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AQUINAS'S EXEMPLAR ETHICS

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THE PROVOCATIVE THESIS of Leonard Boyle's seminal 1983 essay entitled "The Setting of the *Summa theologae* of Saint Thomas" [1] is that the *Summa Theologiae* represents an attempt on Aquinas's part to set the pastoral or practical theology that was at the center of the Dominican curriculum into a larger theological context. According to Boyle, Aquinas used the freedom accorded to him at the *studium personale* in Rome to depart from the accepted tradition of using as principal texts (in addition, of course, to the Bible) Peter Lombard's *Sentences* for dogmatic theology and Raymond of Penyafort's *Summa de casibus* with William Peraldus's *Summa de vitiis et virtutibus* for practical theology. Dissatisfied with this approach because it disconnected moral theology from its larger setting, Aquinas set out to compose a new textbook for theology that would combine all of *sacra doctrina* into a unified whole:

> But he [Aquinas] now gave that practical theology a setting which had not been very evident in Dominican circles before him. By prefacing the Secunda or moral part with a Prima pars on God, Trinity and Creation, and then rounding it off with a Tertia pars on the Son of God, Incarnation and the Sacraments, Thomas put practical theology, the study of Christian man, his virtues and vices, in a full theological context. Christian morality, once for all, was shown to be something more than a question of straight ethical teaching or of vices and virtues in isolation. Inasmuch as man was an intelligent being who was made master of himself and possessed of freedom of choice, he was in the image of God. To

[1] Leonard Boyle, *The Setting of the "Summa theologiae" of Saint Thomas,* The Etienne Gilson Series 5 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1983).

study human action is therefore to study the image of God and to operate on a theological plane. To study human action on a theological plane is to study it in relation to its beginning and end, God, and to the bridge between, Christ and his sacraments. [2]

It is a testimony to Aquinas's conviction about the significance of this approach that he kept working on the *Summa Theologiae* long after the responsibility for educating *incipientes* ceased to be his primary charge.

As Boyle's study of the subsequent manuscript tradition reveals, however, Aquinas's grand project of situating moral or practical theology within the larger whole of *sacra doctrina* seems to have gone for naught insofar as copies of the *Secunda Secundae* soon circulated independently from the rest of the *Summa* (as did the other parts, but not as many). Neither the *Summa* as a whole nor the *Secunda Secundae* as a part played a leading role in Dominican education in the period after Aquinas's death; rather, the *Summa confessorum* of John of Fribourg, which borrowed from Aquinas, became the main guide to practical theology. Business as usual had returned, despite all of Aquinas's efforts, and moral theology remained disconnected from speculative theology. In assessing the reasons for the failure of Aquinas's vision to take hold, Boyle ends his essay by saying:

One could argue, finally, that in any case the relationship between the various parts of the *Summa* is not as clear as it might be in the various prefaces, and that Thomas profitably could have been more forthright about precisely what he was up to when, in the *Summa theologiae,* he wrote what I may now venture to call his one 'Dominican' work, and made what I have suggested was his own very personal contribution to a lopsided system of theological education in the Order to which he belonged. [3]

I esteem Leonard Boyle as one of the greatest Dominican scholars that I have known, and I think this article in particular is among his finest. Yet I would argue that the prologues of Aquinas do provide clear architectonic clues for the connections of moral

[2] Ibid., 16.
[3] Ibid., 30.

theology to the whole of theology. Specifically, I will argue in this article that the prologue to the *Secunda Pars* (implicitly referred to by Boyle in the first quotation above) gives us the decisive connection in its reference to human beings as *imago Dei.* My purpose is to try to paint a broad connective canvas showing how the doctrine of *imago Dei* means that human action, including human freedom, can only be understood in the light of the exemplar of the Trinity. The *Secunda Pars* makes sense only in the light of the *Prima Pars* and as pointing to the *Tertia Pars.*

I. QUIA HOMO FACTUS EST AD IMAGINEM DEI

The prologue to the *Secunda Pars* gives strong *prima facie* evidence that *imago Dei* is the key conceptual link between what has come before and what is yet to come:

> Because, just as Damascene said, the human person is said to be made in the image of God insofar as image implies intellectuality, free choice, and self-control, after having spoken of the exemplar, namely God, and of what came forth from the divine power in accord with God's will, it remains for us to consider God's image, the human person .... First we must consider the ultimate end of human life.[4]

The import of the opening *quia* is that somehow the doctrine of *imago dei* is the explanation for why Aquinas proceeds in the way that he does. It implies also that a proper understanding of free human agency is only possible in the light of the exemplar of God. As we shall see also, even the discussion of human beatitude presupposes the exemplar of divine beatitude. As Aquinas indicates, everything in *sacra doctrina* is conceived *sub ratione dei,* including human being and agency.[5] So before moving forward we have to look back to the *Prima Pars* to find out what is being

[4] All citations from the *Summa Theologiae* will be from the Ottawa edition (1941-45). "Quia, sicut Damascenus <licit, homo factus est ad imaginem Dei dicitur, secundum quod per imaginem significatur intellectuale et arbitrio liberum et per se potestativum; postquam praedictum de exemplari, scilicet de Deo, et de his quae processerunt ex divina potestate secundum eius voluntatem; restat ut consideremus de ejus imagine, iciest de homine ... Primo considerandum occurrit de ultimo fine humanae vitae." All translations are my own.

[5] *STh* I, q. 1, a. 7.

presupposed. Specifically, we have to look at the discussion of *imago Dei* and then behind it to the Trinity.

As Colman O'Neill has pointed out,[6] there is an early clue in the *Summa* that Aquinas's understanding of the image of God is intrinsically connected to human completion in the beatific vision. In the *sed contra* to question 4, article 3 of the *Prima Pars,* Aquinas begins his affirmative answer to the question whether creatures can resemble God by appealing to two biblical texts: (1) "Let us make man in our image and likeness" (Gen 1:26), and (2) "When he appears we shall be like him" (1 John 3:2). Protology and eschatology are here inextricably intertwined; it is not possible to understand the creation of the human person without seeing it as ordered to its end. We are made in the image and likeness of God in order to be assimilated to God, both now and in the life to come. In reply to an objection in the treatise on the Trinity that the *imago Dei* does not apply properly to the second person of the Trinity since it is also true of human beings, Aquinas notes that the second person *is* the perfect image of the Father, while humans are only said to be *ad imaginem* because their imaging of God is a dynamic tending toward a perfection to be achieved rather than an already-realized state.[7]

This becomes clear in the formal discussion of *imago Dei* in question 93 of the *Prima Pars,* which is framed in terms of the *finis* of God's creation of human beings. In the opening article Aquinas explains that what image adds to the vestigial similitude found in every creature is that it belongs to an image to be from another as an imitation of the other in its activity.[8] Exemplar causality implies both formal and final causality: an image is made like its original in form in order to become like the original through its own actions. Specifically, the difference that makes a

[6] Colman O'Neill, "L'homme ouvert a Dieu *(Capax Dei)"* in *Humain a l'image de Dieu,* ed. Pierre Buhler (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1989), 248.

[7] *STh* I, q. 35, a. *2,* ad 3. Commenting on the meaning of being created *ad imaginem Dei,* Fergus Kerr has recently remarked: "A small bit of grammar carries a good deal of theology" (Fergus *Kerr, After Aquinas: Versions of Thomism* [Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002], 124).

[8] "Similitudo est de ratione imaginis, et imago aliquid addit supra rationem similitudinis, scilicet quod sit ex alio expressum; imago enim dictitur ex eo quod agitur ad imitationem alterius" *(STh* I, q. 93, a, 1).

difference is that human beings are created with the capacity to know and love, and herein lies the formal similarity that makes us images of God. Of course, the image and the original do not share in the same form in the same way, since the infinity of God's being cannot belong to a creature; rather, the human being images God only in an imperfect way through conformity, participation, and dynamic assimilation.

The fourth and central article asks the question whether the image of God is found in every human being. Aquinas begins by arguing that human nature imitates God to the highest degree when it imitates what characterizes God's nature in the highest degree: God's own self-knowing and self-loving. He goes on to say:

> Thus the image of God in human beings can be considered in three ways: one way is insofar as human beings have a natural aptitude to know and love God, and this aptitude is constituted by the very nature of mind which is common to all people. A second way is insofar as a person actually or habitually knows and loves God, although in an imperfect manner; this kind of image is through the conformity of grace. The third way is insofar as a person actually knows and loves God perfectly, which follows from the image in accord with the similitude of glory.[9]

Here we see the dynamic relationship between nature, grace, and glory. The purpose of the creation of human nature, with its natural aptitude for knowing and loving God, is that human beings might actually know and love God through grace as the prelude to glory. Here we see also the relationship between *exitus* and *reditus,* the great architectonic theme of the *Summa.* The

[9] "Uncle imago Dei tripliciter potest considerari in homine. Uno quidem modo secundum quod homo habet aptitudinem naturalem ad intelligendum et amandum Deum; et haec aptitudo consistit in ipsa natura mentis, quae est communis omnibus hominibus. Alio modo, secundum quod homo actu vel habitu Deum cognoscit et amat, sed tamen imperfecte; et haec est imago per conformitatem gratiae. Tertio modo, secundum quod homo Deum actu cognoscit et amat perfecte; sic attenditur imago secundum similitudinem gloriae" *(STh* I, q. 93, a. 4). The best treatment of this article is found in Louis B. Geiger, "L'homme, image de Dieu: Apropos de *Summa theologiae,* Ia, 93,4," in *Rivista di filosofia neoscolastica* 66 (1974): 511-32. For a full treatment of *imago Dei,* see D. Juvenal Merriell, *To the Image of the Trinity: A Study in the Development of Aquinas' Teaching* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1990).

exitus of creation finds its consummation in the creation of the human as the image of God and, precisely for that reason, human nature has inscribed into it as image a dynamic orientation to return to the source in the peculiar way possible for an image: that is, through a freely chosen relationship with the Three-Personed God.

While Aquinas's doctrine of grace cannot be reviewed here, it is important to note that his fundamental definition of grace is "a special love by which God draws the rational creature above the condition of its nature to participate in the divine good." [10] Aquinas is a realist about grace in the sense that he thinks it is a real sharing in God's own life; it is a deification. [11] By knowing and loving God, we share in God's own life [12] and God's own beatitude. [13] The kind of activity that Aquinas associates with imaging God is not doing what God does merely in imitation of God from the outside, as one person might imitate the example of another, but rather entering into the very knowing and loving that is the Trinitarian life of God. It is an imitation of the Trinity as a real sharing in the Trinitarian life of beatitude. Aquinas makes this eminently clear in the final two articles of question 93 when he says that because "the divine persons are distinguished

[10] "Alia autem dilectio est specialis, secundum quam trahit creaturam rationalem supra conditionem naturae, ad participationem divini boni" *(STh* I-II, q. 110, a. 1).

[11] "But the infused virtues dispose man in a higher manner and towards a higher end; hence it also an ordering to some higher nature. This is nothing other than an ordering to participate in the divine nature that is called the light of glory; as it is said in 2 Peter I, 4: 'God has given us the greatest and most precious promises, that through these we become sharers in the divine nature'" ("Virtutes autem infusae disponunt hominem altiori modo, et ad altiorem finem; uncle etiam oportet quod in ordine ad aliquem altiorem naturam. Hoc est in ordine ad naturam divinam participatam quae dicitur lumen gratiae: secundum quod dicitur II Petr. 1, 4: *Maxima et pretiosa nobis promissa donavit, ut per haec efficiamini divinae consortes naturae" [STh* I-II, q. 110, a. 3]). The Eastern theme of deification in Aquinas is treated in A. N. Williams, *The Ground of Union: Deification in Aquinas and Palamas* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999). As Jean-Pierre Torrell has noted, a spirituality of deification is one of the central elements in Aquinas's theology. See his *Saint Thomas d'Aquin, maftre spirituel* (Fribourg, Switzerland: Editions Universitaires, 1996), 498-99. My reading of Aquinas is indebted to Torrell.

[12] God is life in the highest degree because God acts maximally *ex seipsis* in knowing and loving himself. See *STh* I, q. 18, a. 3.

[13] See *STh* I, q. 26.

according to the procession of the Word from the One speaking it and the Love uniting them to each other," [14] the image of God is realized in us first and foremost when our minds actually reflect that structure: "namely, insofar as from the knowledge that we have, we form an interior word through which we burst into love." [15] The structural imitation is a result of God's action in us conforming us to God's own life; our knowing and loving are only a knowing and loving of God as God when it is a sharing in God's own knowing and loving by grace or glory. [16] Precisely as a real sharing in the Trinitarian life of God, this knowing and loving presupposes and harkens back to the doctrine of divine indwelling outlined in Aquinas's treatment of the divine missions, wherein the thematic link between Trinity and creation is articulated. The key passage reads:

> The soul is conformed to God through grace. Thus in order for one of the divine persons to be sent to someone through grace, it is necessary that the one to whom the divine person is sent be assimilated to that divine person through some gift of grace. And because the Holy Spirit is Love, it is through the gift of love that the soul becomes assimilated to the Holy Spirit; hence it is through the gift of charity that we understand the mission of the Holy Spirit. The Son is the Word, not just any kind of word, however, but rather one breathing love .... Accordingly it is not as a result of just any intellectual perfection that we understand the mission of the Son, but rather according to that instruction which bursts forth into an affection of love .... Thus Augustine says expressly that *the Son is sent whithersoever he is known and perceived.* Now perception here signifies a kind of experiential awareness and this is properly called wisdom. [17]

[14] "Divinae autem Personae distinguuntur secundum processionem Verbi a dicente et Amoris connectentis utrumque" *(STh* I, q. 93, a. 7).

[15] "Et ideo primo et principaliter attenditur imago Trinitatis in mente secundum actus, prout scilicet ex notitia quam habemus, cogitando interius verbum formamus, et ex hoc in amorem prorumpimus" (ibid.).

[16] "It is God himself who proceeds from God through human acts" ("C'est Dieu lui-meme qui procede de Dieu au travers des actes humains" [Ghislain Lafont, *Structures et methode dans la somme theologique de saint Thomas d'Aquin* (Paris: Desclee de Brouwer, 1960), 270]).

[17] "Ad secundum dicendum quad anima per gratiam conformatur Deo. Uncle ad hoc quod aliqua persona divina mittatur ad aliquem per gratiam, oportet quod fiat assimilatio illius ad divinam personam quae mittitur per aliquod gratiae donum. Etquia Spiritus Sanctus est Amor, per donum caritatis anima Spiritui Sancto assimilatur. Uncle secundum donum caritatis attenditur missio Spiritus Sancti; Filius autem est Verbum, non qualecumque, sed spirans Amorem .... Non igitur secundum quamlibet perfectionem intellectus mittitur Filius, sed

The tight conceptual link between the Trinitarian missions and the doctrine of the *imago Dei* is a reflection of one of Aquinas's deepest theological intuitions structuring the *Summa* but present in his mind even in his earlier commentary on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard:

> In the going forth of creatures from their first principle there follows a kind of revolving or turning around since all things return as to their end to that principle from which they came forth. And thus it is necessary that the very same principle from which they came be that by which they return to their end. Accordingly it follows that since it has already been established that the procession of the divine persons is the pattern and explanation for the production of creatures from the first principle, it follows that that same procession be the pattern and explanation for their return to their end; because it was through the Son and the Spirit that we were created, so through them we are conjoined to our ultimate end.[18]

What this text indicates is that the *reditus* of the human person as the image of God can only be understood in the light of the procession of the Son and the Spirit. The return of the image is both patterned on and powered by the life of the Trinity. The reminder that we are looking at the human person *qua* image of God at the beginning of the *Secunda Pars* is a signal to the reader to see the moral life in the light of the exemplar of the Trinity as pattern and source. The beatitude at the heart of the *Secunda Pars* is Trinitarian. The assimilation to the divine or the deification is Trinitarian. It is by freely chosen acts of knowledge impregnated with love in union with the Trinity that we are beatified and deified. Ultimately Aquinas's moral thinking is an ethic of deifi-

secundum talem instructionem qua prorumpat in affectum amoris.... idea signanter dicit Augustinus quod *Filius mittitur cum a quoquam cognoscitur atque percipitur;* perceptio autem experimentalem quamdam notitiam significat et haec proprie dicitur sapientia" *(STh* I, q. 43, a. 5, ad 2).

[18] "In exitu creaturarum a primo principio attenditur quaedam circulatio vel regiratio, eo quod omnia revertuntur sicut in finem in id a quo sicut principio prodierunt. Et ideo oportet ut per eadem quibus est exitus a principio, et reditus in finem attendatur. Sicut igitur dictum est, quod a processio personarum est ratio productionis creaturarum a primo principio, ita etiam est eadem processio ratio redeundi in finem, quia per Filium et Spiritum sanctum sicut et conditi sumus, ita etiam et fini ultimo conjungimur" (I *Sent.,* d. 14, q. *2,* a. *2* [*Scriptum super libros sententiarum,* vol. 1, ed. Pierre Mandonnet (Paris: Lethielleux 1929), 325]).

cation or beatification; the moral life is a progressive entering into inchoate beatitude through actions in union with the triune God. It is especially through the exemplar causality of the Son and the Spirit that we become who God created us to be. We may now follow out that assimilative pattern.

II. CHRIST: VIA EST NOBIS TENDENDI IN DEUM

If the goal of life is progressive assimilation into the Trinity, then the way along that path lies through Christ, whom Aquinas describes in the prologue to question 2 of the *Tertia Pars* as "For us the way of tending toward God" *(via est nobis tendendi in Deum).* In the prologue to the *Tertia Pars,* Aquinas says:

> Because our Lord and Savior Lord Jesus Christ, "in saving his people from their sins" as the angel said, demonstrated to us the way of truth in himself by which we can arrive at the happiness of eternal life by rising up, it is necessary in order to bring this entire theological enterprise to its fulfillment that, after considering the ultimate end of human life along with the virtues and vices, our consideration turns to the Savior of all and the benefits offered by him to the human race.[19]

That the consideration of Christ is necessary "to bring this entire theological work to its fulfillment" implies that the deepest meaning of what has thus far been written cannot be understood apart from Christ the Savior. What I want to suggest here is that Christ as exemplar is necessary to understand the *reditus* of the image described in the *Secunda Pars.*[20] The way into Trinitarian beatitude is through Christ, especially through the cultivation of

[19] "Quia salvator noster Dominus Jesus Christus, teste angelo, *populum suum salvum faciens a peccatis eorum,* viam veritatis nobis in seipso demonstravit, per quam ad beatitudinem immortalis vitae resurgendo pervenire possumus, necesse est ut ad consummationem totius theologici negotii, post considerationem ultimi finis humanae vitae et virtutum et vitiorum, de ipso omnium Salvatore et beneficiis ejus humano generi praestitis nostra consideratio subsequatur" *(STh* III, pro.).

[20] I will leave out the healing *(gratia sanans)* work of Christ here and concentrate on the way in which union with Christ elevates human nature *(gratia elevans)* because I am focusing on the theme of deification.

the virtue of Christ, which sheds new light on the entire discussion of virtue in the *Secunda Pars.*

In discussing the motive for the Incarnation, Aquinas consistently stresses our need for Christ as moral exemplar in order to attain beatitude. In question 1, article 2 of the *Tertia Pars,* where he discusses the necessity of the Incarnation in order that we might better and more fittingly attain our end *(per quad melius convenientius pervenitur ad finem),* he enumerates five reasons why the Incarnation furthers us in the achievement of our good. Two of them bear on the themes of this paper: (1) "for the sake of right action, in that he has given us an example in his own life"[21] and (2) "for the sake of a full participation in divinity, in which lies our beatitude and the end of human life, and this is bestowed on us through the humanity of Christ."[22] In the parallel discussion in the *Summa contra Gentiles,* Aquinas begins by noting that the Incarnation is the most efficacious help in our journey to beatitude because it gives us hope that we can attain it. More relevant to my concerns here, however, are remarks that Aquinas goes on to make about our need for a moral exemplar in order to acquire virtue:

> It is clear that beatitude is the reward of virtue. Accordingly it is necessary that those striving for beatitude be disposed in accord with virtue. But we are led to virtue by both words and examples. Now the words and example of another are more effective in inculcating virtue the more confident we are in our opinion regarding that person's goodness. Regarding no person, however, can there be completely infallible opinion about his or her goodness because even the holiest people are found deficient in some things. Hence it was necessary for us, so as to be confirmed in virtue, that we receive teaching and examples of virtue from God-made-man. For this reason our Lord said: I have given you an example so that just as I have done, so too you also might do On 13:15).[23]

[21] "Quantum ad rectum operationem, in qua nobis exemplum se praebuit" *(STh* III, q. *1,* a. 2). The end of the corpus indicates that this formulation comes from a sermon of Leo the Great.

[22] "Quantum ad plenam participationem divinitatis quae vere est hominis beatitudo et finis humanae vitae et hoc collatum est nobis per Christi humanitatem" (ibid.).

[23] "Similiter etiam manifestum est quod beatitudo virtutis est praemium. Oportet igitur ad beatitudinem tendentes secundum virtutem disponi. Ad virtutem autem et verbis et exemplis provocamur. Exempla autem alicuius et verba tanto efficacius ad virtutem inducunt, quanto de eo firmior bonitatis habetur opinio. De nullo autem homine puro infallibilis opinio

It is a standard Aristotelian doctrine that one needs the example of a *phronimos* in order to learn virtue. Aquinas shows here, however, that the need for Christ as moral exemplar is fundamentally a Johannine claim closely connected with what might be termed an Augustinian intuition that the reality of sin implies that we cannot count on anyone being a completely virtuous moral exemplar.

The need for the Incarnation in order to provide a moral exemplar is connected with the doctrine of *imago Dei*. Apart from Incarnation, how would we know how to imitate Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? As Aquinas says in commenting on 1 Corinthians 11:1:

> The primordial principle of the procession of things is the Son of God, as it says in Jn 1: *Through him all things are made.* Thus He Himself is the primordial exemplar who is imitated by all creatures as the true and perfect image of the Father. ... But in a special way He is the exemplar of the spiritual graces which shine forth in spiritual creatures .... Having been generated before all creatures in resplendent grace, he has in an exemplar way in himself all the splendors of all the saints. Previously the exemplar was exceedingly remote from us.... And thus He willed to become human so that he might give to humans a human exemplar. [24]

The inaccessibility of the internal life of the Godhead is remedied by Incarnation. God the Father is only knowable to us through his perfect image, the Son, and in the Spirit. We are only conformed to the Father through conformity to Christ: "since the Son is

bonitatis haberi poterat quia etiam sanctissimi viri in aliquibus inveniuntur defecisse. Uncle necessarium fuit homini, ad hoc quod in virtute firmaretur, quod a Deo humanato doctrinam et exempla virtutis acciperet. Propter quod ipse Dominus dicit, Ioan.XIII.15: *Exemplum dedi vobis, ut quemadmodum ego feci, ita et vos faciatis"* (ScG IV, c. 54; I am citing the *Editio leonina manualis* [Rome, 1934]).

[24] "Primordiale autem principium totius processionis rerum est Filius Dei, secundum illud Io. l: 3: *Omnia per ipsum facta sunt.* Et Ipse ideo est primordiale exemplar, quod omnes creaturae imitantur tamquam veram et perfectam imaginem Patris.... Speciali tamen quodam modo exemplar est spiritualium gratiarum ,quibus spirituales creaturae illustrantur .... Genitus est ante omnem creaturam per gratiam lucentem, habens exemplariter in se splendores omnium sanctorum. Hoc autem exemplar prius erat a nobis valde remotum .... Et idea homo fieri voluit ut hominibus exemplar humanum praeberet" *(Super primam epistolam ad Corinthios lectura,* c. 11, lect. 1 [in *Super Epistolas Pauli lectura,* 8th ed., ed. Raphaelis Cai (Rome: Marietti, 1953), 1:583]).

similar to the Father in sharing the same essence, it is necessary that if a person is made into the image of Christ, he will also be made into the image of the Father." [25] It is important to note that Christ's exemplarity is not merely at the level of a moral model to be imitated, as one might imitate a saint, but rather also involves genuine exemplar causality such that it is through Christ, and especially Christ's humanity, that we are made capable of acting in imitation of Christ. We are created in his exemplar likeness and actively enter into that likeness through Christ's grace.

As Gillon [26] and Torrell [27] have pointed out, the idea of the moral life as an *imitatio Christi* is not prominent in Aquinas's systematic works, while it does figure prominently in his Scripture commentaries and in his preaching. [28] It is not entirely absent from the *Summa Theologiae,* however, insofar as Aquinas accepts the theological axiom that every action of Christ is meant to be an instruction for us.[29] As Torrell has noted, the Christology of the *Tertia Pars* is unique in the medieval period for the way in which it incorporates an extended treatment of the mysteries of the life of Christ as an integral part (qq. 27-59); the entirety of the life of Christ is a *mysterion* with both exemplar and soteriological significance for us.[30] No part of Christ's life is more important as an *exemplum* in our own lives than his passion:

[25] "Cum secundum aequalitatem essentiae Filius sit Patri similis, necesse est si homo sit factus ad similitudinem Filii quod sit factus ad similitudinem Patris." *STh* Ia. 93, 5 ad 4.

[26] L.-B. Gillon, "L'imitation du Christ et la morale de saint Thomas," *Angelicum* 36 (1959): 263-86.

[27] J.-P. Torrell, "Imiter Dieu comme des enfants bien-aime," in *Recherches thomasiennes* (Paris: J. Vrin, 2000), 325-35.

[28] Torrell notes that one of the main themes of Aquinas's preaching is *imitatio Christi* ("La pratique pastorale d'un theologien du XIIIe siecle," *in Recherches thomasiennes,* 303-4). For example, in *De decem preceptis* IX, Aquinas says: "the deeds of Christ should be an example for us in all our actions" ("in omnibus factis nostris factum Christi debet esse exemplum nobis"). I am citing the critical Leonine edition as established by Torrell, "Les *Collationes de decem preceptis,"* in *Recherches Tomasiennes,* p. 79, ll. 12-13.

[29] See Richard Schenk, *"Omnis Christi actio nostra est instructio:* The Deeds and Sayings of Jesus as Revelation in the View of Thomas Aquinas," in *La doctrine de la revelation divine de saint Thomas d'Aquin,* ed. Leon Elders, *Studi Tomistici* 37 (Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1990), 104-31.

[30] Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Le "Somme" de saint Thomas* (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1998), 83.

For as blessed Augustine says, the passion of Christ suffices completely as instruction for our lives. Whoever wills to live perfectly should do nothing other than to contemn what Christ contemned on the Cross and desire what Christ desired. No example of virtue is lacking from the Cross.[31]

It is the life of Christ contemplated in its totality that gives the Christian an example of what it means to live in the image of the triune God. It is above all else an example of virtue, the key category of the *Secunda Pars,* because it is the inculcation of the right sets of dispositions that is crucial to making the free choices in the fabric of our own lives as images of God. Christ gives us an example of how to make our way to our end, but that way must be realized and indeed created in the particular context of our own lives, especially through charity and prudence. This is not a slavish imitation but rather a free creation; we cannot copy exactly the life of Christ, we can only imitate it. And this cannot be accomplished without the Spirit:

We read in Sacred Scripture that we are configured to the Son: *You have received the Spirit of adoption as sons* (Rm 8:15) and *Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts.* Now nothing is configured to something else except by the seal of what is proper to the model. For we see in created natures that what conforms something to itself does so through something from itself (as when semen makes a man like a man instead of a horse). But the Holy Spirit is from the Son as his proper seal, hence it is said of Christ *that he has signed us, sealed us, and given us the pledge of the Spirit in our hearts.*[32]

[31] *In symbolorum apostolorum expositio,* a. 4 (ed. R. Spiazzi [Rome: Marietti, 1954], nn. 919-20). It bears recalling here how devoted Aquinas was to meditating on the Cross of Christ in his own personal piety.

[32] "Habetur autem ex sacra Scriptura quod per Spiritum sanctum configuramur Filio, secundum illud Rom. VIII, 15: *Acceptistis Spiritum adoptionis filiorum;* et Galat. IV, 6: *Quoniam estis filii, misit Deus Spiritum Fillii sui in corda vestra.* Nihil autem configuratur alicui nisi per eius proprium characterem. In naturis etiam creatis ita est quod id quod conformat aliquid alicui est ab eo; sicut semen hominis non assimilatur equo, sed homini a quo est. Spiritus autem sanctus est a Filio tanquam proprius character eius; unde dicitur de Christo, II Cor. I, 21-22: *Quad sigrzavitnos et unxit nos et dedit pigrzusSpiritus in cordibus nostris" (De Potentia,* q. 10, a. 4 [in *Quaestiones Disputatae,* vol. 2, ed. P. M. Pession et alia (Rome: Marietti, 1953)]).

III. PER SPIRITUM SANCTUM DEO CONFIGURAMUR

A suggestive text from the *Summa contra Gentiles* links the Spirit to some of the key concepts of this paper and describes it, like Christ, as our way to beatitude:

> In order to attain the fruition of beatitude, which is proper to God by his nature, it is necessary first that we be assimilated to God through spiritual perfections, then act in accord with them, and so achieve beatitude. The spiritual gifts are given to us by the Holy Spirit, as established already. Thus it is through the Holy Spirit that we are configured to God, through the Holy Spirit that we are rendered fit for good works, and through the Holy Spirit that the way to beatitude is opened to us.[33]

It is through the Holy Spirit that we are deified, assimilated, conformed, and beatified. This begins with the gift of sanctifying grace and flowers in all the other ways in which our sharing in the divine nature transforms our capacities for action through the theological virtues (especially charity), the infused moral virtues, the gifts, and the beatitudes. It is obviously not possible here to rehearse all this. What I want to do is to examine two key treatises in the *Summa Theologiae*[34] that display a particular emphasis on the role of the mission of the Holy Spirit in the moral life, especially with respect to the way in which our actions imitate the freedom of God as a sharing in the Trinity.

The discussion of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in question 68 of the *Prima Secundae* follows the general discussion of virtue as the interior principle of good human action. The first question Aquinas considers is whether or not the traditional sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit should be considered as distinct principles of good human action in addition to the virtues. The objections and

[33] "Ad hoc quod homo ad beatitudinem fruitionis, quae Deo propria est secundum suam naturam, perveniat, necesse est, primo quidem quod sunt spirituales perfectiones Deo assimiletur; et deinde secundum eas operatur; et sic tandem praedictam beatitudinem consequetur. Dona autem spiritualia nobis per Spiritum Sanctum dantur, ut ostensum est. Et sic per Spiritum Sanctum Deo configuramur; et per ipsum ad bene operandum habiles reddimur; et per eundem ad beatitudinem nobis via paratur" *(ScG* IV, c. 21).

[34] Albert Patfoort calls them "zones de grande concentration pneumatologique" in *Thomas d'Aquin: Les cles d'une theologie* (Paris: PAC-editions, 1983), 83.

the opening part of the reply itself propose various arguments to reduce the gifts to the virtues. In resolving the question, Aquinas argues that the key is to look carefully at how Scripture (Isa 11:2) emphasizes that the gifts are spiritual, implying that they are in us by divine inspiration. He goes on to explain that the term "inspiration" implies a motion from without *(exterior),* meaning that the gifts are distinct from the interior moving principle of human action (reason).[35] As we shall see, it is vital not to construe the Spirit of God "moving" as an "exterior" principle as though it were like a physical object moving another object exterior to it in space. Aquinas goes on to say that whatever is moved must be proportioned to what moves it, and that the greater the perfection of the mover, the greater the degree of readiness presupposed in the mover; for example, the greater the mind of the teacher, the more finely developed the student must be. The human virtues dispose a person to be docile to the judgment of human reason, as is natural for us. But the human virtues do not by themselves make us docile to be moved by God; hence there must be higher perfections that dispose us to be moved by God, and these are the gifts of the Holy Spirit. They are called such not just because they

[35] "In order to distinguish the gifts from the virtues, we must follow the mode of speaking in Scripture, in which they are given to us not under the name of 'gifts,' but rather under the name 'spirits.' For thus it is said in Isaiah 11,2: 'There shall come upon him a spirit of wisdom and understanding, etc.' From these words it is obvious that we are to understand that these seven are enumerated there insofar as they are in us by divine inspiration. Inspiration signifies some kind of motion from without. Now it must be kept in mind that there are two moving principles in man: one of them is interior, that is reason; the other is exterior, that is God, as was said earlier. Aristotle says the same thing in his work *On Good Fortune"* ("Ad distinguendum dona a virtutibus debemus sequi modum loquendi Scripturae, in qua nobis traduntur non quidem sub nomine donorum, sed magis sub nomine spirituum; sic enim dicitur *Isaiae* XI, 2: *Requiescet super eum spiritus sapientiae et intellectus,* etc. Ex quibus verbis manifeste datur intelligi quod ista septem enumberantur ibi, secundum sunt in nobis ab inspiratione divina. Inspiratio significat quandam motionem ab exteriori. Est enim considerandum quod in homine est duplex principium mavens: unum quidem interius, quod est ratio; aliud exterius, quod est Deus, ut supra dictum est [9, 4 and 6]; et etiam Philosophus <licit hoc in cap. *De bona fortuna").* The *Liber de bona fortuna* was the only part of the *Eudemian Ethics* known to the medievals; it corresponds to book 7, chaps. 14-15. On the role of this text in shaping Aquinas's thought, see Th. Deman, "Le *Liber de bona fortuna* clans la theologie des. Thomas d'Aquin," *Revue des sciences philosophiqueset theologiques* 17 (1928): 38-58; and Cornelio Fabro, "Le *liberde bona fortuna* de l' *Ethique aEudeme* d'Aristote et la dialectique de la providence divine chez saint Thomas," *Revue thomiste* 88 (1988): 556-72.

come from God, but rather also because they dispose us to be easily moved by divine inspiration. [36]

The subsequent history of moral theology has shown a tendency to identify the "higher acts" to which we are disposed by the gifts of the Holy Spirit as mystical. Yet Aquinas goes on in the next article *(STh* I-II, q. 68, a. 2) to ask whether or not the gifts are necessary for *salvation.* And the answer is affirmative:

> Human reason is perfected in two ways by God: first, by a natural perfection, that is by the light of natural reason; in another way by supernatural perfections, that is by the theological virtues (as said above). And while this second kind of perfection is higher than the first, nonetheless the first is possessed in a more perfect manner by us because it belongs to us as fully possessed, while the second is possessed in an imperfect way because we love and know God imperfectly .. . . Yet anything that possesses some nature or form or virtue imperfectly cannot act through itself, but only as moved by another. ... Accordingly when it comes to those matters which are subject to human reason in its orientation to its connatural end, we may act through the judgement of reason .... But as ordered to a ultimately supernatural end, with respect to which reason is in some way only imperfectly disposed by the theological virtues, the direction of reason is not sufficient unless there comes to it from above an instinct and movement of the Holy Spirit; as it says in Romans 8:14, 17: *Those who are led by the Spirit are sons of God, and if Sons .. . also heirs;* it also says in Psalm 142:10: *Your good*

[36] "Now it is evident that whatever is moved must be proportionate to the mover. The perfection of the mover insofar as it is moveable is the disposition by which it is disposed to be moved well by its mover. Accordingly, the more the mover is higher than the moved, the more it is necessary that what is moved be proportioned to it by a more perfect disposition, just like we see that a student must be more perfectly disposed in order to grasp a higher doctrine from his teacher. But it is clear that the virtues perfect human beings insofar as they are born to be moved by reason in what they do either interiorly or exteriorly. Accordingly, there must be present in human beings higher perfections, through which they are disposed to be moved by God. Now these perfections are called "gifts", not only because they are infused by God, but also because through them it comes about that man is disposed to be promptly moved by divine inspiration" ("Manifestum est autem quod omne quod movetur, necesse est proportionatum esse motori; et haec est perfectio mobilis in quantum est mobile, dispositio qua disponitur ad hoc quod bene moveatur a suo motore. Quan to igitur movens est altior, tanto necesse est quod mobile perfectiori dispositione ei proportionetur; sicut videmus quod perfectius oportet esse discipulum dispositum ad hoc quod altiorem doctrinam capiat a doctore. Manifestum est autem quod virtutes humae perficiunt hominem secundum quod homo natus est moveri per rationem in his quae interius vel exterius agit. Oportet igitur inesse homini altiores perfectiones, secundum quas sit dispositus ad hoc quod divinitus moveatur. Et istae perfectiones vocantur dona, non solum quia infunduntur a Deo; sed quia secundum ea homo disponitur ut efficiatur prompte mobilis ab inspiratione divina").

Spirit leads me into the right land. For no one can attain the inheritance of that land of the blessed unless he is led by the Spirit. And so in order to attain that end, it is necessary that we have the Gift of the Holy Spirit.[37]

Aquinas's doctrine on the gifts of the Holy Spirit is a reminder that our sharing in the divine life is always imperfect and fragile, both because of the discrepancy between creature and Creator and because of the reality of sin. We need a special docility to the movement of the Spirit in order that our interior sources of action might be unified in responding to the promptings of God. The purpose of the gifts is not to inspire us to actions that go "beyond" the virtues in a supererogatory fashion, but rather to remedy the imperfect mode of how we act when it comes to what pertains to the divine. By describing the movement of the Spirit as an *instinctus* or impulse, Aquinas implies that while this motion originates in God, it is nonetheless interior to us like the natural impulse to the good commensurate with our nature; it is "exterior" in the sense that its source is in a transcendent other rather than in the sense of being "external."[38] Because this movement is associated with the Holy Spirit, there is an affective component to it, yet because it is meant to provide some kind of guidance, it is also cognitive. In this way it recalls the central

[37] "Ratio autem hominis est perfecta dupliciter a Deo: primo quidem naturali perfectione, scilicet secundum lumen naturale rationis; alio autem modo, quadam supernaturali perfectione, per virtutes theologicas, ut dictum est supra. Et quamvis haec secunda perfectio sit major quam prima, tamen prima perfectio perfectiori modo habetur ab homine quam secunda; nam prima habetur ab homine quasi plena possessio, secunda autem habetur quasi imperfecta; imperfecte enim diligimus et cognoscimus Deum .... Sed id quod imperfecte habet naturam aliquam vel formam aut virtutem non potest per se operari, nisi ab altero moveatur. .. Sic igitur quantum ad ea quae subsunt humanae rationi, in ordine scilicet ad finem connaturalem homini, homo potest operari per judicium rationis .... Sed in ordine ad finem ultimum supernaturalem, ad quern ratio movet secundum quod est aliqualiter et imperfecte informata per virtutes theologicas, non sufficit ipsa motio rationis, nisi desuper adsit instinctus et motio Spiritus Sancti; secundum illud *Rom.* VIII 14, 17: *Qui Spiritu Dei aguntur, hi filii Dei sunt*. .. *et haeredes;* et in *Psalmo* 117: 10 <licit:*Spiritus tuus bonus deducet me in terram rectam;* quia scilicet in haereditem illius terrae beatorum nullus potest pervenire, nisi moveatur et ducatur a Spiritu Sancto. Et ideo ad ilium finem consequendum, necessarium est homini habere donum Spiritus Sancti."

[38] On the gifts as "instincts" see Servais Pinckaers, "L'instinct et L'Esprit au coeur de l'ethique chretienne," in *Novitas et veritas vitae,* ed. C.-J. Pinto de Oliviera (Fribourg, Switzerland: Editions Universitaires, 1991), 213-23.

teaching about the divine indwelling being a *notitta experimentalis,* a word breathing love. It results in a loving sense of what God wants; not, perhaps, a full understanding of why but rather a feel for what is right. Aquinas assigns each gift to a corresponding virtue, seeing the two principles as working in synergy, with the gifts disposing us to act in accord with the prompting of the Spirit and in accord with virtue. Charity is what binds the virtues and the gifts together: "Hence just as the moral virtues are connected together through prudence, so the gifts of the Holy Spirit are connected to each other in charity such that whoever has charity has all the gifts of the Spirit, none of which can be had without charity. "[39]

At this point, however, we encounter a paradox about freedom. Aquinas's doctrine of the gifts stresses that someone who acts in accord with the Spirit is *moveatur ab alio.* Yet the prologue to the *Secunda Pars,* where this all began and where it now will end, describes the human person as reflecting the image of the Trinity in being originative through itself of action and in being the principle of its own activities *(per se potestativum, suorum operum principium)* because of its intellect and freedom of choice. How can the image be both the principle of its own actions and moved by another? What sort of freedom is compatible with being in the image of God? In order to answer this question, I want to turn our attention to the other great pneumatological zone of the *Summa.*

IV. UBI EST SPIRITUS, IBI EST LIBERTAS

It is worth noting that the climax of the *Prima Secundae* is the classic Pauline triptych of sin, law, and grace, with the link between law and grace being Aquinas's treatise on the New Law (qq. 106-8). It should not be surprising, then, to discover that ultimately Aquinas's account of freedom is more Pauline than

[39] "Uncle sicut virtutes morales connectuntur sibi invicem in prudentia, ita dona Spritus Sancti connectuntur sibi invicem in caritate; ita scilicet quod qui caritatem habet, omnia dona Spiritus Sancti habet, quorum nullum sine caritate haberi potest" *(STh* I-II, q. 68, a. 5).

Aristotelian, [40] and completely outside the box of contemporary philosophical debates about freedom in terms of libertarianism and compatibilism. [41] The interplay of Aristotelian and Pauline notions of freedom comes into clear focus in a parallel text in the *Summa contra Gentiles* where Aquinas discusses the effects of the Spirit in moving creatures toward God:

It should be noted that those made sons of God by the Holy Spirit do not act as slaves, but as free people. For since to be free means "to cause oneself" to act *[causa sui],* we act freely when we act from ourselves. This is to act from our wills, for when we act against our will we act in a servile manner rather than freely, whether that be through unqualified violence-as *when the entire principle of the action is outside the agent and the agent contributes nothing,* as when someone is pushed to move-or whether it be violence mixed with voluntariness as when someone is forced to do or suffer something less contrary to his will in order to evade something even more contrary. But the Holy Spirit inclines us to act so that we act by our wills insofar as we have been made lovers of God. Accordingly, those who have been freed by the Spirit act out of love, not out of servility. Hence the Apostle says in *Romans* 8:15: *You did not receive a spirit of slavery leading once more to fear, but a spirit of adoptive sonship.*[42]

In this remarkable passage we see Aquinas using Aristotelian concepts to promote a Pauline view of freedom. Aquinas is fond of the Aristotelian axiom *fiber est qui causa sui est.*[43] Now this

[40] See Torrell, *Maitre spirituel,* 266-73; Bernard Montagnes, "Autonomie et <lignite de l'homme," *Angelicum* 51 (1974): 186-211.

[41] I argue at length for this in "Beyond Libertarianism and Compatibilism: Thomas Aquinas on Created Freedom," in *Freedom and the Human Person,* ed. Richard Velkley (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2007), 70-89.

[42] "Considerandum tamen est quod a Spiritu Sancto filii Dei aguntur non sicut servi, sed sicut liberi. Cum enim liber *sit qui causa sui est* [I Meta. 982b], illud libere agimus quod ex nobis ipsis agimus. Hoc vero est quod ex voluntate agimus: quo autem agimus contra vountatem, non libere, sed serviliter agimus; sive sit violentia absoluta ut *quando totum principium est extra, nihil conferente vim passio* [III Ethics 111Ob] puta cum aliquis vi impellitur ad motum; sive sit violentia voluntario mixta, ut cum aliquis vult facere vel pati quod minus est contrarium voluntati, ut evadat quod magis voluntati contrariatur. Spiritus autem Sanctus sic nos ad agendum inclinat ut nos voluntarie agere faciat, inquantum nos amatores Dei constituit. Filii igitur Dei libere a Spiritu Sancto aguntur ex amore, non serviliter. Uncle Apostolus, *Rom VIII: 15: Non acceptistis spiritum servitutis iterum in timore, sed Spiritum adoptionis filiorum"* (ScG IV, c. 22).

[43] I am indebted here to C.-J. Pinto de Oliveira, "Une morale de liberte evangelique aux prises avec une eglise des pecheurs," in Oliveira, ed., *Novitas et veritas vitae,* 191-211.

cannot be taken in a libertarian sense of an origination of action independent of any antecedent metaphysical causality or divine causality. Aquinas makes this clear in the context of answering an objection-based on the principle that free action must be *causa sui-that* human beings do not have free choice because God moves the will as its first cause. In replying, Aquinas makes an important distinction between *causa sui* and *prima causa sui:*

> Free choice is the cause of its own motion because the human person moves himself to act through free choice. But it is not necessary for liberty that what is free be the *first* cause of itself, just as neither is it required that what is the cause of another be the first cause of it. Accordingly, God is the first cause moving both natural and voluntary causes. And just as by moving natural causes God does not take away their natural quality, so in moving voluntary causes God does not annul the voluntary character of their activities but rather makes them to be voluntary, for God operates in each in accord with its own properties. [44]

God is the *causa prima* of all human action, both in the order of nature and in the order of grace, in accord with the priority of act over potency and in accord with the priority of grace to human initiative. Paradoxically, God's motion causes the human will to choose freely; God's ultimate causality is somehow the explanation for human freedom rather than its enemy. Aquinas interprets the connection that Aristotle makes between free action and being *causa sui* in terms of its political meaning (i.e., the distinction between a free person and a slave) rather than as a claim about causal origination. A free person, in contrast to a slave, is someone whose actions come from out of his own self and for his own sake (rather than for the sake of another). [45]

[44] "Liberum arbitrium est causa sui motus, quia homo per liberum arbitrium sepisum movet ad agendum. Non tamen hoc est de necessitate libertatis quod sit prima causa sui id quod liberum est; sicut nee ad hoc quod aliquid sit causa alterius requiritur quod sit prima causa eius. Deus igitur est prima causa movens et naturales causas et voluntarias. Et sicut naturales causis, movendo eas, non aufert quin actiones earum sint naturales; ita movendo causas voluntarias non aufert quin actiones earum sint voluntariae, sed potius hoc in eis facit; operatur enim in unoquoque secundum eius proprietatem" (*STh* I, q. 83, a. 1, ad 3; emphasis added).

