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A CONTEMPORARY UNDERSTANDING OF ST. THOMAS ON SACERDOTAL CHARACTER

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THE SACRAMENTAL CHARACTER of orders is treated by St. Thomas in several places. The most extensive treatments lie in his commentary on the *Sentences,* where he deals with the effects of baptism and orders, and in the *Summa Theologiae,* where he treats the sacraments in general. The latter in particular presents a problem internal to his view. My purpose in this article is to offer a speculative solution to this problem,[1] and to link this solution with the way the Second Vatican Council talks about priests in *Presbyterorum ordinis* 2.

The problem internal to St. Thomas's account of sacerdotal sacramental character shows up clearly in the *Tertia Pars* of the *Summa,* question 63. It can be stated as follows. In itself, sacramental character is fully realized only in the character of orders,[2] and sacerdotal character is a power received from Christ through the sacrament of orders. The primary act of this power is to confect the Eucharist, and its secondary act is to dispose the faithful

[1] It is a problem internal to his account of character as such; however, the priestly character is the primary instance of character for St. Thomas, and this will be the main concern of this paper.

[2] Note the distinction between receiving gifts and bestowing gifts in *STh* III, q. 63, a. 2: baptismal character is receptive, sacerdotal character active. For St. Thomas's consideration of sacerdotal character as the *analogatum princeps* relative to the characters of baptism and confirmation, see Jean Galot, *La nature du caractere sacramentel: Etude de theologie medievale* (Paris: Desclee de Brouwer, 1956), 179-81; and Pierre-Marie Gy, O.P., "Evolution de saint Thomas sur la theologie du sacrament de l'Ordre," *Revue thomiste* 99 (1999): 181-89, at 185-86.

for the reception of communion by absolving them of their sins.[3] The power of orders is a power of efficiency, perfective of and not merely dispositive to its effect.[4] It is, however, a merely instrumental power. Instrumental power, furthermore, is only a *vis fluens,* the transient motion of the instrument precisely as it is being moved by the controlling hand of the principal agent to produce an effect beyond the proportion of the instrument itself.[5] *As* transient, instrumental power is received in the instrument only while it is being used. Therefore, it should follow that the character is received in the priest only when he says Mass or hears confessions. To the contrary, and as a datum received from a prior tradition in which St. Thomas has perfect confidence, the character is indelible, something permanent in the priest.

The ordinary solution to this problem given by those who try with care, accuracy, and reverence to expound St. Thomas's view of sacramental character is to distinguish the character imparted by orders from the instrumental power received at the very time the priest confects the Eucharist or pronounces absolution. On this view, the character is a permanent capacity for sacramental action, a permanent qualification of the priest, but there is a further power received when the sacrament is celebrated, a temporary *vis.* Receiving the sacramental character, therefore, is as it were like iron being given an edge, or like an axe head being fitted to the handle-the iron is "instrumentalized," made into an instrument. In the use of the instrument, however, there is an altogether new power given it, according as it is moved now in this way, now that, now with this force at this angle and now with

[3] For this, see *N Sent.,* d. 24, q. 3, a. 2, qla., 1 = *STh Suppl.,* q. 40, a. 4.

[4] See H.-D. Dondaine, O.P., "Apropos d'Avicenne et de saint Thomas: De la causalite dispositive ala causalite insturmentale," *Revue Thomiste* 51 (1951): 441-53. A good overview of St. Thomas's sacramental theology as a whole is provided by John P. Yocum, "Sacraments in Aquinas," in *Aquinas on Doctrine: A Critical Introduction,* ed. Thomas Weinandy, Daniel Keating, and John Yocum (NewYork: T. & T. Clark, 2004), 159-81.

[5] See the key texts on instrumentality in *De Potentia,* q. 3, aa. 4 and 7; and St. Thomas's commentary on the first proposition of the *Liber de causis.* See also Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom: Operative Grace in the Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas,* ed. J. Patout Burns (New York: Herder, 1971), 80-84; and idem, "On God and Secondary Causes," in *Collection,* ed. F. E. Crowe (New York: Herder, 1967), 54-67.

that force at that angle, to square the timber or notch the log or whatever it might be that the principal agent is doing.

There is nothing incoherent in this view, and it is, in fact, more or less standard.[6] The very language of sealing and marking that St. Thomas inherits lends itself to this way of taking things. A soldier may be marked with a seal, but he is not always fighting. Moreover, there are several texts that suggest this sort of solution. A passage from the *Summa contra Gentiles* seems especially to envisage sacramental character as a stable power distinct from the discrete acts that, from time to time, flow from it.[7]

There is, however, an alternative avenue of reconciliation: namely, that while the character is indeed a mere *vis fluens,* the transient power imparted to the priest only while being used by the principal agent to confect the sacraments, Christ is in fact always using the priest. So to speak, he is an axe the builder never lets out of his hand, but is always using.

The difficulty that immediately presents itself is that it seems we would have to imagine the priest always saying Mass or hearing confessions every minute of his life. Since it is manifestly untrue that priests do this or even can do this, the alternative solution must be false. Addressing this difficulty is the chief burden of this paper. First, however, we shall look at some key passages of question 63 of the *Tertia Pars.*

I. *SUMMA THEOLOGIAE* III, QUESTION 63

After describing the character in article 1 as a spiritual sign bespeaking the Christian's deputation to "something spiritual

[6] See, e.g., Stephen McCormack, O.P., "The Configuration of the Sacramental Character," *The Thomist* 7 (1944): 458-91, at 468, 470, 480; Emmanuel Doronzo, O.M.I., *Tractatus dogmaticus De ordine, Tom. III: De causis extrinsecis* (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1957), 252-53, following John of St. Thomas; Colman O'Neill, O.P., "The Instrumentality of the Sacramental Character," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 25 (1958): 262-68, at 265; William van Roo, S.J., *De sacramentis in genere,* 2d ed. (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1960), 248-49; John F. Gallagher, C.M., *Significando Causant: A Study of Sacramental Efficiency* (Fribourg, Switzerland: The University Press, 1965), 234.

[7] *ScG* IV, c. 77. At *STh* III, q. 69, a. 10, Thomas calls the baptismal character a "quasi-form."

pertaining to the worship of God" *(aliquid spirituale pertinens ad cultum Dei),* St. Thomas defines it more narrowly in the next article as a spiritual power, active or passive as the case may be for the giving or receiving of a sacrament. Specifically, it is an instrumental power, for according to Aristotle, ministers are a kind of animate instrument. Saint Thomas says most explicitly that it is an instrumental power, "as was said above regarding the power which is in the sacraments" *(sicut supra dictum est de virtute quae est in sacramentis).* Moreover, he explains:

> just as the power which is in the sacraments is not in a genus of itself but is so by reduction, since it is something fluid and incomplete, so also the character is not properly in a genus or species, but is reduced to the second species of quality. [8]

"Just as ... so also": this speaks very strongly for conceiving the character also as a *vis fluens.* If it were not, it would be a stable form and so not "reduced" to the second species of quality but rather would properly and simply speaking be said to be a power. The text assimilates the character of the priest or baptized person to the instrumental power of the sacraments themselves and indicates no distinction whatsoever. The task is to see whether everything else St. Thomas says about the character fits with this straightforward way of taking article 2.

The natural sense of speaking of "character" and "sealing" reasserts itself in article 3, where we are led to think of a sort of permanent mark by analogy with a military seal. The same sense appears in article 4, in the reply to the first objection, where the character is spoken of as "disposing" the soul to doing what pertains to the divine cult, and therefore seemingly as something stable beyond and independently of its subject's actually celebrating or receiving a sacrament.

The greatest difficulty for this way of reading article 2 lies in article 5, which asserts the indelibility of the sacramental character. The *corpus* argues for the perpetual nature of the character

[8] *STh* III, q. 63, a. 2: "sicut virtus quae est in sacramentis, non est in genere per se, sed per reductionem, eo quod est quiddam fluens et incompletum; ita etiam character non proprie est in genere vel specie, sed reducitur ad secundam speciem qualitatis."

in virtue of the perpetual nature of the intellect, where St. Thomas locates it, and on the ground that the character is a kind of consecration; therefore, just as an altar remains consecrated for as long as it lasts once it has been consecrated, so also a man's intellect is "characterized" for as long as it lasts, which is forever. The reply to the third objection states that even after wayfaring and in glory, where sacraments shall pass away, the character remams.

It is just here, though, in article 5, that the initial reading of article 2 reasserts itself, in the replies to the first and second objections. In the first reply, St. Thomas sharply distinguishes the ways in which grace and the character are in the soul. Grace subsists there as a form, "having complete being in it" *(habens esse completum in ea),* but character only as some instrumental power. Grace subsists, therefore, according to the condition of the graced person, but character according to that of the principal agent.

> And therefore character inheres in the soul indelibly, not on account of its own perfection, but on account of the perfection of the priesthood of Christ from which the character is derived as a kind of instrumental power. [9]

Very clearly, again, the character is not a stable form, but something constantly derived from the principal agent, a *vis fluens.* It is indelible even so, however, because of the perfection of the principal agent, who always has this instrument in his hand. We should probably think of the perfection of the priesthood of Christ along the lines of the Letter to the Hebrews, for which it is perfect because it is eternal, founded on a "once and for all" entering into the sanctuary of heaven. Christ, whose priesthood remains forever, is as it were always using the. instrument; therefore, the *vis,* transient as it might be, is always newly infused. This seems to be very exactly stated in the reply to the next objection, which argues that since one may pass from the worship

[9] *STh* III, q. 63, a. 5, ad 1: "Et ideo character indelibiliter inest animae, non propter sui perfectionem, sed propter perfectionem sacerdotii Christi a quo derivatur character sicut quaedam instrumentalis virtus."

of Christ into apostasy, the character, which deputes one to the worship of Christ, can be lost.

> The idea of an instrument consists in this, that it be moved by another, but not in this, that it move itself, which belongs to the will. And therefore, however much the will be moved unto the contrary, the character is not removed, on account of the immobility of the principal mover. [10]

No matter what the one who has received the character does or wills, the principal agent immutably moves him. Thus, the character, an instrumental power, is always to be imputed to the one baptized or ordained, because he is always being used by Christ the priest. [11] To be sure, the priest is not always saying Mass or hearing confessions. How, then, can he be thought to be always being used by Christ, the high priest?

Our investigation shall proceed by considering five aspects of this topic: (1) the analogy with a tool; (2) the sign value of the character; (3) the acts St. Thomas associates with the character; (4) the relation of the priesthood to the episcopacy, and the episcopacy's relation to the Church; [12] and (5) the Eucharist as the culmination of Christian life and so of priestly ministry. We shall then be ready link up the discussion to *Prebyterorum ordinis.*

II. THE TOOL ANALOGY

In thinking about sacramental character, and in thinking of it as the factor that "instrumentalizes" a Christian relative to the

[10] *STh* III, q. 63, a. 5, ad 2: "ratio ... instrumenti consistit in hoc quod ab alio moveatur, non autem in hoc quod ipsum se moveat, quod pertinet ad voluntatem. Et ideo, quantumcumque voluntas moveatur in contrarium, character non removetur, propter immobilitatem principalis moventis."

[11] It must not be thought that identifying the character with that part of the causality of the sacraments for which the priest is responsible and of which sacraments he is the minister would reduce the character to an exterior deputation. The *vis fluens* of which the character consists is real; the relation of dependence of sacramental grace on the priest is real. As for the question that the defrocked and apostate priest poses, a failed priest does not cease to be someone marked by ordination, but becomes in addition a sort of preeminent invitation to think of the mystery of providence and freedom, as Graham Greene knew.

[12] That relation has been thought to encompass the whole of a bishop's life, in which all his energy is exhausted in his ministry. This will turn out to help us to a solution.

sacraments, it is helpful to work out the analogy of hand tools, already invoked, in more detail. First comes the making of a hand tool, then its use. In making a hammer, for example, a lump of iron is fashioned into the head. Next, the head is fitted to a handle. Fashioning the head gives the instrument its own nature, in virtue of which it can convey a certain force in the plane of the flat surface of the head, over an area of a square inch or so. The handle lets the head be connected to the principal agent; it is the configuration of the tool to the hand of the carpenter. As for its use, the hammer can deliver some force simply when dropped or in motion because it is thrown and intersecting with something in its path. But then it is not really being used and is not really operating as the instrument it is. When it is used as an instrument, the principal agent ensures that the plane of the hammer head is parallel to the plane of the nail head, that the line of force does not vary from the line of the nail, and that this force is deployed regularly, at fixed distances. In this way, the hammer contributes to an effect-the roof installed, the house framed-beyond its nature.

Now, if the sacramental character makes a man an instrument, is it like shaping the head of the hammer, putting an edge on an axe head? Or is it like fitting the business end of the tool to a handle? It is not like shaping the iron of hammer or axe. Consider what the priest does at Mass, what he brings as an instrument to making the sacrament. He produces the sacramental sign, the *sacramentum tantum,* whose formal element is the words of consecration. In other words, he quotes the words of Christ at the Last Supper. But anyone can do that, and the priest does not need to be refashioned in order to quote Christ. If it be true that only an ordained priest consecrates, because only he is the instrument of Christ at Mass, then his being made an instrument is not like the iron being given a new shape. Furthermore, St. Thomas holds that what makes a creature a supernatural instrument of God cannot be communicated to it as a stable habit, but can only be the transient motion it receives as moved by God, and this seems

to argue against taking the character in this first way of something being made an instrument. [13]

Is his being made an instrument therefore a matter of the priest's being "enhandled," conformed to Christ so as to be connected to the humanity of Christ, as an axe head is enhandled to conform to a man's hand? But this is no good either. Such conformation does not consist in holiness, for that is a matter of grace and the virtues, nor in any stable, complete form, for that is just how St. Thomas distinguishes character from grace. [14] It seems that there is nothing for the conformation of the instrument to consist in except the person's simply being used by Christ the priest. [15]

Therefore, if we want to think along the lines of a hand tool, we must say that the priest is not like a hammer whose head must be shaped in order to be a hammer, or like a stone axe whose unshaped stone head is lashed to a handle. Rather, he is like a stone that is simply picked up and used to pound nails. The stone remains a tool for as long as it is being used; the priest remains an instrument of Christ the priest as long as he is used by Christ. The character will be indelible, moreover, if the priest is always being used, and there is therefore always in the priest the *vis fluens,* the instrumental power, of which the character consists. In this way of thinking, the character does not enable sacramental acts so much as consist in them. More precisely, the character is the *vis* of these acts as causing grace, which is to say it is the relation of dependence of their supernatural effect on them. [16] In this way of thinking, the priest is always somehow acting as a priest.

[13] See *STh* II-II, q. 178, a. 1, ad 1. For this reason and apropos of this very text, McCormack holds that "the character is a completely unique reality" ("The Configuration of the Sacramental Character," 468). The point of departure of this paper is that such uniqueness is highly suspicious. The issue at *STh* II-II, q. 178, a. 1, ad 1, is the power to perform miracles, but this by no means makes it irrelevant to our topic. On using one application of the notion of instrumentality to illuminate another, see Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom,* 81-84.

[14] *STh* III, q. 63, a. 5, ad 1.

[15] Perhaps we could say that the conformation consists in the person's being known to be ordered to such use.

[16] For causation as the relation of dependence in the effect, see Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom,* 64££. For strenuous rejection of Lonergan's view as helpful in understanding St. Thomas on sacramental causality, see Mark Jordan, "Theology and Philosophy," in *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas,* ed. Norman Kretzmann and Eleonore Stump (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 232-51, at 245.

III. THE CHARACTER AS A SIGN

Just above, we spoke of the conformation of the instrument to the principal agent. This brings us to the "configurative" nature of the character, which is closely related to taking it as a sign.

From the time St. Augustine introduced the notion of sacramental character, it has been supposed to be a sign. Before St. Thomas, it had also already been styled a configuration to Christ. [17] Saint Thomas accepts this inheritance in a very restrained way. The first article of question 63 tells us that the character can indeed be said to be a kind of sign, but that this is so insofar as it is produced by a sensible sacrament, the visible rite (ad 2). This location of the real sign value of the character in the rite must be remembered in considering the important replies to the second and third objections of article 3. Sacramental character is the *res et sacramentum* of the sacrament of orders. Replying to the second objection, St. Thomas says:

> sacramental character is a thing *[res]* with respect to the exterior sacrament [the *sacramentum tantum]* and a sacrament with respect to the ultimate effect [the *res tantum].* And therefore something can be attributed to the character in two ways. In one way, according to the idea of a sacrament. And in this way, it is a sign of the invisible grace which is conferred in the sacrament. In another way, according to the idea of character. And in this way it is a configurative sign, configuring to some principal [agent] with whom the authority resides regarding that to which someone is deputed: just as soldiers, who are deputed to battle, are signed with the sign of the leader, by which sign they are in a certain way configured to him. And in this way, they who are deputed to Christian worship, whose author is Christ, receive a character by which they are configured to Christ. [18]

[17] That it configures to Christ was asserted by Alexander of Hales; that it configures to Christ the priest is asserted by Philip the Chancellor. See Galot, *La nature du caractere sacramentel,* 94££. and 115££.

[18] *STh* III, q. 63, a. 3, ad 2: "character sacramentalis est res respectu sacramenti exterioris [sacramentum tantum] et est sacramentum respectu ultimi effectus [res tantum]. Et ideo dupliciter potest aliquid characteri attribui. Uno modo, secundum rationem sacramenti. Et hoc modo est signum invisibilis gratiae, quae in sacramento confertur. Alio modo, secundum characteris rationem. Et hoc modo signum est configurativum alicui principali, apud quern resider auctoritas eius ad quod aliquis deputatur: sicut milites, qui deputantur ad pugnam, insigniuntur signo ducis, quo quodammodo ei configurantur. Et hoc modo illi qui deputantur ad cultum Christianum, cuius auctor est Christus, characterem accipiunt quo Christo

In itself, as an instrumental power, and as residing in the intellect, the character is not perceptible to the senses. Therefore, it is a sign of the grace of the sacrament given to one who receives the character only in virtue of the rite. But it is also to be considered in itself, as a *res,* in its *ratio* as a character-which means, in its *ratio* as an instrumental power. In this way, it is a *signum configurativum,* an instrumental power that configures to Christ. How should we think of this being configured to Christ by which priests are related to the cult, the acts to which they are deputed, and which, as a "figuring," bespeaks once again the value of a sign, not of grace, but of Christ?

The configuration in question is not the configuration to Christ worked by grace, charity, the virtues, and the gifts. Saint Thomas regards these things as habits, modifications of human powers, whereas he regards character as a capacity, not to do something well or ill (and so, a habit), but to do something at all.[19] Furthermore, grace and the virtues can be lost, but character is indelible. If the character is a sign *(sacramentum)* only by virtue of the visible rite, then perhaps it too configures to Christ by way of the "exterior sacrament," the rite. There are two possible ways to take things here. We could say for instance that when the one being ordained is anointed with chrism, he is visibly configured to Christ, the Anointed One. Or we could say that, when the one who has been ordained does the things for which he is ordained, that is to say, when he offers Mass and absolves sins, he is configured to Christ.[20]

The two ways just mentioned need not be exclusive. The second way, however, seems preferable. If it is the very character that configures to Christ, and character is instrumental power, the power something has when being used, then the configuration is to be found more in the celebration of those sacraments to which the character deputes the priest than of the sacrament by which he

configurantur."

[19] *STh* III, q. 63, a. 2. For the character as a *habitus,* see Avery Dulles, *The Priestly Office: A Theological Reflection* (New York: Paulist Press, 1997), 12.

[20] For this sense of things, see McCormack, "The Configuration of the Sacramental Character," 487-89.

is deputed.[21] In other words, a priest is configured to Christ according as he is being used by Christ.

Both ways of taking configuration can be perceived in the reply to the third objection, where the issue is the character as a distinguishing sign.

One person is distinguished from another by a character in relation to some end unto which one who receives a character is ordered, as has been said about the military character, by which a soldier of the king, ordained to battle, is distinguished from a soldier of the enemy. And likewise, the character of the faithful is that by which the faithful of Christ are distinguished from the servants of the devil, either as ordered to eternal life or as ordered to the worship of the present Church. Of which the first happens by charity and grace, but the second by sacramental character.[22]

This could mean that one is distinguished in virtue of the sacrament he has received-baptism or ordination. On the other hand, it seems rather to mean that one is distinguished in virtue of the cult to which baptism gives access, or in virtue of the sacraments of which ordination makes one the minister. If such a distinction were always evident to both the minister and the people of God, moreover, then the configuration to Christ would be as good as indelible.

In the commentary on the *Sentences,* there is a particularly striking recognition of the priest as a sign of Christ, one moreover that relates the priest as sign expressly to his instrumental power. Saint Thomas is comparing the instrumental *virtus* of the word the priest speaks to that of the priest himself in confecting the Eucharist.

Because the priest has a greater likeness to the principal agent than does the word, because the priest bears his image, therefore and simply speaking, the

[21] See also in this sense *N Sent.,* d. 4, q. a, a. 2, sol. 2, ad 4.

[22] *STh* III, q. 63, a. 3, ad 3: "charactere distinguitur aliquis ab alio per comparationem ad aliquem finem in quern ordinatur qui characterem accipit: sicut dictum est de charactere militari, quo in ordine ad pugnam distinguitur miles regis a milite hostis. Et similiter character fidelium est quo distinguuntur fideles Christi a servis diaboli, vel in ordine ad vitam eternam, vel in ordine ad cultum presentis Ecclesiae. Quorum primum fit per caritatem et gratiam ... secundum autem fit per characterem sacramentalem."

priest's instrumental power is greater and more worthy, whence also it is permanent and is related to many effects of this kind.[23]

The indelible nature of the power, that is, the character, is here entirely a function of the priest as a sign of Christ. Moreover, he seems to be taken as a sign independently of this or that liturgical action-the power is "related to many effects of this kind." Therefore, he is a permanent sign. We may ask how he is a sign, or in what his being a sign consists. It seems to be nothing more than that he knows himself to be a priest and is recognized as a priest, as one who images Christ.[24] Thus, in that he is always and everywhere a sign, simply as one known to be ordained, he is always and everywhere being used by the principal agent of whom he is a sign.

IV. PRIESTLY ACTS

There is another avenue to explore in imagining how it can be truly said that the priest is always being used by Christ as an instrument of his own priestly sanctification of his members.[25] According to St. Thomas, the sacerdotal acts enabled by the character are two: first and primarily, *consecrare verum corpus Christi,* "to consecrate the true body of Christ"; second, *preparare populum ad susceptionem huius sacramenti,* "to prepare the people for the reception of this sacrament."[26] This second act is cleansing from sin, and in virtue of that, the priest is the proper minister *(minister proprius)* of baptism, penance, and extreme unction.[27]

[23] *N Sent.,* d. 8, q. 2, a. 3, ad 9: "quiasacerdos estsimilior principali agenti quam verbum, quia gerit eius figuram, idea, simpliciter loquendo, sua virtus instrumentalis est maior et dignior, uncle etiam permanet et ad multos huismodi effectus se habet."

[24] In this light, cf. *De Potentia,* q. 3, a. 7, where St. Thomas says that the instrumental power of an axe in use, the *vis artis,* could be in the axe as a permanent form if only the axe had an intellect.

[25] For St. Thomas, the grace by which Christ is head of the Church is that by which he is a priest *(STh* III, q. 22, a. 1, ad 3).

[26] *N Sent.,* d. 24, q. 3, a. 2, qla., 1, c = *STh Suppl.,* q. 40, a. 4.

[27] *N Sent.,* d. 24, q. 2, a. 2 ad 1 = *STh Suppl.,* q. 37, a. 4, ad 1.

If these two acts, taken narrowly and only for as long as it takes to perform them ritually, are the only things and fill the only moments for which the sacramental, sacerdotal character is required and in play, and are thus the only times when the priest is being used by the principal agent, Christ, and if the character just is the *vis fluens* in the instrument being used for as long as it is being used by the principal agent, then the character is not indelible, but comes and goes. Contrariwise, if the character is the *vis fluens,* and indelible, we must find some way to take the sacerdotal acts of the priest more broadly, and, as it were, architectonically and so as inclusive of his life.

It is not dear that St. Thomas himself needs to be read as taking things in this way, and of course, he did not live to treat orders again and in conformity with the texts of question 63 most suggestive of the reading argued for here. But there is in fact considerable material that can be pressed into this reading. In a remarkable article of over thirty years ago, M.-J. Nicolas marshaled many of the resources there are in St. Thomas for moving in this direction. [28]

First, not every act said to require a character fits into the mold of instrumental efficient causality. There are in the first place the *protestationes fidei* of the baptized and confirmed. These seem to proceed from their confessors not so much as from instruments as from principal causes.[29] Additionally, there are the acts of the bishop relative to the mystical Body, the Church, which are at least remotely grounded in the *res et sacramentum* of episcopal consecration. [30] Saint Thomas does not speak of "character" for bishops, on the grounds that episcopal consecration does not provide a new relation to the *corpus verum.* But for all intents and purposes, episcopal consecration produces an effect analogous to

[28] Marie-Joseph Nicolas, O.P., "La doctrine de S. Thomas sur le sacerdoce," in *San Tommaso e l'odierna problematica teologica, Studi Tomistici* 2 (Rome: Citta Nuova Editrice, 1974), 309-28.

[29] Ibid., 319-20.

[30] So, speaking of the power conferred in confirmation and orders (IV *Sent.,* d. 4, q. 1, a. 4, qla. 3), St. Thomas says that this power is "ad sacramentorum dispensationem, et aliarum sacrarum hierarchicarum actionum exercitium" ("for the dispensation of the sacraments and for the exercise of other sacred hierarchical actions").

character, which includes the power to ordain as part of the power of ruling the Church. [31] If ordaining may easily be conceived along the lines of instrumental efficient causality, however, jurisdictional and magisterial acts are more difficult to press into that mold, and yet ruling acts are at the very least called for if not exclusively enabled by the power to ordain. [32]

Second, some texts of St. Thomas go some distance in including more in priesthood than Eucharistic consecration and sacramental absolution. For example, the end of the Eucharist is not simply the presence of the sacrament but its distribution to the people. [33] That is, the primary act can be described so as to include a reference to the *corpus mysticum* and not just to the *corpus verum:* "the power of orders is principally directed to the consecration of the body of Christ and its distribution to the faithful."[34] Again, the priest offers the Eucharist not only for himself but for the people. [35] Further, when St. Thomas introduces in the *Summa contra Gentiles* the necessity of orders for the spiritual community, it is, as Nicolas notes, by way of an analogy to those who care for the natural community of mankind, parents and rulers. Those in orders are thus *propagatores et conservatores spiritualis vitae,* "progenitors and preservers of the spiritual life," and take the role of parents and kings in the spiritual order. [36] This seems to place a sort of spiritual paternity in all grades of order, and to make a *munus gubernandi* connatural to them. [37] Further, to convert men to faith "is proper to priests to whom it belongs to preach and teach" *(proprie est sacerdotum quorum est*

[31] See e.g. IV *Sent.,* d. 13, q. 1, a. 1, qla. 2, ad 2; and for thorough treatment, Joseph Lecuyer, "Les etapes de l'enseignement thomiste sur l'episcopat," *Revue thomiste* 57 (1957): 29-52.

[32] On Lecuyer's reading of St. Thomas (see "Les etapes,") the power of orders of a bishop is his competence to govern (which is not the same as jurisdiction, of course) and includes the power to ordain. See also H. Bouesse, "Le caractere episcopal," in *L'eveque dans l'eglise du Christ,* ed. H. Bouesse (Brussels: Desclee de Brouwer, 1963), 361-69.

[33] *STh* III, q. 74, a. 2; see Nicolas, "La doctrine," 318-19.

[34] *ScG* IV, c. 75: "potestas ordinis principaliter ordinatur ad corpus Christi consecrandum et fidelibus dispensandum."

[35] *STh* III, q. 65, a. 1; see Nicolas, "La doctrine," 315.

[36] *ScG* IV, c. 58; Nicolas, "La doctrine," 315.

[37] See *ScG* IV, c. 74, where orders generally are for the building up of the Church.

praedicareet docere).[38] Last, it belongs to those in orders to drive out ignorance from the people.[39] This is not to say that these things belong exclusively to those in orders, but, importantly, that they are not alien from orders, and not alien from the priesthood of presbyters.

It is true that these things do not show up in St. Thomas's definition of ordained priesthood. But as Nicolas explains, it is easy to see why. The ordained priest is a ministerial priest. A minister is an instrument. The priest is most evidently and strictly an instrument in doing those things beyond his own natural power as a man and even a baptized man, and those things are consecrating the *corpus verum* and absolving sins. Therefore, the ministerial priest is defined by these two acts.[40] A definition, however, does not state all that is proper to the defined.

These first two things just noted mean that we can distinguish a broader and a stricter sense of instrument. A priest is an instrument in the strict sense when he is being used to effect something beyond his natural powers, as at the consecration of the elements at Mass. On the other hand, although he functions as a principal cause in evangelizing, preaching, teaching, and ruling, still, since he is nevertheless teaching and implementing a message not his own but one he is commissioned to teach and implement, it makes sense to think of him as an "instrument" in a larger sense, an instrument of the one who sends him and whose message he repeats.[41]

What would be the relation of these other acts to sacramental character? How could the character be seen to sustain them as well as the acts of consecrating and absolving? If they are ordered to and in that sense dependent on those acts strictly contained in the definition of the priest, such that they would lose their point

[38] IV *Sent.,* d 6, q. 2, a. 2, qla. 3; although prebaptismal catechesis is proper to deacons, priests also are capable of this.

[39] IV *Sent.,* d. 24, q. 1, a. 2, qla.1 = *STh Suppl.,* q. 35, a. 1, ad 1. See Nicolas, "La doctrine," 316.

[40] Nicolas, "La doctrine," 315-16.

[41] On the other hand, for all true creaturely speaking of speculatively beheld truth as principally and in the first place a divine speaking and teaching, see G. Mansini, "Doing and Speaking, Created and Uncreated," *Logos* 10 (2007): 105-30.

were they not so ordered, then they too could be acts in which a *vis fluens* moves, if from a greater distance, to the grace of the sacraments. First, however, we must look at what St. Thomas said of bishops, and what that might make us want to say of priests today.

V. LEARNING ABOUT PRIESTHOOD FROM THE EPISCOPACY

We must next take into account the pressure exerted on St. Thomas's account of the priesthood by the phenomenon of large numbers of monastic priests living without care of souls. This encouraged a view of priesthood centered on the Eucharist, and even on the rite of the Eucharist relatively distant, as it were, from ordinary Christian life.[42]

Such a view of the priesthood harbors the idea that while the bishop has a necessary relation, a fully pastoral relation, to the *corpus mysticum,* the simple priest does not. By his episcopal consecration, a bishop's whole life and attention are dedicated to the service of the mystical Body, the Church.[43] And although we have seen in St. Thomas some attention to priestly acts whose intelligibility connects them both more broadly and more immediately to the people of God, still, the existence of large numbers of monastic priests and prebenderies seemed sufficient grounds on which to deny to simple priests such a totalizing consecration to the people of God.[44]

For St. Thomas, the same relation that priest and bishop have to the Eucharist led him to deny that bishops constitute an *ordo* distinct from that of simple priests, and to deny as well that episcopal consecration imparts a character.[45] This does not mean that he did not recognize a difference of *potestas ordinis* for priest and bishop. Because of their consecration to the service of the *corpus mysticum,* and unlike priests, bishops are given the power

[42] Nicolas, "La doctrine," 321ff.

[43] *STh* II-II, q. 184, a. 5.

[44] It is commonly noted that St. Thomas reports the usages of the medieval Church as data to be taken into account, not as possible objects of criticism and reform.

[45] IV *Sent.,* d. 24, q. 3, a. 2, sol. 2, ad 2 = *STh Suppl.,* q. 40, a. 5, ad 2.

to rule, and they are also given the sacred power to confirm, ordain, and consecrate churches and vessels. Thus, equivalently, there is something for bishops exactly analogous to what Thomas calls "character" for priests, and it is not true that he thinks bishops differ from priests only in possessing *potestas iurisdictionis.*[46] This must be borne in mind in the following discussion, for otherwise it will not seem that a discussion of what Thomas thinks about bishops could shed any light on what we might want to think about priestly sacramental character. If the bishop's constant service is his rule, and his rule is somehow founded in the *potestas ordinis* given him at ordination-equivalently, "character"-then the bishop is always being applied to use by the principal agent, and his "character" is in this way indelible.

The different relations of priest and bishop to pastoral care has an important consequence in how the bishop, as opposed to the priest, can be spoken of relative to his representation of Christ. When priests consecrate the elements at Mass, they act "in the person of Christ," both quoting Christ within the institution narrative, and doing so as instruments of Christ.[47] Acting in the person of Christ, the priest is also said to "bear the image of Christ" *(gerit imaginem Christi)* in the celebration of the Eucharist.[48] Bishops, on the other hand, receive power "to act in the person of Christ over his mystical body" *(ut agat in persona Christi supra corpus eius mysticum),* in virtue of which the bishop blesses chrism and consecrates churches and altars.[49] Does the bishop so take on the person of Christ only when he is actually doing something? Bishops are said to "take the place of Christ" *(vicem gerunt Christi)* in that they are the heads of their dioceses, just as the pope is the head of the whole Church.[50] Simply being the head of the diocese seems to make one bear the image of Christ, and so represent him. We could say the bishop's relation

[46] Lecuyer, "Les etapes," 32, 34, 51-52.

[47] *STh* III, q. 78, a. 1; q. 82, a. 1; q. 82, a. 5.

[48] *STh* III, q. 83, a. 1, ad 3.

[49] *STh* III, q. 82, a. 1, ad 4.

so *STh* III, q. 8, a. 6.

to the *corpus mysticum* places him in a stable relation of signifying Christ.

We end with a stricter and a looser sense of acting "in the person of Christ," just as we have encountered a stricter and looser sense of instrument, where the looser sense is used for bishops, and the stricter sense for priests saying mass.[51]

The different relations of priest and bishop to pastoral care also entailed a difference as to their state of life. Although St. Thomas always recognized the requirement of interior holiness for both bishop and priest, he held that only bishops were to be thought of as in a *state* of perfection, meaning that the very form of their life consisted in taking on the assured means of holiness the Church has always recognized in the counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience. The state of perfection is established by two things: obliging oneself to the means of perfection perpetually, and undertaking this obligation publicly, solemnly.[52] When the bishop obligates himself to pastoral care in being consecrated, he obliges himself to a standard of perfection even beyond that of religious.[53] A state of perfection, of course, is an abiding thing. We could say that because of a bishop's relation to the Church, he is in the *state* of perfection, a properly *episcopal* state of perfection (more perfect than that of mere religious), and so always engaged precisely as a bishop, and so always bearing the image of Christ, and always figuring the person of Christ.

If we wish to conceive of the priest as a diminished bishop, as with the Second Vatican Council, rather than of the bishop as a priest with additions, then it might be possible to think of the priest as similarly always dedicated to the Church, as similarly in a sort of state of life and, ordinarily anyway, as always dedicated

[51] It is true that the priest is said without qualification to "represent Christ" *(repraesentat Christum)* as the mediator of God and men at IV *Sent.,* d. 13, q. 1, a. 3, qla. 2, but the context is Eucharistic. There is also the general statement of *STh* III, q. 22, a. 4, on the priesthood of Christ, where a priest of the New Law is said without qualification to work in the person of Christ *(in persona ipsius operatur).*

[52] *STh* II-II, q. 184, a. 4.

[53] *STh* II-II, q. 184, aa. 5 and 7.

to pastoral care.[54] Beginning with the Council of Trent, moreover, as Nicolas observes, that is indeed how the Western Church has come more and more to think of priests. Paradigmatically, priests are parish priests. Parish priests are the extension of the bishop in the local parochial community, and are therefore likewise fittingly thought of as wholly given over to pastoral care in their very form of life.

But in this case it would similarly be possible to think of the priest as always in some way representing Christ, in all of his life, all of his activity. If priests were thought of as bearing a stable relation to the *corpus mysticum,* then they too could be thought of as bearing the person of Christ more generally and permanently. We might even say that the priest's life as a whole constitutes a sort of public and official *protestatio fidei.* And the *protestationes fidei* of the confirmed, we recall, are rooted in sacramental character.[55]

VI. THE EUCHARIST AS THE GOAL

I have suggested a totalizing view of priestly ministry insofar as the whole of a priest's life and all his acts, like a bishop's, would be in service to the people of God. Additionally, the totalizing or architectonic role of the celebration of the Eucharist must be attended to, the "principal act" for which sacerdotal character is necessary.[56]

The spiritual life of Christians consists in the exercise of their spiritual priesthood in union with Christ, which is the spiritual

[54] For the bishop as a priest with additions, see, e.g., George Edward Dolan, *The Distinction between the Episcopate and the Presbyterate according to the Thomistic Opinion* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1950). If this view is to be imputed to St. Thomas, account must be taken of such Dionysian texts as *N Sent.,* d. 13, q. 1, a. 1, qla. 2, c. and ad 2, where the priest very clearly only participates in a fullness which it is the part of bishops to possess.

[55] *STh* III, q. 72, a. 5.

[56] These two ways of totalizing priestly ministry do not, of course, compete with one another. It was one of the objects of *Presbyterorum ordinis* to make that plain.

sacrifice of themselves to God in Christ.[57] The Eucharist, of course, is the sacrament most of all ordered to this spiritual sacrifice of charity; it is the sacrament whose *res* is the growth of charity by which we are united to Christ and in Christ to one another.[58] Therefore, "the Eucharist is the consummation of the spiritual life and the end of all the sacraments."[59] And therefore also, the priest's pastoral care of the faithful is oriented toward the celebration of the Eucharist, where the spiritual priesthood of the faithful and their spiritual sacrifice are completed because most really joined to the priesthood and sacrifice of Christ most really present through the sacramental ministry of the priest. If therefore all that the priest does in the spiritual and sacramental life of the faithful is ordered to their participation in the Eucharist, then all that he does in some way disposes them to the sacrifice, and all that he does is likewise oriented to his own priestly confection of the Eucharist. This includes the priestly work of teaching and shepherding. Everything that is not the Eucharist disposes the faithful to the Eucharist. Therefore, what is thought of as enabling both the Eucharist and its distribution to the faithful as well as their disposition to the Eucharist, namely, the character, is in play-for the priest is always either disposing to the Eucharist or celebrating it. In this way, the priest is always being used by Christ, in all his work, to move the *corpus mysticum* toward the table of the *corpus verum.* In this way, the *vis fluens* of the instrumental power is always actual, the character is permanent and engaged in all the pastoral and sacramental work of the priest.

A collection of texts of St. Thomas taken together supports this view of things. First, the act by which a priest disposes the faithful for communion depends on the primary act, the act of confecting the Eucharist and distributing it to the faithful.[60] Second, just as we have discovered a broader and stricter sense of acting in the

[57] See the study of Gilles Emery, O.P., "Le sacerdoce spirituel des fideles chez Thomas d'Aquin," *Revue thomiste* 99 (1999): 211-43.

[58] *STh* III, q. 73, a. 3; q. 79, a. 1, ad 2.

[59] *STh* III, q. 73, a. 3.

[60] IV *Sent.,* d. 24, q. 1, a. 3, qla. 2, ad 1 = *STh Suppl.,* q. 36, a. 2, ad 1.

person of Christ and a broader and a stricter sense of being the instrument of Christ, a broader and a stricter sense of disposing the faithful for the sacrament is also acknowledged. Proximately, the priest disposes by absolution; other ministers dispose the faithful more remotely-for example, by teaching.[61] Third, what the lower orders do in virtue of their office, the higher orders can do in virtue of theirs.[62] But what any order does is done in virtue of its character, and this is so for all orders, both major and minor. Saint Thomas held that each grade of order has a spiritual act, even the porter in closing the doors, for which a character is required.[63] While the minor orders are no more, the following principle remains true: what the lower orders do or did in virtue of their character is done by the higher in virtue of theirs. All the acts of the orders are directed to the Eucharist, however, even if not necessarily as parts of the Eucharist (as, evidently, the secondary, dispositive act of absolution is not part of the Eucharist).[64] Instruction in Christian doctrine is remote preparation for the reception of Eucharist, and was assigned to lectors, subdeacons, and deacons.[65] This was signified within the Mass itself, where the lector read the Old Testament, the subdeacon the Epistle, and the deacon the Gospel. But like absolution, this remote preparation of declaring the word of God was not necessarily part of the Eucharist, nor is it so today when a priest does it.

It can be concluded from the above argument that whatever a priest does by way of teaching or anything else dispositive to the Eucharist-and that is everything he does-is done in virtue of his priestly character. This does not mean that the power to teach

[61] *N Sent.,* d. 24, q. 2, a. 2, ad 1 = *STh Suppl.,* q. 37, a. 4, ad 1.

