PART II

ESSE/ESSENCE: CREATION IN CHRIST
INTRODUCTION

As Otto Muck notes in the preface to his study on transcendental method,

The question concerning methodology is an indication of a crisis. The access to reality most familiar to us appears to have been called into question with regard to its fundamental validity (or at least with regard to its ability to counteract a very pressing problem). Reflection which is focused on the way, i.e., which brings it to awareness, determines its suitability and thereby either adapts the way to the goal or suggests new ways, is a reflection on methodology.¹

Today's preoccupation with methodology is the product of a long crisis, or rather a long series of crises, in Western thought, dating back to the breakup of the great medieval syntheses. It has made itself most felt in a series of critiques, following in the wake of the Cartesian dualism, each of which has called into question that view of the universe as a participation in divinity which had been assumed by all of the great scholastic theologians. Whether it be the Kantian critique of pure reason, with its suggestion of an unknowable universe, the Nietzschean critique of Christianity with its suggestion of a godless universe, the Darwinian critique of teleology, with its suggestion of a mindless universe, the Sartrean critique of essentialism, with its suggestion of a meaningless universe, or the Marxist critique of capital, with its suggestion of a materially-necessitated universe, each one directly challenges some perspective on the universe, some

access to reality, which had previously been presupposed.

The crisis has heightened in our own century, with the rise of a new consciousness of history, curiously similar to the Heraclitean analysis of the flux, in which historical change is experienced as radically discontinuous and unstructured. As Langdon Gilkey points out, ... contingency rather than necessity seems to be the name of history, and far from being ruled by either transcendent or sub-personal "laws," events seem to be the product of good or bad policy on the part of actors blessed with very good luck or cursed with very bad fortune. 2

This notion of history has, in turn, been reinforced by studies such as T. S. Kuhn's 3 on the history of science, studies which conclude that scientific knowledge is neither permanent nor stable, but rather proceeds by virtue of discontinuous paradigm shifts which are incapable of being reduced to any intelligible ordering. To accept these notions of history and science is tantamount to denying the methodological question altogether. For, if reality is incapable of submitting to rational inquiry, it matters not at all what method one employs in pursuing that inquiry, since the inquiry itself is pointless.

Alisdair MacIntyre's book, After Virtue, is an excellent study of the stages of crisis through which our notions of morality have passed in recent centuries, producing a situation today in which, as MacIntyre characterizes it, "we have--very largely, if not entirely--lost our comprehension, both theoretical and practical, of morality." 4 Believing


that we must challenge the modern doctrine of "emotivism," viz., "the
doctrine that all evaluative judgments and more specifically all moral
judgments are nothing but expressions of preference, expressions of
attitude or feeling, insofar as they are moral or evaluative in
close, it may pass judgment for such
limits could only derive from rational criteria for evaluation and,
as we have seen, the emotivist self lacks any such criteria. Every­
thing may be criticised from whatever standpoint the self has
adopted, including the self's choice of standpoint to adopt. It
is in this capacity of the self to evade any necessary identifica­
tion with any particular contingent state of affairs that some
modern philosophers, both analytical and existentialist, have seen
the essence of moral agency. To be a moral agent is, on this
view, precisely to be able to stand back from any and every situa­
tion in which one is involved, from any and every characteristic
that one may possess, and to pass judgment on it from a purely
universal and abstract point of view that is totally detached from
all social particularity. Anyone and everyone can thus be a moral
agent, since it is in the self and not in social roles or practices
that moral agency is to be located. 6

This atomizing of humanity is the lot of those who deny continuity and
structure to any reality outside the self.

Ironically, the current notions of history and science which make
such a doctrine of emotivism possible have resulted in a view of human
agency which is both unscientific and unhistorical. For the refusal
to submit to the discipline of rational inquiry is as unscientific as
the refusal to identify one's standpoint with the concrete particulari­
ties of one's own situation is unhistorical. Under these circumstances,
the methodological search for a perspective, for an access to reality,
has no meaning at all.

Even among those who seek such a perspective, however, no general

5 Ibid., p. 11.
6 Ibid., p. 30.
agreement can be found. One does not have to read extensively to discover this. On the one hand, for example, Hannah Arendt believes that the critical shift in human perspective took place at the beginning of the modern age, when science made possible a vision of the unity of the universe such that "nothing occurring in earthly nature was viewed as a mere earthly happening." Eric Voegelin, on the other hand, believes that the critical shift took place when Greek philosophy discovered the openness of the human soul to the transcendence of God. Only the man "who has found his true nature through finding his true relation to God" is capable of becoming a self-critical being. Austin Farrer goes even further, insisting that man must seek to share the divine view of things, because "God's view is the view of mind as such, for it corresponds to the real structure of existence." Jonathan Schell, however, in a recent widely-publicized series of articles on nuclear war in The New Yorker, afterwards published in book form, explicitly rejected such a divine perspective.

... these lofty proceedings, in which we exchange our human perspective for a purely speculative superhuman one, are an evasion, for they lift us clean out of the human predicament that it is our obligation to face. ... Seen in religious terms, such an assumption of a godlike perspective would be an attempted usurpation by man of God's omniscience, and, as such, a form of blasphemy.  

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9 Ibid., p. 68.
10 Austin Farrer, cited in Barfield, Saving the Appearances, p. 160.
As can be seen, the search for a perspective is continually both impeded and spurred on by the spectre of dichotomies which it is the function of a sound methodology to overcome. Whether they be the earlier philosophical dichotomies of subject/object (Descartes) and noumena/phenomena (Kant) or the more recent resurrection of the pagan dichotomies of the divine/human, the continuous/discontinuous, the necessary/contingent, they reflect a state of affairs which seems endemic to human thought. The pagans were plagued by the problem of the one and the many, just as Christian thinkers from the fifth century on were obsessed by the problem of the universal and the particular. The concern for methodology today is a sign that no entirely satisfactory perspective has yet been found for overcoming these dichotomies.

The central dichotomy occupying the attention of Catholic theologians from the sixteenth century onwards has been that of nature and grace. This problem was originally and for the most part treated as one of natural theology or philosophy, namely, the problem of locating within the categories of Aristotelian/Thomist metaphysics that obediental potency which every theologian until recently understood to be a capacity for divinization.

In this century, however, the problem has assumed a different shape. First, it has increasingly come to be seen as more of a methodological than a philosophical problem. Secondly, the assumption that grace divinizes has been called into question. The former of these changes indicates that the previous means by which nature and grace were understood to be related has been found unsatisfactory. The latter change indicates that a shift in perspective with regard to the problem itself has taken place.
In this section, we shall examine first, the shape which the nature/grace problem has assumed in this century in Roman Catholicism (chapter 7), secondly, that shift in human consciousness which has flowered in this century, requiring a re-evaluation of our perspective regarding nature and grace (chapter 8), thirdly, the rise of quantum physics and the significance of the epistemological/metaphysical impasse to which the new physics has led the scientific community (chapter 9), and, finally, a theory of human consciousness which offers the primary key to overcoming the nature/grace dichotomy, together with a methodological approach which enables us to understand how that theory might be understood as compatible with the revelation of Christ and the structures of reality (chapter 10).
CHAPTER 7

NATURE/GRACE IN 20TH CENTURY CATHOLIC THEOLOGY:

THE SEARCH FOR A METHOD

The neo-scholastic paradigm on nature and grace which was in force at the turn of this century began to take explicit shape in the sixteenth century in the immediate wake of Reformation/Tridentine confrontations within this area. The cornerstone of the paradigm lay in the 1567 papal condemnation of the notion held by Michael Baius that grace is owed by God to man. Protection of God's complete gratuity in elevating man to a state of supernatural finality became the central focus of the following centuries. The construct of 'pure nature' served as a necessary component for clearly distinguishing between God's free act of creation and His free act of elevation.