[45] "Ille homo proprie dicitur liber, qui non est alterius causa, sed est causa suiipsius. Servi enim dominorum sunt, et propter dominos operantur, et eis acquirunt quicquid acquirunt" (I *Metaphys.*, lect. 3 [ed. R. Spiazzi (Rome: Marietti, 1950) no. 58]). Aquinas sees precisely

Freedom is the capacity to orientate oneself from within toward that good which is one's ultimate completion. A servile will is one that is unable to set its own end and pursue it spontaneously. Aquinas sees the Holy Spirit not as violent external agent, but rather as acting through the power of love and friendship to incline our wills interiorly towards God as our own good precisely insofar as our being incorporated into the life of the Trinity makes God's good our own by participation. The primary model of causality here is friendship and love, not a Deistic *Deus ex machina* or a Frankfurt-style malevolent demon operating on our brains. God inclines us from within through love and frees us from slavery to sin. How that exactly works Aquinas does not say. It is axiomatic for him, however, that "God does not work within us without us," and that both at the moment of conversion (operative grace) and in the life of the Spirit, grace works through human freedom. [46]

The parallel text in the *Summa Theologiae* is in the treatise on the New Law *(STh* I-II, qq. 106-8), which Aquinas defines as *gratia Spiritus sancti* given through faith in Christ; it is through this that we attain our ultimate end. [47] Aquinas discusses there whether it is appropriate for the New Law to enjoin or forbid external works, and remarks that while it is fitting for some external actions to be enjoined or forbidden by the New Law because they are either necessary for or contrary to faith working through love, the New Law of Christ leaves most things to

this kind of freedom as characteristic of God in a *sed contra* in *De Veritate,* q. 23, a. 1, *s.c.* 4: "Liber enim est qui sui causa est, secundum philosophum in 1 Metaphysicorum, quod maxime de Deo verificatur" *(Quaestiones Disputatae,* vol. 1, ed. R. Spiazzi [Rome: Marietti, 1953]).

[46] I have discussed the general problem in "Divine Causation and Human Freedom in Aquinas," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 72 (1998): 99-122. On grace specifically, see *STh* I-II, q. 111, a. 2, ad 2: "God does not justify us without us, since through the motion of free will we consent when we are justified by God's justice; that motion is not the cause of grace, however, but rather its effect" ("Deus non sine nobis nos justificat, quia per motum liberi arbitrii, dum justificamur, Dei justitiae consentimus. Ille autem motus non est causa gratiae, sed effectus"). See also *STh* II-II, q. 52, a. 1, ad 3.

[47] "Nothing can be closer to the ultimate end than what is immediately brought there, and this is what the New Law does" ("Nihil enim potest esse propinquius fini ultimo quam quod immediate in finem ultimum introducit, hoc enim facit nova lex" *[STh* I-II, q. 106, a. 4]).

individual discretion.[48] The New Law is thus fundamentally an ethic of prudence and a *lex libertatis.* In response to an objection that any kind of prescription is contrary to freedom, Aquinas answers:

> According to the Philosopher, "a free person is self-causing." Thus someone does something freely when the action is from him. Now a person who acts by virtue of a habit in accord with his own nature acts from himself because a habit inclines us in a natural way. But if the habit were to be opposed to nature, then the person would not act from himself but rather in accord with some corruption that he has taken on. Accordingly the grace of the Holy Spirit is like an interior habit infused into us, inclining us to righteous action, that makes us free to do what is in accord with grace and to avoid what is repugnant to grace. Thus the New Law is said to be a law of liberty in two ways. First, because it does not compel us with respect to what must be done or avoided except in those matters that are necessary or repugnant to salvation and that fall under the prescription or prohibition of the law. Second, because even with respect to precepts or prohibitions of this kind, it enables us to fulfill them freely insofar as we fulfill them from an inner instinct of grace. And for these two reasons the new law is said to be a law of perfect liberty.[49]

Here we see that the paradigm of free action is virtuous action, insofar as it flows out of the second nature of a person that is the

[48] "But there are other works which are not necessarily contrary to or in accordance with faith working through love. These works are neither enjoined or prohibited by the original establishment of the law; rather, they are left by the legislator, namely Christ, to each person insofar as he must exercise care for others" ("Alia vero sunt opera quae non habent necessariam contrarietatem vel convenientiam ad fidem per dilectionem operantem. Et talia opera non sunt in vova lege praecepta vel prohibita ex ipsa prima legis institutione sed relicta sunt a legislatore, scilicet Christo, unicuique secundum quod aliquis curam gerere debet" *[STh* I-II, q. 108, a. 1]).

[49] "Secundum philosophum in *IMetaph* [982b26], *fiber est qui sui causa est.* Ille ergo libere aliquid agit qui ex seipso agit. Quod autem homo agit ex habitu suae naturae convenienti ex seipso agit, quia habitus inclinat in modum naturae. Si vero habitus esset naturae repugnans, homo non ageret secundum quod est ipse, sed secundum aliquam corruptionem sibi supervenientem. Quia igitur gratia Spiritus sancti est sicut interior habitus nobis infusus, inclinans nos ad recte operand um, facit nos libere operari ea quae conveniunt gratiae, etvitare ea quae gratiae repugnant. Sic igitur lex nova dicitur lex libertatis dupliciter. Uno modo quia non arctat nos ad facienda vel vitanda aliqua, nisi quae de se sunt vel necessaria vel repugnantia saluti, quae cadunt sub praecepto vel prohibitione legis. Secundo quia hujusmodi etiam praecepta vel prohibitiones facit nos libere implere, inquantum ex interiori instinctu gratiae ea implemus. Et propter haec duo lex nova dicitur *lex perfectae libertatis* (lac. 1:25)" *(STh* I-II, q. 108, a. 1, ad 3).

creation and the deposit of his or her own free actions. It is not a liberty of indifference, but a freedom for the good that accords with our nature. Action in accord with vice, by contrast, is the paradigm of unfree action and so a kind of slavery since it leads us to what does not fulfill our nature. Action in accord with the New Law of the grace of the Holy Spirit is like virtuous action because it flows from a *habitus* infused in us in accord with our divinized nature. Insofar as we have become sharers in the divine nature, actions that flow from the Spirit are actions that flow freely and spontaneously from within us.

The parallel between nature and grace, virtue and the New Law, points to one of the most important intuitions in Aquinas's thinking: the interior origin of morality. When Aquinas describes law as an "exterior" principle,[50] this is only to say that it originates in God, not that it involves heteronomy; "exterior" here means having its ultimate origin in another (God) rather than being "outside" or "coercive." Both the natural law and the New Law are *indita a Dea*, inscribed in our hearts, built into our natures both created and graced. In discussing natural law, Aquinas remarks that rational creatures share in the Eternal Law in a special way as being provident for self and others as God is provident.[51] Natural law is our sharing in the eternal law in a manner commensurate with our status as images of God; it is precisely because we are created in the image of God that the source of morality must be interior to us. God implants within our nature the resources to know the good and an attraction for it. We recognize the good as something to be done because we are created with an affinity for it; because God the creator is God the legislator, the natural law is nothing other than our recognition of what we must do to become what we were created to be. In this

[50] In the prologue to the treatise on law at the head of *STh* I-II, q. 90, Aquinas says: "The exterior principle moving us to the good is God, who instructs us by law and helps us by grace" ("Principium autem exterius movens ad bonum est Deus, qui et nos instruit per legem et iuvat per gratiam").

[51] See *STh* I-II, q. 91, a. 2. On the connection of natural law with *imago dei* asserted here, see Ignatius Eschmann, *The Ethics of Thomas Aquinas: Two Courses*, ed. Edward A. Synan (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1997), 211-31.

sense Aquinas's account of human agency is a form of autonomy: while the moral law has its ultimate origin in God, nonetheless we discern it from within as in accord with our natures. [52]

Aquinas's account of the New Law presupposes that God provides for us in the order of grace in a manner that parallels the order of nature by giving us an interior principle whereby we may have a correlative inclination to the good in accord with our deified nature. The New Law is a deeper entering into divine providence, indeed a sharing in it precisely as Trinitarian: returning to the Father through the Son and in the Spirit. It is an ethic of freedom and an ethic of prudence. The whole of the moral life of a Christian is an enactment in time and history of the interior life of God-this is its ultimate meaning in the light of the *Summa theologiae.* We enter most deeply into the life of the Trinity when charity is crowned with the gift of wisdom resulting in a deep affective affinity *(compassio sive connaturalitas)* for the things of God as our own, and the resultant ability to judge them aright on that basis *(recte judicium propter connaturalitatem).* [53]

V. CONCLUSION

As noted at the beginning, it has been the fate of Aquinas's moral thought to be detached from its whole. This is still true today, though perhaps for different reasons. People who write about Aquinas's "ethics" these days tend to be academic specialists who look closely at some part, often as small as a single article or question, and attempt to distill a doctrine out of it. Often there is no attempt to read the part in the light of the theological whole. As Boyle notes, and I would concede, Aquinas does not always signpost the deep connections as much as one would like, yet they are there to an attentive reader. Perhaps if Aquinas had lived to finish the *Summa,* he might have gone back to make the con-

[52] In the Pauline sense, however, full moral autonomy is only possible under the New Law because only under it can we fulfill the precepts of the natural law in a complete way; apart from the New Law, human existence is fundamentally akratic and in that sense servile. See *STh* I-II, q. 109, aa. 2-4 on the effects of the Fall on our ability to fulfill the natural law.

[53] *STh* II-II, q. 45, a. 2.

nections clearer. In an era in which philosophy and theology are distinct disciplines and theology itself is fragmented in ways that would astonish Aquinas, for whom the unity of *sacra doctrina* comprises everything that is divided in a modern academic department, those deep connections are not easily perceived. What I have tried to indicate, albeit sketchily, is that there is a deep unity in Aquinas's moral thought that comes from the Trinity and that is expressed in the *exitus* and the *reditus* that is the grand theme of the *Summa.* Aquinas's theology is above all else Trinitarian. If that is so, then the key for an understanding of Aquinas's moral thinking would be the human person as *imago Trinitatis.*

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DETERMINING THE CONTENT AND DEGREE OF AUTHORITY OF CHURCH TEACHINGS

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THE TEACHING OF THE Second Vatican Council on religious liberty in its declaration *Dignitatis humanae* has been a subject of bitter disagreement ever since the promulgation of that declaration. Presented by some as one of the council's main achievements, it has been condemned by others as a departure from the past teaching of the Church. Most seriously, perhaps, it has been celebrated as being both these things, and as thereby establishing that it is possible for the Church to change her teachings, however authoritative, in the light of a better understanding of reality.

There are two issues involved in this disagreement: the question of the content of the document's teachings, and the question of the level of authority of these teachings. These questions turn upon the more general issues of the nature of the principles to be used in determining the content and authority of Church teachings. These general issues are the topic of long-standing disputes in Catholic theology, disputes that are at least as important as those on religious freedom itself. This paper will attempt to resolve these disputes, partly as a preliminary to considering the issue of religious liberty, and partly on account of their intrinsic interest. It will not go on to apply its conclusions to Church teaching on religious liberty because of space limitations; this task will be undertaken in subsequent publications. However, the consideration of positions on the interpretation of church

teachings and the consideration of *Dignitatis Humanae* are not entirely independent tasks. The debates on both these issues emerge from a common theological and ecclesiastical history, and the exposition of this history that is necessary for a consideration of interpretation of Church teachings will prove essential for an understanding of *Dignitatis humanae.*

None of the teachings of *Dignitatis humanae* are infallible pronouncements that of themselves demand the assent of faith. This is the case with all the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, since that council did not make any dogmatic definitions. [1] *Dignitatis humanae* thus raises the particular issue of the level of authority of noninfallible Church teachings. It is really only for this category of Church teaching that the question of level of authority arises in an important way, since infallible teachings by their nature have the highest level of authority, an authority that excludes rejection or doubt on the part of those who profess the Catholic faith. For theology, the question with respect to infallible teachings is not properly speaking their level of authority, but the means of identifying them. The question of how to identify infallible teachings has been fairly thoroughly discussed, and has in fact been the main focus of theological disputes about the authority of Church teachings. These disputes have generally been asking, what level of authority-fallible or

[1] This was asserted by Paul VI, in his discourse closing the council on 7 December 1965. Umberto Betti claimed an authority for the dogmatic constitution *Lumen gentium* that virtually reached the level of infallible teaching (Umberto Betti, "Qualification theologique de la Constitution," *L'Eglise de Vatican II,* vol. 2, *Commentaires,* ed. Y. Congar [Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1967]). This claim was contested by J. Ratzinger (J. Ratzinger, "Announcements and Prefatory Notes of Explanation," in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II,* vol. 1, ed. H. Vorgrimler [New York: Herder and Herder, 1967]). Ratzinger, in describing Betti as taking a view that "raises most of the Council's declarations practically (though not technically) to the status of dogmas" (ibid., 299), ignores the fact that Betti bases his evaluation of the degree of authority of *Lumen gentium* principally on the prefix "dogmatic" that is applied to it: "Avant tout, ii s'agit d'une Constitution dogmatique. Ce qui importe, ce n'est pas la denomination de Constitution - qui aurait pu aussi bien etre remplacee par d'autres, comme Decret, Bulle, etc., mais la qualification de 'dogmatique'. Celle-ci indique que le magistere universe! a pour tache comme tel de proposer la doctrine contenue clans la Constitution," (Betti, "Qualification theologique," in Congar (1967), 214-15). Betti's maximizing interpretation of the authority of the conciliar documents thus expressly applies only to those constitutions described as "dogmatic"-which excludes *Dignitatis humanae.*

infallible-does a given Church teaching have? The question that concerns us, however, is what are the levels of authority below infallibility that Church teachings can possess, and how are these levels to be identified?

I. HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF DOCTRINE

In order to determine the content of a teaching (and, in some cases, the degree of its authority), it is necessary carefully to examine the circumstances in which it is issued. The relevant circumstances include the nature of the theological terms used and the theological approaches within which these terms emerged, the errors that are intended to be condemned, and the conciliar discussions that gave rise to the texts. The force of the forms used to promulgate a teaching may also vary with time, and requires some attention to context to be understood. Neglect of these circumstances has at times led to more or less serious misrepresentations of conciliar teachings. A good example of this is the teaching of the Council of Trent on Scripture and Tradition as sources of revelation. The standard view of this teaching for many years was that it asserted that oral tradition was an independent source of revelation, in the sense that it contained and passed on divinely revealed truths that are not contained in Scripture. However, investigations of the deliberations of the Council of Trent have shown that the council cannot be said to teach this position. [2]

It is also necessary to interpret particular teachings in the context of Church teaching as a whole. All these teachings are issued by the same authority, which intends them to harmonize with and to interpret each other. The fact that teachings are

[2] This thesis was advanced by J. Geiselmann in "Un malentendu eclairci. La relation Ecriture-Tradition clans la theologie catholique," *Istina* 5 (1958): 197-214; and by George Tavard in *Holy Writ or Holy Church* (London: Burns & Oates, 1959), ch. 12. A more satisfactory treatment is J. Ermel, *Les sources de la foi* (Tournai: Desclee, 1963); his findings are summarized in John Lamont, *Divine Faith* (London: Ashgate, 2004), 174-76.

To say that that Council of Trent did not teach this position does not mean that it denied it. Nor, it should be pointed out, does the denial of this position imply that all of revelation can be extracted from Scripture independently of tradition.

intended to be read in the context of the whole of the Church's teaching is often explicitly stated in conciliar documents, in such phrases as "following the saintly fathers" (Chalcedon) [3] or "following without deviation in a straight path after the saintly fathers" (Constantinople III);[4] it was expressed at the Second Vatican Council in *Dei Verbum* 1 and *Lumen gentium* 51. The presumption is therefore that one teaching does not reject or contradict another, unless it is impossible to understand it except as doing so. The practice in the rare instances where a previous teaching is corrected by a subsequent one is for this correction to be made explicit (as in the condemnation by the Third Council of Constantinople of the teaching of Pope Honorius on Monothelitism).

This means that the meaning that we might attach to a teaching if taken in isolation may not be the meaning that we should understand as meant by the Church, when the whole of the Church's teaching is taken into account. This principle of interpretation is not confined to magisterial documents; as Rene Laurentin remarks, "when a pontifical document seems to go contrary to an opinion received by the Fathers or Doctors of the Church, notably by such a one as St. Thomas Aquinas, this doctrine should not be thought to be rejected by it, unless the papal document says so in so many words."[5]

It may be the case that the meaning of a given teaching is clarified by another teaching, even if the clarification occurs centuries later. An example is Pope Leo the Great's assertion about the divine and human natures in Christ, to the effect that "the activity of each form is what is proper to it in communion with the other: that is, the Word performs what belongs to the Word, and the flesh accomplishes what belongs to the flesh."[6] On its own this expression could be understood in a Nestorian sense, as implying that the two natures are independently acting entities.

[3] Norman Tanner, ed., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils,* 2 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1990), 1:86.

[4] Ibid., 1:124.

[5] Fr. Rene Laurentin, *Mary's Place in the Church* (London: Burns & Oates, 1965), p. 97; tr. by l. G. Pidoux of *La question mariale* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1963).

[6] "agit enim utraque forma cum alterius communione quod proprium est, verbo scilicet operante quod verbi est, et came exequente quod carnem est" (Tanner, ed., *Decrees,* 1:79).

It was indeed understood in this way by many theologians, an understanding that contributed to the Monophysite schism. This understanding was however excluded by the Third Council of Constantinople, which interpreted Leo's claim as asserting that there is both a divine and a human will in Christ, and thus as being a rejection of Monothelitism. [7] Even if this meaning was not present in Leo's original statement, it became part of the meaning of that statement after the clarification of Constantinople III. This is because Leo was not expressing his private opinion, but teaching in his official capacity. The meaning of an official statement is determined by the authority that issues the statement, not by the individual who happens to exercise that authority at a given time; and the authority in question has the power to expand the meaning of its assertions. A humdrum example is British law on value-added tax, which states that bread is not subject to this tax but that cake is. The question arose as to whether bagels should count as bread or as cake; when it was legally decided that bagels were bread, the previous legislation then acquired the content of exempting bagels from value-added tax, a meaning that it did not have before that decision. [8]

The example of the Third Council of Constantinople is a case in which the clearer teaching occurs later than the less clear one. Although this is a sensible order in which to proceed, there is nothing about order in time as such that means that a later statement is to be used to interpret an earlier one rather than vice versa. Statements of greater authority are to be used to interpret statements of lesser authority, and clearer statements are to be used to interpret less clear ones, regardless of the temporal order of the statements in question. A case where earlier teachings are to be used to interpret later ones is where the later teachings repeat earlier ones that have been solemnly defined, as with the Christological teachings of the Second Vatican Council. The former teachings, those of the great Christological councils, are more authoritative than the latter, which are not solemn

[7] See ibid., 1:128-29.

[8] I am grateful to Katharine Allen for providing me with this example.

definitions. They are also more precise, because the solemn definitions were intended to settle specific controversies, whereas the appeal to this teaching at Vatican II was intended to give a more general picture.

There are particular principles of interpretation that have been proposed specifically for the teachings Vatican II that ought to be mentioned here. It is sometimes said that these teachings should be interpreted in the light of the "spirit" of the council, or the "location of the texts within that historical thrust … towards self-understanding by the Church and definition of its relationship with history," [9] or should give "greater interpretative privilege to the thesis supported by the greater majority of voters."[10] The problem with such principles is not simply that they are not very specific, and are thus open to manipulation by people with their own agendas, [11] but that they are wrong, full stop. They violate the principle that a council is only to be interpreted as teaching what it manifestly and officially teaches.

These proposals for reading Vatican II stem in fact from a transposed ultramontane heritage. The extreme ultramontane position on the extent of the authority of the pope, and the ultramontane psychological attitude towards that authority, were expressed by W. G. Ward:

> Take the obvious illustration of a parent; and suppose it were revealed to me, that my mother's guidance is infallible in every particular of moral and religious training. That I should accept with unquestioning assent the very least detail of her explicit instruction, is but a small part of my submission to her authority. I should be ever studying her whole demeanour in my regard-her acts no less than her words-in order that I may more fully apprehend her implied principles

[9] M.-D. Chenu, quoted in Daniele Menozzi, "Opposition to the Council (1966-84)," in *The Reception of Vatican II*, ed. Giuseppe Alberigo, Jean-Plerre Jossua, and Joseph A. Komonchak (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1987), 328.

[10] Ormond Rush, *"Dei Verbum* Forty Years On," *Australasian Catholic Record* 83 no. 4 (Oct. 2006): 408.

[11] The principle about accepting the thesis supported by the majority of conciliar voters, for example, would scarcely be applied by its author to the thesis about the nature of papal infallibility that was held by the majority at Vatican I.

of conduct, and gather those lessons of profound wisdom which she is privileged to dispense. [12]

This ultramontane attitude is simply transferred by some theologians to the Second Vatican Council. The faithful, in relation to the council, are to be like the slaves in the psalm keeping their eyes on the hands of their master. In reality, this attitude is only appropriate towards God. It can be applied to pope or council when these entities are exercising the divine authority, but this attitude is only called for when this authority is exercised in proper form. Otherwise, it is not faith but a regression to childishness, to seeing pope or council as a parental authority whose every word and intention is to be uncritically accepted.

II. "HISTORICAL CONDITIONING" OF DOCTRINE

The purpose of the investigation of the context of Church teachings is to find out how these teachings represent reality. Acceptance of these teachings consists in holding that reality is indeed how they say it is, on account of their saying that it is. This seemingly banal clarification needs to be made because it is rejected by some currently influential accounts of the interpretation of doctrine.

One such account was given in clear and summary form in an address by Julius Cardinal Dopfner to a conference of European bishops in 1969:

All the dogmas in the strict sense of the word, in turn call for interpretation. Although they also contain, with the help of the Holy Spirit, a "timeless" truth, i.e. an objectively valid truth for all times, they still present this truth in a time-bound language. Dogmas are always statements which are historically

[12] W. G. Ward, *The Authority of Doctrinal Decisions Which Are Not Definitions of Faith* (London: Burns, Lambert, and Oates, 1866), 82. Ward makes this claim in the course of correctly opposing the view that the only obligation in matters of belief to which Catholics are subject is the obligation to believe solemnly defined doctrines. His error, of course, lies in ignoring the possibility of a mean between his view and this minimizing approach.

It may be noted that the view expressed in this passage was the view of Ward's friend Cardinal Manning, the leader of the majority at Vatican I.

determined in a conceptual system; they are tied to a particular time and a particular way of thinking. Dogmas come to be in a concrete situation because of a specific set of causes. Doctrinal statements, therefore, always express the truth which is their object in an inadequate and fragmentary way which, nonetheless, is valid from a specific perspective, namely, the perspective of a certain group of hearers. In order to understand a doctrinal truth, one must be familiar with these circumstances. Insofar as these circumstances have changed, the context of a certain dogma no longer exists for us.[13]

This notion of the historical conditioning of doctrine is derived from Karl Rahner. I have criticized this notion in an earlier article,[14] and will simply recapitulate in brief the contents of that criticism. This understanding of the way doctrine is historically conditioned takes the perfectly true claim that doctrinal statements are conditioned and limited by the historical circumstances in which they are made, and adds to it the further claim that this limitation must result in their not being perfectly true. But the former claim does not justify the latter one. Every statement of any kind at all must be subject to limitations of this sort, since every human being and every institution composed of humans exist in historical circumstances that shape and limit what they can know and express. These limitations do indeed mean that there are things that people in a given set of circumstances will be unable to know or comprehend. Such limitations are part of the explanation for the development of doctrine; as conceptual horizons expand, new questions about the subject matter of the faith can be put that require an answer.

[13] Julius Dopfner, "Das Bleibende und Sichwandelnde in Priestertum," *Herder Korrespondenz* 23 (1969): 369-70; quoted and translated in Piet Schoonenberg, "The Theologian's Calling: Freedom, and Constraint," *inAuthority in the Church,* ed. Piet Fransen, S.J. (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1983), 104. Fransen presents Dopfner as replying to, and rejecting, the claims made by Paul VI in his encyclical *Mysterium Fidei,* in which the view of historical conditioning criticized here is rejected. Fransen's article provides a good explanation and a good illustration of this view. The fact that in this paper Fransen, professor of theology at the Katholieke Universiteit te Leuven, gives the coeternity of the three divine persons as one of the teachings that can be considered as due to historical conditioning, rather than as part of the faith (ibid., 111), illustrates how this notion of historical conditioning has been used to reject the most central Christian teachings.

[14] John Lamont, "The Historical Conditioning of Church Doctrine," *The Thomist* 60 (1996): 511-35.

The existence of limitations on knowledge and comprehension, however, does not imply that there is nothing that can be fully known or comprehended. That men are mortal, or that water becomes solid if cooled sufficiently, are examples of statements that describe reality entirely truthfully, and that are comprehensible to anyone with a normal human conceptual apparatus. The claim that the Holy Spirit guides the Church into the truth is to be understood as asserting that the Holy Spirit guides the Church to teach only statements that fall within the conceptual capacities of the Church, at the time the teaching is made, for describing reality as it is-and, furthermore, that succeed in describing reality as it is. The idea that at some times the limits on the conceptual capacities of the Church have prevented her from accurately describing reality is no more than the disguised assumption that the Holy Spirit does not in fact guide her into the truth. This notion of historical conditioning is simply an expression of unbelief.

So understood, belief in the historical conditioning of Church teaching denies the teaching of Vatican I that "if anyone says that it is possible at some time, given the advancement of knowledge, a sense may be assigned to the dogmas propounded by the Church which is different from that which the Church has understood and understands; let him be anathema." [15] It thereby asserts some of the tenets of the Modernist heresy. [16] However, unlike Modernism, it does not amount to a coherent view. It faces the difficulty that if historical conditioning means that some aspects of past doctrines are not to be accepted as part of the faith, it follows that we cannot now know what the faith is. We, like believers in other epochs, exist in history, and hence are subject to historical conditioning that limits our perspectives. Because we cannot get outside our own historical situation, we have no way of finding

[15] Tanner, ed., *Decrees,* 2:811.

[16] Current sympathizers with Modernism have made attempts to rehabilitate it, but these cannot survive examination of the beliefs of the principal Modernists. George Tyrrell, for example, thought (some time before the publication of the anti-Modernist *encyclica1Pascendi)* that Jesus had not intended to found a church, and that the pope was an Antichrist; see David F. Wells, "The Pope as Antichrist: The Substance of George Tyrrell's Polemic," *Harvard Theological Review* 65 (1972): 217-73.

out what those limits are, and hence no way of knowing what part of our own beliefs is historically conditioned and not objectively true. We thus cannot determine what features of our own understanding of the faith are historically conditioned, and hence untrue.

The Modernists did not face this problem, because they discarded the idea of faith as giving any "objectively valid truth for all times" at all, and evaluated religious beliefs solely by their conformity to the needs of a given time. This makes it unlikely that the origins of this notion of historical conditioning are to be found primarily in Modernism. It is probably more the result of belief in progress and the superiority of the present-of the assumption that people in the past were inevitably ignorant and prejudiced in comparison to us, and that their views have to be altered in order to take into account our greater knowledge. This assumption explains why "historical conditioning" is attributed to past teachings, but its implications for present teachings are not considered.

There is a particular version of the historical-conditioning notion that requires further discussion. It is frequently maintained that the concepts used in particular Church teachings change over time, and thus that the teachings have to be re-expressed in different concepts in order to preserve their original message. Taken as stated, this notion can be straightforwardly dismissed. The notion of a concept usually designates a component of the mental life of a particular individual. In this sense, the content of Church teachings cannot depend on particular concepts, because concepts of this sort are not publicly available, and Church teachings are expressed in language. Since language is a public means of communication, its meaning can only be acquired by reference to interpersonal things and events that are publicly identifiable. This familiar point about language means that the vicissitudes of people's concepts are not relevant to the content of Church teaching. They are only relevant to the degree of comprehension that a given individual may possess of them.

We can also use the term "concept" to refer, not to the components of the mental life of a particular individual, but to the content of such components. The point made in the preceding paragraph about the teachings of the Church applies to this notion as well. Since these teachings are expressed in language, their content must be given by the elements of the external, publicly observable world that provide meaning to language. The relation between external things and the vocabulary of the language that determines the meaning of this language is that obtaining at the time of the teachings. This does not change; it refers to a relation obtaining at a single specified time, and change of the meaning of language must occur over a lapse of time. Careful investigation, of the sort described above, is often necessary to discern the exact nature of this relation-since languages and their expressive resources change over time-but there is no such thing as conceptual change that this investigation needs to take into account.

However, many of the theologians who talk about changing concepts seem in fact to have a different notion in mind. They point out that Church teachings are expressed not just in terms that derive their meaning from the external publicly observable world, but also in terms taken from theories that attempt to give a philosophical account of the external world, and that in so doing elaborate concepts that go beyond what is evident to observation. They argue that Church teachings are not intended to advance philosophical theses, and that the Church has no authority to settle philosophical questions. Since the philosophical concepts in Church teachings stand or fall with the truth of the philosophical systems of which they are a part, such theologians conclude that these concepts do not form a constitutive part of these teachings, and can be dispensed with or replaced by other philosophical notions. The specifically philosophical element of Church teaching is thus identified as a historically conditioned element that does not demand the assent of faith. These are the concepts that can change, and that need not be retained.

If this view is correct, the question of the teaching of Vatican II on religious liberty, for example, would at once be settled. Liberty is a notion that must be explicated in philosophical terms, and any statements about it would thus be disqualified from forming part of the teaching of the Church. This consequence is a good example of why this view is untenable. It is not possible for Church teaching to be expressed without making use of philosophical notions, because the subject matter of this teaching is inherently philosophical. It deals with such ultimate realities as the nature of God, of humanity, of knowledge, of good and evil. These are philosophical realities; philosophy itself came into being as the investigation of them. Divine revelation does not have a subject matter that is entirely separate from that of philosophy. Where it differs from philosophy is in the reason for belief that it offers, and in conveying some truths that philosophy is incapable of reaching. To reflect on many central theological issues just is to venture into philosophy, and the accurate formulation of claims about them will necessarily use philosophical notions (cf. *Fides et ratio* 66). This is apparent in the early councils that dealt with Christological issues; these described Christ using the philosophical conceptions of substance, nature, hypostasis, and person. It is necessary to use these notions not only to accept, but to reject, these conciliar teachings; the only way to avoid philosophical characterizations of Christ would be never to think seriously about him at all-which is scarcely an option for theology or faith. The claim that particular philosophical concepts cannot be an intrinsic part of Church teaching is false.

As for the Church not being in the business of teaching philosophical systems, it is true that the falsity of a philosophical system can entail the nonapplicability of the concepts that make it up, but making use of philosophical concepts to describe the world does not amount to embracing a complete philosophical system. Such concepts can be elements of more than one system. The necessary employment of philosophical concepts by the Church in her teaching thus does not constitute an endorsement of a particular philosophical system, and cannot be rejected on

that account. Such employment does limit the available philosophical options by excluding philosophies that do not admit these concepts, but the rejection of philosophical views that are incompatible with the faith is an unexceptionable and necessary element of the Church's teaching-one could hardly say that a condemnation of solipsism, to take an extreme example, would go beyond the authority of the Church because it settles a philosophical question. It is thus false to say that the Church lacks the authority to settle philosophical questions (cf. *Fides et ratio* 50).

The nonexistence of a core content in Church teaching that is independent of philosophical concepts means that if one maintains that the philosophical concepts in Church teachings can be changed, such teaching becomes a nose of wax, able to be twisted into any shape called for by one's philosophical convictions. Because the essence of these teachings is expressed philosophically, a change in philosophy produces a change in their essence. The exercise of finding examples of such twisting in contemporary theology I leave to the reader; it does not require very extensive research.

A) Twentieth-Century Debates over Historical Context and Historical Conditioning

The importance of historical context in understanding Church teaching, and the falsity of notions of historical conditioning of this teaching, are at the heart of twentieth-century debates in Catholic theology-debates that retain their importance today. The first of these theses is a key theme of the *nouvelle theologie*-the theological approach associated with the Dominicans of Le Saulchoir and the Jesuits of Lyon-Fourvieres-and the basis of its principal achievement; the second is its fatal flaw.

The crucial achievement of the *nouvelle theologie*, produced by the application of its program for investigating the historical context of doctrine and theology, was the discovery that the generally accepted conception of Catholic theology in fact had

serious shortcomings. This conception was inherited from the baroque Scholasticism of the Counter-Reformation period. What the *nouvels theologiens* brought to light was the fact that baroque Scholasticism had lost some of the key insights of previous Catholic theology, and had acquired severe flaws not present in that earlier theology. [17] These problems were largely the result of the thought of the Counter-Reformation not having sufficiently emancipated itself from the nominalism of the late Middle Ages. The *nouvels theologiens* connected the problems in the Church with the need to remove these flaws, and to return in theory and in practice to the better understandings that had existed before the disaster of nominalism, a disaster that bore much of the responsibility for the Reformation.

The better understandings that needed to be restored were variously described. Some were sought in the Fathers, especially in the Greek Fathers; but a significant strand of *ressourcement*-inspired above all by Marie-Dominique Chenu-looked for these understandings in St. Thomas himself. It is this strand of *ressourcement* that will be considered (and argued for) here. Its program involved a rejection of the form of Thomism accepted by neo-Scholastics, which accepted and built upon the thought of baroque commentators on St. Thomas, such as Cajetan and John of St. Thomas. These commentators, and their neo-Scholastic heirs, were alleged to have imbibed certain nominalist assumptions, and to have introduced errors of their own. As a result, the "Thomism" of the neo-Scholastics was a significantly changed and impoverished version of the thought of St. Thomas, many of whose deep insights needed to be restored.

Not surprisingly, the neo-Scholastics reacted violently to this accusation. They conceived of the relation of the baroque commentators and themselves to St. Thomas as analogous to the relation of physicists working on general relativity after Einstein

[17] The term "baroque Scholasticism," and the insight that this Scholasticism already contained many of the key elements of modernity, seem to have been originated by Karl Eschweiler in his *Die zwei Wege* der neueren Theologie (Augsburg: Benno Fitser, 1926). Henry Donneaud sees Eschweiler's work as an inspiration for M.-D. Chenu; see Henry Donneaud, "La constitution dialectique de la theologie et de son histoire selon M.-D. Chenu," *Revue Thomiste* 96 (1996): 48-49.

to Einstein himself. Einstein's successors simplified and extended his theory a great deal, but their work was based on and incorporated the fundamental insights developed by Einstein himself as the discoverer of general relativity. The notion that the work of later Thomists could be corrected by reference to St. Thomas himself struck the neo-Scholastics as being like the notion that later physicists could be corrected by reference to Einstein's pioneering work (although they would see later Thomists as more dependent on St. Thomas than later physicists on Einstein). Apparent differences between St. Thomas and his followers would result from the fact that reflection over the centuries would express St. Thomas's original conceptions in clearer ways, and attempts to show that St. Thomas was different in significant respects from his followers-the "palaeo-Thomism" mocked by Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange-were simply trying to take advantage of the inevitable occasional unclarity to be found in the founder of a school of thought, in comparison with later elaborations of that school.

It is not clear whether or not the neo-Scholastics can fairly be described as being hostile to historical research in maintaining this view-as the *nouvels theologiens* claimed-or whether they should rather be described as having a historical thesis about Thomism that happened to be wrong in some respects. After all, they held a historical view about the development of Thomism, and they looked to history to find the favored sources of their ideas, namely, the baroque Scholastics. Whichever of these is the case, the fact remains that the *nouvels theologiens* were right about baroque Scholasticism and its heirs being different from, and inferior to, the thought of St. Thomas himself.

This endorsement of this claim of the *nouvelle theologie* needs to be qualified; it is not as if the neo-Scholastics got St. Thomas totally wrong. Some of them were in fact responsible for reviving and building on important aspects of his thought-for example, Garrigou-Lagrange's work on spiritual theology (a synthesis of the views of St. Thomas and of St. John of the Cross on contemplation), which was crucial to Vatican H's teaching on the universal call to holiness. (The value of this synthesis illustrates

the fact that the Counter-Reformation, producing as it did a theologian of the caliber of S. John of the Cross, was not barren of theological achievement.) This observation about the contribution of some neo-Scholastics to the broader program of *ressourcement* brings out the fact that that program was not peculiar to the *nouvels thiologiens* or to the subjects they considered. The Thomist revival promoted by Leo XIII, particularly its historical element, was both a precondition and to some extent a form of *ressourcement.* Moreover, the program of *ressourcement* was carried on past Vatican II and persists up to the present. [18] The newly revived understandings of the notions of conscience and right that prove to be crucial to the discussion of religious freedom, for example, are a product of *ressourcement.*

The fatal flaw of the *nouvelle thiologie* was the espousal, by many of its significant figures, of forms of the theses about historical conditioning of Church teaching described above. These theses were expressed most clearly by Henri Bouillard, [19] and criticized courteously and effectively by M.-M. Labourdette in an article that is still worth reading (a criticism that earned him dismissal from teaching duties by the Dominicans after the council). [20] They were criticized more bluntly by Garrigou-Lagrange, who answered his own question "La nouvelle theologie ou va t'elle?" by "Le modernisme." [21] As applied to the historical-conditioning element of the *nouvelle thiologie,* Garrigou-Lagrange was right, as the postconciliar period was to show. The verification of this claim has contributed to a guarded and partial rehabilitation of Garrigou-Lagrange by Fergus Kerr, who admits that Garrigou-Lagrange was right in criticizing Maurice Blondel's rejection of truth as *adaequatio rei et intellectus,* and that M.-D. Chenu was wrong in effectively siding with Blondel on this

[18] My own book *Divine Faith* is an attempt at *ressourcement* in the theology of faith.

[19] In Henri Bouillard, *Conversion et grace chez S. Thomas d'Aquin* (Paris: Aubier, 1941); see esp. 220-24.

[20] See. M.-M. Labourdette, "La theologie et ses sources," *Revue Thomiste* 46 (1946): 353-71; and Aidan Nichols, "Thomism and the Nouvelle Thfologie," *The Thomist* 64 (2000): 2.

[21] Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, "La nouvelle theologie oil va t'elle?" *Angelicum23* (1946): 126-45, followed up by "Vfrite et immutabilite du dogme," *Angelicum* 24 (1947): 124-39.

issue.[22] It is most unfortunate that the truth of the position of the *nouvels thiologiens* on the general need for *ressourcement* contributed to the force of neo-Scholastic criticism of other aspects of their views being ignored.

Etienne Fouilloux sees an evolution in Chenu's thought. It began with the idea of *ressourcement*, but moved to an acceptance of the notion of historical conditioning.[23] The key to this evolution was a philosophical assumption that Chenu inherited from nominalism, via the baroque Scholastics he despised. The nominalist account of concepts described them as particular contents of individual minds, which relate to the things in the external world that they are concepts of through signifying these things.[24] This view is repeated in the "Thomist" account of John of St. Thomas.[25] On this understanding, concepts are signs of things, of a kind that serve as intermediaries between the person understanding and the things that are understood. The assumption of this understanding of concepts is what permitted Chenu to hold that concepts are capable of failing adequately to represent the things they signify, and are susceptible of being replaced by other

[22] See Fergus Kerr O.P., *Twentieth-Century Catholic Theologians* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), 30-32; idem," A Different World: Neoscholasticism and Its Discontents," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 8 (April 2006): 128-48. The work by Chenu that Kerr singles out for criticism is his "Verite evangelique et metaphysique Wolfienne aVatican II," *Revue des sciences philosophiques et theologiques* 57 (1973): 623-40. Kerr does not mention that Chenu's position in this paper is anticipated in M.-D. Chenu, *Une ecole de theologie: Le Sau/choir* (repr.; Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1985); see, e.g., 125, 139-40.

[23] Etienne Fouilloux, *Une Eglise en quete de liberte* (Paris: Desclee de Brouwer, 1998), 135-36.

[24] For discussion and bibliography on this nominalist view and its contrast with the view of St. Thomas, see Henrik Lagerlund, "Mental Representation in Medieval Philosophy," in The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2008 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, (http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2008/entries/representation-medieval/). Complementary discussions and bibliographies are to be found in Stephan Meier-Oeser, "Medieval Semiotics," in Zalta, ed., The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2008 Edition) (http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2008/entries/semiotics-medieval/); and Gyula Klima, "The Medieval Problem of Universals," in Zalta, ed., The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2008 Edition) (http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2008/entries/universals-medieval/).

[25] See John of St. Thomas, "Super libros perihermeneias," in *Cursus philosophicus thomisticus*, vol. 1: *Ars logica* (Rome: Marietti, 1948), 702-7. Jacques Maritain, in his *Formal Logic* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1937), took John of St. Thomas as a guide.

concepts that do the job better-and, in consequence, that the same can be said of propositions, which are made up of concepts. Chenu thought, furthermore, that the mystical encounter with God that is basic to faith is not mediated through concepts, and that it is higher than any conceptual encounter; he described propositional assent as the *medium* for supernatural illumination.[26] Hence his claim that every theology is the expression of a spirituality; a theology is the expression, in conceptual terms, of a higher spiritual encounter.[27] Hence, as well, his view that theology must be adapted to the historical situation of the theologian. This historical situation affects the conceptual capacities of the theologian (to deny this is to deny that the theologian exists in history). The theological enterprise must therefore respond to the historical situation, must respond to the "signs of the times"-a demand that Fouilloux claims was adopted by Vatican II from Chenu[28]-rather than pretend to an atemporal understanding of truth, an understanding that would inevitably be ossified and cut off from the living object of faith.

This position on concepts led Chenu to his support of Blondel's definition of truth, and to his belief that the Modernists, with their concern to adjust doctrine to historical circumstances, had important insights.[29] It also contributed to his view, shared by the other *nouvels theologiens,* that the faith ought to be expressed in terms of contemporary philosophies, as well as-or instead of-Scholastic categories. This view was in effect an acceptance of a version of the Modernist heresy. A particular philosophy gives a global account of reality, and significantly different philosophies are different just because they give different accounts of reality. To change the philosophical systems and concepts that are used to express the faith is thus-as noted above-to change

[26] Chenu, *Une ecole de theologie,* 130. In addition to this work, the important reference for Chenu's views on this subject is his "Position de la theologie," *Revue des sciences philosophiques et theologiques* 24 (1935): 232-57, collected in *La parole de Dieu, I: La foi dans !'intelligence* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1964).

[27] Chenu, *Une ecole de theologie,* 75.

[28] Fouilloux, *Une Eglise en quete de liberte,* 140.

[29] Chenu's opinion of the Modernists was shared by Bruno de Solages and Yves Congar: see ibid., 79-80.

the content of the teachings of the faith; the replacement of the notion of transubstantiation by that of transsignification is a contemporary example. Part of the *nouvels theologiens'* motivation for adopting contemporary philosophies was no doubt an apologetic intention coupled with a lack of understanding of what philosophy is, but the baroque Scholastic understanding of concepts would also have played a role.

Chenu's views are an instance of an important failure of *ressourcement:* its glaring omission, in its researches into medieval Scholasticism, of the central role that logic, philosophy of language, and semantics played in medieval thought. [30] Chenu's historicism was not entailed by his view of concepts as signs, since one can accept this view without holding that the relation of a given concept to the world can be improved or changed. But the view of concepts as signs gives room for Chenu's historicism, whereas St. Thomas's understanding of concepts does not. Saint Thomas does not consider concepts to be signs that can represent reality more or less accurately, because he holds that the content of concepts is *identical* with the natures of the realities that they are concepts of: "intelligibile in actu est intellectus in actu" [31] *(STh* I, q. 14, a. 2). Concepts may be of more or less general types of realities-the concept of 'man' is more specie than the concept of 'animal'-but a concept cannot represent reality inaccurately, because all there is to the content of a concept is the feature of reality that it is about. Nor does St. Thomas consider that there can be a grasp of reality, aside from sense experience, that is nonconceptual; for him, to grasp reality in a way that is not seeing, touching, hearing, etc., just is to have a concept, or to

[30] This omission was first remedied in a significant way by J.-M. Bochenski, *A History of Formal Logic* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1961), trans. and ed. by Ivo Thomas (orig., *Formate Logik* [Freiburg and Munich: Verlag Karl Alber, 1956]), and Peter Geach, *Reference and Generality* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1962). Both authors were Catholics, but neither of them were theologians or had any connection to the *nouvelle theologie.* Serious consideration of medieval logic, a topic essential to the understanding of the medieval philosophical and theological heritage, is still confined almost entirely to analytic philosophers.

[31] *STh* I, q. 14, a. 2 (St. Thomas, *Summa Theologiae, Prima Pars* [Madrid: Bibilioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1951], 106).

undersand a proposition that is composed of concepts. This latter position is easily established. We cannot have a grasp of reality that does not present what we grasp as having a determinate character. We cannot grasp a feature of reality as being no more than a "something I know not what"; that is not a grasp of anything. But to have an intellectual grasp of a feature of reality as having some determinate character just is to have a concept of the character in question. What else is it to have a concept?

The substantial philosophical topic of whether or not concepts are signs does not have to be fully addressed in order to dispose of Chenu's position. The understanding of concepts as signs has been attacked by Wittgenstein, Peter Geach,[32] and Hilary Putnam, and St. Thomas's understanding has been defended by Geach[33] and in at least some respects by Anthony Kenny.[34] The idea of concepts as signs, or as mental representations, has nonetheless retained a large following, largely because of its perceived usefulness in offering a physicalist account of thought.[35] It is not however accepted by philosophers in any form that could lend support to Chenu. In these theories, there is no form of nonconceptual understanding that can provide a superior nonrepresentational grasp of reality. Propositions are true if they accurately represent the world; if their representation of the world is something that can be corrected (as opposed to supplemented by the provision of more information), that means that they are not true. To accept a theological assertion or a Church teaching as true, on these theories, is thus to admit that they are not susceptible of correction.

There are a number of ironies about this debate between the *nouvels theologiens* and the neo-Scholastics. Henri de Lubac, although he came to the defense of his Jesuit colleagues in the

[32] Peter Geach, *Mental Acts* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1957), a work that also discusses St. Thomas's view.

[33] Peter Geach, "Aquinas," in Elizabeth Anscombe and Peter Geach, *Three Philosophers* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1961).

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

[35] This motivation is evident in David Pitt, "Mental Representation," in Zalta, ed., The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2008 Edition) (http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2008/entries/mental-representation/).

debates with Labourdette and Garrigou-Lagrange, did not in fact accept the historical-conditioning notion at all; he thought that his claim about human nature as such being ordered to the beatific vision was *true*, in the immutable, essentialist way attacked by Danielou. The neo-Scholastics, in holding to the classical Aristotelian definition of truth, were being loyal to tradition, while the *nouvels theologiens,* in distinguishing concepts and intuitions, conceptual values and religious perceptions, supernatural illumination and propositional assent, a catalogue of propositions and living material, and in claiming that theology investigates events rather than the nature of things,[36] were committing the sin of which they accused their opponents-that of imposing an anachronistic philosophical framework on Catholic tradition that falsifies and obscures it (in this case, a mixture of Cartesian, Enlightenment, sub-Kantian, and existentialist ideas).