[62] *N Sent.,* d. 24, q. 1, a. 2, qla. 5 = *STh Suppl.,* q. 35, a. 5; *N Sent.,* d. 24, q. 2, a. 1, qla. 2, ad 2 = *STh Suppl.,* q. 37, a. 2, ad 2; *N Sent.,* d. 24, q. 2, a. 2 = *STh Suppl.,* q. 37, a. 4, ad 3.

[63] *N Sent.,* d. 24, q. 1, a. 2, qla. 2, c. and ad 1 = *STh Suppl.,* q. 35, a. 2, c. and ad 1. Some acts of the lower orders can be carried out by laymen, but not officially; see *N Sent.,* d. 24, q. 2, a. 2, ad 9 = *STh Suppl.,* q. 37, a. 4, ad 9. Where such acts are carried out by one in orders, however, they are carried out in virtue of the character of orders.

[64] *N Sent.,* d. 24, q. 2, a. 2, c. and ad 1 = *STh Suppl.,* q. 37, a. 4, c. and ad 1.

[65] *N Sent.,* d. 24, q. 2, a. 2, ad 4 = *STh Suppl.,* q. 27, a. 4, ad 4.

need be thought of in the same way as the power to confect the Eucharist. Indeed, it seems they should not be thought of in the same way, since the capacity to teach can be lost.[66] It means rather that, when a priest teaches, we see something that disposes to the Eucharist being done by the one who represents Christ at the Eucharist, and so, remotely but really, we are already in the realm of making the Eucharist.[67] The dependence of the disposing acts on the primary acts need not be all of the same kind.

VII. THE TEACHING OF THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

In section III, it was noted that the character can be taken as configuring the priest to Christ, so making him a sign of Christ, because of the rites and sacraments of worship he is deputed to preside over. From section V, we see that the priest can be taken as a sign of Christ also because of the pastoral care of the people of God to which, like the bishop, he is devoted. After section VI, we can say that the priest is always a sign of Christ because all he does either is the celebration of the Eucharist or is the disposition of the faithful to the reception of the Eucharist. The priest is always in the use of Christ, therefore, for two reasons. First, he is always in use because all his ministry and acts are ordered to the Eucharist (see sections IV and VI). Second, he is always in use

[66] See G. Mansini, "Episcopal Munera and the Character of Episcopal Orders," *The Thomist* 66 (2002): 369-94.

[67] Nicolas, "La doctrine," 328: "the concept of an activity that disposes to grace is large enough in St. Thomas to embrace everything that of itself contributes to the progress and to the defense of the Faith, to preaching the Gospel, to gathering men in the Church--everything that is within the compass of the pastoral mission.... For a work so limitless, and so mixed up with daily human action, it is not necessary to be a priest and it is often enough better not to be one. But whatever the priest does, even if it is not always materially reserved to him, he does as a natural consequence of his role in the Eucharistic Sacrifice" ("le concept d'activite dispositive a la grace est assez large dans S. Thomas pour embrasser tout ce qui concourt de soi au progress et a la defense de la Foi, a !'announce de l'Evangile, au ressemblement des hommes en Eglise, tout ce qui est du ressort de la mission pastorale .... Pour une oeuvre aussi illimitee, si melee a !'action humaine quotidienne, ii n'est pas necessaire d'etre pretre et ii convient souvent mieux de ne l'etre pas. Mais ce qui fait le pretre, meme si cela ne Jui est pas toujours materiellement reserve, ii le fait par une suite naturelle de son role dans le sacrifice eucharistique").

because, just insofar as all his ministry and acts are ordered to the Eucharist, he is also always a sign of Christ (see sections III and V). In his activity and in his person, he is both moved by Christ and just as such always bespeaks Christ's movement of Christian life and community through him to the sacramental realization of itself that occurs in the celebration of the Eucharist. We can say he is a sign because he is used. But also, and better, we can take things the other way around: because he is a sign, he is always being moved by Christ as his instrument. This is the better way because we are in the sacramental order, and *sacramentum in genere signi est,* and they cause by being signs.

Notice also that we can organize the priest's life around the Eucharist, or around pastoral care, and of course, both synthetically. The *protestatio fidei* that is the priest's life is ordered to the Christian cult whose culmination is the Eucharist; also, we can say that it is ordered to the actualization the people of God are brought to when they offer themselves to God with Christ at Mass. This is how Nicolas puts it, speaking of the priest's mission.

> Power over the Body of Christ, over the mystical Body, yes-but especially does the priest have a mission to give Christ a sacramental presence among men and to install that presence at the heart of their lives.[68]

The appreciation of the priest as always a sign, and in terms of a mission whose goal is to bring the people of God to the heavenly banquet through their own sharing in the Eucharistic table, brings us to the point also where our reading of St. Thomas can be linked up with the teaching of the Second Vatican Council and Pope John Paul IL

Presbyterorum ordinis orients the priesthood of presbyters to the service both of bishops, functioning to extend episcopal ministry, itself the extension of apostolic mission, and of the people of God, enabling their spiritual sacrifice to be joined to the

[68] Ibid., 321: "Pouvoir sur le Corps du Christ, sur le Corps mystique, oui, mais surtout mission de donner au Christ une existence sacramentelle parmi !es hommes et de la repandre au coeur de leur vie."

one sacrifice of Christ in the sacrifice of the Mass. Speaking of the sacrament of orders, the council fathers say that by it "priests, by the anointing of the Holy Spirit, are signed with a special character and are conformed to Christ the Priest in such a way that they can act in the person of Christ the Head" (PO 2.3). Acting in the person of Christ the Head of the Church means, in context, acting authoritatively in all three *munera-teaching,* ruling, and sanctifying. The ability so to act is said to be the result of the character and of conformation to Christ. Though the text cites *Lumen gentium* 10, it is in tact constructed on the model of *Lumen gentium* 21, where, speaking of bishops, the council fathers say that as a result of episcopal ordination, "the grace of the Holy Spirit is given in such a way, and a sacred character is impressed in such a way, that bishops ... take the place of Christ himself, teacher, shepherd, and priest, and act in his person." In neither text should acting in the person of Christ in all three *munera* be taken to be founded exclusively in the character. [69] The texts rather mean that both character and grace enable both bishops and priests to act in the person of Christ. Although the fathers go beyond Trent in *Lumen gentium* in asserting the sacramentality of episcopal ordination and the fact that it imprints a character, in neither text did the fathers intend any new teaching on the nature or properties of the sacramental character itself. Here, they do not go beyond Trent, which itself declined to settle disagreements among Catholic theologians on this matter. [70]

[69] Some English translations suggest this, but the Latin does not: "perspicuurn est ... gratiam Spiritus Sancti ita conferri et sacrum characterem ita imprimi, ut episcopi ... ipsius Christi Magistri, Pastoris et Pontificis partes sustineant et in Eiuis persona agant." The final clause, a result clause, is a function both of the conferring of grace and of the imprinting of the character.

[70] See the *relatio* of Cardinal Konig of 21 September 1964, on paragraphs 18-21 of the next-to-final draft of *Lumen gentium.* In affirming that consecration imprints a character, he says, "the words were chosen in such a way as to abstract from disputed questions: namely, whether it be a new character or only a broadening of presbyteral character, and so on" *(Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Vaticani II* [Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1970-], 3/2:204). And in the *relatio* accompanying the final text, the Doctrinal Commission, responding to a request that the text say that the powers of teaching and ruling are founded in that of sanctifying, says that it seemed best to confine the text to an assertion of their conferral, "and not enter into the question of their connection with one another" *(Acta*

That the character is in any way said to found the ability of bishops and priests to act in the person of Christ is moreover a sort of accident of the construction of the text of *Lumen gentium* 21. At first, the text had indicated the permanent effect of the sacrament of orders by stating that, because of the character, a bishop could not once again become a simple priest. To the request that the effect of the sacrament be stated positively and not negatively, it was proposed to say that, in virtue of grace and the character, the bishop acts in the person of Christ in teaching, ruling, and sanctifying. So it was determined in the final text, and the Decree on the Life and Ministry of Priests simply repeated this stratagem: instead of saying that a priest cannot lose his priesthood because of the abiding sacramental character, the text says that ordination imprints a character and configures to Christ and so enables the priest to act in the person of Christ the Head.

Texts, however, have a life of their own, especially texts composed with the assistance of the Holy Spirit. Notwithstanding: the actual history of their composition and the intent of thel fathers not to innovate either in *Lumen gentium* 21 or in *Presbyterorum ordinis* 2, the texts say that, in virtue of the sacramental character and of grace, bishops and priests are, as it were, in the state of representing Christ, and do so in all their ministerial acts.[71] Priests represent Christ also in teaching and ruling the *corpus mysticum,* while St. Thomas spoke in this way only of bishops. The conciliar texts definitively stretch the language of acting *in persona Christi* beyond a Eucharistic context, and insofar as the character in some way grounds the entire

Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Vaticani II, 3/8:61; modus 38). The Commission reports that it is understood that the text does not undertake to settle any disputed question as to the origin of jurisdiction, or questions concerning sacramental character (ibid., 63; modus 45). The *relatio* for the final text of *Presbyterorum ordinis* tells us that the text of no. 2 does not say that it is only by sacramental character that the priest is configured to Christ; therefore neither does it say that all three *munera* are founded therein *(Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Vaticani II,* 4/7:121; response to modus 24). For this and the next paragraph, see G. Mansini, "Sacerdotal Character at the Second Vatican Council," *The Thomist* 67(2003): 539-77.

[71] For the constitution and the *wirkungsgeschicte* of *Presbyterorum ordinis* 2, see G. Mansini and L. Welch, "The Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests," forthcoming.

ministry of priests, let us think of the character as a *vis fluens* always actual in the entire life and ministry of both bishops and priests.

The further teaching of *Presbyterorum ordinis* 2 harmonizes with this, where we read that the entire ministry of priests is ordered to enabling the faithful to join their spiritual sacrifice to the sacrifice of Christ. Let us quote this most beautiful text at some length.

> Through the ministry of the priests, the spiritual sacrifice of the faithful is made perfect in union with the sacrifice of Christ, the only mediator, which sacrifice, through their hands and in the name of the whole Church, is offered sacramentally in the Eucharist and in an unbloody manner until the Lord himself comes. The ministry of priests is directed to this goal and is perfected in it. Their ministry, which begins with the evangelical proclamation, derives its power and force from the sacrifice of Christ. Its aim is that "the entire commonwealth of the redeemed and the society of the saints be offered to God through the High Priest who offered himself also for us in his passion that we might be the body of so great a Head." [72]

All priestly ministry is accomplished under the aegis of the Eucharist, to which all is ordered.

It is therefore unsurprising to find John Paul II, in the post-synodal apostolic exhortation *Pastores dabo vobis,* speaking of the priest as always, in his whole life and activity, given over to being a sign of Christ.

> The priest finds the full truth of his identity in being a derivation, a specific participation in and continuation of Christ himself, the one high priest of the new and eternal covenant. The priest is a living and transparent image of Christ the priest. [73]

Further and concordantly with this notion of the priest as in his very existence always working because always a sign of Christ, we find asserted of priests precisely what St. Thomas asserted of the

[72] The quotation is from St. Augustine, *The City of God* 10.6. See also no. 5 of the Decree: "the Eucharist appears as the fount and culmination of all evangelization."

[73] *Pastores dabo vobis* 12.

bishop; namely, that he is wholly dedicated to the service of the mystical body.

> In the Church and on behalf of the Church, priests are a sacramental representation of Jesus Christ-the head and shepherd-authoritatively proclaiming his word, repeating his acts of forgiveness and his offer of salvation-particularly in baptism, penance and the Eucharist, showing his loving concern to the point of a total gift of self for the flock, which they gather into unity and lead to the Father through Christ and in the Spirit.[74]

Consecrated to the service of the mystical body in this way, the priest approaches the "state of perfection" in which St. Thomas held that bishops stand. Moreover, the exhortation does not fail to recommend the evangelical counsels to all presbyters, and in the name of *pastoral* charity.[75]

VIII. CONCLUSION

Contemporary dogmatic theology of orders that wishes to be in continuity with prior Western magisterial and theological tradition will include an assertion that the sacrament has for one of its effects an indelible character. A contemporary systematic theology of orders, moreover, may very well attempt to understand the nature of the sacramental character imprinted by orders as does St. Thomas, as an instrumental power. But then it must also face the difficulty that the terms and relations St. Thomas employs in speaking about power, efficient power, and instrumental efficient power, have a sort of integrity in virtue of which they cannot be made to mean whatever we want.

Specifically, when St. Thomas speaks narrowly and carefully about instrumental power, it is a *vis fluens*. The intelligibility of such a notion is as plain as, for instance, the order and pattern of hammer strokes received in the hammer as moved by a principal agent, an order and pattern beyond the nature of the tool itself, an order and pattern that is very much something transient,

[74] *Pastores dabo vobis* 15.

[75] *Pastores dabo vobis* 27-30.

something in the hammer only as long as it is used by the carpenter. If we hold strictly to the identification of the character with a *vis fluens,* and if the only acts for which it is needed are those of the consecration of the elements at Mass and the absolution of sins, and if these acts are taken purely in their liturgical and ritual reality, there is an apparent difficulty in speaking of sacramental character as at once an instrumental potency and as something permanent.

It is possible to multiply categories, and to find in the character a metaphysically unique reality, or another sense of instrumental cause.[76] Also, it is possible to find a way in which to conceive of the priest as always in use. I have tried to show both that there are resources in St. Thomas for just this conception, and also that this conception is concordant with more recent authoritative magisterial pronouncements on the nature of the priesthood.

[76] McCormack, "The Configuration of the Sacramental Character," 468; O'Neill, "The Instrumentality of the Sacramental Character," 265 n. 4.

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ETIENNE GILSON, CRITIC OF POSITIVISM

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OPPOSITION TO POSITIVISM was a lifetime concern of Etienne Gilson. His first published article, entitled "Sur le positivisme absolu," was a criticism of an article defending absolute positivism by the Parisian philosopher Abel Rey.[1] Both articles, along with Rey's reply to Gilson, appeared in 1909 in the journal of the University of Paris, *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'etranger.*[2] At the time Gilson was teaching philosophy and mathematics at the lycee in Rochefort-sur-Mer on the Atlantic coast, and he was about to submit his second, complementary doctoral thesis to his master at Paris, the positivist and sociologist Lucien Levy-Bruhl, who also happened to be an editor of the *Revue philosophique.* Gilson knew that Levy-Bruhl fundamentally agreed with the positivism of Abel Rey, that science is the only valid way of knowing, but he gave his critical article to his master, who graciously published it while letting Gilson know that he thought his position was out of date.

Gilson recorded this event sixty-three years later when giving three public lectures "In Quest of Species" at the Pontifical

[1] Abel Rey (1873-1940) taught in French lycees and at the University of Paris. He wrote on psychology, morality, sociology, the philosophy of physics, and the history of science. See *Larousse du XXe siecle* (Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1932), 5:1063. For an earlier view of *Gilson's* article on Rey see Laurence K. Shook, *Etienne Gilson* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1984), 40-41.

[2] Abel Rey, "Vers le positivisme absolu," *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'etranger* 67 (1909): 461-79; Gilson's article and Rey's reply *to* it *both* appeared in "Notes et discussions sur le positivisme absolu," *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'etranger* 68 (1909): Etienne Gilson, "Sur le positivisme absolu," 63-65; Rey's reply, 65-66.

Institute of Mediaeval Studies in Toronto, just before leaving for France in final retirement in 1972. Opening these lectures, he recalled his first article in 1909 in criticism of Abel Rey's absolute positivism. "At that time," he mused,

> 'absolute positivism' was a new term, coined by Abel Rey, a professor of philosophy at the Sorbonne, in order to designate what we today more harshly call 'scientism'. I do not remember the words I used then, but I distinctly recall my state of mind in raising that youthful protest against scientism. I was naively but intensely feeling indignant about a university professor of philosophy brazenly teaching that there was no such thing as philosophy. [3]

Thus at the beginning of his career Gilson struck a pattern of thought that would remain until the very end.

This essay proposes to examine the interplay of ideas in the three articles of Abel Rey, Etienne Gilson's critical response to Rey, and Rey's rejoinder to Gilson. This is followed by a brief account of Gilson' s views on Auguste Comte, the founder of positivism, and its relation to Rey's absolute positivism. Finally, we shall consider Gilson's own philosophy in the light of his criticism of positivism. Though his article occupies only three pages, it assumed some importance when he recalled it in his lectures on species in 1972. Having firmly turned his back on positivism at the beginning of his career, he confirmed his rejection of it at the end. His was a lifelong opposition to Auguste Comte. At the beginning of his lectures "In Quest of Species," Gilson said: "Some of us only late in life realize what confers a degree of unity upon our philosophical reflection." One of the themes that give unity to Gilson's philosophical life is his rejection of positivism and his conviction of the validity of philosophy as a way of knowing specifically distinct from that of science.

[3] Gilson, "In Quest of Species," three unpublished lectures, in the Archives of the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto. On these lectures, which are being readied for publication, see Shook, *Etienne Gilson,* 40-41, 387-88.

I. ABEL REY

Rey begins with the provocative statement: "Since the beginning of Greek philosophy up to the nineteenth century, philosophy has been the work of scientists *[savants]."* [4] Justifying this bold statement, which brings the history of philosophy into agreement with Rey's own positivism, he asserts that during these centuries science and philosophy were so mixed that it was almost impossible to separate pure science from philosophy. In fact, contemporaries found it clearly impossible to draw the line between the two. The best they could do was to consider scientific what we do today, namely, "very precise particular results," and philosophical "general views that concern less particular facts than vast systems." The authors of these general philosophical views regarded them as the natural consequences and conclusions of their detailed studies and purely scientific research. [5] This was true not only for scientists but also for philosophers of old. Rey writes:

> The majority of Greek philosophers, the great scholastics, and the scientists of the Renaissance possessed all the science of their era and they possessed it as masters. It is not surprising then that with them science should quite naturally and of itself end up with a system of nature considered in its totality, with a general view of the universe, with a philosophy. [6]

This notion of the relation between science and philosophy, Rey continues, is impossible today. Science has become so specialized since the end of the eighteenth century that both scientists and

[4] "Depuis Jes debuts de la philosophie grecque jusqu'au XIXe siecle, la philosophie a ete !'oeuvre des savants" (Rey, "Vers le positivisme absolu," 461). The French *savant* has a wider meaning than scientist; in general it means scholar, scientist, learned or erudite person (see *Dictionnaire Franqais-Anglais,* nouvelle ed., ed. Marguerite-Marie Dubois [Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1981]). However, it is clear from Abel's (and Gilson's) use of the term in connection with science, that it means "scientist" in their essays.

[5] Rey, "Vers le positivisme absolu," 461.

[6] "La plupartdes philosophes grecs, des grands scolastiques et des savants de la Renaissance ont possede toute la science de leur epoque et l'ont possede en maltres. It n'est pas etonnant alors que chez eux la science aboutisse tout naturellement, comme d'elle-meme, a un systeme de la nature consideree dams sa totalite, a une vue generale de l'univers, a une philosophie" (ibid., 462).

philosophers have agreed to a divorce. Science has gained its independence of philosophy, and philosophy (especially metaphysics, exemplified by German idealism) developed above or beside science on an entirely different level. Metaphysicians regard science as busied with the relative, the half-truth, or more exactly with apparent truth; absolute truth they "modestly" reserve to themselves. Scientists, for their part, look upon metaphysics as a flight of individual fancy with an aesthetic and not a logical appeal. A scientific philosophy, one emerging from science and using the method of science, is thought to be a myth.[7]

Living in the age of positivism inaugurated by Auguste Comte, Rey aimed to show that a scientific philosophy is indeed possible and necessary. This entailed the revision of the nineteenth-century divorce between science and philosophy. Not that science should once again be mixed with philosophy and depend on it. The great progress of science was entirely due to its separation from the speculations and obscurities of philosophy. "Science," Rey says, "is above all a system of partial propositions over which philosophy has no jurisdiction."[8] But, given this fact, it must be granted that positive science needs theories and general conceptions. Scientists themselves, even the most positivistic, try to answer questions that have always been classified as philosophical. Earlier positivists (Rey is thinking of Auguste Comte and his first followers, who considered positivism to be a philosophy specifically other than the positive sciences)[9] were too narrow and timid to acknowledge this. In short, their positivism was not absolute. Today, however, according to Rey, positivists attempt to answer these questions, not like the nineteenth-century metaphysicians but like the philosophers of old, only with more prudence and much less generality and certainty. Their answers

[7] Ibid., 463.

[8] "La science est d'abord un ensemble de propositions partielles sur laquelle la philosophie n'a aucune juridiction" (ibid., 464).

[9] For Comte's positive philosophy see his *Cours de philosophie positive,* 6 vols., 6th ed. (Paris: Alfred Costes, 1908-34), 1:1-16; E. Gilson, "French Positivism," in Thomas Langan, Etienne Gilson, Armand Maurer, *Recent Philosophy: Hegel to the Present,* A History of Philosophy 4, ed. E. Gilson (New York: Random House, 1966), 267-76.

are not general ideas springing from an individual imagination or fights of fancy, but from the facts of science itself.[10]

What then is philosophy for the absolute positivist? The first thing to be said, according to Rey, is that philosophy cannot and must not add to what the scientists say. They produce philosophy in its entirety, either actually or potentially. They alone are competent to know reality. Hence philosophy can be defined as "the system of positive science." Philosophy cannot be nor ought to be, in spirit and content, anything but the system of positive sciences.[11] Can philosophy at least be given the task of systematizing the results of science for its own purposes and criticism? This was a widespread notion of positive philosophy, attributed to Auguste Comte.[12] To Rey, however, it is bad metaphysics. He insists that if philosophy is to be truly positive it adds nothing to science. If philosophy is organized science, it would add something to it and complete it, but this is the work of science itself.

It might be objected that there are a great number of questions left unanswered by science, like the nature of matter and consciousness, and this leaves the door open to metaphysics. But Rey sees no reason to think that positive science has any definite limits. It might leave us ignorant about a certain matter, but we should be confident that, using the methods of science, the scientist will eventually find the solution, which will be accepted by everyone.[13]

This would seem to leave the philosopher with nothing to do. But Rey finds a task for the positivist philosopher that is both very important and difficult. He is the historian of contemporary scientific thought, noting the differences and agreements between scientists and schools of science, recording questions that remain open and the evolution of scientific ideas. For this he himself must have a broad knowledge of science to be assured that he does not

[10] Rey, "Vers le positivisme absolu," 465-66.

[11] Ibid., 461 n. 1.

[12] For the constructive and critical role of Comte's positivism with regard to science, see Gilson, "French Positivism," 273-76.

[13] Rey, "Vers le positivisme absolu," 471.

make mistakes. The scientist also likes to take a hand in these philosophical endeavors but always from his own limited and partial point of view, unlike the philosopher who takes a broader and more systematic view of the subject. So the philosopher does have a very definite speciality: he studies the evolution of scientific and philosophical ideas, and this puts him in direct contact with *facts* and yields a true *experience.* [14]

This gives the positivist philosopher a broad field in which to work. He tries to synthesize in each period of history its knowledge, methods, and hypotheses, not only as a sort of stock-taking (of which scientists above all feel the need because of the specialized nature of their own work), but especially to provide scientists with a general spirit or culture (a humanism in the best sense of the term) that specialized sciences are unable to furnish. The education and culture these sciences instill would be narrow and even harmful without general philosophical views. Thus philosophy (in the positivist sense) comes to the help of science, which cannot survive without these views. [15]

More can be said about the value of philosophy according to Rey. Scientific knowledge avoids anthropomorphisms; its aim is to be absolutely disinterested and as dehumanized as possible. But humankind now as always raises general questions about human life and destiny that vitally concern it. Rey insists that they must be answered in a positivist spirit and not a priori, artificially and with imagination or tradition. The role of positive philosophy is to examine these new questions like all the others-namely, in the light of the teachings of science, that is to say, in the light of observation and experience, with the sole aim of looking for the truth. [16]

When approaching questions concerning religion and the spiritual and social life that call for an answer, can we appeal to utility? Can we say, "Believe this because it is useful?" Rey refuses this pragmatic reply, for humans are looking for a reason for believing *en verite,* that is, in the order of knowledge and truth.

[14] Ibid., 473 (Rey's emphasis).

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid., 474.

The new positive philosophy must search for answers, and it will find them above all in the suggestions of science-not in studies of the cosmos, but especially, and perhaps exclusively, in psychology and sociology.[17]

It is easy to detect here, as elsewhere, the influence of Comte on Rey's notion of positivist philosophy. As we shall see, Comte had no use for studying astronomy (except the sun and moon), because it does not serve the interests of human life. Rey's emphasis on sociology reflects Comte's notion that this science is most fundamental, for it enables the philosopher to systematize the results of all the other sciences.[18]

Like Comte, Rey also stresses the need of religious sentiment and tolerance of religious beliefs for the cohesion of life in society, and he gives them an important place in positive philosophy. Religion should be encouraged, at least in the broad sense acceptable to the majority, though not in its actual particular manifestations, and perhaps not in its mystical form.[19] Contrary to Comte, Rey insists that positive philosophy should not furnish a system of religious beliefs. But, like Comte, he emphasizes the importance in general of affection and feeling in the positivist philosophy, remarking: "This is the profound basis of our conscious life, the eminent source of our actions, which the whole contemporary science of psychology teaches us. Why would we despise it to the advantage of an exclusive intellectualism, as narrow and superficial as it is little positive?"[20]

Rey's description of positivist philosophy would seem to distinguish it in some way from the sciences, but he insists that their functions are not different in nature but only in degree -presumably, above all, in their degree of generality. Each of the various sciences has its own speciality; philosophy emerges from

[17] Ibid., 474-75.

[18] On the role of sociology for Comte see Gilson, "French Positivism," 274; *The Unity of Philosophical Experience* (New York: Scribner's, 1941), chap. 10.

[19] Rey, "Vers le positivisme absolu," 477.

[20] "Celle-ci [i.e. la vie affective] est la base profonde de notre vie consciente, source eminente de nos actions, a ce que nous enseigne toute la science psychologique contemporaine. Pourquoi la mepriser au profit d'un intellectualisme exclusif, aussi etroit et superficiel que peu positif" (ibid.).

them in the mind of scientists as their continuation and culmination, unifying their conclusions and applying to them the historical and critical method. It is rightfully opposed to metaphysics, by which is meant philosophies that do not use scientific data and method but believe they have a method superior to that of the sciences.

IL GILSON'S CRITICISM OF REY

Gilson's reply to Rey is a brief but passionate plea for the independence of philosophy (and especially of metaphysics) from science. Philosophy, he contends, cannot be reduced to science in its contents, spirit, or method. It has its own content and method which do not emerge from the results of science. There are problems that philosophy alone can solve because they do not come within the scope of science nor can they be addressed by the scientific method.

In Rey's absolute positivism philosophy loses its autonomy and has no other content or method than those of science. *AB* we have seen, in absolute positivism philosophy cannot add anything to what the scientists say; they do everything.[21] Gilson agrees with Rey that scientists are competent to delve into their special domains, and they can also rise to consider the philosophical generalities concerning their specialities. A mathematician, for example, can analyze mathematical reasoning and a geometrician can tell us what he understands by space. But when a scientist gives us conclusions about the meaning and value of science, or about the limits of knowledge, he clearly goes beyond his competence and becomes a philosopher and a metaphysician. No scientific discipline confers on a scientist a special competence to raise the central problem of the critique of knowledge. There is, therefore, a place for metaphysics or a critique of knowledge (whatever it might be called) alongside and above science itself.[22]

[21] See above, p. 202.

[22] Gilson, "Notes et discussions," 64.

Do metaphysicians look down on science and its methods, as Rey claims? Gilson asks who these metaphysicians might be. Rey himself mentions contemporary philosophers, like Renouvier, Bergson, Boutroux, among others, but they believed in the necessity of metaphysics and showed respect for science and its method as necessary introductions to the whole of philosophy.[23]

Gilson also finds Rey's statements about the roles of philosophy in absolute positivism inconsistent. According to Rey's own account, the positivist philosopher does nothing but make an inventory of the results of science and write the history of contemporary scientific thought, which, Gilson adds, Rey himself has happily done. But Rey goes further and claims to raise the problem of human destiny and the meaning of life in the light of psychology and sociology, relying on the results of observation and experience. Gilson doubts that these problems arise in science, even in Rey's terms. He insists that no science, not even psychology or sociology, addresses them. They are problems for metaphysics and theology and are by definition ignored by positive science. He asks how absolute positivism can be a 'humanism', concerned with the fundamental problems of life and action, and yet it "cannot and must not add to what the scientists say."[24]

Gilson sees the basis of Rey's rejection of metaphysics as his desire to avoid putting limits to science, destroying science's monopoly of knowledge and curbing its rights. But Gilson does not see metaphysics as a peril for science; rather, he sees absolute positivism as a veritable peril for philosophy.[25]

Gilson's final remarks in his reply to Abel stress the independence of philosophy as such from both theology and science:

> In the Middle Ages it was said that philosophy is the handmaiden of theology *(Philosophia ancilla theologiae).* Philosophy is now freed from this servitude. Today it is said that philosophy is the handmaiden of science *(Philosophia ancilla*

[23] Ibid., 63. See Rey, "Vers le positivisme absolu," 467.

[24] Gilson, "Notes et discussions," 65.

[25] Ibid., 63.

> *scientiae).* This second servitude would be no better than the first. Philosophy is no one's servant. Without isolating it from science, but also without absorbing it in science, let it continue the work begun several centuries ago. Like science itself it will achieve from its own point of view ever closer approximations of the truth. [26]

Gilson wrote these lines in 1909, before encountering Thomas Aquinas and the role of 'handmaiden' that philosophy played in his theology. [27] At the time, this role appeared to him, in the spirit of the Enlightenment, as a servitude from which philosophy should be liberated. His deepening knowledge of medieval philosophy, and of Thomism in particular, convinced him that the role of philosophy as a handmaiden of theology was not a harmful enslavement for philosophy but a positive enrichment. [28] At the same time he insisted that in order to be a good handmaiden, Thomism as a philosophy had to be strictly rational in its principles and its argumentation. [29]

III. REY'S REPLY TO GILSON

Replying to Gilson, Rey first clears up what he sees as a misunderstanding between them. He then points out irreducible oppositions between their points of view. The misunderstanding concerns the expression "Philosophy is the handmaiden of

[26] "On disait au moyen age: 'Philosophia ancilla theologiae'. La philosophie s'est liberee de ce servage. On nous dit aujourd'hui: 'Philosophia ancilla scientiae'; ce second servage ne vaudrait pas mieux que le premier. La philosophie n'est la servante de personne. Laissons la, sans l'isoler de la science mais aussi sans l'y resorber, poursuivre !'oeuvre commencee depuis plusieurs siecles; comme la science elle-meme elle realisera, du point de vue qui lui est propre, des approximations de plus en plus rigoureuses de la verite" (ibid., 65).

[27] The notion of philosophy as the handmaiden of theology comes from the Church Fathers. See Bernard Bandoux, "Philosophia, ancilla theologiae," *Antonianum* 12 (1937): 293-326; Harry A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Church Fathers* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1956), 1:97-101. It is implied in St. Thomas' *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 1, a. 5, sed contra: "aliae scientiae dicuntur ancillae huius [i.e. theologiae]."

[28] For Gilson's classic defense of this opinion see his *The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy,* trans. A. H. C. Downes (New York: Scribner's, 1940), chaps. 1 and 2. See also his *The Philosopher and Theology,* trans. Cecile Gilson (New York: Random House, 1962).

[29] Etienne Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas,* 6th ed., trans. L. K. Shook and A. Maurer (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2002), xiii.

science," which Gilson attributes to Rey by analogy with the medieval dictum "Philosophy is the handmaiden of theology." The expression is unacceptable to Rey, for it implies that there is a philosophy apart from science that could be its servant. For him, the correct expression is absolute: "Philosophy *is* science," for there is no other philosophy than positive science.[30] Nevertheless, according to Rey, philosophy still exists, absorbed in science and one with it, giving to the special sciences general views, broad syntheses, a wide education and culture, without which there would have been no science. The specialized sciences cannot furnish them, but they must be supplied by the philosophy implied by positive science itself.[31] Again, positive philosophy seeks to clarify for each historical period the synthesis of knowledge and the methods and hypotheses in use, which the scientists are the first to feel the need of because of the specialty of their own work. No doubt Gilson had statements like these in mind when he attributed to Rey the expression "Philosophy is the handmaiden of science."

The oppositions between Gilson and Rey are clear enough. The main irreducible opposition between their points of view, Rey says, is that for him there are no extra-scientific questions, "for there is no legitimate method apart from the methods of science." He illustrates this with the problems relating to human destiny. These religious problems, Rey assures us, are not at all extra-scientific; they can only be "technical applications of scientific data .... Psychology, and above all sociology, sciences of facts, *exhaust* for me the study of the question, and the same [is true] for the problem of morality and the problem of knowledge." Positive science is formed, Rey continues, by slowly eliminating religious myths and magic rites, rejecting everything that cannot measure up to the demands of knowledge. The best definition of positive science that he can give is: "It refines and unifies the means, all the means, and the *sole* means, of arriving at the truth." From the point of view of both knowledge and action, "outside of

[30] Rey, "Notes et discussions: Sur le positivisme absolu," 66 (emphasis added).

[31] Rey, "Vers le positivisme absolu," 466.

science there is no salvation." This is the uncomprom1smg position to which Rey gives the title 'absolute positivism'. [32]

In a postscript Rey clarifies his attitude toward metaphysics. He finds metaphysical reflection very legitimate as a form of *art,* responding to our *aesthetic* needs, but not at all as a way of knowing or directing our actions. [33]

IV. GILSON AND COMTE

Gilson devoted only a few pages in the 1909 issue of the *Revue philosophique* to Rey's absolute positivism. In the years that followed he gave considerable attention to Auguste Comte (1798-1857), the founder of positivism, and to the development of absolute positivism among Comte's followers like Abel Rey and Emile Littre (1801-81)-a movement that in Gilson's eyes radically altered the founder's ideas. [34]

Gilson finds two basic principles underlying Comte's positivism, one intellectual, the other sentimental. The first is, "Everything is relative," to which he adds in blatant contradiction, "and this is the only absolute principle." [35] Suggested to him by his reading of Hume, among others, the principle expresses, for Comte, the positive spirit inherent in the human mind. Having passed through the theological and metaphysical stages of history,

[32] Rey, "Notes et discussions," 66 (emphasis in original).

[33] Ibid. (Rey's emphasis).

[34] Gilson wrote extensively on Auguste Comte, including "La specificite de la philosophie d'apres Auguste Comte," in *Congres des societes americaine, anglaise, beige, italienne et de la societe franqaise de philosophie* (communications et discussions ... a la Sorbonne du 27 au 31 decembre 1921) (Paris: Colin, 1921), 382-86; "Essai sur la vie interieure," *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'etranger* 89 (1920): 23-78; "Le bilan religieux du XIXe siecle franc;;ais,"*Poi et vie* 26 (1923): 1197-1202; *Les metamorphoses de la cite de Dieu* (Louvain: Publications universitaires; Paris: J. Vrin, 1952); *The Unity of Philosophical Experience* (New York: Scribner's, 1941), chap. 10; Gilson, "Auguste Comte," in Gilson, Langan, and Maurer, *Recent Philosophy,* 267-76; *Choir ofMuses,* trans. Maisie Ward (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1953), 103-30. For an excellent account of Comte's philosophy see Henri Gouhier, *Lajeunesse d'Auguste Comte et la formation du positivisme,* 3 vols. (Paris:J. Vrin, 1933-41).

[35] "Tout est relatif, voila le seul principe absolu" (Comte, *Systeme de politique positive,* 4 vols. [Paris: Mathias, 1831-54[, 4:11. Cited in Gilson, "La specificite de la philosophie d'apres Auguste Comte," 363;"Auguste Comte," 272.

in which ideas and even things themselves were conceived as absolute, humankind has finally reached the positive stage in which everything is recognized as relative. This at once separates Comte from followers like Rey and Littre,[36] for whom positivism itself becomes something absolute. Thus, as we have seen, Rey can say absolutely that philosophy *is* science, whereas Comte finds a distinct role and method for philosophy. There are higher and lower sciences for Comte, but this does not do away with the distinctive character of his positive philosophy.

Comte's second principle is the importance of sentiment or affection for a complete philosophy and a happy life. "Tender affections," Comte writes, "are the source of the greatest happiness."[37] This includes the feminine element of humankind, which he regarded as infinitely better than the masculine; without it there can be no happiness. Affection introduced into Comte's philosophy a subjectivism which stressed the primacy of feeling over knowledge. As we have seen, Rey also emphasized the role of affection in his absolute positivism, but unlike Comte he did not elevate feeling and love above knowledge, as Comte increasingly did in the second part of his career.[38]

Comte's notions of science and philosophy and their relations derive from these two principles. Since there are no absolutes for him (except the principle that all is relative), Rey's absolute statement: "Philosophy is science" would make no sense for Comte. Although he granted no other source for the substance of philosophy than that of science,[39] he clearly distinguished between the two by giving philosophy its own functions and method.

In Comte's view, science studies things objectively and in themselves. It sets up a systematic order of the sciences depending on the greater or lesser generality of their objects. Biology, for example, is a fundamental science because it deals with the general fact of life, while entomology is not a fundamental science

[36] For Littre, see Gilson, "La specificite de la philosophie d'apresAuguste Comte," 378-79; "French Positivism," 277 n. 14.

[37] Cited in Gilson, "La specificite de la philosophie d'apres Auguste Comte," 365.

[38] Ibid., 376; Gilson, "Auguste Comte," 275.

[39] Gilson, "Auguste Comte," 268, 274.

because the facts it studies are less general. For Comte, the order of the sciences corresponds to the layers of reality and their degrees of generality. Gilson calls this "perhaps the boldest metaphysical assumption common to all the positivisms founded on the rejection of metaphysics. They assume that there are such things as *more or less general facts,* as if generality were not a thing of the mind. "[40]

Among the sciences Comte found a lacuna: none deals with social facts. To fill this void he created sociology, a 'social physics' that would make possible the creation of a truly organic society, centered around the love of humanity. This positive science became the keystone of his philosophy. The fundamental law of sociology is the "law of the three states," according to which all knowledge passes through three successive stages: theological or fictive, metaphysical or abstract, and positive or scientific. In the present positive stage of knowledge the aim is to explain phenomena by discovering the general laws governing them. Unlike knowledge in the metaphysical stage, it is not a search for causes; rather, in Gilson's words, "it substitutes the search for laws for the search for causes. In other words, it substitutes science for metaphysics. "[41]

We have still to see the role Comte's positive philosophy plays in human life. Science, the objective study of reality, is admirable in itself, but Comte thought that the mind should go further and consider things subjectively, that is, from the perspective of human life and affection. It then reaches wisdom, the study of which is traditionally called philosophy. This leaves no room in Comte's philosophy for pure science. He shows disgust for the pure scientist and for "the fatal dryness that accompanies, above all today, the scientific culture. "[42]

The need for philosophy was evident to Comte. Science tends to multiply and specialize, with the result that it is incapable of offering a system of ideas that would give unity to our intellectual life. Positivism brings together the general conclusions of the

[40] Ibid., 269.

[41] Ibid., 272.

[42] Gilson, "La specificite de la philosophie d'apres Auguste Comte," 377 n. 2.

sciences and gives a systematic interpretation of the world.[43] Far from being reduced to science, positivist philosophy absorbs it, dictates to it, and judges it, for the regeneration and unity of society.[44] This leads Gilson to the important conclusion that Comte's positivism, unlike that of Rey, is not 'a mere scientism'.[45]

Comte was living in the aftermath of the French Revolution of 1789 and saw the need of restoring order and unity in society. For this, he thought a positive system of ideas was needed, but above all an awakening of sentiment and universal love for humankind. Previously these were fostered by Christianity, but with its decline he thought a new religion without God was needed, which he aspired to provide with a religion of humanity. The worship of man was to substitute for the worship of God; and there would be "a City of Man, a positivist duplicate of the Christian City of God, including a High Priest and a positivist clergy."[46]

Writing in the review *Poi et vie* in 1920, only two years after the greatest massacre of the human race in history, in which Gilson himself had suffered, he pointed out the failure of Comte's new religion of humanity. Comte acknowledged the need of a faith and religion, based not on a transcendent object, like the Christian God, but on an object of our own making, namely, the love of humanity. But Gilson retorts that the events of the last few years (i.e., the First World War) convinced us that faith and religion can only be nourished by an object transcending not only man but humanity. After the war, how laughable it is to expect us to adore ourselves![47]

[43] Gilson, "Auguste Comte," 268-69.

[44] Ibid., 274-75.

[45] Ibid., 273.

[46] Ibid., 275; Gilson, "La specificite de la philosophie d'apres Auguste Comte," 376. Gilson treats of this theme, which he calls "the profound aspiration" of Comte's positivist doctrine, in *Les metamorphoses de la cite de Dieu,* 248.