By the end of the nineteenth century, this construct had become the pillar supporting natural theology and philosophy as autonomous and independent of revealed theology. It had also become, inadvertently, the means by which neo-scholasticism created, in the words of Shepherd, "a huge chasm between nature and the supernatural."\(^1\) In fact, the neo-scholastic paradigm on nature and grace suggested a two-storey universe in which, as Karl Rahner notes, "the relationship between nature and grace is thought of as two layers laid very carefully one on top of

the other so that they interpenetrate as little as possible."\(^2\)

Matthias Scheeben's book, *Nature and Grace*, exemplifies very well the relationship which neo-scholasticism thought to exist between the natural and the supernatural. There exists, Scheeben tells us, a "twofold order" based on a "double ontological order of man with regard to God."\(^3\) As a result, "There is a natural and a supernatural knowledge of God, a natural and a supernatural justice and love of God, a natural and a supernatural blessedness."\(^4\) The proper domain of Christian theology is the second of these two orders. "Christianity claims this higher order of being, knowledge, and love, or, in other words, this superior ontological, logical, and ethical order, exclusively as its own."\(^5\)

The problems with this paradigm were twofold. First, on the side of grace, it assumed the supernatural to be extrinsic to the natural.

In fact, this modern theory of a spiritual nature—whether angelic or human—with a 'purely natural' finality, was born and developed in the intellectual context of a watered-down idea of what finality is. What it assumed at its beginnings, though not always very explicitly, was something very different from what most of those who hold it today would assume. This was that every man, in our world as it is, before having received the grace of baptism or any other enabling grace, was in that state of 'pure nature' (at least if one excludes original sin and its consequences). Finality was therefore considered as something fairly extrinsic: not a destiny inscribed in a man's very nature, directing him from within, and which he could not ontologically


\(^4\)Ibid., p. 43.

\(^5\)Ibid., p. 13.
escape, but a mere destination given him from outside when he was already in existence.\textsuperscript{6}

Secondly, on the side of nature, this paradigm seemed to suggest the existence of a natural realm, complete and independent in its own right, and having, therefore, no need for the supernatural. As Blondel, the philosopher, was in a good position to recognize, "when reason, left sole mistress of the knowable world, claimed to find immanent in herself all the truths needed for the life of man, the world of faith found itself totally excluded."\textsuperscript{7} The neo-scholastic paradigm lent verisimilitude to this notion of an immanently-complete natural order because, as Blondel pointed out, "One cannot see, in such an account, either what is lacking or what remains to man without the supernatural."\textsuperscript{8}

\textbf{From Modernism to Humani Generis}

\textbf{The Modernist Crisis}

By the late 1800's, the inadequacies of neo-scholasticism had become apparent to a large number of minds. Although it protected well divine transcendence and gratuity, it no longer seemed to have much bearing on the human condition itself. The need for a new perspective began to make itself felt. The Modernist crisis was the first phase in the search for a new access to reality.

In his book, \textit{Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma}, Ludwig Ott defines


\textsuperscript{8}Ibid., p. 144.
Modernism thus:

The cognitional theoretical basis of Modernism is agnosticism, according to which human rational cognition is limited to the world of experience. Religion, according to this theory, develops from the principle of vital immanence (immanentism) that is, from the need for God which dwells in the human soul. The truths of religion are, according to the general progress of culture, caught up in a constant substantial development (evolutionism).9

Gabriel Daly accepts this definition, adding that "in these words we have the gist of what the encyclical [Pascendi Dominici Gregis] regarded as the basic errors of modernism, namely, agnosticism and the doctrine of vital immanence."10 Although safeguarding the distinction between the natural and supernatural orders was a primary concern of the Papacy during the Modernist crisis, Pope Pius X was indeed most disturbed by a "doctrine of immanence" which he saw as compromising not only divine gratuity but the supernatural realm itself.

The question is no longer one of the old error which claimed for human nature a sort of right to the supernatural. It has gone far beyond that, and has reached the point where it is affirmed that our most holy religion, in the man Christ as in us, emanated from nature spontaneously and of itself. Nothing assuredly could be more utterly destructive of the whole supernatural order. For this reason the Vatican Council most justly decreed [Canon 3 on Revelation]: "If anyone says that man cannot be raised by God to a knowledge and perfection which surpasses nature, but that he can and should, by his own efforts and by a constant development, attain finally to the possession of all truth and good, let him be anathema."11

Although Pascendi speaks of Modernism as though it were a coherent doctrinal program, most recent studies of the movement agree that the

10 Daly, Transcendence and Immanence, p. 1.
doctrinal coherence Modernism was understood to enjoy was, in fact, more conferred on it by Pius X than a reality within it. Roger Aubert points out that "In effect, modernism was first and foremost an 'orientation' (P. Sabatier), a 'tendency' (Loisy) rather than a sum of cut-and-dried doctrines." In the final analysis, Aubert believes that Modernism is best defined, in the words of E. Poulat, as "the real encounter and confrontation between a religious past set long ago in its mould and a present that found its sources of inspiration elsewhere.

Here, then, we see at the beginning of this century the two problems of methodology and historical consciousness both playing an important role in the Modernist movement. For the 'orientation' or 'tendency' of Modernism was indicative of the fact that a new perspective or access to reality was being sought, while the new sources of inspiration indicated that a shift in the orientation of the human mind itself had occurred. The very language which dominated the discussion, particularly the transcendent/immanent dichotomy, indicates the influence exercised by Kant's turn to the subject and Bergson's élan vital, while the emphasis given by various Modernists to human experience and historical development indicates a shift from theocentric to anthropocentric concerns. While Pius X had his eyes on God and the supernatural order, the Modernists had theirs on man and his world. As Vidler notes with regard to the Modernists,

What, according to their own testimony, they had in common was not the system defined in the Pascendi or any system of the sort,

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13 Ibid., p. 187.
but a desire in one way or another to promote the adaptation of Catholicism, of the Church and its teaching, to new conditions.\textsuperscript{14}

Modernist theologians failed to produce a coherent methodology or view of history which could take into account this new historical consciousness and anthropocentricity without simultaneously annulling divine transcendence and the supernatural realm. Their condemnation in 1907 brought Modernism as a movement to an end. But the problems which this movement sought to address remained. Although Rome had made it quite clear that any doctrine of immanence which sought to account for the supernatural in terms of the natural was anathema, Blondel believed that a method of immanence would not only not compromise the divine transcendence, but would in fact open up a new path to that transcendence.