More generally, the neo-Scholastics, in attacking the views of the *nouvels theologiens* on historical conditioning by offering a reasoned philosophical case against them, were following in the footsteps of St. Athanasius, St. Basil, St. Augustine, and St. Thomas.[37] The *nouvels theologiens,* for their part, did not attempt any substantive reasoned reply to this criticism. It is doubtful whether they could have managed to offer one; they did not think philosophically. This is shown by their enthusiasm for Blondel, and by their taking Pierre Teilhard de Chardin seriously. Blondel was a confused thinker[38] and Teilhard was an intellectual charlatan; but both were gifted rhetoricians, and their rhetoric made the *nouvels theologiens* accept them as philosophers. Indeed, rhetoric was what the *nouvels theologiens* understood

[36] See Chenu, *Une ecole de theologie,* 123, 116, 130, 132, 137; also J. Danielou, "Les orientations presentes de la pensee religieuse," *Etudes* 249 (1946): 5-21.

[37] Kerr remarks of Garrigou-Lagrange that "he had a more informed and better-balanced picture [of modern philosophy] than many philosophers, let alone Thomists, at that time .. . . Ironically, when this inveterate adversary of the historico-contextualist approach considers the philosophical options adopted by philosophers in his own day, he becomes a model of how to engage with the philosophical issues about being, truth, and so on" (Kerr, *Twentieth-Century Catholic Theologians,* 13, 16).

[38] Gilson remarked of Blonde! that "je suis allergique a la prose d'un esprit qui pense qu'a force d'ecrire ii finira par savoir ce qu'il veut dire" (Fouilloux, *Une Eglise en quete de liberte,* 150).

philosophy to be. In this they were children of the Counter-Reformation. Rhetoric, unlike philosophy, uses appeals to desires and emotions to affect belief- that is, it uses factors connected with the will. This revulsion from philosophical thought on the part of the *nouvels theologiens* was a much more radical departure from Catholic tradition than anything of which the neo-Scholastics were guilty.[39] If belief is seen as obedience to a command, in the characteristic fashion of Counter-Reformation theology, rhetoric will be the natural way to produce it, and rhetoric, rather than philosophy, will be the appropriate tool for addressing issues of faith.[40]

B) Problems with the Neo-Scholastic Approach to Doctrine, and Their Remedy

The ideas about the interpretation of Church teachings that have been criticized so far emerge from "progressive" theological currents that have become widely accepted only since the 1950s. Immediately before this period, the predominant approach to the interpretation of Church teachings was that of neo-Scholastic theologians, itself a development of the views of baroque Scholastics. Although this approach is still the one generally used by theologians who reject the heterodoxy of the progressive notions, resorting to the neo-Scholastic approach is not a satisfactory method for evaluating certain conciliar teachings, such as that on religious liberty. While this approach is not heterodox, it nonetheless has serious shortcomings. Remedying them requires

[39] In recounting this history it is worth noting the lone figure of Gilson, a personal and intellectual opponent of Garrigou-Lagrange, who espoused the importance of historical investigation-and practiced it on a much higher level than any of the *nouvels theologiens-and* sided with Labourdette in the debate over historical conditioning. See "'Correspondance Etienne Gilson - Michel Labourdette," *Revue thomiste* 94 (1994): 479-529.

[40] Eugene Marcotte, in a very important and neglected paper, described the development of this conception of belief in the theologians of the Counter-Reformation: a conception where the argument from authority becomes the centerpiece of theology, and the allocation of theological notes to a conclusion that specify its degree of authority becomes the highest task of the theologian (citing A. Gardeil O.P., "Lieux theologiques," in *Dictionnaire de theologie catholique* vol. 9 [1926], col. 736). Marcotte identifies Melchior Cano as the main influence on this theological approach, in Melchior Cano, *De Locis theologiis,* lib. 12, c. 4. See Marcotte, "De Saint Thomas a nos manuels," *Revue de l'universite d'Ottawa* 154-74.

some constructive work on the issue of the interpretation of Church teachings.

One class of shortcomings arises from its dependence on a mistaken theory of revelation, which I have dubbed the "magisterial" theory of revelation, and criticized elsewhere. [41] This theory underlies the neo-Scholastic system of theological notes, which divides teachings into the categories of *de fide divina, de fide divina et catholica, de fide catholica, de fide in genere, theologice certa, doctrina catholica,* and *proxima fidei.* The falsity of the magisterial theory and of the theories of the development of doctrine that are associated with it means that these classifications are mistaken or inadequate. [42] However, since most of these notes are intended to be applied to teachings that are infallibly taught, we need not go into their shortcomings in detail. The feature of the neo-Scholastic system that does concern us closely is its general approach to Church teachings, which conceives of assent to these teachings as primarily obedience to a command.

It should be pointed out that criticism of this conception does not involve rejecting a crucial principle of interpretation of Church teachings. Such teachings both convey information and impose an obligation on believers to accept that information as true. The content of the teaching and the fact of its promulgation must be made manifest. To the extent that the teaching is not made dear and binding, it does not convey information or impose an obligation. [43] The need for clarity and promulgation is common

[41] Lamont, *Divine Faith,* chap. 7. Fergus Kerr agrees with this dismissal of the magisterial account; see his review of *Divine Faith* in *New Blackfriars* 88 (2007) 499-501.

[42] Examples of this classification are found in M. Nicolau and I. Salaverri, *Sacrae theologia summa, I: Theologia fundamentalis,* 4th ed. (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1958), 805-15; Sixtus Cartechini, *De valore notarum theologicarum* (Rome: Typis Pontificae Universitatis Gregorianae, 1951); G. van Noort, *Dogmatic Theology, vol.* 3, *The Sources of Revelation: Divine Faith,* trans. and rev. John J. Castelot and William R. Murphy (Cork: Mercier Press, 1961), 290 (a version in English). Rejection of these theological notes should not be construed as involving rejection of the standard theological censures of the Church (on which see *Dictionnaire de theologie catholique,* s.v. "Censures doctrinales"). These censures evolved long before the neo-Scholastic system of theological notes and the theology of revelation that underlies them, so the content of a particular censure cannot be seen as equivalent to the negation of a particular neo-Scholastic note.

[43] This basic point is made in Cartechini, *De valore notarum theologicarum,* 22.

to teachings of the faith and to commands. Nor is criticism of this approach meant to imply that there is no such thing as obligation in faith. The trouble with the neo-Scholastic view is that it loses sight of the primary form of obligation that faith involves. This obligation is not the obligation to obey an order from a superior, but the obligation to believe the assertion of a trustworthy speaker (cf. 1John5: 10). This mistaken perspective of the neo-Scholastic view emerges in two of its characteristic features.

The first of these features is the classification of Church teachings according to the sin involved in rejecting them, rather than the degree of rational conviction that they should be given. This feature is neatly expressed in Sixtus Cartechini's diagram of the various kinds of teachings, to each of which is attached the degree and nature of the sin incurred by disbelief in them.[44] This kind of classification is certainly what is needed by a confessor dealing with very erudite penitents. However, it is of less use to theologians, for whom it is not the sin involved in rejecting a teaching, but its truth and degree of warrant, that are of interest. These features of a teaching cannot always be simply read off from the degree of sin (if any) that is involved in rejecting it. In a particular individual, blameless ignorance and stupidity will affect the degree of culpability of disbelief, but not the degree of warrant of a teaching. And when we consider teachings taken in themselves and abstract from the effects of ignorance and stupidity, the degree of sin involved in disbelieving them is not a fine-grained enough measure to identify the degree of warrant they deserve. For one thing, sin can attach only to the fact of disbelief as such; there is no sin in accepting a Church teaching as true, but not awarding it the degree of probability it deserves.

The second characteristic feature is the predominant neo-Scholastic view that Church teaching should be interpreted in such a way as to minimize as far as possible the obligation of Catholics to believe. This view results from combining the notion of faith as obedience with the position in moral theology known as probabilism. It is usually expressed with regard to infallible

[44] Ibid., 134-35; see also van Noort, *The Sources of Revelation*, 290.

teaching, but the general principle that Catholics should only have to believe the minimum that can reasonably be expected of them applies *a fortiori* to noninfallible teaching. It is stated by Cartechini in his manual for theologians of the Holy Office: "Condemnation, as an odious thing, is to be restricted .... Since infallibility demands a sacrifice of the mind, the Church requires this sacrifice to the minimum extent possible."[45]

The same teaching is also advanced by a great name, John Henry Newman. In his *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk*, he writes,

> So difficult a virtue is faith, even with the special grace of God, in proportion as the reason is exercised, so difficult is it to assent inwardly to propositions, verified to us neither by reason nor experience, but as depending for their reception on the word of the Church as God's oracle, that [the Church] has ever shown the utmost care to contract, as far as possible, the range of truths and the sense of proposition, of which she demands this absolute reception.[46]

Newman was not giving here the fruit of his personal investigation and reflection on this topic. He was accepting Fr. Ignatius Dudley Ryder's account of the Catholic theology of faith, and Ryder in turn was repeating the standard baroque Scholastic view. It is Ryder's criticism of W. G. Ward that Newman cites as the source of his position.[47] Ryder later gave a clear and characteristic identification of faith with obedience: "What probabilism is in moral, that is minimism [Ryder's own view] in dogmatic theology; they are both based upon a common principle, 'lex dubia non

[45] "Damnatio, ut res odiosa, restringenda est.... Infallibilitas ergo, cum exigat sacrificium mentis, Ecclesia imponit hoc sacrificium in minimo gradu possibili" (Cartechini, *De valore notarum theologicarum*, 25, 26). Cartechini makes this point to buttress his claim that it is the contradictory, not the contrary, of an anathematized proposition that must be believed as a matter of faith-quite unnecessarily, since this claim follows as a matter of logic.

[46] John Henry Newman, "A Letter to the Duke of Norfolk on the Occasion of Mr. Gladstone's Recent Expostulation," in *Certain Difficulties Felt by Anglicans in Catholic Teaching*, vol. 2 (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1910), 320.

[47] Newman (ibid.), quotes Ryder's *Idealism in Theology, a Review of Dr. Ward's Scheme of Dogmatic Authority* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1867). No doubt Newman was glad to have this position to hand to combat Ward's excesses, which would explain why he did not consider its shortcomings.

obligat.'" [48] Cartechini quotes this very maxim, "lex dubia non obligat," in his handbook. [49] Newman's espousal of this view found expression in his criticism of the definition of papal infallibility: "When has definition of doctrine *de fide* been a luxury of devotion, and not a stern painful necessity?" [50]

This view can only be maintained if we do not think about the fact that the object of faith is the gospel of Christ. When we do think about this, we realize that what Newman, Ryder, and Cartechini are saying is that the faithful should be asked to believe as little of the gospel as possible, and hence that they should be required to know as little of the saving truth of the gospel as possible, and to make the minimum possible number of those acts of charity that are acts of the virtue of formed faith. This view implies that professing the Catholic faith is a stern painful necessity; that the faithful would be better off in some respects if there were fewer books of the Scripture and fewer articles of the Creed; and that Christ's hearers became worse off in some respects when they heard him explain how he was the fulfillment of the Scriptures, because this explanation imposed on them a sacrifice of the mind, through requiring them to believe more things as a matter of faith. It ignores the fact that faith gives us the most important truths.

The premise from which these absurd conclusions follow is, not surprisingly, a false one. For the principle "lex dubia non obligat" to be applicable to faith, not only would probabilism with respect to laws have to be true, but in addition an act of faith would have to consist in obedience to a command, which is not the case. The fact that disbelieving God is a sin does not entail

[48] Henry Ignatius Dudley Ryder, unpublished review of Salvatore di Bartolo's *Criteri teologici*, in *Essays* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1911), 316. Ward's ultramontane view of papal authority, in contrast, could be compared to tutiorism in moral theology, but argument for an approach to interpretation of Church teachings analogous to tutiorism does not seem often to have been advanced by academic theologians, and the minimizing view had become the generally accepted one by the twentieth century.

[49] Cartechini, *De valore notarum theologicarum,* 22.

[50] John Henry Newman, "Letter to Bishop Ullathorne, Jan, 28'h 1870," in *Letters and Diaries,* vol. 25, ed. C. S. Dessain and T. Gornall, S.J. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), 18-19. Newman sacrifices logic to rhetoric in this criticism, since the two alternatives he proposes obviously do not exhaust the possibilities.

that the object of an act of faith is a command. Faith is belief in God's testimony,[51] and an act of believing someone's testimony is not an act of obedience to a command; it is an act of accepting their claim as true, on account of their saying it.[52] The criteria for determining what it is that someone is saying are simply the criteria for understanding expressions in human language. There is nothing that requires or permits "contracting as far as possible the sense of a proposition" that is believed on the basis of someone's testimony.

The fact that faith is belief in God's testimony reveals the mistake in Newman and Cartechini's claim that increasing the content of the faith as such means increasing the difficulty of faith. Believing another dogma is not like having to donate another $1000 to the poor. The basic psychological and intellectual difficulty of faith lies in accepting that the Church, to outward observation simply a human group, is in fact speaking for God in announcing the faith. If this difficulty is overcome, it is not intrinsically more difficult to believe more doctrines than less; just as if we accept that a given individual is a competent doctor, we go on believing the advice he gives us about our health, without taking into account the volume of the advice he gives. We may have difficulty in believing him if his advice seems contrary to other evidence, but it is the seeming contradiction that gives rise to the problem, not the volume of advice he gives as such. The same applies to believing the teachings of the Church.

The minimizing view of belief is often supported by appeal to the fact, noted above, that teachings of the faith, like ecclesiastical laws (which are commands), require manifest promulgation in order to be binding. It is thence concluded that the requirement of manifest promulgation justifies the application of the principle

[51] Lamont, *Divine Faith*, chaps. 2, 8, expands on this basic dogma, which is set forth in Vatican I's dogmatic constitution *Dei Filius.*

[52] On belief in testimony, see Lamont, *Divine Faith*, chap. 6; C. A. J. Coady, *Testimony: A Philosophical Study* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992); Bimal Krishna Matilal and Arindam Chakrabarti eds., *Knowing from Words* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic, 1994); J. Lackey and E. Sosa, eds., *The Epistemology of Testimony* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

"lex dubia non obligat."[53] However, we can see the fallacy in arguing from the need for manifest promulgation to a minimizing view of doctrine by considering a parallel with systems of civil law. Such systems usually include the requirement for a law to be promulgated in some manifest way in order to be binding. In Canada, for example, federal law must receive the royal assent from the Governor General, and then be published in the *Canada Gazette.* This does not however enable Canadian lawyers to apply a probabilist kind of minimizing to Canadian law. The issue of manifest promulgation bears on the question of whether a law exists, not on the question of what the content of a law commands; and it is in relation to the latter question that the issue of minimizing arises. It is of course possible to attempt to minimize obligations by questioning the existence rather than the content of Church teachings, but this is rarely feasible in practice, because systems of promulgation are deliberately arranged to make the fact of promulgation clear. Thus, for example, since the issuance of the constitution *Promulgandi pontificias* by Pope St. Pius X (29 Sept. 1908), publication in the *Acta apostolicae sedis* is required for a law of the Holy See, unless the Holy See provides otherwise through some other recognized form (e.g., an apostolic constitution). This should not be taken as implying that certain precise forms of promulgation are required for a Church teaching to be promulgated and thus binding. Given the varied circumstances of the Church throughout the centuries, such a requirement would be impractical. All that is necessary is that the form of words used and the method of their being communicated

[53] The principle is enunciated by Gratian: "Leges instituuntur, cum promulgantur" *(Decreti prima pars,* dist. 4, c. 3 *[Corpus iuris canonici,* vol. 1, A. L. Richter ed. (Leipzig: Tauchnitz, 1879), 6]). Saint Thomas argues for this principle in *STh* I-II, q. 90, a. 4, citing Gratian as an authority. The principle is not a universal one; the Japanese legal code of 1790, for example, stipulates that it is only to be shown to the officials concerned with implementing it. This in turn seems partly rooted in a saying attributed to Confucius, to the effect that the people should obey the laws but not be instructed in them; see Gilbert Bailey, "The Promulgation of Law," *The American Political Science Review* 35, no. 6 (Dec. 1941): 1059-84. I have not been able to determine whether Gratian was the first explicitly to formulate this principle (it is not in the *Etymologies* of Isidore of Seville, book 5, which is where Gratian gets much of the material he uses in this distinction). If Gratian was the first legal thinker to explicitly formulate this principle, this is a very important advance.

clearly manifest the intention of addressing a binding teaching, of whatever level, to the whole Church. [54]

In addition to the need for manifest promulgation, there is also a requirement that the content of a teaching be clear; we are obligated to believe only what is clearly taught. However, the fact that clarity is a necessary condition for the existence of a Church teaching is not a ground for minimizing. The clarity of the content of a teaching is a function of the meanings of the sentences used to express it, which in turn is a function of the rules of meaning for the languages in which the sentences are uttered, taking into account the context. These rules will determine the degree of clarity-that is, of lack of vagueness and/or ambiguity-of a teaching. But there is no rational basis for attempting to minimize the content determined by these meaning rules. In fact, the rules themselves incorporate standards for determining the amount of content that should be attributed to utterances. Provided that there *is* some clear content to a teaching, the nature of its content is simply that which is determined by the rules of the language used; and that content is what we have a duty to believe, without any maxim1zmg or minimizing.

It could be maintained that although minimizing ought not to be applied to the content of a Church teaching, the degree of obligation to believe a Church teaching, once its meaning has been ascertained, is subject to the principle "lex dubia non obligat," and ought thus to be minimized. This would not apply to teachings that have been taught by the Church as a matter of faith, but might be claimed to apply to noninfallible teachings. This claim-as Ryder says-stands or falls with the truth of probabilism, of which this principle is a maxim. The issue of the truth of probabilism is an important one, that will be addressed in subsequent work on the issue of religious freedom; it will there be

[54] Cartechini makes this point with respect to papal teachings *ex cathedra (De valore notarum theologicarum,* 28). Lucien Choupin, in his standard work *Valeur des decisions doctrinales et disciplinaires du Saint-Siege,* 3rd ed. (Paris: Beauchesne, 1928), makes the same point: "the Pope is not obliged to use a specific form" ("le Pape n'est pas astreint a une forme speciale" [27]). This principle applies to Church teachings generally, not only to papal ones. The rule that publication in the *Acta apostolicae sedis* is not a necessary condition for promulgation was established by a decree in the *Acta apostolicae sedis* 5 (1913): 558.

argued that probabilism is a harmful mistake that has had destructive effects in the Church. But even if probabilism is true, the claim will still be one that is relevant to the confessor, rather than the theologian, for the claim professedly bears upon the moral obligation to believe a teaching, rather than the rational degree of assent that the teaching merits.

In attacking the minimizing view as absurd, some explanation is called for as to why, if absurd, it came to be generally accepted. One of its sources, the notion of faith as obedience to a command, was partly a result of attitudes inherited from nominalism, which conceived of the moral life entirely in terms of obedience to commands. Since faith is a virtue, it follows from this view that faith is a disposition to obey commands. This notion was reinforced by the habits of mind produced by the measures adopted to deal with the emergency of the Reformation. The project of the Counter-Reformation relied crucially upon the substitution of seminaries for universities as the means for training clergy, and upon the Society of Jesus. Both these institutions exalted obedience as the supreme virtue, and discouraged independence of mind. This was particularly true of the Jesuits on account of their requirement that Jesuit scholars teach as true the more common Jesuit opinion, as opposed to the one that struck a given Jesuit as best supported by reason. The other source of the minimalist view, the probabilist approach to obedience, was also a result of the nominalist inheritance (and of measures taken to deal with the results of this inheritance).

The ultramontane attitude to belief also strengthened the minimizing approach, once ultramontanism became powerful in the nineteenth century. From a psychological point of view, the minimizing approach is a sort of adolescent rebellion against the infantile features of the ultramontane attitude. The minimizing approach in turn strengthened the ultramontane approach, by giving rise to alarm about the risk of eroding the faith of believers-a danger against which the ultramontane approach presented itself as a shield. The two fed on each other, at the expense of an approach dedicated to finding out exactly what the

Church taught, without attempting to minimize or maximize, and then believing it.

This conception of faith as obedience to authority, and the general nominalist outlook from which it sprang, had an important influence on the debate over religious liberty and the production of *Dignitatis humanae.* It meant that objections about *Dignitatis humanae* contradicting previous teaching were not taken very seriously by most bishops at the council. If one's fundamental model of faith is that of obeying a command rather than that of grasping reality, it is psychologically easier to accept a Church pronouncement that seems hard to reconcile with earlier teachings, because it is quite permissible-and even necessary-for an authority to issue one command at one time, and a contrary command at a later time. The effect of this fundamental model can be seen in the expression "the contemporary magisterium." Theologically this expression is nonsensical, because there is only one Church with one teaching office, and the pronouncements of this teaching office, from the apostles to our own time, are to be interpreted as a whole. If however these teachings are seen as commands, it is reasonable to conceive of a "contemporary magisterium" distinct from the past magisterium, and to conceive of the deliverances of the former as superseding those of the latter. The continued debates over the morality of contraception and the possibility of women's ordination reflect this conception of the faith (as well as the acceptance of notions of the historical conditioning of doctrine criticized above). Church teachings on these subjects are conceived of as orders that could in theory be countermanded, rather than as what they in fact are-descriptions of reality that are true beyond a reasonable doubt.

The debate over *Dignitatis humanae* was also influenced by this conception of faith in a more general fashion. The notion of belief as obedience to authority had a blighting influence on the philosophical culture of the Church, because it tended to destroy the habits of mind needed for philosophy. This can be seen by comparing the philosophical achievements of the clergy before

and after the Counter-Reformation. [55] Some of this philosophical decline is no doubt due to the fact that Counter-Reformation systems incorporated incompatible elements from earlier thinkers. (The principal incompatibility was the acceptance of nominalist concepts while allegedly following St. Thomas.) This meant that one could not adhere to these systems if one thought deeply about philosophical issues; probably this was partly a product and partly a cause of clerical intellectual weakness. Leo XIII's attempt to revive Thomism had limited success in reforming this shortcoming, in part because many of its supporters tried to impose this revival principally as a matter of obedience. This shortcoming fatally handicapped discussion of the right to religious freedom, a discussion that centered around difficult philosophical issues.

C) The Degrees of Warrant of Noninfallible Church Teachings

Having established the unsuitableness for theological purposes of considering belief in noninfallible Church teachings in terms of obedience to authority, we can set about the positive task of describing the degrees of warrant that can attach to such teachings. There are four basic categories of warrant that they can possess.

(A) Taught with such a degree of authority that it is unreasonable to suppose that there could ever be any good evidence against their being true.

In understanding this category, it is important to remember the character of infallible teachings. These teachings have the highest

[55] Malebranche (d. 1715) was the last cleric to make an important philosophical contribution. Significantly, after his time, those priests who were important to philosophy-Bolzano and Brentano-left the priesthood. A key step in the demise of Catholic philosophy was the replacement in the late seventeenth century of St. Thomas's commentaries on Aristotle by philosophical manuals as texts for instruction, "mainly in order to meet the pedagogical requirements of students preparing for the ministerial priesthood" (Romanus Cessario O.P., *A Short History of Thomism* [Washington, D. C.:The Catholic University of America Press, 2005], 83-84.) The elements of a revival of philosophical aptitude among the clergy that were fostered by the Thomist revival were cut short by the postconciliar reforms, which destroyed almost all serious philosophical formation for clerics.

degree of warrant that a human belief can have; they are as certain as that 1 + 1 = 2. This is the degree of warrant that attaches to beliefs where there is no logical possibility of their being false, and where the nonexistence of such a logical possibility is known with certainty. (This is not a claim that infallible teachings are of this character. They are not, since if they were, belief in them could not be voluntary and could not be an exercise of faith. It is rather a claim that infallible teachings have the same degree of warrant, and demand the same degree of assent, as statements of this character.)

Beneath this strength of warrant, which in matters of faith belongs only to infallible teachings, there is a lesser degree of warrant, according to which the logical possibility of a belief's being false is admitted (e.g., the belief that I am not deceived by an evil demon in the way described by Descartes, or the belief that the world did not come into existence five minutes ago with all the apparent traces of its past built into it), but where it is unreasonable to suppose that any good evidence for their being false will ever turn up. Sufficiently authoritative Church teachings which nonetheless fall short of infallibility fall into this category.

(B) Authoritatively taught, and without any evidence against their truth, but where the real possibility of there being such evidence is not excluded.

(C) Authoritatively taught, and with existing evidence against their truth, but where the evidence against them is not strong enough to justify rejecting them.

(D) Authoritatively taught, but contradicted by evidence that is so strong that they ought reasonably to be rejected.

Any discussion of the truth of a noninfallible Church teaching will effectively be assuming that that teaching does not belong to category (A), and discussing whether or not it belongs to category (D).

Such discussion must begin by identifying the sense of the teaching in question. In making this identification, we must take into account the point, made above, that we ought to understand

a given individual teaching as having a sense that is true and that harmonizes with the rest of the teachings of the Church, unless the way in which such a teaching is expressed makes such an understanding impossible. The sense we attribute to a given individual teaching may thus not be the one we would have ascribed to the sentences that express it, if we had encountered those sentences in a different context. This could be described as giving these sentences a nonnatural sense, or as giving them a pious interpretation. Such descriptions are however misleading, because they imply that we are interpreting the sentences in question in some kind of unusual or nonstandard way. This is not the case; we are simply applying the principles that are to be used in understanding utterances generally.[56] What makes the result of this application seem unusual is the fact that the application is not to the utterances of Pope X or Council Y taken in isolation, but to the utterances of the Catholic Church, who speaks through these instruments, and whose meaning is not therefore to be understood as corresponding to what these individuals or groups might be understood as saying if they were speaking on their own behalf.

This principle of interpretation has implications for the question of whether or not a particular Church teaching is false. The whole body of Church teaching forms a harmonious whole. The minimal form of harmony that can exist between a particular Church teaching and the whole body of Church teaching is that of absence of contradiction. Typically, however, because Church teaching is a unified whole dealing with a particular subject matter, this harmony will consist in a particular Church teaching's repeating and/or elucidating other teachings. Because Church teaching as a whole cannot be false, the latter kind of harmony makes it difficult for an individual teaching to be false, and impossible for it to be a radical misrepresentation of reality. Ascribing a sense to a given Church teaching that harmonizes with Church teaching as a whole will thus also be ascribing a sense to

[56] For exposition of these principles, with a particular application of them to Church teaching, see Richard Swinburne, *Revelation: From Metaphor to Analogy,* 1d ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

it that makes it unlikely to be false, and that is not a radically wrong description of reality. This in itself will make it unusual to identify a Church teaching that falls under category (D).

If, however, there is no option but to ascribe to a given Church teaching a sense whose truth seems doubtful, there are a number of considerations that need to be kept in mind in evaluating it. One consideration is that although there is by definition a (low) possibility of any noninfallible teaching that is not in category (A) being false, this does not imply that there is a possibility (however low) of all these teachings being false; no such possibility exists. These teachings are brought into being by God for the purpose of teaching the faithful, and this purpose would be frustrated if a majority of them-or even a greater proportion than an extremely small minority-turned out to be false. It is impossible for God to be frustrated, so it would be impossible for this to happen. It follows that if there is a sufficient weight of teaching in favor of some doctrine, the possibility of the doctrine's being false must be excluded, even if none of the teachings taken individually is infallible or in category (A). This fact has traditionally been recognized by theologians, who have accepted that a sufficient weight of teaching in favor of a doctrine has the effect of making that doctrine a teaching of the faith, even if each individual teaching that asserts the doctrine could in itself possibly be false.

This is connected to a general point about theological investigation that is pertinent to questions such as those of religious liberty. Such investigation can only be focussed on the authority of a particular noninfallible pronouncement respecting it when it is a question of whether or not that teaching is in category (A). For the other levels, what is needed is an investigation of all the factors that are relevant to the question, where the Church teachings that will have to be considered cannot be restricted to one pronouncement that addresses the question, but must instead be Church teaching taken as a whole in so far as it has any bearing on the subject at hand. Focussing upon particular magisterial utterances, when it comes to teachings that are not infallibly taught, is (except for category [A]) an

inappropriate transfer to fallible teachings of an approach that properly belongs to the consideration of infallible ones. With infallible teachings, this approach is correct, because particular infallible teachings are capable on their own of finally settling a debated question, and are typically intended to do just that. Noninfallible teachings in categories (B), (C), or (D), on the other hand, are not suited to being considered except within the whole context of Church teaching and tradition that bears upon the subject they address. Since the contents of *Dignitatis humanae* certainly do not belong to category (A), this is the approach that needs to be taken to the question of the teachings of the Church on religious liberty.

If there is a real case for the falsity of a given teaching, either because it contradicts another teaching or because there is very strong evidence against it that is external to Church teaching, two issues will arise: (1) proving its falsity, and (2) explaining its falsity. These will be related, since it will be easier to conclude that a teaching is false if a plausible explanation for its falsity is available. Such explanation is called for, because an authoritative Church teaching is not the sort of thing that can just turn out to be false every once in a while, in the way that the conclusions of statistical inferences with a probability of .95 will just happen to be false one time in twenty. Such teachings have the function of conveying the truth, and the Church has the capacity to communicate the truth through them-that is why they are authoritative. If they fail in this function, it is because something has interfered with this capacity. Nothing could bring it about that the Catholic faith could itself contain any falsehood, so the explanation for a false Church teaching can only be a failing in the human instruments who formulate it. Such failings can result either from error or from deceit in these instruments, these being the two possible explanations for the falsity of any form of teaching. A claim that a given Church teaching is false, if it is to be plausible, must thus include reasons for believing that the human instruments who uttered it on behalf of the Church were either deceitful or in error.

This account of the methods for identifying the content and degrees of authority of noninfallible Church teaching does not make any radically new proposals. Instead, it systematizes and to some extent makes explicit principles that theologians have always been practicing. This is how it should be; a radically new account of how to determine the content and degree of authority of Church teachings would imply that theologians have been badly mistaken about these teachings for two thousand years, which is absurd if Catholicism is true. The need for this explicit systematization arises from the development of approaches to Church teaching that *are* radically new-approaches that have described and criticized above. These radically new approaches have promoted distorted understandings of the Church's teachings on a number of subjects, and especially in the field of religious liberty. Application of this systematized approach will be valuable in correcting this distorted understanding. However, as the account of this approach given above makes clear, its application requires a thorough consideration of the Catholic tradition on the questions at issue; and this consideration must be undertaken in a further discussion.

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DIONYSIAN ELEMENTS IN THOMAS AQUINAS'S CHRISTOLOGY: A CASE OF THE AUTHORITY AND AMBIGUITY OF PSEUDO-DIONYSIUS

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THOMAS AQUINAS FEATURES Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite [1] in the very first article of the *Tertia pars* of the *Summa Theologiae,* on whether it was fitting that God should become incarnate. This use of Dionysius to begin the treatise on the Savior can prompt us to step back and reconsider him as a source for Aquinas's teaching on Christ. The general authority of Dionysius has been a source of some dispute, both in the tradition and at present. [2] Christology today could gain much from considering Aquinas's sensitive appropriation of this enigmatic ancient figure.

The most influential Greek patristic authority in Aquinas's thought, Dionysius presents within Aquinas's treatment on Christ a pervasively ambiguous source. Aquinas adapts Dionysius's teaching to strengthen his own understanding of the incarnation. Aquinas's frequent recourse to the theandric operation, in particular, demonstrates his keen appreciation for Dionysius and the wider Greek tradition. Yet, the most significant point of

[1] For the sake of brevity, hereafter I refer to him as Dionysius or the Areopagite.

[2] For example, see the intra-Orthodox debate on Dionysius's orthodoxy in the exchange between Kenneth Paul Wesche and Hieromonk Alexander: Kenneth Paul Wesche, "Christological Doctrine and Liturgical Interpretation in Pseudo-Dionysius," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* (1989): 53-73; Hieromonk Alexander, "On the Other Hand," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* (1990): 305-23; and Kenneth Paul Wesche, "Appendix: A Reply to Hieromonk Alexander's Reply," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* (1990): 324-27.

convergence between the Christology of Dionysius and that of the *Summa Theologiae* lies not in explicating Christ's theandric operation, but rather in extolling the divine goodness and *philanthropia* in Christ for the salvation of sinners.

My investigation falls into four parts. The first sketches a broad assessment of the presence of Dionysius in the thought of Aquinas in order to establish his preeminence among Aquinas's Greek patristic sources. The second undertakes a brief overview of Dionysian Christology, particularly in regards to its articulation of Christ's theandric operation and its emphasis on *philanthropia.* The third surveys the Dionysian presence in Aquinas's Christo logy in questions 1-59 of the *Tertia pars.* With all this as background, the fourth section offers a more detailed and critical appreciation of all of Aquinas's uses of one Dionysian contribution: Christ's theandric operation. I conclude by suggesting the importance of Aquinas's understanding of the theandric operation for ecumenism today and underscoring the common emphasis in Dionysius and Aquinas of God's love made known in the Savior for us smners.

I. DIONYSIUS AS A SOURCE FOR AQUINAS

Estimates in assessing the role of Dionysius in Aquinas's thought vary considerably. T. C. O'Brien defines an *auctoritas* for medievals as a privileged text "from the canonical Scriptures, ecclesiastical writers, canon law, liturgy, even the philosophers." He then claims that Dionysius is cited by Aquinas "more than any other single *auctoritas."* [3] This is an exaggeration, as the canonical Scriptures are for Aquinas a far superior and more frequently cited authority than any nonbiblical source. [4] Significantly for our

[3] T. C. O'Brien, "The Dionysian Corpus," Appendix 3 to Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae,* vol. 14 (Ia. 103-109), *Divine Government,* trans. T. C. O'Brien (New York: McGraw-Hill Co., 1975), 182-83.

[4] For the position of biblical authority versus other authorities, see esp. *STh* I, q. 1, a. 8, ad 2. For an important study of Scripture in St. Thomas's theology, see Wilhelmus G. B. M. Valkenberg, *Words of the Living God: Place and Function of Holy Scripture in the Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Leuven: Peeters, 2000). For example, Valkenberg states that 4,105 explicit scriptural references are found in *STh* III, qq. 1-59. Adding implicit quotations,

present interest, Aquinas often poses objections to the use of a nonscriptural term in theology on the basis of Dionysius's authority that no one should ever dare to say anything about God except what is divinely expressed to us by the Sacred Scriptures. [5] In fact, Wayne Hankey goes so far as to say that "Denys determines his [Aquinas's] interpretation of Holy Scripture." [6] Returning to a position reminiscent of O'Brien's, Hankey states flatly, "[T]he authority and strength of Denys' writings for Aquinas is unsurpassed by others. "[7]

In light of the profound and complex influences of Aristotle and Augustine on Aquinas, Hankey's claim is unconvincing, but a more manageable question can be asked. How does the Areopagite compare with other Greek Fathers as an *auctoritas* for Aquinas? Even this question has hazards. In an article on Aquinas and the Fathers of the Church, Leo Elders offers a table of research results from the *Index Thomisticus.* [8] The tabulation gives statistics of patristic references in Aquinas, but it should be interpreted with care. For example, Elders knows that the *Opus imperfectum,* excerpted liberally by Aquinas along with John Chrysostom's homilies on Matthew, is falsely attributed to Chrysostom. [9] However, his research does not take this fact into account when it gives 1,281 citations of "Chrysostom" in the *Catena aurea* on Matthew. Omitting the many false references

allusions, and vague resemblances, he finds that the number rises to 6,251 (ibid., 24).

[5] Dionysius emphasizes the scriptural bounds for our discourse at the beginning of *On the Divine Names.* Aquinas quotes Dionysius on this principle in *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 29, a. 3, obj. 1; I, q. 36, a. 2, obj. 1; I, q. 39, a. 2, obj. 2. Aquinas paraphrases it without mention of Dionysius in *STh* III, q. 35, a. 4, arg. 1. See Valkenberg's treatment of "Scripture as *auctoritas,"* in *Words of the Living God,* 11-18.

[6] Wayne John Hankey, "Dionysian Hierarchy in St. Thomas Aquinas: Tradition and Transformation," in *Denys l'Areopagite et sa posterite en Orient et en Occident,* Actes du Colloque International Paris, 21-24 September 1994, ed. Ysabel de Andia, Collection des Etudes Augustiniennes, Serie Antiquite 151 (Paris: Institut d'Etudes Augustiniennes, 1997), 405-38, at 435.

[7] Ibid. Hankey says that Aquinas's acceptance of Dionysius determines his choice and understanding of the other leading authorities-Aristotle and Augustine.

[8] Leo J. Elders, S.V.D., "Santo Tomas de Aquino y los Padres de la Iglesia," *Doctor Communis* 48 (1995): 55-80; table on p. 66.

[9] Ibid., 61.

would reduce that number, but it should still be conceded that Chrysostom exercises a far greater influence in the exegetical works authored and compiled by Aquinas than does Dionysius. Dionysius, after all, has extant only four treatises and ten letters-no biblical commentary or homily.

How frequently does Dionysius appear throughout Aquinas's *opera omnia?* J. Durantel's groundbreaking study on the Dionysian influence on Aquinas reports 1,702 explicit citations, not including other forms of reference. [10] But this number is now known to be too low. According to John D. Jones, whose *Catalogue of Citations of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite in the Opera Omnia of St. Thomas Aquinas* will be published by The Catholic University of America Press, Aquinas "refers directly to Dionysius in nearly 2200 texts-more references than to any other author except Aristotle and Augustine." [11] Indeed, Jones's own careful notation of explicit citations shows that Dionysius appears 755 times in the *Scriptum super Sententiis,* 582 times in the *Summa Theologiae,* and 48 times in the *Summa contra Gentiles.* [12] These figures can be compared with Chrysostom's 42 times in the *Scriptum,* 240 times in the *Summa Theologiae,* and 0 times in the *Summa contra Gentiles,* as well as Damascene's 285 times in the *Scriptum,* 328 times in the *Summa Theologiae,* and 7 times in the *Summa contra Gentiles.* [13] Moreover, Aquinas chose to write commentaries on only two Christian nonbiblical authors: Boethius and Dionysius. When taking Aquinas's commentary on

[10] See the 1917 doctoral thesis of J. Durante!, *Saint Thomas et le Pseudo-Denis* (Paris: Librairie Felix Akan, 1919), 60.

[11] John D. Jones, "An Absolutely Simple God? Frameworks for Reading Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagite," *The Thomist* 69 (2005): 371-406, at 371. This number does not include the constant internal references within the *Commentaria in librum de Divinis Nominibus.*

[12] Jones generously shared the results of his research with me before his publication. The references to Dionysius in Aquinas's *Scriptum super Sententiiss* can be found 167 times in the first book, 221 times in the second book, 122 times in the third book, and 245 times in the fourth book. In the *Summa Theologiae,* Aquinas refers to Dionysius 260 times in the *Prima pars,* 102 times in the *Prima secundae,* 113 times in the *Secunda secundae,* and 107 times in the *Tertia pars.*

[13] See Elders, "Santo Tomas de Aquino y los Padres de la Iglesia," 66. As Jones readjusts the figures for Dionysius, one can imagine other ways of figuring the tallies for Chrysostom and Damascene.

Dionysius's longest treatise, *On the Divine Names,* into consideration, the material presence of Dionysius significantly increases. Thanks to Jones's research, Dionysius should be esteemed as the leading Greek Christian authority for Aquinas's writing. [14]

Moreover, the evidence of Aquinas's ongoing adaptation of Dionysius is not limited only to explicit citations of the Areopagite. Aquinas famously writes "Therefore, since grace does not destroy nature but perfects it **...** ". [15] Less well known is how closely this relates to what he twice quotes from Dionysius elsewhere in the *Summa Theologiae,* "It is characteristic of providence not to corrupt nature, but to preserve it." [16] Another case is taken from Aquinas's Christology. Aquinas asks whether it was fitting that Christ should preach to the Jews, and not to the Gentiles *(STh* III, q. 42, a. 1). In the second reason he gives for this fittingness he notes that Christ's coming was from God, by whom all things are ordered. Because of their faith and worship of the one God, the Jews were closer to God. Therefore, Aquinas argues, Christ's doctrine should have been first propounded to the Jews and "through them it be transmitted to the Gentiles, just as also in the celestial hierarchy the divine illuminations come down through the higher angels to the lower ones." [17] Aquinas does not

[14] For a different reckoning, see Gilles Emery, O.P., "A Note on St. Thomas and the Eastern Fathers," trans. Jennifer Harms and John Baptist Ku, O.P., in Gilles Emery, O.P., *Trinity, Church, and the Human Person: Thomistic Essays* (Naples, Fla.: Sapientia Press, 2007), 193-207. Emery considers Dionysius to be "only in second place" to Chrysostom for material presence in Aquinas's works (196). He also states, "However, concerning reflections organized in a synthetic manner, it is to St. John Damascene that St. Thomas turns the most often" (198). I agree that Aquinas turns most frequently to Damascene among the Greeks in certain areas. For a pertinent example, Aquinas cites the name Damascene in the Christology of *STh* III, qq. 1-59 over 120 times.

[15] "Cum igitur gratia non tollat naturam sed perficiat" *(STh* I, q. 1, a. 8, ad 2).

[16] "Providentiae non est naturam corrumpere, sed salvare," from Dionysius, *On the Divine Names* 4. Quoted in *STh* II-II, q. 165, a. 1; and *STh* III, q. 44, a. 2, obj. 1. Cf. Paul Rorem, *Pseudo-Dionysius: A Commentary on the Texts and an Introduction to Their Influence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 168 and 177 n. 12; and Richard Schenk, O.P., "From Providence to Grace: Thomas Aquinas and the Platonists of the Mid-Thirteenth Century," *Nova et Vetera* 3 (2005): 307-20.

[17] *STh* III, q. 42, a. 1: "per eos transmitteretur ad gentes; sicut etiam in coelesti hierarchia per superiores angelos ad inferiores divinae illuminationes deveniunt."

explicitly cite Dionysius, and Dionysius does not discuss the transmission of the gospel to the nations through Israel. However, the Dionysian inspiration is palpable. This suggests that Aquinas used the Dionysian concept of hierarchy without any need for added elaboration. Indeed, the Dionysian word "hierarchy" had become a standard term in Western usage by Aquinas's day.[18]

Such a pervasive reliance upon Dionysius was by no means universal in Western Scholasticism. Peter Lombard quotes Dionysius only three times in all of his *Sententiae.*[19] Between the time of Lombard's *Sentences* and Aquinas's *Scriptum,* Scholasticism received a rather dramatic Dionysian infusion.[20] Reputed to be Paul's Athenian convert mentioned in Acts 17:34, Dionysius enjoyed a nonscriptural authority like no other among some Scholastics in the mid-thirteenth century.[21] Aquinas follows his mentor Albert the Great, who commented on all of Dionysius's works and cited the Areopagite from the *originalia* (in Latin

[18] For a detailed study of Dionysian hierarchy, see Ronald F. Hathaway, *Hierarchy and the Definition of Order in the Letters of Pseudo-Dionysius: A Study in the Form and Meaning of the Pseudo-Dionysian Writings* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969). Hathaway observes, "In the several recent discussion of the term 'hierarchy' and its use by Ps.-Dionysius, one fact of obvious importance is never emphasized: Ps.-Dionysius is the virtual author of the term with the lexical meaning which it has possessed ever since" (xxi).

[19] Peter Lombard, *Sententiae in N Libris Distinctae* tom. 1, pars 2 (lib. 1 et 2) (Grottaferrata: Collegii S. Bonaventurae ad Claras Aquas, 1971). Lombard cites *De cael. hierarchia* in II *Sent.,* d. 9, c. 1 (Grottaferrata ed., 371); II *Sent.,* d. 10, c. 1 (Grottaferrata ed., 377); and II *Sent.,* d. 11, c. 1 (Grottaferrata ed., 379); cf. the implicit presence of *De cael. hierarchia* in II *Sent.,* d. 9, c. 2 (Grottaferrata ed., 371).

[20] For analysis, see H.F. Dondaine, O.P., *Le corpus dionysien de l'universite de Paris au XIIIe siecle,* Storia e letteratura racccolta di studi e testi 44 (Rome: Edizioni di storia et letteratura, 1953).

[21] For example, according to Bonaventure, John Damascene follows Moses in saying that "He who is" is God's primary name, but Dionysius follows Christ in saying that God's primary name is "Good" *(Itinerarium mentis in Deum* 5.2). The latter goes beyond the former in that it leads to the consideration God as Trinity, which prepares for spiritual and mystical ecstasy. Bonaventure's description of this ecstasy, at the end of the *Itinerarium,* features two quotations from Dionysius's *De mystica theologia.* Also, Bonaventure says that whereas Augustine teaches the allegorical sense of Scripture in the eternal generation and incarnation of Christ and Gregory the Great teaches the moral sense of Scripture in the pattern of human life, it is Dionysius who teaches the anagogical sense of Scripture, the ultimate goal of the other two spiritual senses, in the soul's union with God *(De reductione artium ad theologiam* 5).

translations) more frequently than did any other Scholastic.[22] For his part, Aquinas did not simply repeat his teacher's method of appropriating Dionysius, but forged his own interpretation, which has received critical approval in our day. For example, Andrew Louth criticizes Westerners for "pillaging" the Dionysian writings for themes and images quite remote from their original context and rendering them in a way foreign to Dionysius's intention.[23] Exceptionally, Louth gives this positive assessment: "St. Thomas Aquinas read Denys with great care and attention: and whole areas of his theology-the doctrine of the divine attributes, angelology, to name but two-are deeply in debt to him."[24]

Especially since Durantel's pioneering study, scholars have appreciated more and more the Dionysian influence on Aquinas, effectively countering the stereotype of Aquinas as simply a "Christian Aristotelian."[25] However, most contemporary scholarship on Aquinas's appropriation of Dionysius has concentrated on matters concerning Neoplatonist philosophy and language of God, leaving aside other important aspects of Dionysius found in Aquinas. Fran O'Rourke's work exemplifies this contemporary

[22] H. F. Dondaine, O.P., "Les scholastique citent-ils !es Peres de premiere main?" *Revue des sciences philosophiques et theologiques* 36 (1952): 231-43. This article's general-sounding title is misleading, as Dondaine compares the Scholastics' citation of Dionysius's original texts in Latin translations.