[47] Gilson, "Le bilan religieux du XIXe siecle franc;;ais," 1200. I wish to thank Richard J. Fafara for this reference and his comment on it in his "Gilson and Gouhier: Approaches to Malebranche," in *A Thomistic Tapestry: Essays in Memory of Etienne Gilson,* ed. Peter A. Redpath, Valuelnquiry Book Series 142 (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2003), 107-55.

Abel Rey, like other followers of Comte, refused to accept his new positive religion, regarding it as a failure.[48] Nevertheless, as we have seen, Rey insisted on the importance of religious sentiment for its social value. He envisaged "a general protection of religious tendencies in the name of social needs, which amounted to a positive use of religions." He thought that none of the current religions would gain worldwide acceptance. Rather, they would gradually lose their force, and religion might become a purely individual affair, "an entirely personal culture," an object of study by psychology and sociology.[49]

In Gilson's view, this is a decline from the partial scientism of Comte to pure scientism and in fact to the end of positivism as a philosophy:

> Hence scientism and so-called absolute positivism, which make the content of philosophy coincide with the content of science, mark the necessary ending of the historical breakup of Comtism. At the precise moment when philosophy not only refuses to lay claim to a power of knowing transcending that of science, but even refuses to be only a human wisdom that actively intervenes in our knowledge in order to arrange it in view of our needs and to submit it to the demands of our interior perfection, philosophy as such surrenders into the hands of science and at that moment ceases to exist .... absolute positivism is the absolute negation of positivism.[50]

V. GILSON AND PHILOSOPHY

Many of the ideas of Comte and his immediate followers live on in logical positivism and logical empiricism, and they are still widely influential among contemporary philosophers and scien-

[48] Rey, "Vers le positivisme absolu," 474.

[49] Ibid., 477.

[50] "Le scientisme et le positivisme dit absolu, qui font coincider le contenu de la philosophie avec le contenu de la science, marquent done le point d'aboutissement necessaire de la decomposition historique du comtisme. Au moment precis oil la philosophie, non seulement refuse de s'arroger un pouvoir de connaftre transcendant il celui de la science, mais renonce meme il n'etre qu'une sagesse humaine qui intervienne activement clans nos connaissances pour !es ordonner en vue de nos besoins et !es soumettre aux exigences de notre perfectionnement interieur, la philosophie comme telle abdique entre !es mains de la science, et cesse au meme moment d'exister .... le positivisme absolu est la negation absolue du positivisme" (Gilson, "La specificite de la philosophie d'apres Auguste Comte," 380).

tists. Among these are the notions that the scientific method is the only means of reaching the truth, that philosophy (if admitted at all) is inextricably bound up with science and emerges from it, and that theology and metaphysics belong to ages long past and have no place in the modern world as purveyors of the truth. [51]

What is at stake here for Gilson is the integrity and specificity of philosophy in relation to science-in short, the existence of philosophy itself. Is philosophy a specific discipline with its own object and method, or is its content and method identical with those of science? These are problems he takes up in *Methodical Realism,* when he treats of the specific nature of the philosophic order. [52]

Is it not reasonable, Gilson argues, that, since the objects of the various sciences and philosophy are different, they should have different methods? Rather than speaking, with Descartes, of *the method* of seeking the truth, should we not speak of *the methods?* He writes:

> The mathematical method corresponds with the order of abstract quantity; even so it has to diversify itself according to whether it is dealing with continuous or discontinuous quantity, with geometry or with arithmetic. The physical order has its method, because it has to study the movement and properties of inorganic bodies. The biological order requires still another method, because it tackles the study of organized beings, and so on for psychology, morality, and sociology. [53]

The sciences study the various modes of being, while metaphysics studies "being in itself, in its essence and in its properties. It is the science of being as being," so it is natural that it should have its own method, distinct from those of the sciences. Metaphysics is necessary, Gilson writes,

[51] In a recent work Joseph Margolis says, "Scientism remains the most salient vision of the whole of analytic philosophy," adding "which is no closer now to being vindicated than it was a hundred years ago" Goseph Margolis, *The Unravelling of Scientism* [Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003], 11). For Margolis, any philosophy is marked by scientism that advocates the use of a single method. Thus Cartesianism is an example of scientism.

[52] Etienne Gilson, *Methodical Realism,* trans. Philip Trower (Front Royal, Va.: Christendom Press, 1990), 81-107.

[53] Ibid., 99-100.

[For] over and above the problems which the different modes of being raise, there is the problem raised by being itself; not, how do such and such things exist, but what is existence? In what does it consist? Why is there existence at all, seeing that the existence we directly know does not seem to have in itself a sufficient reason for its existence? Is it necessary or contingent? And if it is contingent, does it not postulate a necessary existence as its cause and explanation? [54]

Throughout his career as a philosopher, metaphysics with its many problems was Gilson's dominant preoccupation. His numerous books and articles devoted to metaphysics give witness to his love of the subject and to his conviction that Aristotle was right in calling it the primary philosophy and human wisdom par excellence. So intent was Gilson on the cultivation of this wisdom that some have thought, or at least, suspected, that he equated philosophy with metaphysics. [55]

In fact, Gilson recognized a philosophy of nature, or what he calls "the philosophy of the science of nature" in his book on final causality and evolution. [56] Unlike Jacques Maritain and many other Thomists, he did not think the philosophy of nature should be conceived as a philosophical discipline formally distinct from mathematics, the natural sciences or physics, and metaphysics. [57] Rather, it is the wisdom that probes the principles of the sciences and takes up problems encountered in them but beyond the range of the sciences themselves. Scientists are best qualified to engage in these pursuits, and in fact some feel impelled to do so, but then they do not speculate as scientists but as philosophers. This is the

[54] Ibid., 106-7.

[55] For example, Mortimer J. Adler, "Problems for Thomists, 2," *The Thomist* 2 (1940): 253 n. 219; John M. Quinn, *The Thomism of Etienne Gilson: A Critical Study* (Villanova: Villanova University Press, 1971), 18-20.

[56] Gilson, *From Aristotle to Darwin and Back Again: A Journey in Final Causality, Species, and Evolution,* trans. John Lyon (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), xix, 16.

[57] For Maritain, the distinction between science and the philosophy of science results from two specifically distinct types of the analysis of sensible reality, empiriological in the first case and ontological in the second Uacques Maritain, *Philosophy o(Nature,* trans. Imelda C. Byrne [New York: Philosophical Library, 1951], 73-74). Only in the seventeenth century was this distinction clearly made with the Galileo-Cartesian revolution. See Jacques Maritain, "The Conflict of Methods at the End of the Middle Ages," *The Thomist* 3 (1941): 527-38.

case with the principle of final causality in nature, which "belongs to the philosophy of the science of nature."[58] What Gilson seems to have in mind is not simply Comte's higher and lower levels of science, the philosophy of nature being the highest and most general, but a discipline emerging from science but using a philosophic method to examine subjects beyond the reach of science. This carries the philosophy of nature beyond Abel Rey's absorption of philosophy in science and Comte's conception of positive philosophy.

Gilson says little about the philosophy of nature in his published works. However, he talks briefly about it in his unpublished lectures "In Quest of Species," given in Toronto in 1972.[59] In the second lecture he says:

> I have nothing against the project of a philosophy of nature, for there can be a philosophy of everything. Every time you push up to the generalities and principles of some discipline you reach its philosophy, but the philosophy of a discipline is part of that discipline as being its crowning part. So, if there is a philosophy of nature, since the science of nature is physics, that philosophy should be conceived as the crowning part of physics.

In the twilight of Gilson's life he wrote several works critical of positivism or scientism. Among these works is his book on modern linguistics: *Linguistics and Philosophy.*[60] In this work he records the attempt of linguists like Ferdinand de Saussure to make a rigorous science of linguistics, avoiding all philosophical commitments: what Gilson calls "linguistic positivism." He contends that linguistics cannot do without philosophy, because in reality language is meaningful, and meaning cannot be

[58] Gilson, *From Aristotle to Danuin and Back Again,* 16. It should be noted that, since the philosophy of nature, as Gilson conceived it, is a part of physics, it cannot have the full autonomy of philosophy as described in *Methodical Realism.* Metaphysics alone would seem to measure up to this independence. Nevertheless, the philosophy of nature has its own object and method.

[59] For these lectures, see above n. 3.

[60] Etienne Gilson, *Linguistics and Philosophy: An Essay on the Philosophical Constants of Language,* trans. John Lyon (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988). See Armand Maurer, "Gilson on Linguistics and the Philosophy of Language," *Doctor Communis* 38, no. 1 (1985): 335-44.

understood without taking into account thought, which is an immaterial and metaphysical factor.[61]

Gilson also opposed modern scientism in his book on final causality and evolution: *From Aristotle to Darwin and Back Again.* From the start he takes a stand against scientism in modern biology. A modern biologist who is a pure mechanist, he says, declares that it is *scientific* to exclude final causality from the explanation of living beings, because it cannot be integrated into his research. It is a fact, however, that the parts of a living organism act for an end, and hence there is final causality or teleology in nature. "[I]t is difficult," Gilson remarks, "to speak of the *function* of an organ or of a tissue without dangerously brushing against the idea of a natural teleology."[62] He writes:

> The pure mechanist in biology is a man whose entire activity has as its end the discovery of the "how" of the vital operations in plants and animals. Looking for nothing else, he sees nothing else, and since he cannot integrate other things in his research, he denies their existence. This is why he sincerely denies the existence, however evident, of final causality.[63]

Gilson's purpose is not to make final causality a scientific notion but "a philosophical inevitability and, consquently, a constant of biophilosophy, or philosophy of life."[64]

Thus, from his first published article in 1909 to his last works, Gilson was a critic of positivism and its implied scientism. At stake was no less than the existence of philosophy itself as a specific mental discipline. Contrary to Abel Rey, he insisted that philosophy is not identical with science but has its own object and method, distinct from those of the sciences. Using its own method, it is able to solve weighty problems and to delve into mysteries that would elude the sciences. Not that philosophers should separate themselves from the sciences; rather, they should avail themselves of their data, which they can use for philosophy's own enrichment. Scientists for their part should turn to

[61] Gilson, *Linguistics and Philosophy,* 69, 87.

[62] Gilson, *From Aristotle to Darwin and Back Again,* 11.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Ibid., xix.

philosophy when faced with questions lying beyond their competence.

Gilson's defense of philosophy as a specific rational mode of inquiry extends, beyond its relation to science, to that of theology. It does not come within the scope of this essay to examine Gilson's notion of Christian philosophy-an expression, he said in later years, "which some wrongly imagine I like, whereas all I like is the right to use it."[65] (A surprising statement indeed, in view of his defense of Christian philosophy in his Gifford lectures!) He did not think that when philosophy is used as a handmaiden of theology it is absorbed by theology so as to lose its integrity and rationality and to become indistinguishable from it. He insisted that it is appropriate to speak of the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas, even when it lives in its fullness within his theology. In the sixth and final edition of his *Le thomisme* (1986) he continued to emphasize the essentially theological character of Thomas's teaching because it is directed to a theological end, but he added: "I maintain more than ever that his theology by its very nature includes not only in fact but necessarily a strictly rational philosophy. To deny this would be like denying that stones are real stones just because they are used to build a cathedral."[66] Commenting on Pope Leo XIII's description in *Aeterni Patris* of philosophy's role in theology as a "way of philosophizing" *(genus philosophandi),* he asserts:

> [T]he philosophizing that reason is here doing is indeed philosophy .... In all that falls under its competence, let philosophy follow its own method, use its own principles and its own methods of demonstration .... In this religious use of reason, philosophy should be present such as it is in itself, or otherwise the Christian could not really use it.[67]

[65] Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas,* xiv.

[66] Ibid., xiii. For the nature of Thomistic philosophy and its direction to theological ends, see ibid., 1-37, especially 9.

[67] Gilson, *The Philosopher and Theology,* 190-91.

Hence in its relation to theology, as well as in its relation to science, Gilson guarded the integrity and rationality of philosophy. It was in defense of philosophy in this sense that he set his face against absolute positivism in his youthful essay on Abel Rey and continued to criticize the positivism of Auguste Comte and his followers throughout his long career.

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THE NECESSITY OF RAISING THE QUESTION OF GOD: AQUINAS AND LONERGAN ON THE QUEST AFTER COMPLETE INTELLIGIBILITY

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"ONE CANNOT CONFINE human knowledge within the domain of proportionate being without condemning it to mere matters of fact without explanation and so stripping it of knowledge not only of transcendent but also of proportionate being."[1] Those who take their inspiration from Bernard Lonergan's philosophical method for its ability to shed light on the problems of human knowing and living are as it were obligated to come to terms with this statement from *Insight.*

What Lonergan is in effect saying is that, sooner or later, one must raise the question of God. At least in the speculative domain, the inquiry into human understanding terminates in the affirmation of an unrestricted act of understanding that no human knower can identify with her own developing understanding, but that she must affirm in order to make sense of her own limited acts of understanding. Because this unrestricted act of understanding would have to be the understanding of everything about everything, Lonergan identifies it with the idea of being, for an idea is the content of an act of understanding.[2] Such an idea and its corresponding act of understanding, because it would be

[1] Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding, S'h* edition, vol. 3 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan,* ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto and Buffalo: Published for Lonergan Research Institute of Regis College, Toronto, by University of Toronto Press, 1992), 676.

[2] Ibid., 667.

the understanding of being in all its universality and concreteness, would have to be absolutely unconditioned and unlimited. Such an intelligence could only be what men in all ages have called 'God'.[3]

Lonergan aligns his approach to the problem of God (at least in *Insight)* with the five ways of Thomas Aquinas. He identifies the unrestricted act of understanding with Aquinas's *ipsum intelligere,* one of the primary attributes of the First Uncaused Cause who is affirmed at the end of Aquinas's demonstrations for the existence of God. Lonergan acknowledges the Thomist debate over whether being or intelligence is logically prior in Aquinas's conception of God and firmly places his interpretation on the side of the primacy of the act of intelligence.[4] I do not intend here to enter into this debate. However, I shall attempt to show that Aquinas's method of arriving at the affirmation of God is guided every step of the way by the demands of intelligence in such a way that the final product of the affirmation must be thought to be the intelligent ground of all finite intelligence and intelligibility in the same way that Lonergan's unrestricted act of understanding grounds the intelligibility of the real. In effect I shall be challenging the usual distinction made between the Aristotelian/Thomistic physical or cosmological affirmation of a first cause and Lonergan' s own method of delving deeper and deeper into the demands of intelligence in order to arrive at what he calls 'general transcendent knowledge'.[5]

[3] Such is the general argument, drastically abbreviated, of the penultimate chapter of *Insight,* entitled "General Transcendent Knowledge." The final chapter, "Special Transcendent Knowledge," lays out the heuristic structure of a possible supernatural revelation.

[4] Bernard J. F. Lonergan et al., *Understanding and Being: The Halifax Lectures on Insight,* 2d edition, vol. 5 of *Collected Works ofBernard Lonergan* (Toronto and Buffalo: Published for Lonergan Research Institute of Regis College, Toronto, by University of Toronto Press, 1990), 240-41.

[5] Lonergan himself claims that the "two processes are equivalent" (ibid., 240). Frederick Crowe, one of Lonergan's foremost interpreters, distinguishes Lonergan's approach as 'transcendental' in contrast to the traditional 'cosmological' approach of Aquinas. See Frederick E. Crowe, "Lonergan's Thoughts on Ultimate Reality and Meaning," in idem, *Appropriating the Lonergan Idea* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1989), 71-105. I will argue that Lonergan's approach simply makes explicit what is implicit in Aquinas's five ways.

This paper will follow the general lines of Aquinas's argument in the five ways as well as its presuppositions (without entering into the particularities of any of the five ways themselves) in order to show how the demands of intelligence and intelligibility lead Aquinas to the affirmation of a first uncaused cause of being. In doing so, Aquinas is in effect arguing for the speculative necessity of raising the question of God.[6]

I would like to show that Lonergan' s method of inquiry after God essentially corresponds to Aquinas's own procedure, as there has been some recent concern that Lonergan's 'transcendental' approach to the question of God (and more generally, the question of being) cannot get us to the classical First Uncaused Cause of Thomist metaphysics.[7] I shall show how Aquinas's metaphysical assent to God's existence is itself an expression of a quest after the complete intelligibility of being, so that Lonergan' s approach in chapter 19 of *Insight* can really be understood as a reflection upon the intellectual operations that gave rise to this affirmation of God as first cause.

I shall begin with the fact of the intellect's openness to all reality and all truth evidenced in the wonder that is inspired in it. This wonder on the part of the human spirit, recognized by Aristotle and Aquinas and identical to what Lonergan calls the pure and unrestricted desire to know, necessarily becomes an inquiry into causes or explanatory principles. This inquiry,

[6] The philosophical question of God-at least as a being who is totally other than finite being-cannot be framed adequately until one has succeeded in rising to the affirmation of a first uncaused cause of being. Until then, any notion of what one means by God risks being conflated with the immanence of human reason. I have discussed this issue in my doctoral dissertation especially in relation to Hegel (A. Jaramillo, *The Total Transcendence of the Infinite in Thomas Aquinas* [Ph.D. diss., Boston College, 2005]). I have entitled this paper "The Necessity of Raising the Question of God" rather than "The Necessity of Affirming the Existence of God" precisely because I would like to draw attention to the genesis of the idea of God from intelligence's immanent dynamism in its encounter with the data of experience. The first expression of this dynamism is always a question, not a judgment. This is Lonergan's argument in *Insight.* For an opposing view, which insists on the primacy of judgment, see Frederick E. Wilhelmsen, *Being and Knowing: Reflections of a Thomist* (Albany, N.Y.: Preserving Christian Publications, 1991).

[7] See John F. X. Knasas, "Transcendental Thomism: A Metaphysical Assessment," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 64 (1995): 15-28.

founded in the wonder that gives rise to philosophy, is intelligent and reasonable, and therefore structures itself into the quest after more and more universal principles of explanation for the beings it knows. In order to be true to its own rationality, this quest must terminate not arbitrarily, but necessarily at a first universal principle of being that is the explanatory principle of all things. Here I shall consider Lonergan's reflections on causality in order to make more clear the necessity of arriving at a first uncaused cause (in Lonergan's terminology, the formally unconditioned). Finally, as an afternote of sorts, I shall acknowledge the practical and existential turn of contemporary philosophy, [8] and show that the necessity of the question of God, while truly one in the speculative or theoretical order, has certain existential or practical preconditions that must be met in order for the question adequately to be raised.

I conclude this way in order to show that I am sensitive to the fact that the question of God-at least as the intelligible ground of being-is in fact one that is no longer commonly raised in a speculative context. I shall attempt to give some reasons for the divergence between the *de jure* and the *de facto* prominence of the question in human rational endeavor. This aspect of the question of the necessity of raising the question of God is one that neither Aquinas nor Lonergan neglected.

This article intends to contribute to the ongoing effort to bring both Aquinas and Lonergan into dialogue with contemporary trends in philosophy and theology, especially in the case where epistemological and ontological 'foundationalism' has been rejected. In an article critical of Lonergan's demonstration for the existence of God, R. M. Burns defines foundationalism as "the traditional attempt to conceive of knowledge as necessarily grounded in absolutely self-evident or purely given foundations whether of a rationalist, empiricist, or Kantian-transcendentalist

[8] For the primacy of the existential in contemporary philosophy, see Bernard J. F. Lonergan, "The Subject," in idem, *A Second Collection,* ed. William J. F. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrrell (repr.; Toronto: Published for Lonergan Research Institute of Regis College, Toronto, by University of Toronto Press, 1996), 79-84.

kind." [9] It is clear from Bum's article that he believes that Lonergan's philosophical project falls under this label, and he argues that such a project is ultimately untenable and that the quest after complete intelligibility in the universe is a fool's errand. In contrast, Burns proposes that it is a kind of philosophical faith, or *Grundvertrauen,* that founds the epistemological enterprise and resists the attempt of human beings to overcome all facticity by illuminating the foundations of reason itself with the light of intelligence. Consequently, he takes issue with Lonergan's (as well as Aquinas's) characterization of God as the ground of intelligibility, and even goes so far as to propose an alternative theology in which unlimited divine intelligence is rejected in favor of an unconscious or nonintelligible abyss at the core of the Godhead, reminiscent of Gnosticizing trends in both antiquity and modernity. [10]

Much contemporary theology as well is committedly 'antifoundationalist', even in its foremost proponents of speculative theology, in the sense that the fundamental role of a rational metaphysics for theology is denied. With respect to Lonergan, this often presents itself as a critique of his methodological 'transcendentalism'. [11] This seems to be the position of John Milbank, the founding father of 'Radical Orthodoxy', who takes issue with the "anthropological starting

[9] R. M. Burns, "Bernard Lonergan's Proof of the Existence and Nature of God," *Modem Theology* 32 (1987): 153. Another interpreter of Lonergan, more sympathetic to Lonergan's philosophy of religion, defines foundationalism as "the view that knowledge requires some theoretical grounds for its justification" Uim Kanaris, "Lonergan and Contemporary Philosophy of Religion," in Deane-Peter Baker and Patrick Maxwell, eds., *Explorations in Contemporary Continental Philosophy of Religion* [Amsterdam and New York: Editions Rodopi, B.V., 2003]).

[10] For an illuminating study of this trend, see Cyril O'Regan, *Gnostic Return in Modernity* (Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 2001). O'Regan locates gnostic trends in thinkers as disparate as Boehme, Schelling, Hegel, and Altizer.

[11] Lonergan defines a method as transcendental when it "considers the operations of the intellect and will, whose objects are transcendental" ("The Method of Theology," notes for lectures delivered in Latin at the Gregorian University, Rome, under the title *De methodo theologiae* [1962; unpublished translation produced in Toronto at the Lonergan Research Institute in 1990], 7-8). The text also presents Lonergan's concise and useful comparison of his transcendental approach with Kantian transcendentalism.

point" of a thinker like Lonergan, particularly with respect to the latter's interpretation of Aquinas.[12] Milbank and his colleague Catherine Pickstock go so far as to suggest that while Aquinas may have *perceived* his metaphysics of creation as "universally available to rightly-directed reason," it is *actually* "rooted in the Biblical tradition."[13] This contrast between the logic of creation as the "transcendental possibility of a negative specification of the unknown" and creation as a grammar that is "the explication of culturally-specific meaning-presuppositions" causes Milbank to be highly suspicious of the project of 'natural' or philosophical theology.

This preference for grounding reason or intelligence in that which is nonrational or nonintelligent is a trend so pervasive in contemporary philosophy and theology that it would take several books to treat the variety of objections raised against the viability of 'natural theology' or 'philosophy of God'.[14] I shall limit my efforts to showing exactly how both Aquinas and Lonergan held that, in the case of knowledge of God's existence, *scientia,* which normally requires insight into its first principles,[15] is possible, although in fact it is rarely realized. I shall also show how especially Lonergan's particular way of grounding human speculative endeavor tends to escape the criticisms leveled at classical foundationalisms. I acknowledge the main insight of the anti-foundationalist trend in theological thinking by arguing for the existential necessity of religious conversion for an affirmation of God and the theological context (in the strong sense of revelation) in which such an affirmation usually takes place. However, I hold

[12] John Milbank, "Critique of Theology of Right," in idem, *The Word Made Strange* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 15.

[13] Ibid., 13.

[14] For a thorough-going treatment of the question of Lonergan's philosophy of God and the question of foundationalism, see Ulf Jonsson, *Foundations for Knowing God: Bernard Lonergan's Foundations for Knowledge of God and the Challenge from Antifoundationalism* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1999).

[15] The exception being 'subalternate' sciences, whose first principles are taken from a higher science, the principles of which are *per se* known to it. See Aquinas's discussion of sacred doctrine as a subalternate science in the first question of the *Summa Theologiae (STh* I, q. 1, a. 2).

firmly to the *de jure* integrity of the philosophical pursuit of complete intelligibility, in the sense that this quest's crowning affirmation of God does not depend upon revealed truth or "culturally-specific meanings" for its intrinsic intelligibility. In so doing, I am arguing for the viability of the Aristotelian ideal of *scientia* for our knowledge of God, an ideal transposed by Lonergan into modern terms by his focus on method.

I. FROM WONDER TO THE INQUIRY AFTER CAUSES

The treatment of the question of God in terms of a First Cause has fallen into disfavor in contemporary philosophy.[16] As James Collins has suggested,[17] contemporary phenomenology considers itself to be a purely descriptive, noninferential science that does not inquire into the causes of the phenomena in question. Accordingly, contemporary phenomenology of religion seems to want to dispense with the 'ways' or demonstrations favored by Aquinas and to focus on immediate religious or even theological experience.[18] While this is not the place to balance one method against the other, we must begin our inquiry into the necessity of the question of God with an apology for the way it appears in Aquinas's work, that is, as a question that is necessitated by the way of causality. We can do this by showing how the inquiry after causes begins in a *phenomenon* that is itself distinctly human.

Aristotle's *Metaphysics* famously begins by stating that all men by nature desire to know.[19] Aquinas comments that the desire to know follows from everyday experience, for men begin to philosophize when they are struck by the things around them: "perplexity and wonder arise from ignorance. For when we see certain obvious effects whose cause we do not know, we wonder

[16] For a representative of this critique see Jean-Luc Marion, *God without Being* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

[17] James Collins, *God in Modem Philosophy* (Chicago: H. Regnery Co., 1959).

[18] See Marion, *God without Being*. Marion belongs to the Heideggerian tradition's move away from the propositional forms of truth (assertion, inference, etc.) towards a theory of truth as disclosure.

[19] Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1.980a22-980a27 (trans. W. D. Ross, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle,* v. 2 [Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984], 1552).

about their cause."[20] 'Effects' that are 'manifest' in our experience naturally strike us as fascinating. The ignorance of which Aristotle and Aquinas speak is not a dumb opacity before the phenomena, but the human potency for knowing that is identical with a questioning spirit. This wonder or *admiratio* is not some rarified experience but is common to the poets or myth-makers (in Aristotle's mind, nontheoretical types) as well:

> Since wonder was the motive which led men to philosophy, it is evident that the philosopher is, in a sense, a philomyth, i.e., a lover of myth, as is characteristic of the poets. Hence the first men to deal with the principles of things in a mythical way, such as Perseus and certain others who were the seven sages, were called the theologizing poets. Now the reason why the philosopher is compared to the poet is that both are concerned with wonders. For the myths with which the poets deal are composed of wonders, and the philosophers themselves were moved to philosophize as a result of wonder.[21]

Human intelligence, whether in its poetic or theoretical mode,[22] is activated by the fascination of being. The intellectual event of wonder, which gives rise to questioning, is in some sense common to all persons endowed with imagination and intelligence. Experience, especially new and puzzling experience, gives rise to a desire to explain the obscure, to illuminate the *principia rerum,* to penetrate the givenness of experience with the light of understanding. Admiration and wonder are not givens in sense experience. They are rather the effect of intelligence's interplay with such experience. One might venture to say that wonder is the affective aspect of the experience of intelligence itself.

The philosophical quest begins in wonder at existence; it sets the dynamism of the intellect on its way to convert *admiratio et ignorantia* into *scientia et sapientia,* which are the ends of the intellect. Now, the way to achieve a desired end is not through

[20] Aquinas, I *Metaphys.,* lect. 3 Gohn P. Rowan, trans., *Commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics* [Notre Dame, Ind.: Dumb Ox Books, 1995], 19).

[21] Ibid. (Rowan, trans., 19).

[22] For the differentiations of consciousness, see Lonergan, *Insight,* 204-12, where he examines the different ways in which human experience is patterned. See also Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), 81-99, where he discusses 'stages of meaning' and 'realms of meaning'.

some haphazard succession of activity, but through a determinate series of mediate operations. In the case of the intellectual desire ignited by *admiratio,* what is called for is an engagement in an ordered series of questions that inquire into the grounds for the phenomena of experience. The dynamism of the intellect manifests itself as an inquiry after causes:

> Man has a natural desire to know the causes of whatever he sees: wherefore through wondering at what they saw, and being ignorant of its cause, men first began to philosophize, and when they had discovered the cause they were at rest. Nor do they cease inquiring until they come to the first cause; and *then do we deem ourselves to know perfectly when we know the first cause.* Therefore man naturally desires, as his last end, to know the first cause.[23]

In this particular passage, Aquinas speaks about knowledge of the first cause as also the final end of human life, such that knowledge of this cause would be closely linked to appropriating the meaning of existence.[24] Human reason inquires after causes in order to cast light on the experience of a wondering mind; causes are multiple, but the inquiry cannot stop until the first cause has been discovered. This first cause must be considered not simply as the first of a series of causes, but also as the most universal of causes. Intelligence inquires after particular causes in the particular sciences, where being presents itself under some particular aspect. However, while each of these sciences converts *admiratio* into *scientia* about some particular aspect of the experience of being by investigating its causes, only the science that asks about being *as* being can reach to the primary cause of wonder in itself. As we shall see, this primary cause must be considered to be the first cause of the *intelligibility* of phenomena[25] as well as of the phenomena themselves.[26] This amounts to asking about the universal cause of everything, the cause that not only accounts for

[23] Aquinas, *Summa contra Gentiles* III, c. 25 (Vernon J. Bourke, trans., *Summa contra Gentiles, Book Three: Providence, Part I* [Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975], 101; translation modified).

[24] For the existential implications of the unrestricted desire to know, the inquiry after causes, and the quest after complete intelligibility, see section IV, below.

[25] That is, their relation to intellect.

[26] See below, section III.

particular phenomena, but also that accounts for there being anything at all for us to wonder about.

It is in this 'accounting' that we can find the importance of asking about causes. For Aristotle and Aquinas, causality is not just a matter of necessary connection among phenomena or events. A 'necessary connection' could be understood merely as a fact, even if a necessary fact. Nonetheless, the 'necessity' would remain opaque to the understanding, something that would still inspire *admiratio.* Rather than resting in brute matter-of-factness, the classical ideal of science, explained in Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics* and practiced in the *Metaphysics,* seeks the full intelligibility of beings as given in experience (of matters of fact) through causes. Human beings look for causes because the cause is thought of as being more intelligible in itself, for the cause accounts for the being of the effect, not vice-versa. This is why wisdom, the most explanatory of the intellectual virtues and the one that orders all things,[27] concerns itself with the inquiry after causes: "Since the certitude of science is acquired by the intellect knowing causes, a knowledge of causes seems to be intellectual in the highest degree. Hence that science which considers first causes also seems to be the ruler of the others in the highest degree."[28] The inquiry after causes is for the sake of a more and more penetrating understanding of reality, of the things that we know through experience. Causes give us not only sufficient reason for the fact that something is; they also give us insight into how and why something is the way it is. As human knowledge begins in questioning, the types of questions that arise will heuristically determine the types of causes that may be known. But we do not ask only whether something is so, but also why it is so. Reason seeks the truth in its totality, and therefore perseveres until it discovers a first cause that could account for why things are as they are.[29]

[27] *In Metaphys.,* prologue. See also *ScG* I, c. 1.

[28] *In Metaphys.,* prologue.

[29] It can be argued that in his inquiry after the meaning of being Heidegger rejected the way of causality because he interpreted it according to the reduction by the modern rationalists of causality to the *a priori* principle of sufficient reason. For a classical presentation

The wonder that manifests itself in philosophical inquiry is indeed the desire to know everything; however this "desire to know everything" must be qualified in light of a proper understanding of what science or scientific knowledge means for Aristotle. In Aristotelian science, knowledge of causes is the defining feature of wisdom, for the illumination of being belongs to the knowledge of all things through their causes. In contrast, this "knowing of all things" that belongs to wisdom does not include exhaustive knowledge of particulars; for, as there are or could be an infinite number of singular things, it is impossible to comprehend them: "In general we all consider those especially to be wise who know all things, as the case demands, without having a knowledge of every singular thing. For this is impossible, since singular things are infinite in number, and an infinite number of things cannot be comprehended by the intellect."[30] The desire to know all singulars could be better characterized as curiosity. Indeed, it is for the intellectual vice of curiosity, a prurient obsession with the aesthetically interesting, that St. Augustine condemns himself in the *Confessions,*[31] and not for the wonder at God's transcendence and paradoxical omnipresence which opens the work.[32]

of this principle, see Rene Descartes, "Replies to First Set of Objections," in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes,* vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 78: "[f]he light of nature does establish that if anything exists we may always ask why it exists; that is, we may inquire into its efficient cause, or, if it does not have one, we may demand why it does not need one." For Heidegger's critique of the principle of sufficient reason, see Martin Heidegger, *The Principle of Reason,* trans. Reginald Lilly (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1991). Descartes's principle of sufficient reason as the intellectual ground of causality is clearly *a priori.* For Aquinas, on the other hand, first principles are learned through concrete sense experience, even though the light by which they are apprehended is innate (*Super Boethium de Trinitate,* q. 3, a. 1, ad 4).

[30] I *Metaphys.,* lect. 2.

[31] *Confessions 10:* "There are many respects, in tiny and contemptible matters, where our curiosity is provoked every day ... it distracts me perhaps indeed from thinking out some weighty matter" (Augustine, *Confessions,* trans. Henry Chadwick [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991], 212).

[32] *Confessions* 1: "Why do I request you to come to me when, unless you were within me, I would have no being at all? ... Who then are you, my God? ... Most high, utterly good, utterly powerful, most omnipotent, most merciful and most just, deeply hidden yet most present ... "(Chadwick trans., 4).

The contrast that Aquinas makes between knowledge of principles and causes, on the one hand, and knowledge of particulars, on the other, leads us to suspect that the first cause cannot be conceived as merely one being, albeit the first, among many. Wisdom belongs to the one who knows the highest causes because they are in some way non-particular; they possess a universality in terms of explanatory power. There has to be something universal about a cause that accounts for a plurality and diversity of facts. For the more universal ('higher') the cause, the more beings is it able to comprehend under its power. The first cause as most universal would have to be able to account for all beings, and perhaps for being itself in its commonality. [33]

In seeking the first universal cause as explanatory of the phenomena of experience, the mind inquires after that which may exceed finite powers of knowing, but nonetheless is more intelligible than that for which it accounts. [34] The perfection of the intellect consists, not in the (impossible) traversal of an infinite series of singulars, but in the act of beholding some principle that would comprehend the *rationes* of all things, including those of all particulars, under its power.

The natural desire of the rational creature is to know everything that belongs to the perfection of the intellect, namely, the species and the genera of things and

[33] We draw this distinction because of Aquinas's tendency to think of God as the creator not only of *esse* and therefore of all particular beings, but of common being as *esse cum ordine,* so that the order of the universe can be considered to be the primary effect of God *(In De Div. nom.,* c. 7, lect. 4; *ScG* I, c. 42). Crowe claims that, unlike classical causal demonstrations for the existence of God, Lonergan's transcendental approach to the affirmation of God can countenance the break, occasioned by the development of modern science, between empirical causality (immanent causes and correlations) and metaphysical (extrinsic) causality. On this account, God is no longer used to explain phenomena in the world and their operations, which must be explained by an immanent explanatory scheme. God is rather the explanation of the world itself, of reality or being (Crowe, "Lonergan's Thoughts on Ultimate Reality and Meaning"). I would say that this is an extension of Aquinas's own conception of the distinction between particular and universal causes, especially his insistence that the first cause causes not only the being but the operative potency of the second cause. Therefore immanent causes are causes only because their causality is caused by a transcendent principle. See note 38, below. Cf. note 37 for Lonergan's discussion of this problem.

[34] *STh* I q. 12, a. 1.

their types, and these everyone who sees the Divine essence will see in God. But to know other singulars, their thoughts and their deeds does not belong to the perfection of the created intellect nor does its natural desire go out to these things.[35]

As we can see from this passage, Aquinas equates this principle of explanation with God. It may be too precipitate for us to accept this assertion, however, for we have yet to examine other candidates that have been proposed. Let us look at one that makes its appearance in Aquinas's own demonstrations.

II. THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF THE INFINITE REGRESS

For Aquinas, the necessity of affirming a first uncaused cause lies in the fact that reason cannot rest in the positing of the most obvious alternative: an infinite regress in *per se* subordinated causes, each cause itself caused by a higher or more universal cause, such that there would be no first uncaused cause or most universal cause. The impossibility of an infinite regress in causes is an axiom upon which Aquinas's proofs for the existence of God stand or fall. Although this axiom is not fully analyzed in the *Summa Theologiae,* it is nonetheless a truth that can be made more manifest, as Aquinas attempts to do in other works.[36]

Aristotle speaks of the impossibility of an infinite regress in the four causes that he explored in the *Physics.* What will concern us here, however, are only the efficient and final causes of the universe, what Aquinas calls 'extrinsic causes'.[37] For Aristotle and Aquinas, it is impossible to posit an infinite regress in efficient causes because of the nature of instrumentality in causes:

Three things are found in motion: one is the mobile object which is moved; another is the mover; and the third is the instrument by which the mover moves. Of these three it is clear that that which is moved must be moved, but it is not

[35] *STh* I q. 12, a. 8, ad 4. Translations from the *Summa Theologiae* come from Saint Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae,* trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1948).

[36] *ScG* I, c. 13; I *Metaphys.,* lect. 3-4.

[37] *De Principiis,* c. 3.

> necessary that it move. The instrument by which the mover moves must both move and be moved (for it is moved by the principal mover, and it moves the ultimate thing moved). Hence everything which both moves and is moved has the nature *[ratio]* of an instrument.[38]

Something that has the nature of an instrument cannot be a first cause. An instrument is such that it cannot operate except by the operation of its moving cause.[39] For Aristotle and Aquinas, to posit an infinite regress of causes is to deny that there is a first cause; this would render all causes instrumental. In an infinite series of intermediaries (i.e., of nonultimate or instrumental causes), there can be no cause of the *causality* of the intermediaries. And intermediaries are causes only because their causality is nonultimate, that is, caused. Thus the intermediaries could not exist *as intermediaries:* "Consequently, if the causes of motion proceed to infinity in this way, there will be no first cause. But a first cause is the cause of all things. Therefore it will follow that all causes are eliminated; for when a cause is removed the things of which it is the cause are also removed."[40]

Here we are given an expanded version of the axiom *remota causa, removetur effectus.* The cogency of the argument rests on one's ability to understand causality not just in relation to things, but in relation to operations as well. One can inquire into the causes of the *causality* of particular causes. Secondary causes cannot operate without the operation of a primary cause, because this primary cause is the cause of their causal power. This is evident in the very meaning of an instrument, which is always the instrument of an agent. For Aquinas, not only are artifacts instruments, natural beings are as well, whose causality is effective only through the operation of higher beings, whether these be the heavenly bodies, separate substances, or God himself. Lonergan

[38] VIII *Physic.,* lect. 9. Translations of Aquinas's commentary on Aristotle's *Physics* are from St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on Aristotle's Physics,* trans. Richard J. Blackwell, Richard J. Spath, and W. Edmund Thirlkel (Notre Dame, Ind.: Dumb Ox Books, 1999).

[39] II *Metaphys.,* lect. 3.

[40] Ibid.

calls this the "slightly difficult concept of 'causing causation'. "[41] Thus, the first cause is not only the cause of the being (or, as in Aristotle, the motion) of the intermediate causes and ultimate effects, it is the cause of the active power of all intermediate causes and of their action. That is, the first cause causes the motion of the intermediate cause or causes, and also enables the intermediate causes to cause the motion of the ultimate effects. Not all instrumental causes receive their being from the primary cause that operates an effect through them (e.g., a person can use a hammer that he has not fashioned). But they all receive their operative efficacy through being used by a more primary cause.

Aquinas insists that the primary or universal cause, although more remote, is *plus influens* and operates more powerfully *(vehementius)* than the secondary cause.

> The operation by which the secondary cause causes the effect is itself caused by the first cause; for the primary cause assists the secondary cause by making it act; therefore with respect to the operation by which the effect is produced by the secondary cause, the first cause is more a cause than the secondary cause. This Proclus expressly proves: for the secondary cause, since it is the effect of the primary cause, has its substance from the primary cause; but from that which something has its substance, from that same thing it has its power or force to act. Therefore the secondary cause has its power or force from the primary cause. But the secondary cause according to its power or force is the cause of the effect; therefore that very thing in the secondary cause that causes the effect it has by the first cause.[42]

[41] Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom: Operative Grace in the Thought of St Thomas Aquinas.* (Buffalo: Published for Lonergan Research Institute of Regis College, Toronto, by University of Toronto Press, 2000), 87. See esp. chap. 4, "St. Thomas' theory of operation" (87££.).

[42] *In de Causis,* lect. l: "Eminentius convenit aliquid causae quam causato; sed operatio qua causa secunda causat effectum, causatur a causa prima, nam causa prima adiuvat causam secundam faciens earn operari; ergo huius operationis secundum quam effectus producitur a causa secunda, magis est causa causa prima quam causa secunda. Proclus autem expressius hoc sic probat: causa enim secunda, cum sit effectus causae primae, substantiam suam habet a causa prima; sed a quo habet aliquid substantiam, ab eo habet potentiam sive virtutem operandi; ergo causa secunda habet potentiam sive virtutem operandi a causa prima. Sed causa secunda per suam potentiam vel virtutem est causa effectus; ergo hoc ipsum C[uod causa secunda sit causa effectus, habet a prima causa." All translations from Aquinas's commentary on the *Liber de causis* are mine.