**Maurice Blondel: Method of Immanence**

As Frederick Copleston notes, Blondel's major preoccupation was the problem of man's destiny.\textsuperscript{15} At the beginning of *L'Action*, Blondel raises the question which the rest of the book is designed to address: "Yes or no, has life a meaning, and has man a destiny?"\textsuperscript{16} Lacroix points out that, for Blondel, if man can be discovered to have a destiny, "it is impossible for philosophy not to be interested in it."\textsuperscript{17}

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In order to investigate the question of man's destiny, Blondel employed what he called a 'method of immanence.' As much emphasis must be placed on the word 'method' as on the word 'immanence,' for he was not engaged in expounding any 'doctrines of immanence' such as were condemned in Pascendi. Instead, he sought the transcendent within the immanent. As Daly points out,

Blondel . . . accepted the methodological implications of the Kantian critique. The point of departure on the road to transcendence must be human experience. . . . Analysis of human action, the dynamic force-field of man's existence, would, Blondel claimed, show that what begins as an exploration of immanence points inexorably towards a transcendent term.\(^{18}\)

Employing a dialectic of action, Blondel located within human experience an ultimate act of the will which surpasses anything man is capable of achieving for himself. It is this act, according to Blondel, which takes man beyond the finite, material world into the realm of the transcendent. In order to avoid a 'doctrine of immanence,' Blondel was careful to specify man's desire for God as arising not from human nature but from the gift of grace already implanted within that nature.

The primary importance of Blondel's work is twofold. First, he concerned himself with man's concrete, historical situation as opposed to any theoretical construct about human nature per se. Secondly, his analysis of man in his concrete historicity led Blondel to reject the notion that historical man is or ever has been in a state of 'pure nature,' for he has always and everywhere been the recipient of divine grace. Man's universally experienced need for God, in Blondel's judgment,

. . . leads us to recognize the need of a further gift, gives us the aptitude not to produce or to define but to recognize and

\(^{18}\) Daly, Transcendence and Immanence, pp. 30-31.
to receive it, offers us, in a word, by a sort of prevenient grace, that baptism of desire which, presupposing God's secret touch, is always accessible and necessary apart from any explicit revelation, and which, even when revelation is known, is as it were, the human sacrament immanent in the divine operation. 19

Historical man is therefore not purely natural, but 'transnatural,' because at the center of his nature, from the very beginning, the "secret touch" of God, the "prevenient grace" of the divine, has always been at work, preparing the way in orienting man towards his final destiny in God.

Blondel did not reject the basic neo-scholastic paradigm on nature and grace. As much as any neo-scholastic, he desired to retain "the absolute distinction between the natural and the supernatural." 20

Blondel was also at one with the neo-scholastics in wishing to safeguard divine gratuity. He had no desire to jettison 'pure nature' as a hypothetical construct for protecting the gratuity of God's action. God could, according to Blondel, have created man in a state of pure nature. By insisting that God had not so created man and by identifying man's need for God as itself a gift from God, Blondel believed he had successfully modified the neo-scholastic paradigm without endangering the essential components.

Henri de Lubac: The Nature of Spirit

Henri de Lubac's Surnaturel, published in 1946, was described by one neo-Thomist as either "a most subtly dangerous work or else ... immortal." 21 It opened a new chapter of debate on the nature/grace

20 Ibid., p. 201.
relationship. The heart of the controversy surrounding the book centered on the construct of 'pure nature,' the abandoning of which de Lubac advocated.

De Lubac had no desire to deny divine gratuity. As he stated repeatedly in a variety of ways, "No 'disposition' in creatures can ever, in any way, bind the Creator." Nevertheless, de Lubac did not believe it was either necessary or desirable to employ the concept of 'pure nature' in order to safeguard this gratuity. In The Mystery of the Supernatural, a reformulation and development of Surnaturel, he reiterated his objections to this concept.

Because of a lack of sufficient awareness—and also perhaps of a sufficient real knowledge of tradition—a problem which should have provided a stimulus to thought has been turned into a stumbling-block. People took hasty flight to what seemed the 'safest' position [pure nature], and felt that they thereby possessed dogmatic truth in peace. But by this oversimple method of preserving the gratuitousness of the supernatural order, they were, to put it mildly, lessening its meaning. They were making it not merely an 'accident' in the scholastic sense—which is understandable—but something completely accidental in the ordinary sense, and therefore, one must admit, something superficial. They were dooming themselves to see it as merely a kind of superstructure. It followed inevitably that man could not only have managed quite well without it, but that even now he could with impunity disregard it. It was deprived of any hold on human thinking or human existence. Christian thought was thus bounded by a narrow circle, in a quiet backwater of the intellectual universe, where it could only waste away. By the good offices of some of its own exponents, who were aiming to preserve its transcendence, it became merely an 'exile'.

Noting that the doctrine did not arise until the sixteenth century controversies with Baius and had never taken hold in the theology of the East, de Lubac wanted to return to the Irenaeus/patristic tradition of the imago dei as a model for understanding man's relationship to God.

22 de Lubac, The Mystery of the Supernatural, p. 310.
23 Ibid., pp. 232-233.
At the heart of de Lubac's objection to the construct of 'pure nature' lay his own view of human nature. His primary concern was to move away from the Aristotelian concept of nature, with its suggestion of a self-enclosed being, towards the concept of the human being as a spirit open to endless desire. Much in his writings does suggest that he equated 'spirit' with 'desire for God.' He quotes with approval, for example, the words of Pere Michel-Ange, a commentator of Duns Scotus, that "In creating the human soul destined by nature for a supernatural life, God has given it natural aptitudes for that supernatural life." Later de Lubac notes that when people include in their definition of a spiritual being 'an end corresponding to its powers' or 'an essence which rests content in the good that is proportionate to it.' he could not accept such statements, "For in fact such is fully the case only with the lower natures; it is not true at all of what is most profound in created spirits." He therefore concluded that, in human nature as we experience it, the desire to see God is absolute, because it "cannot be permanently frustrated without an essential suffering."

The central problem in de Lubac's position, insofar as Thomists were concerned, lay in the fact that, on the one hand, he claimed to be working along Thomist lines, while, on the other hand, his identification of an infrustrable desire for God with man's imaging of God could not be made to conform to what Thomists understood by imago dei. Thomas had identified our imaging of God with our intellect and reason.

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24 Ibid., p. 125.
25 Ibid., p. 149.
26 Ibid., p. 70.
27 ST I, 3, 1 ad 2.
He had also distinguished three types of imaging, namely, those of creation, recreation and beatitude. Since Thomism had always identified that imaging of God given by creation with 'nature' (based on Thomas' notion of the universally given as 'natural') and had, by the end of the nineteenth century, firmly committed itself to the notion of a 'natural' order of human knowledge and reasoning, de Lubac's linking of that imaging to an infrustrable desire for God seemed tantamount to maintaining from the side of human nature a demand for God's grace.

**Humani Generis**

Although Pius X never condemned Blondel's method of immanence, he exhibited no great enthusiasm for it either. In a passage in *Pascendi* generally thought to refer to Blondel, Pius spoke of Catholics who, while rejecting immanence as a doctrine, employ it as a method of apologetics, and who do this so imprudently that they seem to admit, not merely a capacity and a suitability for the supernatural, such as has at all times been emphasized, within due limits, by Catholic apologists, but that there is in human nature a true and rigorous need for the supernatural order.

Blondel always insisted that he was never a Modernist. Indeed, he seemed to have avoided any doctrine of immanence, first, by his insistence that our desire for God is itself a gift from Him and not something arising out of our nature, and secondly, by his willingness to employ the notion of 'pure nature' as a hypothetical construct symbolizing a different order which God could have created but did not. Blondel failed, however, to provide any ontology to account for how grace could be constitutive of the human condition without arising out

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28 *ST I*, 93, 4.

of the principles of human nature.