[23] Andrew Louth, *Denys the Areopagite,* Outstanding Christian Thinkers (Wilton, Conn.: Morehouse-Barlow, 1989), 120-27, esp. 126. Paul Rorem offers a similar observation. Paraphrasing Alan of Lille's comment that authority has a wax nose that can be bent in diverse directions, Rorem notes, "As a presumably ancient authority, Dionysius had his nose and his texts bent in several directions" (Rorem, *Pseudo-Dionysius,* 38). For Alan of Lille, see his *De fide catholica* 1:30 *(PL* 210:333A).

[24] Louth, *Denys the Areopagite,* 126.

[25] For example, Wayne Hankey argues for situating Aquinas within the Christian Neoplatonist tradition. See his "Denys and Aquinas: Antimodern Cold and Postmodern Hot," in *Christian Origins: Theology, Rhetoric and Community,* ed. Lewis Ayres and Gareth Jones (London: Routledge, 1998), 139-84; *God in Himself: Aquinas' Doctrine of God as Expounded in the Summa Theologiae,* Oxford Theological Monographs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987); "Aquinas, Pseudo-Denys, Prod us and Isaiah VI.6," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et litteraire du Mayen Age* 64 (1997): 59-93; and "Aquinas and the Platonists," in *The Platonic Tradition in the Middle Ages: A Doxographic Approach,* ed. Stephen Gersh and MaartenJ. F. M. Hoenen (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2002), 279-324. Brian Davies, O.P., in his review of *God in Himself,* considers Aquinas to be more Dionysian than Hankey argues *(journal of Theological Studies* n.s. 40 [1989]: 290-94).

appreciation for Aquinas's debt to Dionysius. Yet O'Rourke concludes his suggestive study observing that Dionysius' s "importance for Aquinas, both in philosophy and theology, should not be underestimated; the phrases and themes of Dionysius appear almost at every turn and in the most unexpected contexts. "[26] A study of Thomistic Christology could well complement the more recent research on Aquinas's use of Dionysius in the *Prima pars* by Gregory Rocca and Thierry-Dominique Humbrecht. [27] However, one first ought to be acquainted with Dionysian Christology in its own right in order to appreciate Aquinas's adaptations.

II. DIONYSIAN CHRISTOLOGY

Paul Rorem warns, "Analyses of the Areopagite's teaching about Christ must sift the entire corpus and gather the various unsystematic comments." [28] I propose to touch upon Dionysius's Christology, a daunting task in a controversial field, in only two respects. [29] This cursory overview notes the difficulty of Dionysius's proposal of Christ's theandric operation and exposes

[26] Fran O'Rourke, *Pseudo-Dionysius and the Metaphysics of Aquinas* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005), 276. O'Rourke recognizes, "Most of the literature on Dionysius and Aquinas deals with the question of knowledge and language about God" (xvi).

[27] Gregory P. Rocca, O.P., *Speaking the Incomprehensible God: Thomas Aquinas on the Interplay of Positive and Negative Theology* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2004); Thierry-Dominique Humbrecht, O.P., *Theologie negative et noms divins chez saint Thomas d'Aquin,* Bibliotheque Thomiste 57 (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 2005).

[28] Rorem, *Pseudo-Dionysius,* 142.

[29] For example, Timothy A. Mahony gives a brief reply to Bernard McGinn's concern that even scholars sympathetic to Dionysius cannot find in him an adequate prominence for Christ. See Timothy A. Mahoney, "A Note on the Importance of the Incarnation in Dionysius the Areopagite," *Diakonia* 35 (2002): 49-53. Similarly, I cannot support the argument of A. I. Hauken, O.P., "Incarnation and Hierarchy: The Christ according to Ps-Dionysius," in *Studia Patristica,* vol. 15, Seventh International Conference on Patristic Studies at Oxford (1975), ed. Elizabeth A. Livingstone (Berlin: Akadamie-Verlag, 1984), 317-20. For Hauken, Dionysius's thought is "thoroughly God-centered, and he represents a God-mysticism rather than a Christ-mysticism or anything like a 'Jesus-religion"' (ibid., 317). Furthermore, Hauken thinks Dionysius overturned the vision of St. Paul and the early Church on the faithful's accessibility to Christ without hierarchy. For another view, see Rene Roques's discussion of Dionysius's understanding of Christ, especially in reference to hierarchies, in *L'univers dionysien: Structure hierarchique du monde selon le Pseudo-Dionysius* (Lille: Aubier, 1954), 305-29.

the theme of *philanthropia* in its decisive role as the main concern in his Christology. The twofold project paves the way for a more detailed study of Aquinas's reception of Dionysian Christology.

Unlike those who immediately situate Dionysius with respect to the philosophical traditions of Neoplatonism, [30] Louth perceptively introduces the world of Dionysius through the Christological controversies of the late fifth and early sixth centuries. Significantly, the first record of Dionysius comes from a 532 colloquy in Antioch between Chalcedonians and Severians in which the latter (mis-)quoted Dionysius's fourth epistle to support the position of Severus of Antioch against the Chalcedonian doctrine of two natures. [31] The misquotation has to do with the fact that the Severians claimed that Dionysius wrote of a "single" *(mia* in Greek) theandric operation. The controversial passage, even without the word "single," still poses a challenge for interpretation: "Furthermore, it was not by virtue of being God that he did divine things, not by virtue of being a man that he did what was human, but rather, by the fact of being God-made-man he accomplished some new theandric operation *[kainen tina ten theandriken energeian]* in our midst." [32]

The Christology of Dionysius's fourth epistle has been the subject of a recent, extensive study on the Greek and Syriac texts. Against a Severian interpretation, Istvan Perczel considers Dionysius's Christology to have "a rather pronounced Dyophysite doctrine" and he states, "this already gives us cause to wonder

[30] The philosophical identification of Dionysian theology as Neoplatonist, although admittedly important, may lead readers to determine (falsely in my opinion) that Neoplatonism is the guiding "rule of faith" in Dionysius and in those influenced by him.

[31] Louth, *Denys the Areopagite,* 14.

[32] *Ep.* 4 (PG 3:1072C; Luibheid, trans., 265). The Dionysian epistles are found in G. Heil and A. M. Ritter, eds., *Corpus Dionysiacum II: Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita. De coelesti hierarchia, de ecclesiastica hierarchia, de mystica theologia, epistulae,* Patristische Texte und Studien 36 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1991), 155-210. I use that edition for quoting the Greek, but it appeared too late for Colm Luibheid's translation *(Pseudo-Dionysius: The Complete Works,* trans. Colm Luibheid, with foreword, notes, and translation collaboration by Paul Rorem [New York: Paulist Press, 1987]), which is based on Corderius's edition in *Migne'sPatrologia Graeca* 3. Therefore, I give the *PG* 3 citation in the notes to accompany Luibheid's translation.

For something comparable to what is found in *Epistle* 4, see the expression *ti's anthropikes autou theourgias* in *On the Divine Names* 2.6.

why the hypothesis that the author was a Monophysite or crypto-Monophysite has been and is still held so firmly by so many scholars." [33] Indeed, Jaroslav Pelikan calls the theandric operation formula from *Epistle* 4 "[t]he most notorious statement ... of Dionysian spirituality, and the one with the most momentous consequences for its Westward odyssey." [34] Profoundly aware of the controversy in interpretation, Pelikan writes starkly, "Whatever the status of his alleged 'Monophysitism' may be, however, his 'Monenergism' does indeed seem to be an 'obvious fact'; and Monenergism was condemned, too. That remains so even after putting as charitable a construction as possible on his words." [35]

We will soon consider how Aquinas interprets the most notorious statement from the Areopagite. First, though, I would argue that the central aspect of Dionysian Christology is something more broadly conceived than theandric operation. It is divine *philanthropia,* which was frequently translated into Latin as *benignitas.* This Latin word does not adequately capture the Greek concept, "loving humanity," an idea that propelled Christians to speculate about its appropriateness to describe the incarnation. *Pace* John Rist, the term itself is scriptural. [36] Its

[33] Istvan Perczel, "The Christology of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite: The *Fourth Letter* in its Indirect and Direct Text Traditions," *Le Museon* 117 (2004): 409-46, at 415.

[34] Jaroslav Pelikan, "The Odyssey of Dionysian Spirituality," in Luibheid, trans., *The Complete Works,* 11-24, at 19. Pelikan notes his reliance upon Yugoslav scholar Jossip Marie's use of the phrase "the most celebrated formula" (Jossip Marie, "Pseudo-Dionysii Areopagitae formula christologica celeberrima de Christi activitate theandrica: Secunda quaestio praevia ad Novam Apologiam Honorii I papae," *Bogoslovska smotra* 20 [1932): 105-73).

[35] Pelikan, "The Odyssey of Dionysian Spirituality," 21. For more of Pelikan on Dionysius's role in the debates on Christ's actions and wills in union, see Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine,* vol. 2, *The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (600-1700)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 62-75.

[36] John Rist, "Love, Knowing and Incarnation in Pseudo-Dionysius," in *Traditions of Platonism: Essays in Honour of John Dillon,* ed. John J. Cleary (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 375-88. Rist explores "whether that concept of *philanthropia* (despite its non-scriptural name) is a serious attempt to represent some scriptural motif" (377). In fact, Titus 3:4 says, "But when the kindness and the *philanthropia* of our Savior God has appeared." Granted that the term also has non-Christian currency, its appearance in the Epistle to Titus and its influence in second-century Christian writings, such as Clement of Alexandria's *Protrepticus,* should be better appreciated.

biblical derivation supports in this instance Dionysius's protestation of being completely dependent upon Sacred Scripture. Moreover, the very brief *Epistle* 4 features *philanthri5pia* twice to show the context in which Christ's theandric operation must be understood. Dionysius says:

> He who exceedingly loves humanity *[ho diapheront6s philanthropos]* became quite truly a human, both superhuman and among humans; and, though himself beyond being, he took upon himself the being of humans .... As one considers it all in a divine manner, one will recognize in a transcending way that every affirmation regarding Jesus' love for humanity *[epi tei philanthr6piaitau Iesou]* has the force of a negation pointing toward transcendence. [37]

These two instances of *philanthri5pia* demonstrate the very reason for the incarnation and how our positive statements (such as affirming the theandric operation) must yield to what cannot be said about the utterly transcendent mystery of Jesus, who is God among us. The theandric operation is, in a sense, (only) a telling detail of what Dionysius gives as the big picture of God's *philanthrapia.*

While *Epistle* 4 is the most controversial text in Dionysian Christology, *Epistle* 8 contains the most vivid description of Christ and *philanthrapia.*[38] In this letter to the monk Demophilus, the Areopagite offers a Christology that underscores the divine kindness to the human race. Dionysius writes to Demophilus because that monk had overstepped his place to criticize a priest who showed mercy to a repentant sinner. Demophilus is told, "You are ignorant of the very truth of scripture, you who abuse it daily to the misfortune of those who hear you."[39] Dionysius expounds a biblical account of Christ's compassionate mercy. He recounts how Jesus even in his suffering asked the Father to forgive those who did him wrong. He rebuked the disciples because they had sought punishment against the impious Samaritans. Among several references to the Letter to the Hebrews, Dionysius quotes Hebrew 4: 15, "We do not have a high

[37] *Ep.* 4 (PG 3:1072B; Luibheid, trans., 264 [translation modified]).

[38] Dionysius uses the word *philanthropia* in its variants four times in *ep.* 8.

[39] *Ep.* 8 (PG 3:1089B; Luibheid, trans., 273).

priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses. "[40] Unlike Demophilus who beat back the man who was on his way to repentance, Christ in his kindness goes out to look for the one who is lost. Dionysius clearly understands Christ's compassion to be an example for others, as he writes, "Those who do not know must be taught, not punished. We do not hit the blind. We lead them by the hand." [41]

Moreover, at the end of this letter Dionysius refers to a private revelation to present the scriptural teaching on Christ's mercy. He recounts a story of a visit on Crete with a holy man by the name of Carpos. Carpos told Dionysius that he once felt great hostility to two certain sinful men when he awoke in the middle of the night for prayers. He prayed that God would hurl thunderbolts at the men. Suddenly, he experienced a transformation of the place where he was. A vision of heaven showed Jesus surrounded by an endless throng of angels. When Carpos looked at the ground, he saw the two men whom he had cursed sliding down a pit where serpents and men were trying to pull the two down with them. The sight delighted him, and he tried repeatedly to help the serpents finish the two. He failed and cursed again. Looking up, he saw Jesus moved by compassion coming down to save the unfaithful two. With the angels assisting, Jesus reached down and pulled up the two men, one on either side. Then Jesus said to Carpos:

> So your hand is raised up and I now am the one you must hit. Here I am, ready once again to suffer for the salvation of man and I would very gladly endure it if in this way I could keep men from sin. Look to yourself. Maybe you should be living with the serpents in the pit rather than with God and with the good angels who are the friends of man. [42]

This dramatic vision of Christ coming down, in the Dionysian letter most concerned about hierarchy, should give cause for

[40] *Ep.* 8 (PG 3:1096C; Luibheid, trans., 277).
[41] *Ep.* 8 *(PG* 3:1096C; Luibheid, trans., 278).
[42] *Ep.* 8 *(PG* 3:1100C-1100D; Luibheid, trans., 280).

revision to those who construe Dionysian hierarchy in a way that removes Christ's tender love for individual sinners.

Ill. AN OVERVIEW OF AQUINAS'S USE OF DIONYSIUS INSTHIII,QQ.1-59

It should be better known that Aquinas draws abundantly from Dionysius in some key areas of his Christology. [43] In the next section I will give ample treatment to one Dionysian element; here I will give an overview of how Dionysius appears in Aquinas's treatise on the Savior in the *Summa Theologiae.* Aquinas explicitly cites Dionysius 46 times in questions 1-59 of the *Tertia pars.*[44] Sixteen of these citations appear in the objections, indicating some ambiguity that Aquinas must clarify. As a point of contrast, Aquinas is commonly regarded as Cyrillian in his Christology. [45] He appeals to Cyril 21 times in these questions, 4 times in objections. Dionysius thus appears about twice as often as Cyril.

I do not intend to recast Aquinas's Christology as resolutely Dionysian. A greater material presence does not necessarily mean

[43] For what remains a standard reference, see Ignaz Backes, *Die Christologie des hl. Thomas v. Aquin und die griechischen Kirchenvater* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schoningh Verlag, 1931). Backes sketches the place of Dionysius in Aquinas's Christo logy relatively briefly (108-14) and relies heavily upon Dionysius for the relationship between Christ and the angels in Aquinas's thought (307-14). For a study that treats Dionysius's influence on Aquinas precisely as Neoplatonist, see Pierre Faucon, *Aspects neoplatoniciens de la doctrine de saint Thomas d'Aquin,* (Lille: Atelier reproduction des theses universite Lille III, 1975). Faucon presented his 714-page thesis in 1970 at the University of Strasbourg. Most pertinent for the present study, Faucon considers Dionysius's influence on Aquinas's Christology and soteriology on pages 504-75 of his work. For a work on Aquinas's Christology with careful, but not sustained, attention to Dionysius, see Edouard-Henri Weber, O.P., *Le Christ selon saint Thomas d'Aquin,* Collection "Jesus et Jesus-Christ" (Paris: Desclee, 1988).

[44] Backes notes that in the Christological parts of the *Scriptum* Dionysius is quoted about 30 times and in the *Summa Theologiae* about 44 times (Backes, *Die Christologie des hl. Thomas v. Aquin,* 41).

[45] Like Cyril, Aquinas came to understand with particular forcefulness how Nestorianism poses grave errors in recounting the mystery of the incarnation. In his "A Note on St. Thomas and the Eastern Fathers," Gilles Emery directs our attention to Ciriaco Scanzillo, "Influssi di S. Cirillo d'Alessandria nella cristologia di s. Tommaso," in *Tommaso d'Aquino nel suo settimo centenario,* vol. 4: *Problemi di teologia* (Naples: Edizioni Domenicane Italiane, 1976), 187-220.

a deeper influence. Cyril's teaching on Christ does in fact profoundly shape Aquinas's anti-Nestorian Christology, and one must never forget the enormously influential model of John Damascene's eighth-century work for Aquinas's Christology. [46] Indeed, Aquinas's profoundly scriptural teaching on the Savior draws abundantly from many sources, such as his varied patristic research for the *Catena aurea*, the unprecedented Western use of the conciliar *acta*, and his Scholastic predecessors. Acknowledging this much broader field of sources, I will treat select aspects that Aquinas appropriates from Dionysius for his own project as well as select points that Aquinas has to handle as Dionysian objections or that he avoids in the sacred teaching on Christ.

Our first point of inquiry can be the first article of the *Tertia pars*, mentioned in this essay's introduction, "whether it was fitting that God should become incarnate." After the *sed contra* from John Damascene' s *On the Orthodox Faith (De fide orth.* 3.1, itself seemingly inspired by Gregory of Nyssa's *Catechetical Oration* 24), Aquinas speaks in the *corpus* about things being suited to distinctive natures, as reasoning is fitting to the human being due to our rational nature. "But the very nature of God is goodness, as is clear through Dionysius. Therefore, whatever pertains to the meaning of the good," Aquinas says, "is fitting for God." [47]

Those attentive to Aquinas's debate with Dionysius about the nature of God in the *Prima pars* might be a bit perplexed by his reasoning as he begins the *Tertia pars.* In question 5, article 2 of the *Prima pars,* Aquinas asks, "which is prior according to reason, the good *[bonum]* or being *[ens]."* The first and second objections come from Dionysius. "Good" is before "being" among the names of God, and "good" has a more extensive application than "being. "[48] Aquinas prefers the *Liber de causis* for his *sed contra:* "the first of all created things is existing [*esse]*."[49] The *corpus*

[46] See note 14 above.

[47] *SI'h* III, q. 1, a. 1: "Ipsa autem natura Dei est bonitas, ut pater per Dionysum. Uncle quidquid pertinet ad rationem boni, conveniens est Deo."

[48] Dionysius, *On the Divine Names* 3.1 and 5.1.

[49] *Liber de causis* 4: "prima rerum creatarum est esse."

unfolds Aquinas's reasoning, supported by Aristotle's authority, that being is prior to the good.[50] Yet, Aquinas does not say at the beginning of the *Tertia pars* that God's very nature is to exist (as he makes clear in *STh* I, q. 3, a. 4).[51] Rather, he repeats a subsequent (and dependent) notion of God as good.[52]

As O'Rourke has shown, Aquinas agrees with Dionysius by reinterpreting him through the primacy of God's title as "Qui est."[53] Replying to the Dionysian objection that "the good" is the principal name of God, Aquinas says that "the good" is the principal name of God insofar as he is a cause, but is nevertheless not his principal name simply speaking.[54] Aquinas repeatedly describes this causality of God as good in terms of the desire for the good arising from final causality.[55] This can point us to the movement toward God that is the very purpose of the *Tertia pars.*

Aquinas's next mention of Dionysius at the beginning of the *Tertia pars* elaborates on this meaning of the good. "But it pertains to the meaning of good," he says, "so as to communicate itself to others, as is clear through Dionysius."[56] Aquinas here points to chapter 4 of *On the Divine Names.* His wording is similar to the axiom, "bonum diffusivum sui," a phrase used in the tradition but not explicitly found in the Areopagite.[57] Commenting on Aquinas's use of Dionysius in this first article, R. J. Hennessy accurately notes, "The principle expresses, first of all, the final causality of the good as attracting things towards a share in it."[58] The significance of this appears if we recall the intention

so See Aristotle, *Metaphys.* 9.9.1051a31.

[51] *STh* I, q. 3, a. 4: "Sua igitur essentia suum esse."

[52] Cf. *STh* I, q. 6, "de bonitate Dei."

[53] See O'Rourke, *Pseudo-Dionysius and the Metaphysics of Aquinas,* 109-10.

[54] *STh* I, q. 13, a. 11, ad 2.

[55] For Aquinas's discussion of God's goodness, see esp. *STh* I, q. 6.

[56] *STh* III, q. 1, a. 1: "Pertinet autem ad rationem boni ut se aliis communicet, ut patet per Dionysium."

[57] Among the dozens of uses in Aquinas, see esp. *STh* I, q. 5, a. 4, ad 2; I, q. 73, a. 3, obj. 2; I-II, q. 1, a. 4, obj. 1. See also Rorem, *Pseudo-Dionysius,* 168 and 176 n. 11; and Julien Peghaire, "L'axiome 'Bonum est diffusivum sui' clans le neo-platonisme et le thomisme," *Revue de l'Universite d'Ottawa* 1, *section speciale* (1932): 5-30.

[58] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae,* vol 48 (3a. 1-6), *The Incarnate Word,* trans. R. J. Hennessy, O.P. (New York: McGraw-Hill Co., 1975), 7 n. a.

in the *Tertia pars* to treat "Christ, who as human is the way for us to take in going to God."[59] The way, as communicating or manifesting the goodness of God, attracts humans. This attraction to divine goodness, which is found preeminently in the incarnation, then prepares for the second article's consideration of "whether it was necessary that the Word of God be incarnated for the restoration of the human race."[60]

Before turning to that second article, we should first refer to an insight found in the remarkable work of Henk Schoot.[61] In propounding Aquinas's teaching as a negative Christo logy, Schoot makes use of the conclusion to the *corpus* of the first article of *De unione.*[62] There, Aquinas borrows from Dionysian apophaticism: "And Dionysius says in *On the Divine Names* 2, 'Jesus for us is a divine composition, that is union, ineffable for every word, unknown to the mind, and even so to the very first of the most noble of angels'."[63]

Aquinas gives another example of negative Christology in question 1, article 2 of the *Tertia pars* (though this seems not to be adduced by Schoot for his argument). After providing ten reasons for the fittingness of the incarnation-five reasons pertaining to furtherance in the good and five pertaining to withdrawal from evil-Aquinas concludes, "But there are many other advantages which follow, above the comprehension of the human mind."[64] This last statement compares favorably with "ineffable for every word, unknown to the mind," cited in *De unione.* The beauty of ten tightly ordered advantages, a work of cataphatic

[59] *STh* I, pro!.: "tertio de Christo, qui secundum quad homo via est nobis tendendi in **Deum."**

[60] See also *STh* III, q. 1, a. 1, ad 2. Replying to an objection that God and flesh are infinitely distant, Aquinas answers with the fittingness of God to unite himself to flesh for human salvation according to the infinite excellence of his goodness.

[61] Henk Schoot, *Christ the 'Name' of God: Thomas Aquinas on Naming Christ,* Thomas Instituut te Utrecht, new series, vol. 1 (Leuven: Peeters, 1993).

[62] Ibid., 98-99.

[63] *De unione* a. 5: "Et Dionysius <licitin cap. II de Divin. Norn.: *Jesus secundum nos divina compositio,* id est unio, *et ineffabilis est verbo omni, et ignota menti; tamen et ipsi primo dignissimorum Angelorum."*

[64] *STh* III, q. 1, a. 2: "Sunt autem et aliae plurimae utilitates quae consecutae sunt, supra comprehensionem sensus humani."

theology, must be situated within a broader apophatic approach to the incarnation. Other reasons could be given, but they exceed human comprehension. This is only right because when we speak of Christ, we speak of the incomprehensible God among us. Given this article's prominent placement, perhaps Aquinas reveals a Dionysian presumption that he expects the reader to understand in the rest of his questions on Christ.

We can also hear in the subsequent article an echo of a favorite Dionysian passage used by Aquinas and already seen above. One should not dare say anything about God that has not been revealed in the Scriptures.[65] Aquinas holds that things which flow from God's will beyond all that is due to creatures can come to be known by us only insofar as they are handed down in Sacred Scripture. Because Aquinas reads in the Scriptures that the reason for the incarnation was Adam's sin, he thinks it preferable to see the incarnation as God's remedy for sin-but divine power is not limited to this (pointing again to the apophatic). Moreover, we saw in *Epistle* 8 how Dionysius finds in our sin the motive for Christ's descent among us. It is worth repeating that Jesus says in *Epistle* 8: "Here I am, ready once again to suffer for the salvation of man and I would very gladly endure it if in this way I could keep men from sin."[66] Thus, question 1, article 3 of the *Tertia pars* displays a twin Dionysian emphasis-a reservation to speak only according to the Scriptures and a belief that Christ came on account of our need arising from sin.

We have seen that *philanthropia* gives a key to Dionysian Christology and that Aquinas begins the *Summa's* Christology in light of the Dionysian attention to divine goodness for our salvation. Is there a connection? It is true that goodness and *philanthropia* are distinct terms for Dionysius, and Aquinas uses *benignitas*, the Latin translation of *philanthropia*, only when

[65] See note 5 above.

[66] Also in this letter Dionysius sarcastically asks, "Have we ourselves been so perfected to complete holiness that we do not need that divine love for humanity shown to us *[tes theias eph' heautois philanthropias]* ?" *(Ep.* 8.4 *[PG* 3: 1093D; Luibheid, trans., *The Complete Works,* 276 (translation modified)]). If one already has complete holiness, the incarnation is not needed.

quoting authorities in the Christology of the *Tertia pars.*[67] One might think that Aquinas sidesteps this most significant of Dionysian contributions to Christology-but such is not at all the case. In his perceptive book *Le Christ selon saint Thomas d'Aquin,* Edouard-Henri weber writes that the fundamental explication of Aquinas on the theme of the Word's incarnation remains strictly biblical: the love of God for the human person.[68] To be sure, the word *philanthropia* in Latin translation appears only rarely, but its meaning forms the heart of Aquinas's understanding of what is revealed about God's goodness in the incarnation. [69]

Such an interpretation can lead the reader to pertinent sections on God's love in the *Summa Theologiae.* For example, in question 20 of the *Prima pars* Aquinas writes on God's love. Asking whether God loves all things, Aquinas presents the first objection with the authority of Dionysius. According to the Areopagite, "Love places the lover outside of himself, and in a sense transports him into the beloved. "[70] This would be unfitting for God, continues the objection. Aquinas answers by returning to Dionysius:

To the first it must be said that the lover thus becomes outside of himself, transported into the beloved, insofar as he wills the good for the beloved, and works through his providence for the beloved just as he does for himself. Whereupon Dionysius says, *It must be dared to speak the truth about this, that*

[67] In reference to Dionysius, see *STh* III, q. 19, a. 1, obj. 1 and ad 1; III, q. 30, a. 2. In reference to Ambrose, see *STh* III, q. 55, a. 3, ad 4.

[68] Cf. Weber, *Le Christ selon Saint Thomas d'Aquin,* 18. Weber cites *In Eph.* c. 1, lect. 3 (Mariett ed., 25) and c. 3, lect. 5 (Marietti ed., 178) for his textual support.

[69] In distinguishing (and ultimately uniting) kinds of love as names applied to God, Dionysius says, "In my opinion, it would be unreasonable and silly to look at words rather than at the power of the meanings. Anyone seeking to understand the divine things should never do this, for this is the procedure followed by those who do not allow empty sounds to pass beyond their ears, who shut them out because they do not wish to know what a particular phrase means or how to convey its sense through equivalent but more effective phrases" *(On the Divine Names* 4 [Luibheid, trans., *The Complete Works,* 80]). For Aquinas's comments on the lengthy passage of which this is an excerpt, see his *In Librum beati Dionysii de Divinis Nominibus Expositio,* c. 4, lect. 9 (Marietti ed., 410-25).

[70] *STh* I, q. 20, a. 2, obj. 1. "amor amantem extra se ponit; et eum quodammodo in amatum transfert" (quoting *On the Divine Names* 4).

even he who is the cause of all becomes through the abundance of his loving goodness outside of himself by providence for all things existing.[71]

This interpretation can also make the reader more attentive to Aquinas's emphasis on love in his Christological treatise. For example, Aquinas cites John 3:16 ("For God so loved the world ... ") as the *sed contra* in question 1, article 2, and in the *corpus* of the same article quotes Augustine: "What greater cause is there for the coming of the Lord except so that God would show his love for us?"[72] Again, the nature of love's friendship answers the objection in question 1, article 5 that God should have become incarnate at the beginning of the human race.[73] In the *sed contra* of question 4, article 1, Aquinas quotes Proverbs 8:31: "we hear from the mouth of Wisdom begotten, 'My delights were with the children of men.'"[74] In treating the mysteries of Christ's life, when Aquinas comes to the fittingness of the liberation of the human race by Christ's passion, the first reason he gives is so that we would be able to see how much God loves us.[75] Although not in the questions on Christ's passion, Aquinas does in fact explicitly link Christ's passion with *benignitas* elsewhere in the *Summa.* In the *Secunda secundae (STh* 11-11, q. 82, a. 4, ad 1) Aquinas says that in Christ's passion God's *benignitas* (which we can certainly understand as the Greek *philanthropia)* enkindles our joy.

But what would Aquinas think about the story concerning Christ's *philanthropia* from Dionysius's *Epistle* 8? Given his theological method for handling sources, Aquinas probably would not have approved featuring a private revelation so prominently.[76]

[71] *STh* I, q. 20, a. 2, ad 1 "Ad primum ergo dicendum quod amans sic fit extra se in amatum translatus inquantum vult amato bonum, et operator per suam providentiam, sicut et sibi. Under <licit Dionysius, *Audendum est autem et hoc pro veritate dicere, quad et ipse omnium causa per abundantiam amativae bonitatis extra se ipsum fit ad omnia existentia providentiis"* (quoting *On the Divine Names* 4). Cf. *STh* I, q. 20, a. 4.

[72] *STh* III, q. 1, a. 2: "Quae major causa est adventus Domini, nisi ut ostenderet Deus dilectionem suam in nobis?" The quotation is from *De catechizandis rudibus* 4.

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

[74] "Deliciae meae esse cum filiis hominum."

[75] *STh* III, q. 46, a. 3, where Aquinas quotes Rom 5:8 concerning God's love for us.

[76] See *STh* I, q. 1, a. 8, ad 2: "For our faith rests upon revelation made to the apostles and prophets, who wrote the canonical books, but not upon revelation, if there was such, made to other teachers" ("Innititur enim fides nostra revelationi apostolis et prophetis factae qui

Elsewhere he does make mention of Carpo from *Epistle* 8 concerning a private revelation, but not in direct reference to the vision of Christ's rescue of the sinners.[77] Moreover, in the *Summa Theologiae* he refers to the alleged eyewitness account offered by Dionysius of the miracle worked on creation at the time of Jesus' death.[78]

One final example can serve to illustrate Aquinas's appropriation of Dionysius in the Christology of the *Tertia pars.* We saw above that Andrew Louth admires Aquinas's fidelity in interpreting Dionysius, but the two disagree on an important aspect of Dionysian Christology. Although he knows that Dionysius considers the incarnate Son of God to be the "source and perfection of all hierarchies" *(Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* 1.2), Louth asserts, "[I]t is made quite clear that during his earthly life, Jesus was subject to angelic ministrations and like us had no direct, unmediated communion with God.,,n What prompts both Aquinas and Louth to investigate Dionysius on this point comes from *Celestial Hierarchy* 4. Aquinas gives the controversial passage as the second objection in the article on "Whether Christ received knowledge from the angels" *(STh* III, q. 12, a. 4):

> Moreover, Dionysius says, *For I see that even Jesus himself, the supersubstantial substance of supercelestial substances, in coming to our substance without changing, was obediently subject to the instructions of his Father and God through the angels.* Therefore, it seems that Christ himself willed to be subjected to the ordination of divine law, through which humans, with angels mediating, are instructed.[80]

canonicos libros scripserunt, non autem revelationi, si qua fuit, aliis doctoribus factae")

[77] IV *Sent.,* d. 8 q. 1 a. 4, qcla. 3, ad 1. The reference is to Carpo never beginning to celebrate the Mass except having first received a divine revelation. Writing within the context of fasting and other Mass preparations, Aquinas comments that the Church now has a contrary custom.

[78] *STh* III, q. 19, a. 2, ad 2. Aquinas quotes Dionysius also in the article's first objection and *corpus.*

[79] Louth, *Denys theAreopagite,* 42. One excellent Thomistic explanation of what is at stake in the tradition of affirming Christ's immediate knowledge of God is Thomas Joseph White, "The Voluntary Action of the Earthly Christ and the Necessity of the Beatific Vision," *The Thomist* 69 (2005): 497-534.

[80] *STh* III, q. 12, a. 4, obj. 2: "Praeterea, Dionysius <licit,*Video enim quod et ipse Jesus, supercaelestium substantiarum supersubstantialis substantia, ad nostrum intransmutabiliter veniens, obedienter subjicitur Patris et Dei per angelos formationibus.* Videtur igitur quod ipse

Aquinas does not abandon Dionysius as the great authority in this respect. Rather, Aquinas quotes him both in the *sed contra* and in the reply to the second objection. In the former, Aquinas cites *Celestial Hierarchy* 7 that the highest angels *"make their question to Jesus himself, and learn the knowledge of his divine operation for our sake; and Jesus himself teaches them without mediation.* It does not belong to the same one to teach and to be taught. Therefore Christ did not receive knowledge from angels." [81] Answering the second objection, Aquinas explains that Dionysius says that Christ was subject to the angelic instructions, not for himself, but simply for the events surrounding his infancy. Aquinas concludes, "Therefore, in the same place, he [Dionysius] adds, *the flight of Jesus to Egypt, prepared by the Father, is announced to Joseph through mediating angels, and the same occurs for the return again to Judea from Egypt.* "[82] Aquinas thus makes a case both for Christ not receiving knowledge from angels and for Dionysius as an authority whose ambiguity must be sufficiently cleared. In this case, Aquinas has Dionysius interpret Dionysius to explicate the gospel.

For further appreciation of the broad Dionysian influence on Aquinas's mature Christology, one should look beyond questions 1-59 of the *Tertia pars.* For example, Aquinas appeals to *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* 3 for Dionysius's authority that the sacrament of the Eucharist contains Christ himself; other sacraments culminate in it; and "it does not happen that anyone is perfected with hierarchical perfection except through the most divine Eucharist. "[83] It would be interesting to compare the link between Christ and the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, found in both

Christus ordinationi legis divinae subjici voluerit, per quam homines, mediantes angelis, erudiuntur."

[81] *STh* III, q. 12, a. 4, sc: "Sed contra est quod Dionysius <licit, quod supremi angeli *ad ipsum Jesum quaestionem faciunt, et ipsius divinae operationis pro nobis scientiam discunt; et eas ipse Jesus sine media docet.* Non est autem ejusdem docere et doceri. Ergo Christus non accepit scientiam ab angelis."

[82] *STh* III, q. 12, a. 4, ad 2: "Uncle ibidem subdit quod *per medias angelos nuntiatur Joseph a Patre dispensata Jesu ad Aegyptum recessio, et rursum ad Judeam de Aegypto traductio."*

[83] *STh* III, q. 65, a. 3; *STh* III, q. 75, a. 1; *STh* III, q. 65, a. 3, sc: "Dionysius <licit, quod *non contigit aliquem perfici per(ectione hierarchica nisi per divinissimum Eucharistiam."*

Dionysius and Aquinas. But such is beyond the scope of this present study.

IV. A DIONYSIAN ELEMENT IN AQUINAS: CHRIST'S THEANDRIC OPERATION

When describing the three parts of the *Summa Theologiae,* Gerald Vann commented that the *Prima pars* considers divine activity, the *Secunda pars* human activity, and the *Tertia pars* theandric activity.[84] Such a characterization stretches the importance of the term "theandric" for Aquinas's theology, as in the *Tertia pars* he uses the word only in one objection and a reply to that objection.[85] However, Vann's description does hold a suggestive power that deserves closer examination. By exploring all the uses of "theandric" in Aquinas's works, we can achieve a more detailed knowledge of Dionysius as an authority in Aquinas's Christology.[86] Moreover, because Aquinas continues Maximus the Confessor's legacy inherited by John Damascene in this regard, this study can assist ecumenism today to re-examine the ancient controversies concerning Christ's acts and see what is at stake in terminological differences.[87] In what follows I will treat

[84] Gerald Vann, O.P., *Saint Thomas Aquinas* (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1940), 142.

[85] *STh* III, q. 19, a. 1, obj. 1 and ad 1.

[86] Among the studies that have treated the question of Aquinas's use of the Dionysian term, Backes gives little comment more than that the term is found in the *Scriptum* and the *Summa theologiae,* besides being already present in Albert. He also compares and the different Latin translations available: "dei-humanum" (John Scotus Eriugena); "dei et hominis operatio" (the Saracen); and "deivirilis" (the acts of Constantinople III and the Burgundian's translation of John Damascene). For questions on translations, one should consult Philippe Chevallier, *Dionysiaca: Recueil donnant l'ensemble des traditions latines des ouvrages attribues au Denys de l'Areopage,* 2 vols. (Paris: 1937). Also, Bernard Catao discusses the term in the *Scriptum* and contrasts its appearance there with the "sens restraint et precis" in efficient instrumental causality found in the *Summa contra Gentiles, Summa theologiae,* and today. See his *Salut et redemption chez s. Thomas d'Aquin: L'acte sauveurdu Christ* (Paris: Aubier, 1964), pp. 108-11. Pierre Faucon concentrates on the term's appearance in *STh* III, q. 19, a. 1. See his *Aspects Neoplatoniciens de la doctrine de saint Thomas d'Aquin,* 1970 dissertation at the University of Strasbourg (Lille: Atelier, 1975), pp. 518-25.

[87] For Maxim us the Confessor's synthesis concerning Christ's theandric operation, see esp. *hisAmbiguum* 5. Aquinas was heavily indebted to John Damascene's *On the Orthodox Faith,* which transmitted Maximus's teachings on how to interpret Dionysius. See esp. *On the*

Aquinas's treatments of theandric activity in chronological order of composition: the *Scriptum super Sententiis* (1252-56); the *Summa contra Gentiles* (IV, ca. 1264); *Compendium theologiae* (I, ca. 1265-67); *De unione Verbi Incarnati* (ca. 1272); and *Summa Theologiae (Tertia pars,* 1272-73).

Aquinas's earliest treatment of the theandric operation occurs in the commentary on book 3 of Lombard's *Sentences.* He first considers it as a reply to the objection as to whether Christ's grace is infinite. [88] This objection takes for granted that Christ's merit is infinite, as it suffices for the redemption of the whole human race. But a finite cause cannot produce an infinite effect. Since grace is the cause of merit, the grace too must be infinite. Aquinas answers that infinity of efficacy in merit occurs because the divine person concurs in this action. He then says, "It is not only an action of a human, but of God and of a human. On this account, Dionysius calls Christ's action 'deivirile.'" [89] This is the only place in his *opera omnia* that Aquinas calls upon the Dionysian principle without giving the Greek term and without noting a problem in its use. It simply serves to reply to an objection.

A fuller consideration is given in the following distinction, which addresses Christ's merit. Aquinas begins his treatment of merit here (III *Sent.,* d. 18, q. 1, a. 1) by asking if Christ has two actions-a move that demonstrates Aquinas's care to distinguish within his treatments of grace and merit. [90] His first objection is from the authority of Dionysius. The objection says, "It seems that in Christ there is only one action. For Dionysius calls the action of Christ 'theandric,' that is 'deivirile.' But this signifies one action, not different actions. Therefore in Christ there is only one

Orthodox Faith 3.13-3.19.

[88] III *Sent.,* d. 13, q. 1, a. 2, qcla. 2, ad 4.

[89] Ibid.: "non est tantum hominis actio, sed Dei et hominis; secundum quod Dionysius actionem Christi nominat deivirilem." Cf. *STh* III, q. 7, a. 11, where Aquinas no longer mentions Dionysius in the question on the infinity of Christ's grace.

[90] For an analysis of Christ's merit, see Catao, *Salut et Redemption,* esp. 65-77; for Christ's merit in Aquinas's mature teaching, see Joseph P. Wawrykow, *God's Grace and Human Action: 'Merit' in the Theology of Thomas Aquinas* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), 238-47.

action of divinity and humanity." [91] At the time of this writing, Aquinas had not yet read the acts of Constantinople III, but he did know John Damascene, whom he quotes repeatedly as an authority on this question. [92] In reply to the first objection, Aquinas gives three reasons to support the Dionysian term "theandric."

> Dionysius calls Christ's action "theandric," not because it is simply one action of deity and humanity in Christ, but because the actions of the two natures are united as to three things. First, as to the supposit doing a divine and human action, which is one thing. Second, as to the one effect, which is called the work having been worked, or *apotelesma* according to Damascene, such as the healing of a leper. Third, as to this that the human action of Christ himself shares in something from the perfection of the divine nature, just as his intellect more eminently than others understood from the power of the divine intellect conjoined to it in the person; although the divine action in no way was weakened by consort with the human nature. [93]

In taking the trouble to give these three reasons, Aquinas underscores the unity at work in the actions that flow from the incarnate Word, while he still preserves the sense of Christ having both human and divine actions.

Aquinas's careful treatment of the term "theandric" should be compared with that of his teacher Albert the Great. Corey Barnes finds in Albert's early work *De Incarnatione* what may be the first

[91] III *Sent.*, d. 18, q. 1, a. 1, obj. 1: "Videtur quod in Christo sit tantum una actio. Dionysius enim actionem Christi nominat theandricam, idest deivirilem. Hoc autem non diversas actiones, sed unam significant. Ergo in Christo est tantum una action divinitatis et humanitatis."

[92] For Aquinas on Constantinople III, see Martin Morard, "Thomas d'Aquin lecteur des conciles," *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 98 (2005): 211-365, at 305-16.

[93] III *Sent.*, d. 18, q. 1, a. 1, ad 1: "Ad primum ergo dicendum, quod actionem Christi dicit Dionysius deivirilem, non quia sit simpliciter una actio deitatis et humanitatis in Christo; sed quia actiones duarum naturarum quantum ad tria uniuntur. Primo quantum ad ipsum suppositum agens actionem divinam et humanam, quod est unum. Secundo quantum ad unum effectum, qui dicitur opus operatum, vel *apotelesma* secundum Damascenum, sicut mundatio leprosi. Tertio quantum ad hoc quod humana actio ipsius Christi participabat aliquid de perfectione divinae naturae, sicut intellectus ejus aliis eminentius intelligebat ex virtute divini intellectus sibi in persona conjuncti; quamvis divina actio in nullo infirmaretur ex consortio **humanae.**"

Scholastic use of Dionysius on the theandric operation.[94] However, Barnes comments, "Albert provides no indication that this reference requires reverential interpretation but rather takes it as naturally supportive of the orthodox position of two powers in Christ, divine and human."[95] Indeed, in his commentary on Dionysius's *Epistle* 4 Albert does not suggest that the term "theandric" may hold difficulties for the doctrine of Christ's two operations.[96] Moreover, in his commentary on the *Sentences,* Albert introduces "theandric" to support the view that Christ's acts are many and not one, although the actor is but one.[97] Within this context, and with his knowledge of John Damascene, Albert says, "every action of Christ was saving for us."[98]

Aquinas continues Albert's use of "theandric" as investing saving significance in all of Christ's deeds in the *Summa contra Gentiles.* The significance of the theandric operation on Aquinas's understanding of the incarnation appears in startling fashion in book 4. Aquinas in this work rarely quotes the authorities of the Fathers and the councils when doing his own scriptural work of refuting Trinitarian and Christo logical heresies. Yet he adduces Dionysius, his most frequent ecclesiastical authority (exceeding even Augustine) in the *Summa contra Gentiles,* in a moment of great significance. While upholding the Church's teaching of two operations and two wills, Aquinas concedes that one must speak

[94] *De Incarnatione,* q. 2, a. 1; see Corey Ladd Barnes, "Christ's Two Wills in Scholastic Theology: Thirteenth-Century Debates and the Christology of Thomas Aquinas" (Ph.D. diss., University of Notre Dame, 2006), 57.

[95] Barnes, "Christ's Two Wills in Scholastic Theology," 57.

[96] Albert writes on *Epistle* 4 that Christ "acted in human things by a divine power above human nature. This is why his operation is called 'theandric,' as if divine-manly, just as Dionysius often says in the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy"* ("[Q]uod in humanis operatus est super naturam humanam virtute divina. Uncle operatio sua dicitur *theandrica,* quasi divina-virilis, sicut saepe dicit Dionysius in Ecclesiastica Hierarchia" *[SuperDionysiiMysticam Theologiam et Epistulas (Opera Omnia,* tomus 37 pars 2, ed. Paulus Simon [Cologne: Monasterii Westfalorum in Aedibus Aschendorff, 1978), 491))). But Dionysius does not "often" use the word theandric in the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy.* In fact, that term appears only within the Dionysian corpus in *Epistle* 4, although its sense can admittedly be found elsewhere-such as *On the Divine Names* 2.

[97] Albert the Great, III *Sent.,* d. 17, a. 5, ad 4.

[98] Ibid.: "omnem Christi actionem nobis salutarem." See Barnes, "Christ's Two Wills in Scholastic Theology," 73.

of a kind of oneness when discussing Christ's activities-but with a distinction lacking in Macarius's heresy.[99] He observes the following concerning those who posit one operation:

> It seems that this position arose because its authors did not know how to distinguish between that which is one simply and that which is one in order *[simpliciter unum et ordine unum].* For they saw the human will in Christ to be completely ordered under the divine will so that Christ willed nothing by his human will except that which the divine will disposed him to want. Similarly, also, Christ did nothing according to his human nature, either by acting or by undergoing, except what the divine will disposed, according to John 8:29: "I always do the things pleasing to him." For the human operation of Christ conveys a certain divine efficacy from the union of the divinity, just as an action of a secondary agent conveys a certain efficacy from a primary agent. On this account, it happens that his every action or undergoing was saving. For this reason, Dionysius calls the human operation of Christ "theandric," i.e. "deivirile," and also because it is of God and of a human. Therefore seeing the human will and operation of Christ to be ordained under the divine infallible order, they judged there to be only one will and operation in Christ. However, as was said, one of order and one simply are not the same thing *[quamvis non sit idem, ut dictum est, ordinis unum et simpliciter unum]*.[100]

Aquinas thus affirms a certain "oneness" in Christ's action, while making a vital distinction. Moreover, he is clear that the term "theandric" applies to what he calls the human operation of Christ. With this in mind, he gives a twofold explication of the

[99] Morard, following Gauthier, does not believe that Aquinas had read and appropriated Constantinople III at this stage of his writing. See Morard, "Thomas d'Aquin lecteur des conciles," 305-16.