There are orders of causes, ordered according to the power and universality of the cause, which is partly what Aquinas has in mind when he speaks of a *per se* subordination: "[The series is] *per se* when the intention of the primary cause has in view everything up to the final effect through all intermediate causes, just as the art of the maker moves the hand, and the hand moves the hammer which pounds the iron, which is the aim of the art."[43] The order of causes itself entails distinct orders, each of which contributes in a unique way to the execution of the effect, which is the intention of the first cause. Not so with a *per accidens* order of causes:

> It is a *per accidens* [order] when the intention of the cause do not extend beyond the most proximate effect; however, whatever else happens to be effected by that effect is beyond the aim of the first mover, as when someone lights a candle, it is beyond his aim that this lighted candle would again light another and that one another; and that which is outside an intention we call *per accidens*.[44]

It is only with a *per se* subordination of efficient causes that Aquinas's insistence holds: "non autem est possibile quod in causis efficientibus procedatur in infinitum." In a *per accidens* order of causes, there could indeed be infinite regress; however, any particular instance in this sequence of causes would itself require a *per se* order of higher causes and a first cause that does not belong to the infinite sequence. The notion of *per accidens* would not exclude the necessity that an infinite regress of a *per accidens* order of causes be comprehended under the power (and knowledge)[45] of higher, more universal causes and of the first cause. Instrumental causes depend upon the primary cause. The

[43] Ibid.: "Per se quidem quando intentio primae causae respicit usque ad ultimum effectum per omnes medias causas, sicut cum ars fabrilis movet manum, manus martellum qui ferrum percussura extendit, ad quod fertur intentio artis."

[44] Ibid.: "Per accidens autem quando intentio causae non procedit nisi ad proximum effectum; quod autem ab illo effectu efficiatur iterum aliud, est praeter intentionem primi efficientis, sicut cum aliquis accendit candelam, praeter intentionem eius est quod iterum accensa candela accendat aliam et illa aliam; quod autem praeter intentionem est, dicimus esse per accidens."

[45] Aquinas's doctrine of Providence requires that God's infinite intellect be able to comprehend an infinite number of singulars. See *STh* I, q.22.

number of instrumental causes could be infinite, but this does not preclude the necessity of a primary agent cause.

> Because in all efficient causes following in order, the first is the cause of the intermediate cause, and the intermediate is the cause of the ultimate cause, whether the intermediate cause be several, or only one. Now to take away the cause is to take away the effect. Therefore, if there be no first cause among efficient causes, there will be no ultimate, nor any intermediate cause.[46]

On the other hand, an infinite *per se* sequence of efficient causes would render all causes instrumental and therefore in themselves impotent.

Aquinas absolutely rejects the infinite regress as truly a 'bad infinity' that is not only a merely superficial intellectual penetration of the phenomena, but also a descent into unintelligibility and a renunciation of all explanation in terms of *per se* subordinated causes. An infinite series of causes, conceived as unconditioned, would not give us a determinate phenomenon to be explained, and therefore cannot be comprehended conceptually. The infinite regress excludes a final terminus, and as such is indefinite and indeterminate.[47]

> But if we were to hold that there is an infinite series of moving causes in the above way, then all causes would be intermediate ones. Thus we would have to say without qualification that all parts of any infinite thing, whether of a series of causes or of continuous quantities, are intermediate ones; for if there were a part that was not an intermediate one, it would have to be either a first or a last; and both of these are opposed to the nature of the infinite, which excludes every limit, whether it be a starting-point or a terminus.[48]

If we look for other instances in the history of philosophy of the rejection of the infinite regress, we come upon Hegel's treatment of the 'spurious infinite' in his dialectic of the finite and the infinite and subsequent transposition of the dialectic onto the causal relation. Like Aquinas, Hegel shows that *Verstand's* (what he calls the finite understanding's) indefinite and interminable

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

[47] Aristotle associates this indeterminateness and indefiniteness with the material principle.

[48] II *Metaphys.,* lect. 3.

positing of finite causes is not properly explanatory until it has been comprehended by Reason *(Vernunft)* as the unity of the finite and its beyond. This unity is the 'affirmative infinite' of the *causa sui:*

> In the usual sense of the causal relation the cause is finite, inasmuch as its content is finite (just as it is in finite substance) and inasmuch as the cause and the effect are represented as two diverse independent existences *[Daseiende]*-but that is only what they are when we abstract from the causal relationship in considering them. In the realm of the finite, we do not get beyond the distinction of the form-determinations within their relation; hence, it is the turn of the cause to be also determined as something-posited or as an effect; this effect has yet an other cause; and in this way the progress ad infinitum, from effects to causes, arises once more. A descending progress arises in the same way, since it follows from the identity of the effect with the cause that the effect is itself determined as a cause and at the same time as an other. [49]

Hegel, in asserting that the infinite series is uncaused, or rather self-causing, is claiming that *beyond* the infinite play of finite oppositions there is nothing about which one could inquire. According to Hegel's Logic, this is precisely the insight that allows one to advance to the comprehension of the 'affirmative infinite'. In effect, Hegel denies the infinite progress's *lack* of intelligibility and attempts to show that it can be comprehended in the Concept. One might venture to say that for Hegel the 'quidditative' or 'explanatory' definition of the infinite regress is the concept of affirmative infinity. Reason is able to comprehend the whole that is represented by the Understanding as an endless series of causes and effects.

In contrast, for Aquinas, the very positing of the infinite regress, not merely an inadequate interpretation of it in terms of an irrational beyondness, is what is truly indeterminate and unintelligible, in the privative sense of lacking any *terminus* and of being only an abstraction that cannot have concrete being. For Aquinas, if one were to posit the infinite regress, it would not make sense to inquire into its essence or quiddity, because there

[49] G. W. F. Hegel, *The Encyclopaedia Logic,* trans. T. F. Geraets, W. A. Suchting, and H. S. Harris (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1991), 228-29.

is no determinate existence affirmed about which we can ask but merely an agglomeration of finite oppositions (or endless repetition of the same). To 'understand' the bad infinite/infinite regress is to understand that it has no intelligibility,[50] that it cannot be traversed rationally nor defined, as Aquinas says.[51]

Aristotle and Aquinas were concrete thinkers whose scientific method entailed explaining difficult and abstract ideas (such as infinite regress or uncaused cause) by means of what is better known to us. This is why, in explaining the impossibility of an infinite regress in causes, Aristotle emphasized final causality. In attempting to clarify the impossibility of an infinite regress in final causes, Aristotle avails himself of an analogy taken from the domain of practical reason or rational action, a maneuver that Aquinas also adopts.[52] The final cause is literally "that for the sake of which" (ou *EVEKa* or *cuius causa).* We have already used the principle of the final cause to elucidate the dynamism of the intellect as a search for ultimate causes.[53] The meaning of rational action entails purposive activity, which is activity in view of an end. Positing an infinite regress in final causes, however, leaves the agent without a determinate end to pursue: "One who posits an infinite number of final causes does away with a limit, and therefore with the end for the sake of which a cause acts. But every intelligent agent acts for the sake of some end. Therefore it would follow that there is no intellect among causes which are productive; and thus the practical intellect is eliminated."[54] In practice, we think of ourselves as sources of activity acting for some purpose or another. But to act for a purpose is to determine a limit towards which we strive. Rational activity of its very nature cannot pursue a 'bad infinite' or infinite regress in ends,

[50] Since matter's intelligibility depends upon its form (the act of the matter), an unlimited material component would be absolutely unintelligible.

[51] I *Anal. Post.,* lect. 34. All translations of Aquinas's commentary on Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics* are from St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Posterior Analytics of Aristotle,* trans. F. R. Larcher (Albany, N.Y.: Magi Books, 1970).

[52] *ScG* III, c. 2.

[53] does this more fully in his attempt critically to ground the principle of realism. See J. Marechal, *Le point du depart de la metaphysique* (Paris : Desclee De Brouwer, 1944).

[54] II *Metaphys.,* lect. 4.

because the rational agent will not pursue anything it conceives of as in principle unattainable.

III. FROM THE INFINITE REGRESS TO UNLIMITED INTELLIGIBILITY

According to Aristotle and Aquinas, the principle of conscious purposive activity described above can, by analogy, be extended to include the natural world as well:

> If there were an infinite number of final causes, no one could reach a last terminus, because there is no last terminus in an infinite series. But no one will attempt to do anything unless he thinks he is able to accomplish something as a final goal. Therefore, those who hold that final causes proceed to infinity do away with every attempt to operate and even with the activities of natural bodies; for a thing's natural movement is only toward something which it is naturally disposed to attain. [55]

This extension of the analogy of finality to the entire universe of being is important for Aristotle's affirmation of the First Unmoved Mover. It would be beyond our objectives to rehearse in detail Aristotle's argument for a hierarchy of moved movers to account for the many varieties of motion observed in the universe: the eternal process of generation and corruption as caused by the eternal circular motion of the heavenly bodies, who are moved movers; these in turn moved by an unmoved mover, who is able to cause eternal, regular motion in the heavenly bodies because it is unmoved pure act that always· acts in the same way. What is important, however, is to note that, for Aristotle, the Unmoved Mover moves (primarily) by being desired, that is, as a final cause. This is important, because while Aquinas will initially follow this shift from efficient (motive) causality to final causality in moving from the material to immaterial orders of causes, [56] his mature thought will emphasize the efficient and exemplary causality of the First Unmoved Mover. For Aristotle, efficient causes that are bodies cause movement by coming into physical contact with what they are moving. Obviously, the immaterial first cause cannot

[55] Ibid.

[56] Cf. XII *Metaphys.; ScG* I, c. 13.

cause movement in this way; for the same reason, neither can bodily movers be unmoved movers. According to Aristotle, then, an unmoved mover must move another only by way of being the end desired by that other: "Now the first mover causes motion as something intelligible and something appetible; for these alone cause motion without being moved."[57] The first mover causes motion without being moved, because it is the ultimate object of the natural and intellectual desire of the earthly and heavenly bodies: "since it has been shown that the first mover is unmoved, it must cause motion in the way in which the desirable and the intelligible do; for only these, the desirable and the intelligible, are found to cause motion without being moved."[58] All moved movers act in order to liken themselves to the first mover, by being causal principles: "Now it is said that the first mover causes motion as something appetible because the motion of the heavens has this mover as its end or goal, for this motion is caused by some proximate mover which moves on account of the first unmoved mover in order that it may be assimilated in its causality to the first mover and bring to actuality whatever is virtually contained in it."[59]

The question becomes, can we restrict the search for higher, more universal causes to that of final causality, that is, conceive the power of the first mover as causing solely by being desired? The inquiry after causes, the manifestation of the intellect's dynamic and unrestricted desire, seeks complete intelligibility and total explanation. That Aquinas believed that something other than final causality was necessary is evident even as he comments on Aristotle, who thought of the first mover as ordering the universe primarily by being the focus of intention, as the commander is the intentional focus of an army.

> And since the formal character of things which exist for the sake of an end is derived from the end, it is therefore necessary not only that the good of the army exist for the sake of the commander *fpropter ducem*], but also that the order of

[57] Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 12.1072a26.

[58] XII *Metaphys.,* Iect. 7.

[59] Ibid.

> the army depend on the commander *[a duce],* since its order exists for the sake of the commander. ... For the whole order of the universe exists for the sake of the first mover inasmuch as the things contained in the mind and will of the first mover are realized in the ordered universe. Hence the whole order of the universe must depend on the first mover.[60]

Here Aquinas reads something like exemplary causality into Aristotle's military analogy.[61] The commander leads not only by being that for the sake of whom the order of the army composes itself, but is also the one who conceives and executes the ordering of the army itself.

Can we then extend the analogy to inquire into whether God, the *unus princeps totius universi,*[62] can be thought to be the cause of the order of the universe by being the efficient cause of its very being? Aquinas himself certainly thought so, even in commenting on and correcting Aristotle's affirmation of the eternity of the world. For while Aquinas did not believe that the universe was eternal, or that motion was eternal, nonetheless, he showed that even on the hypothesis that there is no beginning nor end to motion, as Aristotle believed, the question of the universal efficient cause of being, that is, the question of creation, is still relevant. Eternal things are not necessarily uncaused.[63] The question of the universal cause of being is meaningful even on the presupposition of the eternity of the world, for the very reason that the inquiry after causes cannot be restricted to the inquiry after a beginning in time but rather is in essence a quest for ultimate intelligibility in the universe, whether that universe be temporally limited or not.

Aquinas was aware that, in inquiring into the universal cause of being simply (i.e., into the existence of things in the world), we are not to be satisfied with a cause that would remain at the level

[60] XII *Metaphys.,* lect. 12.

[61] Aristotle's text: "We must consider also in which of two ways the nature of the universe contains the good, and the highest good, whether as something separate and by itself, or as the order of the parts. Probably in both ways, as an army does; for its good is found both in its order and in its leader, and more in the latter; for he does not depend on the order but it depends on him" *(Metaphysics* 12.1075a11-15).

[62] XII *Metaphys.,* lect. 12.

[63] See Aquinas's third way *(STh* I, q. *2,* a. 3).

of a matter of fact (i.e., an existence that is contingent and has no intelligible reason for existing). For Aquinas, the questions that inquire into whether something *exists-quia, an sit, si est:* in a word, is it so?-are always either propaedeutic to or consequent upon the question of *quid* or *prapter quid,* because the proper object of the intellect is the *quad quid est*[64] or what will account for what is. This is because the intellect is not perfected with the knowledge of mere matters of fact, but always desires to know why something is so. On one level, the intrinsic intelligibility of a thing, expressed by its explanatory definition, answers the question *why:* what is this, why is this the way it is? Starting with a nominal definition, we begin to ask what are the terms and relations that make it be the kind of thing it is, what in the classical tradition is called the formal cause or the *quad quid est.* The answer to such a question gives us explanatory knowledge.[65] The essence or *quad quid est* of a thing is formally its 'reason why', because it expresses its intrinsic intelligibility. It is from the *quad quid est* that the definition of a thing is taken.[66]

But the mind can ask a further variety of the question *why:* namely, "Why does something exist, why does anything exist, why is there anything rather than nothing?" In the finite being that we know, existence presents itself to us ultimately as a matter of fact, that is, a contingency verified in judgment: things, and even the universe as a totality, happen to be, they exist, but not necessarily. Our judgments are founded on what Lonergan calls the 'virtually unconditioned', that is, a conditioned whose conditions happen to be fulfilled.[67] The relative nature of the virtually unconditioned is obvious: it is dependent upon its conditions. As for these conditions, to be able to affirm their own existence within the realm of proportionate being would be again to arrive at a virtually unconditioned. Can we go on to infinity in this affirmation of the virtually unconditioned?

[64] See *STh* I-II, q. 3, a. 8.

[65] For the distinction between descriptive and explanatory knowledge, see Lonergan, *Insight,* 35.

[66] II *Post. Anal.,* lect. 1.

[67] Lonergan, *Insight,* 304-8 (in chap. 10, "Reflective Understanding").

Anything that is affirmed as a virtually unconditioned must be ultimately known as a mere matter of fact, for the virtually unconditioned is a conditioned whose conditions just *happen* to be fulfilled. However, matters of fact that could not be grounded would be absolutely or ultimately unintelligible, and therefore could not belong to being, for being as being must have an explanation. In elucidating this controverted statement of Lonergan' s we will come to understand the importance of emphasizing the centrality of causality for Aquinas in raising the question of the God as well as elucidate Lonergan's own rationale for approaching the question of God via an examinaton of the grounds of knowledge. [68]

Lonergan defines being heuristically as whatever is to be grasped intelligently and affirmed reasonably. [69] It must be intelligible, because it is intended *as* intelligible and *for* intelligence; anything that would in principle fall outside of intelligent grasp and reasonable affirmation would not belong to what the intelligent inquirer means by 'being'. Lonergan' s thesis is actually equivalent to what any intelligent inquirer performatively affirms; for we do not inquire into things that we anticipate must remain opaque and unintelligible:

> [T]he fundamental anticipation is the detached, disinterested, unrestricted desire to understand correctly; the fundamental assumption is that the real is coincident with the grounded intelligibility to be known by correct understanding; the fundamental reflective enucleation of all intelligent and rational anticipation and assumption is to conceive the idea of being, and thereby the notion of God, and to affirm that the real is being, and thereby to affirm the reality of God. [70]

[68] For the remainder of this section, I rely primarily on Lonergan's discussion of 'general transcendent knowledge' (that is, knowledge of an absolutely transcendent being) in *Insight,* chap. 19.

[69] "The pure notion of being is the detached, disinterested, unrestricted desire to know. It is prior to understanding and affirming, but it heads to them for it is the ground of intelligent inquiry and critical reflection .... since the pure notion of being unfolds through understanding and judgment, there can be formulated a heuristic notion of being as whatever is to be grasped intelligently and affirmed reasonably" (Lonergan, *Insight,* 665).

[70] Ibid., 707.

This is not a statement of pure idealism, much less of ontologism: it is only to affirm that being as such presents itself to us in intelligent inquiry, in understanding and judgment. Otherwise, no amount of intelligent inquiry and critical reflection, which is the way that human beings are compelled to approach the very question of being, will yield any results. "For us to have valid knowledge, for us to say anything significant, for us to use our intelligence and reasonableness, it is necessary that being be intelligible."[71] In turn, the affirmation of God is the anticipation of complete intelligibility in the universe, in order to safeguard the intelligibility that we experience in our knowing of proportionate being.

If we were to look for something other than the intelligible objective of correct understanding that might qualify as a candidate for being, 'matters of fact', the raw data of sensitive experience, might seem like a plausible candidate, or perhaps more interestingly, a phenomenological 'presence' (or 'presencing', as in Heideigger's later philosophy). But on closer reflection, we understand that this cannot be so. Matters of fact belong to the data of experience *about which we inquire.*[72] Phenomena are occasions for intelligence's setting itself in motion, rather than constituting its *terminus ad quem.* Intelligence is what brings matters of fact to light; it infuses the raw data of experience with the light of being. This is precisely the wonder and *admiratio* at things of which we do not yet know the cause, as described by Aquinas in his commentary on the *Metaphysics.* Because it is the starting point of rational inquiry and not the ending point, 'brute existence' or matter of factness is not in itself intelligible but can be known only insofar as it contributes to intelligent grasp and reasonable affirmation.

However, we inhabit a world affirmed as a verified matter of fact. We might have penetrated the laws of nature, or, more

[71] Lonergan, *Understanding and Being,* 244.

[72] By 'matters of fact', we are referring to what goes by the name of 'facticity' in post-Heideggerian philosophy: the 'thereness' of the *factum brutum.* This usage must be distinguished from what Lonergan refers to as 'concrete judgments of fact', which indeed do have a limited intelligibility, that of being virtually unconditioned.

accurately, the schemes of recurrence that are statistically probable rather than necessary.[73] But why should these laws or schemes of recurrence necessarily[74] be? Why not others? Why any at all? Empirical science and a philosophy that restricts itself to the domain of immanence will always find itself confronted with what Lonergan calls 'the contingence of existence and occurrence'.[75] Existence cannot be denied, but neither does it seem to have an explanation that is proportionate to our knowing:

> If nothing existed, there would be no one to ask questions and nothing to ask questions about. The most fundamental of all questions, then, asks about existence, yet neither empirical science nor a methodically restricted philosophy can have an adequate answer. Statistical laws assign the frequencies with which things exist, and the explanation of statistical laws will account for the respective numbers of different kinds of things. But the number of existents is one thing, and their existing is another. Again, in particular cases, the scientist can deduce one existent from others, but not even in particular cases can he account for the existence of the others to which he appeals for his premises. As far as empirical science goes, existence is just a matter of fact. Nor is the methodically restricted philosophy better off. So far from accounting for existence, the philosopher can establish that it cannot be accounted for within the limits of proportionate[76] being. For every proportionate being that exists, exists conditionally; it exists inasmuch as the conditions of its existence happen to be fulfilled; and the contingence of that happening cannot be eliminated by appealing to another happening that equally is contingent.[77]

Existence interpreted as a mere matter of fact is not intelligible. Therefore contingent (virtually unconditioned) existence is not ultimate, is not a mere matter of fact, but is grounded in something other that is more intelligible. The 'otherness' of this something necessitates the inquiry after ultimate extrinsic causes, that is, final, exemplary, and efficient causes. This is where

[73] Lonergan, *Insight,* 677.

[74] Here we are speaking of necessity in terms of what Aquinas calls the 'necessity of supposition' (see *STh* I, q. 19, a. 3).

[75] Lonergan, *Insight,* 670.

[76] That is, proportionate to the grasp of human intelligence. For the heuristic structure of proportionate being, see ibid., 456-511.

[77] Ibid., 676-77.

Lonergan's method meets that of Aquinas in the five ways. In Lonergan's own words, "causality denotes the objective and real counterpart of the questions and further questions raised by the detached, disinterested and unrestricted desire to know."[78] Because we are seeking to penetrate being with the light of intelligence, the first and ultimate causes of being will have to be more intelligible than that for which they account; otherwise, they are *not* causes in the sense of accounting or explanatory principles. This is the fundamental reason Aquinas rejects an infinite regress of efficient or final causes. In Lonergan's words,

> To account for one happening by appealing to another is to change the topic without meeting the issue, for if the other happening is regarded as mere matter of fact without any explanation then either it is not being or else being is not intelligible .... For one misses the real point to efficient causality if one supposes that it consists simply in the necessity that conditioned being becomes virtually unconditioned only if its conditions are fulfilled. On that formulation, efficient causality would be satisfied by an infinite regress in which each conditioned has its conditions fulfilled by a prior conditioned or, perhaps more realistically, by a circle illustrated by the scheme of recurrence. However, the real requirement is that, if conditioned being is being, it has to be intelligible; it cannot be or exist or occur merely as a matter of fact for which no explanation is to be asked or expected, for the nonintelligible is apart from being. Now both the infinite regress and the circle are simply aggregates of mere matters of fact; they fail to provide for the intelligibility of conditioned being; and so they do not succeed in assigning an efficient cause for being that is intelligible yet conditioned.[79]

This is the root reason why the infinite regress is not an acceptable solution to the question of ultimate causes and why any inquiry into the intelligibility of being and its ultimate grounds must terminate in the affirmation of a first uncaused cause. Only that which is purely intelligible in itself, that whose existence and intelligibility are contingent upon no conditions, what Lonergan calls the 'formally unconditioned', will answer to the intrinsic dynamism of our immanent intelligence and reason's demand for truth in its totality.

[78] Ibid., 674.
[79] Ibid., 678-79.

It is this demand for complete intelligibility that is the 'transcendental' or psychological origin of the metaphysical inquiry after ultimate causes. A focus on the transcendental demand that being be completely intelligible does not entail that one has abandoned the classical cosmological ascent to God in favor of an explanation of beings that originates in the intellectual dynamism of the transcendental subject.[80] It is an attention to this immanent demand of intelligence that distinguishes both Aquinas's five ways and Lonergan's discussion of general transcendent knowledge from the classical modern proofs for God's existence, which Kant rightfully debunked. When Heidegger criticizes the 'ontotheology' of modern metaphysics, it is because he sees that the question of being *(Sein)* historically has been obscured rather than illuminated by the Enlightenment endeavor to prove the existence of a highest being *(Seiendes)*.[81] What Aquinas and Lonergan seek is the full intelligibility of being, which cannot be reached by mechanically resorting to another being or fact, leaving out the question of the meaning of Being which in a way is more foundational. Aquinas and Lonergan disagree with Heidegger in that they affirm that the meaning of Being can be and in fact is coincident with a substantial act of understanding that is Being itself. Heidegger's interpretation of the traditional 'metaphysics of substance' and his 'retrieval' of the 'ontological difference' will not allow him to do this.[82]

An adequate understanding of the explanatory force of causes will make sense of Aquinas's preference for efficient causality in the five ways, which occupy themselves with efficient causality in some form or another-as the efficient cause of motion, or of possible and necessary being, or of the transcendental properties,

[80] Cf. Knasas, "Transcendental Thomism," 25-28.

[81] Martin Heidegger, "The Ontotheological Constitution of Metaphysics," in idem, *Identity and Difference,* trans. Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), 42-74.

[82] For an Aristotelian-Thomist critique of Heidegger's rendering of the problem of metaphysics in terms of an 'ontological difference', see Oliva Blanchette, "Suarez and the Latent Essentialism of Heidegger's Metaphysics," *Review of Metaphysics* 53 (1999): 3-19; idem, *Philosophy of Being: A Reconstructive Essay in Metaphysics.* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2003), 3-42.

or of finality in nature.[83] In the demonstrations for the existence of God, it is the *existence* or *actuality* of beings, the *fact* that they *are,* from which we must begin and that must ultimately be accounted for, since, as Lonergan has shown, simple facticity cannot be ultimate. Only the efficient cause accounts for the actuality of the effect. In contrast to Aristotle's preoccupation with final causality in his account of the Intelligent Movers, Aquinas emphasizes efficiency, because the efficient cause is that which causes the being or existence of its effect, makes the effect to be actual *(ec-facio).* The final cause may be the 'cause of causes', but its explanatory force is essentially *that for the sake of which* something exists rather than *that from whence* something receives its very existence and actuality.

It is absolutely necessary to affirm a first uncaused efficient cause. However, it must be emphasized here, at the end of Aquinas's five ways for demonstrating the existence of God, that what we have arrived at in this affirmation of an absolutely intelligible ground of being is primarily an *x,* an unknown whose properties or attributes are not initially known. Lonergan describes this as the 'heuristic structure' of general transcendent knowledge, and not its determination.[84] We are still at the very beginning of a philosophical theology, but this initial inquiry is crucial. It is one thing to claim that the universe has an intelligible ground that is not (and perhaps cannot be) comprehensively known; it is another to claim that we cannot know *whether* such a ground exists. This important distinction puts to rest empiricist or Kantian objections that not only have we stepped beyond the boundaries of all possible experience, but also that in doing so we have not added anything to our knowledge.[85] The affirmation of

[83] Contrary to an initial impression, the fifth way does not show that God is the final cause of *rerum natura,* but rather that he is the efficient cause of there being immanent *finality* in nonconscious nature. For the distinction between finality and final cause, see Lonergan's discussion in *Insight,* 470-76.

[84] Ibid., 657.

[85] See Burns, "Bernard Lonergan's Proof of the Existence and Nature of God," 147: "Moreover that the extrapolative leap [from empirical knowledge of proportionate being to general transcendent knowledge] does not so much 'complete' as abandon the process of knowing the empirical universe, is apparent from the fact that whoever might return to

this intelligible ground is precisely that: an affirmation, that is to say, a judgment that does not presuppose an explanatory understanding of the reality that one is affirming.[86]

Therefore Lonergan can align his quest for transcendent knowledge with "the knowledge of God that, according to St. Thomas Aquinas, consists in knowing that he is but not what he is."[87] In other words, to affirm an unrestricted act of understanding as the ultimate explanatory principle for all our finite acts of understanding of proportionate being is not equivalent to enjoying that unrestricted act ourselves. Indeed, the primary and secondary components of the idea of being that Lonergan outlines in chapter 19 of *Insight* can be compared to the knowledge of what God is not in the *Prima Pars.* Both are thoroughly analogous; that is, they extrapolate from restricted acts of understanding of proportionate being.

IV. FROM SPECULATIVE TO EXISTENTIAL NECESSITY

Up until this point, we have occupied ourselves with the speculative necessity of posing the question of God as the first

empirical investigation after such an excursion would find himself in exactly the same state of knowledge/ignorance of this world as beforehand. It is hard therefore to avoid the conclusion that it is, to adopt a phrase from Strawson, an expression of a kind of 'fatigue of reason' rather than a genuine extension of cognition." Burns cites Kant's precept that transcendental hypotheses as 'mere ideas of reason' cannot serve as explanatory principles of natural beings. But it is here that Burns fails to see a crucial distinction between Kant and Lonergan on this score. While Kant talks of mere ideas, Lonergan's discussion of general transcendent knowledge begins with a heuristic idea of being in its primary and secondary components but ends in a judgment that such an unrestricted act of understanding does indeed exist (Lonergan, *Insight,* 692-98). There can be no corresponding judgment in Kant's epistemology, and God remains merely a 'regulative ideal'. The 'extrapolative leap' from knowledge of proportionate being to knowledge of transcendent being is no leap at all, since it consists not in a jump from sensible perceptions to nonsensible ideas, but rather in a grasp of the condition of possibility for finite human judgments, which rest on the 'virtually unconditioned'.

[86] For Aquinas's explanation of how we can make a judgment about that which we do not (fully) understand, see his discussion of how, in a demonstration for the existence of an unknown, a nominal definition takes the place of a quidditative one *(ScG* I, c. 12). For Lonergan on the generally heuristic nature of metaphysics see Lonergan, *Insight,* 415££.

[87] Lonergan, *Insight,* 657.

uncaused cause of the universe of being. This cause we must conceive as absolutely unconditioned and completely explanatory. However, the human intelligence that poses this question is eminently self-reflective, and so another way of bringing the necessity of the question of God into focus is the way Lonergan approaches this theme in his later works. If the inquiry into the intelligibility of being has manifested itself in the search for causes, there is a more profound, second-order question that questions intelligibility itself, that is, the intelligibility of intelligence. While the former method is perhaps to be preferred in a metaphysical affirmation of God because it keeps firmly in mind human intelligence's subordination to the transcendence of being, the latter method of questioning intelligence-or as Lonergan puts it in *Method in Theology,* 'questioning questioning' -is closer to the subjective genesis of metaphysics in the interior experience of one's own intellectual dynamism.

The question may be stated as such: Should the real be intelligible? On what grounds? "The structure of our minds is the ground of our knowing that the real must be being and intelligible. But there is a further question: What accounts for the fact that the real is intelligible and being?"[88] Lonergan is commenting here on the method of *Insight,* yet there is a nuance to this question that turns the focus to our conscious intentionality, and that is expressed explicitly in asking for the ground of our very questioning, understanding, knowing, willing, and loving. It is this ground that in *Insight* Lonergan had called the intelligible in the "deeper sense": "it denotes the primary component in an idea; it is what is grasped inasmuch as one is understanding; it is the intelligible ground or root or key from which results intelligibility in the ordinary sense."[89] It is the *act* of understanding itself rather than its content. Thus there is a transition from inquiring into the ground of what we affirm as intelligible to inquiring into the ground of the conscious intentionality that intends intelligibility itself: "In the measure that

[88] Lonergan, *Understanding and Being,* 245.
[89] Lonergan, *Insight,* 670.

we advert to our own questioning and proceed to question it, there arises the question of God.... The same transcendental tendency of the human spirit that questions, that questions without restriction, that questions the significance of its own questioning, and so comes to the question of God."[90]

Why must we equate the question of ultimate significance and ultimate value with the question of God? Because in doing so, we are inquiring into the source of our own conscious intentionality, our intending of truth and value. Apart from any consideration of the question of God, this intending is only a fact: as a finite subject, I do, as a fact, intend complete intelligibility; the natural quest after causes attests to this. But why am I entitled to do so?[91] In itself, the human mind is not the sufficient ground of intelligibility. This further question arises naturally, as soon as one has averted to one's own conscious intentionality, which is dynamically oriented not towards mere matters of fact, but towards intelligibility. God is the traditional name for this source of intelligibility; in Lonergan's words, God "is not some datum to be explained.... He is absolute explanation, pure intelligibility in himself, and the first cause and last end of everything else."[92]

In this article we have been trying to show how Aquinas and Lonergan conceive the necessity of raising the question of God. We have been focusing on the speculative necessity of the question of God in terms of the natural dynamism of the intellect and its pursuit of wisdom or unrestricted intelligibility. In principle, the question of God is necessary, that is, it is demanded by the natural and rational progression of an intelligence

[90] Lonergan, *Method in Theology,* 103.

[91] For concerns about this very point as related to the pure desire to know, see Knasas, "Transcendental Thomism," 23-25. It is of course not universally accepted that the human mind is 'entitled' to intend complete intelligibility. Hans Georg Gadamer believes that this drive is in fundamental conflict with the historicality of our being: "What a man has to learn through suffering is not this or that particular thing, but insight into the limitations of humanity, into the absoluteness of the barrier that separates man from the divine.... In it all dogmatism, which proceeds from the soaring desires of the human heart, reaches an absolute barrier" (Hans Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method,* trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall [New York: Continuum, 1996], 357).

[92] Cited in Bernard Tyrrell, *Bernard Lonergan's Philosophy of God* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1974), 127.

intellectually present to the data of experience. If we are to inquire into the full intelligibility of being, we must ask the question of God. The normative dynamism of the intellect demands this; the search for causes and ultimate explanation requires it. All inquirers of sufficient intellectual capability, honesty, and good will are oriented towards the eventual posing of this question in one way or another. This is indeed true. However, in the contemporary context, we are bound to admit that the necessity of the question is often neither clearly seen nor acknowledged; in fact, it is the pervasive secularity of intellectual life in our times that has given birth to so passionate a reaction as the Radical Orthodoxy movement. These thinkers tend to offer a metanarrative of the history of philosophy, from late medieval Scholasticism to the present, in an effort to explain how this state of affairs came about.[93] This article can only attempt to offer a more modest explanation grounded in its quasi-phenomenological analysis of the genesis of the question of God in the human mind. Thus I would like to raise the question of possible existential conditions for asking this speculative question, if the abstract necessity that has been argued for is to become concretely intelligible. Both Lonergan and Aquinas were attentive to this personal-existential[94] dimension of the question of God.

As shown above, J.he intelligent inquirer must judge a failure to consider the question of God as in effect a failure of the natural dynamism of humah intelligence to be entirely consistent with itself. How can we account for this default in reasonableness, which today has not merely affected individuals, but an entire culture? An examination of Aquinas's rationale for the necessity of divinely revealed truth for human beings is a good place to start.

[93] For example, see Conor Cunningham, *Genealogy of Nihilism* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002).

[94] In this section I will be using the term 'existential' in a way similar to that of the philosophers of existentialism. This is Lonergan's own usage, and is not to be confused with the existence or *actus essendi* to which 'existential Thomists' (Etienne Gilson, Jacques Maritain, et al.) refer.

According to Aquinas, a myriad of temporally or historically circumstantial factors interrupt the natural dynamism of the human spirit. He recounts these factors in the *Summa contra Gentiles:*

> [F]ew men would possess the knowledge of God. For there are three reasons why most men are cut off from the fruit of diligent inquiry which is the discovery of truth. Some do not have the physical disposition for such work. As a result, there are many who are naturally not fitted to pursue knowledge; and so, however much they tried, they would be unable to reach the highest level of human knowledge which consists in knowing God. Others are cut off from pursuing this truth by the necessities imposed upon them by their daily lives. For some men must devote themselves to taking care of temporal matters. Such men would not be able to give so much time to the leisure of contemplative inquiry as to reach the highest peak at which human investigation can arrive, namely, the knowledge of God. Finally, there are some who are cut off by indolence. In order to know the things that the reason can investigate concerning God, a knowledge of many things must already be possessed. For almost all of philosophy is directed towards the knowledge of God, and that is why metaphysics, which deals with divine things, is the last part of philosophy to be learned. [95]

Aquinas concludes this passage with an apparently paradoxical statement: "It is not possible to arrive at the inquiry about the aforesaid truth except after a most laborious study: and few are willing to take upon themselves this labour for the love of knowledge, *the natural desire for which has nevertheless been instilled into the mind of man by God.*"[96] The question of God, which in some sense is the question of human fulfillment, has an immediate urgency to all human beings, and yet the rational posing of the question is reserved for the crowning achievement of a very specialized theoretical labor.[97] Truth is learned little by

[95] *ScG* I, c. 4. Translations from the *Summa contra Gentiles* are taken from Saint Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra Gentiles, Book One: Providence, Part I,* trans. Anton C. Pegis (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975).

[96] Ibid. (emphasis added).

[97] Lonergan of course acknowledges that the mythological imagination has sought to answer this question from the beginnings of human history. But it is equally clear that Lonergan finds this approach to be inadequate. See Lonergan's discussion of the need for a 'control of meaning' in 'Dimensions of Meaning' in *Collection* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 232-246.

little, and the successful answering of initial questions is the prerequisite for raising the ultimate question of God. Aquinas illustrates the arduous process of learning in his recounting of the ancient philosophers' ascent to the concept of a first cause of being, from the ancient physicists through Plato to Aristotle (who in Aquinas's opinion did indeed raise the question of a first efficient cause):

> The ancient philosophers gradually, and as it were step by step, advanced to the knowledge of truth. At first being of grosser mind, they failed to realize that any beings existed except sensible bodies. And those among them who admitted movement, did not consider it except as regards certain accidents, for instance, in relation to rarefaction and condensation, by union and separation. And supposing as they did that corporeal substance itself was uncreated, they assigned certain causes for these accidental changes, as for instance, affinity, discord, intellect, or something of that kind. An advance was made when they understood thatthere was a distinction between the substantial form and matter, which latter they imagined to be uncreated, and when they perceived transmutation to take place in bodies in regard to essential forms. Such transmutations they attributed to certain universal causes, such as the oblique circle [the ecliptic], according to Aristotle (De Gener. ii), or ideas, according to Plato. But we must take into consideration that matter is contracted by its form to a determinate species, as a substance, belonging to a certain species, is contracted by a supervening accident to a determinate mode of being; for instance, man by whiteness. Each of these opinions, therefore, considered "being" under some particular aspect, either as "this" or as "such"; and so they assigned particular efficient causes to things. Then others there were who arose to the consideration of "being," as being, and who assigned a cause to things, not as "these," or as "such," but as "beings." Therefore whatever is the cause of things considered as beings must be the cause of things, not only according as they are "such" by accidental forms, nor according as they are "these' by substantial forms, but also according to all that belongs to their being at all in any way. And thus it is necessary to say that also primary matter is created by the universal cause of things. [98]

The pre-Socratic physicists were unable to raise the question of an absolute cause of being. Because they had identified the real with body, and were only able to imagine change in terms of the joining together and separating of bodies, they were unable to rise to the question of substantial change. Once the physicalist limitations of the imagination were successfully transcended by

[98] *STh* I, q. 44, a. 2

Plato and Aristotle, these philosophers were able to distinguish matter and form and account for the actual coming to be of substances rather than their mere alteration, and to account for this generation by reference to universal causes of genera (such as the sun, the universal cause of life in all living things). Finally, having appropriated the notion of universal causality, the ancients were in a position to ask about the cause of being *qua* being. But this question about being as being rather than being restricted to coming to be (substantial change)[99] could not be successfully fielded until an inquiry into the speculative content of the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* could relativize the unintelligibility of prime matter. Then, finally, it could be asked, why indeed is there something rather than nothing?

Aquinas's narrative of the history of the question of creation alerts us to the fact that the ability adequately to raise the question of God as transcendent first cause is contingent upon historical factors. The acquisition of knowledge has always been a collaborative effort, with fresh insights either building upon and coalescing with or overturning previous insights in favor of a more adequate understanding. In addition, science is attained by way not only of an intuition of first principles but also by an act of faith in one's teacher, who leads the student's intellect from potency to act.[100] This means that the intellectual successes and failures of the past will affect one's ability successfully to raise the question. Thus while Aquinas never ceased to draw attention to the discursive and therefore temporally conditioned character of human intelligence, Lonergan was able to take the implications of our historical nature a step further to incorporate the historical character of meaning itself: "Historicity means-very briefly-that human living is informed by meanings, that meanings are the product of intelligence, that human intelligence develops cumulatively over time, and that such cumulative development

[99] Contrary to Nietzschean and Heideggerian analysis of the history of metaphysics, Aquinas does not oppose being and becoming; being as a transcendental must be predicated of becoming.

[100] *STh* I, q. 117, a. 1. For the importance of faith to human society in general and to the process of learning in particular, see *Super Boet. de Trin.,* q. 3, a. 1.

differs in different histories."[101] This means that human meaning- and therefore learning and knowing-cannot be fully accounted for by the static norms of logical analysis, because acts of intelligence are mediated by the meaning embodied in historically particular conceptual and linguistic forms. Fundamental to this awareness of the constitutive role of historically mediated meaning in human knowing and living is the recognition of the horizons in which particular insights are had and judgments are made. A horizon defines the particular scope of our knowledge and range of our interests; it is our worldview. Horizons differ according to differences in education, culture, social position, and personal development. They are always shifting with the development of the individual, of the society to which he belongs, and of the history which he helps make and which makes him. Lonergan came to realize that the simple presentation of a valid argument for the existence of God could not be sufficient for securing an apprehension of the rational necessity of affirming God's existence. Beyond this presentation, there must be effected a shift of horizon-on both the subjective and objective poles of the demonstration-that would make this argument meaningful to the subject.