De Lubac, heir both to Thomism and the work of Blondel, attempted to synthesize, within the framework of Thomist metaphysics, the Blondelian graced, and therefore infrustrable, desire for God with the Christian notion of man as the image of God. Unfortunately, his attempt to link a universal infrustrable desire for God with man's universal imaging of God (the imaging associated with creation) had the effect, in a Thomist metaphysics, of turning Blondel's graced desire into Thomas' natural desire. Because de Lubac accepted the Thomist account of grace as accidental, he was never able to make coherent his own notion of an infrustrable desire for God which could, within a Thomist framework, be understood as both substantial and gratuitous. And his unwillingness to employ the construct of 'pure nature' in any capacity only heightened the impression already present in a good many minds that he was denying the possibility that God could, even hypothetically, create a purely natural order.

When Humani Generis was issued in 1950, theologians recognized that de Lubac, more than anyone else, was on Pius XII's mind. Pius' particular concern was with the errors of those who "destroy the gratuitous character of the supernatural order by suggesting that it would be impossible for God to create rational beings without ordaining them for the Beatific Vision and calling them to it." Humani Generis not only put a damper on the work of de Lubac and the French Nouvelle théologie movement, it also ended, to all practical intents and purposes, the

search for a Thomist solution to the problem which had surfaced between *Pascendi* and *Humani Generis*, viz., how grace, within a Thomist framework, could be understood as substantial and yet not natural.

**After Humani Generis: Transcendental Thomism**

Although *Humani Generis* censured the work of de Lubac and others, it by no means had the effect of restoring a pre-Modernist mentality in Catholic theology. Genuine achievements had been won, particularly by the work of men such as Blondel and de Lubac, achievements which were paralleled and fueled to no small extent by Thomist philosophers who were at the same time rediscovering esse and an existential dynamism in Thomas which had been lost to sight in the nineteenth century. The neo-scholastic notion of a static human being whose 'potency' for grace consisted in nothing more than a mere 'non-repugnance' for it died somewhere between *Pascendi* and *Humani Generis*. Even neo-scholastics recognized that the notion of man as a self-enclosed being could be reconciled neither with reality nor with Thomas' own views in regard to man. And so they attempted, in one way or another, to align themselves with the position of Anton Pegis, a member of their ranks, that "Man is an open being so that he might close himself freely in the hope of divine friendship."31

To the extent that the neo-scholastic paradigm on nature and grace had depended upon a static view of man and a radically extrinsic view of grace, it was recognized to be no longer useful or desirable. At the same time, *Humani Generis* served as a continual reminder that any

attempt to locate an intrinsic nexus between the human and the divine must avoid compromising the gratuity and transcendence of the supernatural. Those theologians, therefore, who wished to build upon the achievements of the pre-Humani Generis years proceeded on the basis of two assumptions which were, for the most part, unquestioned in Catholic theology. First, it was assumed that a nexus between God and man could be located only by accepting the Kantian 'turn to the subject,' by the use of methods of immanence. As Daly puts it, "all religious thinking which genuinely seeks a hearing in the post-Kantian world has to be done on the slippery slope of immanent attraction." 32

Secondly, it was assumed that the supernatural could be protected only if a concrete natural order were affirmed. As has already been noted, it was assumed that "grace remains grace only if there exists alongside it concrete natural reality: e.g., concrete human nature." 33 This assumption arose not only from Pius XII's insistence that God is able to create human beings without ordaining them to Himself, but also from Vatican I's insistence that God can be known by the natural light of human reason.

Although Humani Generis prematurely ended the attempts of French theologians to find a Thomist resolution to the nature/grace problem as it developed in the years after Pascendi, it was actually the above two assumptions, made by virtually every theologian who followed up on the methodological approach to theology after Humani Generis, which effectively guaranteed that no Thomist resolution would be found by such theologies. Before examining why these assumptions made the task

32 Daly, Transcendence and Immanence, p. 121.
33 See p. 233n.
of finding such a resolution impossible, we shall first examine those problems which did command the attention of theologians after *Humani Generis.*

Because transcendental Thomism is, on the one hand, the direct heir of the 'method of immanence' approach established by Blondel and, on the other, the only approach to theology in Catholicism today which both claims to be and is generally accepted as Thomist (the objection of Gilsonian Thomists notwithstanding), we shall concentrate on the work of Karl Rahner and Bernard Lonergan and on the two problems to which they have respectively given their attention. The analyses which follow do not pretend to cover the entirety of their works, but only those aspects of their writings which have a direct bearing on the nature/grace question and the corresponding methodological problem as both of them have arisen in this century.

**Karl Rahner: The Intrinsic Character of Grace**

William C. Shepherd, in *Man's Condition: God and the World Process,* characterizes Rahner's work as a "theology of nature and grace."34 Certainly one of Rahner's primary concerns over the years has been to establish the centrality of grace in the life of man. In that sense, his work is a continuation of de Lubac's. Furthermore, in the judgment of many, he has, through his notion of the 'supernatural existential,' succeeded where de Lubac failed.

Rahner knows the problem [of extrinsicism] very well and has found a solution so simple and penetrating that it is hardly disputed today. In order to overcome the extrinsicism of grace, he insists on the possibility of a pure human nature that has not been finalized supernaturally and in this way ensures that God's grace is free and gratuitous. At the same time, however, he

34 Shepherd, *Man's Condition,* p. 98.
maintains that this possibility has never been a reality. In concrete terms this means that man, in his factual existence, is not pure nature and does not experience himself as such. In the sense of a supernatural existential factor, grace is always present for every man as a priori, transcendental consciousness and as an offer made by God that precedes every act and decision made by man and all his knowledge. As an offer made by God and as God's concrete will to save all men, this supernatural existential element is a reality in man, with the result that every man is dynamically finalized in the direction of God's grace, which is God himself, and this finalization takes place in the innermost depths of being.35

There is an immediate difficulty, however, in the solution which Rahner offers. For no general agreement can be found among his commentators as to just what he means by a 'supernatural existential.' William V. Dych, translator of Foundations of Christian Faith, seems to view it as a 'natural' component, pointing out that "Existential," as in Rahner's phrase "supernatural existential," refers to an element in man's ontological constitution precisely as human being, an element which is constitutive of his existence as man prior to his exercise of freedom. It is an aspect of concrete human nature precisely as human.36 Schillebeeckx understands it to be "a kind of 'intermediary' between nature and supernature."37 Weger seems to view it as a quasi-grace, noting that "this supernatural existential factor is no more than an offer of salvation. In the full sense of the word, grace itself is man's consent, freely accepted and made possible by God's grace, to this offer of grace."38 Galvin, however, understands it to be grace. "The

38 Weger, Karl Rahner, p. 111.
adjective 'supernatural' is added in order to indicate that this existential, unlike others, is not given automatically with human nature, but is rather the result of a gratuitous gift of God."39 McCool agrees, characterizing the supernatural existential as "the ontological 'existential' which raises man to the supernatural order."40

Differences of opinion to this degree can't but raise the suspicion that Rahner himself has failed to clarify his views with regard to this matter. In fact, there seem to be four problems in Rahner's presentation of the supernatural existential, three of which are methodological.

The first, and the only non-methodological, problem would seem to be a certain wavering on Rahner's part with regard to whether the supernatural existential is natural or supernatural. On the one hand, he characterizes it as a supernatural component in man.

The real man as God's real partner should be able to receive this Love as what it necessarily is: as free gift. But that means that this central, abiding existential, consisting in the ordination to the threefold God of grace and eternal life, is itself to be characterized as unexacted, as 'supernatural'.41

On the other hand, he seems to insist that man, even as constituted in part by the supernatural existential, must continue to be understood as 'natural'.