[100] *ScG* IV, c. 36: "Videtur autem haec positio ortum habuisse ex hoc quod eius auctores nescierunt distinguere inter id quod est simpliciter unum, et ordine unum. Viderunt enim voluntatem humanam in Christo omnino sub voluntate divina ordinatam fuisse, ita quod nihil voluntate humana Christus voluit nisi quod eum velle voluntas divina disposuit. Similiter etiam nihil Christus secundum humanam naturam operatus est, vel agendo vel patiendo, nisi quod voluntas divina disposuit: secundum illud loan. 8-29: *quae placita sunt ei, facio semper*. Humana etiam operatio Christi quandam efficaciam divinam ex unione divinitatis consequebatur, sicut actio secundarii agentis consequitur efficaciam quandam ex principali agente: et ex hoc contigit quod quaelibet eius actio vel passio fuit salubris. Propter quod Dionysius humanam Christi operationem vocat *theandricam,* idest dei-virilem; et etiam quia est Dei et hominis. Videntes igitur humanam voluntatem et operationem Christi sub divina ordinari infallibili ordine, iudicaverunt in Christo esse tantum voluntatem et operationem unam; quamvis non sit idem, ut dictum est, ordinis unum et simpliciter unum."

term's significance. While the second one succinctly points to Christ as the God-man, the first one has more elaboration and points to the salvation bestowed in Christ's life. Dionysius's formula summarily expresses how everything the Lord did or underwent in the flesh conveys divine and saving power. This significance for our salvation can be related to what Aquinas repeatedly says, "Every action of Christ is our instruction. "[101] Although the *Summa contra Gentiles* lacks a detailed presentation of Christ's life, Aquinas's understanding of the importance of Christ's actions and passions appear with great detail in the *Summa Theologiae (STh* III, qq. 27-59).

Aquinas wrote the *Compendium Theologiae* not long after finishing the *Summa contra Gentiles.* In book 1, chapter 212, he treats those things which are said in Christ to be one or many. Much of the brief treatment deals with the question of operations. Aquinas first explores the faulty reasoning process of those who think because in Christ there is only one subject there must also be only one operation. This need not be so, as operations proceed from principles of operations, which may be plural in an agent. For example, a human being has the operations of understanding and of sensing. Likewise, fire has one operation to heat and another to rise. Then, Aquinas asserts, "But nature is compared to operation as its principle." [102] Such a statement admittedly may pose a difficulty for the previous examples, as the human being with different faculties is not said to have different natures. But these prior examples may be meant simply to introduce the reader to think about the fact that one agent can have multiple actions. Now, Aquinas becomes more exact. Relying upon the doctrine of two natures, he says, "Therefore, there is not one operation in Christ according to the one supposit, but there are two according to the two natures, just as the converse in the Holy Trinity there

[101] Aquinas quotes this phrase at least seventeen times. For an insightful essay that puts this into a greater theological context, particularly with regard to grace, see Richard Schenk, O.P., *"Omnis Christi Actio Nostra est Instructio,"* in *La doctrine de la revelation divine de saint Thomas d'Aquin,* Studi Tomisitici, no. 37, ed. Leo Elders, S.V.D. (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1990), 104-31.

[102] *Comp. theol.* I, c. 212: "Natura autem comparatur ad operationem ut eius principium."

is one operation of the three persons according to the one nature."[103] Aquinas maneuvers his Christological teaching to conform to the principles already known in Trinitarian doctrine. The better-known converse argument in this respect is that the Trinity is one nature, but multiple persons; Christ is one person, but multiple natures. Here, Aquinas applies it to show how the one Trinitarian operation, because of oneness of nature, supports the twoness of Christ's operations, because of the twoness of natures.

Aquinas continues with a profound, brief reflection upon instrumentality, heavily indebted to John Damascene.

Nevertheless, the operation of humanity participates in Christ with something from the operation of the divine power. For of all these which are fitting in one supposit, to that which is more principal other things are subject instrumentally, just as other parts of a human are instruments of the intellect. Thus, therefore, Christ's humanity is considered as a certain organ of divinity. Moreover, it is clear that an instrument acts in the power of the principal agent. For this reason, one finds in the instrument's action not only the instrument's power, but also that of the principal agent, just as through the action of an axe comes a box, insofar as the craftsman handles the axe. Therefore, so also the operation of the human nature in Christ was having a certain force from the deity above the human power. For that which touched a leper was the action of humanity, but that touch which healed him from leprosy proceeded from the divine power. And through this way all his human actions and things endured were saving from the power of his divinity. And therefore, Dionysius calls the human operation of Christ "theandric," i.e. "deivirile," because namely it thus proceeds from his humanity but nevertheless the divinity's power was active in it.[104]

[103] Ibid.: "Non ergo est una operatio in Christo propter unum suppositum, sed duae propter duas naturas, sicut e converso in sancta Trinitate est una operatio trium personarum propter unam naturam."

[104] Ibid.: "Participat tamen operatio humanitatis in Christo aliquid de operatione virtutis divinae. Omnium enim eorum quae conveniunt in unum suppositum, ei quod principalius est, cetera instrumentaliter deserviunt, sicut ceterae partes hominis sunt instrumenta intellectus. Sic igitur in Christo humanitas quasi quoddam organum divinitatis censetur. Patet autem quod instrumentum agit in virtute principalis agentis. Uncle in actione instrumenti non solum invenitur virtus instrumenti, sed etiam principalis agentis, sicut per actionem securis fit area, inquantum securis dirigitur ab artifice. Ita ergo et operatio humanae naturae in Christo quandam vim ex deitate habebat supra virtutem humanam. Quod enim tangeret leprosum, humanitatis actio fuit, sed quod tactus ille curaret a lepra, ex virtute divinitatis procedebat. Et per hunc modum omnes eius actiones et passiones humanae virtute divinitatis salutares

The *Compendium* thus demonstrates an increased use of the language of instrumentality when explicating the meaning of Christ's theandric operation. [105]

Aquinas continued to refine his response to the Monenergist argument. Most notably, by the time he wrote *De unione Verbi Incarnati,* he had studied the acts of Constantinople III. Perhaps that is why he features the question of whether in Christ there is only one operation as the fifth and last article of this disputed question. In this treatise, discussion of the union of the incarnate Word culminates in articulating the operations of Christ. The immediately preceding article (whether in Christ there is only one being *[esse])* has received considerable scholarly attention as some see it as differing from Aquinas's other treatments of the topic. [106] Here, in article, 5 we find that he begins the dispute with an argument from Dionysius: *"With God having become man, he moved about with a certain new operation of God and of man.* Moreover, there would not be a *new operation of God and of man,* unless there were one and the same operation of both.

fuerunt: et ideo Dionysius vocat humanam Christi operationem theandricam, idest deivirilem, quia scilicet sic procedebat ex humanitate, quod tamen in ea vigebat divinitatis virtus."

[105] For the most thorough analysis of instrument in Aquinas's Christology, see the 1939 study of Theophil Tschipke, *L'humanite du Christ comme instrument de salut de la divinite,* Studia Friburgensia 94, trans. Philibert Secretan (Fribourg: Academic Press Fribourg, 2003), esp. 111-12 and 124-35 for discussion of the theandric operation. Philip L. Reynolds does not engage Tschipke's argument directly but distances his research from other scholars concerning Aquinas's mature position on instrumental causality. Reynolds writes, "His [Aquinas'sJmature account is so spare as to be consistent with any theory as to how Christ's humanity is the instrument of his divinity" (Philip L. Reynolds, "Philosophy as the Handmaid of Theology: Aquinas on Christ's Causality," in *Contemplating Aquinas: On the Varieties of Interpretation,* ed. Fergus Kerr, O.P., Faith in Reason Philosophical Enquiries [London: SCM Press, 2003], 217-46, at 243).

[106] However, for an interesting argument that Aquinas's *De unione* holds no contradiction in the treatment of a single *esse,* see Victor Salas, Jr., "Thomas Aquinas on Christ's *Esse:* A Metaphysics of the Incarnation" *The Thomist* 70 (2006): 577-603. Perhaps a reading of how Aquinas treats whether Christ has only one operation in article 5 can shed some additional light on reading Aquinas's nuanced answer in article 4. Similarly, Aquinas arranges together the questions of the unity of Christ's existence, the unity of his will, and the unity of his operation in *STh* III, qq. 17-19.

Therefore in Christ there is one operation of God and of man."[107] Aquinas answers:

> It must be said that Christ's operation according to his humanity is called "theandric," i.e. "deivirile," insofar as Christ's humanity was acting in divine power. And from this, the action of his humanity was saving, just as an instrument acts in the agent's power. And because of this, it is said that a new action has occurred, because it has newly happened that the humanity of Christ is the conjoined instrument of the divinity in the unity of the person. But it is not that there is one composition from two actions.[108]

Aquinas here gives evidence of interpreting the Dionysian theandric operation with a greater refinement of his own instrumental-causality language. Theandric operation serves to point, in Aquinas's interpretation, to Christ's humanity, significantly described as "the conjoined instrument of the divinity in the unity of the person."

In the *Summa Theologiae*, we find yet another expression of Christ's operations. Aquinas says that an action which is moved by another is "twofold: one indeed which it has according to its proper form and the other which it has according to which it is moved by another."[109] His overall argument has not substantially changed; yet its accent seems to have shifted. Most importantly, Aquinas takes into even greater account the authority of Constantinople III, while Dionysius appears in this article only in the first objection and its response. As such, "theandric operation" admittedly holds little prominence in the *Summa's* teaching on Christ. Aquinas clearly has become more adept in the language of

[107] *De unione* a. 5, obj. 1. "Dicit enim Dionysius: *Dea homine facto, nova quadam Dei et hominis operatione conversatus est.* Non autem esset nova operatio Dei et hominis, nisi esset una et eadem operatio utriusque. Ergo in Christo est una operatio Dei et hominis."

[108] *De unione* a. 5, ad 1: "Ad primum ergo dicendum estquod operatio Christi secundum humanitatem dicitur theandrica, id est deivirilis, in quantum humanitas Christi agebat in virtute divina. Et ex hoc actio humanitatis erat salutaris, sicut instrumentum agit in virtute agentis. Et pro tanto dicitur nova actio facta, quia de novo factum est quod humanitas Christi est instrumentum divinitati coniunctum in unitate personae; non autem ita quod ex duabus actionibus sit una compositio."

[109] *STh* III, q. 19, a. 1: "duplex; una quidem quam habet secundum propriam formam, alia autem quam habet secundum quod movetur ab alio."

the councils and found his own voice in emphasizing other aspects important for understanding the saving acts and passions of Christ, such as the grace of Christ as head and the subtleties of instrumental causality, and in an unprecedented attention to the mysteries of Christ's life.[110]

With this said, Aquinas in the *Summa* still finds the Dionysian term "theandric operation" useful-if properly understood. The first objection of question 19, article 1 proceeds on the authority of *On the Divine Names* 2, which includes the phrase, "he did and underwent whatever things were fitting to his human and divine operation." Aquinas then comments, "he names this one operation human and divine, which in Greek is called 'theandric,' i.e. 'deivirile.' Therefore, it seems that there is one composite operation in Christ."[111] In reply Aquinas gives a two-part argument which deserves close attention.

The first argument concerns the operations of the Word as incarnate with both divine and human natures as sources of operation: the divine operation uses the human, while the human operation participates in the power of the divine operation. This is the same language that Aquinas uses in the *corpus* to interpret Pope Leo the Great's teaching through instrumental causality.[112] Aquinas gives for this argument the authority of Dionysius's

no Catao, *Salut et Redemption,* 138 argues for a shift from the theandric operation, as in the *Scriptum,* and the infinite dignity of the divine person, as in *De Veritate* or the *Compendium,* to the capital grace as Aquinas writes in the *Summa Theologiae.* Catao assures the reader that the previous two considerations stay valuable, but they are no longer premier. His point of the theandric operation receding in prominence is correct; however, his formulation does not take adequate account of Aquinas's refinement on instrumental causality, elucidated by Tschipke. For another reservation, see Barnes, "Christ's Two Wills in Scholastic Theology," 327 n. 705.

111 *STh* III, q. 19, a. 1, obj. 1: *"operari et pati, quaecumque humanae ejus divinaeque operationi congruent:* ubi unam operationem nominat humanam et divinam, quae in graeco dicitur 'theandrica' idest Dei-virilis. Videtur igitur esse una operatio composita in Christo."

ni Leo's *Tome to Flavian* was cited at Constantinople III. In *STh* III, q. 19, a. 1, Aquinas gives this from Leo: *"Each form does,* namely both the divine and the human nature in Christ, *with the communion of the other, what is proper to it: the Word acting what is proper to the Word, and the flesh carrying out what is proper to the flesh" ("Agit utraque forma,* scilicet tam natura divina quam humana in Christo, *cum alterius communione, quad proprium est: Verba scilicet operante quad Verbi est, et came exsequente quad carnis est").*

Epistle 4: "he was doing these things of a human superhumanly, which the Virgin conceiving supernaturally shows, and fluid water sustaining the weight of his earthly feet."[113] Aquinas comments that to be conceived and to walk are things of a human nature, but both are in Christ supernaturally. Likewise, he continues, Christ "did divine things humanly, just as when he healed the leper by touching him. Thereupon in the same letter Dionysius adds, *But God having been made human, with a certain new operation of God and of human."* [114]

The second argument also proceeds from the establishment of the divine and human natures, but it has a Trinitarian reference. Aquinas says that the distinction of the two operations is implicitly presupposed in Dionysius's writings, as made clear in the Areopagite's Trinitarian reflections on the distinction of operations. Aquinas again quotes *On the Divine Names* 2:

> where Dionysius says that in *these,* which pertain to his human operation, *the Father and the Holy Spirit share in no way, unless one were to speak according to the most kind and merciful will,* insofar namely the Father and the Holy Spirit willed Christ from their mercy to act and to undergo human things. Moreover, he adds, *and every most sublime and ineffable operation of God which he did although having been made in accordance with us, yet was unchanging by that which he was God and the Word of God.*[115]

w STh III, q. 19, a. 1, ad 1: *"super hominem operabatur ea quae sunt hominis, quad monstrat Virgo supernaturaliter concipiens, et aqua instabilis terrenorum pedum sustinens gravitatem."*

[114] *STh* III, q. 19, a. 1, ad 1: "Et similiter divina operabatur humanitus, sicut cum sanavit leprosum tangendo. Uncle in eadem epistola subdit, *Sed Deo homine facto, nova quadam Dei et hominis operatione."*

[IL<] Ibid.: "ubi <licit quod *his,* quae pertinent ad humanam ejus operationem, *Pater et Spiritus Sanctus nu/la ratione communicant, nisi quis dixerit secundum benignissimam et misericordem voluntatem;* inquantum scilicet Pater et Spiritus Sanctus ex sua misericordia voluerunt Christum agere et pati humana. Addit autem, *et omnem sublimissimam et ineffabilem Dei operationem quam operatus est secundum nos factus incommutabilis eo quad Deus et Dei Verbum."* Aquinas paraphrases Dionysius in writing, "quae pertinent ad humanam ejus operationem." In the original text of *On the Divine Names* 2.6 Dionysius does not exactly say "human operation." Rather, he gives the expression *tes anthropikes autou theourgias* ("his divine work proper to humanity" or "his properly human divine work"). Luibheid translates it as "his divinely human activity" *(The Complete Works,* 63).

Put slightly differently, the Word who was made incarnate did not cease doing the operations of his divine nature, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, when he undertook a human nature. Aquinas thus finds that Dionysius himself provides the distinction of the two operations on this Trinitarian basis. One is what Aquinas calls the "human operation," in which the Father and the Holy Spirit do not share except according to their common *philanthropia* expressed in the incarnation of Christ alone. The other is Christ's divine operation done as the Word in God, in which the Father and the Holy Spirit do share.

CONCLUSION

What significance does Aquinas's repeated attention to Christ's theandric operation have for today? To mention just one benefit, Aquinas's work on this difficult Dionysian element through the course of his career has relevance in ecumenism for understanding the truth of the common faith believed by Christians who historically have been divided on the question of Chalcedon's authority. In 1984, Pope John Paul II and Patriarch Mar Ignatius Zakka of Antioch signed a joint declaration stating, *inter alia:*

> He who is God eternal and indivisible, became visible in the flesh and took the form of a servant. In him are united, in a real, perfect, indivisible, and inseparable way, divinity and humanity, and in Him all their properties are present and active.[116]

In studying Aquinas on Christ's theandric operation, we find a position consistently supportive of the teaching of two operations, but one that is nuanced to allow for multiple reasons that the operations flowing from the incarnate Word could be called one or are really united. The different interpretations that Aquinas gives to Christ's theandric operation can help distinguish today

[116] "Common Declaration of Pope John Paul II and the Ecumenical Patriarch of Antioch His Holiness Moran Mar Ignatius Zakka I Iwas," 4 (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1984; translation modified).

what is at stake in saying that the operations of divinity and humanity, united in Christ, are present and active in him.

Indeed, Dionysius's authority and ambiguity brought Aquinas many opportunities for further development of his own thought in Christology. As an acutely perceptive theologian, Aquinas gladly borrows much from Dionysius in constructing his teaching on Christ, but uses him with great care so as to clarify both the sacred teaching itself and Dionysius as an authority. Moreover, Aquinas in his mature Christology seems most indebted to Dionysius for something other than the term "theandric operation." When writing his treatise on Christ in the *Summa Theologiae*, Aquinas tellingly begins with a quotation from Dionysius on divine goodness because it is precisely in Christ that one comes to know the infinite goodness and *philanthropia* . drawing sinners on the way back to the most loving God. Aquinas thus wholeheartedly agrees with the central principle of divine love that guides Dionysian Christology, a principle well worth stressing in their times and ours. [117]

[117] I am grateful to Austin G. Murphy, O.S.B., Joseph Wawrykow, Thomas Joseph White, O.P., Joshua G. Lollar, and *The Thomist's* anonymous referees for their helpful comments on earlier forms of this essay.

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WHAT IS LEGALISM? ENGELHARDT AND GRISEZ ON THE MISUSE OF LAW IN CHRISTIAN ETHICS

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IT SEEMS INCONCEIVABLE that any contemporary Christian moralist in his or her right mind, or at least in his or her enlightened *heart,* would admit to being a "legalist" or uncomplainingly accede to a description of his or her moral theological framework as "legalistic." Those terms are often used as rhetorical weapons, in order simultaneously to express disdain for a moral theory or argument and to justify a decision to refrain from engaging that theory or argument further. Just as the term "fundamentalism" is freely used in some secular academic discussions to gesture to an object of polemic and scorn, so too is the term "legalism" used in Christian theological discussions.

But what, exactly, does it mean to call a Christian moral theory "legalistic"? The general consensus that legalism is unhelpful in a Christian moral framework a is not matched by a corresponding consensus about either the exact definition of legalism or the precise impediments it poses to sound moral analysis. Perhaps this is to be expected. From its very beginnings, Christianity expressed a complicated and ambivalent attitude toward the law, as its early leaders struggled to define its relationship with both Judaism and Greek philosophy. Chapter 3 of St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians furnishes us with a compact example. On the one hand, St. Paul tells us that "all who depend on works of the law are under a

curse."[1] On the other hand, after raising the rhetorical question "Is the law then opposed to the promises [of God]?" he emphatically responds "Of course not!"[2] Distinguishing proper respect for the law, especially the moral law, from improper use of it or reliance upon it, especially with regard to salvation, has occupied the attention of many a Christian theologian from apostolic times until the present day.[3]

My aims in this article are modest. I do not hope to resolve here the great questions about the role of law in Christian life, the relationship of the eternal law to the natural law, the influence of natural law on positive law, or the relationship of law and grace. I do hope to shed some light on the meaning and use of the charge of "legalism." In order to do so, I will use St. Thomas Aquinas's definition of law[4] to structure a close comparison of the thought of H. Tristram Engelhardt, Jr., an Eastern Orthodox thinker, and Germain Grisez, a Roman Catholic, on the role of law in the moral life.

Why Aquinas's definition of law? The charge of "legalism" cannot be fully understood without a clear understanding of the meaning of "law." Roughly speaking, to charge a moralist with "legalism" is to charge that he or she allows law, legal concepts, and characteristically legal ways of thinking unduly to influence his or her moral theory. What, then, does the concept of "law" entail? Manifesting his characteristic precision and nuance, Aquinas's definition offers a response to this question, and therefore a base for gaining more precision about what the charge of "legalism" entails.

[1] Gal 3:10 *(Catholic Study Bible,* gen. ed. Donald Senior [New York: Oxford University Press, 1990]).

[2] Gal 3:21.

[3] After the Reformation, St. Paul tended to be pervasively misread as a proto-Lutheran. Recent scholarship has corrected this misreading by situating him in his own historical and social context of late Second Temple Judaism. See, e.g., E. P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983); and Markus *Bockmuehl,]ewish Law in Gentile Churches: Halakhah and the Beginning of Christian Public Ethics* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2000).

[4] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I-II, q. 90, a. 4.

Why Engelhardt and Grisez? First, both are rigorous thinkers who have produced significant, lengthy, and wide-ranging articulations of their respective position on the relationship of Christianity and the moral life. Engelhardt, Professor of Philosophy and Professor of Medicine at Rice University, has written *Foundations of Christian Bioethics*,[5] which situates biomedical questions within a broad articulation of an Orthodox Christian approach to the meaning and purpose of human life. Grisez, the Flynn Professor of Christian Ethics at Mount St. Mary's Seminary, has produced a magisterial three-volume work entitled *The Way of the Lord Jesus*.[6] Within this work he not only develops his Roman Catholic moral theory in great detail, he also applies it to a number of concrete questions, including questions of bioethics and sexual ethics addressed by Engelhardt as well.

Second, while Grisez and Engelhardt operate out of different traditions within Christianity, their positions are not difficult to bring into conversation with each other. Engelhardt, a former Roman Catholic, develops his argument for a "noetic" approach to theological ethics that emphasizes mystical union with God as the ultimate ground of moral knowledge, in critical conversation with Western Christian moral thought, particularly Roman Catholic moral casuistry. Grisez, in contrast, attempts to retrieve, reform, and refurbish the very tradition that Engelhardt has rejected. Both theorists situate their account of moral norms, even moral norms applied to concrete cases, within a broader context of humanity's relationship with God, mediated by Christ Jesus.

Third, and most importantly, both are contemporary moralists who combine in their writings serious respect for the role of moral discernment and moral norms in Christian life with a strong antipathy to legalism. It is possible, of course, to find Christian thinkers who will condemn as "legalistic" anyone who believes that Christianity ought to encompass disciplined moral

[5] H. Tristram Engelhardt, Jr., *The Foundations of Christian Bioethics* (Lisse: Swets & Zeitlinger, 2000).

[6] Germain Grisez, *The Way of the Lord Jesus*, vol. 1, *Christian Moral Principles* (Quincy, Ill.: Franciscan Press, 1983); vol. 2, *Living a Christian Life* (Quincy, Ill.: Franciscan Press, 1993); vol. 3, *Difficult Moral Questions* (Quincy, Ill.: Franciscan Press, 1997).

reflection, settled commitment to moral norms, and sustained reflection upon what it means to follow God's law. There is an "antinomian" strand in Christianity that is deeply suspicious of any effort to integrate respect for the law, including the moral law, into an account of a good Christian life.[7] Opposition to legalism, however, does not necessarily make one an antinomian. *Abusus non tollit usum.* Consequently, one purpose of this article is to help illuminate what it means to respect moral norms and to honor God's law while at the same time opposing legalism.

My plan for this essay is as follows. In section I, I will briefly set forth the five components of the definition of law offered by Aquinas in his *Summa Theologiae* to serve as a framework for my comparative analysis. In section II, I will attempt to flesh out precisely what Engelhardt and Grisez mean by "legalism" by analyzing their thought in light of Aquinas's definition of law. In section III, I will examine some of the deleterious consequences that Engelhardt and Grisez believe a legalistic approach to morality entails for moral life and pastoral practice. In section IV, the Conclusion, I will offer some brief reflections on the usefulness of the term "legalism" in contemporary discussions regarding the methodology and content of Christian ethics.

I. AQUINAS'S DEFINITION OF LAW

In the first question of his treatise on law, question 90 of the *Prima Secundae,* entitled, "Of the Essence of Law," Aquinas offers a multifaceted definition of law. It is "nothing else than an *ordinance of reason* for the *common good,* made by him *who has care of the community,* and *promulgated.*"[8] In the four articles of that question, Aquinas systematically considers each element of that definition. Note, however, that the first element actually

[7] I do not mean to deny, of course, that the charge of "antinomianism" has been bandied about with nearly as much laxity as the charge of "legalism." But that is the subject of another essay.

[8] *STh* I-II, q. 90, a. 4 (trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province [Westminster, Md.: Christian Classics, 1981]).

encompasses two components, not one: Aquinas tells us that law is an *ordinance* of *reason.* He takes it for granted that a law is fundamentally an *ordinance;* it is not simply a statement, it makes a normative claim upon an agent subject to its jurisdiction. While Aquinas does not devote a separate article to an examination of this element of the definition of law, he does indicate what it involves in the course of explicating the other four elements. Since all five elements are relevant to my analysis of legalism, I will briefly describe Aquinas's treatment of each of them.

A) An Ordinance

By its very nature, law has a normative, directive thrust. In article 1 of question 90, which discusses "whether law is something pertaining to reason," Aquinas clearly recognizes that "[i]t belongs to law to command or forbid. "[9] Noting that the word "lex" (law) is derived from the word "ligare" (to bind), he writes that "law binds one to act."[10] Law operates as a constraint on human activity, either by mandating or prohibiting certain particular actions. The same recognition permeates article 2, "whether the law is always something directed to the common good." Aquinas here assumes that law "directs man in his actions" [11] and goes on to consider the ultimate purpose of these directions. Article 3, "whether the reason of any man is competent to make laws," grapples not only with the directive power of law, but also with its more specifically "coercive power." [12] Article 4, "whether promulgation is essential to a law," considers what is necessary "in order that a law obtain the binding force which is proper to a law."[13] In short, Aquinas takes it for granted that law orders human activity through its ordinances; on

[9] *STh* I-II, q. 90, a. 1.
[10] Ibid.
[11] *STh* I-II, q. 90, a. 2, obj. 1.
[12] *STh* I-II, q. 90, a. 3 , ad 2.
[13] *STh* I-II, q. 90, a. 4.

this basis, he goes on to ask what else must be true about law if it is to order human activity well and properly.

B) Of Reason

The first and fundamental move that Aquinas makes is to shape, define, and qualify the type of ordinance that law is. It is not an ordinance of whimsy. It is not an demand based in pure desire, on the one hand, or pure fear on the other. It is not an arbitrary expression of power. Ordered as well as ordering, law is an ordinance of *reason.* Law is a "rule and measure" of human acts.[14] The ultimate rule and measure of human acts, however, is reason. Consequently, law must correspond to reason.[15] For Aquinas, therefore, it is necessary, but not sufficient, that law entails an ordinance or a command. He tells us that "in order that the volition of what is commanded may have the nature of law, it needs to be in accord with some rule of reason."[16]

C) For the Common Good

Practical reason is oriented toward achieving an end or a goal; that end or goal is in fact the starting point and first principle in its deliberations. To say, therefore, that law must be guided by practical reason is immediately to raise the question, what is the end or goal of the law? Aquinas tells us that the end of the law is "universal happiness," the flourishing not only of an individual, but of a perfect or complete community of individuals. The purpose of law is to direct individual actions with a view to the good of that community-the common good. "[S]ince the law is chiefly ordained to the common good, any other precept in regard to some individual work, must needs be devoid of the nature of a law, save in so far as at regards the common good."[17]

[14] *STh* I-II, q. 90, a. 1.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid., ad 3.
[17] *STh* I-II, q. 90, a. 2.

D) Competent Authority

If law is an ordinance of reason, whose reason counts? Can *any* reasonable person make law? Aquinas says no. Precisely because law pertains to the common good, only those responsible for the common good can make law. "Now to order anything to the common good, belongs either to the whole people, or to someone who is the viceregent of the whole people."[18] Consequently, making law "belongs either to the whole people or to a public personage who has care of the whole people."[19] Moreover, Aquinas does not forget that law entails the coercive imposition of the lawgiver's will. "[C]oercive power is vested in the whole people, or in some public personage, to whom it belongs to inflict penalties."[20]

E) Promulgation

Finally, Aquinas maintains that law must be promulgated. Because "law is imposed on others by way of a rule and measure,"[21] those who are subject to the rule and measure must be given notice of its existence and application. "Wherefore promulgation is necessary for the law to obtain its force."[22] This requirement, while seemingly obvious, is in fact quite significant. It strongly suggests, for example, that *ex post facto* laws, which apply to actions that took place before they were promulgated, are not "laws" properly speaking.

In view of Aquinas's multifaceted definition of law, what, then, is legalism? My hypothesis is that moralists will label as "legalist" any view of moral norms that they believe gives disproportionate or otherwise inappropriate stress to one of the five elements of

[18] *STh* I-II, q. 90, a. 3.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid.
[21] *STh* I-II, q. 90, a. 4.
[22] Ibid.

the definition of law given to us by Aquinas. As one might suspect, the label functions more as a broad, negative judgment about a rival moral system than as a nuanced, positive statement about one's own view of the moral life. Furthermore, in using the label, the user objects to a perceived distortion in a rival way of understanding morality, but is not committed to adopting a mirror-image distortion. For example, by saying, negatively, that one objects to an overemphasis on God's will in understanding the eternal law at the expense of his reasonableness, one is not asserting positively that God's will plays no role whatsoever in the legitimate meaning of the eternal law.

This way of understanding "legalism" has several advantages. First, it makes it clear that one's definition of legalism is (a) dependent upon one's understanding of the nature and function of law and (b) integrally related to one's understanding of the way in which the norms of the moral life can helpfully be understood as laws. Second, it gives us a way to account for the fact that the various people who make the charge of legalism, and those who respond to it, frequently seem to be talking past one another, even while they seem to be loosely talking about the same thing-the moral law. This definition allows us to see how they are indeed talking about the same thing, but about different facets or aspects of it. There are several components to the definition of law, and one or more of them may be the central focus of a charge of "legalism." Third, this definition makes clear that in some cases-perhaps in many cases-the charge of "legalism" within a Christian context can be more helpfully understood as a charge that a particular thinker or school of thought has incorporated one or more distorted elements into a proffered articulation or application of the moral law, rather than a charge that a thinker has wrongly extended the moral law into a sphere where it does not belong.

We are now in a position to test the explanatory power of my hypothesis about legalism by considering the work of H. Tristram Engelhardt and Germain Grisez.

II. ENGELHARDT AND GRISEZ: TWO DEFINITIONS OF LEGALISM

The title of Engelhardt's book, *Foundations of Christian Bioethics,* needs some interpretation. It is not a book about biomedical ethical questions-or their foundations-narrowly construed; it is rather a book that situates biomedical questions within a broad articulation of an Orthodox Christian approach to the meaning and purpose of human life. Engelhardt clearly frames his objectives in the preface to his work:

> The cardinal philosophical and theological puzzle is: can one break through immanence to truth? And if so, how? By addressing this puzzle, this volume invites the reader to the Christianity of the first millennium, a Christianity rooted in mysticism, or better stated, a noetic theology. It is here that the puzzle is solved and the door is found in the horizon of immanence: Christianity's disclosure of an immediate experience of the uncreated energies of a radically transcendent, personal God.[23]

Engelhardt objects to the Christianity of the West on both political philosophical and religious grounds. Following Alasdair Macintyre, he argues that the Western tradition in political philosophy has failed in its objective of identifying foundations for a common morality in a religiously pluralistic world.[24] Second, he maintains that Western Christianity has not even succeed in providing a coherent, content-full morality that is uncontroversially acknowledged to be true by its own adherents.[25]

What approach does Engelhardt adopt in this situation? Because all attempts to formulate a substantive, rich common morality have failed, he argues that the attempt to do so must be given up as impossible. He maintains that in a secular society whose members do not agree on the nature and purpose of human life, the only justifiable morality is based on autonomy, consent, and contract; in his terms, the only justifiable public morality is a libertarian cosmopolitan morality of strangers. Such a morality will, he admits, allow practices deeply offensive to many

[23] Engelhardt, *The Foundations of Christian Bioethics,* xiii.

[24] Ibid., xi-xii.

[25] Ibid., 127.

Christians (e.g., abortion and assisted suicide) to proceed without legal impediment. It will also tolerate a great deal more disparity in the distribution of health-care resources than most Christian theorists of social justice would deem permissible.

Engelhardt objects to the theological and liturgical commitments of Western Christianity no less than to its political morality. For him, the problem with Western Christianity is that it never moves beyond an immanent understanding of reality to touch the transcendent. Roman Catholic thought emphasizes the priority of discursive reason, which remains trapped within the immanent; it therefore cannot find itself a secure foundation in unchanging, transcendent Truth. Protestant thought, with its emphasis on private study of Scripture, apart from the liturgical life of the worshiping community, generates a historical-critical approach to sacred writings that obscures their value as a gateway to transcendence. "If God is available to us only through arguments, texts, and oral traditions, God is obscured by the immanent, the finite, the contingent, and the historically conditioned. "[26]

Engelhardt maintains that traditional Christianity, in contrast, is enabled, by the grace of God, to reach beyond the immanent in order truly to touch the transcendent-to touch the energies of God himself through a type of noetic experience. The marks of a life formed by such an experience do not change with the passage of time throughout the ages. He writes:

> Orthodox Christianity interweaves theological experience and reflection through liturgical texts and ascetical practices that have firm roots in the work and the sentiments of the Fathers, thus making the Fathers of the Church and their lives present to the contemporary community of believers. By sustaining religious life in the spirit of the first millennium, a framework for moral theology is engaged so that the contemporary believer can engage the moral reflections of early Christians with little conceptual opacity or distance.[27]

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid., 160. Obviously, this claim is susceptible to vigorous challenge by sociologists of knowledge who view the appropriation of texts as conditioned by the presuppositions of the reader.

Engelhardt maintains that one virtue of his "traditional Christian" approach, which is rooted in the theological and liturgical traditions of Eastern Christianity, is that it avoids legalism. According to Engelhardt, Western Christian moral thought, particularly Roman Catholic moral thought, has long been plagued by legalistic modes of analysis. More specifically, his prototype of legalistic thinking seems to be the "manualist" model of moral theology that predominated in the Catholic Church from the time of the Council of Trent until the mid-twentieth century, and which was designed to allow confessors to evaluate the seriousness of the sins confessed by members of their flock and to set an appropriate penance.

Of coures, as Engelhardt repeatedly observes, Catholic moral theology underwent a sea-change after the Second Vatican Council. The moral manuals have all but disappeared from the scene. Are there any intellectually respectable, card-carrying legalists left within mainstream Roman Catholic thought? Or is Engelhardt's polemic against legalism nothing more than a quixotic battle with authoritarian ghosts of the past? It is hard to say, because Engelhardt does not support his accusations of Catholic legalism with citations of any contemporary Roman Catholic thinkers.

Germain Grisez seems to be an eminently plausible candidate for the role of an intelligent, contemporary, card-carrying legalist. Strongly supportive of the reforms initiated by the Second Vatican Council, he nonetheless has also been concerned to promote and defend aspects of Catholic moral and spiritual life that have fallen into desuetude in its wake: the desirability of frequent use of the sacrament of penance, the importance of penitential practices, and even the usefulness of indulgences in deepening one's spiritual life. Moreover, for nearly thirty years, Grisez has been a tireless defender of the Roman Catholic magisterium's affirmation of the existence of exceptionless moral rules, including an absolute prohibition against the use of drugs, devices, or surgical procedures for the purpose of preventing conception. At first glance, therefore, Grisez seems as likely as any post-Vatican II

Catholic moralist to defend an explicitly and self-avowedly legalistic approach to moral theology. Nonetheless, he does not do so. In fact, in *The Way of the Lord Jesus* he devotes a great deal of explicit attention to combating what he defines as legalism and the abuses and distortions it introduces into the moral life of Christians.

Both Englhardt and Grisez have reason to distance themselves from legalism, because the nature of their writings renders their work casually susceptible to that very charge. Both maintain that moral theological reflection ought not to remain at the level of abstraction; it should provide sufficient detail to help people address the issues that arise in their day-to-day lives.[28] The writings of both men, therefore, include finely nuanced analyses of particular classes of cases, which achieve definite conclusions regarding acceptable and nonacceptable courses of action. As Engelhardt and Grisez surely know, the refusal to limit one's moral theology to the articulation of abstract ideals or principles can render a theorist vulnerable to the charge of legalism by those inclined to think that any effort to reach a definite judgment on specific questions threatens to constrain Christian freedom.

Despite the fact that Engelhardt is Orthodox and Grisez is Roman Catholic, they share a significant number of basic judgments regarding the shape of the Christian moral life. For example, although Grisez is a natural-law thinker (and therefore believes that a significant amount of moral truth is accessible in principle to both believers and nonbelievers), he and Engelhardt would agree that Christian revelation affects both the accessibility and the substantive content of moral norms. Engelhardt and Grisez also both maintain that prayer and spiritual guidance can significantly contribute to moral discernment. Neither man believes that the Christian moral life can be lived without participation in the liturgical practices that have marked the Christian community from its beginnings.

[28] This is not to deny that Engelhardt wants to distance himself from the practice of casuistry, at least as it is usually understood. See Engelhardt, *The Foundations of Christian Bioethics*, 209.

As we shall see below, however, their commonalities are punctuated by important differences. While they are equally adamant in their condemnation of "legalism," Engelhardt and Grisez in fact mean significantly different things by the term. By exploring their differences within the broader context of their respective theological commitments, I hope to shed some light on the more general question of when and how it is appropriate to understand Christian morality as a type of "law." The five-pronged definition of law offered by Aquinas offers us a way to organize and compare what the two thinkers mean by the term "legalism."

A) An Ordinance

To focus on the aspect of law as an *ordinance* is to focus on its nature as a command or an order given by the lawgiver to those subject to the law. To someone who concentrates on this aspect of the law, the content of the order is less decisive; it is the fact that it is valid *order* that is crucial for recognizing its binding legal character. Some Christian theologians have placed almost exclusive emphasis on God's role as lawgiver, conceiving of the moral life largely as obedience to a series of divine commands. Their heavy emphasis on the sovereignty of the divine will logically leads to the position that even a divine command to perform an evil action must be obeyed.[29] In one sense, such an approach is not different from that taken by theorists such as Aquinas, who also maintained that all divine commands should be obeyed. Aquinas took pains, however, to show that an apparently a wrongful act (e.g., taking someone else's life) might not in fact be evil (because God is in command of life and death already).[30] Viewed narrowly, this endeavor may seem like an attempt at special pleading, an attempt to escape a difficult moral problem with a clever distinction. When viewed more broadly, however,

[29] For an overview, see Janine Marie Idziak, *Divine Command Morality: Historical and Contemporary Readings*, (New York: E Mellen Press, 1979); and Paul Helm, ed., *Divine Commands and Morality* (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1981).

[30] *STh* II-II, q. 64, a. 6, ad 1.

Aquinas's goal is to ensure that the divine knowledge and the divine will are not set against one another.

For Grisez, the core mistake of legalism is placing too great an emphasis on the aspect of the moral law as a product of the will of God, rather than as something intelligible in itself, as an aspect of the divine intellect. He writes:

> In thus tracing the practical force of moral obligation back to God as lawmaker, classical moral theology tended toward voluntarism. Voluntarism in general is a theory which assigns primacy to the will over reason. Classical moral theology assigned primacy in the genesis of moral obligation to God's will, although it left a subordinate place for human reason. This limited voluntarism, together with the isolation of moral from dogmatic theology, led classical moralists to pay less and less attention to intrinsic reasons for accepting Christian moral norms as true. Instead, they increasingly tended to treat moral norms as laws which members of the Church must obey because the Church insists upon them with divine authority. [31]

Grisez identifies four basic consequences of this voluntaristic legalism for the moral life. First, it concentrated too much on the "detailed specification of duties," without clarifying "the meaning of good and bad in terms of the total Christian vocation." Second, it meant that Catholic moral theology is primarily concerned with "the minimum required to avoid mortal sin." Third, it largely avoided addressing the responsibilities of personal vocation, because "it tended to suggest that what is not forbidden is thereby permitted, in the sense that one is free to do as one pleases in regard to it; thus it tended to ignore the responsibilities of personal vocation." Fourth, classical moral theology "tended to liken moral truths to Church laws," leading to the "suggestion that the Church might or should change its moral teaching, as if it were changeable law rather than unchangeable truth. "[32]

Engelhardt would agree with Grisez about the undesirability-and the danger-of most of the consequences that the latter attributes to legalism. He would not, however, be likely to trace their source to an overemphasis on the moral law as an aspect of

[31] Grisez, *Christian Moral Principles,* 12-13.

[32] Ibid., 13.

God's will, or of human willing in response to the will of God. According to Engelhardt, the basic move toward God is one of the will, rather than one of reason. "The impact of the Fall is not so much on man's will as often supposed in the West, but upon his intellect, his noetic capacity for non-discursive knowledge. "[33] The knowledge of God's moral law follows upon, rather than leads to, an experience of God himself, what Engelhardt refers to as a "noetic" experience of God, which begins with a grace-inspired turning to God. He writes:

> Natural law properly understood compasses the precepts taught us by God through our being and through the world around us, rendering nature a window to God. To see that law, one must take on the faith that turns us from agnosticism to an encounter with God. God then allows us through His energies to grow in knowledge of His commandments. [34]

According to Engelhardt, our fundamental mistake is to attempt to come to know God through discursive reason before we will to join ourselves with him by grace. Consequently, as discussed below, for Engelhardt the key problem of legalism is a distorted emphasis on the powers of human reason to reach the mind of God by proceeding in a discursive manner.

B) Of Reason

For Aquinas, law is an ordinance of *reason;* it is not an arbitrary imposition expressing the whim of the lawgiver. In his account of morality, Grisez follows Aquinas in emphasizing the reasonableness of the moral law. In fact, it is in this emphasis on the reasonableness of the requirements of morality, and the reasonableness of expecting Christians to follow them, that Grisez locates the antidote to legalism. For example, he charges the "new moral theology" developed after Vatican II with remaining "as legalistic as the old," because "[i]t provides no account in Christian terms of why one should seek human fulfillment in this life,

[33] Engelhardt, *The Foundations of Christian Bioethics,* 174.
[34] Ibid., 176.

what the specifically Christian way of life is, and how living as a Christian in this life is intrinsically related to fulfillment in everlasting life."[35]

In this situation, Grisez aims to provide an adequate treatise on Christian moral principles, which

> clarify what a Christian is and how Christian life can be at once and entirely both human and divine. It must explain how human goods determine Christian moral norms and show why a life in accord with the Christian norms is the only life which is really humanly good, while also showing how to live such a life. It should be oriented toward preaching, teaching, and counseling, while providing an adequate basis for studies leading to the formation of confessors. Finally, it must explain the authority of the Church's teaching.[36]

For Engelhardt, in sharp contrast, reason is not the solution, it is the problem. He believes that legalism results from distorted emphasis on the rational accessibility of divine law. As noted above, the key for Engelhardt is the noetic experience of the uncreated energies of God, which is only made possible by union with God. The goal of the Christian life is "an intimate knowing between persons, most particularly an illumination of the creature by the Creator. It is only through this illumination that true knowledge becomes possible."[37] It is only by repenting of one's sins, joining with God, and living in accordance with God's will that one will be in a position to discern the requirements of the moral life.

Engelhardt contrasts "noetic knowledge," the intimate, immediate, nondiscursive knowledge of the transcendent God made possible through this union with God, with "discursive knowledge," his name for human reasoning as it proceeds more or less autonomously. Discursive reason is helpful in dealing with the world of immanence, but absolutely useless in reaching the transcendent. In fact, by relying exclusively on discursive reason, human beings will move away from God, rather than toward him. The sad history of Western debates over the establishment of

[35] Grisez, *Christian Moral Principles,* 15.

[36] Ibid., 22.

[37] Engelhardt, *The Foundations of Christian Bioethics,* 163.

rational foundations for morality demonstrates that discursive reason is not sufficient to produce a morality certain enough to provide a basis for living one's life. Relatedly, and perhaps more importantly, discursive reason remains trapped within the realm of immanence, according to Engelhardt. He would reject the effort to clarify and systematize moral norms that constitutes the heart of Grisez's project. He reflects:

> This is not to deny a place in Christian bioethics for moral rules, commandments, or precepts: properly understood, they indicate real boundaries beyond which one will go very wrong rather than enter into union with God. But they cannot be systematized in terms of conceptual foundations. So, too, one should resist the temptation to ground prohibitions against murder or abortion in supposed general principles such as the principle of the sanctity of life, rather than in the pursuit of God. Murder and abortion are wrong first and foremost because they lead us away from union with God. Nor can there be a legalistic rule for dealing with particular cases.[38]

1. The Principle of Double Effect

A flash point revealing the difference in the approaches of the two theologians is their attitude toward the principle of double effect. At its core, the principle states that agents are responsible for the intended effects of their actions (whether they intend those effects as ends in themselves or merely as means to other intended ends) in a way different from their responsibility for the foreseen-but-unintended side effects of their actions.

What is the difference? In mainline Roman Catholic thought, one is never permitted to intend to cause certain effects in one's acting (e.g., the death of an innocent human being), but under certain circumstances one may permit such a result as the foreseen-but-unintended side effect of one's action. This is not to say that agents are not responsible for the foreseen-but-unintended effects of their action. They are required to consider whether permitting such effects conforms to the norms of proportionality and fairness. For example, a doctor may not perform an abortion intending to bring about the death of a child,

[38] Ibid., 209.

even to save the life of the mother, but may perform another action (e.g., removing the cancerous uterus of a pregnant woman) foreseeing but not intending the death of the baby, provided it is proportionate and fair to cause that result in that particular case.

According to Grisez, this distinction between intended consequences and consequences that are merely foreseen is an essential tool of practical reason. Fundamentally, one constitutes one's character differently with respect to the intended effects of one's action (even those intended as means to other ends) than with respect to effects that are foreseen-but-unintended side effects of one's intentions. Consequently, Grisez believes that it is extremely important for deliberating agents to identify precisely which effects they are intending in their actions, and which effects they are merely permitting as foreseen-but-unintended side effects. This process of clarification requires reflecting upon the path of action proposed by one's own practical reason, which chooses means in order to achieve ends. For example, an agent may mistakenly believe that a contemplated action is ruled out by the prohibition against intentional killing, when a proper understanding of the situation and the norm at issue reveals that the action in question will involve permitting, but not intending, the death in question. [39] Once an agent has reached this understanding of his or her action, he or she is not required to rule it out *ab initio,* but is permitted to go on to consider whether it is proportionate and fair to cause such a side effect in the case at hand.