> *Insight* insists a great deal on the authenticity of the subject, on his need to reverse his counter-positions and develop his positions, on the importance, in brief, of intellectual conversion. . . . More specifically, proof in any serious meaning of the term presupposes the erection of a system, in which all terms and relations have an exact meaning, and all procedures from some propositions to others are rigorous. But the system itself, in turn, has its presuppositions. It presupposes a horizon, a world-view, a differentiation of consciousness that has unfolded under the conditions and circumstances of a particular culture and a particular historical development.[102]

In other words, the problem with the demonstration for the existence of God in chapter 19 of *Insight* lies not in the validity of

[101] Bernard Lonergan, *A Lonergan Reader,* ed. Mark D. Morelli and Elizabeth A. Morelli (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 438.

[102] Bernard Lonergan, *Philosophy of God, and Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1973), 12.

the proof, but in the subject's achieving an adequate apprehension of the terms and relations that comprise this proof. Lonergan had already gone a long way towards bringing modern critical credibility to the Thomistic philosophy of God by his shifting from Scholastic metaphysics to an empirically informed analysis of human knowing. However, the resolution of philosophical counterpositions is not achieved merely by exchanging one system for another (e.g., post-Kantian critical philosophy for Thomist Scholasticism) and adapting to the present cultural horizon (although this is necessary), but more fundamentally by a radical change in the subject. The horizon within which one might apprehend a valid argument for the existence of God is, more likely than not, dialectically[103] related to the horizons in which the modern subject finds herself. We have undoubtedly witnessed a transition, propelled by the rise of modern empirical science and historically minded consciousness, from the horizon constituted by a classicist world view, which was at home with both speculative metaphysics and religious language, to that of modern culture, negatively distinguished (for the purposes of our argument) by a reluctance to engage in speculative metaphysics, considered to be too abstract to have any bearing on either empirical science or concrete living, and by a humanism that if it does not outrule the question of God at least relegates it to the margin of human concerns in the here and now. This entails that, while Aquinas saw the history of philosophy up until his time as a process of development, the basic positions of the ancients being genetically related to his own, Lonergan, while praising the advances of modern culture, could not be so sanguine about its philosophical patrimony. What is required here is not only the transposition of meaning into modern idiom, but, more radically, conversion on the part of the subject.

Most basically, in order to apprehend Lonergan's argument for the existence of God, the subject must be a critical realist, for whom the real is limited neither to immediacy (whether empirical or 'existential') nor to subjective/cultural construction of meaning,

[103] "Dialectic ... deals with conflicts" (Lonergan, *Method in Theology,* 235).

but rather to the universe of being, the objective of the pure and unrestricted desire for complete intelligibility, and as unlimited as that desire. But one is not born a critical realist; one becomes one after a long labor of self-appropriation of one's own cognitional structure. Lonergan's goal in *Insight,* which contains his elaborate demonstration for the existence of God, was not primarily the laying out of a systematic philosophy (although it indeed accomplishes this), but rather self-appropriation on the part of the reader, in the sense of intellectual conversion. Intellectual conversion allows one to apprehend the truth of this simple syllogism and of the premises which comprise it: "If the real is completely intelligible, God exists. But the real is completely intelligible. Therefore God exists."[104] *Demonstrare* means to show or to point out. Aquinas, following Aristotle, says that the successful demonstration makes *(jacit)* the pupil know.[105] Thus there is a subjective element built into the very notion of demonstration, for, as any teacher knows, what makes one person know may not work for another, and this is often due not to any dullness on the part of the student, but to an inadequate intellectual horizon. As for Lonergan's demonstration, unless intellectual conversion[106] is successfully achieved, the demonstration of the exigency for general transcendent knowledge cannot be apprehended. We would say the same for Aquinas's deceptively simple five ways.

However, intellectual conversion itself is a factor that rests on others.

> In the present instance men must exist. They must be healthy and enjoy considerable leisure. They must have attained a sufficient differentiation of consciousness to think philosophically. They must have succeeded in avoiding the pitfalls in which so many great philosophers have become entrapped. They must resist their personal evil tendencies and not be seduced by the bad example

[104] Lonergan, *Insight,* 672.

[105] *STh* I, q. 117, a. 1.

[106] For Lonergan's brief description of what he means by intellectual conversion, see *Method in Theology,* 238-39.

of others. Such are just a few very general conditions of someone actually grasping a valid argument for God's existence.[107]

This passage suggests that in addition to the circumstantial difficulties (whether existential, social, or historical in nature) of following through the demands of the innate intellectual desire, there is the sheer unwillingness that manifests itself in slowness to moral and religious conversion. Lonergan holds that intellectual conversion is unlikely without some degree of moral conversion, if only for the reason that not only moral reasoning, but remotely all reasoning in its ultimate meaning as seeking adequate grounds, does not occur apart from the deliberation and choosing of the subject. If these are not rightly oriented, it is unlikely that the subject will be able to appropriate fully the meaning and implications of her own rationality.

Take for example Aristotle's description of human speculative bliss in the *Nicomachean Ethics.* Aristotle's virtuous man approaches the ideal of wisdom to the extent that he is able to contemplate the highest realities[108]-we might say, to the extent that he is able to ask and answer the ultimate questions about himself and the universe he inhabits. However, who is this man? He is not the average person, but the man who is exercising both the moral and intellectual virtues, the man who has realized *arete* in his concrete living. He is the one who desires what is truly and unrestrictedly good-which includes the good of the intellect, truth-rather than the merely apparent or relative or limited good, and whose pursuit of the good is reflectively conscious and oriented toward the ultimate end. It is perhaps this person alone who would be able fully to recognize the cogency of Aristotle's analogy referred to above, which makes an argument for the existence of one supreme final cause in the universe from the logic of human praxis. The idea of such an ultimate final cause corresponds to the reasonable pursuit of happiness, because it acknowledges the end towards which all one's actions are ultimately directed. While everyone desires happiness and pursues

[107] "The Natural Knowledge of God," in Lonergan, *A Second Collection,* 133.

[108] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 10.7.

it, not everyone does so attentively, intelligently, and reasonably, as Aquinas is well aware:

> To know that God exists in a general and confused way is implanted in us by nature, inasmuch as God is man's beatitude. For man naturally desires happiness, and what is naturally desired by man must be naturally known to him. This, however, is not to know absolutely that God exists; just as to know that someone is approaching is not the same as to know that Peter is approaching, even though it is Peter who is approaching; for many there are who imagine that man's perfect good which is happiness, consists in riches, and others in pleasures, and others in something else.[109]

While every agent acts for an ultimate end, only the wise man self-reflectively and in full conscience keeps the horizon of his existence open to an ultimate end, has determined the objective for which he will strive, and knows why he is doing so. The many are dispersed in distraction and error, and the question of God does not occur to them. Now, if one can be blind to the practical or existential urgency of the question of God, how much more prone to derailment is the speculative orientation of the intellect towards transcendent truth.

Because the pure desire to know can be interrupted by other desires and inclinations, one must deliberately pledge one's fidelity to the demands of inquiry.[110] Moral authenticity is especially relevant to the affirmation of God, for this metaphysical judgment has the peculiarity of directly bearing on concrete living. But if moral authenticity is necessary, it is fulfilled only by falling in love with God.[111] Falling in love with God is the radical conversion by which our latent drive towards self-transcendence is made effective, where our spirit is wrested out of habitual inattentiveness, unreasonableness, and irresponsibility. Falling in love, whether it be this- or other-worldly, is prior to the knowing and choosing by which we achieve self-transcendence; it reorients

[109] *STh* I, q. 2, a .1, ad 1.

[110] For the epistemological problems related to bias, see Lonergan, *Insight,* 214-69.

[111] See Lonergan, *Method in Theology,* 101-24, for his account of religious conversion as falling in love with God. "Falling in love in an unrestricted fashion" is the gift of sanctifying grace as experienced; cf. 267-71, for his discussion of the foundational role of conversion in theological method.

that knowing and choosing, and rekindles desire, that dynamic first principle of self-transcendence. The dynamic state of being in love establishes a new horizon within which our knowing and valuing are radically reoriented. Falling in love with God is a falling in love in an unrestricted fashion: "Just as unrestricted questioning is our capacity for self-transcendence, so being in love in an unrestricted fashion is the proper fulfillment of that capacity." [112] Being in love with God restores within us the pure and unrestricted desire to know, gives it new energy, dismantles obstacles to its fulfillment. It is true that the pure desire belongs to human nature; it is equally true that this nature fulfills itself only by, in the words of a Pauline text that Lonergan is fond of quoting, "God's love flooding our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us" (Rom 5:5). This means that the knowledge of God proportionate to the human intellect is attained only by the help of grace; for while self-transcendence involves the development of the subject "from below upwards," falling in love is a change that occurs "from above downwards," that is, from a principle that does not originate in ourselves. [113] Therefore we are faced with a paradox that intertwines the natural and supernatural orders: "Natural knowledge of God is not attained without moral judgments and existential decisions. These do not occur without God's grace. Therefore the natural light of human reason does not suffice for man's so-called natural knowledge of God." [114]

While the necessity of the question of God is speculative to the highest degree, it is not to be thought of as absolutely divorced

[112] Lonergan, *Method in Theology,* 106.

[113] On the metaphors of "below upwards" and "above downwards," see Bernard J. F. Lonergan, "Healing and Creating in History" in idem, *A Third Collection,* ed. Frederick E. Crowe (NewYork: PaulistPress, 1985), 100-109.

[114] Lonergan, *A Second Collection,* 133. In this essay on the natural knowledge of God, Lonergan quotes Vatican I's constitution *Dei Filius* (DS 3004, DBl 785): "Eadem sancta mater Ecclesia tenet et docet, Deum rerum omnium principium et finem, naturali humanae rationis lumine e rebus creatis certo cognosci posse" ("Holy Mother Church holds and teaches that the existence of God as the principle and end of all things can be known from created things with certainty by the natural light of human reason"). Lonergan insists that this pronouncement answers to a *quaestio juris,* not a *quaestio facta.*

from its practical preconditions. The speculative and practical exercises of reason may be distinct, but they are the operations of one and the same existential subject. The existential has implications for speculative knowledge, for we do not really know and we cannot fully and responsibly exercise judgment-which requires intentional self-transcendence into the realm of being-unless we are aiming for and at least in part achieve real self-transcendence, which belongs to the moral and religious exigencies of existence. [115]

As for Aquinas, the demonstrations for the existence of God do not occur in a philosophical treatise, but within the context of religious conversion presupposed for the readers of the *Summa Theologiae.* It is *within* the context of *sacra doctrina* that the question of God as the ground of the intelligibility of being has historically been raised, and Lonergan has argued for returning the philosophy of God to this original place *within* systematic theology. [116] This is essentially different from Radical Orthodoxy's claim to have deconstructed the traditional Thomist distinction between faith and reason, or between philosophy and theology, or, more accurately, between the natural and the supernatural. [117] Where current trends like these aim at problematizing the conceptual distinction between philosophy and sacred doctrine to the point of calling into question the possibility of a rigorous or scientific treatment of either, Lonergan penetrates beneath this (valid) conceptual distinction to the subject for whom this

[115] "I should urge that just as the intellectual, moral, and the religious are three phases in the single thrust to self-transcendence, so too, moral and religious development only reveal more fully the God that can be known by the natural light of human reason" (Lonergan, *A Second Collection,* 132). For the concept of self-transcendence, see Lonergan, *Method in Theology,* 104-5.

[116] Lonergan, *Philosophy of God, and Theology,* 45ff.

[117] JohnMilbank and Catherine Pickstock, *Truth in Aquinas* (London: Routledge, 2001), 21: "Throughout we hope to show how a 'radically orthodox' position {primarily characterized by a more persistent refusal of distinct 'natural' and 'supernatural' phases and a consequent assault upon an autonomous naturalism as 'nihilistic'), can indeed be rendered as an attentive reading of Aquinas." Milbank presents a much more nuanced-if not entirely clear-position on the nature/grace question in *The Suspended Middle: Henri de Lubac and the Debate Concerning the Supernatural* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2005).

distinction does not map neatly onto the various phases of self-transcendence.[118]

This caveat about the existential obstacles to the posing of the question does not subtract from the rational necessity of the question of God. It only helps reason to own up to its own *de facto* failure to live up to its lofty natural finality. Many who ask the speculative question of God come from a context of faith, or at least of religious conversion, broadly conceived, but this does not imply that the question of God (and the validity of any answer to it) is restricted to a "community of faith" for which alone such discourse has meaning.[119] Such a presupposition of "theological commitments" is not the same as the requirement of conversion, which is preconceptual and predoctrinal, since it is conversion that enables one to apprehend the meaning and judge rightly of metaphysical concepts and theological doctrines in the first place. Neither does one have to appeal to a nondiscursive "intellectual vision" of transcendent realities, granted by grace, in order to secure realism or be able to rise to the affirmation of a transcendent first cause.[120] The question of God, if not the answer, is fully within the domain of human reason, which, as we have seen, proceeds from effect to cause, from that which is better known *apud nos* to that which is more knowable *in se*. This is the real significance of preserving the so-called autonomy of reason,

[118] For an interesting defense of 'philosophies of subjectivity' (albeit tainted by an overly Kantian insistence on the 'autonomy' of both reason and subjectivity) against Radical Orthodoxy's abandonment of them, see Paul D. Janz, "Radical Orthodoxy and the New Culture of Obscurantism," *Modern Theology* 20 (2004}: 362-405.

[119] See John Caputo, "Auto-Deconstructing or Constructing a Bridge? A Reply to Thomas A.F. Kelly," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 76 (2002): 341-44.

[120] Milbank and Pickstock, *Truth in Aquinas,* 22ff. Milbank and Pickstock mistakenly interpret Aquinas as identifying the apprehension ("intellectual vision") of the transcendental concepts (being, good, true, beautiful) with an inchoate intuition of God. They interpret Aquinas as subscribing to a thoroughgoing Augustinian theory of illumination, where judgment is grounded in the inspection of eternal verities. For Lonergan's rejection of this interpretation, see Lonergan, *Insight,* 394: "Augustine had advanced that our knowledge of truth originated not from without but from within us, yet not simply from within us but in some illumination in which we consulted the eternal ground and norms, not by taking a look at them, but by having within us a light of intelligence that is a created participation of the eternal and uncreated light." For a detailed treatment of this issue, see Bernard Lonergan, *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997).

a misnomer that fails to bring out reason's essence as the demand for intelligibility and meaning that is apprehensible to reason itself. Philosophical or 'natural' theology serves both its propaedeutic and its ancillary roles to the proper task of Christian theology [121] only when its rational integrity is respected and not overcome by overhasty appeals to transcendent sources of truth. [122] That said, however, the reasonableness of the speculative question of God can be judged rightly only by one who is intellectually, morally, and religiously converted, who has a firm commitment to personal self-transcendence into the full intelligibility of being.

CONCLUSION

The question of God is speculatively necessary, but this speculative necessity is not merely one of an impersonal cosmic order, but rather one of intimate relation to the innate dynamism of human intelligence. For Aquinas, the intellect was made for an unlimited source of intelligibility. Although he never uses the natural desire of the mind to know this source as a demonstration for the existence of such a being, the affirmation of such a being on causal grounds does answer to the mind's demand for complete intelligibility. Without this necessary movement of reason, the mind confines itself to the opaqueness of matter of

[121] I.e., intellectual reflection on the mysteries of faith.

[122] Cf. John Milbank, "Only Theology Overcomes Metaphysics," in Milbank, *The Word Made Strange,* 36-52. For Milbank's latest discussion of the relation between theology and metaphysics, see his "Only Theology Saves Metaphysics," an on-line paper published on the web site of the Centre of Theology and Philosophy at the University of Nottingham(posted Nov. 2006), <http://theologyphilosophycentre.co.uk/papers.php#milbank>. Milbank's position on the relation between philosophy and theology is somewhat ambiguous, mostly because he is unclear about what exactly he means by either philosophy or theology. He insists that the Christian context for the rise of a metaphysics of actuality is not a mere matter of historical accident, which would establish a *de facto* dependence of such a metaphysics on the Christian theological tradition. However, because in his discussion he moves between two distinct senses of the word 'theology', from the concept of theology in Aristotle's sense as first philosophy's investigation of first principles (our task here) to the concept of theology as revealed doctrine, it is unclear whether Milbank would agree with the statement that philosophy has a certain rational integrity of its own. He denies that the methodologies of the one or the other are really distinct. See Milbank and Pickstock, *Truth in Aquinas,* 21ff.

fact, the supposed ultimacy of which, in Lonergan's words, consigns all knowledge of proportionate being to oblivion. It is here that we see the peculiar character of Lonergan' s 'foundationalism'. One must affirm the intelligibility of being, and as a consequence the existence of God as the ground of that intelligibility, since to do otherwise would eventually land one in a performative contradiction. Since *all* our knowledge is somehow dependent upon being's supposed intelligibility, to deny this intelligibility is to pull the ground of the meaningfulness of any affirmation or denial out from under oneself.[123] Human intelligence requires no 'self-evident' grounding principle, but it does need to be consistent with itself, with its own performance. Therefore Lonergan can see the personal appropriation of one's own intelligence as foundational for *both* metaphysics and theology:

> [T]he metaphysics I would envisage would not be a philosophic first. It would be a conclusion derived from epistemology and cognitional theory, and these in turn would be formulations of one's personal experience of one's own cognitional operations. In this fashion philosophy and the root of theological method would come out of the personal experience of the thinker.[124]

Lonergan's 'anthropological starting point' is remarkably different from traditional transcendentalisms, because it demands a personal appropriation of the intellectual operations that generate methods and by which any method, whether it be transcendental, phenomenological, poststructural, linguistic, or hermeneutical,

[123] Crowe makes a similar point about Lonergan's epistemology: that no one can challenge the foundation of knowledge unless he himself assumes that critical spirit that is itself the foundation, according to Lonergan (Crowe, "Ultimate Reality and Meaning," 70). Therefore Lonergan's 'foundationalism' is not of a kind with the positive foundationalism proposed by Descartes's *fundamentum inconcussum* or even the Kantian *a priori.* Nonetheless, Lonergan's position does not ultimately rest on faith (although the practice of his method of criticism does presuppose an initial trust in the validity of the critical spirit), but on knowledge in the sense of science, for the meaning of 'self-appropriation' in *Insight* is to be able to arrive at an *insight* about the nature of knowing and reality and subsequent judgment that knowing is of being, which rests in more foundational judgments about what knowing is.

[124] Bernard Lonergan, "Philosophy and Theology," in idem, *A Second Collection,* 204.

can be examined and criticized.[125] His analysis of and insistence on conversion offers a most 'radical' vision for both philosophy and theology: it is precisely intellectual, moral, and religious conversion that pull one out of inauthenticity and enable one to judge rightly one's intellectual, cultural, or religious horizon. By reinterpreting the 'first principles' of philosophy and theology in terms of conversion, Lonergan restores philosophy to a "way of life," while it also promises to contribute to the much needed reintegration of theology and spirituality.[126]

Aquinas's approach to the question of God shows that he was committed to the intelligibility of being, and consistently so. He expressed this intelligibility in the second-order language of metaphysics. Lonergan's transcendental method, proceeding by way of intentionality analysis, is useful in taking us behind the scenes to witness the genesis of metaphysics in the intelligence and reasonableness of the subject. It invites us to return to the intellectual acts, verifiable in experience, from which the metaphysical terms and relations derive their meaning . This is not to say that Aquinas's treatment of the question of God is pre-reflective. His approach is eminently reflective and approaches the Aristotelian ideal of science in that he is careful to point out the ineluctability of this crowning question of metaphysics. He indicates this rational necessity by bringing out the demands of intelligence in its search after causes.

[125] For an illuminating dialectical treatment of the claims of linguistic philosophy as applied to theology, see Lonergan, *Method in Theology,* 253-57.

[126] For philosophy as ascetical practice, see Pierre Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life,* trans. Chase, Michael (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1995). For the problem of the modern divorce between theology and spirituality, beginning with the *devotio modema* of the sixteenth century, see David Schindler, "The Religious Sense and American Culture," in *A Generative Thought: An Introduction to the Works of Luigi Giussani* (Toronto: McGill University Press, 2003), 84-102. In this essay Schindler refers to the work of Hans Urs von Balthasar, esp. a piece entitled "Theology and Sanctity," in *Explorations in Theology,* vol. 1 (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989). It is because Lonergan's epistemological 'foundations' are personal authenticity and intellectual conversion rather than self-evident propositions or beliefs that Ulf Jonsson judges that Lonergan is not a foundationalist in the "strict sense" (Jonsson, *Foundations for Knowing God,* 310).

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THOMISM AND ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY: A DISCUSSION

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THE COLLECTION OF ESSAYS *Mind, Metaphysics, and Value in the Thomistic and Analytical Traditions,* edited by John Haldane, [1] is aimed at promoting a more fruitful engagement between the two traditions of its title. For complex historical and cultural reasons, the twentieth-century revival of Thomism tended in its encounter with contemporary philosophy to focus upon Continental European philosophy in its phenomenological and existentialist strains. With some notable exceptions, analytic philosophers often thought of Thomism as so thoroughly infected by the perceived authoritarianism of religion and the presuppositions of theism as to be discredited at the bar of philosophy. Thomists for their part tended to view analytic philosophy as deeply corrupted by Logical Positivism with its anti-metaphysical bias. This two-sided suspicion at times had more to do with mutual ignorance than considered philosophical dispute.

More recently, this suspicion has become weaker as a result of the work in analytic philosophy of theists like Michael Dummett, Alvin Plantinga, Richard Swinburne, and others. In addition, figures like Elizabeth Anscombe, Peter Geach, Alasdair Macintyre, Anthony Kenny, Norman Kretzmann, Eleanore Stump, Fergus Kerr, and Haldane have directly engaged Aquinas in their

[1] John Haldane, ed., *Mind, Metaphysics, and Value in the Thomistic and Analytical Traditions* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002). Pp. 240. $45.00 (cloth). ISBN 0-268-03467-2.

different ways with an eye toward the issues that concern analytic philosophy. Indeed, even thoroughly secular analytic philosophers have been studying authoritative aspects of their own tradition for philosophical insight. Almost no one any longer believes that presuppositionless philosophy is possible. Finally, the last three decades or so have seen a robust metaphysical turn in analytic Philosophy, as well as the seeds of a rapprochement with some strains of the phenomenological movement. This volume is a welcome addition of high-quality papers to the thaw that has been taking place.

Just as within contemporary Thomism one will find a number of different approaches to the work of Aquinas, signaling that it is not a monolithic tradition, so also 'analytic philosophy' is a broad term covering a number of different approaches to contemporary philosophy. The wide array of essays collected here display that diversity of approach on both the Thomistic and the analytic sides. The limitations of space given to the authors required the writing of essays that very often are rich suggestions for much longer research projects. As the title suggests, the papers fall into three general categories, though the category of 'Value' is represented by only one essay, "Practical Reason and the Orders of Morals and Nature in Aquinas's Theory of the *Lex Naturae,"* by M. W. F. Stone. Stone argues that it is a mistake to try to fit Aquinas's discussions of natural law too quickly into the contemporary category of ethical naturalism, as "plausible yet contrary readings of the theory of natural law, readings which lend themselves to both naturalist and anti-naturalist interpretations, can be derived from important passages in the *Summa Theologiae"* (196). Stone suggests that a good deal more examination of Aquinas' theories of action and mind has to be done before we can really begin to understand his theory of natural law.

Perhaps coincidentally then, seven of the twelve essays consider questions in the Philosophy of Mind and Action. In "Aquinas after-Wittgenstein," Fergus Kerr argues that while Aquinas agrees with Wittgenstein that there is no problem

aligning the private world of thought with the public world of objects, since the very possibility of thought "presupposes the existence of public objects," nonetheless, Aquinas felt the need to argue for this position, where Wittgenstein did not. Kerr focuses upon the discussion of human knowing in the first part of the *Summa Theologiae* for Aquinas's arguments against the "'Cartesian' conception of the self-transparent subject" (4). He adds a very strong defense of Aquinas against the charge that his account leads to an overly individualist account of language learning and knowledge acquisition.

Jonathan Jacobs's essay, "Habits, Cognition, and Realism" should be read in conjunction with Kerr's piece. Jacobs wants to use Aquinas to address Quinean and post-Quinean worries about the normativity of concept use-metaphysically "what underwrites the applicability of general concepts to particulars," and epistemologically "what is it, on the side of the mind, that makes for the correct use of a concept" (109). The solution suggested by Jacobs is the Thomistic thesis that the mind's concepts are formally identical to their objects, and not simply causally (efficient) related to those objects. The "intentional actualization" (114) of worldly forms in the mind constitutes knowledge of those worldly objects. So actualized a concept cannot be anything other than the normatively appropriate concept of the worldly object.

Jacobs's paper also complements Haldane's own contribution, "The Breakdown of Philosophy of Mind." After giving a brief but informative survey of the "untenablity" of reductive physicalism, and the "mess" that nonreductive physicalism is in within analytic Philosophy, Haldane suggests that their common difficulty is an inadequate conception of the principles constitutive of physical being, whether on the part of the human knower or on the part of the known. Analytic philosophy needs on the part of the knower "a notion of psychophysical substantiality that does not reduce to substance monism plus attribute dualism," and on the part of the known a recovery of the "notion of formal causation that does not reduce to efficient causation" (68).

David Braine in "The Active and Potential Intellects" shows how Aquinas's discussion of concepts and the intelligible species or structures that in-form them differ radically from the "empiricist accounts [of ideas] typified in Locke and Hume, and exemplified in the 'psychologism' rejected by Frege" (22). Once one has rejected readings of Aquinas along those lines, one can begin to appreciate the "permanently valuable" insights that he provides in the philosophy of cognition.

In "Aquinas and the Mind-Body Problem" Richard Cross, presupposing three basic positions in contemporary analytic philosophy of mind-substance dualism, "hard (reductive) materialism," and "soft (non-reductive) materialism or property dualism" (36)-seeks to translate Aquinas's discussion of soul and body into a "philosophy of mind," in order to place it within the contemporary debate. He argues that Aquinas dearly rejects both the hard and the soft versions of materialism. He believes Aquinas espouses a position on the relation of mind to body that is not quite captured by substance dualism, but is dose enough insofar as the human being is more than the living composite of matter and substantial form, that is, more than the living body, since a human being also includes "that part of the soul which on Aquinas's showing is not part of the body (i.e., its cognitive and appetitive capacities)" (43).

Two of the very best essays in the book concern the philosophy of human action: C. F. J. Martin's "Voluntary Action and Non-Voluntary Causality" and Stefaan E. Cuypers's "Thomistic Agent-Causalism." Martin focuses upon the conditions necessary for an adequate account of voluntary action. He seeks to reverse the order of assimilation in contemporary discussions of causality, where nonvoluntary causality is taken as the dear and distinct case, and voluntary causality a troubling departure that must be assimilated to it in some fashion. Instead, his strategy is "to assimilate non-voluntary and voluntary causality, in the hope that there will be some element in voluntary causality that resists assimilation. [But he] shall do this by assimilating non-voluntary causality to voluntary causality." Cuypers seeks to develop a

distinctive Thomistic "agent-causalist" account of human action that rejects mechanistic event-causalism, but also rejects the "para-mechanistic flavour" (90) of many contemporary agent-causal accounts descending proximately from Roderick Chisholm, and remotely from Thomas Reid. The departure of Thomistic agent-causalism from the Reidian accounts consists in its teleological form, relying upon the interplay of intellect and will, where "an instance of agent-causation is a contingent exertion of a person's will-power in a teleological context" (100). Taken singly, these papers are excellent. Coupled together, they pose a powerful challenge to contemporary discussions of human action.

Reflective of the wide diversity of topics treated in contemporary metaphysics, the four remaining essays devoted to 'Metaphysics' do not share the general unity that animates the section on 'Mind and Action'. In "Hylomorphism and Individuation," David S. Oderberg begins by examining and rejecting a number of candidates for the role of the principle of individuation in Scholastic thought, in order to settle on "matter designated by indeterminate quantity" (130). He suggests applying this analysis to problems with Aristotelianism suggested by Kit Fine. Christopher Hughes, in "Aquinas on God's Knowledge of Future Contingents," raises difficulties for the role of necessity in Aquinas's treatment of the topic within the *Summa contra Gentiles, De Veritate,* and the *Summa Theologiae.* He proposes to modify Aquinas's discussion in the *Summa Theologiae* in order to align it more clearly with the general Boethian treatment of eternity that he takes Aquinas to be committed to. In "Ontology and the Art of the Possible," Gerard J. Hughes, S.J., argues that contemporary discussions of necessity and possibility are unsatisfactory in a number of ways, insofar as they base themselves upon intuitions grounded in a "strictly logical approach." He suggests that these inadequacies may be remedied by taking greater account of the traditional approach to potentiality given by Aristotle and Aquinas that grounds our notions of possibility in a prior metaphysical analysis of act. Finally, following closely upon Hughes, in "Contemporary 'Essentialism' vs. Aristotelian

Essentialism," Gyula Klima raises a number of difficulties for contemporary semantic discussions of necessity and essentialism, in order to contrast the virtues of his own brief sketch of the semantics of the Aristotelian essentialism one sees in Aquinas. He claims that while the latter semantic apparatus does not beg any metaphysical questions, it allows room for the properly metaphysical reflection lacking, indeed excluded, in contemporary logical discussions.

Despite particular differences among the authors, all of the essays provide rich opportunities for further philosophical reflection and argument. Still, a difficulty faced by anyone interested in the thought of Aquinas is to figure out what approach to take in addressing recent philosophy. At least two approaches suggest themselves. One might be to take one's bearings from recent philosophy, recognizing its issues and problems as fundamental, and then to look piecemeal to Aquinas and the Thomistic tradition for arguments here and there that may be brought to bear upon the solution, or at least the advancement, of those issues and problems. On the other hand, one might approach Aquinas and the Thomistic tradition as by and large a systematic philosophical enterprise that poses comprehensive and wholesale challenges to the presuppositions of much of recent philosophy. Both of these approaches can take extreme forms, but it is likely that most Thomists will find themselves somewhere on a spectrum between one extreme and another. Almost all of the essays in this volume, while genuinely conversant with and respectful of contemporary analytic philosophy, suggest ways in which Thomism can contribute to remedying some of its fundamental inadequacies as well. In that regard they tend gently toward the second approach. This attitude is welcome, as one suspects that the chilly reception some Thomists of the past gave analytic philosophy was due in part to a reaction against the attitude of many analytic philosophers toward Thomism-namely, that all was well with the analytic world and the Thomists would have to assimilate or die. For the most part, the approach here is

neither a capitulation to that hubris, nor a rejection of the value of analytic philosophy.

That point made, there are some broad questions about the essays worth considering at greater length. I will look at two in particular, namely, the importance of the historical study of Aquinas to a living Thomism, and conflicts between different approaches to Aquinas and Thomism having to do with the often quite different philosophical idioms within which the two broad traditions operate. I will illustrate these two questions by considering two papers in particular, Oderberg's "Hylomorphism and Individuation" and Cross's "Aquinas and the Mind-Body Problem."

I. HISTORICAL STUDIES

Oderberg's paper "Hylomorphism and Individuation" on matter as the principle of individuation, while very interesting, illustrates the problem of the place of historical study in any effort at advancing the Thomistic tradition within recent analytic philosophy. He appears to reject the importance of such study as "the ossified material of an essentially tedious historical analysis" (125). Instead he depends heavily upon secondary sources, and in particular *The School,* by Thomas Harper, S.J., a Scholastic textbook published in 1879. Indeed, Oderberg does not so much discuss Thomism or the Thomistic tradition, as, rather, "the philosophy of the School" (ibid.). The connection to Aquinas is established by the thesis that "all schoolmen [are] obliged to hold the Thomistic opinion on all matters of philosophy as their default position" (126). This statement is of course normative; but it immediately raises a factual question about whether *The School* and other such textbooks did in fact hold such Thomistic default positions, and whether they were the expression of a tradition of sufficient unity to bear the normative weight placed upon them.

In fact, the reliance upon Harper is unfortunate. In one particular instance it is very much so, since Oderberg uses passages quoted and translated by Harper that purportedly come

from works of Aquinas, *De Natura Materiae et Dimensionibus Interminatis* and *De Principia Individuationis,* that, since 1879, have been judged inauthentic, [2] and that involve theses that conflict in serious ways with positions that Aquinas certainly held. One is faced with the question whether Oderberg's paper is advancing the Thomistic tradition or some other conflicting tradition. One of the major achievements of historical studies in the twentieth century was to demonstrate the great difficulties inherent in the presupposition that there was something called Scholasticism and a definite medieval "school," rather than quite a few Scholasticisms and schools that often disagreed upon very substantive philosophical issues.

Oderberg believes that for "The School," "Thomism," and Aquinas himself, "designated matter of indeterminate quantity" is the principle of individuation. Before considering Oderberg's thesis, I think it important to say something about the problem itself. In order to understand a philosophical thesis, it is very often helpful to ask what question the thesis is designed to answer. When one asks what individuates some being, the answer Aquinas gives is complicated. One must distinguish at least two different senses of the question. [3] The first sense is: what makes this being to be identical with itself and not another being? The second sense is: how do these distinct members of a kind differ from one another?

With regard to the first sense of the question, being *one (unum)*, that is, being indivisible in itself, and being *other (aliquid,* from *aliud quid),* [4] that is, being divided or distinct from all other beings, are transcendental features of any being whatsoever. They pertain to any being as such. They do not pick out distinct properties that inhere in a being and qualify it. Nor do they pick

[2] See Jean-Pierre Torrell, O.P., *Saint Thomas Aquinas: The Person and His Work,* trans. Robert Royal (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1996), 360. See also the list of falsely ascribed works, compiled by Enrique Alarcon, on the Corpus Thomisticum website, housed in Pamplona at the University of Navarre (http://www.corpusthomisticum.org/iopera.html#OF).

[3] For such a careful analysis of the questions see P. T. Geach, "Aquinas," in G. E. M. Anscombe and P. T. Geach, *Three Philosophers* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1967), 72.

[4] See *De Verit.,* q. 1, a. 1.

out different principles of being, as for example form and matter do in a material substance, or *esse* and *essentia* do in a creature. So, they differ from *being* as such not at all in the thing that exists, but rather in our understanding of existing being. Something different is expressed and communicated conceptually by the terms 'being', 'one', and 'other', even as the terms do not pick out any distinct properties, features, or principles in the things to which they are applied. The same thing that is said 'to be' is said 'to be one' and 'to be other'. In that case no *intrinsic* principle or feature is the cause, or *makes* a being to be the very individual being that it is and different from all other beings-'to be' is 'to be this indivisible thing and not that'. And the only *extrinsic* principle, if there is one, that could be said to cause the being to be this rather than that is an extrinsic principle that causes it to be. For this reason, Aquinas says that self-identity is a relation only in thought, "positing nothing in reality." [5]

Certainly a material object, like a particular human being or a horse, must be caused to be in such a way that there is a hylomorphic union of some particular or designated matter and a particular form. [6] The possession of a particular form and some designated matter are thus necessary conditions for the existence of a particular material substance. However, 'being a necessary condition for the existence of a material substance' no more posits designated matter as "*the* principle of individuation" in this first sense than it does "particular form."

[5] *De Verit.,* q. 1, a. 5, ad 16.

[6] Aquinas is committed to individual forms as the forms of individual things. There is no general form existing in a thing. "It cannot be said that the definition of a *genus* or *a species* pertains to human nature insofar as human nature exists in individuals, because human nature is not found in individuals as a unity, as if one form which all the individuals have, which is the definition of a universal [namely-one form which a number of individuals have]" *(De Ente et Essentia* 2). See *STh* I, q. 85, a, 2, ad 2. The term 'universal' is used analogously as predicated of the nature or form that exists in individual things, which is the basis in things that, through abstraction, results in the universal properly so called, the form or nature existing in intellect. By abstraction the intention of universality accrues to the nature or form as it exists in the intellect, while the individual nature or form itself is *called* universal because it leads to this genuine universal in the intellect, even though it is not a universal in being. See also *ScG* II, c. 50, where it is said "among things, whatever is a composite of matter and form is a composite of individual form and matter." See also *De Spirit. Great.,* a. 9.

Matter enters into the discussion of individuation when we consider a second sense of the question, namely, the sense in which we presuppose that some beings are beings of the same kind. When we do so, we consider them according to a certain sameness or unity.[7] The principles of that unity are the individual substantial forms or natures intrinsic to them that determine them as beings of a certain kind. Members of a kind "do not differ" with respect to those natures "considered absolutely." But members of a kind do differ when considered in other respects. Take two human beings, Socrates and Xanthippe. Socrates is clearly not Xanthippe, even though when we consider them simply as human beings we do not note a difference between them. At any particular time, Socrates is of such and such size and mass, while Xanthippe is of some other size and mass. He is over here, while she is over there. He is male, while she is female.

However, these features do not pertain to being as such; they are not an expression of the unity and otherness of the beings under consideration, the unity and otherness that pertain to the first sense of the question. Nor do they belong as such to the substantial forms or natures, since the objects are judged to be the same according to their respective forms. The forms are the *fundamenta in rebus* that account for the lack of difference found between these two human beings considered absolutely, or, more generally, two members of a kind considered absolutely. Yet it does pertain to the substantial form or nature of such material beings to specify that they have some quantity of mass or other, and that they be in some place or other at some time or other, and in the case of sexually reproducing animals that they be male or female. However, their forms or natures *as such* do not specify which quantity of matter, where, when, and so on. The only intrinsic principle that can account for this difference between individuals *qua* members of the material kind is the actual bunches of matter that are hylomorphically composed with each of the respective substantial forms, given the historical generative or

[7] According to Aquinas there are at least four different senses of "being one": numerically, specifically, generically, and by analogy or proportion. See *STh* I, q. 93, a. 1, ad 3; V *Metaphys.,* lect. 8 (876). Parenthetical numbers refer to paragraphs in the Marietti edition.

augmentative processes by which they came to be the matters of those substances.

Thus, for Aquinas, matter as the principle of individuation answers a very specific question: positing that we have two or more members of one material kind, how do they differ as members of that kind? Aquinas writes, "matter is not the principle of numerical diversity except insofar as being divided into many parts, the many parts receiving a form of the same *ratio* it constitutes many individuals of the same species," [8] and "it ought to be said that matter subject to dimensions is the principle of numerical distinction in those types of things in which a multitude of individuals are found of one species, for things of this kind do not differ according to form." [9] To see this, notice that giving the disposition of some lump of matter, its quantity and location, may be part of an answer to the question how members of different kinds differ-for example, how this dog differs from that man. But it is not a particularly adequate, complete, or good answer to that question, since what is most striking about how this man differs from that dog pertains to the formal character of their particular actions, like speaking versus barking, walking on two feet versus walking on four, etc. If we ask, "what is it that individuates Socrates, in the sense of distinguishing him from Fido," a much more significant answer than "designated matter of indeterminate quantity" is "his rational activity." But his rational activity pertains to his form, which is the principle through which he has being as the individual he is.

In members of different kinds, the more important differences individuating them are differences that pertain to the difference of species, not differences of material quantity and spatio-temporal location; and the more adequate answer to the question of what individuates them expresses those species differences. But species differences are taken according to formal differences. In other words, between a particular dog and a particular human being their forms are as much principles of individuation

[8] *In Boet. De Trin.,* q. 5, a. 3, ad 3. I have deliberately left the term *'ratio'* untranslated.

[9] *De Malo,* q. 6, a. 1, ad 18. See also *De Spirit. Creat.,* a. 1, ad 19: "it ought to be said that matter is the principle of numerical distinction in the same species."

distinguishing this man from that dog as are the quantities of matter involved in each. Indeed, in many ways their forms are more important principles of individuation than their matter, because being comes to a substance through form.

Consider an angel and a human being. Aquinas famously denied universal hylomorphism, the thesis that all creatures are composed of matter and form (in the case of spiritual substances, a kind of spiritual matter). Since there is no material principle available to individuate angels within a species, it follows for Aquinas that there can be no multiple instances of a particular angelic species. A single angel completely exhausts the possibilities of instantiation for its species-necessarily there is one angel per species of angel. Thus multiple angels differ simply according to their being, which is entirely formal. When we ask how an angel differs from a particular human being, material differences do not apply, other than the species claim that the angel has no matter whatsoever, a claim that can only pertain to its particular form.

Matter takes on primary importance as a principle of individuation only in the context of two or more things posited as more or less the same in everything else, that is, alike down to their species characteristics. But even in that setting this doesn't tell us why Socrates is the individual he is and no other-why he is Socrates and not Xanthippe. It simply tells us ways in which Socrates differs from Xanthippe, given the fact that they are both human beings.

The position Oderberg attributes to "The School," and thus to Aquinas, is that the principle of individuation is "matter designated by indeterminate quantity." He thinks it must involve "indeterminate quantity" since the actual determinateness of the quantity can change without the individual ceasing to be the individual it is. If the principle were matter designated by determinate quantity, then the ceasing to be of the determinate quantity would imply the ceasing to be of the individual. But Socrates can gain and lose weight, and move from here to there, and yet remain Socrates. So the principle cannot involve "determinate" quantity but, rather, "indeterminate" quantity. But

this position appears to be confusing the first sense of the question of individuation with the second. Matter of any sort does not tell us why Socrates is Socrates and remains Socrates amidst change.[10] It simply tells us how Socrates differs from other members of the human species.