The being of man itself has, in the actual order, an inevitable orientation towards God's strictly supernatural grace (a supernatural existential); but to designate it then as in itself

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'supernatural' instead of 'natural' can only lead to hopeless confusion and blur beyond recognition the objective distinction between nature and grace.42

A second problem would seem to be that Rahner employs the same words in different ways and combines words from different systems of thought in ways that are confusing. 'Supernatural existential' is itself an excellent example of this. 'Existential', as Dych points out, means an ontologically constitutive aspect of man's existence, an element of concrete human nature. The word 'existential' is drawn from the phenomenological vocabulary of Heidegger. In a phenomenological approach to reality, 'natural' structures are simply 'universally given' structures. Hence, the supernatural existential, because universally constitutive of concrete human beings, is 'natural'. (We have already seen how Thomas himself allows for this use of the word 'natural'.)43

'Supernatural', on the other hand, designates that which, in a Thomist systematic use of the word, cannot be reduced to the essential principle of a thing. By combining the Thomist use of the word 'supernatural' with the Heideggerian use of the word 'existential', Rahner ends up with an expression which can accurately, if confusedly, be rendered as 'supernatural natural component'. If Keefe is correct when he says that "Words become meaningful within a system by reason of the relation they bear to all the other words used, and this relation is given them by the method of the system,"44 then Rahner can fairly be


43 See p. 224.

44 Keefe, Thomism, p. 7.
criticized for an unsystematic and therefore incoherent use of language.

Rahner's confusing use of language, however, signals a third and more serious problem, that of a confusing blending of systems. Again, his notion of a supernatural existential exemplifies this very well. By employing the word 'existential,' Rahner wishes to establish the reality of an "enduring, continuing condition" within every human being. On the other hand, he wants grace or the supernatural to be understood in terms which are compatible with the Thomist notion of grace as accident.

Fulfilment in grace is necessarily also fulfilment of the natural person. In this sense, therefore, the latter is an inner moment of the concreteness of grace, just as potency is the potency of act and act is the act of the potency, and both therefore mutually embody one another in the concrete so as to exist and to exist as such themselves. Grace exists by affecting a spiritual, personal substantiality, by being the divinising condition of the latter, and hence presupposes and incorporates into itself the whole reality of this person as the condition of its own possibility and makes it part of the factors of its own concrete being.

It is not possible, however, to identify the phenomenological notion of an 'existential' or permanent structure with the Thomist notion of a gratuitous accident. For only proper accidents, viz., those necessarily arising out of the essential principles of a being, can be understood as enduring faculties.

Rahner further confuses the situation by stating that "man's concretely experienced quiddity differentiates itself into the supernatural

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existential as such and the 'remainder'--the pure nature." Here Rahner has located a 'supernatural' structure within the quiddity or 'whatness' of a being, which is to say, within its essence. This, however, also reduces to incoherence, for if the supernatural comes to a substantiality, it cannot simultaneously function as a constitutive principle of the substantiality to which it comes.

Rahner is, of course, trying to avoid the dilemma in which de Lubac found himself, that of accounting for a component in concrete human beings which is ontologically constitutive (substantial) and gratuitous. Hence, he employs phenomenological language, such as 'existential,' when he wishes to emphasize the constitutive function of this component, and he employs Thomist language, such as 'supernatural,' when he wishes to emphasize its gratuity. Unfortunately, this shifting from system to system is nothing more than a form of methodological nominalism in which not only the words but the realities themselves cease to have any systematic meaning. What is affirmed on one side of the street is simply annulled on the other. Shepherd maintains that "Rahner has developed an embracing theological system, despite its never having been written out in systematic form." The situation would seem to be the opposite, that Rahner has sought to make his work compatible with both phenomenology and the analytical method of Thomism without tying himself to either approach.

When Shepherd speaks of a Rahnerian system, however, he has something else in mind, and this brings us to the fourth problem in Rahner. For Shepherd maintains that the actual system which Rahner developed

48 Shepherd, Man's Condition, p. 97.
was based upon a shift in his own thinking with regard to the supernatural existential itself.

To solve the isolated problem of nature and grace as it was proposed by the post-Tridentine tradition, Rahner developed the concept of the supernatural existential. In that context, however, it referred to a part of man's constitution, while the other part was purportedly made up of "pure nature." But within Rahner's own framework of thought, and within his own system, the supernatural existential refers to the activity of God, not at all to man's makeup. 49

Within the latter framework, 'nature' refers simply to the concrete human situation, including both man and the world which he inhabits. 'Supernatural existential' then refers to God's presence to man.

There is much in Rahner's writings to recommend Shepherd's interpretation here. For not only does Rahner, in his later work, emphasize the supernatural existential as the self-communication of God present to every person "in the mode of an offer," 50 he had written much earlier of the supernatural existential as constitutive of man by virtue of the graced order within which it places man.

Our actual nature is never 'pure' nature. It is a nature installel in a supernatural order which man can never leave, even as a sinner and unbeliever. It is a nature which is continually being determined (which does not mean justified) by the supernatural grace of salvation offered to it. And these 'existentials' of man's concrete, 'historical' nature are not purely states of being beyond consciousness. They make themselves felt in the experience of man. 51

In these circumstances, the difference between 'pure' nature and concrete, historical nature arises not out of any element or structure which can be located within human beings, but rather depends upon whether human beings have been placed in a 'natural' or a 'supernatural'

49 Ibid., p. 171.
order. In other words, human nature is a constant; the order in which it is placed is the variable.

If Shepherd is correct, and the evidence would suggest that he is, then the system which Shepherd understands Rahner to have constructed is based upon this notion of grace as the order within which concrete human beings have been placed. If this be the case, then it must be said that Rahner ultimately abandoned even the attempt to resolve the problem which de Lubac had raised. For the Thomist method lives by its analysis of those intrinsic causes which are constitutive of created beings. A Thomist methodology, therefore, has nothing to say about a supernatural existential understood as the offer of God's grace, no matter how immanent or intrinsic to human beings such an offer might be, unless it also functions as an intrinsic cause constitutive of the concrete human being within whom it is understood to be immanent.

In fact, such a notion of grace really constitutes a return to the extrinsicism which it was Rahner's original intention to overcome. For grace now comes ab extrinseco to a substantially complete human being. Furthermore, it is no longer clear what sort of potency, if any, human nature can be understood to have for such an offer if, as Rahner suggests, that same human nature could just as easily be placed within a natural order within which such an offer could be withheld. To say, as Rahner does, that the offer itself induces ontological changes in human nature simply begs the question. For the question is precisely one of understanding from the side of concrete human nature how the offer of God's grace meets a responsive capacity intrinsic to the human condition itself. That nexus between the human and the divine which Blondel sought has here apparently been abandoned by Rahner.
In fact, and contra Shepherd, the evidence would seem to indicate that Rahner, far from developing a system of his own, simply abandoned even the search for a system. For his *Foundations of Christian Faith* is explicitly designated as a "first level of reflection," that is to say, a "pre-scientific" and "thematic" justification of Christian faith. Rahner seems to disavow the notion that any Christian theologian can today give a scientific account of the whole of Christianity. Rahner insists that anyone who would attempt to do so

... must be asked whether anybody today can reflect upon the totality of his existence in any way other than this "pre-scientific" way. We would have to ask him whether it is very sensible to take a "scientific" attitude in an undertaking of this kind in view of the fact that no single individual can any longer master all of today's sciences. ... These disciplines are indeed relevant per se in such reflection. But they can no longer be made use of directly by the individual theologian and Christian if he is trying to address himself to the single whole of Christianity at a time when all of these individual disciplines must be further and intensively developed. But because of their complexity and because of the difficulty and the pluralism of their methods, they have moved beyond the realm within which an individual Christian and also an individual theologian must give an account of his faith. 52

Rahner's view that today's systematic theologian is to all practical intents and purposes unable to give a scientific and methodological account of the whole of Christianity constitutes not only an abandonment of the search for a systematically coherent account of the intrinsicism of grace, it also exemplifies the primary difference between his theological concerns and those of Bernard Lonergan. For while Rahner has been occupied with the nature/grace problematic, Lonergan has given his attention to the problem of methodological unity.