Engelhardt rejects the principle of double effect, and its basic distinction between intended effects and side effects that are foreseen-but-unintended by the agent, as the tool of a legalistic, rationalist mentality. First, he believes that by exonerating certain types of unintentional killing, the distinction ignores the need for spiritual treatment in this type of case. He notes that in the Church of the first millennium, even involuntary homicide required penance and purification. "One can become involved in

[39] Grisez, *Christian Moral Principles,* 295-300.

an evil such as the death of a person, which even against one's will can have an effect on one's heart. "[40]

Second, he argues that the distinction is wrongly used to draw absolute distinctions between cases that should be treated as different in degree, not in kind.

> One must fully recognize how far a choice to kill in order to save life falls short of the mark and that this is the case whether the abortion is undertaken "indirectly" (i.e., the abortion as a side effect of another intervention), as when one removes a cancerous uterus containing a child, or when one performs a "direct" abortion (i.e., acts to abort) for a woman with severe congestive heart failure. [41]

Engelhardt notes that according to traditional double effect analysis, the indirect abortion should be justified and the direct abortion should be prohibited. In his view, both abortions can be permitted and both must be repented, in the sense that the spiritual harm they inflict upon both the physician and the mother should be recognized and treated in the context of spiritual direction.

From one perspective, the difference between Engelhardt and Grisez on double effect may not be as great as it initially appears. Like Grisez, Engelhardt acknowledges that "differences in willing make a difference to the human heart," [42] although obviously for him the difference is not as decisive as it is for Grisez. Moreover, although Engelhardt's approach might seem to be more permissive in theory, in practice, the only cases of abortion that Engelhardt seems willing to allow are those designed to save the life of the mother. He categorically rules out other abortions, including in the stereotypical "hard cases" of rape and incest, although this position does not seem to be required by his theological commitments. For his part, Grisez's reformulation of the principle of double effect in order to focus on the purpose of the acting agent would likely permit the narrow range of actions permitted by Engelhardt but prohibited by the Catholic manualists (e.g.,

[40] Engelhardt, *The Foundations of Christian Bioethics,* 278.

[41] Ibid., 279-80.

[42] Ibid., 279.

early delivery of a nonviable baby in the case of the mother's congestive heart failure).[43]

Yet significant divergences in opinion do remain. At bottom, Grisez believes that the distinction between intended effects and effects that are merely foreseen by the agent is an illuminating tool of moral discernment, separating unjustified actions from those that may, other things being equal, be justified for an agent to perform. For Engelhardt, this distinction, the core of the principle of double effect, functions to obscure more than it reveals. More specifically, it threatens to occlude the spiritual harm to an agent that can result from foreseeably causing certain effects, in particular the death of another human being.

2. The Role of Reason in Identifying Moral Norms

In identifying similarities and differences between Engelhardt and Grisez on the place of reason, it is important to avoid creating the impression that the two thinkers are as far apart as one might initially judge them to be on the basis of their rhetoric. Engelhardt, for his part, does not deny the usefulness of reason-it would be foolish for him to do so, given the analysis and argument that is the backbone of his four-hundred-page book. In fact, he emphatically denies that "a Christian bioethics should eschew clear expression, analytic explication, or systematic reflection in favor of contradictory statements and deliberately ambiguous claims."[44] His overriding goal is to downgrade the importance of discursive reason relative to the moral wisdom that stems from the noetic experience of God, which is a property more properly of the holy than of the analytically brilliant. More generally, he wants to affirm that the recognition and appreciation of moral norms are only possible within a life shaped by the liturgical and ascetic practices of the orthodox Church.

[43] Grisez, *Christian Moral Principles,* 299. The manualists tended to describe the object of the agent's action from a purely external perspective. They also considered the timing of the two effects to be significant; if the undesired effect precedes the desired effect, they considered it to be a means to the desired effect.

[44] Engelhardt, *The Foundations of Christian Bioethics,* 180.

Grisez too is sensitive to the need to situate morality within a well-lived Christian life. Moreover, he explicitly describes the moral life as leading to union with God, as God's decision to offer us divine life within the divine unity.[45] He notes, as well, that his position on this point "is very similar to the view of some theologians of the Eastern Church."[46] Furthermore, like Engelhardt, Grisez recognizes both that Christian morality is true morality, appropriate for all persons, and that a full account of that morality is only accessible with the help of the grace divinely provided to the Church. He also acknowledges, like Engelhardt, that Christian commitment generates additional, specific norms binding only upon Christians.[47]

Nonetheless, there are significant differences in their understanding of the role of reason in identifying moral norms. Grisez certainly has more confidence than Engelhardt does in the power of a reasoning person, working with all the resources that the Church has to offer, to identify moral norms and courses of action that correspond to them. It is not possible, with the texts at hand, to be more specific. However, it is not difficult to identify the point at which further conversation would need to begin. In describing his methodological approach, Grisez cites a passage from the First Vatican Council about the role of reason in the context of faith:

> It is, nevertheless, true that if human reason, with faith as its guiding light, inquires earnestly, devoutly, and circumspectly, it does reach, by God's generosity, some understanding of mysteries, and that a most profitable one. It achieves this by the similarity *[analogia]* with truths which it knows naturally and also from the interrelationship of mysteries with one another and with the final end of man.[48]

[45] Grisez, *Christian Moral Principles,* 580-86.

[46] Ibid., 597 n. 24.

[47] Ibid., 606-9.

[48] Ibid., 31, citing Henricus Denzinger and Adolfus Sch6nmetzer, S.I., *Enchiridion symbolorum definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum* (34d ed.; Freiburg in Breisgau: Herder, 1967) 3016/1796.

Grisez maintains that Vatican I should be understood here as implying that the appropriate method for theology is "dialectic," in Plato's sense of the term. "By this method, one considers truths of faith by comparison *(anologia)* with truths of reason, with one another, and with the ultimate fulfillment to which God calls us in the Lord Jesus."[49] In broad terms, this method is advocated by nearly all post-Vatican II Roman Catholic moral theologians, both liberal and conservative. Does Grisez's dialectical method qualify as "discursive reason" in the sense condemned by Engelhardt? I am not sure.

On the one hand, Engelhardt never gives a clear account of what he means by "discursive reason." At times, he seems to mean a process that stresses conceptual analysis as opposed to reflection on experience, an excessive concern for logical consistency, a desire for immediate certitude as opposed to dynamic progress in understanding eternal truths, and a total prioritization of unchanging human nature rather than the changing conditions of history. His account of discursive reason, in short, significantly resembles the "rationalism" of the pre-Vatican II Catholic Church that Grisez criticizes.[50] Moreover, admittedly with some glossing,

[49] Grisez, *Christian Moral Principles,* 31.

[50] Ibid., 27-31. See especially p. 29: "A rationalist philosophy, even if it need not contradict essential truths of faith, has a number of limitations and tendencies which render it less than ideally suited for the work of theology. The rationalist stresses certitude as an objective: this objective does not fit well with the ideal of theology as a work faith seeking constantly growing-but only gradually growing-understanding. Also, the rationalist emphasis on clear and distinct ideas tends to distract users of the method from the complexity and richness of human cognition, and thus leads them to overlook the many ways in which linguistic expressions have meaning. As a result, rationalists almost inevitably misunderstand the relational character of the language used to talk about God. Moreover, rationalists often overlook the need for careful interpretation of the witness of faith. They generally oversimplify the problem of interpretation even when they realize the need for it.

"Rationalist philosophers focus on the intellectual knowing subject; they tend to identify the human person with the mind, the thinking self. Bodiliness and other dimensions of the person are insufficiently appreciated. A theologian using rationalism tends for this reason to ignore many aspects of revelation and to stress almost exclusively the communication of propositional truths. At its extreme, this tendency leads to a conception of faith as acceptance of a certain amount of correct information rather than as a personal relationship of hearing and adhering to God revealing himself.

"Rationalist philosophy also makes a very sharp distinction between the knowing subject and the thing known. It tends to be unsuited to practical reflection, in which one thinks about

Engelhardt's account of the practice of noetic theology, within the context of the ecclesial community of Orthodox Christians, could be encapsulated in Grisez's summary of the use of the dialectic method in Catholic thought. The use of that method "means that, accepting the truth of Catholic faith present in the living Church of which one is a member, one seeks a better understanding of this truth in which one already lives."[51]

On the other hand, Engelhardt might argue that the method that Grisez actually practices in *The Way of the Lord Jesus* not infrequently seems more akin to discursive reason-or rationalism-than to dialectical reason. For example, he might suggest that the rhetorical tone, together with the exhaustively pursued question-and-answer format of *Christian Moral Principles,* overwhelmingly conveys the impression of the author's certitude with regard to the answers he provides, rather than an invitation to the reader to engage in a dialogical pursuit of truth. One wag gave the title "Germain Grisez Explains it All (Well, Almost)" to a largely sympathetic review of *Difficult Moral Questions.* [52] In addition, Grisez's work bears more than a trace of the rationalist concern with true propositions. His most extensive and explicit discussion of truth in Scripture in *Christian Moral Principles,* for example, focuses largely on Scripture's? role in transmitting true moral propositions to the faithful. [53]

oneself and shapes one's becoming by one's thought. A rationalist approach tends rather to look at what is known as if it were a detached object. Any practical problem tends to be looked at on the model of the application of mathematics in engineering.

"This approach also takes insufficient account of history, which can hardly be so easily ignored when one begins practical reflection about the lives of real, bodily person who have diverse abilities and opportunities, and who exist in actual relationships with one another. This aspect of rationalism had the result that the more it became accepted as a method for Catholic theology, the less Christian life could be treated integrally by the same theological inquiry which considered the central truths of faith. The latter were considered much more as dogmas or theoretical truths to be proved from the witness of faith than as normative truths shaping Christian life."

[51] Ibid., 7.

[52] Mark Brumley, "Germain Grisez Explains It All (Well, Almost)," *The Catholic Faith* (Mar-Apr 1999).

[53] Grisez, *Christian Moral Principles,* 831-35, 861-63.

C) For the Common Good

According to Aquinas, the purpose of law is to advance the common good. But what, exactly, is the "common good"? This is a notoriously elusive question. In *Gaudium et spes,* the Second Vatican Council's Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, the common good is defined as "the sum of those conditions of social life which allow social groups and their individual members relatively thorough and ready access to their own fulfillment. "[54]

In defining the common good, the precise relationship of the good of the individual person and the good of the community is a key issue. Christian thought has generally resisted the temptation to choose between the two, asserting that the common good is the good of all persons, who are by nature social creatures designed to flourish in community.

According to Jacques Maritain, the common good "is therefore common *to the whole and to the parts,* which are themselves wholes, since the very notion of *person* means totality; it is common to the whole and to the parts, over which it flows back and must all benefit from it."[55] On this basis, mainstream Christianity has rejected, for example, the idea that the community can sacrifice one innocent person to save many; any community that did so would actually be undermining its own common good, not merely the good of the sacrificed individual. [56] Nonetheless, many of the debates within Christian ethics can

[54] *GS* 26.

[55] Jacques Maritain, *The Rights of Man and Natural Law* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943), 8-9.

[56] Aquinas does come disturbingly close to the notion of sacrificing one to save many in the case of a guilty person. He justifies the killing of wicked individuals by analogy to the situation in which one cuts off a gangrenous limb in order to save the body as a whole *(STh* II-II, q. 64, a. 3). In my view, the "body politic" analogy Aquinas uses is dangerous, precisely because it would not be hard to extend it to encompass killing an innocent person who is perceived to be a drain on society. By analogy, a rock climber *in extremis* could legitimately decide to cut off a healthy limb hopelessly entangled in a rope, if doing so was the only way to save his life. That Aquinas himself would oppose this extension of the analogy is evident when he says that "it is in no way lawful to slay the innocent," apart from the extraordinary case in which God has commanded one to do so (noted above; *STh* II-II, q.64, a. 6).

fruitfully be understood as rooted in a disagreement about the appropriate balance between protecting the good of the individual and safeguarding the good of the many in promoting the common good.

In his articulation of the requirements of Christian morality, Engelhardt tends to emphasize the good of the individual over the broader concerns of the community. This emphasis appears first and foremost in his understanding of the point of the moral law: it is therapy for diseased souls, a way of preparing us to experience God. The moral law is intimately connected to a regime of personal asceticism, quelling our passions and enabling us to make life-giving contact with the energies of the divine being. For Engelhardt, "the moral law is thus a means for the growth of an intimate connection between the creature and the creator." In his view, "[m]orality must be lived so as to cure our souls from passions, to make us whole, and to unite us with God." [57] Like medicine, like therapy, the application of the moral law must be intensely personal, applied with discretion and judgment to each patient, taking into account his or her own particular strengths and weaknesses.

Engelhardt contrasts the notion of the moral law as therapy with a more "legalistic notion" of morality, one that concerned not with promoting the well-being of the individual, but with enforcing the requirements of "an impersonal codebook of divine law."[58] While he does not expand systematically on this contrast, it seems to me to include the following three components.

First, according to Engelhardt, the moral law should be applied and interpreted with the mindset of a healer-a spiritual physician, if you will. In contrast, he seems to believe that a legalistic conception of morality is applied and interpreted with the mindset of a judge. The healer is first and foremost concerned with the well-being of the individual patient, while the judge is more concerned with protecting the well-being of the community

[57] Engelhardt, *The Foundations of Christian Bioethics,* 171.
[58] Ibid., 169.

as a whole by maintaining the structure and authority of the rule of law.

Second, of crucial importance for Engelhardt is his understanding of morality as *intensely personal-grounded* in and facilitating the relationship of a personal God with the persons created in his image and likeness. To subordinate the well-being of particular persons to the inexorable requirements of law is an aspect of what he means by "legalism."[59]

Third, by combining his notion of the purpose of morality as being a type of healing with his understanding of morality's ground as a relationship between persons, Engelhardt develops a pastoral approach that gives great discretion to spiritual advisors to tailor moral advice to particular situations. "The appropriate response will not be found in a casuistic literature, or at least in a formalized casuistical approach. In each particular case, the appropriate response must be drawn from prayer and grace. A formal casuistry that provides recipes for responses to particular cases would confront the Spirit with our dead letters."[60]

Grisez tends to focus more than Engelhardt does on morality's role in contributing to the well-being of the community as a whole, by providing a basis on which human beings can rightly structure their interactions with one another. In this vein, a striking difference between the two theorists is the way they conceptualize paradise and the human path to it. Engelhardt emphasizes the personal relationship between God and the believer, characterized by the communication of the divine energies to the human person. The social dimension of paradise is not developed in his analysis, which concentrates on the individual believer's union with God. In contrast, Grisez's notion of heaven, and our path to it, is much more essentially social-one could even say political, in the sense of having to do with a *polis*. He sees the task of earthly life as nothing less than building up the kingdom of God. Quoting the Second Vatican

[59] "Persons are central. Moral principles are at best chapter headings and rules of thumb. Too much attention to general principles can even divert attention from the personal character of the communion with God to which all theology and all bioethics should lead" (ibid., 209).

[60] Ibid.

Council, he writes "after we have obeyed the Lord, and in his Spirit nurtured on earth the values of human dignity, brotherhood and freedom, and indeed all the good fruits of our nature and enterprise, we will find them again, but freed of stain, burnished and transfigured. "[61] Although the kingdom can only be brought to fruition with the second coming of Jesus Christ, Grisez maintains that believers are contributing to its construction here and now. In fact each and every one of our morally acceptable actions contributes to the building up of the kingdom of God.[62]

A theory that sees morality as identifying the actions that contribute to the construction of the kingdom of God will have a significantly different understanding of the role of moral principles and rules than does a theory of morality that sees it as a type of therapy for sick souls. Grisez emphasizes that free choices are constitutive of both self and community.[63] His act analysis focuses on principles and rules, which pick out not the unique circumstances of agents and their lives, but the generalizable features of action that are repeatable in a number of cases. Furthermore, he expresses far more concern than does Engelhardt for the maintenance of social practices in which large numbers of people may find their flourishing. For example, in analyzing the prohibition against divorce and remarriage in the Catholic Church, he stresses the importance of being able to make an absolute commitment for the creative unfolding of the lives of many Christians.

In responding to proportionalists-those who would make exceptions to some moral prohibitions (e.g., prohibitions against contraception, adultery, and divorce) in difficult circumstances for proportionate reason-Grisez is concerned with the impact of such exception-making upon moral and social practices in general.

[61] Grisez, *Christian Moral Principles,* 1 (quoting *GS* 39).

[62] "We can do this by respecting and defending the human goods of the kingdom insofar as they are goods of our nature, and pursuing and promoting them insofar as they can be good fruits of our work. It is God's wish that our daily contribution to the building up of Christ, made in obedience to him and in the power of his Spirit, have eternal worth. Every morally good act of Christian living though the grace of the Spirit is therefore an act of cooperation in the work of the Trinity" (ibid., 1-2).

[63] Ibid., 56-57.

Proportionalism also undermines unconditional commitments, which are essential to Christian personal vocation. Those who have lived in any state for a few years have a very different awareness of its good and bad points than they had upon entering it. Marital and religious vows often are set aside today with the encouragement of proportionalist theologians, who suggest that in some cases the choice to set them aside is a lesser evil than continuing fidelity without any apparent benefits. [64]

This is not to say that Grisez is insensitive to the needs of human beings who experience themselves constrained by moral rules and principles. A bedrock assumption of his approach is the ultimate compatibility of the flourishing of the individual with compliance with exceptionless moral rules, even in difficult situations. First, he emphasizes that such situations provide tremendous opportunities for evangelization. He notes that a woman who refuses a potentially life-saving abortion "can bear outstanding witness to her faith and hope in God: faith if her refusal is based on her willingness to live by the Church's teaching and to leave in God's hands the risk of the disaster which might occur; hope if her choice shows her confidence that disaster accepted in Jesus is not final." [65] Second, he emphasizes the self-constituting character of actions. "Human action is soul-making. Moral acts are ultimately most important insofar as they make a difference to the self one is constituting by doing the act. Ultimately, it would profit nothing if one saved the mortal lives of everyone in the world by committing one mortal sin." [66] Third, he believes that every Christian, by grace, has the power of avoiding mortal sin. Grisez rejects as incoherent the idea that there might be some circumstance under which one is required to commit a mortal sin. Fourth, and most generally, he believes that complying with the Church's moral teaching is the only way to achieve genuine human fulfillment. "To sin is not to break a law (taking 'law' in any ordinary sense); to be punished for sin is not to experience the sanction imposed upon lawbreakers. Rather, to

[64] Ibid., 155-56.
[65] Ibid., 155.
[66] Ibid.

sin is to limit oneself unnecessarily, to damage one's true self and block one's real fulfillment." [67]

Nonetheless, Engelhardt, in my view, would consider this analysis as verging dangerously close to his understanding of legalism. First, he would not accept the Roman Catholic tradition's clear division of sins into the categories of mortal and venial; he would argue that the failures of the human heart are deeper and murkier than that division permits. We all sin; in his terms, we all "fall short of the mark" and stand in need of some form of spiritual therapy. Engelhardt would likely consider any attempt to distinguish so sharply between fatal and nonfatal "falling short of the mark" to exemplify the rationalism he associates with legalism. Second, he would argue that it is simply unjustified to say that every human being is strong enough not to be morally or spiritually destroyed by bearing the burdens associated with acting in a morally courageous way. Third, he would contend that the Orthodox tradition allows for the possibility of maintaining the ideal, while allowing for merciful exceptions to be made individual instances. He could point, for example, to the Orthodox practice of allowing for divorce and remarriage in cases where it is simply impossible for the two parties to the first marriage to carry on in it. These exceptions do not endorse the less-than-optimal course of action *tout court.* They simply constitute a merciful recognition that the agents involved are not capable of doing more at the present time. [68]

Grisez would likely respond that Engelhardt's view of morality is a logical muddle, particularly in its attempt to recognize that there some acts which are both permissible and morally forbidden. Engelhardt in turn would argue that Grisez's approach places too much emphasis on logical coherence. At some point, theological sources would become an issue. Grisez would likely observe that Engelhardt's view of morality is inconsistent with the teaching of the Roman Catholic magisterium, which is divinely assisted in its identification and proclamation of moral norms,

[67] Ibid., 329.

[68] I am extrapolating from Engelhardt, *The Foundations of Christian Bioethics,* 237.

including the acceptance of negative moral norms (such as the norm against adultery) which bind absolutely.[69] Engelhardt would obviously not find this a telling point, given his own view of ecclesiastical teaching authority as a member of the Eastern Church. This response, of course, would lead to a discussion of the next two elements in Aquinas's definition of law: it must be made by one who has care of the community, and promulgated.

D) Competent Authority

Engelhardt and Grisez are in agreement that the source of the moral law is ultimately God, who has care of the universe. Bothof them are worried, in some sense, that the moral law will be wrongly perceived as independent of the divine lawgiver. But the shape of that worry is very different in the two cases, which difference reflects back to other differences in their views of morality.

Engelhardt worries that the Roman Catholic tradition depicts the moral law as a constraint independent of God, and therefore as binding upon God in a way analogous to the way it binds human beings.[70] For him, the basic problem with this approach is that it will lead to an application of the moral law that does not take into account God's overriding purpose for it as a type of therapy for sinful and diseased souls. In contrast, Grisez worries that people will think of the law as independent of the divine law giver for a different reason. If it is merely a product of divine will, then God, or divinely authorized representatives, can simply change the law, or discount it as an arbitrary imposition by a divine bully. For Grisez, the basic separation at issue is the separation of divine will from divine intellect. The moral law is not an arbitrary imposition, but a constitutive element of God's rational plan for building the kingdom of God with the cooperation of human beings.

[69] To my knowledge, Grisez has never addressed the question whether the mode of moral thought associated with the Eastern tradition is also subject to the charges he makes against proportionalism.

[70] Engelhardt, *The Foundations of Christian Bioethics,* 173.

E) Promulgation

Finally, of course, the different ecclesial commitments of Engelhardt and Grisez affect their assessment of legitimate and illegitimate moral law. For Engelhardt, as an Orthodox Christian, God's moral law is revealed preeminently in the theological reflections, liturgical practices, and ascetic disciplines that have been handed down by the Fathers of the Church.[71] The true meaning of that law in difficult cases is revealed primarily to the holy, not primarily those skilled in discursive reasoning. The application of the law to one's own difficult case is to be done by engaging in prayer and appropriate liturgical and ascetic practices, and by consulting one's spiritual father or mother. For Engelhardt, therefore, the moral law of God is not definitively promulgated through the magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church. In fact, he argues that the widely secular culture which we have now has its roots in the rationalist understanding of the natural law perpetuated by the Catholic Church.[72] To Engelhardt's mind, the Roman Catholic moral tradition before the Second Vatican Council at least had the advantage of being coherent. Now, much of it simply follows the latest intellectual fashions, dictated by the concerns for liberal equality animating secular Western culture. It is posttraditional Christianity, which is nothing short of blasphemy to the traditional Christian.[73]

In contrast, for Grisez, the mind of Christ is closely identified, and at points virtually equated, with the authoritative teaching of the Catholic Church: "One ought to proceed with personal obedience of faith; one must submit one's experiences, insights, and wishes to the judgment of the Church's teaching, prepared to reform oneself according to the mind of Christ."[74] While the Catholic tradition includes the possibility of the development of doctrine, and the revision of noninfallible Church teaching, it is not a possibility upon which Grisez dwells. Instead, he emphasizes

[71] Ibid., 159.

[72] Ibid., 6.

[73] Ibid., 144-48.

[74] Grisez, *Christian Moral Principles,* 18-19.

the need to bide one's time while living in a spirit of docility with respect to Church teaching:

> Catholics who wish to be faithful and consistent will attempt to conform their consciences exactly to the Church's moral teaching. There is a substantial body of received moral teaching which deserves recognition as infallibly accepted and handed on by the Church. Moreover, even teachings which are not proposed infallibly must be accepted with religious assent; this obligation admits of exception only if there is some superior theological source for a contrary judgment. [75]

Consequently, for Grisez, when the Church teaches authoritatively it is not legalistically imposing an arbitrary norm on the faithful; instead, it is communicating the will of God, which is ultimately inseparable from the mind of God. The point of the norm will therefore be accessible, in principle, to the mind of the believing Catholic "thinking" with the mind of the Church.

III. LEGALISM AND THE MORAL LIFE

The charge of legalism is not a solely theoretical charge, lodged against the plausibility or internal consistency of a moral theory in the abstract. It is a charge with a fierce practical bite; it is made with deep concern about the ramification that the legalism identified will have for the moral life of Christians. What are the consequences of legalism for the moral life? It is helpful to look at this question from two angles: how people apply the moral law to themselves in a legalistic framework, and how people m authority apply the moral law to others in such a framework.

A) How People Apply the Moral Law to Themselves

One concrete problem often identified with legalism is the equation of the contents of the moral life with the application and extension of a discrete set of rules or principles-moral "laws," so

[75] Ibid., 871.

to speak. This equation can have one of two consequences: moral minimalism and/or laxism, or moral maximalism and/or rigorism.

One could fear that a view of the moral life as a collection of rules or principles illegitimately reduces it to a *small* set of moral rules. Those who worry about this consequence focus on two aspects of legalism's effect on moral agents. First, a legalistic account of morality will create the impression that there are no moral norms applicable to situations that fall outside these rules; if an agent follows the rules, then all other aspects of his or her life are matters of unfettered freedom. Second, such an account of morality will create the impression that the more difficult rules can be changed, provided enough pressure is exerted on the rule maker. Conjoined with the factual judgment that the most dangerous temptation in the contemporary world is to minimize the requirements of morality, a moralist could come to the conclusion that these two features of legalism will generate moral minimalism and/or laxism.[76]

In fact, this reasoning process encapsulates Grisez's most pressing worries about the practical consequences of legalism for moral life today.[77] At the end of his most extensive section

[76] Grisez would no doubt acknowledge that in other circumstances, of course, these features of legalism could generate rigorism: the web of rules fixing the moral life could conceivably be large, not small; changes in the teaching of the Church could be more restrictive, not less restrictive. Yet his discussion of "how can the requirement that Christians live according to the modes of Christian response escape rigorism" *(Christian Moral Principles,* 695ff.) would no doubt be deeply unsatisfactory to Engelhardt. Grisez's first point is that many people are not subjectively culpable for living according to the modes of responsibility. His second point is that" [r]igorism is relative" (ibid., 697)-the moral framework he outlines does not ask too much of God's adopted children, although it may ask too much of fallen human beings. His third point is that love, the gift of the Holy Spirit, makes all things possible, and even "easy and joyous" (ibid.) (although he does recognize the concrete need for the Catholic community to provide support for those facing difficult situations). In my view, Engelhardt would likely respond that Grisez is simply defining the problem away, by failing to recognize the degree to which God's adopted children are still marred by sin.

[77] On the idea that legalism leads to the idea that the basic question is whether the person is bound by law or free to do as he or she pleases, see, e.g., ibid., 13, 86-87, 293-94, 304-5, 370, 375, 514. See also, Grisez, *Living a Christian Life,* 9, 34, 250, 251, 514, 535, 544, 672, 876. In Grisez, *Difficult Moral Questions,* see xvii, xxv, 44, 250, 452, 607, 645. On the idea that legalism leads to the idea that moral rules are changeable laws rather than unchangeable truths, see, e.g., Grisez, *Christian Moral Principles,* 13, 21-22, 74, 85, 101, 107, 154, 283, 382. See also Grisez, *Living a Christian Life,* 249.

discussing legalism at the beginning of *Christian Moral Principles,* he summarizes his concerns:

> Legalism often causes the faithful to view the Church's moral teaching as an imposition. The suspicion grows that the Christian life itself is a kind of arbitrary test for which different rules could well be devised if only the test maker chose. In these circumstances, the desire increases to do as one pleases as much as one can. Thus, while setting stringent requirement concerning a few matters, classical moral theology offers little or no helpful guidance for much of Christian life. The temptation to rebel against received teaching is nourished by its seeming arbitrariness, as well as by interests cultivated without reference to Christian faith. [78]

In oppos1t10n to legalism, Grisez's major concern is to emphasize that every decision we make, every path we choose, is fraught with moral implications. We are never free to do as we choose in the sense that there are aspects of our lives that are unrelated to our overarching task to building up the kingdom of God by following "the way of the Lord Jesus." But we are generally free to do as we choose in the sense that every choice we make is an opportunity freely to constitute ourselves as the children of God that we are called to be. In his view, the purpose of his book is to provide guidance to Catholics who realize, as adults and as believers, that "[i]n this passing world we make the selves and relationships which will endure forever." [79]

Like Grisez, Engelhardt wants to emphasize the radical, all-encompassing claim of Christianity on the lives of those who profess their faith on it. The goal is nothing short of holiness, which he repeatedly emphasizes cannot be achieved within the framework of a legalistic account of morality. For example, in

Grisez believes that many people today pick and choose from a legalistic world view, in order further to minimize their moral responsibilities. "It is ironic although not surprising that in the present new, and still transitional, situation many-among theologians, priests, teachers, and the ordinary faithful-both gladly reject legalism insofar as it is restrictive and cling to it insofar as it limits responsibility" (Grisez, *Christian Moral Principles,* 307). By contrast, I have found only two places where Grisez interprets legalism as the use of authority to impose a morally unjustified burden: *Christian Moral Principles,* 535 (discussing Jesus's interaction with the Pharisees); and *Difficult Moral Questions,* 64-68 (tithing).

[78] Grisez, *Christian Moral Principles,* 13.

[79] Ibid., xxix.

articulating how a Christian should approach beginning-of-life ethics, he writes: "This focus on holiness transforms the question of how correctly to make reproductive choices from a merely legalistic engagement to the ascetic task of finding spiritual wholeness in a morally broken world. "[80]

In contrast with Grisez, however, Engelhardt seems to be more worried about the maximalist rather than the minimalist tendencies of legalism. It is important to remember that Engelhardt's fundamental definition of legalism concentrates on an excessive rationalism, rather than on an excessive voluntarism. If we expand the sphere of operation of moral principles and rules and the demand for rational discernment to cover the whole of our lives, we will, in his view, lose the forest for the trees. More specifically, we will begin to think that holiness is virtually identical to, if not actually constituted by, the requirements of discursive rationality.

Engelhardt would say that a rationalist approach, even one as nuanced as Grisez's (or perhaps, especially one so nuanced), simply expands the requirements of immanence, when what is required is a turn to the transcendent. An analogy may be helpful here. The requirements of practical reasonableness are like a map. One can continue to mark landmarks, to fill in details, to add color and some texture to the map. Nonetheless, no matter how elaborate it becomes, the map remains two-dimensional. Finding the transcendent in life is fundamentally a matter of breaking the confines of the map itself; it requires a new movement into a third dimension, which transcends the map entirely. [81]

While rational argumentation has its place for Engelhardt, as do rules and principles, it is not fundamental. Instead, as I noted above, the fundamental source of knowledge is grace-filled participation in the liturgical rites and the way of life of traditional Christianity. The moral life, and its rational regulation,

[80] Engelhardt, *The Foundations of Christian Bioethics,* 6.

[81] See, e.g., ibid., 170: "Only if truth veridically communicates with us can we break out of the horizon of immanence."

are preparatory means for the noetic experience of God.[82] Indeed, Engelhardt's major complaint against Roman Catholic thought is precisely that it has lost the forest for the trees: "In this century of intellectual energy [the 13th century, which saw the rise of the medieval university], theology came no longer to be regarded primarily as the fruit of holiness. Theology came instead to be understood more centrally as the fruit of scholarship."[83]

B) How People Apply the Moral Law to Others

We apply the moral law not only to our own actions, both prospectively and retrospectively, we also apply it to the actions of others. Often we do so informally, with respect to friends and acquaintances who seek our advice, with respect to the actions of public figures whose activities are reported by the media, and with respect to the actions of strangers who cross our paths. Some situations, however, present more formal occasions for evaluating the past acts of other persons, or of giving counsel to them with respect to future acts. In Roman Catholicism, these occasions are most frequently associated with the priest-penitent relationship in the sacrament of penance; in Orthodoxy, they are found in the relationship between a spiritual father or mother and his or her spiritual children.

What special concerns arise in contexts where people apply the moral law to the lives and choices of other people? Here, John Noonan's *Persons and Masks of the Law* provides a good perspective on the problem, although he discusses law as it is treated in the legal system, not the moral law *per se*. Standing at the heart of any system of law are two entities: rules and persons. For Noonan, the legal "process is rightly understood only if rules

[82] See, e.g., ibid., 179-80: "Because the goal par excellence of human life is holiness, union with God, then the moral life, the keeping of the commandments, the acquisition of virtue, along with the articulation of a Christian bioethics, are not ends in themselves. They are means to carry us to the other side of natural knowledge." Grisez would not deny that these things are means to that end; he would emphasize that they are constitutive means, and not instrumental means. Consequently, we cannot legitimately decide to follow them or depart from them on a case-by-case basis.

[83] Ibid., 203.

and persons are seen as equally essential components, every rule depending on persons to frame, apply, and undergo it, every person using rules."[84] Grave dangers arise from letting go of either component. On the one hand, the subsumption of persons into the inexorable impersonality of rule can be ruthless, creating masks ("personae") that obscure the faces of persons. On the other, the abandonment of impartially formulated rules can produce "monsters" that strangle justice with favoritism and arbitrariness.[85]

Not surprisingly, Engelhardt is very concerned about the former possibility. His core concern is rooted in his conception of morality (and spiritual direction regarding moral concerns) as being a kind of therapy, designed to heal the soul and enable union with God. The task of the spiritual father or mother is always to keep this ultimate purpose of the moral law in sight when dealing with individual spiritual children.[86] Consequently, the spiritual parent has a significant amount of discretion in dealing with individual cases-dealing with them as a guide and a healer, not as a judge. Fulfilling this role entails refusing to constrain one's evaluation of a spiritual child's actions within the law-oriented framework of "justified" or "unjustified," "innocent" or "guilty."

Sometimes, a spiritual father or mother must identify problematic aspects of situations that would not raise any question from the perspective of a more law-oriented framework focused on the culpability of the agent. Engelhardt recognizes, along with the Eastern tradition, the possibility of "involuntary sins," a manifestation of the brokenness of original sin in our lives. An example would be a woman who suffers a miscarriage, and who may face feelings of guilt, hopelessness, and despair because of it. If we recognize that repentance and spiritual therapy can be called

[84] John T. Noonan, Jr., *Persons and Masks of the Law* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1976), 18.

[85] See M. Cathleen Kaveny, "Listening for the Future in the Voices of the Past: John T. Noonan, Jr. On Love and Power in Human History," *The Journal of Law and Religion* 11:1 (1994-95): 203-28.

[86] See, e.g., Engelhardt, *The Foundations of Christian Bioethics*, 283-84.

for outside the narrow context of individual moral responsibility, then the Orthodox practice of providing for purification in such cases can be seen as a humane way of dealing with a situation that manifests human brokenness on an bodily level.[87] Furthermore, Engelhardt argues that some actions that may be morally justified from a legalist point of view (e.g., abortion to save the life of the mother) [88] are nonetheless fraught with spiritual danger. Persons who engage in these actions are at risk of spiritual harm, for which they should receive spiritual treatment. [89]

In other situations, Engelhardt believes that the strict requirements of the law should be modified to take into account the exigencies of the particular situation. Sometimes those modifications are designed to recognize that the application of the moral law in its full force will break a morally weak person, causing them to turn their backs on the Christian message, or will cause harm to innocent third parties.[90] In some instances, a gradualist approach to Christian holiness is possible. For example, Engelhardt contends that prophylactics (and contraceptives) might be provided to unmarried persons "with regret, admonition, but without impropriety. "[91]

Sometimes those modifications involve tailoring general moral concerns to specific situations. While Engelhardt recognizes the validity of many of the concerns identified in *Humanae vitae* about the consequences of widely available contraception, [92] he does not believe that these concerns justify an absolute prohibition

[87] Ibid., 277.

[88] Grisez would say that no action taken with the intent of destroying the baby is ever justified, even to save the mother. However, some actions which foreseeably result in the death of the baby are allowable for this purpose, if the purpose is not to kill the baby, under the principle of double effect. Grisez, *Living a Christian Life,* 499-507. As noted above, Engelhardt rejects the principle of double effect as a legalistic strategy used to evade responsibility.

[89] Engelhardt, *The Foundations of Christian Bioethics,* 278, 325-26.

[90] "The Church is uncompromising in her demand that we open our hearts to God, that we become perfect, that we become saints. She is therapeutic in her approach to making us perfect. She recognizes that she must begin by treating us where she finds us in our sins" (ibid., 284).

[91] Ibid., 274.

[92] Ibid., 267.

against its use, even by married couples.[93] In these situations, the Orthodox tradition assigns the responsibility to spiritual fathers or mothers to help married persons make decisions in this regard in a way that will facilitate their journey to holiness. In some cases, that may mean abstaining from artificial contraception. In other cases, it may not.[94] Engelhardt writes: "The differences between the Orthodox and the Roman Catholic views regarding contraception lie in the first being primarily articulated in terms of an asceticism directed toward approaching holiness and the second being directed to conforming to impersonal norms, including those rooted in a highly biological interpretation of natural law."[95] He notes as well that the Orthodox Church has a highly developed notion of married asceticism,[96] which requires married persons regularly to abstain from sex at certain points in the liturgical calendar. In his view, this integration of moral norms with liturgical practices is the key to understanding the holistic aim of Christian ethics: to enable a life of holiness in union with God.[97]

Engelhardt's general position on these matters is encapsulated in his discussion of the Orthodox understanding of canon law as it bears on moral discernment:

> The result is a collage of canons without systematic order, making their legalistic application nigh unto impossible. The canons are not a set of laws to be applied, for example, to bioethical issues. The canons have not given rise to a systematic casuistry, but to an invitation to approach each case guided by the relevant canons and the Holy Spirit. This is surely one of the great strengths of the canons. The canons must be understood not as a law that must be applied following its letter, but as a set of very important spiritual signposts directing Christians toward salvation.[98]

[93] Ibid., 267-68.
[94] Ibid., 299 n. 101.
[95] See ibid., 300 n. 102.
[96] Ibid., 244.
[97] See esp. ibid., 292 n. 43.
[98] Ibid., 224 n. 112.

Particularly important to him is the difference between the notion of "economia" in the Orthodox Church and the notion of "dispensation" in the Western Church.

> A dispensation lifts the law for a particular person or class of persons. An economia recognizes that the purpose of the law, namely, to bring salvation, is best achieved by something other than the strict application of the law. An economia thus should not violate the spirit of the law; rather, it should focus better on the goal of the law by setting aside its letter. It is important to note that the notion of economia includes not only applying a canon less rigorously, but also applying it more rigorously, thus achieving the true purpose of the canon. At times, the spirit of the law is best served by acrivia, the strict application of the law.[99]

Grisez's concerns, in contrast, seem to be clustered more at the other end of Noonan's polarity: he is primarily worried about the monsters that strangle justice with arbitrariness and favoritism. Because he does not conceive of his approach to the moral life as the imposition of an arbitrary set of norms, but as the fruits of the deliberation of practical reason (aided by the magisterium) about acts to be done and to be avoided, he would not share the worries about the impersonal application of the moral law expressed by Engelhardt. The idea that the requirements of practical reason should be bent to conform to the exigencies of particular situations would likely strike him as a deeply misguided claim. Within his framework, the danger that looms largest in our time with respect to the application of the moral law to others is precisely the temptation to distort the requirements of the moral law for irrational reasons (e.g., sympathy with the plight of a particular person).

Like Engelhardt, Grisez believes that Christians and the Christian community are called to perfect holiness, an ideal that is not possible immediately to achieve. At the same time, he firmly rejects any interpretation of Christian morality as an ideal that would reduce the claim that binding moral norms have upon us

[99] Ibid., 224 n. 112. Engelhardt clearly thinks that some moral prohibitions function as "real moral boundaries," while others are more flexible. Grisez would no doubt press him to articulate more fully the distinction between the two categories.

here and now. [100] While acknowledging that complying with some of those norms is difficult, he does not believe it is ever impossible, in congruence with Catholic belief that it is never impossible to refrain from sinning mortally. Consequently, moral gradualism, in the sense of only gradually bringing oneself to comply with difficult moral teaching (e.g., the teaching that using contraception is always wrong) is not acceptable to Grisez.

Unlike Engelhardt, Grisez struggles hard to demonstrate that there are no true moral dilemmas (situations in which one has no choice but to commit a wrongful act), at least for the morally upright, and sometimes even for those who have sinned. He emphasizes the possibility of always complying with the negative absolute norms, which by definition trump positive norms. He is less concerned about the specific effect of compliance with moral norms upon individuals, and more concerned with upholding the validity of the norm. In arguing that there are fewer moral conflicts than initially appears to be the case, Grisez writes:

> In many cases, apparent conflicts are removed when the morally right course, previously ignored because it is unappealing, is accepted as a practical possibility. For example, persons who have divorced and remarried need not really choose between committing adultery and renouncing their responsibilities to their second family. They can choose instead to live together in celibacy, in accord with the moral truth that they have no marital rights but do have familial responsibilities. [101]

In Engelhardt's view, this response would likely epitomize an "impersonal" concern for the preservation of the moral law, rather than a "personal" concern for the well-being of the two parties. In some cases, a celibate marriage is likely to suffer immense strain, leading to a second divorce. In line with the Orthodox view, second marriages are permitted (regrettably) as a concession to the lingering effects of sin in human life. For Grisez, however, for a confessor to distort the requirements of practical reason by inappropriately responding to the emotionally appealing aspects of a particular situation would be triply wrong.

[100] Grisez, *Christian Moral Principles,* 684-85.

[101] Ibid., 297.

First, the priest would be conveying only illusory comfort to the penitent. Because the moral principles and rules at issue are rooted in reason, not in arbitrary will, they cannot be set aside in individual cases. Second, the priest would be weakening the social and religious fabric that allowed the faithful to recognize the truth. Third, he would be weakening his own moral character, by choosing in a way that reflected and confirmed a distorted perception of the goods at stake. [102]

IV. CONCLUSION

In this essay, I hope to have demonstrated that "legalism" is not a straightforward concept. Tristram Engelhardt and Germain Grisez both condemn legalism, but mean significantly different things by the condemnation. I have argued that the concept of legalism is a derivative concept, drawing its meaning from a theolgian's conception of the nature and proper function of the moral law in the Christian life. "Legalism" is a pejorative term, with which theologians gesture to what they believe are distorted elements in a competing understanding of the nature and function of the moral law for Christians. As defined by Aquinas, the concept of law includes a number of components. Consequently, there are a number of trigger points, tracking these components, each of which can attract a charge of legalism from one critic or another.

These trigger points touch on basic issues in Christian ethics, such as whether morality is more appropriately seen as an aspect of God's will or God's reason; what relationship obtains among the individual, the community and the common good; and what role various ecclesiastical authorities and theologians play in interpreting Christian moral teaching. Moreover, they have significant practical implications for how one addresses questions such as whether true moral dilemmas occur in the Christian life, and whether some moral norms can be tailored to the exigencies of particular circumstances.

[102] Ibid., 154.

What does this mean for future conversation among Christian ethicists? In my view, it suggests that the charge of "legalism" generates more heat than light. To understand what precisely is meant by the charge, one has to understand the fundamental moral framework used by the theologian making it, in comparison to the framework of the theory against which the charge is being lodged. Once one understands the relevant frameworks, the charge itself loses its sting; it becomes situated within broader and more fundamental disagreements about the nature and purpose of Christian life, and the role of the moral law within it.

Speaking more broadly, it is not surprising that Christians would have different views of the use and misuse of the law, including the moral law, in the way of discipleship. After all, Christ himself expressed different attitudes toward the law on different occasions in the Gospels. On the one hand, in the Gospel of Mark, he chastises the Pharisees, with the admonition that "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27). On the other, in the Gospel of Matthew, he says, "Think not that I have come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, until heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matt 5: 17-18).

From the earliest times, beginning with James and Paul, there have been disputes among faithful followers of Christ about the proper way to reconcile the seemingly conflicting attitudes toward divine law that these statements reflect. It is not surprising that the debates continue to this day, whether we give primacy with Engelhardt to the first millennium of the Church's witness in the East, or honor with Grisez its continued development in the West under the headship of the bishop of Rome.

BOOK REVIEWS

Aquinas, Aristotle, and the Promise of the Common Good. By MARY M. KEYS. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. 255 pp. $26.99 (paper). ISBN 978-0-521-72238-4.

Mary Keys sets out to excavate and explicate St. Thomas's understanding of the common good, especially the political common good. She skillfully distinguishes multiple levels of this project. Given the fact that Thomas left the *Sententia libri Politicorum* incomplete, how should we weigh it in comparison to what seems to be a richer account of social and political theory in the *Secunda pars* of the *Summa theologiae?* There is also the bevy of distinctions deployed by Thomas, which tend to recur in subtly different ways, depending upon the issue at hand. As Keys shows, some of the most acute and interesting work in social and political theory will crop up where least expected in the *Summa.* Finally, there is what can be called the big picture. How is Thomas's philosophy of the common good situated within his work as a whole, including anthropology, morals, and theology?

"A central aim of this book," writes Keys, "is to help reinsert Aquinas into contemporary debates in political theory, to explore various ways we might enrich our political-philosophical discourse with conceptual resources drawn from his works" (8). In the first part, she briefly examines how the problem of the common good emerges in contemporary liberal political theory. Here, she treats John Rawls, Michael Sandel, and William Galston. Her treatment of Rawls is notable for the fact that she regards him-in my view, correctly-as maintaining, even in his later work, the position that political order cannot be reduced to an atomistic aggregation held together by mere procedures. This allows some room for dialogue between Rawls and a more traditional proponent of political union as a common good. But her survey of this sector of contemporary debate remains rather sketchy. Keys moves along quickly to another debate-among, and between, Aristotelians and Thomists. The chief question, which harbors a number of subsidiary questions, is how to make sense ofThomas's penchant to move well beyond the boundaries set by Aristotle. Does Thomas's doctrine of human inclination, virtue, and participation in the eternal law deepen or distort Aristotle's account of political phenomena? Once Keys situates herself within this debate, her exposition of Thomas finds its feet. It is a challenging piece of work.

