. POU.ARD

Office of the Catechism
National Conference of Catholic Bishops
Washington, D.C.

Sexuality and Authority in the Catholic Church. By MONICA MIGLIORINO MILLER. Scranton: University of Scranton Press, and London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1995. Pp. xvi + 286. $45.00 (cloth). ISBN 0-940886-24-2.

This book is an important contribution in the effort to find the right categories by which to understand the roles of women in the Church and to elaborate a consistent language to speak about the realities of *feminine* and *masculine.* It moves between the poles of a more adequate understanding of authority (source and cause of life) and femininity which is the embodiment of the receptivity and goodness of creation in its marital relation with God. This basic approach, particularly the notion of covenantal relationship, owes an acknowledged debt to the work of Donald Keefe.

The first of the seven chapters in the book is dedicated to a critique of feminist theology, a presentation of patristic opinions of women, and a discussion of authority. Feminism is criticized for its failure to understand the nature of symbol, both as a mediation of reality that cannot be arbitrarily detached and replaced, and as extending to the male and female body person. Feminism shares the first of these failures with much modern thought, as recent work in psychology, literature, comparative religion, philosophy, and the interpretative disciplines has demonstrated quite conclusively. The recent work of Mary Douglas on natural symbols, applied by her to the question of the ordination of women (see "The Debate on Women Priests," in *Risk and Blame: Essays in Cultural Theory* [London and New York: Routledge, 1992], 271-94), highlights the need for more reflection on the symbolic and mediating function of the human body. In fact, while Miller's book is a contribution to the task of developing symbolic discourse that is adequate to an understanding of the question of male and female, it is also an indication that more studies are needed in order to bring the discourse to a "critical mass," enabling the whole effort to effect a development of doctrine in regard to Christian anthropology.

The brief treatment of the Church Fathers' views of women shows once again their own ambiguity but also the need to put their thought into the context of their whole intellectual milieu. The same can be said about much pagan, especially neo-Pythagorean, thought which presumed that, while women lacked the public efficacy of men's activity, they were in fact often more virtuous than their husbands. The treatment of authority, also in chapter 1, adds the notion of covenant to recent discussions critical of that post-Enlightenment understanding which equated authority with power and power with the ability to impose one's will on others. Authority in a Christian context is linked to the giving and nourishing of life, is effectively symbolized by male and female, and finds its fullest expression in Eucharistic worship.

The second chapter is concerned with the authority of Christ as Head of the Church and as the New Adam, and this involves a discussion of 1 Corinthians 11:3-16 as well as several passages in the Letter to the Ephesians, particularly

Ephesians 1:19-23. To use terms not employed in the book, authority in the Church, which is the capacity to effect redemption, is twofold, productive and receptive, and both types of causality, though they are asymmetrical, are necessary in order to bring about the effect. It is possible to retain the mearing of "authority" for *kephalein* 1Corinthians11, Ephesians 5, etc., while seeing that this authority has the notion of "productive of life," a notion that adapts the concept as it is applied to Christ's relation to the universe in Ephesians 1:22 where it clearly means "Lord." The receptive or feminine causality exemplified by Mary and existing in the Church can be understood as a necessary and completive causality in regard to Christ even if Ephesians 1:23 is not translated so as to make the Church the "completing agent" in the action of Christ who fills all things. I say this because this very difficult text is too controverted to become the principal foundation for a notion of causal authority that includes both the generosity of the Head and the receptivity of the Body. This returns us to the marital-covenantal order of redemption.

Chapter 3 takes up directly the question of male ecclesial authority: "The critical question before us at this moment of the Church's history is how male and female sexuality serve as the essential, as opposed to arbitrary or time-conditioned, liturgical expression of salvation in Christ" (76). The argument runs as follows. Christ is the image of the Father who is the "principle of origin" to whom pertain "fontalitas et auctoritas" *(STh* I, q. 33, a. 4, ad 1). By his death and resurrection Christ realizes historically and images in regard to the Church the "fontalitas et auctoritas" of the Father. This authority must be transmitted and historicized in a male body person in order to continue the maritaVcovenantal reality of the Christ-Church relationship. The female body person is a realizing symbol of the receptive causality of the Church without which the productive authority of Christ, now passed on to those who hold ecclesiastical office, would have no effect and no meaning. The main lines of an argument in favor of male priesthood are thus set out in a substantially correct manner. It is particularly here, however, that our modern inability to understand symbolically mediated reality makes the setting forth of the argument and an appreciation of its cogency especially difficult. Our linages and concepts have yet to arrive at the "critical mass."

Chapter 4, on the authority of Mary, prepares us for chapters 5 and 6 which deal respectively with the authority of the Church and the authority of women. Mary is the prime example of the reality of receptive causality. In a way that is real but asymmetrical, through her completely free consent, she is a cause of the incarnation along with the Holy Spirit. The principle, illustrated by many patristic texts, is then elaborated throughout the rest of the chapter in a manner that shows forth the symbolic reality of the marital covenant established by the plan of redemption. This reality is often referred to as 'nuptial," and the word is apt provided that it is restricted to those realizations of the more metaphysical prmciple of causality that can be expressed in terms of generosity and receptivity.

As we search for better ways to articulate discursively the symbols we are dealing with, I would suggest that we reserve the term "nuptial" to refer to those realizations of the metaphysical principle in which there is some sort of physical union: the incarnation, Christ and the Church, and marriage itself.

The consideration of Mary's authority is then extended to include what is described as a "key element in the meaning of feminine authority; this authority is meant to lead men to the accomplishment of what it means for them to be masculine and to fulfill the specific responsibilities and tasks that they are entrusted with in the order of creation and redemption" (123). This is not the "nuptial authority" of women expressed previously but rather what might be called "feminine authority." Sister Prudence Allen has frequently pointed out that the irreducible physicality of women and men permeates their persons at every level. Thus, there is a feminine way of being masculine and a feminine way of being feminine, just as there is a masculine way of being feminine and a masculine way of being masculine ("A Woman and a Man as Prime Analogical Beings," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 66, no.4 [1992]: 465-82). This insight, which is far from the Jungian understanding of masculine and feminine, is an important factor in clarifying what is meant by what I am calling here "feminine authority."

Both the nuptial and feminine principles of authority are applied to the Church in chapter 5. Most especially valuable in this chapter is the presentation of the consistent understanding within the tradition of *Ecclesia Mater*. We see here not only the symbolic reality of the Church as a virgin mother with true and completive causality/authority in the ongoing mystery of redemption, but also that type of authority which is life producing and in some sense directive. The concluding chapter of the book returns to this notion, showing how it has been realized in various women throughout the history of God's people. This might have been the place to consider the prophetic dimension of this type of authority, exercised by either men or women, which can complete and enliven that authority which is part of office and is restricted to men.

Chapter 6, which establishes the more theoretical basis for the examples given in chapter 7, develops both aspects of authority just mentioned. It is an important step in the effort to speak about authority as both life-giving and directive without identifying it with domination. The notion of motherhood, so prominent in the fifth chapter, appears again, this time applied as well to actual mothers and their role as unifiers in the family and society and as able to form those who will exercise specifically masculine roles in the Church and in society. Here again Prudence Allen's observation about a feminine way of doing something that is masculine could have nuanced some of the statements.

It is important for those engaged in the effort to articulate a new feminism that they familiarize themselves with the biblical and philosophical as well as the pastoral aspects of the .question. This study is to be recommended as a genuine contribution to that task and an important furthering <;if the effort to

provide a vocabulary and conceptual framework within which this issue may be studied.

FRANCIS MARTIN

Pope John Paul II Institute
Washington, D.C.

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