**Bernard Lonergan: The Unity of Method**

With the breakdown of the neo-scholastic paradigm on nature and...
grace, the danger arose that theology would be overrun by a pluralism of methodologies and metaphysics. In Rahner's judgment, as we have seen, such pluralism in theology is already an established fact and one which he believes we must accept. Lonergan does not agree. In his judgment, metaphysics has been occupied, since the Middle Ages, with the search for a unified method, and the failure to meet this need is responsible "both for the disrepute into which metaphysics has fallen and for the intellectual, moral and social consequences that in our day so evidently flow from disdain for metaphysics."\(^53\)

The dialectic of critique, from Kant onward, has made a wasteland of the world in which man lives.

As there is a post-Cartesian affirmation of philosophy that rules theology out of court, so there is a post-Kantian affirmation of science that tosses overboard even Kant's modest claims for philosophy, and there is a still later totalitarian violence that with equal impartiality brushes aside theology and philosophy and science. But at that empty conclusion to the sequence of ever less comprehensive syntheses, man still exists and man still is called upon to decide. . . . But the plain fact is that the world lies in pieces before him and pleads to be put together again, to be put together not as it stood before on the careless foundation of assumptions that happened to be unquestioned but on the strong ground of the possibility of questioning and with full awareness of the range of possible answers.\(^54\)

Lonergan has, therefore, sought "the rock on which one can build."\(^55\)

Thus, while Rahner's theology is a continuation of de Lubac's concern for redefining the nature/grace relationship, Lonergan's methodology is much more a continuation of the neo-scholastic concern to provide a single, comprehensive account of nature and grace and, indeed, of the


\(^54\)Ibid.

more general and traditional Thomist concern to provide a 'perennial' metaphysics.

Believing, however, that metaphysics cannot serve as the starting-point of inquiry, inasmuch as metaphysics is forced to proceed on the basis of assumptions which, in the post-Kantian world, can no longer go unquestioned, Lonergan accepts the Kantian 'turn to the subject' as the starting-point which today gives us access to reality. Believing that "The immanent source of transcendence in man is his detached, disinterested, unrestricted desire to know,"56 Lonergan seeks a new methodological unity based on a cognitional analysis of man himself. Referring to the world's current methodological and metaphysical fragmentation, Lonergan asserts that

If its confusion is to be replaced by intelligible order and its violence by reasonable affirmation, then the nucleus from which this process can begin must include an acknowledgement of detached inquiry and disinterested reflection, a rigorous unfolding of the implications of that acknowledgement, an acceptance not only of the metaphysics that constitutes that unfolding but also of the method that guides it between the Charybdis of asserting too little and the Scylla of asserting too much.57

Turning to the natural sciences for his basic notion of method, Lonergan defines it as "a normative pattern of recurrent and related operations yielding cumulative and progressive results."58 Applying this notion of method more generally to the processes of the human mind, Lonergan discovers there a 'transcendental' element, that is, a dynamic element in human cognition which pushes us beyond what we know to what we don't know. When we examine that process whereby we continually move

56 Idem., Insight, p. 636.
57 Ibid., p. 529.
58 Idem., Method in Theology, p. 4.
from ignorance to knowledge, we discover there a pattern of operations which is repeated in every act of knowing. The objectification of this pattern of operations provides us with that 'rock' of methodological unity which metaphysics has so long sought.

... there is a sense in which the objectification of the normative pattern of our conscious and intentional operations does not admit revision. The sense in question is that the activity of revising consists in such operations in accord with such a pattern, so that a revision rejecting the pattern would be rejecting itself.

Such an analysis not only provides us with a unified and universally relevant notion of methodology, it also gives rise to a unified and universally applicable cognitional theory, epistemology and metaphysics.

Very precisely, it is a heightening of consciousness that brings to light our conscious and intentional operations and thereby leads to the answers to three basic questions. What am I doing when I am knowing? Why is doing that knowing? What do I know when I do it? The first answer is a cognitional theory. The second is an epistemology. The third is a metaphysics where, however, the metaphysics is transcendental, an integration of heuristic structures, and not some categorial speculation that reveals that all is water, or matter, or spirit, or process or what have you.60

Hence Lonergan's interiority analysis of human cognition is able, in his judgment, to reunify that world which centuries of dialectical critique have shattered.

The unified world which Lonergan's method restores to us is, however, a 'natural' world. For, beyond his assumption that we must proceed by a method of immanence, he also presumes that the reality which this method enables us to objectify is a natural pattern of operations brought to light by a natural process of questioning.

59 Ibid., p. 19.
60 Ibid., p. 25.
The desires of human intellect are manifested in questions; and all questions reduce to the pair, an *sit* and *quid sit*. But to put these questions is natural: it supposes no acquired habit, as does playing the violin; it supposes no gift of divine grace, as do faith and charity. Hence, since the questions are natural, the desire they manifest must also be natural. There exists, then, a desire that is natural to intellect, that arises from the mere fact that we possess intellects, and that is defined by the basic questions, *an sit* and *quid sit*.\footnote{Idem., "The Natural Desire to See God," in Collection, ed. F. E. Crowe (Montreal: Palm Publishers, 1967), p. 84.}

When Lonergan says, therefore, that his own position with regard to the human desire to see God is fundamentally that of Aquinas,\footnote{Ibid.} he indicates his agreement with Thomas' notion of grace as an accidental modification of an already complete and natural substantiality.

Whatever differences Lonergan and Rahner may have with regard to the question of method, Lonergan supposes throughout his work the same relationship between nature and grace which Rahner in his later writings seems to have adopted, namely, that grace is not constitutive of concrete human beings but is rather the order within which they are placed. Lonergan, for example, asks, "Is a state of pure nature, a world-order in which no one receives grace, a concrete possibility?"\footnote{Ibid., p. 91.} He obviously identifies 'pure nature' simply with a world order in which grace is not offered. What, therefore, allows us to speak of the order in which we actually live as graced is not the fact that this order is intrinsically structured by grace, but the fact that

There is in the world, as it were, a charged field of love and meaning; here and there it reaches a notable intensity; but it is ever unobtrusive, hidden, inviting each of us to join. And join we must if we are able to perceive it, for our perceiving is through our own loving.\footnote{Idem., Method in Theology, p. 290.}
Here again we meet the offer of God's love to us as that factor within the world and within us which enables us to speak of this world as a graced order and of grace itself as intrinsic to that order.