One lesson that can be drawn from the famous exchange in the 1940s between Charles De Koninck and Ignatius Eschmann about the primacy of the common good is that the terminology of "common good" is porous and ever-shifting. Keys right away reminds the reader that for both Aristotle and Thomas the social and political common good stand between the two poles of unity of substance and the unity of aggregation. What is the "common" in an intersubjective collectivity? When two or more persons hold themselves out *as one-in* a marriage, a club, a labor union, a church, or a polity-there does not come into existence a new natural kind, if by natural kind one means a substance. Nor is their unity a mental fiction imposed upon otherwise unrelated constituent bits. Indeed, if we were to refuse to recognize the union of spouses as something more than the sum of the parts, they would be the first to remind us that we are not regarding them justly. The "common" of a society is neither substantial nor aggregational. Members of a society are not "parts" in either of these senses. Rather, they enjoy what Aristotle and Thomas call a unity of order. Every part is a whole-an acting individual who retains his own proper acts and operations. At the same time, when two or more individuals pursue a common end, and intend to have it brought about through united action, there exists a distinct kind of unity. Lawyers call it a *persona moralis* in order to indicate that the locus of rights and responsibilities-the personhood-consists in a shared end and structure of action. In Aristotelian parlance, such entity has a "form," which is nothing other than the unity of order. For a political unity of order, the form is called the *regimen.* Therefore, unless it is used in a metaphorical sense, a "common good" is a shared order of action. It is "common" because it cannot be distributed into private portions, but only participated by each of its members in the manner of usufruct. So, for example, a court can issue a writ of divorce and divide the property, but it is quite impossible to send each of the former spouses away with his or her private share of the marriage. Such is true, by analogy, of any society. In sum, the common good is not opposed to the individual (member) but to the private. When the common is ordered to the private good of the ruler, it is called tyranny; when it is ordered to the good of a particular group, faction, or party it is called schism or sedition. About these fundaments and terms, Aristotle and Thomas differ only in minor ways.

The first two books of Aristotle's *Politics* are a mother-lode of this social ontology. Thomas commented upon it carefully, up through 3.6-8. Why did he leave it incomplete? Keys's hypothesis is that Thomas found the movement from the anthropological and social foundations in the first two books to the regime-specific analysis in the third book to be disquieting. "Perhaps Aquinas declines or delays indefinitely giving further attention to this text because he judges that it concedes too much too quickly to the partial goals of particular regimes, and that the Philosopher focuses on their particularities to such an extent as to obscure or at least to gloss over the universally human, normative foundations and purposes of politics" (19). We can restate the hypothesis as a problem. Given that man is naturally social and political, and that the achievement of political order has a finality not instantiated by other modes of society, how can human

flourishing be parceled-out into admittedly partial regime-arrangements which introduce a gap or tension between what is good for man and what is good for the citizen?

The problem can be formulated more sharply in terms of legal or general justice, which Aristotle treats in book 5 of the *Nicomachaean Ethics* (and Keys, 173-99). In the case of justice as fairness, virtue consists either in exchange or in distribution according to merit. For legal or general justice, however, the virtue consists in a right ordering of other actions and virtues to the common good. It resides principally in the ruler, whose jurisprudence orders all of the members; it resides by participation in all of the ordered members, who exercise civic prudence irt preserving in their own acts the unity of order. While legal justice does not cancel out the justice of commutation or distribution, it does introduce a new object(ive) and therefore a distinct habit. It has as its object not a person equalized, but members sharing a common *order-sub specie societatis.* Because it directs all virtues to a common good, Thomas placed legal justice alongside charity as a "general" virtue. The problem, therefore, is how such a general virtue can mobilize the other virtues when the object(ive) is participation in a particular and partial regime. It is important to notice that this question is related to, but not the same as asking: Is man, in the order of substance, subordinated in all that he is to a unity of order? If we accept Aristotle's and Thomas's understanding of the common good as unity of order, the answer to this last question is immediately apparent. We do not need to introduce complications of theology and the afterlife in order to see that in the order of substance no individual can be completely subordinated or reduced to any society, no matter how large or small. Every member retains his own acts and operations, and therefore perfections which are properly his own. Rather, the main question is whether there is a common good worthy of the finality suggested by legal or general justice.

Whether or not this proved to be the stumbling block for Thomas as he approached *Politics* 3.8 is hard to say. Keys readily admits that there is no firm evidence in the historical record. Her provocative hypothesis is interesting enough, but her analysis of the philosophical issues does not depend upon it. It is quite enough for her to show that in several other works, particularly the *Summa theologiae,* which makes extensive use of both the *Politics* and the *Ethics,* Thomas reworks the fundamental ontology of books 1 and 2 of the *Politics.* He posits, for example, the habit of *synderesis* whereby every human agent has not merely a capacity for, but is actively inclined to know, the first, universal precepts of action; he defines the common as participation in the eternal law. The acquired virtues are given new depth and scope, including legal justice. Regime-transcending principles of sociability are more firmly built into the foundations. To posit a universal participation in eternal law in the first stirrings of practical intellection is to guarantee, for good or for ill, that this account of the "common" will not track Aristotle's in every respect. Keys demonstrates rather well that in introducing more universal requirements of moral and political

order, Thomas draws upon Aristotle but philosophizes in his own name. "In this important respect, Aquinas is not building on anyone else's foundations" (23).

Keys writes: "Aquinas does not equal Aristotle, but neither does he simply blur or oversimplify the Philosopher's pristine thought, as some scholars [e.g. Jaffa and Strauss] have argued. At times and in important ways, he improves upon it. To study only Aristotle on the problem of virtue, law, and the common good is to clarify some crucial theoretic possibilities but to miss out on others" (20-21). Whether Thomas "improves" Aristotle, and whether he provides "new possibilities for harmonizing human and civic excellence" are disputed questions. The virtue of Keys's work is that she meets this issue head on, without trying to explain away the Thomistic difference as a result of misunderstanding Aristotle or confusing revealed theology with philosophical analysis. By the same token, she does not shrink from the theology. Thomas often reworks and clarifies the philosophical issues in tandem with a theological problem, but this is not the same as confusing the two-or worse yet, of importing the deposit of revealed truth under philosophical cover.

This book can be profitably read along side Douglas Kries's *The Problem of Natural Law* (Lexington Books, 2007). Kries asks many of the same questions, but takes a different tack. He contends that the doctrine of *synderesis* claims too much, that it creates a crippling expectation of consensus in moral matters, and that it obscures the need for acquired moral virtues necessary for agents adequately to participate in a common political order. Thomists, if not Thomas himself, inadvertently laid premises exploited by modern rationalists and precipitous universalists; and by front-loading a knowledge of first precepts, he also exposed the tradition to skeptics, who use social sciences to show the profound dissensus that obtains within and across societies. Consequently, moral debates in the public sphere are chronically pulled in opposite directions, aggressive universalism countered by skepticism and an equally aggressive claim about so-called epistemic deficits. Kries offers an alternative picture of natural-law foundations of moral and political order, without the Thomistic "improvements." On balance, Keys makes a very fine and challenging contribution to the ongoing debate about Aristotelian and Thomistic accounts of the foundations of social and political order. She is much more patient than Kries with the complex coherence of Thomas's philosophy. That two scholars so similarly trained within ancient and Scholastic political philosophy can take such diverse positions alerts us to the live nature of this debate.

There is one other area of controversy that Keys touches upon but does not adequately develop. For centuries, Catholics used the term *doctrina civilis:* teaching(s) about political order. The chief virtue of justice, holding sway over all other species of justice, was called *iustitia legalis,* legal or general justice, which took its name from what is most characteristic of polity, the ordering of law. After the pontificate of Leo XIII (1878-1903), *doctrina civilis* became *doctrina socialis;* for its part, *iustitia legalis* became *iustitia socialis.* Here, we have a concrete instance of Keys's observation that Thomas emphasizes the social ontology in order to orient the regime-specific issues of polity. In the late

nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it was clear that human persons are citizens, but less clear how they are members of societies other than the state. Thomas's rendition of legal justice was apt to be confused with mere obedience to the positive law of the state. Accordingly, the name was changed from legal justice to social justice. This terminological "improvement" of Thomas (not to mention Aristotle) had the unintended effect of conflating distributive and general justice. As social justice came to mean the more adequate distribution of a "common stock" to individuals or groups, it became increasingly less clear what constitutes a common good in contrast to public utilities. A society, of whatever magnitude, will distribute common utilities. In this sense, even the traditional understanding of general justice will involve distribution. Even so, when a state makes available free legal counsel to the indigent, we do not say that the rule of law is distributed to private persons. When the international order distributes resources for the development of peoples, the resources are distributed, not the international order itself. In short, we have a new notion of solidarity without the precise notion of common good. If common good becomes something inherently divisible rather than participated, the ancient rubric is lost. Moreover, insofar as every polity accepts, or seems to accept, the higher norm of social justice, the regime-specific character of distribution is inevitably flattened. There are many troubles and perplexities lurking under the rather serene account of common good provided by Keys. Some of these problems have arisen from within "the tradition." But for a full-orbed and challenging account of Thomas's philosophy Keys's book is a major contribution.

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Das Ende des Neuthomismus: Die 68er, das Konzil und die Dominikaner. By EDUARD HABSBURG-LOTHRINGEN Bonn: Nova & Vetera, 2007. Pp. 292 38 €(paper). ISBN 978-3-936741-43-8

In his recent review of Romanus Cessario's *A Short History of Thomism (The Thomist* 72 [2008]: 147-54), Alfred Freddoso writes about "many encouraging signs for the future." On a mere quantitative level, one could add the first volume of a new yearbook, published in 2007 *(Thomistica 2006: An International Yearbook of Thomistic Bibliography* by the same publisher as the book under review), that intends to continue the tradition of *Bulletin Thomiste* and *Rassegna di Letteratura Tomistica* and reviews more than 1400 titles on the thought of St. Thomas. It is in this context that it becomes all the more urgent to reflect on the reasons for the decline of Thomism in the recent past. Rather

than engaging in general remarks on the theological and philosophical climate of the 1960s and 1970s, it is intellectually more satisfying to undertake a historical study of individual persons, journals, institutions, etc., in order to obtain first-hand knowledge of that period. While such studies on, for instance, the journals *Revue Thomiste* and *Divus Thomas* and the Pontifical Academy of St. Thomas have already been written, a comprehensive study of the Dominican Order has been lacking.

The book under review promises to accomplish this from the particular perspective of the Dominican Thomist philosophers at the University of Fribourg (Switzerland) between 1960 and 1980. Originally a doctoral dissertation defended at the University of Erfurt (Germany) in 1999, its publication was postponed at the request of the Order. As the author explains in his foreword, the "delicate" nature of some of the information being used in the dissertation at a time when negotiations were taking place between the Swiss state and the theological faculty caused publication to be delayed. Besides archived material, the dissertation incorporates the results of a series of interviews with twenty-two key witnesses, dating back to 1993, including the Dominicans Chr. Schonborn, M.-D. Philippe, J.-H. Nicolas, G. Cottier, Th. Mehrle, and Fr. Utz as well as Josef Pieper, Cornelio Fabro, and cardinals Mayer and Ratzinger.

The author takes an original approach to the philosophy of neo-Thomism by applying in part 1 (13-58) Thomas Kuhn's theory on the history of science. Aware of the difficulty of defining neo-Thomism, the author makes a helpful distinction between those who from a historical or linguistic viewpoint converse *about* St. Thomas (in German referred to by the adjective 'thomasisch') and those who converse *with* St. Thomas, meaning that they have taken over the structures of his thought (in German, 'thomistisch'). He refers to the Twenty-Four Theses as the principal content of philosophical neo-Thomism. When arguing that neo-Thomism constituted a paradigm as a "normal science" and that the phases of the disappearance of neo-Thomism resemble Kuhn's theory, he refers to the discussion between R. Cessario and R. Lauder/G. McCool in this journal (see *The Thomist* 56 [1992]: 701-10) as an example of what Kuhn called historical misconstructions of previous paradigms in the new scientific textbooks. According to the author, neo-Thomism had two separate functions within the same paradigm. The ecclesiastical function ("innerkirchliche Funktion") regarded neo-Thomistic philosophy as a preparation for doing theology, while the academic function ("universitiire Funktion") tried to bring neo-Thomism as an academic philosophy into dialogue with other philosophical systems. This distinction partly explains why adherents of the paradigm's first function went different ways and were unable to engage in a true dialogue. In the course of the book the author argues that the disappearance of philosophical neo-Thomism in its ecclesiastical function was caused not so much by anomalies such as the modern mindset or historical research but more so by a change in the *theological* paradigm. Contrary to Kuhn's theory, however, a new philosophical paradigm did not arise; the previous one just became "obsolete" (271).

The historical parts of the study (parts 2 and 3) give credence to Max Planck's observation, quoted in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (151), that sometimes "a new scientific truth does not triumph by convincing its opponents and making them see the light, but rather because its opponents eventually die, and a new generation grows up that is familiar with it."

Part 2 ("Thomas, Weltkirche und Dominikanerorden" [59-158]) studies the directives of the Church, divided into four periods (Leo XIII-Pius IX; Pius XII-John XXIII; the time of the council; Paul VI-John Paul II), regarding Thomistic philosophy, and also studies with respect to each period the reaction of the Dominican Order. On the basis of a careful study of the acts of the General Chapters and the *rationes studiorum,* the author, extensively quoting from the sources, traces the firm adherence to the papal directives under Master General Friihwirth, the origin of the oath *De tenenda S. Thomae doctrina,* but also the new tone of voice under Master General Gillet, exemplified by the Constitutions of 1932 which state that the study of St. Thomas should not occupy itself with "minutis et obsoletis controversiis" but should show "quomodo ex principiis S. Thomae huius temporis problemata solvi possunt." The author points out (correctly, in my opinion) that these wordings reflect already the approach Pius XII will undertake. Regarding the General Chapter of 1946, the author notes that the *positiones modernae* "for the first time in a document of the Order regarding study" do not receive a negative connotation. At the same time the acts mention (no. 89, not 39 as the author writes) that "doctrina Divi Thomae vel imperite tradatur aut aperte impugnetur." The author considers such phrases as "the first heralds of a rupture that will reach its peak twenty years later." The balanced view of Pius XII is expressed by Alphonso D'Amato, provincial of Lombardy to the General Chapter in Bologna (misattributed by the author to Master General Brown in a speech to the provincial council ofBoulogne) in 1961 when he affirms that fidelity to the spirit of Holy Father Dominic and St. Thomas "minime excludit opportunam, immo et necessariam accommodationem." The *Ratio* of 1965, prepared at the General Chapter of 1962 at Toulouse, retains St. Thomas's teaching "at the center" of philosophical and theological studies. The author concludes for the period 1946-62 that the texts of the Chapters are marked by a continuity with tradition although the Order is seeking "a new language" to transmit St. Thomas's teachings to modern man.

In order to understand the "full rupture" regarding neo-Thomism, the author traces in detail the events at the council. As a prelude he discusses the developments in France regarding the *nouvelle theologie,* the discussion instigated by Labourdette (on this see A. Nichols's article in *The Thomist* 64 [2000]: 1-19), the condemnation of Chenu and Congar, but also the contested priest-worker movement in which one can "perhaps" see a practical application of the evolutionism of the much-admired Teilhard de Chardin. Rome's reaction to this caused such negative feelings in France as a nation that the French journal *Le Figaro* could write "To take on the sons of father Lacordaire in France is as much as to blast our cathedrals in the sky." Tracing the textual history of

Optatam totius 15-16 and *De educatione Christiana* 10 (94-104), the author notes with Cardinal Mayer "an antithomistic mood of many Fathers" and sees a partial explanation of the energy and efficiency of the "anti-Thomas lobby" in the bad experiences with Rome which leading theologians such as Chenu, Congar, Rahner, and de Lubac (listed by Schillebeeckx) had over the years. The German theologian J. Neuner in his 1966 commentary, published in LThK 2, summarizes this mood very well when he juxtaposes a "closed scholastic system" which separates the priest from the world with "the actual problems and questions of life which interiorly motivate students." Let me add a few observations. We now possess a thorough book-length study on the textual history of *Optatam totius,* which, while written from the perspective of a hermeneutic of discontinuity, nonetheless gives a wealth of material regarding the discussions on Thomas during the Council: A. Greiler, *Das Konzil und die Seminare: Die Ausbildung der Priester in der Dynamik des Zweiten Vatikanums,* Peeters, Louvain, 2003. Based upon my own research (see "Die heutige Autoritat des hl. Thomas von Aquin im Lichte der Tradition," *Doctor Angelicus* 5 [2005): 7-54), I would suggest giving more weight to the explanation by the preparatory commission "De studiis et seminariis" Guly 1965) statement ("ceterum in patrimonio philosophico perenniter valido ipsa S. Thomae principia significare commissio intellexit"), especially in the light of the hermeneutic model offered by Paul VI in various speeches during and after the council and in his letter *Lumen ecclesiae.* I would also argue that the opposing council fathers worked with the dichotomy of exclusivity versus inclusivity regarding Aquinas which did not reflect correctly the magisterium, at least since Pius XII. I would however agree with the author that the *Ratio fundamental is* of 1970 on priestly formation further weakens Aquinas's position and-I would add-seems to give credence to Master General Fernandez's fear at the council that the role of St. Thomas would be reduced "ad vagam imitationem figurae exemplaris Angelici Doctoris et non ad eius doctrinam" *(Acta Synodalia* III, 8, p. 285).

The author continues with the "ideological crisis" within the French provinces of the Order which was, according to B. Ashley, "exemplary" for the Order worldwide. Schonborn recalls that, beginning in the 1950s in Le Saulchoir, the younger generation was introduced to a variety of subjects (Marxism, psychology, sociology). By 1968 it became apparent that this generation was somehow dispersed into every possible subject without covering its "core-business" *(Kernbereich).* Chenu signs an appeal in May 1968 "to introduce revolution in the Church" and "to not suffer anymore in the Church the limits which have been imposed." Father Paissac recalls that "the majority position within the Order was a revolutionary movement." The effect on Le Saulchoir meant, in the words of Schonborn, "a collapse." Returning to Le Saulchoir after the events of May 1968, Schonborn notes: "What upset me was that many older friars just dropped forms in which they lived for decades as if one changes of clothing .... I think it was like in the French Revolution, only the guillotine was missing." In May 1969 an anonymous document on the formation of the friars was circulating. Within the overall frame of "solidarity with the modern world,"

philosophy was defined as the consciousness one has of the culture of an era. A thorough study of philosophy is not encouraged; however, it permits that some friars engage themselves with the "technicality" of academic studies in order to obtain an official diploma. The author judges this text to be "in a certain sense a travesty, pushed to the extremes, of *Optatam totius"* (p. 120) because it ignores Thomism, discards any plan of studies and calls for the instrumentalization of philosophy according to the "solidarity" of the individual. The provincial chapter of 1969 reflects this document when it proposes a three-year cycle of theology at the start of the formation after which friars follow a two-year cycle in which they can choose philosophy "or another discipline which is more fitting to their potential." Reference to Aquinas is entirely absent. In his interview with the author, Schonborn gives three reasons for the "elimination" of Thomas. First, there was a sense of shame for the identity of Thomism, which was considered to be out of date. Second, the historicism of Le Saulchoir emptied to a large extent the commitment to Thomas. Third, and most important, there was a mental rupture with his way of thinking: one had become alienated from the mentality *(Geistigkeit)* Aquinas represented. After the closure of Le Saulchoir in 1971, the provincial chapters of 1972 and 1975 continue to express the need to promote social activism and endorse studies with a minimum of philosophical preparation.

The fourth period under review (Paul VI-John Paul II) and especially the letter *Lumen ecclesiae* and John Paul II's "distinct commitment" to Aquinas marks "a distance from the battles and quarrels of the time of the Council" (132). By way of a document of the permanent commission for studies of 1966, the author informs us of the different voices regarding the Thomas oath. We also learn of the dramatic appeals of Paul VI at the General Chapters of 1965, 1968, and 1971 to safeguard the Order's commitment to Aquinas although the corresponding acts hardly mention him. The author however finds "a lack of interest" in Aquinas and philosophy in general and notes the marked difference between the latest edition of the constitutions of 1954 and those of 1969 where Aquinas's doctrine is reduced to a "good influence." According to the author, the activities of Master General de Cuesnongle (1974-83) mark a new era in promoting Aquinas, as becomes clear from a comparison of the role of Aquinas in the *Ratio* of 1975 with the constitutions of 1969. Following a forceful speech by de Cuesnongle at the General Chapter of 1980 on the importance of the study of philosophy and Aquinas in particular, the permanent commission for studies was commissioned to look for ways to study and teach Aquinas effectively and a Thomistic institute was founded at the Angelicum. On the basis of the acts of the General Chapters of 1986 and 1989, the author concludes that de Cuesnongle's successor did not seem to be overly eager to encourage the friars to study Aquinas in depth. Based on the 1993 *Ratio,* in which Aquinas played again a more prominent role, the author concludes part 2: "Today [1998] the relation to Thomas Aquinas seems overall to be more relaxed. A new generation, unaffected by the traumatic events of the 1960s and 1970s, discovers Aquinas and his philosophy anew" (151).

Part 3 (159-258) focuses on the particular situation of the chairs of philosophy (three at the philosophical and two at the theological faculty) at the university of Fribourg (Switzerland) between 1890 and 1982. Until 1972 the Dominicans occupied all the chairs; in 1982 M.-D. Philippe (1912-2006) retired as the last Dominican on the faculty. After sketching the history up to 1960, the author provides the reader with an impressive account of the life and work of the "last generation" of professors and especially the "last five" holders of a chair: N. Luyten, M.-D. Philippe, L.-B. Geiger, A. F. Utz, and I. M. Bochenski. He next reconstructs by way of interviews with three alumni (now professors) the study and teaching methods during the 1950s and 1960s. From these interviews we learn that the Dominicans were largely perceived as a group who "somehow belonged to the same school but had entirely different personalities. They were individually great, but as a group, somehow even greater." This would suggest that at that time Thomism was, in Kuhn's words, perceived as the "normal science."

Chapters 4 and 5 of part 3 chronicle the "disappearance of Thomism." The author discusses the disappearance of Latin in 1966 in favor of bilingual courses, which caused difficulties for the professors in translating their courses and which doubled the number of chairs at the theology faculty. It would also make it more difficult for the Order to find suitable successors. A reform of the plan of studies in line with what was perceived as a consequence of *Optatam totius* de facto eliminated the two-year mandatory philosophical program. In 1969 a new nomination procedure was approved that weakened the position of the Dominicans. The author chronicles the "early retirement" of five theology professors under the pressure of students. Most prominent at the time was the case of Fr. Mehrle, dean of the theology faculty between 1966 and 1968, who was forced to suspend his courses because he was charged with "judging the new theological orientations from the perspective of Thomism." The author judges these cases to be symptomatic of the "birth pains" of a scientific revolution. As the chairs between 1972 and 1982 were gradually being handed over to lay professors, Belgian father Norbertus Luyten, prior of the Albertinum, came to have a central role. Largely based on archived material, the author depicts in chapter 5 the dramatic story of Luyten's many initiatives to ensure a Dominican philosophical presence at Fribourg. Quoting extensively from his correspondence with de Cuesnongle, the author allows us to become witnesses of Luyten's concern that some circles are seeking a *"dedominicanisation"* (231) at Fribourg. We also witness the powerlessness of the Master General to find suitable successors from within the Order.

The concluding part 4 (259-77) places the results within Kuhn's model. The author notes that the philosophical chairs, contrary to the theological chairs, did not suffer from such anomalies as a perceived unscientific character in the light of modern questions or a perceived inability to address modern problems. On the contrary, the Dominican philosophers kept their research and teaching up to date and their courses were well attended by students. The author argues that the *ressentiment* towards Thomistic theology and the diminishing role of philosophy

as a preparation for the study of theology made it more and more insignificant what kind of philosophy professors were teaching. This would explain why the neo-Thomistic paradigm silently disappeared.

As the author himself admits in the preface of the book, the years after finishing the dissertation in 1999 give reason for drawing a more hopeful picture of the current status of Thomism. However, it seems to me that at least in Europe the exclusively historical approach is still predominating and that, while one can witness a renewed interest in Aquinas's theology, this renewal is not matched by a renewed interest in his philosophy; a situation which, from a Thomistic viewpoint, can only be a *contradictio in terminis.*

Although the references to Kuhn's model could be criticized as being somewhat too artificial, those interested in the history of Thomism and especially the Dominican Order are in the author's debt for writing a detailed and intriguing story on the Order's commitment to Aquinas and the way this commitment has been applied in the case of Fribourg.

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The Passions of Christ in High-Medieval Thought: An Essay on Christological Development. By KEVIN MADIGAN. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007. Pp. 158. $65 (paper). ISBN 978-0-19-532274-3.

Beauty is proportion. According to Aristotle's standard, Kevin Madigan's study is an achievement, due to its remarkable proportions: concise in length, sharp in thinking, well-contained in its scholarship, and as clear-cut in its statements. The argument is made in a manner as meticulous as straight. There are two arguments, as the specific topic the author sets forth turns out to be a fallibility test for a more general theological principle. In the author's words: "Most historians of medieval thought have perceived profound continuity between scholastic theological and exegetical thought and the patristic authorities with which such thought characteristically began. I argue here that high-medieval thinkers on the passible aspects of Christ's human nature-fear, sorrow, apparent ignorance and so forth-more often rupture such putative conceptual links and erase much or all dogmatic continuity with the very figures whose thought they seem to want to preserve or, in many cases, to rehabilitate. This argument has implications for the much larger theme of continuity and discontinuity in the history of Christian thought" (3). One would immediately spare a thought for Cardinal Newman and his *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine,* which is exactly what Madigan has in mind. Newman indeed

asserted that, between the earliest expression of a dogma and its developed form, there exists a *prima facie* dissimilitude which conceals the deeper fact of development (cf. 91). As a balance, Madigan intends to prove that, at least in one case, the rule fails: "the history of relations between ancient and medieval thought on the passions of Christ is a history of correction and improvement. It is therefore, remorselessly, a history of fissure and discontinuity" (92).

The body of evidence provided by Madigan is sifted step-by-step, convincingly, from chapter 2 to chapter 7. Chapter 2 sets the scenery by bringing us back to the fourth century's Christological controversies. At that time, Arians were in the forefront; they were setting terms and questions. And since one of their first concerns was the rejection of Christ's divinity and equality with the Father, it is not surprising that they turned their attention to all the defects of Christ acknowledged in the Gospels, defects at odds with divine nature. Thanks to recent scholarship, summarized by Madigan, we are now more aware of the fact that this main tenet had a soteriological counterpart: being a creature, Christ was able to suffer and die in order to obtain redemption for humankind. In the Arians' view, it was specifically because Christ was neither real God nor real man that he carried out a task unfit for both God and man. Orthodox theologians, in their answer, had to prioritize. Trinitarian faith was at stake. They therefore concentrated their efforts on setting the boundary straight between God and creatures, and, in a way, making clear that the Son as God was definitely on the first side of this boundary. This Trinitarian belief was to combine with the belief that Christ was truly human, but this was another matter for which each Father developed a theory of his own-a pluralism that would eventually lead to Chalcedon. In this respect, a wide spectrum of possibilities was asserted, each one involving a variant interpretation of Christ's passions. Even among the most prominent authors there is a notable difference between Athanasius's exemplarism, Hilary's divinization of Christ's spiritual powers, and Ambrose's strict compartmentalization of natures.

This diversity was to embarrass Scholastic mediaeval theologians: attempting to summarize Tradition into clear statements, *magistri* were reluctant to choose between authorities, to say nothing about correcting them. Chapters 3 to 7 scrutinize the way in which the *magistri* negotiated their common understanding of reverence toward ancient authorities-yet without boasting about it as innovators-concerning particular defects of Christ: the possibility of progress in Wisdom (chap. 3), the possibility of ignorance (chap. 4), the pain in the Passion (chap. 5), the fear and sorrow in Gethsemane (chap. 6) and, finally, Christ's prayer (chap. 7). For each chapter, Madigan presents the Church Fathers' texts, and then turns to their mediaeval appraisal in Peter Lombard, Bonaventure, and Aquinas. There is nothing really new in these core pages, but even for the specialist these short, clear thematic summaries in the history of doctrine will be useful. One would perhaps deplore that the brisk prose style changes here and there into journalistic simplicity (see, for example, pp. 6, 61, 63, 70), though an overall genuine sense of synthesis is to be acknowledged.

Now, taken for granted that mediaeval theologians substantially amended their patristic predecessors, two questions arise: do those amendments account for a shift in the theological tradition between the Fathers and their mediaeval appraisal? This question will be addressed later. Second, can one thereby conclude that this is "at least an initial announcement of gross defects in the tradition" (61), which means that at least in this case, and contrary to Newman's view, "in no way is the early visible in inchoate or implicit form in the latter" (92)? The answer to this question is no, because two important theological principles are missing in the reasoning. First, theologians are *in* the Christian tradition, but they are not *the* Christian Tradition. There have indeed been many conflicting theological traditions in the history of the Church; this does not necessarily mean that there is no such thing as unity in the Christian Tradition, or that some proposals were within and others without. (It might appear to be the case, even afterwards, yet it is not necessarily so.) But second, and more simply: the Christian Tradition is unified by and in faith, not by and in theologians. In other words, in order to show defects in the Tradition it is not enough to display prominent disagreements; one has also to prove that the disagreements affect the transmission of the Church's faith as such. This leads us to the second step missing in Madigan's argument: the development that attracted Newman's attention and eventually drew him into the Catholic Church is not the chaotic development of theological doctrines but the homogeneous development of Christian faith. Madigan is right to point out discrepancies among theologians about Christ's passions, but he should have brought this fact together with this other fact: that the Church never adjudicated the faith on the subject of Christ's passions. And the most obvious reason for the latter fact is the former, that is, the still-in-progress work of theologians. Even today, the place of Christ's passions in the *organon* of faith remains somewhat unclear.

Albeit unwillingly, Madigan's book offers a pertinent example of this doctrinal indetermination, as early as in its title and subtitle: *The Passions of Christ in High-Medieval Thought: An Essay on Christo logical Development.* First, there is a shift between the intentions expressed in the subtitle and the final result. As we have just seen Madigan does not clarify in what way a development might have occurred within the Church's formulation of faith about Christ, because he concentrates exclusively on discontinuities in the understanding of faith about Christ by theologians. Second, the title is misleading concerning the book's content, in that pain, fear, and sorrow are passions while knowledge and prayer are not. Is there, then, any reason to bring all these elements together, and to place them under the common heading of "passions"? The reason presented by Madigan (6) is that Arians did so and thereby shaped the issue for centuries to come. But he himself appears quite at ease with their approach, even if it is, of course, for a different motive. Arians were on the track of every little indication of Christ's inferiority to the Father. Madigan is uncomfortable with everything that would suggest that Christ experienced life in a different manner than we do, because it would suggest that Christ possessed a diminished humanity. In other words, the latter's concern is the equality of Christ with us,

while the farmer's was the inequality of Christ with the Father. As a result, the Arians as well as Madigan think that the defects or passible dimensions of Christ mentioned in the gospel have to be read literally: any gesture of pain for example, must echo and thus reveal the inner subjectivity or nature of Christ. Even if Madigan remains evasive about how far his own position goes, oft-repeated sharp remarks clearly indicate that herein lies his main preoccupation. His introduction is quite clear: relying on a hypothetical exegetical theory complementary to his own, he maintains that the dissimilarities between the Gospels about Christ's defects are the result of a progressive erasure by the first generations of Christians who felt ill at ease with those "all-too-human" (63) traits of Christ (cf. 4-6). John is even accused of "outright denial" for having not mentioned the fear and grief in Gethsemane (5). This betrays another feature common with Arians, which is a tendency to favor certain pericopes, the ones that fit with one's theory, and to rewrite the Gospels according to these. Therein lies a presumption about what an incarnate divine subject or a divine nature consists of. Arians considered it obvious that divine nature is of a kind that cannot be communicated; similarly, Madigan seems to consider that the question of what it meant for the divine Word to experience passions and defects he voluntarily assumed is quite a trivial one. Finally, Arians and Madigan ascribe to Christ's passions the same purpose: passions are of interest not in themselves, but because their literal existence in Christ is the key condition of something else. All these similarities suggest that, as Arians have nothing in common with Madigan regarding doctrine, they must partake in the same theological method.

Enough material has been gathered to see that at the heart of this method is a knotty, mixed-up perception of what pertains to nature and what pertains to person. To put it briefly, any essential property is proper to a nature but it exists in a certain hypostasis; and conversely any hypostatic property is distinctive of a hypostasis but it exists according to a certain nature. To apply this principle in Christology: passions are in themselves relative to a particular nature, that is, a sensible and rational nature. This is why they offer the best evidence that Christ was truly human, as Chalcedon made clear and declared conclusively. But by themselves they are unable to make us understand how they exist in this particular person, the Word incarnate. In other words, true human passions are in Christ because Christ truly has a human nature, but they are in Christ according to the way Christ is a person, that is the Son of God. Christ had human passions but it must be added that they were Christ's passions, which makes a difference. To halt at the first part of the reflection and to be forgetful of the second one seems to suggest, first, that Christ's passions and defects as a whole are of interest only insofar as they underscore the Chalcedonian doctrine; second, that any attempt to outline passions according to their particular mode of existence in Christ is mistakenly construed as a denial or a diminishment of the true humanity of Christ; and third, that passions and defects in Christ remain understood as common, unspecific passions and defects, for they never come to be fathomed as Christ's. In this impersonal perspective, the causality of salvation divides according to the two natures and is no more unified in Christ's person.

Christ's passions and defects are deprived of any soteriological significance except exemplarity. This implies that exemplarity has to be literal: Christ must experience life in absolutely the same way as we do; otherwise his example would be insincere. Then a final step comes: the parting of soteriology from Christo logy.

All said and done, did the mediaeval theologians sever from their patristic predecessors as Madigan asserts? Did a shift occur in the doctrinal history of Christianity? I think that the so-called shift is merely a kind of optical illusion created by the use of flawed theological lenses. Madigan has assembled texts and organized them in a clever thematic synthesis. Needless to say, he must have spent a lot of time becoming familiar with them. In spite of all this effort, it is amazing that something of great importance remained unperceived by him: in their attempt to organize the many *quaestiones* fueled by their biblical teaching, twelfth-century theologians were relying on patristic anti-Arian material, but they were no longer tied down to the Arians' agenda. For many reasons the passions and defects were to be studied in medieval treatises for their own sake, each one in particular, and were related to both the Incarnation and the Passion. This shift from the vantage point of the Fathers allowed for a clarification of the distinction between the natural reality of passions and defects in Christ and their soteriological significance (in more or less satisfying ways, but this is another matter). Through rewriting and reverent exegesis, this makes for continuity with the patristic period and constitutes a development. Madigan knows the texts: he quotes them; he comments upon them, and shows that he understands them; but something prevents him from grasping their thrust and the continuous line they were drawing. It is as if he was a still prisoner of the Arians' perspective. His inability to integrate the consideration of nature in a consideration of the person of Christ keeps him from perceiving one of the most fascinating progressions in the history of Christology. Beauty can deceive.

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Vatican II: Renewal within Tradition. Edited by MATTHEW L. LAMB and MATTHEW LEVERING. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. Pp. xxiv + 462. $29.95 (paper). ISBN 978-0-19-533267-9.

This collection of essays answers to the call of Pope Benedict XVI for a reading of the texts of the Second Vatican Council within a "hermeneutic of continuity," for which, as a matter of course, conciliar documents are interpreted by way of anamnesis (i.e., against their de facto doctrinal background in the

tradition) and not by way of prognosis (i.e., in terms of their possible contribution to a speculatively constructed future). The address of the pope to the Roman curia on 22 December 2005, which suggested this desideratum, is printed here as a kind of preface to the whole work. The task the editors have set themselves is certainly both desirable and necessary. Firstly, it is desirable because too many versions of what the council said or intended have assumed the alternative-a hermeneutic of rupture, with consequences often unfortunate for the life of the faithful. Secondly, it is also necessary because what Benedict XVI requested is simply the normal way to proceed when handling such texts in an intellectually responsible manner. No historical theologian, or Church historian, should treat Vatican II as a sketch for a hypothetical Vatican III. What should we make of a student who decided to interpret, say, the two-wills doctrine of Constantinople III, not against the background of Chalcedon and Constantinople II, but in terms of a proleptic account of Trent on justification, or even, for that matter, of Nicaea II (the council immediately following) on the portrayable character of the hypostasis of the Word incarnate? At least Nicaea II and Trent have a measurable reality quotient, which is more than can be said for Vatican III.

A substantial introduction by the editors ascribes the lacunae of much commentary on the council texts not only to Church politics but also-and more profoundly-to the loss of a sapiential culture, whereby all such documents would be approached in a manner reflecting the holism of genuine Tradition. They also offer a key to reading the essays that follow, signaling key features of each contribution. This is useful because, in their entirety, these articles on, respectively, the constitutions, decrees, and declarations of the Council, occupy well over four hundred pages of text. Contributors are overwhelmingly American, at any rate by domicile. The exceptions are all Dominicans (one Nigerian, one French, one Swiss). Painting with broad brush-strokes: contributors can be described as chiefly belonging to either the Thomist or the *Communio* schools.

An inevitable commonplace of reviewing multiauthor works is to notice that not all essays are equally successful. Here the problem is compounded by the variable quality or at any rate the importance of the conciliar texts on which particular authors were commissioned to write. Plainly, it was much easier for Avery Cardinal Dulles to produce something theologically meaty on the ecclesiology of the first four chapters of *Lumen gentium*, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, than it was for Richard John Neuhaus to extract ecclesially nutritious elements from *Inter mirifica*, the Decree on the Instruments of Social Communication. Accordingly, this review will concentrate on those essays where (a) somewhat surprising points of particular importance are made, while (b) comment is being offered on the four principal documents of the council, its constitutions. In effect, I shall concentrate on essays that are striking in that they flout commonly received Church opinion, especially when the latter is shaped by the hermeneutic of rupture. At the risk of misrepresenting the ethos of the text, which is more likely to point to precedents in the Church Fathers,

St. Thomas, or the papal magisterium than to stir up the nests of hornets, the rest of this review concerns this "shock criterion."

I have already mentioned Cardinal Dulles. Massive experience of theological writing and an increasingly focused theological mind makes his essay, relatively short though it be, as memorable as it is trenchant. A summary might run as follows: despite the wider range of images for the Church it sanctioned, *Lumen gentium's* teaching on the structure of the Church is basically the kind of doctrine the First Vatican Council would have produced had it remained in session. A point Dulles underlines-and I have to admit it had passed me by though its significance leaps to the eye-is that the celebrated phrase *subsistit in,* whereby the Church of Christ is said to "subsist in" the Catholic Church, was not proposed (as is widely alleged) as a minimizing alternative to *esse-to be* that Church. Rather, it was voted into the text as a maximalising alternative to the formula *adest in-to be present in* that Church (which makes, as they say, a whole load of difference). Almost at a stroke, the "revolution in ecclesiology" beloved of liberal commentators evaporates. Something remains behind, however, like the smile on the face of the Cheshire cat. And that is the impression careless talk has left on plain persons-in-the-pew that "all the Churches are the same now" (i.e., after Vatican II).

Abbot Denis Farkasfalvy tackles the topics of biblical inspiration and interpretation in *Dei verbum.* Though in part he is seeking elegant solutions to *aporiae* in the council texts, or the filling in of *lacunae* in the thinking of the council fathers, he also meets the "shock criterion" in two respects. Firstly, he considers that "standard" (my term) Old Testament exegesis as now practiced by Catholics as by others in the academy fails to correspond to the provisions of the conciliar constitution, which sought rather to foster for the Elder Covenant a neo-patristic typological exegesis centered on the mystery of Christ. Secondly, the account of the origins of the four Gospels commonly taken for granted in median historical-critical study cannot be squared with *Dei verbum's* affirmation that they stem from the apostles and/or their collaborators.

In an account of the theology of the liturgy in *Sacrosanctum concilium* Pamela Jackson shows that by "pastoral" efficacy the bishops at Vatican II did not mean a liturgy that was "less demanding, more interesting and enjoyable, and perhaps even entertaining" (116), but one that draws the faithful along the way of holiness by joining them more deeply to Christ in his high priestly worship of the Father. Some might think that this hardly needed stating. They should recall the pit into which the beautiful word 'pastoral' has fallen when used in this context.

Finally, when tackling *Gaudium et spes,].* Brian Benestad finds that the invocation of the distinctive experience and expertise of the laity in the document's forty-third section was never intended as an invitation to reformulate Church teaching on "certain moral matters." Rather, the bishops sought to release the initiative of the laity in making "prudent application of Catholic social principles to public policy" (162). When we read in a correspondence column that the "official Church" must cease to reject the "relevance of lay

experience," it is not, I think, this modest (yet crucial) task letter-writers generally have in mind.

I have singled out four neuralgic points. My selectiveness should not be misinterpreted as lack of enthusiasm for the project of this book as a whole, or want of admiration for the competence with which its project has been brought to completion. Many essays are of value simply by being sober and workmanlike (e.g., Francis Martin on revelation and its transmission in *Dei verbum,* or Matthew Levering on the closing chapters of *Gaudium et spes).* What I have been terming the "shock criterion" is inadequate to portray the riches of this collection. But is the best reason why this book is needed. Fortunately, owing to the distinction of the publishing house which produced it (wisely, the editors eschewed the more obvious choice of conservative Catholic publishers), it is likely to be widely read by those who would profit from hearing its message.

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John Paul II and St. Thomas Aquinas. Edited by MICHAEL DAUPHINAIS and MATTHEW LEVERING. Naples, Fla.: Sapientia Press of Ave Maria University, 2006. Pp. 259. $29.95 (paper). ISBN 978-1-932589-28-3.

There have been many studies of John Paul's thought and certainly even more of Thomas Aquinas. But those that compare them one to another are few and far between. This collection fills an important lacunae in this regard. Many of the essays are well done and generate some significant insights.

In their introduction, the editors point to what Aidan Nichols has described as "a new Thomistic renaissance" that has begun to emerge within (and in part to be shaped by) the pontificate of John Paul II. This renaissance was a correction of the neo-Scholastic theology that flourished prior to the Second Vatican Council, which neglected biblical and patristic sources in favor of an arid rationalism. John Paul II, particularly in *Crossing the Threshold of Hope* and in his encyclicals *Veritatis splendor* and *Fides et ratio,* appropriated Aquinas as a contemplative spiritual theologian whose thought was profoundly immersed in biblical and patristic sources, even while articulating with great clarity the metaphysical basis of the relationship between creatures and God as both Creator and Redeemer.

The first of these essays is the one which is perhaps the most out of place. It is not really a scholarly essay like the book's other chapters. It is rather a homily given at the Dominican Priory of Ibadan, Nigeria on 6 April 2005 by Anthony Akinwale, O.P., in a Mass offered for the repose of the soul of the late pope .. It

does, nonetheless, offer a brief biographical overview of the life of Karol Wojtyla/John Paul II and some of the events and influences that formed him.

The collection immediately takes on a more substantive tone with an essay by Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J., which deals with the late pope and the renewal of Thomism, reprising a theme sounded by the editors in the volume's introduction. Unlike the editors, however, Cardinal Dulles declares himself to be interested in whether the late pope was a Thomist and more specifically a Thomist of what stripe in light of the classifications of species of students of Aquinas offered by Gerald McCool and others. Surveying Wojtyla's intellectual development through the prism of biography (student, professor, pastor), the cardinal concludes that John Paul II was a metaphysical realist (as are Thomists of any kind), existentialist as opposed to essentialist (like Gilson), and personalist (integrating modern attention to human experience with the metaphysical bedrock of the dignity of the person). Based on this assessment Dulles offers guidance to students of Aquinas who want to emulate Wojtyla/John Paul II: they must be metaphysically grounded, focused on the primacy of the act of existence and the dignity of persons, yet conversant with contemporary philosophies, ideologies, and science.

Frederick Christian Bauerschmidt's essay then turns the focus of the collection from questions of method to those of Christology and soteriology, offering an interesting comparison between Aquinas, Scotus, and John Paul II. Bauerschmidt sees contemporary Catholic thought as tilting toward Scotus's view of the necessity of the Incarnation (in, e.g., Rahner, or *Gaudium et spes* 22). He asserts that Aquinas's argument for the Incarnation's fittingness is not simply the starkly negative rejoinder to the question of whether the Son of God would have become man had humanity not sinned. Nonetheless, the Incarnation is colored by the reality of redemption. Bauerschmidt finds the same basic position in the thought of John Paul IL Yet the late pope's emphasis on divine mercy and the hermeneutical lens of *GS* 22 enriches the Thomistic understanding of the Incarnation: "as fully divine and fully human, Christ accomplishes at the same time the revelation of God and the revelation of true humanity" (43).

Moving through the classical topics of systematic theology, the compendium next enters the arena of ecclesiology, in an essay by Charles Morerod, O.P. More than many of the authors in this collection Morerod shows a real awareness of many of the historical and methodological difficulties faced in this comparison across centuries and genres-the lack of self-consciously ecclesiological texts in Aquinas's time, the nuances of comparing the work of a private theologian (however great) with the Church's universal pastor, and the varying degrees of authority and various kinds of authorship involved in papal writings. Through a rich and detailed engagement with primary texts, Morerod highlights the visibility of an "ecclesiology" in Aquinas's work by highlighting God's self-communication to us in divine and human terms-particularly in the Incarnation.

In one of the strongest essays of the collection, Guy Mansini, O.S.B., takes on the theme of mercy in the late pope's thought. He begins with an overview of John Paul II's notion of mercy as described in *Dives in miseriocordia*. From an

engagement with the late pontiff's utilization of select OT and NT texts, he easily finds the epitome of Christian notions of mercy in the paschal mystery itself. But the essay then undertakes a surprising and ultimately fruitful shift. The Judeo-Christian concept of mercy is deftly contrasted with Aristotle's understanding of pity which is dominated by conceptions of justice as fairness as opposed to the Judeo-Christian understanding of mercy as justice. Saint Thomas then provides the bridge in showing that (contrary to his Greek philosophical mentor) mercy for sinners is itself a virtue-in fact, the very chief of the virtues (cf. *STh* II-II, q. 30, a. 4, ad 3). In even more surprising turns, Mansini moves on to offer brilliant contrasts between the Christian conception and Rousseau's concept of pity and Nietzsche's attack on it as respectively marking the beginning and the end of modernity. In our resultant postmodern position, the late pope perhaps goes beyond Aquinas as he himself surpassed Aristotle. He does so by anchoring his anthropology and his concept of mercy Christologically in the cross and resurrection of Jesus.