With regard to matter as an answer to the question of individuation in its second sense, Oderberg's thesis is disputed as an interpretation of Aquinas by the best of recent scholarship-for example, John Wippel's *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas.*[11] As Wippel argues, Aquinas probably rejected that position by the end of his work, since it is not clear at all what "indeterminate quantity" could be as a real metaphysical principle, as opposed to an abstract logical notion used to talk in a general way about the only matter that is real, namely, determinate matter.[12] Thus we run directly up against the philosophical importance of historical study, since examining the actual discussion in Aquinas may raise for us similar issues in our own discussions of individuation.

In fact, once we see matter as the principle of individuation within a kind, determining differences not of beings as such but of members of a kind, it is not at all clear why "designated matter" of determinate quantity cannot do the job. This matter of this human being over here is not of indeterminate quantity, but of determinate quantity. Such determinate quantity is sufficient to account for the difference within the kind from that human being over there. If its quantity changes by depletion or augmentation, there is no danger that suddenly this being will cease to be the being it is (i.e., lose its identity), since that issue pertains to the first sense of the question, the sense that 'matter' was never designed to answer. Its quantity will simply change, and *qua* member of a kind it will remain different from other members of its kind by the very quantity that it now has, the quantity of matter that is here and not there. Indeed, the substantial identity

[10] See Geach, "Aquinas," 72-73.

[11] John F. Wippel, *TheMetaphysica!ThoughtofThomasAquinas* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2000), 351-75

[12] See also Geach, "Aquinas," 84.

of the matter changes as it is integrated into the substance, for it takes on the identity that is metaphysically prior to it, namely, the unity and otherness of the being itself. Some bit of matter has become this horse's matter, rather than that cow's; before that it was the matter of the grass that has ceased to be.

Another way in which the problem of individuation is often put is that, given multiple instances of a universal, there must be some principle that particularizes the universal to those instances. This seems to be what Oderberg has in mind when he writes that "form is common, whereas individuality is not," (128) and "it is matter which divides common form, i.e., which turns the communicable into the incommunicable" (129). This might seem to be Aquinas's position when we look at the role of form in determining individuals to be in the same kind, the sameness that we recognized in them considered absolutely. It may seem that Aquinas is committed to some common formal being in things that needs particularizing to this thing versus that, making the individual of a species a kind of complex of universal and particularizing conditions.

However, the claim that matter "individuates or particularizes the universal" can be taken in a robustly metaphysical sense, or in a less robust logical or semantic sense. In the robust metaphysical sense one is committed to the existence of universals or common forms as extramental beings. Matter "enters into" composition with the extramental universal and in a sense "does" something ontologically to it, so that the individual is a complex being of common form "individuated" or "particularized" by incommunicable matter; it *makes* or "turns the communicable into the incommunicable," whatever one might mean metaphysically by "makes," "turns, "enters into," "particularizes," or "individuates" in this context.

The problem with this robust metaphysical position for the Thomist is that Aquinas does not attribute any being to common forms or universals beyond the mind. Universality characterizes a form as existing in a human intellect.[13] Neither universality nor

[13] See *De Ente* 2; II *De Anima,* lect. 12 (378-80); and *STh* I, q. 85, a. 2, ad 2.

particularity pertain to form as such or considered absolutely; in other words, forms in themselves are neither individual nor common. But forms in themselves do not exist, according to Aquinas. "In themselves" is a way of considering forms; it is not a way of being for forms. Universality characterizes our way of knowing, not what we know. Forms existing in things are in no way common; they are individual. There is no thing or being that is common to individuals, or a common part of individuals. So there is no universal in things that needs to be made particular by something else. There is no doubt that Aquinas leaves open the very difficult question of how it is that two existing individual forms in two distinct things can be the basis for a lack of difference between those two things when we consider them absolutely. Nonetheless, "absolute consideration" is a way of considering, not a way of being. Aquinas is thus not committed to the robust metaphysical view that there is some being beyond the mind that is common and that must be "particularized" or "individuated" in the individuals in which it exists. Matter, in turn, cannot be performing any role as "individuating" the universal in any robust metaphysical sense.

On the other hand, given the rejection of extramental universals by Aquinas, one can understand matter as the principle of individuation in a much more benign sense, namely, a logical or semantic sense. Given that understanding is expressed in the intellect in a universal way, or that we use universal terms in our discourse, if we are to think about or talk about individual things employing that universal understanding or those universal terms, then we must somehow particularize our *thought* or the reference of our *terms* by expressing the apprehension of the individual material conditions of the objects that we talk about in a particular sensory context,[14] a particularizing function that

[14] See Peter Geach, *Mental Acts* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1957), 64. Geach might be uncomfortable with my phrase "particularize our *thought"* if it is misunderstood. I do not mean that we take the conceptual meaning of the thought and render that meaning particular. I mean what he means when he writes, "the content of the judgment is always intelligible and conceptual-acquaintance with a particular sensible thing is no part of the judgment itself-but an act of judgment performed in a particular sensory context may

Aquinas attributes to the "cogitative power."[15] In that sense we can say that the apprehension of designated matter, taken in a logical or semantic sense, particularizes our universal way of thinking of things that takes place in intellect. For example, in "Socrates is a human being" we only succeed in thinking about Socrates as a human being, rather than, say, Plato as a human being, by expressing our apprehension of those particular features of his matter that characterize him along with his humanity.[16]

Finally, in defense of his claim, Oderberg considers fictional entities. He claims that these presumed fictional nonexistent entities, like Hamlet, or just plain nonexistent individuals that we think of, like "a big brown bear," have individual essences, and that even here it is matter designated by indeterminate quantity that is the principle of individuation for these things.

> We can ... conceive of a wholly non-existent individual, say a big brown bear, or a man who wins the presidency .... Such a thing conceived of is no more or less an individual essence, and it contracts its species just as a species contracts its genus whether or not the species has any actual members. . . . Hence individuality must be contained in the individual essence of a thing, not in its existence. (128-29)

"If existence is the actualization of an individual essence, it presupposes the individuation of that essence, i.e., it presupposes an individual potentiality" (129). Thus Oderberg argues that existence cannot be the principle of individuation, since these individuated essences do not exist and yet must still be individuated.

> What individuates existence? That is, what distinguishes the existence of *a* from the existence of *b*. If existence is self-individuating, then why not say the same of essence, which is prior to existence 'in the order of nature and of perfection', as the Thomist would say? (129)

thereby be referred to particular sensible things."

[15] *ScG* II, c. 60; *STh* I, q. 78; *De Verit.,* q. 10.

[16] See I *Perherm.,* lect. 10 (121).

We have already seen that, according to Aquinas, notliing individuates or distinguishes the existence of a from *b,* because nothing has to. To be 'one' and 'other' just is the condition of being at all; along with 'good' and 'true', they just are identically 'being'. Aquinas says that the term *'ens'* or 'being' is taken from the 'act of existence' *(actus essendi).* Saying of some being that it is undivided in itself, and something other than anything else, is not to posit some principle in the thing, or property of it, that *makes* it to be this rather than that (i.e., a principle or property that *individuates* this or that). In the thing, 'to be one' and 'to be other' just is the very same thing as 'to be'.

In addition, it is difficult to imagine a Thomist saying that "essence is prior to existence 'in the order of nature and perfection'." [17] Aquinas regularly says that in the order of nature act is always prior to potency, that *esse* (the *actus essendi)* is compared to *essentia* as act to potency, and, further, that *esse* is the act of all acts and the perfection of all perfections. [18]

Are we to think that the matter that is doing the individuating of the nonexistent yet still individuated essence is itself nonexistent matter? After all, what could the matter of a nonexistent entity be other than nonexistent matter? If it is nonexistent, how can it be a principle of anything? How can what does not exist individuate anything? [19] At this point we seem to be

[17] By using the term 'Thomist' here and throughout, I do not intend to adjudicate who is and who isn't a Thomist, as if there were a set of necessary and sufficient conditions for someone being called a Thomist, rather than prudential considerations. I simply use it as a convenient term that covers historic and contemporary traditions of philosophical thought informed by the work of Thomas Aquinas.

[18] "Esse est actualitas omnium actuum, et propter hoc est perfectio omnium perfection um" *(De Pot.,* q. 7, a. 2, ad 9).

[19] Perhaps there is an equivocation at play here. Perhaps what Oderberg intends to say is that the individual essences of things exist, not as intrinsic principles or features of existing things, but as abstract entities. So while Hamlet does not exist, his individual essence does, though it is not exemplified. So one would say that Hamlet's, a particular unicorn's, and my individual essence all exist, even if Hamlet, that unicorn, and I do not exist. In that case, it isn't non-existent matter that is individuating Hamlet, the particular unicorn, or me. It is existent abstract matter in the individual existing abstract essence that is individuating the essence. But that simply raises the question of how that presumably abstract matter is related to the presumably concrete matter that actually enters hylomorphically into composition with my soul such that I exist, the intrinsic feature of my being that is the principle of potency and

very far afield from the "default" position of Aquinas. There is no reason to think that Aquinas in particular holds that fictional beings are individual essences or things with essences, only nonexistent essences. When we speak of what appear to be beings that do not exist, fictional or otherwise, they are called beings in a derivative sense because they enter into the subject place of many affirmative propositions, as for example, "Hamlet is a character of Shakespeare's," "Hamlet treated Ophelia shabbily," "my fourth son, were he to exist, would be younger than my second daughter." We are speaking "as if" there were such beings; but that is a fact about us, not about beings that do not exist. Such nonexistent beings are not things *(res)* for Aquinas because they have no essence, and thing *(res)* as a transcendental feature of being only applies to existing being, being *(ens)* in the proper sense. Similarly they are not one *(unum)* or different from anything else *(aliquid).*[20] When we talk about them we are not talking about nonexistent things with essences, even though we may appear, at first glance, to be talking about some thing. We are talking in a way derivative upon our ability to talk about existent things with essences. We are mimicking our talk about the existent world when we talk in a fictional or imaginative way; in other words, we can only talk about nonexistent things by modifying our talk about existent things.[21] Any truths that are

change in me. And presumably that abstract matter is not a principle of change and potency in the abstract essence; so in what sense would it be matter at all? However, I don't think Oderberg really wants to go this route, as he writes "we can... conceive of a wholly non-existent individual, say a big brown bear, or a man who wins the presidency, without embedding the conception within any identifiable frame of discourse, and so without presupposing the thing's existence in any sense.... Such a thing conceived of is no more or less an individual essence... "(p.128) This statement suggests not that we are thinking about some abstract existing object which may or may not be exemplified, but, rather, about the very concrete object that is said not to exist, but to be, nonetheless, an individuated essence-"without presupposing the thing's existence in any sense."

[20] See *De Ente,* c. 1; *De Verit.,* q. 1, a. 1. For the background of my point here, see the discussion of fictional entities in relation to real entities in my *Thomist Realism and the Linguistic Tum* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003), 182-94.

[21] To be fair, this position seems to be what Oderberg denies when he writes, "we can .. . conceive of a wholly non-existent individual ... without embedding the conception within any identifiable frame of discourse." My point is that even if the talk of the fictional entity is not embedded within a frame of discourse like a play or novel, the talk remains derivative

enunciated in such talk are derivative from the truths that characterize the real things we talk about, as for example, "if I had seven daughters and seven sons, I would have fourteen children."[22]

Unfortunately, Oderberg does not note the difference between his discussion of 'existence' and Aquinas's discussion of *'esse'*.[23] Oderberg appears to be operating with something like the Fregean sense of existence that marks the instantiation of a concept or property, as in "a man exists" is equivalent to "there is an instance of humanity."[24] He is adding to that Fregean background the notion of individual essence, or 'haecceity', which we might take to be an individual Fregean concept of sorts.[25] "Socrates exists"

upon our talk of existing things, and is a mimicry of it.

[22] Though it is tangential to our purpose here, we may note a distinction between speculative truths enunciated in fictional settings and the practical truths enunciated about such settings. It is true that "Hamlet treated Ophelia shabbily" because Shakespeare made it so; quantity that exists, not art, makes it true that "if I had seven daughters and seven sons I would have fourteen children."

[23] See Geach's excellent discussion of the difference between what is meant by *"an est"* and *"esse"* in Aquinas (Geach, "Aquinas," 88-90).

[24] "In this respect existence is analogous to number. Affirmation of existence is in fact nothing but the denial of the number nought" (Gottlob Frege, *The Foundations of Arithmetic,* trans. J. L. Austin [Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1980], 65).

[25] We have to be very careful here in speaking of Fregean "concepts," as we risk equivocation. I am here deliberately ignoring the different ontological commitments of Frege and Aquinas on concepts. Frege was adamant that concepts not be thought of as mental entities or acts. A concept for Frege is the reference of a predicative expression. One gets a predicative expression by taking a statement and removing one or more proper names from it. We get the predicative expression "_ is walking" by taking a statement like "Socrates is walking" and dropping the 'Socrates'. So concepts are for Frege always predicative in nature. They are not the referents of proper names. Objects are the referents of proper names. The object that is the referent of a proper name completing a predicative expression and thus forming a true statement can be said to exemplify the concept referred to by the predicative expression. And an individual concept will be a concept that is exemplified by only one object, either as a matter of fact or necessarily so. It may just happen to be the case that "____ is walking" is satisfied by only one object. But "____ is my third son" can only be satisfied by one object in a possible world, though it may be satisfied by different objects in different possible worlds. "____ is identical to Socrates" can only be satisfied by one object in a possible world, and can only be satisfied by that very object in all possible worlds in which it exists. Though Frege had no use for haecceities, they would be individual concepts akin to the latter. For more on individual essences see the discussion of essences in Alvin Plantinga, *The Nature of Necessity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), chap. 5, "The Necessity of Natures."

becomes "there is an instance of Socrateity," or better "Socrateity is instantiated" (since the phrase "there is an instance of Socrateity" might leave the impression that there could be more than one instance). Here existence is indeed of very little interest to the metaphysics of individuation, since one has already posited the individual concept, individual essence, or 'haecceity' prior to the apparently banal question of existence (i.e., instantiation), and that individual essence is doing serious metaphysical work. One can see how it is matter of some sort that is supposed to "individuate" the individual essence prior to existence, since in this context the contrast is between Fregean common concepts and certain individual concepts or 'haecceities'. The common concept or essence is combined with some individuating conceptual principle or principles to compose an individual 'concept', 'essence', or 'haecceity'.

Aquinas would have no problem with the Fregean sense of 'existence' as marking the instantiation of concepts or thoughts-"a dog exists," "a human being exists," "a god exists," "a unicorn exists"-provided the general concepts or 'thoughts' do not have the kind of Platonic weight that Frege seems to attribute to them.[26] This is the sense of *est* that is at play in answering affirmatively the *an est* question from the *Posterior Analytics.* That is one sense of 'existence' or 'exists', but not the sense that expresses the act of existence or *esse* of an individual, the *actus*[27] to which any *essentia* stands in potency as a limit of

[26] These would just involve nominal definitions for Aquinas, that is, they would specify the *usus loquentium* of a term.

[27] I am using the Latin *'actus'* here rather than the English 'act', since, as Anthony Kenny has pointed out many times, 'act' in English is more closely associated with the notion of an action. In saying that any creature is composed of *esse* and *essentia,* Aquinas does not mean to suggest that *esse* is a kind action being performed by the subject. For our sense of action, Aquinas will very often use the Latin *'operatio'. Esse* cannot be something the subject does, since the subject only exists as an agent, capable of doings, through its *esse. Esse* is not subsequent to the subsistent subject such that it could be an action or a "doing." It constitutes the subsistent subject as existing such that it can be a subject that acts. On the other hand, one should not push this point too far, as actions are just particular expressions of *actus.* Thus we have the distinction between so-called first act and second act. First act is what a thing *is* in its nature or essence. Second act is what a thing *does* as conditioned by what it *is,* conditioned, that is, by its first act. *Actus* is much closer to the Greek *energeia,* and *esse* is the *actus* of a

that *actus,* an essence that only has being, is other than nothing, through that *actus.* On the other hand, there is no reason whatsoever to think Aquinas would have any truck with the notion of individual essences that may or may not be exemplified or instantiated, and no reason for thinking that Thomists who ground their work in his should either.

Individual *essentia* is always for Aquinas the limited character of *esse.* To speak of an individual essence is, for Aquinas, always to speak of some thing that exists, not of some thing that may or may not exist. For Aquinas, there are no beings *(entia* in the proper sense) or things *(res)* that do not exist.[28] Here we see a fundamental difference between the way 'essence' is used in contemporary analytic terminology as involving *abstracta* determining a classificatory scheme instantiated by one or more individuals (individual essence if necessarily only one), and the way it is used by Aquinas for an intrinsic principle of limitation to the fundamental *actus* of some existing being. In Aquinas *essentia* is the intrinsic limiting principle for the *actus* or *esse* of any existing being. It is the intrinsic finitude of *esse* as we encounter it;[29] as such it is certainly not an abstract classificatory entity, that is, not an abstract entity distinct from a concrete being that instantiates it. Oderberg's discussion of the existence of the individual, or the individuation versus instantiation of the abstract

being.

[28] For an extended discussion of the background from which I making this point see my *Thomist Realism and the Linguistic Turn,* 182-94. At best, one might be able to speak of a "nominal essence," that is, a description that is or is not satisfied by things *(res).* And perhaps those nominal essences could be so fully specified as to be only possibly satisfiable by one thing, such as "my fourth son," if one wants to count that as a nominal essence. But such nominal essences are the products of our descriptive capacities. They are not what Aquinas is talking about when he talks about the *essentia* that enters into the constitution of some thing as an intrinsic principle determining for that thing "what it is for it to be." After all, such nominal essences, which are linguistic entities, could be fully determined and individuated by merely nonessential features-"my fourth son," or "the only white thing in the room."

[29] In this sense, 'essence' is only said of God by analogy, precisely because there is no intrinsic limiting principle to the divine *esse-God* is the infinite act of being. In God his essence and his *esse* are the same. In creatures, essence and *esse* are not the same precisely because essence is the intrinsic principle in a being that limits its *esse,* with the result that it is finite *esse,* not infinite *esse* like God.

individual essence, appears to have little to do with Aquinas's discussion of the unity and otherness that attends the being of anything whatsoever that has an essence as the limit of its act of existence or *esse.*

The position Oderberg describes may be interesting for certain recent philosophical discussions, but I have been trying to argue that its relationship to the Thomistic tradition is dubious, especially when the author adds to it a commitment to such philosophical caloric as the "haecceity (individual essence) of the complete composite substance" (126, 128-29) and the phrase characterizing "all schoolmen [as] being obliged to hold the Thomistic opinion on all matters of philosophy as their default position" (126).

It is ironic that *The School* was published in 1879, the same year that Leo XIII promulgated *Aeterni Patris.* That encyclical ignited the revival of the philosophical and historical study of the works of Aquinas himself, a revival that became a distinctive and vibrant philosophical tradition in the twentieth century, and which in many ways made possible this volume in the twenty-first. In so doing *Aeterni Patris* also sounded the death knell for the kind of moribund Scholasticism represented by textbooks like *The School,* an ahistorical Scholasticism that very often tried to reconcile the irreconcilable by a forced combination of modern epistemological and ontological presuppositions with an often sterile synthesis of distinct medieval traditions. It was, as Newman reports in his *Apologia,* the kind of Scholasticism in which no one even in Rome wanted to read with him the works of Aquinas himself. Indeed, the rejection of the importance of the study of history to the advancement of one's tradition is one of the general faults that Haldane attributes to analytic philosophy in his introduction (vii, ix). Aquinas does not answer all of our questions, and he gets others wrong. But the life blood of a living Thomism that seeks to engage recent philosophy must find its source in a historically informed philosophical understanding of his texts. If we want to pick up the issues of interest in the recent

debates about individuation against the background of Thomism, we must engage in historical analysis of Aquinas's own texts.

II. PHILOSOPHICAL IDIOM

The second broad question of interest mentioned above concerns conflicts among different approaches to engaging the two traditions given the different philosophical idioms they employ. Is Thomism to be incorporated within an analytic framework that by and large goes unquestioned? Or is it to be seen as benefiting at times from the encounter with this framework, while at the same time often challenging it, and thus attempting to improve it?

This question of metaphysical idiom comes up most explicitly in Richard Cross's paper. In a critical vein, Hilary Putnam has argued that Cartesian methodology continues to animate much, if not all, of recent philosophy of mind, a methodology that he calls Cartesianism-cum-materialism. According to him this method remains in play even as Descartes's substance dualism is taken to be manifestly absurd by many and at the very least false by most. Such methodology begins with the presumption that the conceptual analysis of mind apart from an analysis of body is relatively unproblematic. He argues that this is a presumption presupposed to the intelligibility of the mind/world and mind/body problems that cry out for solutions in contemporary philosophy.[30] Putnam's criticism of this Cartesian methodology suggests that it is a mistake, or at least a presumption worth questioning, to think that there is an adequate "philosophical" or conceptual analysis of mind apart from body.

If this Cartesian methodology is as endemic to contemporary analytic philosophy as Putnam suggests, we might ask what it does to Aquinas's discussion of body and soul. In their different ways, Kerr, Braine, and Haldane all challenge the legitimacy of this Cartesian methodological approach to Aquinas. Cross, on the other hand, takes it to be fundamental to a contemporary

[30] See Putnam's *Royce Lectures* reprinted as part 2 of Hilary Putnam, *The Threefold Cord: Mind, Body, and World* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001).

appropriation of Aquinas. Thus, it is Cross's paper on "Aquinas and the Mind Body Problem," with the near-miss substance dualism that he ends up attributing to Aquinas, that raises in their most explicit form some of the difficulties attendant upon the project of this volume.[31]

According to Aquinas, a person is an individual substance of a rational nature. In the case of human persons, that substance is a living human body. A person is not the rational soul of a living human body, as a soul is not a complete nature and thus cannot be a person. Only the living human body is a substance complete in its nature, and thus a candidate for being a human person. Its nature is constituted by a formal principle or soul that is the substance's being actually a substance of this or that kind, along with a material principle which renders the substance subject to accidental physical change or dissolution in substantial change. The soul is the matter's being actually human, rather than being actually some other kind of substance. The soul as formal principle and the matter as potential principle are not two things constituting another thing. They are the one thing that is the substance of a certain kind potentially subject to change.[32]

A) Cross's Aquinas

In order to approach Cross's paper, one has to recognize two major features that animate it: first, a kind of reformation project, and second, a translation project. He intends first of all to reform

[31] This is particularly striking by contrast with Haldane's paper on the need to reintroduce into contemporary philosophy a genuine notion of formal causality, as well as the need for a notion of psychophysical substantiality.

[32] "[T]hey held such [erroneous views] because they inquired about what makes a potency and an act to be one thing, and they sought the differences of these things, as if it were necessary to collect them as through some single medium, just like things which are diverse according to act. But as has been said, the ultimate matter, which is appropriate to a form, and the form itself are the same thing *[idem]*. For one .of these is as potency, while the other is as act.... [P]otency and act are in a certain respect one. For that which is in potency is made to be in act. And so it is not necessary for them to be united through some bond, like those things which are entirely diverse. So no cause makes those things which are composed from matter and form to be one, except that which moves a potency to act" (VIII *Metaphys.*, lect. 5 [1767]). See also *QSC* q. 1, a. 3

Aquinas's discussion of soul so as to correct a confusion or even contradiction that he perceives in it. Second, he intends to translate the reformed Aquinas's discussion of the human person, body and soul, into the contemporary framework of the mind-body problem and the language of properties and property bearers. Cross presupposes that the translation project can go through with little or no difficulty for adequately capturing Aquinas's position. Thus, he does not question the framework, nor does he suggest that Thomists might find its presuppositions inadequate to the task of expressing Aquinas's analyses of the person, mind, soul, and body. Even if the full-bore Cartesian metaphysical position of substance dualism is only one position in the contemporary debate canvassed by Cross, the setting of all the positions within the debate tends to presuppose methodological Cartesianism, in which one provides separate analyses of mind and body only to ask how those things which one has analyzed separately are identified, related, or eliminated in reality.[33] Aquinas's methodological approach to the soul through the acts of the living body is deeply opposed to this, and his metaphysical position may be just as deeply deformed by attempting to translate it without remainder into the Cartesian methodological framework.

B) Cross's Reformation of Aquinas

The reformation of Aquinas begins when Cross places the focus in Aquinas on the "mind" as in some sense distinct from the soul. He does so by raising an apparent conflict he thinks exists between two claims in Aquinas. The first claim is that God directly creates the entirety of each and every human soul. The second is that the powers of intellect and will, like any powers of the soul, are "caused" by the soul as *propria* of it. Cross cannot see how it is that God can cause the soul by direct creation while the soul "causes" its powers. He suggests a reformation of Aquinas

[33] For an excellent survey of the issues in contemporary philosophy of mind, see Jaegwon Kim, *Philosophy of Mind* (Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 2005).

that would avoid this apparent conflict, namely, that Aquinas's account should be modified to the more modest claim that God directly creates intellect and will, that is, the mind as a part of the soul, while the soul itself, excluding the mind, is not directly created by God, but is, rather, generated in reproduction from the underlying matter, just as any other animal soul is. Thus "the whole human being is more than *just* a human body" (42-43). In other words, while we may still treat intellect and will as parts of the human soul, and the mind as a whole, containing both intellect and will, as a part of the soul, we must drop the claim that they are *propria* of the human soul. Moreover, we must drop the claim that the human person just is the living human body, because the living human body is simply the body informed by the soul *sans* intellect and will, or *sans* mind generally. Thus, for the reformed Aquinas, the human person is "more than" the living body in virtue of the mind that God directly creates.

There are several difficulties with this reformation of Aquinas's account of the soul. In the first place, its motivation is unwarranted. Cross does not explain what the conflict is between God's causal role in the creation of the soul and the soul's causal role vis-a-vis its powers as *propria.* Let us suppose for the sake of argument that the sense of 'cause' at play in both is the same, namely, efficient causation. In general Aquinas thinks there is no conflict at all between God's creative causality causing things to be and those things exercising genuine causality of their own.[34] When we place Aquinas's discussion of the soul and its powers within the framework of primary and secondary causality, it simply follows that the powers of the soul are not identical with or integral parts of the soul, a position he actually holds, as we will see later. Perhaps this broader metaphysical claim of Aquinas's about primary and secondary causality will not stand in the end, but insofar as his arguments for it are entirely general as concerning all created causes, it would seem that some work needs to be done to back up an intuition that there is a conflict in

[34] See *De Pot.,* q. 3.

Aquinas when he claims that God is the direct cause of the soul, and the soul the cause of its powers.

In addition, for Aquinas the human being is in fact nothing "more than" the living human body. Aquinas does deny that the acts of intellect and will are the actualities of any bodily organ, or even of the "body" in one sense of the term. But it does not follow that the human substance is something "more than" a living human body in another sense of the term, and that the acts of intellect and will are not acts of that human body in that sense. There is a complicated equivocation at play here in Cross's discussion between at least two senses of the term 'body', two of the three senses of 'body' that Aquinas analyzes in chapter 2 of *De Ente et Essentia.*[35] In one sense the body is an integral part of the human substance when we prescind from the perfection of life, and it is distinguished from the soul as another integral part taken as the principle of life. It is in this sense that Aquinas speaks of the human being as composed of body and soul. Call this sense '$body_1$'. In another sense, the primary sense, as "in the genus of substance," the substances Socrates and an iron stone are not composed of a body and something else. They just are bodies, and the soul is the substantial form that causes the body that is Socrates to be actually a living body rather than a lifeless body like the stone.[36] Call this sense '$body_2$'.

In this sense, Socrates just is a living human $body_2$. The death of the $body_2$ is the death of Socrates. It is not that Socrates is said to die in some derivative sense because an integral part of him dies. The integral part called the $body_1$ does not strictly speaking die, since in the sense in which it is an integral part it is not alive. The living substance $body_2$ is alive, and that living substance dies. Socrates himself dies because the $body_2$ that he is dies.

[35] See Gyula Klima, "Man=Body+Soul: Aquinas's Arithmetic of Human Nature," for an excellent sorting through of these senses (available on Klima's faculty website at Fordham University: http://www.fordham.edu/gsas/phil/klima/BODYSOUL.HTM).

[36] The metaphysical analysis of substance here is not invalidated by the growth of physical knowledge that might drive us to claim that iron is really an aggregate of substances, that is, iron atoms. Just put 'iron atom' in where I have written 'iron stone'.

Consider, for example, the following discussion in Aquinas's commentary on the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians. Paul claims that without the hope of the resurrection of the body, Christians can only have hope and confidence in this life, not the next. Aquinas considers an objection to the effect that Christians could have confidence in the next life because of the immortality of the soul. In other words, the objector thinks the continued existence of the soul after death is sufficient for the Christian to be confident of his or her survival after death. Aquinas responds:

> The position [that we need not be confident only in this life, but can be confident in the next life because our souls survive] can be defeated ... because it is agreed that a man naturally desires his own salvation. However, the soul, since it is part of a human body, is not the whole man, and my soul is not I. Therefore, granting that the soul obtains salvation in another life, nonetheless from that fact neither I nor any human being achieves salvation.[37]

Here Aquinas makes it clear that the person is not identical with his soul. But he also makes it clear in the discussion that the hope or confidence human beings have for their immortality resides in the hope of the resurrection of the body$_2$. The question is about the resurrection of the body as what the Christian hopes for, and "it is agreed that a man naturally desires his own salvation." The reason Aquinas rejects the objection is that the person is identical with the body$_2$. Christians hope for *their* resurrection, not the resurrection of one of their parts, but themselves, the living bodies$_2$ that they are.[38] I am not confusing Cross's position with

[37] *Super I Car.,* c. 15, lect. 2.

[38] Aquinas is thoroughly consistent in this position, applying it to questions about the identity of the souls of the dead. "Abraham's soul, properly speaking, is not Abraham himself, but a part of him (and the same as regards [Isaac and Jacob]). Hence life in Abraham's soul does not suffice to make Abraham a living being, or to make the God of Abraham the God of a living man. But there needs to be life in the whole composite, i.e. the soul and body[1]: and although this life were not actually when these words were uttered, it was in each part as ordained to the resurrection. Wherefore our Lord proves the resurrection with the greatest subtlety and efficacy" (*STh* suppl., q. 75, a. 1, ad 2). He is responding to an objection that when God said he was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, those three were dead, implying thus that they are identical with their souls which survive death. The use of 'body' in this quotation pertains to the first sense, as I have indicated. But the resurrection of Abraham is not the resurrection of some part of Abraham who continues to exist as a disembodied soul

the position that the person is identical with his or her soul. I am looking at Aquinas's argument from the other side, namely, that the reason for rejecting the immortality of the soul as the hope for immortality of the person is that the person is identical with the living $body_2$. This position is sufficient for rejecting both the claim that the person is identical with the soul and Cross's claim that the person is something more than the living human body.

It is by reference to $body_2$ that Aquinas denies, for example, that it is the intellect that understands, or even the soul with that power, but affirms, rather, that it is Socrates himself, the living $body_2$, who understands. Indeed, one of Aquinas's most important arguments is that the form that intellect takes in a human being is rational precisely because it is essentially a power of a soul that is the actuality of a living $body_2$.[39] Angels and God, while intellectual, are not rational.[40] This is one striking instance where Haldane's point about the need for an adequate conception of psychophysical substance presses in most forcefully on the question. If Cross's reformed position were true, and mind were not essentially a power of the soul of the body, Aquinas would also have to drop his arguments about what constitutes rationality, and why it is distinctively human.

prior to the resurrection. Properly speaking the resurrection is the resurrection of Abraham himself, not a part of him. Aquinas also applies it to the Catholic practice of praying to and for the souls of the dead. He considers this objection: "the soul of Peter is not Peter. If therefore the souls of the saints pray for us, so long as they are separated from their bodies, we ought not to call upon Saint Peter, but on his soul, to pray for us: yet the Church does the contrary. The saints therefore do not pray for us, at least before the resurrection." He responds, "It is because the saints while living merited to pray for us, that we invoke them under the names by which they were known in this life, and by which they are better known to us: and also in order to indicate our belief in the resurrection, according to the saying of Ex. 3:6, 'I am the God of Abraham,' etc." (*STh* II-II, q. 83, a. 11, obj. 5 and ad 5). Notice he does not challenge the presupposition of the argument that the soul of Peter is not Peter. He explains the practice of invoking the soul under the name of the living composite who no longer lives, expressing a hope in the resurrection of those saints. And again he invokes the passage about Abraham. The resurrection of Peter is not the resurrection of an integral part of Peter, who has continued to exist as a disembodied soul. It is the resurrection of Peter.

[39] *STh* I, q. 79, a. 8.

[40] Indeed, insofar as 'intellect' is ordinarily taken from the human case of intellect as the power of reason, it is applied to God and angels by analogy.

While Aquinas argues that the soul is the terminus of God's direct act of creation, Cross's intuition of the direct creation of the mind, comprised of intellect and will, as a part of a naturally generated soul raises the possibility of naturally generated living human bodies in which God has refrained from creating a mind as a power of their souls. As Cross notes, intellect and will are *propria.* But *proprium* is a technical term for Aquinas. It refers back to the second mode of *per se* predication discussed in Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics,* and what Aquinas refers to as "necessary" or "essential" accidents. Here accident does not have the sense it has in contemporary metaphysics, in which an accident is taken to be a property that an object may lose while it maintains its identity as that object, suggesting that all accidents are non-necessary properties. In Aquinas, an accident is a formality or *actus* that is not the essential *actus* of the object in question; an accident will not enter into an ultimate specification of "what it is to be" that object. And yet such accidents may be divided into features that the object may lack and others that it may not lack. The ability to laugh is one such "necessary accident" for a human being, according to Aquinas, as it arises from the embodied form that reason takes in a human being-a rational animal can laugh because of the ability to reason that is required to grasp the point of a humorous situation and the expression of that rational grasp through the voice box. Thus, while an angel may grasp the point of a humorous situation, it cannot laugh. And while a hyena may make sound more or less akin to the sound made by human beings when they laugh, it is not laughing because the sound it produces is not an expression of reason's grasp of a humorous point or situation. So the particular *proprium* of human beings that is the ability to laugh flows necessarily from the essence of humanity, which essence is to be a rational animal, without being an element or integral part constituting it. It is not the essence because it is not the principle or origin of distinctively human life. It is consequent upon more fundamental features.

Now, pursuing the implications of Cross's intuition about mind, namely, that Aquinas should not hold that intellect and will

are *propria* of the human soul, it is logically possible for God to refrain from creating them in any particular case of the soul of a human body. An even more striking logical possibility is that because they would not be *propria* of a human soul, God could just as well create them as parts of some other soul, for example, as part of a dog's soul, or a worm's soul, a tree's soul, or for that matter a nonliving thing's substantial form, such as that of a lump of iron. To be fair, Cross, while asserting that "Aquinas's account does not take very seriously his own claim that *propria* are *caused by* the 'essential principles of a species'" (45), suggests that Aquinas might take it to be a decision on God's part to create these powers only as powers of "the substantial form of a human body." God might then decide to treat brain development as a "necessary (and part of a set of jointly sufficient conditions) for God's creating the human soul[41] with its sorts of cognitive and appetitive capacities" (ibid.). Thus, it is a conditional set of necessary and sufficient conditions, in the sense in which I might treat my child's turning eighteen years of age as a necessary and sufficient condition for allowing him or her to learn to drive. On a supposition of divine voluntarism, we would never be confronted by either human beings lacking mind or rocks that think. Aquinas, by contrast, takes intellect and will as *propria* of the human soul very seriously indeed. For example, he explicitly rejects the logical possibility of the human soul existing without these powers, not as a matter of a divine fiat, but as involving a contradiction in terms.[42]

The conflict Cross sees appears to be based upon a failure to attend to the different senses of 'cause' at play in Aquinas's discussion. God's creatively causing the soul to be is a mode of efficient causality. However, Aquinas describes the being of powers as *propria* flowing from the substantial form by a certain

[41] This must be a slip on Cross's part, given what he has said about reforming Aquinas's discussion of soul. What he must mean is "for creating the human mind with its sorts of cognitive and appetitive capacities."

[42] *De Spirit. Great.*, a. 11, ad 7; also Q. D. *DeAnima,* a. 12, ad 7. This follows from what he says about *propria* as necessary accidents and as involving *per se* predication in the second mode.

"natural result," while immediately suggesting that such a "natural result" is not a mode of efficient causation when he denies that it involves a change or motion.[43] As *propria,* in the second mode of *per se* predication, the powers are related to the human soul definitionally, and thus in terms of formal, not efficient, causality. Aquinas's position on powers as *propria,* formally related to the soul as caused by it, explains why he says that it would be a contradiction in terms for there to be a human soul without those powers.

Haldane's call for an adequate conception of formal causation is on point. It is because the powers of the soul are *propria,* related definitionally to the human soul, that not even God could create a human soul without creating its *propria,*[44] nor could they be created except as the powers of the human soul.[45] Aquinas's argument for *rationality* as the form that intellect takes in a human being depends upon the claim that it is through sensate acts of the body that the intellect abstracts its concepts, and so rationality is a *proprium* of a certain kind of living body. According to Aquinas, the soul does not have intellect as such as its power, but intellect as the power of reason, discursively moving from one thing known to another. This is why "rational," not "intellectual," is the specific defining feature of the human animal in the definition "a man is a rational animal," which involves nothing "more than" a certain kind of living body$_2$, an animal body$_2$, in the genus of substance. There is no general

[43] *STh* I, q. 77, a. 6, c. and ad 3.

[44] This is in fact a more complicated claim than I have presented above, and I do not have the space to pursue it at length. Briefly, it is not that the powers enter into the definition of the soul as such. In the second mode of *per se* predication, it is that the soul enters into their definition. However, that fact establishes that they are *propria,* and thus as powers necessary accidents. And, insofar as a substance is known through its powers as necessary accidents, Aquinas believes the powers themselves can be used to define in a provisional way the substance in the absence of a direct unmediated insight into the essence of the soul itself, that is, in the absence of the direct unmediated insight that God has. We will see later that the powers are not integral parts of the soul; nonetheless because they are necessary accidents, Aquinas thinks they can be used to define it.

[45] 'Will' of course is said only analogously of God and angels, as in human beings it is rational appetite, and we have already seen that neither God nor angels are rational. Thus, while they do have will in an analogous sense, they do not have rational appetite.

conflict between God efficiently causing the entirety of the soul to be and the soul formally causing its powers as *propria* of it, unless one does not recognize the different senses of 'cause' at play in the discussion.

Finally, even if the soul were the efficient cause of its *propria,* as we supposed earlier for the sake of argument, there would be no conflict with the claim that God creates them, once we recognize that the powers of the soul are not integral parts of it. This lack of conflict is implied by Aquinas's larger position that there is no conflict at all between God's causality in creating natural agents that have their own genuine natural causality. Indeed, the conflict that Cross sees in Aquinas between the two claims-that God directly causes the soul and that the soul causes its *propria-appears* to be driven by a confusion about the kind of "parts" of the soul that powers are.

Aquinas distinguishes three distinct senses of "part" -integral, subjective, and potential *(potentialis).* [46] Integral parts are the elements that enter into the constitution of some compound being; the examples used by Aquinas are the walls, roof, and foundation of a house. Subjective parts are a little more difficult to understand. Against the background of Aristotelian classification in terms of genus and species, Aquinas has in mind the way in which a member of a species is also a member of the genus. The study of the species is part of the subject studied in the genus. For example, the species ox and the species lion are both parts of the genus animal, and so the study of oxen and lions will be part of the subject of the study of animals. Finally, the third kind of part has to do with the relationship of powers to the soul. Aquinas gives the examples of the nutritive and the sensitive powers as "parts" of the soul in this sense. In speaking here of "potential" parts, we should not think of the broad English notion of "potential," but more narrowly of specific powers as potentialities related to particular types of soul.

Cross's intuition would have some bite to it if we were to construe powers of the soul as integral parts of it. If the soul has

[46] *STh* II-II, q. 48, a. 1.

integral parts, and if the powers are among those integral parts, then how could the soul cause its integral parts if indeed God directly causes the soul to be? Wouldn't God then be the direct cause of any integral parts the soul has, if it has any?

However, Aquinas clearly distinguishes powers as parts of the soul from integral parts of any kind. Whatever is meant by calling a power a part of the soul, it is not so called as an integral part or element of the soul entering into its composition. Cross, on the other hand, appears to be treating the powers as integral parts of the soul, in something like the way in which arms, legs, heart, kidneys, and so on, are integral parts of the body. We will see later that Aquinas does not think the soul has any integral parts at all. Still, even if the soul does have integral parts, what Aquinas says about the powers as *propria* "flowing from" the soul by a certain natural result makes it fairly clear that we should not think of the powers as among such integral parts.