The only difference between Lonergan's approach to the nature/grace problem and that of Rahner is that, while Rahner abandoned the attempt to resolve the dilemma into which de Lubac had gotten himself, Lonergan seems never to have considered that dilemma at all. As far as Lonergan is concerned, the nature/grace problem would appear to lie in quite a different direction. Whereas de Lubac wrestled with the problem of accounting for a universal and concretely experienced dynamism within us, in which the desire to see God must be understood as absolute because it "cannot be permanently frustrated without an essential suffering," Lonergan has concerned himself with a more modest problem, that of establishing through cognitional analysis that human nature is, by definition, dynamic.

The primary problem which de Lubac understood to be associated with the neo-scholastic paradigm was its assumption of a natural order to which grace is added. Lonergan's primary difficulty with the neo-scholastic paradigm arises instead out of its assumption that the natural order to which grace comes is static. Hence, Lonergan's rejection of that paradigm is quite different from de Lubac's. As Lonergan characterizes his own objection,

On the objective side it involves the rejection of a static essentialism that precludes the possibility of natural aspiration to a supernatural goal. On the subjective side it involves the rejection of a closed conceptualism that precludes the possibility of philosophy being confronted with paradoxes which theology can resolve.  

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65 de Lubac, *The Mystery of the Supernatural*, p. 70.
When, therefore, Lonergan says that "at the present time it seems to me that the real issue does not lie in the possibility of a world-order without grace," he does not have in mind that notion of a purely natural order which made such a possibility a real issue for de Lubac (and for Rahner as well, at least in his earlier writings). For the 'natural world order' to which Lonergan refers here is one in which human nature, as concretely experienced, would differ not at all from the way in which we experience it in this graced order. Only the offer of God's grace would be withdrawn. For de Lubac, on the other hand, since the very dynamism which we experience in this order is incapable of finding rest short of beatitude, even the postulating of an ungraced order posed for him a very difficult problem. For if one takes away that dynamism of the human spirit which makes our desire to see God absolute, would one not also remove precisely that element which makes the human spirit human?

In Lonergan's cognitional analysis, the dynamism of which de Lubac speaks emerges as the unrestricted desire to know. Posed in Lonerganian language, therefore, de Lubac's question would be, How can such a desire, which is absolute because unrestricted, be regarded as natural and therefore frustrable? Would not, under these circumstances, such a nature undergo essential suffering were it placed in a world order in which the offer of God's love were not made? These are not, however, questions which Lonergan himself poses, because his own presupposition that we live in a substantially natural order, in which grace is universally present solely in the mode of an offer, rules them out from the beginning. They therefore do not pose for him a "real issue."

67 Ibid., p. 95.
The real issue, in Lonergan's judgment, "lies between the essentialist and conceptualist tendency and, on the other hand, the existential and intellectualist tendency."

The natural desire for God is something which neither a static essentialism nor a closed conceptualism can handle, for neither is able to deal with the paradoxical.

The best that natural reason can attain is the discovery of the paradox that the desire to understand arises naturally, that its object is the transcendent, ens, and that the proper fulfilment that naturally is attainable is restricted to the proportionate object of finite intellect.

Experientially, such a paradox is resolved by conversion, by "falling in love with God." Theologically, it is resolved by the revelation that grace, in the mode of an invitation to enter into God's love, is universally available to us. Methodologically and metaphysically, it is resolved by embracing a dynamic existentialism and an open intellectualism which recognizes that the order in which we live is not enclosed upon itself, but rather is receptive to the revelation of God's love.

Because Lonergan's notion of the relation between nature and grace is substantially the same as the one which the later Rahner seems ultimately to have accepted, the same criticism which have been made of Rahner's work must be applied to Lonergan's. For once again in Lonergan's work we encounter a grace which comes ab extrinsec o as a contingent modification of a pre-existing natural entity.
Lonergan's work does differ from Rahner's, however, in that Lonergan seems never to have considered the problem raised by de Lubac. This is most apparent in Lonergan's statement that our desire to see God is natural, because the questioning process itself is natural. He supposes the questioning process to be natural because this process requires neither an acquired habit nor the gift of divine grace. It proceeds naturally, that is, spontaneously and effortlessly. However, this notion that anything which proceeds spontaneously and effortlessly is therefore 'natural' is precisely what Blondel's dialectic of action called into question. Once Blondel raised the possibility of an intrinsic, infrustrable dynamism toward God which is itself God's grace as a constitutive factor in human experience, it could no longer be supposed that any human action, simply by virtue of its spontaneous and effortless character, could be designated as 'natural.'

De Lubac understood the Blondelian 'critique', but failed to find an appropriate framework within which to embody its central insight of a substantial gratuity. Rahner also understood the critique, but ultimately abandoned the insight. Lonergan, curiously enough, seems never to have understood the critique. Hence, all of his work proceeds on the basis of an assumption about human cognition which, since Blondel, simply cannot be made. Thus, whatever the value of Lonergan's work in bringing to light the structures of human knowing, it is incapable of resolving the main dilemma which confronts theologians today when they consider the relationship between nature and grace.

order. As a result, grace as the invitation to enter into God's love is incapable of being located within the constitutive principles of this order.

71 See p. 273.
Transcendental Thomism: The Failure to Find a Method

Although it is generally assumed that both Rahner and Lonergan make a decisive break with the neo-scholastic paradigm, neither in fact does. Both have revised its static elements, Rahner with his notion of a human dynamism based on our Vorgriff of absolute being, Lonergan with his notion of a human dynamism based on our restricted desire to know. This human dynamism is simply the new obediental potency.

This new obediental potency is, however, no more capable of serving as an intrinsic nexus between the human and the divine than was the older notion of a 'non-repugnance,' for the rational distance between the human and the divine is infinite. The individual's capacity to move beyond himself cannot, considered in itself, be identified as a movement toward God. To suppose that it can is to substitute imagination for analysis.

Even more importantly, however, neither can such a capacity be identified with a receptivity for grace. As we have already seen, in chapter 5, even in an Aristotelian essentialist universe, the individual is dynamically oriented toward the species and is therefore continuously engaged in an intra-specific activity which allows him to transcend the limits of his own particularity. In such a universe, the individual's capacity for self-transcendence would not be absolute, but rather oriented toward that fullness of perfection appropriate to his species.

Nothing in our own experience, nothing which is given solely at the phenomenological level, allows us to suppose that we are oriented toward anything more than this. When, therefore, Rahner and Lonergan attach to that self-transcendence some absolute feature, whether Rahner's infinite horizon or Lonergan's unrestricted desire to know, they have
gone beyond what a purely phenomenological analysis will permit.

The fact that Blondel was able to locate in concrete human experience an ordination to God was not a product of his 'method of immanence' or phenomenological approach. It was, rather, a product of his having started from a theological perspective. He started with the fact that grace is offered and with the presupposition that, unless grace were to be conceived as extrinsic, the offer of grace must correlate with some element in the human condition which is incapable of being characterized as purely human. Hence, although writing as a philosopher, he was engaged in a theological enterprise, viz., faith seeking understanding. He understood his task to be philosophical in the sense that everything which is universally given can be understood to fall within the domain of philosophy. But within the universally given, he located an element which, from the Christian perspective with which he began, could only be characterized as grace. It was his Christianity, not his method of immanence, which made that characterization possible.

Having gone that far, however, he was unable to give a methodological account of the ordination to God which he had located. For a phenomenological approach is, by its very nature, designed to yield a description of the phenomena, not an analytical account of the intrinsic causes or conditions of possibility underlying the phenomena. To go further would have required a Thomist act/potency methodology.