In something of an unintended and indirect *sed contra* to the preceding essay, Robert Barron then deals with the Christian humanism of the volume's two principal subjects. He highlights their strong convergence in divine and human self-gift-the diffusive self-gift of the Incarnation which in turn enables human freedom in self-surrender. For Aquinas this self-surrender is ordered primarily to God, while for Wojtyla it is to the truth who is ultimately God. Hence for both, albeit with different emphases, the converging self-gift of these two freedoms converges on the idea that "authentic humanism is Jesus Christ" (114).

Michael Sherwin, O.P., continues the analysis of freedom and truth sounded in Barron's essay. He offers an extended and substantive overview of the late pontiff's notion(s) of freedom-as ordered to God, to Christ, to graced humanity, and to the truth of the gospel proclamation. He then notes (as have others) the utter dependence of these forms of freedom on truth in the thought of John Paul IL While the interdependence of truth and freedom may appear circular, Sherwin argues that they need not be seen as such if located within the broadly Thomistic anthropology of the late pope. Sherwin then insightfully highlights the politically "dissident" character of this anthropology for Wojtyla/John Paul II in the face of the totalitarianisms he confronted throughout his life in Central and Eastern Europe. This vision can serve to ground the reflections on truth and freedom offered by other Central and Eastern European dissidents such as Vaclav Havel. Yet Sherwin acknowledges that further work needs to be done in renewing Thomistic anthropology by attending more closely to the communal character of moral development, the impact of human animality on practical reasoning, a deeper grasp of the mystery of sin, and an account of nature that separates itself from the deficiencies of Aristotelian science.

Michael Waldstein moves the discussion on to the concept of the common good in the two thinkers. He begins by noting the apparent problem: while both treat issues of communion and community, Aquinas gives an architectonic role to "common good," while John Paul II appears to do the same with the idea of

"gift of self" (cf. 141). Waldstein finds a solution to this conundrum in the interrelation of the two concepts in the *Letter to Families,* nos. 10 and 11. The key to harmonizing the two concepts lies in the principle of Pseudo-Dionysius utilized frequently by Aquinas, *bonum est diffusivum sui.* Both Aquinas and the late pontiff see this manifested in the love of friendship and within Trinitarian communion. For John Paul II, in marriage as a reflection of the Trinitarian *communio* the couple's mutual self-gift is ordered to the common good of the family and society especially in the gift of a child. To put it in Thomistic terms "[t]he intrinsic common good of marriage, which is the unity of love between husband and wife on the basis of the marriage vow, is ordered to the child, which is the extrinsic common good of marriage" (147).

The anthropological focus continues in Reinhold Hiitter's essay on the intellect and will in *Fides et ratio.* He notes that while the encyclical focuses on faith and reason it seems to pay little attention to the will. This is compounded by the Augustinian insistence on the "incurvature" of the will due to sin. Hutter proposes to attend to this "problem" by turning to Aquinas. He gives a detailed overview of "intellect" (distinguishing it from "reasoning") and will in the thought of the Angelic Doctor, examining humanity's creation in the image of God, the operations of intellect and will (noting a growing voluntarism over the course of the Dominican's career), and the impact of sin on the human person. He then leads the reader through a rather wandering contrast between the virtue of studiousness and the vice of curiosity as an example of the interplay of reason and will faced with the realities of sin and grace. This, he holds, sheds some light on the problem of the will in the encyclical.

Thomas Weinandy, O.F.M.Cap., continues the analysis of the same theme with a compact and substantial essay. He seeks to highlight the way in which the interconnection of faith and reason in *Fides et ratio* is pervaded by a "Thomistic spirit" (175). He shows very clearly how reason and faith support and affirm one another. Reason serves as both the guide and the servant of faith, enabling the person to come to faith (reason itself being transformed by conversion) but also properly to understand its mysteries. He then turns to the anthropology necessary to support such an interplay. At the same time Weinandy faults the late pope for not providing a proper philosophical and theological basis for the ability to seek truth in seeing humanity as both *imago dei* and *imago trinitiatis.*

The volume then takes an unexpected turn with the essay of Fergus Kerr, 0.P., which bridges the apparently disparate worlds of *Fides et ratio,* Thomistic metaphysics, and analytical philosophy. Kerr faults the late pope and those who advised him for not seriously engaging the analytic tradition (seeing it instead as a form of logical positivism), while admitting that tradition's aversion to postmodern and religious concerns. Instead of seeing it as a philosophical impulse that deals only with "piecemeal analysis of manageable topics" (190), he argues that it has "'become the natural ally of Thomism and Catholic philosophy"' (192). Kerr then provides a very detailed history of Anglo-American analytic philosophy, arguing that it need not be construed, as it often is, as anti-metaphysical. Indeed, he holds that it can find common ground with Aquinas

and John Paul II in the area of ethics. He confirms this assertion with brief overviews of three female analytic philosophers: Iris Murdoch, Elizabeth Anscombe, and Phillipa Foot. The Aristotelian naturalism of the last of these reconnects her (albeit without Anscombe's Catholic faith) to the thought of Aquinas and hence indirectly to the realism of *Fides et ratio.*

One of the volume's editors-Matthew Levering-weighs in with an essay on the Eucharist in the understanding of the study's two principal subjects. The essay begins with a somewhat polemical contrast between the thought of the late pope and David Power, O.M.I., on the nature of the Eucharist as sacrifice and communion. Unsurprisingly, Levering finds the late pope to be in harmony with Aquinas, opposed to Power's "strikingly Protestant" language of seeing the Eucharist as merely an inclusive meal which celebrates God's gracious gifts (cf. 214). Levering then offers the Gospel of]ohn,Aquinas, and John Paul II, as well as other sources in the tradition, as indicators that the Eucharist is rightly understood as a participation in the sacrificial character of the cross of Christ. Sacrifice and communion are therefore inseparably connected

The final essay offers a reading of John Paul II and Aquinas through the lens of Balthasarian theological aesthetics. Francesca Murphy accentuates the theme of beauty in the thought of Aquinas and John Paul II. While the "ugly duckling" of the transcendantals for Thomists, beauty is, in fact, fully displayed in the cross-a fact appreciated by both thinkers. She then points to many of the invocations of this transcendental in the tradition and in Wojtyla/John Paul II's writings, from the Augustinian meditation on *amor pondus* in *The jeweler's Shop* to his appreciation of St. Francis, naming him patron saint of those who promote ecology.

Collections of essays tend to be of uneven quality and this present work is no exception. Anthony Akinwale's homily is a bit out of place in a volume of scholarly essays. Reinhard Hiitter's piece is rather wandering and disjointed, while Fergus Kerr's treatment of analytic philosophy comes across as highly defensive though perhaps understandably so given the way it stands out in the volume. The essays vary widely in their length and level of documentation, making it difficult to offer even comparisons. And while *Fides et ratio* offers a good deal of material for purposes of comparison, devoting three out of thirteen essays to it seems a bit like overkill.

In spite of the range of subjects covered, there are areas comparison and contrast between Aquinas and John Paul II that go unexplored. Even with the heavy anthropological (and particularly epistemological) focus of many of the essays, the differing concepts of the human person as embodied in the two thinkers is relatively undeveloped, especially Aquinas's Augustinian location of the *imago dei* in the powers of the soul as opposed to John Paul II's insistence that the person becomes the image of God in communion. Indeed the whole of the late pope's theology of the body catecheses are relatively unexplored. It would be interesting to ponder the Thomistic roots of these addresses. Michael Waldstein, who has recently offered a outstanding critical translation and edition of them, would have been uniquely qualified to take on this subject. However,

his essay, while compact and insightful, deals with a very focused exegesis of two sections of the *Letter to Families* on the interconnection of self-gift and the common good, leaving the theology of the body catecheses unmined. Finally, apart from Levering's fruitful comparison of John Paul II and Aquinas on the Eucharist there are no studies on their approach to the sacraments. It might have been especially interesting to contrast their thought on the marriage since, unlike Aquinas, John Paul II agrees with St. Bonaventure in seeing marriage as a sacrament "from the beginning."

In spite of the uneven nature of some of the essays and the fact that some potentially fruitful topics of comparison are left untreated, this is a very worthwhile volume. The essays by Dulles, Mansini, Morerod, and Sherwin are genuinely outstanding. Virtually all of the essays are interesting and substantive in their own right. With the exception of the debate over whether Wojtyla was a phenomenologist, a Thomist, or (if possible) both, on his elevation to the papacy, there has not been sufficient attention paid to the Thomistic roots of the twentieth century's most prolific and visible pope. This collection goes some distance in filling that gap in scholarly reflection. I recommend this study for advanced students of Aquinas and of Wojtyla/John Paul II. Both will profit from this fruitful interchange.

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Pico della Mirandola: New Essays. Edited by M. V. DOUGHERTY. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 2008. Pp. 240. $80 (cloth). ISBN 978-0-521-84736-0.

Giovanni Pico della Mirandola died at 31, none of his writings became part of institutional Christian study, and his was the first printed book to be banned by the Catholic Church. Nevertheless, his writings have been a major focus for discussion about the relations of philosophy, religion, and humanism in the Renaissance. His citation of Hermetic, magical, kabbalistic and Zoroastrian writings, from Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic, and Arabic has frustrated scholarly efforts to identify his opinions within any particular school of thought. He declared an intention of learning from all teachers, instead of following any single master; some scholars have interpreted this to mean that he believed that all teachings contain an element of truth. Such an interpretation does not explain letters to his nephew that expressed earnest Christian piety, his resolute defense against the papal commission of his condemned theses, his affinity to Savonarola, or his exhaustive denunciation of judicial astrology. Now, at a time when earlier

interpretations of Pico's thought have crumbled and new evidence has become available, the articles in this volume ask whether and how it is possible to reconcile the contradictions in his major works.

After briefly surveying the current state of Pico studies, Michael V. Dougherty announces that the collection is intended "to assess the philosophical merit" of Pico's writings, to guide English-speaking readers through the wide range of topics in his diverse corpus, to make scholarship about him comprehensible, and to point out directions for future investigation. Each of these articles confronts a clear problem and proceeds, through lucid discussion of the textual evidence, to break important scholarly ground, without the professional jargon that might leave students behind.

Jill Kraye ("Pico on the Relationship of Rhetoric and Philosophy") explains Pico's surprising defense of Scholasticism in a letter of 1485 to Ermolao Barbaro. Pico defended the Scholastics against humanist complaints that their Latin was a barbarous distortion of the classical language. Barbaro advocated uniting wisdom with eloquence and studying ancient Greek commentators on Aristotle instead of the Latin Scholastics who did not know Greek. Pico replied, using the rhetorical device of prosopopoeia, by impersonating an imagined Scholastic philosopher saying that the Scholastics' awkward, technical Latin was a tactic for concealing deep secrets from unqualified readers. The Scholastics applied their subtlety and intellectual penetration to investigating deep questions, not to adorning their writing to please the crowd. "They have Mercury in their hearts, not on their tongues." In this letter, as in his famous *Oration*, Kraye asserts, Pico endorsed Scholastic philosophy as a discipline intended to discover the truth, whereas humanist rhetoric could, at best, suggest the truth to nonphilosophers.

Paul Richard Blum ("Pico, Theology, and the Church") investigates why the papal commission in 1487 condemned thirteen of Pico's nine hundred theses, but not others that appear no less offensive. He explains the implications of some theses by examining the ways Pico first defended them, in the *Apology*, and then restated and extended them in the *Heptaplus* (1489). The commission either did not want to recognize or did not want to accept that "Pico stretches the mode of disputation to its limits in showing that the exercise of the mind, not petrified conclusions, is the aim of such debates."

The most difficult to explain are Pico's cabbalistic theses "in my own opinion." Blum earns our admiration and gratitude for deciphering them and explaining their significance to Pico. Unlike some interpreters of Pico's kabbalism, Blum evidently thinks that it did not merely provide another range of exotic metaphors for what Pico already thought, but taught him new things that affected the structure of his thought. For example, he adapted an enigmatic text by the thirteenth-century visionary kabbalist Abraham Abulafia to redefine the relations among the disciplines of philosophy and theology. Later he used Abulafian letter-reordering and numerical values to bring the *Heptaplus* to the conclusion that Christ was implied in Genesis from the first word. Even though we and the papal commission may not understand, Pico appears to have demonstrated there his "wrong, erroneous, superstitious and heretical" thesis,

"There is no science that assures us more of the divinity of Christ than magic and Cabala."

Several of the articles here mention that Pico's wide range of reference and nonconformity to any established school of thought tempt moderns to conceive of his thought as a "grand syncretistic project" among all traditions. Michael Sudduth ("Pico della Mirandola's Philosophy of Religion") deftly distinguishes Pico from such an anachronistic conception by contrasting his writings about Christianity and philosophy with John Hick's and Keith Ward's conceptions of comparative religion. Careful survey of the writings shows a subordination of philosophy to Christian theology, the decipherment of contradictory surface-meaning of texts from many schools and religions to discover a hidden, shared Christianity. Not an attempt to stand above all teachings to formulate a new synthesis, "Pica's syncretism presupposes perspectival diversity and the rational accessibility of the one truth contained in all." Pico does not doubt what that truth is. As he writes in the *Heptaplus,* "Surely if all things agree with the truth, as Aristotle says, all things ought to agree with Christ, who is the truth itself."

Michael J. B. Allen ("The Birth Day of Venus: Pico as Platonic Exegete in the *Commento* and the *Heptaplus")* shows Pico commenting on the first chapter of Genesis in the *Heptaplus* with an interpretive method he first developed in 1486 in his *Commento* on the Platonic *canzone* by Girolamo Benivieni. Allen's expertise in Marsilio Ficino's commentaries on Plato, a necessary perspective on Pica's efforts at Platonic exegesis, informs lucid, considerate explanations of a dizzying range of references. When Pico applied Platonic, Plotinian, and Ficinian conceptions and exegetical choices to it, "Genesis became in effect the most profound of Platonic texts and enabled him to look beyond the *Timaeus, Symposium, Phaedrus* and other Platonic dialogues." Allen points out the contrasts between Ficino's emphasis on Soul and a greater whole and Pica's emphasis on the uniqueness of man, "of man in Christ and of Christ as the Idea of Man." The discussion encourages a nonspecialist to recognize the need to return to studying the complex of texts that the revived Platonism of Ficino and his disciples, into the sixteenth century, made into a coherent body of philosophical myth.

The modest title of the article by M. V. Dougherty ("Three Precursors to Pico della Mirandola's Roman Disputation and the Question of.Human Nature in the *Oratio")* hides a surprisingly far-reaching reinterpretation of Pica's *Oration* and *900 Theses.* He shows that Pico intended the *900 Theses* to combine three familiar academic exercises: (1) a discussion of disputed questions-not a *quod-libet* debate on any suggested topic; (2) a collection of authoritative statements, *sententiae,* like those that university students collected from their studies, but not philosophically proven conclusions; (3) the discussion that would proceed, in accord with Aristotle's *Dialectics,* by examining apparent verbal conflicts in order to find underlying agreed truths. Pico did not, then, propose for Rome a grandiose argument with everyone about everything, nor an attempt to prove harmony among all opinions, but a new agenda of important topics for philosophy to consider and refine. The *Oration* defines those topics as the

progressive deification of man, through the arts and sciences up to theology and the apprehension of God. Pico was not proposing a "grand syncretistic project" among all traditions, but confirmation of the essential Christian beliefs-the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the divinity of Christ-from the most diverse sources. Confirmation that Pico's near-contemporaries understood the *Oration* to be an important statement about human potential comes from four sermons, delivered before popes in the decades after the papal condemnation, that quote the *Oration.* Dougherty's interpretation may well attract criticism from those scholars who hold previously stated positions, but it sounds plausible and the effort deserves admiration.

To trace notable statements from the *900 Theses* to Pico's posthumous longest work, the *Disputations about Divinatory Astrology,* Sheila J. Rabin discusses "Pico on Magic and Astrology," two disciplines from the margins of university studies. Kabbalah needed to be discussed with the other two because Pico connected it to them in the *Conclusions* ("There is no science that assures us more of the divinity of Christ than magic and Cabala") and, in the final thesis given as his own opinion, he declared, "Just as true astrology teaches us to read in the book of God, so the Cabala teaches us to read in the book of the Law." The *Disputations,* in contrast, forcefully repudiate astrology and distinguish natural magic, as mere natural science, from black magic. Kabbalah remains outside the *Disputations,* for reasons that are unclear. The condemnation of astrology, however, had immediate and long-term influence in scientific thought. Rabin's survey of the book, which is still not translated into English, fills out the range of Pico's thought about humanity in the universe.

Carl N. Still ("Pico's Quest for All Knowledge") tests the success of Pico's attempt to harmonize Platonic and Aristotelian conceptions of body, mind, and intellect by examining his statements about epistemology in the *Commento, Oration,* and *Conclusions* (all 1486), the *Heptaplus* (1489) and *De Ente et uno* (1491). Situating Pico's thought between characterizations that "minimize" his efforts on theory of knowledge into medieval realism and those that "maximize" it into an anticipation of modern thought, Still shows how Pico tried to harmonize the three-level soul of Latin Aristotelians (vegetative, sensitive, and rational) with the Platonic four-level soul (vegetative, sensitive, rational [human] and intellectual [angelic]). The incomplete correspondence of these levels of the human soul to the universe, in the *Heptaplus,* and the incomplete explanation for simultaneously claiming individual immortality and endorsing the Averroistic intellective soul that is common to all humans, require Pico's system to be examined from other angles, through metaphors from other texts. Still concludes that, in Pico's vision of human ascent, "there is a grand design, but the details are not provided."

Francesco Borghesi ("A Life in Works") begins by asking what value there is to any life of a philosopher, especially since the thirty-one years of Pico's life (1463-94) might seem to be too short a time to allow much development. On the other hand, the diversity of his writings and their unusual circumstances make us feel that the gaps between writings may be more explicable by events than by

the author's intentions. Because he was a nobleman, Pico's life was well documented from before his birth, and immediately after his death his nephew Giovanni Francesco made him the subject of one of the first biographies of a contemporary. Borghesi's survey of the life, mentioning essential articles as it proceeds, opens the way to understanding Pico's career and writings without reducing the thinker to his life.

Although announced as an invitation to studying Pico, this volume is not elementary in the usual sense. Unlike many introductions, it does not treat the intended audience as distractible groundlings who need to be flattered and tricked into reading philosophy. Instead, the authors address the intellectual ambition of their readers to understand problems in Pico's writings for which there is no professional consensus and then guide readers through evidence in the original texts, including Latin. Who is the intended audience, ready for philosophical arguments that they recognize to be inherently important? The academic affiliations of many of the contributors suggest that, besides other scholars, it is undergraduate and graduate students at Catholic colleges and universities who have the curiosity and preparation in classical and later philosophy and in Latin to follow the solutions of problems posed by a thinker about whom experts have not made up their minds. Pico is an excellent subject for such an approach, because he formulated challenging questions that provoke contemporary interest.

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Becoming God: The Doctrine of Theosis in Nicholas of Cusa. By NANCY J. HUDSON. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, Pp. 218. $59.85 (cloth). ISBN 978-0-8132-1472-6.

Becoming God is, in a sense, a search for the true identity of the fifteenth-century writer Nicholas of Cusa (1401-64). Is he at root a neo-Platonist philosopher or an orthodox Christian theologian? Is he properly cast as a medieval thinker or is he really an early modern figure? Can his philosophy of God be rescued from the charge of monism or is it irredeemably pantheist? Is he best depicted as a nominalist, a realist or something in between? Can his intensely paradoxical language be folded into the scholastic concept of the analogy between God and humanity? Nancy]. Hudson attempts to "untangle these and other questions raised by the ideas of this enigmatic figure" (8) by addressing the topic of theosis in Nicholas, convinced that "an examination of theosis, or becoming God, will help in the effort to correctly place Nicholas of

Cusa and his understanding of the creation-creature relationship" (1). In the end she concludes that Nicholas is an orthodox Christian thinker whose ideas are best evaluated against the backdrop of the Eastern theological tradition of Gregory of Nyssa, Maximus the Confessor and (preeminently) Pseudo-Dionysius. In a series of running skirmishes along the way, she also argues that Nicholas is fundamentally a medieval thinker (not an early modern) who adapted neo-Platonic categories in the service of a Christian theology. Though in dialogue with the Scholastics and sharing some features of the nominalists, he does not fit into either camp. For Hudson, Nicholas's Christocentric account of reality charts a unique course between the Scholastic and nominalist options, and offers us important insights into the deification of both the world and humanity.

The study begins (chap. 1) with a brief survey of three Eastern theologians, Gregory, Maximus and Pseudo-Dionysius, in order to display the characteristics of an Eastern account of deification that Hudson will later use to contextualize Cusa's own account. Nicholas's direct dependence on Pseudo-Dionysius is well established. Hudson suggests that (whether directly or indirectly) the influence of both Gregory and Maximus is also important for understanding Nicholas. Maximus's influence on Cusa's idea of the deification of the cosmos, and of the human being as microcosm, is quite plausible, and the link between Cusa's idea of "infinite progress" and Gregory of Nyssa is persuasive-this is plainly a view that can be traced back to him, though it could have been channeled to Nicholas through Maximus.

With the Eastern Fathers as a backdrop, Hudson unfolds Nicholas's account of theosis in three steps. The first step (chap. 2) is an account of divine immanence in Nicholas under the rubric of "theophany as self-communication." The second step (chap. 3) is the balancing side of the equation, Nicholas's views on divine transcendence as the "distance between knower and known." The third step (chap. 4) is synthetic, drawing together Nicholas's paradoxical thought into his mature understanding of a Christologically-based doctrine of theosis.

Hudson is insistent throughout that we recognize Nicholas's distance from the Scholastic idea of analogy and the hierarchy of being. Rather than grounding an epistemology on the analogy of being as the Scholastics do, Nicholas employs the coincidence of opposites in God to ground an epistemology of "learned ignorance." There is no getting away from the fact that Nicholas's metaphysics and epistemology are difficult, marked as they are by a peculiar philosophical terminology and strained to the breaking point by the frequency of extreme paradoxical language. For example, Nicholas's summary term for the Triune God is "Not-other," indicating not simply self-referentiality, but also that God is *"Not-other* than his creation" (51). Hudson deflects the charge of monism here, arguing that by this term Nicholas asserts that "God is not the cause merely of the actual being of things, nor is he merely an efficient cause. Rather, he underlies the very possibility of all things, including nothingness" (55). To put this in other words, "it is not merely that all things exist in God, but that enfolded in God, all things are God" (60). The influence of Pseudo-Dionysius can be seen in this kind of statement, though the terms are distinctly Cusan. But

it may be asked whether Hudson's use of the terms "identity" and "identical" to describe God's relation to the world, when summing up Cusa's teaching, can be justified. Is it meaningful to assert that, for Nicholas, "the divine presence to and in the created order is so intense that it is an identity" (55), or that "the One God who is absolutely identical to each and every thing is contracted actually in difference" (75)?

Hudson herself raises hard questions about Nicholas's views of God's immanence and transcendence. Does his metaphysics of transcendence destroy his epistemology of knowledge through union? If we cannot have real knowledge of God, what kind of real union with God in theosis remains? (90) Picking her way carefully through the nuances of Nicholas's thought, Hudson leads the reader out of this apparent dead-end, showing that Nicholas's distinction between "reason" and "intellect" offers a way forward. "Nicholas's understanding of the mystical union that culminates in theosis is not obviated by his insistence on the absolute distance of God .... It is precisely the manifestation of the transcendent God in the intellect that allows for a unique divinization of humanity and its centrality in the theotic movement of the entire universe" (91).

The crucial conceptual piece for understanding Nicholas is his theory of the four unities. These explain "the relation among the sensible world, the conceptual world, the world of contemplation, and the divine" (125). The fourth unity is the corporeal world grasped through the senses. The third is what enables us to grasp the sensible data through the activity of *ratio* or rationality. This is the plane of logic, discursive reasoning and the domain of the law of noncontradiction. But the limitations of *ratio* lead to the necessary use of negative language to talk about God. The second unity is the world of the intellect, and here God is to be grasped by the "coincidence of opposites." Paradoxical language must be used at this level and the law of noncontradiction is transcended. Here the intellect is primarily passive, allowing God (the first unity) to illuminate the intellect through grace (126-27). To speak of God, the first unity, Nicholas moves to the language of supereminence, beyond the coincidence of opposites, following the lead of Pseudo-Dionysius. Hudson concludes that Nicholas's account of theosis through the intellect, in tension with "his ever-present denial of the capacity of human knowledge to reach God," is the "central paradox" of his thought (129).

Becoming God culminates in a treatment of "theosis" in Nicholas, displaying his Christological account of theosis as "divine filiation" and highlighting the unusual dominance of the intellect in deification. Hudson concedes that Cusa's Christology "arises out of philosophical theology rather than biblical theology," and that he does not "aim at discovering the historical Jesus through exegesis of biblical texts, but at coming to a philosophical understanding of the significance of God's becoming other than himself" (139). In a kind of Anselmian move, Nicholas posits Christ as the necessary "Absolute Contracted Maximum," that is, as the one who in a contracted manner unites all that God is uncontractedly with creation itself. He is a kind of metaphysical bridge or meeting point. Here Hudson argues that Nicholas wends his way between the realist and nominalist

alternatives of his day. By means of a Christological exemplarism Christ becomes "the Form of forms, the Maximum Exemplar in whom all universals are united" (148). Conveying a certain grace and beauty in Nicholas's depiction of Christ, Hudson concludes: "In the hypostatic union, the Word that is equality of being all things is contracted. In flesh and blood, time and space, the Form of forms, the Exemplar of all things is made concrete" (150).

In the closing chapter on "The Problem of Intellectual Salvation" and in her conclusions, Hudson marshals her arguments in a summary explanation and defense of Nicholas. She begins with remarkably frank admissions of certain theological shortcomings in Nicholas. She grants that Nicholas neglects a doctrine of sin as moral wrongdoing, favoring instead a conception of sin rooted in human finitude (180). She admits that Nicholas portrays Jesus, not as "the suffering savior who takes on the sins of the world," but as the "bridge of the ontological divide between God and man" (200). She concurs that he does not adequately address the problem of evil, and that for Nicholas Christ's humanity is viewed less in terms of sacrifice than of revelation (182). Strikingly, she acknowledges that Nicholas's view of deification is really linked to creation (not to the order of redemption), and that his Christ is "not the Christ whose story is told by the gospel narrative of suffering and death on a cross" (188). Hudson mitigates the force of these admissions to a modest extent, but she allows that from the perspective of the Western theological tradition, Nicholas supplies an inadequate Christology and soteriology (194-95). How then can Nicholas be judged an orthodox Christian thinker? By similarity to and association with the Eastern theological tradition. Hudson proposes that Nicholas be given the same latitude that those in the West give, for example, to Maximus and Pseudo-Dionysius. She contrasts an Eastern view of the Cosmic Christ and an intellectual doctrine of theosis, concerned primarily with "the transhistorical relationship between Creator and creation" (195) to a Western view that centers on the story of God in history and the soteriological role of the cross to deal with sin. Thus, the logic of her argument is that if we absolve Pseudo-Dionysius and other esteemed Eastern writers from the charges of neo-Platonism, intellectualism and monism, then we should grant the same absolution to Nicholas of Cusa.

Hudson's alignment of Nicholas with Eastern theology is illuminating and seems undeniable. Many of his concerns and orientations can be perceived especially in Pseudo-Dionysius. And so to a certain extent the argument has merit. But the argument runs into trouble with Hudson's characterization of Eastern theology more generally. Her survey of Gregory, Maximus, and Pseudo-Dionysius, and her final summaries, while they show certain characteristic features of Eastern theology that have connection to Nicholas, do not present an adequate summary of the breadth of Eastern theology. For instance, in all three of her chosen Eastern figures the language of deification is densely concentrated in sacramental contexts. While the Eastern Fathers use cosmic categories and accent the role of the intellect in deification, they retain a biblical idiom and the notion that deification is fundamentally begun and refreshed through sacramental grace. We see none of this in Hudson's account of theosis in

Nicholas of Cusa. Further, the key piece missing in Nicholas's doctrine of theosis from the Eastern point of view is the person and activity of the Holy Spirit. In the Eastern accounts (especially in Gregory and Maximus) the Holy Spirit is a crucial agent in theosis. Nicholas plainly accepts the Trinity, but the Holy Spirit is notably absent from his account of how Christ is the "Absolute Contracted Maximum" in whom we participate. Finally, it is inaccurate to characterize the Eastern approach as not concerned with sin as moral wrongdoing, or with the cross, or with Christ in history. Maximus for one explains his doctrine of theosis by constant reference to the moral wrongdoing of Adam and the renovation of our nature through the grace of Christ in redemption. Theosis in Maximus is grounded, not in creation as such, but in the new creation inaugurated in Christ. If Nicholas does indeed adopt and develop largely Eastern categories of thought and theology, it would appear that he leaves out (or at the least treats very thinly) crucial aspects of Eastern theology that are grounded solidly in a biblical narrative of salvation and a sacramental context for the life of grace. As Hudson herself observes, "a complete study" of Nicholas of Cusa's relationship to the theological tradition of the East is still needed (195). Until that study is accomplished, the issue of the adequacy of Nicholas's theology, at least gauged by his similarities to the East, remains an open question.

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The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman, vol. 10, *The Final Step, November 1843-October 1845.* Edited at the Birmingham Oratory. Notes and introduction by FRANCIS J. MCGRATH, F.M.S. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006. Pp. xlvi + 1010. $325.00 (cloth). ISBN 978-0-19-925459-0.

The masterful effort begun in 1961 to publish Cardinal Newman's personal correspondence and diaries in thirty-one volumes has come full circle with the appearance of volume 10-almost. Fr. Charles Stephen Dessain (1908-76) of Newman's own Birmingham Oratory began with Newman's Catholic period (1845-90), and the ten volumes of the Anglican period conclude with the present volume. (See my reviews in *The Thomist* 61 [1997]: 325-28; 67 [2003]: 655-62; 71 [2007]: 147-53.) Dessain himself, at the end of volume 31, included 98 pages of Catholic-period letters that had surfaced by 1975. But many more letters have turned up subsequently, and Francis McGrath is producing a thirty-second volume for them, followed by a thirty-third volume that will function as a general index. So the circle, as I said, is *almost* completed.

On late Wednesday evening, 8 October 1845, Italian missioner Dominic Barberi arrived in a cold drenching rain at Littlemore, where Newman and a few friends had been living in quiet retreat three miles from Oxford. He was drying off by a fire when Newman came into the room, dropped to his knees, and began making his general confession. Newman continued his confession the following day, followed by his profession of faith in the Roman Catholic Church. Volume 10 of *The Letters and Diaries* relates the complex unfolding that led to Newman's devout and straightforward action on 9 October. It fleshes out Newman's 1864 comment in his *Apologia pro vita sua* (Uniform Edition [London: Longmans, Green & Co.] p. 185) that his "last Sermon was in September, 1843; th,en I remained at Littlemore in quiet for two years. But it was made a subject of reproach to me at that time, and is at this day, that I did not leave the Anglican Church sooner."

Were the editor's extensive footnotes, his nine appendices, the correspondence addressed to Newman, and the letters between other principal figures printed in the same normal font size as Newman's own letters, this volume would reach easily over 1500 pages. Given this wealth of material, a review must be selective, and I have selected three areas: the final stages of Newman's conversion process that display acutely its theological and psychological aspects; the writing of the famous *Essay on Development* which happened during 1845; and the contentious events unfolding within Oxford University.

To follow in Newman's own words his discernment toward 9 October 1845 is to be struck by his holiness and integrity of character (see, e.g., his journaling for Advent 1843 [LD 10:64-68]). One is struck by how intemperate is the recent book from Harvard historian Frank M. Turner, *John Henry Newman: The Challenge to Evangelical Religion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), which asserts that Newman's conversion was merely his choice for the next best thing after his project for a Catholic enclave within Anglicanism under his self-aggrandizing leadership failed to materialize. Unfortunately for Turner's thesis, there is no common measure between his construed Newman and the actual Newman of the *Letters and Diaries.*

Newman had two sisters, both married to Mozley brothers. Harriett severed contact with him in 1843. To Jemima, who maintained life-long contact, Newman shared in March 1845 how painful was the prospect that he might leave the Anglican Church (see *LD* 10:595-98). Another poignancy (that his perplexed religious state was unnerving many who looked to him as a spiritual guide) must be mentioned because Newman noted it frequently to friends, as, for example, to Charles Marriott two months earlier. "No one, I suppose, has a notion of the extreme anguish it gives me ... to be *unsettling* the minds of others; this is what consumes me. I should not mind it, so I think, did I see my way more clearly-but to have to act as if in the dark, without a certainty that one is not under a judicial delusion in having the convictions I have, and, while acting, to be unsettling others, the thing of all others which it is abhorrent to my

nature to do, is a trial so great that I may claim your prayers and those of any other friend who knows it" (LD 10:500-501).

Many have thought that Newman's decision to become Roman Catholic was akin to the conclusion of a syllogism. Rome's Tridentine dogmas seemed to be novelties. However, they met the tests for genuine doctrinal developments. Therefore, this last obstacle to becoming Catholic was now been removed by Newman's just-completed essay proving the minor premise. The present volume casts matters in a different light. The larger context is well known from the *Apologia* and is oft-repeated in these letters. Simply put, Newman's 1838 studies of the Arian and Monophysite heresies vis-a-vis the papal position suggested that the extreme and moderate heretical positions, the Arian and semi-Arian for instance, corresponded to the Protestant and Anglican Via Media positions today, with Rome being where she was in patristic times. Then came Fr. Nicholas Wiseman's 1839 *Dublin Review* article on the Donatists that, as Newman later noted to Edward Pusey, "completed my unsettlement" (about the viability of the Via Media theory). Newman tried to salvage matters with "three separate attempts ... my article on the Catholic English Church [,] that on Private Judgment [,] and my Four Sermons" *(LD* 10:592 with elaborating footnotes. Newman reprinted the "Catholicity" essay in *Essays Critical and Historical II,* pp. 1-73 of the Uniform Edition).

Newman's Anglicanism, though shaken, remained stabilized by his rebuttals until the Tract 90 condemnations began in 1841. Newman withdrew increasingly from the affairs of university and church because his thinking was judged unsuitable by their authorities. Although retaining his fellowship to Oriel, Newman and like-minded clergymen "retired" to a rustic property he had purchased in Littlemore. They were humorously called "inmates" or "recluses" of the "Do mus BVM" by their friends (passim in *LD* 10), while their enemies thought them crypto-papist monks. The present volume prints many inquiries to Newman during these months he was "on the shelf" as to whether the rumor was true that he had already "conformed" to Rome. His answers attempted to walk the razor's edge, needing in truth to deny the rumor, yet needing to avoid revealing how tenuous his situation was fast becoming.

It had become ever clearer to Newman that the English Church was in schism from the one divinely constituted Roman Church. It was more probable, he noted frequently to friends, that Christianity in England veered into schism than that recent Roman doctrines veered from the apostolic teachings. "As to the Fathers ... I do now think, far more than I did, that their study leads to Rome. It has thus wrought in me," he wrote Pusey just before Christmas 1843 (LD 10:63). But was he deluding himself in so thinking? Why did not other leading lights of the "movement" see what he was seeing, he wondered? Writing to Henry Edward Manning almost a year later, he says that his salvation depends on joining the Church of Rome, but "what keeps me yet, is what has kept me here long-a fear that I am under a delusion." In this same letter, he tells Manning that he does not see greener grass on the other side; in fact, "I have no existing sympathies with Roman Catholics. I hardly ever, even abroad, was at

one of their services-I know none of them. I do not like what I hear of them" (LD 10:412). He had a constant conviction he was in schism. He had an apprehension he did not want to die in a state of schism. But was it all a delusion? This is what held him back from Rome. His *Essay on Development of Doctrine* reflected resolutions he had already come to accept intellectually, as will be seen. Fear of delusion, not doctrinal issues, held him an Anglican.

How was the fear of delusion whisked away? By patience and by obedience to conscience! "Time alone can show whether a view will hold-but then there is this consolation, that, if time has shown the untenableness of one, it will do the like service to another, if it be untenable. Time alone can turn a view into a conviction-It is most unsatisfactory to be acting on a syllogism, or a solitary, naked, external, logical process. But surely it is possible in process of time to have a proposition so wrought into the mind, both ethically and by numberless fine conspiring and ever-recurring considerations as to become part of our mind, to be inseparable from us, and to command our obedience" (LD 10:53). As for obedience to one's conscience, "I have always contended that obedience even to an erring conscience was the way to gain light, and that it mattered not where a man began, so that he began on what came to hand and in faith-that any thing might become a divine method of Truth, that to the pure all things are pure, and have a self-correcting virtue and a power of germinating" (LD 10: 190). Readers who know Newman's famous 1869 *Grammar of Assent* will detect here the very twin principles, patience and conscience, that galvanize what Newman came to call the "illative sense" in making judgments in concrete matters. It is the hard-to-describe mental process that unerringly tells someone within a discernment process that "enough is enough" and "now is the time to decide and to act." This is what happened to Newman by late summer, 1845, and his letters then begin to forewarn friends of an imminent move. That Newman's final two years at Littlemore are a sort of existential commentary on the later *Grammar of Assent* is an insight I owe to editor Francis McGrath. McGrath perceptibly notes in his introduction (xxii) the harbingers of later *Grammar of Assent* thematics that appearing in this volume.

The second focus of this review, the composition of Newman's celebrated *Essay on Development of Doctrine,* may be presented more briefly. At the outset of 1845 he began writing it (see *Apologia,* 234). On 21 September he wrote John Keble's parish curate Robert Wilson that "my book has just gone to press, though I do not wish it mentioned till I have resigned my fellowship" (LD 10:765). One is struck by how little mention the book's composition receives in Newman's intervening letters. Its earliest notice is a casual comment to lifelong confident Maria Giberne on March 30: "My present intention is to give up my fellowship in October-and to publish some work or treatise between that and Christmas" (LD 10:610). Without ever mentioning the subject matter, Newman writes Catherine Froude on 1 June of a "new work … that I have … consumed several months this Spring, in working upon it in ways which will not turn to any direct account. I have had to remodel my plan, and what it will be at last I cannot yet foretell" (LD 10:686). To his sister Jemima on 17 August: "I am still

more fidgetted [sic] about my book. I cannot arrange the last and most important chapter. I have written it several times in vain; and till I settle it, I shall be in something of a worry" (LD 10:748).

Nowhere in his letters does Newman mention that his book is a work-up of criteria for genuine doctrinal developments. Were it not for McGrath's footnotes *passim* showing Newman's notebooks, we would have no indicators of Newman's unfolding thoughts on what is likely his most famous theological book. For example, in a footnote to the last referenced letter to Jemina, McGrath furnishes scholars with Newman's valuable study notes attempting to craft a final chapter to the book. I note but two: "enough in antiquity to *bear out* the Church after, *if* its infallibility be supposed"; and "what conserves what is cannot be its corruption. The worship of St. Mary conserves the Incarnation." (See other informative journal or diary entries at *LD* 10: 134, 373, and 696 n. 2.)

Because Newman kept secret the subject of his book does not mean his correspondence leaves the theme unmentioned. After all, he preached a famous sermon about doctrinal development on the Feast of the Purification 1843 (see Uniform Edition, *University Sermons,* pp. 312-51). Readers interested in background material to the 1845 *Essay* should look at the series of letters Newman wrote Catherine Holdsworth Froude, who had married William Froude, brother of Newman's influential Oxford friend Richard Hurrell Froude. All letters to her can be identified in McGrath's index (but see especially *LD* 10:247 ff., 264 ff., and 297-98). The last-referenced letter mentions what I consider the linchpin of the famous *Essay:* "Granting that the Roman (special) doctrines are not found drawn out in the early Church, yet I think there is sufficient trace of them in it, to recommend and prove them, *on the hypothesis* of the Church having a divine guidance, though not sufficient to prove them by itself. So that the question simply turns on the nature of the promise of the Spirit to the Church." (This married couple is curious. Mrs. Froude and her children became Catholics soon after Newman. William Froude's scientific training led him toward agnosticism. Newman's fondness for him underpinned a lifelong correspondence between them on topics concerning faith and reason. Readers interested in *Grammar of Assent* topics ought to follow this correspondence, utilizing the indices of all the *LD* volumes.)

A final observation on the development-of-doctrine aspect. Newman makes a lapidary statement in the *Apologia* (p. 198): "There [is] no medium, in true philosophy, between Atheism and Catholicity." (In Newman's scheme, "philosophy" means religious reflection.) The present volume makes clear what he means. Human life unaided by a divine revelation drifts into some or other variant of atheism. But if a revelation is given, it must needs develop. He writes to Pusey: "The theory of development has increasingly pressed upon me .... One age corrects the expressions . . . of the foregoing. Infant Baptism and Confession, Monachism and Roman Supremacy, Original Sin and Purgatory, seem to me equally developments .... Why should I believe the most sacred and fundamental doctrines of our faith, if you cut me off from the ground of development? But if that ground is given me, I must go further .... I must go

forward or backward-else I sinkinto a dead skepticism" (LD 10:592-93). Going backward, shaving off doctrinal developments, as happened at the Protestant Reformation, because doctrines such as infant baptism were not explicitly in Scripture made no sense to Newman. And accepting in an official manner post-scriptural developments, such as the dogmas of Nicea and Chalcedon, but then stopping, shunning later councils, was equally nonsensical to him. Therefore, there are only two logical conclusions. If there is a God but he has never revealed himself, one must be atheist. If a divine revelation has been given (and Newman means given to a church), the ineluctable trajectory of developments of this revelation can only be found in that church which alone in his day claimed to have them, Roman Catholicism.

Events within Oxford University are this review's final focus, and only one is selected. It makes riveting reading indeed in this volume. William George Ward, fellow of Balliol, was a younger member of the Tractarian movement. His position on Anglicanism's 39 Articles of Religion went well beyond Newman's Tract 90 interpretation. Ward maintained that all Roman Catholic doctrines were fully consonant with the 39 Articles. Because many in the university and especially its authorities (the heads of the constituent colleges known as the Hebdomadal Board) were hostile to Tractarian principles, Ward provided the "perfect storm" when his book, *The Ideal of a Christian Church*, appeared in the summer of 1844. It gave criteria for being a church, said that Rome had them fully, and Anglicanism not at all. A process was initiated against him, culminating in three proposals (condemnation of the book, withdrawing Ward's B.A and M.A. degrees, and holding Articles' subscribers to an interpretation the Hebdomadal Board gave to them) to be voted by Convocation. (Convocation was composed of all M.A.s of the university, both those resident in Oxford-the fellows-and those following careers elsewhere such as the London lawyers and the parish clergy. Convocation was the highest authority of Oxford University.)

The first and second proposals would have easily passed Convocation but not the third, and McGrath provides fascinating letters and footnotes on behind-the-scene machinations. Prior to the scheduled Convocation on 13 February 1845, the third proposal was withdrawn (LD 10:505 n. 2). Throughout this university turmoil, Newman was on the sidelines; as he wrote to W. E. Gladstone, the later prime minister, "I live so much out of the world" [at Littlemore] (LD 10:503). But his enemies were not to leave him undisturbed. Another proposal was made to the university's authorities, in lieu of the abandoned third petition, to have Newman's Tract 90 condemned, which they duly accepted and promulgated (LD 10:520). The day of Convocation arrived, the Sheldonian Theatre packed with fellows-Newman was not present-and the voting began. Censure of Ward's book carried 776 to 368. His degradation carried less so, 568 to 511. Then came the moment for the censure of Newman's Tract 90. In Convocation there are two elected fellows, the proctors, who have the power to veto the proceedings. In 1845 the proctors, Henry Peter Guillemard and Richard William Church, were friends of Newman, especially Church who later became dean of St. Paul's Cathedral and whom Newman visited into old age. When the Tract 90 censure

was introduced, senior proctor Guillemard stood up and said "nobis procuratoribus non placet," and Convocation ended abruptly. Interested readers, especially those connected with universities today, will find these pages of this volume surrounding 13 February engaging because of the background material McGrath supplies.

With another academic year and new proctors it was possible the university authorities would go after Tract 90 again. But William Gladstone, Tractarian lawyer James Robert Hope, and Henry Edward Manning, who was to become a Roman Catholic cardinal years later, engineered a "Declaration of Thanks to the Proctors" that garnered so many signatures, whose many names the editor supplies (LD 10:551-55), that Tract 90 and Newman were to be forever left alone. McGrath puts it perfectly in his Introduction: "What nobody realized at the time was that the curtain had just come down on the final act of the Oxford Movement" (xxviii). As one might expect, Newman remained unruffled throughout.

On 3 October 1845, Newman resigned his fellowship. "Mr Provost, I hope you will find the inclosed form correct. I shall be obliged to you if you will remove my name from the books of the College and University" (LD 10:771). The curtain had fallen on Newman's Anglican life.

The editor's many footnotes aid both Newman scholarship and historical curiosity. An example that assists the former is the dating of Newman's sermons (see *LD* 10:147 n. 3). Apropos the latter, the 1843 visit of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert to the neighborhood of Newman's relatives in Derby led the editor to track down a newspaper account of it (see *LD* 10:42 n. 1). The nine appendices support Newman scholarship in various ways. Appendix 3, for example, prints Newman's three contributions to the *Lives of English Saints* series. The "lives" occupy much of the correspondence in *LD* 10.

Oxford University Press is to be commended for standing behind this vast publishing project. In my opinion, OUP has also associated itself with the finest edition of an eminent person's correspondence, an edition that is likely to be a benchmark for similar projects. Kudos, then, to Oxford University Press and to Charles Stephen Dessain and his successors.

Because the present volume connects to Newman's Catholic letters (Dessain's volumes 11-31), now long in print, readers of his Catholic period will recognize the prophetic words Newman wrote to his Aunt Elizabeth on 25 July 1844: "I really do think I love peace, yet I am destined to be a 'man of strife'" (LD 10:304). Only when he became cardinal in 1879 did the peace he wanted become an everyday thing.

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