In addition, Cross's effort at reformation generally inverts the distinction in Aquinas between the bodily powers and the powers of intellect and will. Bodily powers, Aquinas argues, have their origin in the soul like any powers, but exist in the body $_{1}$ as in their immediate subject, while intellect and will have their origin in the soul, but also exist in the soul as their immediate subject.[47] Cross, in reforming Aquinas for the contemporary framework, rejects this distinction, and holds that Aquinas should count the body's essential properties as not simply having their origin in the soul, but just as much parts of the soul as intellect and will (48).[48] However, Aquinas makes his distinction between the powers on the basis of his argument that the bodily powers differ from intellect and will insofar as their *actus* are *actus* of bodily organs while the *actus* of intellect and will are not. Having made that distinction, he goes on to argue for the immaterial mode of existence of the soul, which is the immediate subject of the

[47] *STh* I, q. 77, aa. 5-6.

[48] That is, accepting, for the sake of argument and despite what I have argued above about "parts" of the soul in Aquinas, Cross's thesis that in having the soul as the subject of their existence they are "parts" of the soul in whatever sense Cross intends.

intellect and will, and then on the basis of that immaterial mode of existence that God must directly create the human soul.

If we abandon this distinction between the powers for the sake of argument, we must nevertheless note that Aquinas does not claim that intellect and will alone are *propria* of the human soul, but that all the powers of the body are as well.[49] Being *propria* bears upon the question of the origin of powers, not their immediate subject of existence. In that respect, according to Aquinas there is no distinction between intellect and will as *propria* of the soul and all of the other powers of a human being. As *propria* they all have their origin in the human soul, and they are all of a piece.

But we have already seen that Cross thinks Aquinas should abandon the distinction between the powers on the basis of their subject of existence. By having God directly create only the powers of intellect and will, which pertains to their origin, while leaving the bodily powers alone to originate as *propria* from the naturally generated soul, Cross has effectively inverted Aquinas's position. Aquinas held no distinction between the powers on the basis of their origin as *propria* of the soul, but distinguished them on the basis of their immediate subject of existence. In Cross's reformed Aquinas the powers will now be distinguished on the basis of their origin-bodily as *propria* of a naturally generated soul, intellect and will as directly caused by God and not *propria* of the soul-in the absence of any distinction among them on the basis of their subject of existence. Insofar as Aquinas's discussion of the relationship between the soul and its powers has been inverted, it is difficult to see how it remains in view at all.

C) Cross's Translation of Aquinas

Turning now to the translation part of Cross's project, a significant problem with the translation into the talk of properties and their bearers is that it at best masks, and at worst eliminates, the central feature of substantial forms for Aquinas, namely, that

[49] *STh* I, q. 77, a. 1, ad 5; I, q. 77, a. 6, c. and ad 3.

they are principles of *actus* and unity, what Aquinas calls "first act." It is difficult to capture what is meant by *actus* in Latin or *energeia* in Greek. Aristotle warns against trying to define it, preferring to proceed by example and analogy. He gives such examples as "that which is building to that which is capable of building," and "that which is wrought to the unwrought." [50] The soul as substantial *actus* determines the substance to be what it is, to be indivisible as that kind of thing, and to be only one such being. Powers, on the other hand, are in most cases principles of potency toward "second act" in a substance. [51]

One of Aquinas's central concerns in the discussion of soul and body is to argue against the claim that there are many souls in a human being, or that the human soul itself is composed of many subsouls, or subsubstantial forms-in other words, against the claim that the soul has any integral parts. [52] This position of Aquinas against the so-called plurality of forms position was almost unique to him in his time, and rested firmly upon his understanding of Aristotle's metaphysics of substance as set out in the *Metaphysics* and analyzed in his own *Commentary on the Metaphysics of Aristotle.*

Aquinas's arguments against both pluralist positions rely primarily upon his emphasis on the unity of human life as exhibited in its animate activities. In a human being the actuality (first act) of being animal just is the actuality (first act) of being rational, even as the powers characteristic of such being may be actually exercised (second act) episodically and apart from one another. In addition, even when they are exercised episodically and apart from one another, most often they enter into the constitution of intentional actions that possess a *per se* unity subordinated to rational goals teleologically determined by the nature of the soul as first act. This unity is by contrast with a *per accidens* unity. In one of his more forceful statements, Aquinas concludes that if the pluralist position distinguishing reason as a

[50] Aristotle, *Metaphys.* 1047a35-1048a9, trans. W. D. Ross, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle,* ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).

[51] *ScG* II, cc. 59-60; *STh* I, q. 75, a. 4, ad 1; and esp. I, q. 77, a. 1.

[52] See *STh* I, q. 76, aa. 3-4.

form from the substantial form of the body were true, reason and will would have no more relation to the animal life of human beings than does being white, namely, none; technically, being rational would be *per accidens* to being human. He treats this latter position about reason and will as manifestly false.

Rationality is the form of animality in a human being; its union with the animal acts of a human being is *per se*. Failure of one of the powers involved in the *per se* unity of such an intentional act leads to some measure of failure in accomplishing the act as such. Here Cuyper's "Thomistic Agent-Causalism" is relevant, with its critique of "para-mechanistic" agent causalism. We do not have two or more *actus* tied together by divine fiat, but, rather, identically one simple unity of *actus* (first) that is the substantial form determining the natures of its *propria* and their fulfillment in second act. And yet, it is precisely according to divine fiat that Cross has the reformed Aquinas treat the relation of reason and will to the life of the animal whose soul with its animal powers has been naturally generated. God could just as well treat brain development as a necessary and sufficient condition for creating the hair color of all human beings to be brown, as he treats it for creating the powers of intellect and will.

Aquinas's arguments may fail, perhaps, in the end, but the difficulty with Cross's translation is that it comes close to making Aquinas's position appear unintelligible. If 'property' translates both 'form' and 'power', as Cross uses it, the soul is a property and it has properties as parts. Aquinas's position, in the language of form, is that the soul is a substantial form and it has powers as parts. The soul cannot have powers as integral parts because they are fundamentally in potency, while it is fundamentally *actus*.[53] If it had the potencies as its integral parts, there would have to be a further more fundamental *actus* determining the union of those integral potencies as parts of the soul. In the contemporary idiom, there is no such barrier to one property having other properties as integral parts. It is no surprise, therefore, when Cross treats the

[53] Recall the analysis above whereby it is shown that Aquinas does not in fact treat powers as integral parts.

translated Aquinas's discussion of "parts of the soul" as involving integral parts, despite Aquinas's denial in his own idiom that this is so.

In fact, in Cross's translation, we are forced into a plurality of properties where Aquinas had argued in his own terms against a plurality of forms. The translation masks or eliminates the difference between the soul and its powers, unless with Cross one has recourse to the property of "being a substantial form of a body," which the soul in some sense bears and its powers do not (41). But this latter property looks suspiciously like a Cambridge property to be doing any serious metaphysical work. It is *ad hoc,* and is introduced to distinguish the soul as a property from all the other properties of the substance. However, specification of this property plainly requires use of the term 'form' that is supposed to be translated. Presumably, the property of "being a substantial property" will not do to characterize the soul apart from the powers, since intellect, will, and all the other properties of the human substance are presumably substantial properties as well. What is lost in translation is that substantial form is the intrinsic principle of being, *actus,* and unity in a substance, features of existence not adequately captured by more recent notions of property. Certainly recent philosophy of mind has no use at all for the notion of forms, let alone substantial forms. In particular, failure to recognize the role of substantial form as principle of unity in human life and action is precisely what Aquinas thinks leads to the 'plurality of forms' position of his contemporaries, and what we might recognize in Cross's analysis as the plurality of properties. In the end, Cross finds himself in a position in which he must return to the unanalyzed notion of 'form' in "property of being a substantial form of a body," lest the translation fail to distinguish the soul from all the other properties of the human substance. Thus, it simply looks as if the term 'form' as Aquinas uses it in the discussion of human life cannot be translated without remainder as 'property'.

Furthermore, if we take the property of mind to be the intellectual principle-which, according to Cross, should not be

a *proprium* of the human soul-property-by introducing the mind as a property directly created by God that is not the naturally generated soul-property, Cross's translation commits Aquinas to a position that he deliberately and significantly argues against in the *Summa,* namely, that the intellectual principle is something other than the human soul itself.[54] In the translated terms, Cross argues that Aquinas should treat the soul-property as naturally generated with the body, while the mind-property is directly created by God. Thus the mind-property is not identical to the soul-property. But if the mind-property is the intellectual principle, it follows that the soul-property is not. On the other hand, if the soul-property does not have the mind-property as one of its *propria,* it is difficult to see how the soul-property could in any sense be called the intellectual principle. But in Aquinas's own argument, that the soul is the intellectual principle is an identity claim. It has the necessity of an identity claim; not even God could make the human soul to be, even counterfactually, anything other than the intellectual principle of a living body.

Thus the reformed and translated Aquinas needs to abandon one of the most unique positions he took in his own time, namely, against the plurality of forms. He must also abandon one of the most substantive positions he took on the relation of intellect and will to bodily life, namely, that the principle of intellect and will is nothing other than the substantial form or principle of life in a particular kind of animal body. No wonder then that this updated Aquinas ends up a kind of near-miss Cartesian dualist, in the terms and context of recent analytic debate about the nature of mind.

[54] *STh* I, q. 76, a. 1. It is important not to confuse or treat as synonymous 'the power of intellect' and 'intellectual principle'. 'Principle' is just an English near-transliteration of the Latin 'principium', which is in turn the translation of Aristotle's Greek 'arche'. It is a technical term in Aquinas, the various senses of which are analyzed as the first entry in book 5 of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* and Aquinas's commentary on it. The point of Aquinas's argument in *STh* I, q. 76, a. 1 is that the intellectual principle is not a power but the soul itself. From this it follows that, again, the power of intellect is thus a *proprium* of that intellectual principle of human bodily life.

D) Cross and the Interaction Problem

Cross uses the contemporary idiom of properties and their bearers to translate Aquinas's language of form, powers, and substance. The soul on this account turns out to be a property that can itself bear properties, namely, the powers of intellect and will that it has, as well as "the property of being a substantial form of a body." How does this translation fare in dealing with one of the central problems of contemporary dualism in analytic philosophy, the "Interaction Problem"? Cross's reformed and translated Aquinas will see part of the soul as part of the body, and the essential properties of the body as parts of the soul, not simply as having their origin in the soul. "The causal influence of the human body on the human soul can be explained by the soul's being causally affected by one of its properties" (48). Going in the other direction from mind to body, insofar as it is "a substantial form of a human body, the human soul is, in the relevant sense, a part of the human body. And the causal influence of the soul on the body can be explained in terms of the body's being affected by one of its own parts" (49).

Granted that Cross has little space to develop this thought, it is far from obvious that it is "prima facie unproblematic" (48), that the reformed and translated "[Aquinas] will have no difficulty accounting for the causal activity of the human body on the human soul" (ibid.) and vice versa, and that this Aquinas will have solved the Interaction Problem. Cross claims that "on Aquinas' account, the individual subsistent (the human soul) which is the mind, is also that in virtue of which a human body has the essential properties which it has" (ibid.). But this claim is at best ambiguous, and at worst false in the present context. In the first place, in the unreformed Aquinas, the claim is seriously ambiguous. Aquinas treats the term 'mind' in its proper sense as synonymous with the term 'intellect', and as referring to the power of intellect alone, not intellect and will, or intellect and any other set of powers. In the proper sense, Aquinas denies that mind

or intellect is the soul itself.[55] He is willing to grant that the term 'intellect' may be applied to the soul as substantial form of the body. However, such a use of the term is by analogy, as he says that the soul can be named from its highest power which is intellect or mind.[56] And certainly, neither of these senses, the proper or the analogous, is what is meant by the term 'mind' in recent philosophy of mind.

In the second place, considering the reformed and translated Aquinas that Cross has given us, the claim is false. Cross has the reformed Aquinas rejecting the claim that God creates the human soul, which should be taken to be naturally generated with the body, while the "mind," that is, the powers of intellect and will *are* created by God as parts of the naturally generated soul once brain development has reached a certain point. But this new part of the soul is not an essential part of the soul, and so it cannot constitute a new soul. So the complex of soul-plus-mind is not identical to the soul that was naturally generated, and it is not a new soul of the body. Thus, Cross cannot help himself to the claim, which we have seen is ambiguous in the unreformed Aquinas, that the soul is the mind. On the new view, the mind created by God is clearly something other than the soul naturally generated by the body, and so the claim that the human soul is the human mind is clearly false.

In addition, Cross slides ambiguously between the two idioms of properties and forms: bodily properties are properties of the soul and in that sense parts of it, while the soul is a substantial form of the body and in that sense a part of it. Is 'part' here being used in the same sense? According to Cross, the soul as a property is a part of the body; as such, it can causally affect the body. If there is to be causal symmetry here between soul and body, then it would seem that the body itself must be a property that can causally affect the soul. But a property of what? Is it a property of the soul, and a part of the soul in that sense, since according to Cross the properties of the body are parts of the soul? If not, what

[55] *STh* I, q. 79, a. 1.

[56] Ibid., ad 1.

else could the body be a property of, and in "the relevant sense" a part of?

We have little difficulty with the idea that one physical part of the body can causally affect another part, as when in a fit of laughter I leave a red mark on my thigh from slapping it with my hand. Here one integral part of the body is casually (as an efficient cause) affecting another integral part of the body. But presumably my soul, which Cross's Aquinas thinks is in some sense a part of my body, is not a part in the same sense as my hand or thigh is. All the work is being done by Cross's phrase "in the relevant sense." But what is that relevant sense in contemporary terms? Cross does not tell us.

A favorite candidate for causal explanation in analytic thought would have it that the event of my thigh being red is caused by the event of my hand striking my thigh because the two events fall under a covering law that relates with natural necessity certain physical properties that the events exemplify. Applied to Cross's proposal about Aquinas, we would then have the claim that a certain bodily event is caused by a certain mental event because the two events fall under a covering law relating bodily properties exemplified by the bodily event to mental properties exemplified by the mental events, and vice versa; we could cash out the "relevant sense" of 'part' by relating it to this account.

But that account doesn't solve the "soul-body problem"; it states it. Given assumptions about the causal closure of the physical that animate recent philosophy of mind, the very existence of such psychophysical laws, the kinds of events that fall under them if they exist, whether mental events are type-identical with physical events, whether they supervene on physical events, and so on, are some of the central features and most controversial difficulties associated with the Interaction Problem in recent analytic philosophy. Unless Cross intends a type identity theory, in which mental types are identical with physical or bodily types, there is no solution here of the Interaction Problem. If he does intend such a theory, it only solves the problem at a cost rejected by most philosophers of mind in the analytic tradition. And

certainly Aquinas himself, the un-reformed and un-translated Aquinas, in his own terms had no intention of affirming a type identity theory when he argued that the *actus* of the power of reason is immaterial. There are other ways of approaching an analysis of cause and effect, but unless we understand what is meant by the "soul is a part of the body *in the relevant sense,"* they will most likely suffer the same problem.

There is an even deeper problem here. We have taken at face value Cross's claim about a part of the soul being a part of the body, as the precondition for addressing the Interaction Problem. The difficulty is that on Cross's account this part of the soul cannot be the relevant part for addressing that problem, that is, it cannot be the mind that is this part of the soul that is part of the body. Cross had suggested that the reformed Aquinas treat the mind, consisting of the powers of intellect and will, as a part of the soul directly created by God. However, these powers cannot be the part of the soul that is also part of the body, because Cross had also said that it is in virtue of these powers, that is, in virtue of the mind, that the human person is "more than" the living human body. The reformed Aquinas will hold that the soul with its bodily powers is naturally generated with the body. Once brain development hits the right condition, God will create the mind as a part of the soul, but a part that makes the person to be more than the living human body. It is difficult to see how that part that makes the person more than the human body could itself be a part of the human body. If it is a part of the human body then how could the person through that part be more than the human body?

Thus, whatever part of the soul it is that is supposed to be a part of the body in solving the Interaction Problem, it cannot be the mind as Cross conceives of it. We are left precisely with that Interaction Problem in straightforward Cartesian terms: how is it that the mind that God creates interacts with the human body? If Cross were to say that it interacts with that part of the soul that is part of the body, this would not solve the difficulty, but simply relocate it in a latter-day search for the pineal gland. None of this is *prima facie* unproblematic. And it is clear that despite his claims

to the contrary Cross's reformed and translated Aquinas appears to have no solution to the "Interaction Problem."

E) Aquinas and the Interaction Problem

In Aquinas's original language of form as act, by contrast, it is not clear that there is an interaction problem at all to be solved. Recall Aristotle's gruesome insight that a detached human hand is only called a human hand equivocally. That equivocation arises because a real human hand is what it is in virtue of its actually being alive, that is, in virtue of the form of life that animates it, the human soul. The same of course is said, *mutatis mutandis,* of a dead body and a real human body. But forms do not "interact" with that which they inform. Either as first act or as second act, forms are not sufficiently distinct from the objects they inform so that they could interact with them.[57] Forms just are the objects, considered as *what* they actually are and do. Thus, forms determine the ways in which objects interact with the world, without themselves interacting with the objects they inform.

For example, the sphericity of the iron sphere does not interact with the iron. It is the iron being actually spherical, where the iron could be but is not actually some other shape. And it is because the iron is actually spherical that the iron interacts with its environment in typical ways and not others-rolling, for instance, rather than sliding. Its actual motion as rolling depends on the sculptor who fashions it, upon the child who pushes it, and upon the sphericity that informs but does not push it. And there is no competition here between the sphericity, the sculptor, and the child, as to responsibility for moving the bronze. All of them can be said to cause it to roll, so long as we recognize the different modalities of causality at play. A form as an intrinsic principle of some object is explicitly contrasted in both Aristotle and Aquinas with an efficient cause as an extrinsic principle of that object.

Aquinas does say briefly that the soul "moves the body ... through the motive power" (*STh* I, q. 76, a. 4, ad 2) and the soul

[57] *VIIIMetaphys.,* lect. 5 (1767).

may thus be taken to be a moving part while the body is a moved part. Cross takes this passage to be evidence for his claim that the soul can act upon the body as an *efficient* cause (49), and thus evidence for the issue of interaction in Aquinas's account. However, *prima facie,* the claim doesn't say that, and all Aquinas is giving is a *fafon de parler.* Because soul and body are contrasted in this text as parts, the sense of body must be body$_1$. But recall that body$_1$ was that sense in which one does not consider the body as living; one prescinds from that in order to consider it simply as material with a weight and size, composed of certain elements and compounds, and so on. When we consider body$_1$, we do not consider it as alive, and *a fortiori* as a source of motion. To consider it as alive, and as a source of a particular type of motion, human motion, we must advert to the human soul that informs it, just as we must advert to the sphericity of the bronze if we are to consider the actual type of motion it undergoes. We can say that the bronze's shape moves it to roll rather than slide, without thereby committing ourselves to the shape as a little agent (a quasi homunculus) within the bronze. Without considering the soul, we can say nothing of the body as a source of a particular kind of motion, the human kind.[58] Thus, because the body is not the origin of motion when we simply consider it as body$_1$, the soul is a principle of motion in the body, and the moving part in that sense, just as the sphericity can be called the rolling part of the bronze. But it is not an efficient principle of motion in the body, not a moving part in that sense.

Expanding upon and explaining at greater length elsewhere the claim that the soul "moves the body . . . through the motive power," Aquinas identifies this motive power with the union of cognitive and appetitive powers, including not only intellect and will, which belong to the human soul alone as subject, but also sense cognition and sense appetite, which are powers that involve bodily organs, not the soul alone. "Since motion is directed at

[58] It is evident that motions of animals cannot be adequately described at the level of the *genus* motion. Canine motion differs from feline motion, which differs from human motion; and these are formal differences required in the specification of the motion itself, not in the efficient cause of the motions.

something particular, the intellective part, which apprehends universally, only moves through a particular apprehension and desire which belongs to the sensitive part." The union of intellective and sensitive part required here is none other than the simple unity of the soul as first act. Aquinas concludes, "it is that part of an animated body. to which it belongs to apprehend (particular things) and desire (them) that moves the body."[59] Notice that Aquinas speaks of motion requiring a "desire which belongs to the sensitive part," in conjunction with rational appetite which informed by intellect only desires in a general way. But desire that leads to action is directed at a particular goal or end as final cause. And neither Aristotle nor Aquinas has any difficulty referring to the end or final cause moving some being, without thereby reducing the end or final cause to a species of efficient causality that would "interact" with the moved.

Aquinas says it is a part of the "animated body" that moves the body. And yet is it not the case that the soul moves the body? Yes and no. Consider human sight as an analogy. The soul causes the body to see because the power of sight has its formal origin in this type of soul. In this sense, mole souls do not cause, do not move moles to see. And yet it is the living human body that sees, since sight exists in that body as in its immediate subject. Similarly the "motive power," like any power, has its origin in the soul-it is a *proprium-and* in that sense is caused by the soul, while it does not exist in the soul as its immediate subject. Only intellect and will exist in the soul as their immediate subject. In that sense, the motive power exists in the living body as its subject, and it is nothing other than the body's power of movement.

Here again one wants to avoid the paramechanistic agent causalism critiqued by Cuypers. Since Aquinas holds that an efficient cause must be extrinsic to that which it efficiently causes[60] and powers of the composite body are not extrinsic to the composite, this movement of the body by its cognitive and appetitive powers cannot be a mode of efficient causality. The

[59] Q. D. *De Anima,* a. 9, ad 6.

[60] V *Metaphys,* lect. 2 (763-76); and *De Prin. Natur.,* c. 3.

soul moves the body through the motive power, not in the sense of efficiently interacting with it, but in the sense of informing it, and causing it to be what it is, as it informs the eye, and causes human vision to be what it is. Other integral parts of the body$_2$ interact with the eyeball in human vision-the optic nerve, and muscles surrounding it, and so on-much like when I slap my thigh and leave a red mark. But the soul does not move the eyeball in that sense. It informs it, and makes it a human eyeball involved in human vision rather than canine vision. To make the soul the efficient cause of some motion of the body would require denying that the soul informs that part of the body. But that would require treating that part of the body as nonliving. If we were to take the hand, for example, and deny that it is informed by the soul in order that it could be efficiently moved by the soul, we would be left with Aristotle's gruesome detached human hand, and the motion of our attached human hands would be no different in principle from the motion involved in picking up the detached human hand and waving it about. But this is simply to misunderstand the nature of human action, and the *form* that it takes. Again, Cuypers and Martin's papers are relevant here.

Thus in speaking of the soul moving the body through the motive power, we have ample evidence and philosophical reasons for thinking the mode of causality involved is not one of efficient causality of the soul upon the body, "interacting with it." In fact, what the point from question 76 of the *Prima Pars* amounts to is the claim that the living body moves in virtue of the distinctive cognitive and appetitive powers appropriate for the kind of living being in question. Thus it is significant that in his extended discussion of the issue, Aquinas did not confine the discussion to the human soul and body, but broadly to any animal soul and body. Like the iron sphere, the living body moves distinctively in the way it does in virtue of its distinctive form. But unlike the iron sphere, it does so in a distinctive fashion animated by the cognition and desire appropriate to the kind of being it is, determined formally, not efficiently, by its soul. Dogs move in distinctively doglike ways not simply because their bodies are structurally

different from cat bodies, but because their cogmt1ve and appetitive powers are different from the cognitive and appetitive powers of cats. Human beings move in distinctively human ways, not simply because they are upright and bipedal, but because in their animal bodies sense cognition and appetite are formally and thus existentially united with reason and will in the human soul. In the framework of being and act that animates Aquinas's thought, the Interaction Problem between soul and body simply does not arise. If I am correct in this assessment, then the fact that it arises when translating Aquinas into the contemporary idiom should give one pause not only about the translation, but philosophically about the idiom itself.

'Form', particularly 'substantial form', looks to be simply untranslatable. Following Haldane's suggestion, we ought to face that fact and try to develop an adequate philosophical account of it, not in terms of, but, rather, as a genuine philosophical contribution or even a challenge to the adequacy of analytic philosophy to provide an account of human life and action without it. The elements of an adequate philosophical anthropology may be one of the most important contributions that Thomism can make to contemporary philosophy. Cross's paper is both important and well worth the attention one gives to it. It genuinely wrestles with the difficulties of engaging recent philosophy of mind employing the thought of Thomas Aquinas. Such wrestling should take place. But the paper is also useful because it displays just the sorts of difficulties that have to be faced if one wants to translate Aquinas's discussion of soul and body into the contemporary analytic setting. Both Oderberg and Cross are living philosophers trying in their own ways to take seriously an historical figure as a genuine philosophical interlocutor worthy of more than antiquarian interest, and they should be applauded for that.

Too often Thomists want to place Aquinas in recent debates without struggling with the issues Cross struggles with. Perhaps the struggle proves too great in this instance, and the Thomist's account of the soul is a challenge to the adequacy of the philosophical presuppositions of the recent debate, rather than a

position that can be translated into it. The conflicts, as one sees in all the papers in this volume, are the stuff of which good philosophy is made. If there are genuine philosophical insights to be found within Thomism, Thomists must seek to engage the living philosophy of our age, one major area of which is contemporary analytic philosophy. Those Thomists who take up that responsibility with all its potential triumphs and pitfalls would do very well to read this collection of essays.[61]

[61] I am grateful to David Burrell, Fred Freddoso, and Alasdair Macintyre for their helpful comments on earlier drafts of this essay.

BOOK REVIEWS

Logic, Theology, and Poetry in Boethius, Abelard, and Alan of Lille: Words in the Absence of Things. By EILEEN SWEENEY. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006. Pp. 236. $65.00 (cloth). ISBN 1-4039-6972-8.

This is a very timely study on an important segment of the intellectual tradition of the Middle Ages, one, moreover, that not many scholars with expertise in this field would be capable of undertaking. One reason is that it moves outside the set fields of Augustinian, Victorine, or Chartrian studies, thus positioning itself deliberately in an open arena. Another reason is that it combines three divergent areas, that is, logic, theology, and poetry. Whereas any combination of two would have yielded interesting but slightly predictable perspectives (logic and theology, theology and poetry), the addition of a third derails any prior notions of synthesis and harmonious development one might have.

The combination of authors from Boethius to Abelard and on to Alan of Lille is a responsible choice and creates an exciting span, as the *Three Theological Treatises* of Boethius are connected with the *Theological Rules* of Alan of Lille, reflecting the *longue duree* that is typical of medieval thought. The fact that Sweeney's analysis is under three hundred pages long speaks to her authorial skills, as her conciseness of argument makes for a clear and efficient read.

The book's subtitle is "Words in the Absence of Things," which points to the similar texture of semantics found in all three authors, connecting them as part of one continuous tradition. The major achievement of the study lies in its view of the era from late antiquity to the early Scholastic in an unbroken light. Doing so requires intellectual reach and philosophical stamina, both of which are demonstrated here in exemplary fashion.

Sweeney's book unfolds as follows. In the introduction she clarifies her thematic approach of "words in the absence of things" by referring to Augustine's division of reality into signs and things-the latter referring ultimately only to God-which was designed in his *On Christian Doctrine* and canonized in Peter Lombard's *Sentences.* Based on this division, all metaphysical problems are problems that regard signs, and hence pose as problems of interpretation, an interpretation that is duly complicated because its central object, that is, God, is itself the only 'thing' and as such inexpressible. This is the absence to which the book's subtitle refers, and which rather indicates a latent presence or substrate. Rather than analyzing the thought of Augustine-whose responsibility for the "semiological consciousness of the Christian West" stems

from his firm interest in "redeemed language" mediated through the presence of Christ as the Word-however, Sweeney focuses on the technical mastery of the language arts exhibited by Boethius, Abelard, and Alan. Her overall thesis is that even in these potentially more arid thinkers the logical and analytical were combined with the imaginative and the existential, a connection that would last until the thirteenth century. Although a similar point about the merger of analytical and imaginative discourse was made by Peter Dronke (see his *Fabula: Explorations into the Uses of Myth in Medieval Platonism* [Leiden and Cologne: E. J. Brill, 1974], 1), it has rarely been turned into an epistemological program and Sweeney should be much commended for doing so.

The book has three chapters, which are similar in length and closely follow the texts of the selected authors. The chapter on Boethius (7-61) is entitled "Translation, Transfer and Transport," and combines an analysis of his mediating function in the history of Western thought with the more unusual task of lending a kind of unity to his works, portraying him in the process as an original and autonomous thinker rather than a compiler. Main Boethian themes are the distinction between the order of words and things and the conventionality of language (8). Notwithstanding Boethius's aim of mediation, Sweeney rightly points out how his logical categories form an extra layer between the reader and the things described by the text (9), thereby causing many of the intellectual problems with which the Middle Ages would henceforth struggle.

Sweeney discusses the *Commentary on the Isagoge,* the *Commentary on the Peri hermeneias,* and the *Theological Tractates,* carefully laying out in each case what the work intends and what Boethius's aim with it is. In *Contra Eutychen et Nestorium* Boethius posits theological reasoning as finding the mean between two heresies, a position that in *De hebdomadibus* is concretized as a refutation of Manichean dualism. Sweeney here follows the view of Robert Crouse (21, 26), that a being can only be good to the extent that it is related to that which is Being or Good in a perfect unity, that is, God. In *De trinitate* Aristotelian and Neoplatonic categories meet again, but it proves difficult for Boethius to go from the 'thing' of divine unity to the plurality of its names ('words'): that is, as synonymous names signifying the single divine nature, as names with different meanings indicating the same God, or as nonsynonymous names for the different persons. The difficulty is that the Trinity cannot be fully understood by us as it is, which necessitates different and hierarchically ordered approaches through physics, mathematics, and theology. In Sweeney's view Boethius is giving up any esoteric superiority in these tractates, assuming a position of supplication as the only fitting mediating posture to stretch language from this world to the next (38).

The same is true for the *Consolation,* which takes mediation one step further, as Boethius aims at a transformation of his own perspective on suffering. There are clearly different voices in this work, ranging from Boethius the victim to Lady Philosophy as his therapist, yet there is no reason either to see Boethius as unable to control all of these roles or to identify him with just one of them. Instead, Sweeney sees the *Consolation's* project as the development and

hierarchical arrangement of different perspectives on suffering, taking this work as *pars pro toto* for Boethius's entire oeuvre. In a long segment, she carefully weaves its different threads together in such a way that we can still hear the deep echoes of classical knowledge. Seeing the absence of direct Christian allusions as a relevant problem, she feels generally at home with Marenbon's solution of seeing this work as reflecting the failure, rather than the success of philosophy (60). She ends this chapter by pointing to the work's poetry as both mirroring the fragmented vision of philosophy and complementing it in the attempt to overcome the limits of human reasoning.

While Boethius's *Consolation,* in Sweeney's vision, was "baring the wound" (39), her chapter on Abelard ("A Twelfth-Century Hermeneutics of Suspicion" [63-125]) opens with this thinker's attempt to "keep open the wound of exile" (63). Here too she goes through the logical developments of the author under review only to end with an analysis of his poetry, especially the *planctus,* a set of biblical poems often thought to display personal notes to his life story. Sweeney sees in Abelard not the mediation typical of Boethius but struggle and opposition against complacent masters, as Abelard scratches their surface and measures their (false) depths. His "tragedy" is that the outcome of his search is that surface and depth cannot be matched, and hence his quest for coherence must ultimately fail. But that may be too harsh a judgment on Sweeney's part, because his exposition of the gaps that he detects in, for example, Boethius's logical works, led to many improvements, as did the collection of conflicting patristic authorities in his *Sic et Non* or the listing of arguments against the Trinity in his *Theologia 'summi bani'* (66). In light of the book's central problem of 'words' and 'things' Abelard's position on universals is obviously of key importance, as he argues that a universal is common to all and proper to none (69, with reference to *Glosses on Porphyry* 21.34). Abelard is interested above all, Sweeney states, in keeping the realms of words, things, and thoughts separate so as to make language functional. This squares with the position of Klaus Jacobi (77), that Abelard's logic has an essentially negative character, in that all his arguments warn against reductional accounts. This leads to an interesting tension, observed again by Jacobi, for Abelard's dialectical thought and arguments reach farther than he can actually account for, while Jolivet sees him as combining nonrealism and Platonism (78).

Sweeney's interesting analysis of Abelard's theological works zooms in on his siege-mentality. Instead of Boethius's order, here we have conflict (81). While there are good reasons for Sweeney to make this statement, we should not forget that the amorphous weight of tradition necessitated a drastic makeover indeed and Abelard's offensive strategy can perhaps also be explained as an attempt to cut his way through the forest, trying to construct roads where there were none. Sweeney hints as much when she detects a development in Abelard's work from being merely defensive to trying gradually to close the gap between language and reality through rational arguments; she identifies the remaining niches as the dwelling place of faith.

Where Abelard's theology breaks off, his laments begin, and Sweeney gives an excellent analysis of these attempts to reject and rewrite allegory at the same time (95-114). Perhaps composed as stimuli for personal contemplation, they modulate on cases of biblical loss and on the theme of loss in general, creatively twisting conventional readings of biblical stories. Sweeney's suggestion to see these laments as an emotional *Sic et Non,* offering different perspectives on a single biblical problem text, is particularly helpful.

The chapter ends with Sweeney's analysis of Abelard's *Ethics* and his Letters, especially his Rule for Heloise's nuns, which she sees as bridging the very gaps that his other works opened up. They can do so only because a mature Abelard regards his own struggles as being in the service of spirituality. In his search for coherence of word and deed, Sweeney concludes that Abelard eventually comes to dwell in the gaps, the very 'de-reification' of his theologies repeating the absences more than filling them (124).

In her final chapter on Alan of Lille ("Language and its Peregrinations to and from Divine Unity" [127-75]), Sweeney concentrates on the paradox between innovative form and conservative content in Alan, which she explains through the analogy of strength rather than weakness used by Alan himself, namely, that of fighting fire with fire. Alan writes poetry to fight poetic falsehoods and gives correct theological vocabulary to those trying to find terminology that is analogous to that used in the other arts. But, Sweeney goes on, he *uses* these methods, as he is conscious of their limitations (128). She then takes her readers through Alan's. works: the *Regulae caelestis iuris,* the *Summa quoniam horniness,* and the *Liber in distinctionibus dictionum.* The chapter ends again with (allegorical) poetry, this time Alan's prosimetricDe *planctu naturae,* followed by his *poemAnticlaudianus.* Whereas contemporary interpretation of these poems oscillates between considering Alan either a sombre moralist exploring sexual terminology or a medieval postmodernist undermining stable meaning, Sweeney stresses the similarity between his sexual language and his God-talk. This is in line with her functional approach to Alan's use of genre and method. His confident use of reason and the arts to capture God implies at the same time his deep scepticism about their possible success. Both allegorical poems highlight that vice and God fall outside the arts.

The advantage of Sweeney's interpretation is that, while making Alan less a typical twelfth-century schoolmaster, she adds to his complexity, bringing in his interest in Dionysian negative theology. Alan, as she states, "emphasizes God as radically other. He gives the reader no chance to bask in the certainty of God as the ground of nature before he brings home the way in which God confounds nature" (167). Precisely what this means for Alan's own agenda beyond his functional approach I would have liked to see elaborated a bit further; nevertheless, Alan's portrait is a much 'thicker' one indeed than often comes across. His approach is also fully in line with Augustine's *De doctrina christiana.* After all, 'things' and nature are signifiers rather than signified (173).

In her brief conclusion about "Language and the *Ascensus Mentis ad Deum"* (177-83) Sweeney commends "her" works as worthy of being lifted above the

quagmires of Scholasticism as reflective of more existential questions. The arguments to support this thesis which her book has put forth certainly whet our appetite to reread them all closely.

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Form and Being: Studies in Thomistic Metaphysics. By LAWRENCE DEWAN, O.P. Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy 45. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2006. Pp.265. $59.95 (cloth). ISBN 0-8132-1461-0.

It is a pleasure to spend time with Lawrence Dewan in the pages of this book. His mastery of Aquinas, eagerness to teach, zeal for philosophical truth, critical intellect, and gentle humor illumine every chapter. The book is a collection of thirteen of his essays on the metaphysics of Thomas Aquinas published between 1980 and 2004. As the title indicates, they are centered on the notion of formal causality, a focus he sees as distinguishing him from such philosophers as Joseph Owens and Etienne Gilson, with their emphasis on the act of being *(esse)* (xii).

The essays range from general discussions of the nature of metaphysics to treatments of specific topics such as causality, the immortality of the human soul, the notion of substance, the principle of individuation, and the real distinction between the formal cause and the act of existing *(esse).* They often have the flavor of disputed questions, with Dewan taking the part of the master and many of the great Thomistic thinkers of twentieth century serving as objectors, including Joseph Owens, Etienne Gilson, Ralph Mcinerny, Cornelio Fabro, Jacques Maritain, and James Weisheipl. Dewan's method always involves a close reading of Aquinas's texts combined with his own insights, including his emphasis on the importance of formal causality and on the "continuity of thought between Aristotle and Thomas, even as to the doctrine of the act of being" (xii).

The first article considers the fundamental challenge of metaphysical thinking, an enterprise not for the faint of heart or intellect. Dewan's conviction of the continuity between Aristotle and Aquinas surfaces in his assertion that Aristotle's first cause is "one being which is both final cause and efficient cause of *all* [sic]" (8). This view is quite different from that of Gilson, who saw Aquinas's God as both a final and efficient cause, but Aristotle's first principle as a final cause only. Dewan provides a reference to support his assertion *(Metaphys.* 12.10.107 *Sb* 34-107 6a 4), but admits that "I am very far from thinking that what I say here jumps right out from this text" (8 n. 43). The essay concludes with an addendum on the

"Big Bang," in which Dewan rightly points out that the discussion of creation belongs not to physics but to metaphysics. The Big Bang cannot be identified scientifically with the moment of creation since "from a strictly physical perspective" some previous event is always "presupposed by any posited 'first event"' (10). It is "a principle needed for the existence of any experimental science" that "an event occurs if and only if the appropriate conditions obtain" (11). (It would be interesting to see how Dewan would apply this principle to the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum mechanics, where quantum events are understood as having no cause.)

The task of metaphysics is examined in the second article. Its work is something like constructing a "spiritual trampoline or launching pad" to lead the philosopher from the consideration of contingent, sensible, material things to the highest cause or first principle (ix, 7). In establishing what it means to study being as being, Dewan reviews Aquinas's presentation of the four "modes" of being: "(1) negations and privations, (2) generations and corruptions and movements, (3) inhering accidents, and (4) substances" (17). The last are the special concern of metaphysics since "to be" is "used in the unqualified, we might say 'uninhibited,' 'full blast,' way when it is said with reference to the thing's very substantiality" (19).

The third and fourth essays are concerned with the starting point of metaphysics, the knowledge of being. Noting the "undeserved abuse" that the notion of abstraction has suffered "in recent decades" (39) and responding to the views of Cornelio Fabro, Dewan argues that our knowledge of being *(ens)* is a product of abstraction and that this product forms the basis of our knowledge of the act of existing *(esse).* He also argues against the contention of James Weisheipl and the "River Forest" School of Thomism that it is physics, by proving the existence of immaterial reality, that provides metaphysics with "its proper subject of study, being as being" (47).

The fifth and sixth essays deal with causality and analogy. Dewan explains how efficient causality involves relation, and then exploits the notion of relation to show in what ways David Hume was justified in disassociating effect from cause. Since relationship implies only reference to another, and not reference to the substance in which the relation exists as an accident, "Hume's contention makes sense, that one can think of an effect without thinking of its cause" (76). One can focus on the thing in which the relation inheres without alluding to the referent of the relation. The effect's dependence and need for a cause are seen only if one considers its existential aspect by thinking of cause and effect "as having being" or questioning, for instance, whether the composite of matter and form can be thought of "as existing without an efficient cause" (80-81). In the sixth essay, Dewan argues (against Ralph Mcinerny) that analogy is not primarily a problem of logic and that "the account of analogy given by logic cannot be expected to do the job that a metaphysician will do" (85).

The seventh essay comprises three insightful, though somewhat disconnected parts. Its basic theme is the "terribly neglected" topic of substance (x). It begins with a playful account of "contemporary Presocratics" who, like their

predecessors, make the kinds of universal claims that belong to metaphysics while still "under the spell of physics or mathematics" (98). Physicist Stephen Weinberg, for instance, claims that physics itself can investigate the "deepest questions," and biologist Michael Behe contends that the discussion of intelligent design belongs within empirical science. Dewan proposes to awaken them from their "dogmatic slumbers" by pointing out that their universal claims exceed the limits of their espoused disciplines (98-101). The treatment of such thinkers is abruptly dropped, however, for a discussion of the nature of substances, especially their unity and primacy in being. The essay then reviews Charles De Koninck's understanding of the forms and essences of material things, and concludes with three addenda of related texts from Aquinas and De Koninck. The topic of substantial form continues in the eighth essay, which analyzes key parts of Aquinas's commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics,* providing "a lesson on the centrality of substantial form for the study of metaphysics" (x).

The next three essays are concerned with explaining in what way form is a "a principle of the act of being" (xi). This is an intriguing topic since Aquinas teaches that *esse,* as the "act of all acts and the perfection of all perfections," is also the act by which the form (in immaterial creatures) and the composite substance (in material creatures) exists *(De Pot.,* q. 7, a. 2, ad 9). Recognizing the intimate relation of form and *esse,* Dewan remarks ironically that "a healthy conception of form should tend to confuse it with the act of being" (xi). Certainly his essay allows form and *esse* to skate perilously close, yet without tumble or mishap. He gives a carefully reasoned explanation of how form has priority over existence in that "the influence of the efficient cause on the caused thing will be the *existence* of the caused thing only inasmuch as the efficient cause also provides *form* for the caused thing" (169). He points out that Aquinas "has no difficulty in viewing *esse* as the effect of form (as long as an outside efficient cause is posited)" (170). If form is considered as "that by which the agent's influence is *appropriated* to the effected thing, form is 'resulting' in *esse,* and so is causal" (171). Dewan explains that this doctrine "that *esse* is the *per se* result of form as form" does not compromise the teaching that in all creatures form *"participates* in *esse"* and "stands related to *esse* as potency to act" (172). He also shows that form and *esse,* despite their close association, "are indeed *really,* and not merely notionally, distinct" (188).

The twelfth essay discusses form as nature, using the human soul as an example of how form is the principle of a substance's activity (xi). Here Dewan is pleased to give "equal time" to essence after the "difficult time" it had in the twentieth century "when the insistence was decidedly on existence" (205).

The final essay considers the subsisting thing as such. Dewan sees it as the third "target" of metaphysical inquiry, following the targets of the essence or form and the act of being (xi). He is primarily concerned with refuting Joseph Owen's contention that *esse* is the ultimate principle of individuation and establishing the individual as "a mode of being" (229). His conclusion is that "in diverse levels of being there are diverse 'principles' of individuation" (247). An eye-opener to me was his treatment of the "need for a special doctrine of

individuation" to accommodate the phenomenon of nutrition in living things. Such substances (which change their matter through nutrition, growth, and diminution, while maintaining their substantial identity) require "a special mode of substantial form, somewhat immaterial, and thus somewhat akin to the subsisting form which is the human soul" (233). Quoting Aquinas, he explains that such a form is "like an immaterial form" since it "does not determine for itself any designated matter, but at one moment is preserved in this, at another moment in that" (234). This makes one wonder whether today we would not have to say that the forms of all material substances must be "somewhat immaterial," given our present scientific understanding of the natural world in which all substances, living and non-living, constantly gain and lose matter (electrons) while maintaining their substantial identity.

Father Dewan and the editors of the Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy series have performed a service to the philosophical community in bringing these essays together. The book's index of names and detailed index of topics allows the reader easily to find and track a given figure or theme through the various articles. Dewan has promised future collections of essays on the doctrine of being and natural theology (ix). These will be most welcome in providing ready access to the rich fruits of his continuing "apprenticeship with Thomas Aquinas" (xiii).

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Love of Self and Love of God fn Thirteenth-Century Ethics. By THOMAS M. OSBORNE, JR. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005. Pp. 336. $60.00 (cloth), $30.00 (paper). ISBN 0-268-03723-X (cloth), 0-268-03722-1 (paper).

Thomas M. Osborne's study of the development of thirteenth-century ethics focuses on a thematic that has not received the attention it deserves: the relationship of love of self to love of God. While for modern ethical theories the relationship of self to God has often appeared as a conflict between egoism and altruism, the medieval treatment of human love as foundation to ethics reveals a much richer and more intricate and therefore more integrated treatment. As this textual study demonstrates, the dichotomy is not as obvious for medieval thinkers as it might be for moderns.

Comprised of five chapters, this work begins with the Augustinian tradition's emphasis on loving God as the key to the happy life, a tradition presented as largely Neoplatonic and in contrast to the Aristotelian ethical project which is

centered on happiness. Chapter 2 follows the Scholastic development in the mid-thirteenth century prior to Aquinas. This chapter is especially helpful in the way it brings to the forefront the work of William of Auxerre, Philip the Chancellor, and Albert the Great, not simply as predecessors to Thomas Aquinas, but as thinkers who dealt with this question in important ways. Chapter 3 focuses on Aquinas and on his distinct manner of dealing with the question, informed by his Aristotelian perspective. Chapter 4 helps fill out the picture in the final quarter of the thirteenth century, with thinkers such as Siger of Brabant, Boethius of Dacia, and James of Viterbo. Here again, light is shed on aspects of the debate that have not often been studied in depth. Finally, the fifth chapter takes up the position of John Duns Scotus, showing how his treatment of this theme is both similar to and distinct from Aquinas and other earlier thinkers.

The first chapter sets the trajectory for the entire work, with its emphasis on Augustine and the way in which later, thirteenth-century Christian thinkers would attempt to integrate the central Augustinian insights when they read Aristotle. Augustine's Platonism is the key for Osborne's study, both for his emphasis on love and for his focus on God as the *summum bonum.* The influence of the Augustinian tradition on the eleventh and twelfth centuries is presented, however, as if the medievals developed a largely Platonic ethic prior to the arrival of the *Nicomachean Ethics.* Platonic influences are clearly present in this early medieval period, but this chapter would have benefitted from a more developed treatment of Stoic influences, both on Augustine's own theory of goods of use and intrinsic goods, and on the overall development of ethical questions. Despite this lack, the chapter offers very good information regarding the positions of Hugh of St. Victor, William of Auxerre, Philip the Chancellor, and Albert the Great.

Chapter 2 is also a very helpful treatment of the positions of Albert the Great, Alexander of Hales, and Bonaventure. The focus of their discussion is the dignity of nature, and the natural capacity of anyone to love God in the absence of grace. This chapter offers a nice contrast between the different positions, showing how they both develop and diverge from earlier positions, such as those of William of Auxerre and Philip the Chancellor. Osborne carefully lays out the distinct ways in which each thinker handles the Augustinian categories of *uti!frui* in love for God and self, as well as the distinctions between *propter se* and *propter aliud.* Albert's attempt to reconcile pagan moral theory with Christianity appears clearly in his discussion of friendship; here again, Osborne's study might have benefitted from a stronger connection to Stoic sources, such as Cicero (mentioned only in passing). Nonetheless, with its attention to textual detail and analysis, this chapter is exceptionally helpful in setting the stage for Aquinas's treatment of the two loves.

The chapter devoted to Aquinas is extremely good, laying out the relevant texts and showing clearly how important St. Thomas is to the transformation of the debate to one focused on natural desire and the common good. It is within this context that Aquinas integrates Aristotelian ethics and metaphysics. Here again, a stronger Stoic connection might actually have helped Osborne's

argument, showing how the earlier legacy prepared the way for Aquinas's important role. The first portion of this chapter engages in a rich and detailed explanation of various scholarly positions relative to Aquinas's treatment of natural love. Osborne plays out the varying interpretations and positions, his own interpretation among them. While interesting to the specialist, this section seems to be out of harmony with the rest of the book, for at no time in any other chapter do we follow the scholarly debate so carefully. After presenting several texts and versions of Aquinas's argument on natural love for God, Osborne helpfully lays out the central argument that he attributes to St. Thomas (85) and clarifies the distinction between charity and natural love.

Chapter 4, like chapter 2, is extremely helpful in bringing out the key developments between 1270 and 1300, in thinkers like Siger of Brabant, Boethius of Dacia, Godfrey of Fontaines, and Henry of Ghent. Especially helpful here is the way in which the debate changes during the last quarter of the thirteenth century, in regard to the relationship between moral science and theology. Osborne's presentation of James of Viterbo's position and its relationship to that of Godfrey of Fontaines brings out clearly what was at issue at the end of the century: whether or not natural moral philosophy is primarily self-interested. This section of the chapter is particularly helpful in its discussion of the move from earlier positions that considered moral psychology to later developments that focused on the nature of the moral order and its relationship to self or God.

With the debate of the final quarter of the thirteenth century, Osborne has aptly set the scene for the moral theory of John Duns Scotus. The final chapter both presents Scotus's treatment of the two affections in the will (for happiness and for justice) and points to the continuity and discontinuity of his ethical position with that of Aquinas. By noting the important metaphysical grounding of Scotus's position on the nature of the will, Osborne shows how significant Scotus's theory on the centrality of freedom is for later thinkers and how traditional Scotus was in his own ethical affirmations. Osborne's situation and assessment of Scotus relative to Aquinas are especially helpful and welcome.

Osborne states in the introduction that this work originated in his doctoral dissertation. One does not get this impression in reading it, except in those sections where he attempts to lay out the scholarly debate regarding the interpretation of a given thinker, for example, Thomas Aquinas. The development of Osborne's interpretation of Aquinas in chapter 3 is hindered by his attempt to contrast De Lubac, Gilson, Geiger, and Rousselot in their various theories and responses to one another. This scholarly debate, while interesting for the specialist and essential in a doctoral dissertation, might better have been placed, in the notes, or perhaps in an appendix. As it stands, the author's own interpretation of the texts is far more interesting for the study itself.

This study is extremely insightful and illuminating, especially in regard to the periods between Albert and Thomas, and between Thomas and Duns Scotus. It offers, as well, a quantity of textual material not often seen in works devoted to medieval ethics. More work on the figures involved in these transitional debates,

as well as on their influence for the key thinkers, is sorely needed for any accurate interpretation of the central role of medieval ethics and its development. For this contribution alone, Osborne's study is worthy of praise.

Osborne is correct when he states that the dominant historical reading of medieval ethics is overly influenced by modern categories of moral discussion, such as the antipathy of self-love and love for God. However, his choice to focus on the Platonic and Aristotelian traditions alone works against what he is trying to achieve. Indeed, the narrow frame within which the study is organized does not provide sufficient conceptual resources to correct the false historical reading that the entire study so eloquently critiques. When, for example, Osborne presents the central role of the common good as mediator between the two loves, he contextualizes Aquinas's position relative only to these two main philosophical traditions. As was the case in earlier chapters, the discussion of the natural inclination and self-love would actually have been helped by some reference to Stoic sources, such as Cicero or Seneca, both of whose texts were influential in medieval ethics. Contrasting Aristotle's *eudaimonism* to Platonic love (as *eras, philia,* or *agape)* results in the very dichotomy between self-love and love of God that Osborne tries so carefully to avoid. Indeed, given only these two traditions as sources for the medieval discussion, it does not seem possible to avoid understanding the medieval position as either a type of enlightened self-interest (94) or a proto-Kantian discussion involving legal obligations (97). Likewise, the presentation of the two affections for Scotus (natural affections which embody the dynamic attraction toward love of self and love of God) would have been far more integrating, had Osborne made more of the Anselmian and Stoic integration of the dynamic of human love.

In short, this is an extremely good introduction to the ethical debates of the thirteenth century, providing a wealth of textual and bibliographical resources. An acknowledgment of the role of Stoicism for the central ethical discussion of love (whether of self or of God) would have helped Osborne make an even stronger case for his position. It would also have helped him avoid falling dangerously close to the very dichotomy (self vs. God) he seeks to correct.

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Reading John with St. Thomas Aquinas: Theological Exegesis and Speculative Theology. Edited by MICHAEL DAUPHINAIS and MATIHEW LEVERING. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005. Pp. 416. $79.95 (cloth). ISBN 0-8132-1405-X.

This volume, ably edited by Michael Dauphinais and Matthew Levering, aims at "speculative theological reflection upon St. Thomas's" *Commentary on John* (xiii). It draws its content from the first in a series of conferences sponsored by Ave Maria University's Aquinas Center for Theological Renewal. Subsequent conferences have addressed the themes of "John Paul II and the Renewal of Thomistic Theology" (2003), "Aquinas the Augustinian" (2005), and "Sacraments in Aquinas" (2007). Like the rest of the conferences, *Reading John with St. Thomas Aquinas* represents an international, interdisciplinary, and ecumenical engagement with the work of the Angelic Doctor.

The essays in this volume offer close readings of the *Commentary on John* on its own and often in dialogue with the *Summa Theologiae.* Indeed, it is structured along the lines of the great *Summa.* It begins with the theme of revelation, continues with sections devoted to the triune God, the moral life, and the person and work of Jesus Christ, and concludes with contributions on the Church and the sacraments. The handsome volume includes an extensive bibliography and a helpful index.

One of the delights of any conference, but particularly one focused on a theme that attracts wide expertise, is the conversation before, between, and after papers. The contents of *Reading John* reflect the riches of such conversation since it examines the *Commentary* intra-Thomistically (i.e., within the context of other works by St. Thomas), and extra-Thomistically (i.e., in dialogue with a wide range of thinkers, ancient and contemporary). Given the constraints of space, I can only highlight a small portion of the book before turning to proposals for further study.

Reading John opens with John Boyle's "Authorial Intention and the *Divisio textus."* Boyle engages Beryl Smalley, the important twentieth-century scholar of medieval exegesis, in conversation to disagree with her. He locates Thomas's importance in the fact that "he is not one of us" and so has something to say to "the modern interpreter of Scripture" (3). Concisely and with humor, he points out Thomas's indifference to a text's single meaning-there could be many-and instead turns his attention to authorial intention, "to what ultimate end did St. John write [a] particular passage" (8). He then spells out the significance of *divisio textus,* the careful and, for many today, graceless means of textual organization that Thomas used to convey evangelical and so divine intentions for human salvation.

Other conversations in the volume include those with Thomas's predecessors. Janet Smith, in "'Come and See'" (cf. John 1:39, 46), notes the "influence of some key Aristotelian principles" on the *Commentary* "to explain why some who encounter Christ recognize him as divine and why others do not" (211). Stephen Brown, in "The Theological Role of the Fathers in the Aquinas's *Super*

Evangelium S. Ioannis Lectura," presents Peter Aureoli's definition of declarative theology in the fourteenth century: it clarifies and defends the articles of faith. Brown identifies, with the assistance of the Fathers, Thomas's own practice of declarative theology.

Reading John also includes conversations with our contemporaries. David Burrell, in "Creation in St. Thomas Aquinas's *Super Evangelium S. Joannis Lectura,"* engages the academy. He does so by "deconstructing" "the unilateral focus on Aquinas the philosopher" that separated theology and philosophy in the study of the Angelic Doctor and also separated these university faculties (115). He takes the theme of creation in the *Commentary* and argues that Thomas bridges the two disciplines with a philosophical theology that treats subjects "theological in character, while the mode of treatment [is] philosophical" (116).

Bruce Marshall returns to a question that has vexed him elsewhere. Western accounts of the Trinity seem to suffer "from a pneumatological deficit" that, apparently, do not give "the Holy Spirit anything to do" (62). For Marshall, the *Commentary* represents something of a cure because of the significant role the Spirit plays within it. It also supplies theological tools for maintaining unity of divine action (including action by the Spirit) and diversity of persons in the Trinity.

Most of the essays place Thomas in conversation with himself. Frederick Christian Bauerschmidt opens his "'That the Faithful Become the Temple of God': The Church Militant in Aquinas's *Commentary on John"* by asking, "Where *did* Thomas Aquinas put his ecclesiology?" He examines the *Commentary* in light of the *Summa Theologiae,* a range of secondary sources, and even iconography to take up the question of the Church's sinfulness. Bauerschmidt writes, "Thomas makes no attempt to distinguish between the 'objective' holiness of the Church and the 'subjective' sinfulness of her members" (309). He adds, "This should not be taken as a slight to the significance of the Church, which is, after all, the temple filled with the majesty of God.... [It] is like Peter, who stands in all his inadequacy before the risen Lord and receives his command: feed my sheep. It is like Thomas, reduced to the silence of learned ignorance in the face of the mystery of God" (311).

Gilles Emery's "Biblical Exegesis and the Speculative Doctrine of the Trinity in St. Thomas Aquinas's *Commentary on John"* is the longest at thirty-nine pages. It represents a very close reading of the *Commentary* (evidence for this claim can be found in Table 1, which links an entire page of Trinitarian references in the *Commentary* to those in questions 27-43 of the *Summa's prima pars* [25]). Emery compares the Trinitarian doctrines of the *Summa* and the *Commentary* and enumerates themes that are more developed in the latter than in the former. He continues with a careful study of the method and sources of the *Commentary* and concludes with its contribution. It helps "to renew our reading of St. Thomas's Trinitarian theology" (56). "If we want to follow St. Thomas today our first task is to show the deep biblical and Patristic foundations of his Trinitarian doctrine" (61).

Two essays stand out for their richness. Paul Gondreau, in "Anti-Docetism in Aquinas's *Super Ioannem:* St. Thomas as Defender of the Full Humanity of Christ," draws on works across the genres in the Thomistic oeuvre. He also cites patristic authors, Thomas's near-contemporaries, current Thomas scholars, and biblical and systematic theologians to argue that "What we find formulated in the *Commentary on John,* then, stands as a testament to Aquinas's commitment to probe ever deeper the human dimension of the Incarnation" (275).

Richard Schenk's *"And Jesus Wept:* Notes Towards a Theology of Mourning" responds to the "Christian tradition's ambivalence toward death" (216). He develops his account by citing (among many others) St. Augustine and his Platonic background, St. Bonaventure, Shakespeare, Bultmann, Schnackenburg, Brown, Rahner, and Metz. Schenck underlines the significance of Jesus' mourning for Thomas. It is real; it demonstrates his humanity; it supplies us with an example, in fact, a saving example. He finally extends Thomas's argument to link hope with mourning. "The same love that teaches us to mourn the losses of humankind teaches us to hope for the salvation of human goods .... A Church that could not mourn is one that could not hope; a Church that could not hope is one that could not mourn for long. The future vitality of Christianity will depend on the revival of these twin virtues" (237).

A conference's strength lies not only in the quality of its papers but also in the critiques it elicits, and the same is true of a book. I conclude with critiques and suggestions for future directions. Pim Valkenberg, at the beginning of "Aquinas and Christ's Resurrection," writes, "some years ago, I could not find many studies about Aquinas as commentator on Scripture. But the majority of these few ... were concerned with the *Commentary on John"* (277). Even though this volume focuses on speculative theology, an introductory essay on the *Commentary* itself, its organization, content, and intra- and extra-Thomistic significance would have prepared readers better for the interchange between the two.

Moreover, better documentation would have assisted readers not privy to certain debates. For example, one author quotes Hans Frei without attribution (296 n. 9) and locates, without evidence, St. Therese of Lisieux and us "in the age of modern atheism" (308). Another holds that "Arianism is not a limited historical phenomenon, but a general tendency of the human mind." It states that we live in "an age in which ... many speak in unguarded ways of the Trinity as a community of persons" (103). Another records opposition to Thomas's position, "Some authors believe ... others think ... and of course, continental a priorists ... All these objections cannot be fielded here" (143). It is true that the limits imposed by this format prevent every objection from being argued, yet it would have been helpful for the authors to document these claims and to direct interested readers to pertinent resources.

Similarly, the essay "The Analogy of Mission and Obedience" rightly stresses the centrality of obedience in the Gospel of John and its place in the *Commentary.* Yet one of the most dramatic moments in Thomas's life was his disobedience to his parents. In their unsuccessful attempt to dissuade him from

joining the Order of Preachers, they had him captured, sequestered in the family compound, and, by means of temptation and privation, tried to make him rethink his decision. This biographical moment would have undergirded the argument by pointing out how Thomas's filial disobedience represented at the same time *pietas* or obedience to God. Thomas's use of Aristotle represents another instance of apparent disobedience. As the Parisian condemnations of 1277 suggest, there were at least some who considered immersion in the thought of the Philosopher dangerous. Using him so heavily not only in the great *Summa* but even in his biblical commentaries suggested to some Thomas's tacit support of the more controversial Aristotelian positions. While perhaps disobedient on one level, Thomas's move can again be reframed as obedient, in this case to the truth and in deploying the tools necessary for communicating the truth about God and creation.

This volume and its antecedent conference together reflect and encourage important moves in Thomistic studies, that is, the recentering of the biblical commentaries and their "reintegration" with "speculative theology" (xiii). As the Aquinas Center for Theological Renewal continues to sponsor conferences and publications, it might ask where dangerous work analogous to Thomas's is being done today. Might future volumes bring to bear contemporary and, perhaps for some, dangerous theory to illuminate the Angelic Doctor? Theorists are myriad, but one possibility is to include sympathetic readings of those David Tracy designates as the three great hermeneuts of suspicion-Marx, Nietszche, and Freud.

In sum, this volume contributes to scholarship on St. Thomas because it fills out our picture of him by highlighting one of his overlooked genres. It invites further research, and it teases out implications for the life of the Church, all vital tasks for speculative theology today.

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Paths to the Triune God: An Encounter between Aquinas and Recent Theologies. By ANSELM K. MIN. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005. Pp. 408. $50.00 (cloth), $26.00 (paper). ISBN 0-268-03488-5 (cloth), 0-268-03489-3 (paper).

Anselm Min is attempting to accomplish several things at once. His central conviction is that Thomas, with his sapiential and theocentered theology, is able to provide themes and insights that importantly address the anthropocentricism and praxis orientation (which he refers to as "prophetic") that characterize

contemporary theology. The positive presentation of Thomas is set out in chapters 1 to 5. While Min ranges over the breadth of Thomas's thought, he remains generally focused on the doctrine of the Trinity. The encounter with recent theologies takes three forms: an ongoing interaction with contemporary currents of theology in which Thomas is allowed to critique and be critiqued; more sustained presentations of three social approaches to the Trinity (chapter 6); and treatments of a number of contemporary issues including the salvation of those outside an explicit Christianity (chapters 1 through 3), feminist and other critiques of God-language (chapter 6), and theological methodology (chapter 7). I will comment in more detail on Min's presentation of Thomas (with which I was quite impressed) and on his suggestions for contemporary theology (with which I was less impressed). His critiques of recent theologies are insightful but there is no need to rehearse these separately.

Key points are set out in the first chapter. Min begins by arguing for the contemporary relevance of a natural theology understood more broadly than it was in traditional apologetics. Interreligious dialogue requires "a mode of knowing God that is not so tied to a particular religious tradition as to exclude all common ground" but that can be justified from within the perspective of a particular religious tradition itself (14). This sets the stage for a Thomistic understanding of the relationship of philosophy and theology that overlaps but does not identify with the relationship between reason and faith. It is the formal object, the *ordo ad Deum* which considers all things *sub ratione Dei,* that distinguishes theology or *sacra doctrina,* not the material considered or the use of reason. Min's treatment of this material is accurate and fairly standard.

Less standard but carefully reasoned from Thomas is Min's presentation of Aquinas's Trinitarian theology of creation. He goes beyond the simple identification of the God of reason and the God of revelation and argues that Aquinas works out the *ordo ad Deum* "in terms of a christological, trinitarian, iconic theology of creation and reason" (27) to assert that "the analogy of being is founded on the analogy of imaging" since the analogy of being is possible only because of the likeness that exists from the causal relationship of creation to God (27-28). This allows for an integrated understanding of the relationship between nature, grace, and glory where each is oriented to the next as potency to perfecting act. For Thomas there is "no purely natural aptitude that is not already in the process of being actualized and perfected by grace." The nature-grace distinction is itself "posited by the grace of the triune God who seeks the participation of the human creature in her [sic] own life in glory" (30). Min interprets this as involving a "christological mediation of the movement of all creation from and to God."

On the structure of the *Summa* Min is something of an eirenicist, trying to reconcile the *exitus-reditus* approach pioneered by M.-D. Chenu, O.P., and followed by the majority of commentators, with the insights of Michel Corbin (*Le chemin de la theologie chez Thomas D'Aquin* [Paris: Beauchesne, 1974]) which sets out a fat more Christocentric vision of the *Summa* which fits in quite well with Min's own approach and which I personally endorse. I wonder,

however, at the ultimate compatibility of the two positions. Followers of Chenu tend to interpret the *Tertia Pars* as the concrete actualization of the general principles developed in the second half of the *Prima Pars* and in the *Secunda Pars;* Corbin sees the *Tertia Pars* as the climax of an act-potency analysis where the divine (act) and the human (potency) are combined in Christ. What is generally overlooked, and Min is no exception, is that because Christ is God he is the proper object of *sacra dactrina* in his own right and not simply as the concrete actualization of God's redemptive action in history or even as the fullest exemplar of the divine image.

Min summarizes (101-2) his Thomistic argument for grace in a sacramental theology of religion in nine points: the universal salvific will of God, the mediation of all salvific grace through the humanity of Christ, the Spirit of Christ "orders the world to its teleological fulfilment" and is present wherever there is even implicit faith in Christ, the appropriate means of salvation will be provided to all, grace is given "in a way suitable to human nature and the human condition" (an example would be the "sacramental principle"), "the means of salvation must be available with reasonable ease," "God is not bound to the sacraments [of the Church] or their ministers to confer grace," different things are required of different persons respecting the diversity of circumstances, and implicit faith made concrete through good morality can substitute for an explicit faith for those who have not had an opportunity to concretely encounter Christ. Each point is detailed and accurate. He notes that these suffice to ground "the possibility of the salvation of non-Christians as individuals." He wants to go further than this and move toward a theology of religious pluralism, but he is clear and accurate about what can and cannot be found in Thomas for this project.

The chapters on theology as contemplative wisdom and on Thomas's Trinitarian doctrine are likewise accurately and incisively developed with every step grounded in the text. He avoids the pitfalls of Thomistic interpretation that bedevil so many contemporary theologians. He sees through, for instance, the complaints regarding the separation of the tractates *De Dea una* and *De Dea trina* or the abstractness of Thomas's theology; he correctly understands Thomas's God as goodness which is self-diffusive, over and against those who would contrast Thomas to Bonaventure. His presentation of Thomas is consistently among the finest I have encountered.

At the end of his presentation of a "christological, trinitarian, iconic theology of creation and reason" Min argues, reasonably enough, that the "locus or source of theology ... is not limited to biblical revelation" but that God's revelation extends to all of creation including the religious experiences that animate the world religions. He concludes that one may "look for the traces, images, and graces of the triune God in all of these because they belong to God's graced creation." This is true but he further concludes that the "pneumatically motivated teleological ordination of reason to the beatific vision is as operative in non-Christian religions as in the Christian" (39-40). If, as Min argues, all movement from and to God is mediated by Jesus Christ, then how does one

conclude to this equivalence between non-Christian religions and Christianity, even granting that his point is about the universal ordination of reason to the vision of God? The concrete fallenness of human reason which tends to obscure the truth and place obstacles in the way of grace is not here discussed. Christians suffer from fallenness as well but the explicitness of the revelation of God in Christ Jesus and the remedies to fallenness provided in the sacraments would seem to confer some advantage even on the level of reason itself to Christians.

In the second chapter Min proposes to develop a pluralist theology of religions "which considers each religion a sacrament in the same way that contemporary Catholic theology considers the church the 'basic' sacrament out of which the particular sacraments flow" (77). Min's discussion of the necessarily "sacramental" structure of God's grace mediated to everyone is interesting and he may be right that "contemporary Catholic theology" has an understanding of the Church that allows one to identify the sacramentality of the Christian Church and the "sacramentality" of the world religions (quite a few theologians have taken over the nonsacramental Protestant notion of the Church as the free assembly of believers-compare Min's explanation that "the light of faith, when shared, produces a church" (107); this allows him to say that when the light of implicit faith is shared, as in a world religion, it produces a sacramental reality equivalent to the Christian Church). However, the Christian Church is the Body of Christ, a relationship to Christ and his saving graces that can be claimed by no other religion qua religion. Their "sacramentality," as Min himself points out, is on the level of creation only-all of creation in some way reveals or points toward God; all of creation can in some way mediate God's grace. The opening lines of Hebrews marks a distinction between the revelation of God through the prophets (and in principle all of creation) and through the Son who mediates "a new and better covenant." This is better than what? the covenant mediated through creation itself? the covenant mediated through Moses?

There are other points that could be contested in Min's move toward a pluralistic theology. This must suffice here.

Min's treatment of the feminist critique is quite short; its effect is quite pervasive-feminine references to the deity show up even in translations from the text of Thomas. Min claims with many feminists that the exclusion of the feminine in the creedal and liturgical formula of the Church "hides, nurtures, and justifies patriarchy" (249); I would disagree on many levels but pursuing this here would be a distraction. His treatment of the various alternatives offered by others are insightful, recognizing the tendencies toward crypto-modalism, subordinationism, or simple infelicity of different attempts. His own suggestion retains "the traditional formula of 'Father, Son, and Holy Spirit' for referring to the triune God while referring to the one God in the feminine ... to balance the masculine language of the traditional trinitarian formula by using the feminine whenever the reference is to the one God" (255-56).

This creates as many problems as it solves. Masculinity and femininity are inherently relational. What masculine are we to imagine over and against the femininity of the one God: the world? The point in referring to the world as

feminine in reference to God lies in the receptivity of the world to the divine initiative; what would it mean to refer to the world as masculine in reference to God? the three masculine divine persons? Sexual referencing is personal referencing; are we to imagine the one God as a fourth feminine "person" over and against the three masculine ones? In point of fact all Min is doing is playing a language game, one that strips sexuality of all connotations of personhood or interrelationality. That seems a high price to pay.

The traditional formula is firmly rooted in the economy. Jesus was the male child of Mary. When one asks the rather literal question, "who is the father of this child," one receives a surprising answer, "God is the Father." The literal femininity of Mary grounds the masculinity of the Father in the generation of this child. There have been attempts to understand the Spirit as feminine (see for example Yves Congar, O.P. or Donald Gelpi, S.J.). Min makes no mention of this sort of solution. Still, even here the question posed above remains-the Spirit is feminine in relation to what masculine? In this case there are somewhat acceptable answers-the Spirit is feminine in relation to the masculinity of the Son as the "hands" of God, or the Spirit is feminine in relation to the "masculinity" of the Father in the generation of the Son. The problem in both cases is that the Son and the Father in their masculinity are understood as correlated with other feminines, the Church in the case of the Son, Mary in the case of the Father. Still the Spirit is closely associated with both as if the Spirit were making them to be "divinely" feminine not as a masculine principle (which would make the Spirit to be the Father and/or the Bridegroom) but as, in some sense, the source of this divine femininity.

Min argues with respect to the monarchy of the Father that "we must find a way or principle within the monarchy of the Father and inherent in that monarchy whereby we can also transcend that monarchy: we must articulate a form of monarchy that is also capable of canceling itself into an affirmation of equality" (184). A similar resolution is required with regard to the masculine references to God or persons of the Trinity, understanding masculinity as a total pouring out of oneself that subverts inequality. The Father pours himself out toward humanity in sending his Son; that human, Jesus, sits at the Father's right hand in full equality. More needs to be done with this than can be done here. The point is that one need not resort to verbal games to address these issues.

My final point regarding the correlation Min postulates between a sapiential theology such as Thomas's and contemporary prophetic theology is more a question rather than a criticism. His assessment of the state of contemporary theology and his typology of these two sorts of theology demonstrate the same sort of acuity of thought which was evident in his presentation of Thomas throughout and in his earlier treatments of specific theologians and issues. He argues that the two types of theology can only be held in tension "not mere balance or complementarity ... as two inseparably related moments of one and the same theology, not as two parallel types of theology" (319). "Balance," he later explains, "means peace and harmony between the two," but the relation "between two ways and paradigms of theology with opposing ultimate claims

and tendencies . . can only be conceived in terms of a dialectic or tension between the two" (333). Mutual confrontation and challenge are required, not balance. The tension is understood explicitly "in the Hegelian sense of aufheben" (335-36).

This sort of tension or opposition evokes Platonism of one sort or another (and Hegelianism can be so described) with its correlation of being and nonbeing. The Aristotelian character of Thomism suggests that another sort of correlation is possible that does not presuppose methodological tension between the two forms of theology. An Aristotelian approach presumes the intelligibility of the object investigated and seeks to explore that intelligibility. If one presumes that a prophetic theology is fundamentally intelligible, Thomism intends to explore that intelligibility in all its integrity. There is no question here of "balancing" or "complementation" but of a complete penetration. The opposition felt between a sapiential and a prophetic theology has less to do with any intrinsic opposition (unless a given prophetic theology is truly irrational) than with the concrete stances taken by individual practitioners. The question is, then, why does Min see here an inescapable tension?

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The Augustinian Person. By PETER BURNELL. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005. Pp. xiii + 218. $24.95 (paper). ISBN 0-8132-1418-1.

Augustine's conception of the human person is a difficult topic to comprehend, even for seasoned readers of his works. Peter Burnell, however, has managed to do so with extraordinary skill by engaging in a painstaking analysis of the subtle details of Augustine's texts that oftentimes go unnoticed. As he indicates in the preface, his primary concern is to clarify Augustine's thought on the person and human nature by making plain what is implicit in his texts and subsequently correcting the distorted meanings that his critics attribute to them.

With this objective in mind, Burnell addresses seven controversial areas of Augustine's thought. Taken together, these areas cover a complex of ideas in Augustine's works that revolve around the notions of person and human nature. These areas include the relationship between body and soul, the mind's structure, the stages of the human condition, the centrality of charity in attaining *humanitas,* the essence of citizenship in human society, the nature of the divine image in human beings, and three open questions regarding human nature that

remain puzzling. In the end what emerges from this meticulous study of Augustine is a comprehensive vision of his anthropology together with a clear sense of the centrality of the person in his thought.

Burnell's primary strategy in undertaking this endeavor is to concentrate on the theme of unity. Because Augustine's critics have frequently dismissed his thought on the grounds of incoherence, Burnell sets out to demonstrate that, far from being unsystematic and undeveloped, Augustine's works display a concern for unity. Consequently, Burnell's approach to Augustine's anthropology reflects the emphasis in Augustine's texts on finding the middle path between opposing extremes, the ideal of harmony and moderation that pagan and Christian authors shared and that, by Augustine's time, had achieved a long currency in Western thought. As a Christian philosopher and theologian, Augustine was acutely aware of the necessity of the Incarnation for overcoming the division between God and humankind. Burnell effectively captures the significance of this event in Augustine's works, while at the same time subjecting his critics' objections to unrelenting logical scrutiny for their failure to observe the unifying effect of the Incarnation in those works.

Burnell's opening chapter "Soul and Body" provides a useful illustration of his approach to Augustine's texts at the same time that it sets the tone for the chapters that follow. Burnell begins his exploration of Augustine's position on human nature by focusing on the fact that a human being consists of two parts, a soul and a body. He then raises the question whether or not for Augustine a human being is one substance. Despite its simplicity, this question remains controversial among Augustine's critics, who persist in interpreting his conception of human nature dualistically given the Neoplatonic influence on his thought.

Burnell's response to the dilemma is to dialogue throughout the chapter with Augustine's critics, both past and present. In so doing, he is able to pinpoint the weaknesses in their views while highlighting the strengths of Augustine's insights into human nature. Though he rarely accepts the views of critics without some form of modification, an examination of their views nevertheless allows him to expose the problems that arise from a misguided reading of Augustine's texts and to question the legitimacy of the assumptions on which it rests.

Thus, in regard to the disputed question concerning whether or not a human being is one substance, Burnell contends that Augustine's response would be an unequivocal, "Yes." Metaphysically speaking, Augustine is a dualist because he is aware of the difference between bodily and spiritual substances and refrains from mixing them together. But his recognition of this fact does not entail the notion that a human being is reducible to a bodily being that includes a physical soul or to a spiritual being that is somehow attached to a nonhuman body. Nor does it follow that a human being is a composite of two substances: a body that is wholly independent of a soul and a soul that exists entirely apart from the body. Rather, human nature combines two distinct metaphysical substances, the intelligible and the material, in a way that allows for the possibility that an

intelligible nature formed out of dust exists as a single nature. In this sense, Augustine cannot be said to be a dualist.

Nor is dualism the cause of the fallen condition of human nature and the concupiscence that afflicts it on account of the Fall. Though Augustine never provides a definitive answer to the question concerning the soul's origin, he does emphasize that the soul is exclusively spiritual in nature. If concupiscence exists in the soul, it does so because of a human being's inner disobedience to the divine command, not because a being of this sort possesses a dualistic nature. Moreover, since no division exists between physical animation and a mental will, the soul is both purely mental and one. If the soul appears to be divided into parts because it wavers between one course of action and another, this implies that the soul is capable of directing itself in one direction or the other, not that the soul is literally divided into parts. The concupiscent soul directs its attention towards the world, the contemplative soul towards God.

In chapter 2 Burnell turns his attention to a consideration of the mind's structure or to the faculties of personality. As in the previous chapter, he initiates his inquiry into Augustine's thought with a series of questions, now with respect to the mind's unity. For Burnell the upshot of the inquiry is that, by focusing on the mind's functioning rather than on its faculties, Augustine is able to specify the difference between mental acts such as willing, understanding, and remembering at the same time that he maintains that each of these acts implies the presence of the other two. Willing, for example, partakes in the act of knowing and knowing in the act of willing. And even though willing and understanding are distinct acts, whereas willing and feeling are not (they are indistinguishable), the first two acts are nevertheless one faculty, and each is the entire mind. The same principle applies to memory because memory, too, is present in knowing and willing, and vice versa.

Burnell concludes chapter 2 by emphasizing Augustine's distinction between animal and human memory and affirming his analogy between the divine and human mind. In the latter case, Augustine recognizes that the two minds differ in that a real distinction among three persons cannot exist in a corporeal being. And yet, despite the distinct activities of willing, understanding, and remembering, the image of God exists in the whole human mind, not just in a part of it.

Augustine's views on the unity of person and mind in the first two chapters provide the background for an analysis of the compatibility of these views with the human condition. Burnell's primary objective in chapter 3, then, is to overcome the potential contradiction between the mind's activity and its fallen condition. Consequently, his analysis focuses largely on concupiscence and grace and the impact that these two dispositions have on human nature. He also reflects on the significance of original sin, infant baptism, and human destiny in the life to come. In the end, he is able to make a plausible case for the existence of human freedom despite the aftermath of the Fall.

Burnell expands his analysis of the implications of Augustine's perspective on the human condition in chapter 4 by defending the integrity of Augustine's

notion of charity, a central principle in his ethics. Noting the failure on the part of both Catholics and Protestants to discern Augustine's commitment to the unity of love, he devotes the entire chapter to excavating Augustine's insights into how this unity is possible. For Burnell, the key to understanding Augustine's thinking on love is the acceptance of the idea that charity is compassion. Moreover, all of the crucial forms of love that later theologians distinguished to correct the deficiencies in Augustine's thought are in fact present in his texts.

The examination of the unity of love leads Burnell to reflect upon the implications of this love within the context of civil society. In chapter 5 he shifts his attention to the social constitution of charity, exploring its relevance to Augustine's division of society into the heavenly city and the earthly city. The unity in Augustine's thought that Burnell seeks in this chapter pertains to the continuity between any given state (or church) and the eschatological one towards which charitable individuals strive. He is astute enough, though, to recognize that for Augustine the complete identity of these two states cannot exist at present on account of the fluidity of the religious and ethical allegiances of their inhabitants. Nevertheless, whenever continuity does exist, it depends upon an Incarnational compassion that permits citizens striving towards the realization of an eschatological state to enjoy peaceful relations with one another, if only temporarily on account of their captivity to the earthly city.

The trajectory of Burnell's conclusions in chapter 5 directs his attention in chapter 6 to the possibility of human deification, since this is the ultimate goal of the charitable inhabitants of the earthly city who long for the loving embrace of God. Because God constitutes each individual as a person on account of his compassion for others, Burnell interprets Augustine's notion of human deification in terms of the complete fulfillment of each individual.

This thumbnail sketch of the main thrust of Burnell's analysis of the Augustinian person reveals a conscious effort on his part to structure the contents of that analysis along the lines of an Augustinian ascent from the natural world to God. As his analysis unfolds, Burnell guides his reader from a consideration of the intricacies of Augustine's thought on human nature and the mind's structure to the soul's inner dispositions. He then ponders the effect that the Fall had on a human being's ability to cultivate a morally good disposition in his inner life and to promote peace and harmony in civil society in his outer life. Finally, given the human soul's eschatological longing for everlasting peace, Burnell focuses the reader's attention on the fulfillment of human nature that occurs when the twofold impulse to love the self and others coalesces in the love of God.

Burnell's Augustinian approach to St. Augustine implies as well that the human mind's attempt to arrive at a definitive understanding of the person and human nature will forever be incomplete in this life. Like Augustine before him, Burnell implicitly acknowledges the mind's limited ability to comprehend all that there is to know about the human person. It is fitting, then, that in his final chapter he addresses three open questions regarding Augustine's conception of the human person, namely, the inexplicability of evil, the meaning of civil justice,

and the implications of contemporary science for a fuller account of human nature. Burnell realizes that these questions bring both his reader and himself closer to the precipice of human understanding, beyond which the human person remains an unsolved mystery. In the meantime, though, his tenacious efforts to comprehend what can be known reveals the essential unity of Augustine's thought, defending Augustine against the charge of dualism. Burnell's book certainly deserves the highest praise in this regard because it provides a clear alternative to dualistic accounts of Augustine's works that overlook the subtleties of his thought and the Incarnational nature of his approach to mediating extremes.

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