De Lubac had at his disposal the tools to account for the substantial (universal) gratuity which Blondel had located. For, as we have seen, the esse/essence correlation provides an intrinsic existential component (esse) in concrete human nature which is both substantial and irreducible to the natural (the essential). De Lubac was, however, reluctant to
break with the Thomist notion of natural substance. Hence, he was never able to make methodologically coherent his own notion of a substantial, infrustrable desire for God.

After Humani Generis, as we have already noted, most theologians proceeded on the basis of two assumptions: first, that of a methodological 'turn to the subject' and, secondly, that of a natural order in which grace is present solely as an offer to and an accidental modification of that order. These two assumptions guaranteed that a Thomist account of the intrinsicism of grace would not be pursued. For the positing of a natural order within which grace operates solely on the accidental level rules out from the beginning the possibility of grace operating as an intrinsic or constitutive cause of that order. Furthermore, the methodological 'turn to the subject' which is employed under these circumstances can no longer proceed on the basis of explicitly theological or doctrinal assumptions about reality. Instead, human interiority becomes the a priori of theological and doctrinal statements about reality. Doctrinal truth or the revelation is made to submit to an experiential a priori or an anthropological prolegomenon.

This, however, is an impossible task, and its impossibility is nowhere more apparent than with regard to the nature/grace problematic. For a methodological approach based on a 'turn to the subject' can give us nothing more than a description of those structures which are universally present in concrete human nature. Whether those structures are natural or gratuitous lies beyond the competence of such a method. Schillebeeckx has noted the inadequacy of Rahner's approach in just this regard.

We do not experience God's speaking to us in itself--since this is God himself--but as a reality in our life. That is why we cannot,
outside the revelation in Word, distinguish grace from nature—that is, from human life. The spiritual subject that comes into contact with God in faith is a physical subject and, what is more, its physical nature is terrestrial. This means that grace is, in all its aspects and dimensions, entirely bound up with our life in this world. We know thematically and reflectively that nature is not grace, but this is not distinct in our living experience.\(^7\)

Rahner himself knows this. As he has had occasion to note,

... the possibility of experiencing grace and the possibility of experiencing grace as grace are not the same thing. If this is not assumed beforehand or taken for granted, is it so easy to say what belongs to human 'nature', and what is more not merely to the contingently factual nature of this concrete economy but to 'pure' nature, in such a way that if it were lacking man would cease to be man? How could one give this question a precise answer philosophically, without recourse to revelation.\(^7\)

Both Rahner and Lonergan seem to avoid the methodological dead end here not by a 'turn to the revelation' but by an a priori assumption that the concrete human nature to which they have turned is 'natural,' i.e., substantially complete apart from and prior to the reception of grace. As Rahner puts it,

The personal self-communication of God . . . , if justice is to be done to its nature, must not appear as something inevitably instituted with the creation of man of itself. It must appear as the free gift of incalculable grace, even to man in so far as he has been constituted.\(^7\)

Such an assumption allows both of them to proceed as though they were able to sort out the natural and the gratuitous. But the sorting out process is no longer something which arises from their analysis of concrete human nature; it is rather something which proceeds from the assumptions which they make regarding that human nature apart from and prior to their analysis.

\(^7\) Schillebeeckx, Revelation and Theology, II:67.
\(^7\) Rahner, "Concerning the Relationship," pp. 300-301.
\(^7\) Idem., "Questions," p. 213.
The two assumptions which transcendental Thomism makes, namely, that theology today must 1) posit a natural order to which grace is added as an accidental modification and 2) proceed by a method of immanence (a 'turn to the subject') are not only unworkable, they are also unnecessary.

First, the positing of a natural order is not required by Church teaching, Scripture or Thomism. The view that Church teaching requires the positing of such an order is based primarily on interpretations of Vatican I and *Humani Generis* which read more into those documents than is actually there. Pius XII's statement in *Humani Generis* condemning the errors of those who "destroy the gratuitous character of the supernatural order by suggesting that it would be impossible for God to create rational beings without ordaining them for the Beatific Vision and calling them to it" does not require us to suppose that the concrete human nature which we experience in this order might not have been ordained for beatitude. As Shepherd points out,

Most thinkers have assumed that gratuity of grace implies that God must have a choice among various kinds of world orders. That is quite true, and it is, incidentally, all that *Humani Generis* demands. Unfortunately, however, it appeared that if God really has alternatives among world orders, that meant he could have withheld grace from this one.75

Even those who have recognized that *Humani Generis* requires nothing more than the hypothetical positing of another world order have supposed that the teaching of Vatican I with regard to natural knowledge requires us to suppose that human beings in this order are substantially natural. But such a reading of Vatican I also goes beyond what that Council actually said. As Vatican I put it,

The same Holy Mother Church holds and teaches that God, the beginning and end of all things, may be certainly known by the natural light of human reason, by means of created things, 'for the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made' (Rom 1:20).76

What is so often assumed is that a Thomist reading of 'natural' and of creation as 'natural' must be attributed to this text. Yet such an assumption is belied by the text itself, which specifically places this 'natural light of human reason' in a Pauline, not a Thomist, context. As Keefe notes with regard to the passage cited from Romans,

Inasmuch as St. Paul is speaking in that passage of the innate ability of the pagan of his day to know God, it is reasonable to conclude that the natural light of human reason of which the canon and the chapter speak is natural in the sense of being found universally in all men who have the use of reason; natural then means inborn or native.77

And, as Keefe goes on to point out, nativa is employed as a synonym for naturalitas in the very next paragraph of this Constitution. Although such a use of 'natural' is alien to a Thomist method, we have already seen how Thomas himself acknowledges this phenomenological use of the word in Scripture.78 Hence, when Vatican I anathematizes those who say "that the One true God, our Creator and Lord, cannot be certainly known by the natural light of human reason through created things,"79 this anathema cannot be understood as underwriting a Thomist view of creation and human reason as 'natural'.

Furthermore, as William Vandermark notes in his study of patristic

76 Neuner and Roos, The Teaching of the Catholic Church, pp. 31-32.
77 Keefe, Thomism, p. 73.
78 ST III, 2, 12; see pp. 223-224.
79 Neuner and Roos, The Teaching of the Catholic Church, p. 38.
and medieval interpretations of this natural knowledge of God in Romans, the passage cited by Vatican I was consistently given a Christological interpretation. In this exegetical tradition, it is Christ (not the immanent Logos) in whom things have been created. Therefore, this tradition understands not only Christian knowledge of God but pagan knowledge of Him as well to be Christological, because "the God who reveals Himself in the universe is called Jesus Christ." And, as Vandermark also points out, exegetes in this tradition had no hesitancy in citing "many other places in the New Testament where Christ is described as the one through whom everything has been created, in whom it exists, etc." In other words, they understood there to be a broad Scriptural warrant for such an interpretation. Hence, there is no obvious reason for supposing, and much evidence against supposing, that either Vatican I or Scripture itself requires us to view creation and human reason as 'natural' in the Thomist sense of the word.

Nor does Thomist methodology itself, as has been repeatedly pointed out, require us to regard the universally given as 'natural.' In an Aristotelian universe, such an identification is unavoidable, because all substantial structures proceed from a single substantial principle (form). In such a universe, the intelligible, the necessary, the natural and the universal are identical, because all ultimately reduce to the essence of a thing. The Thomist real distinction, by introducing a second substantial principle (esse), no longer requires us to identify the universal and the intelligible with the necessary and the natural.

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81 Ibid., p. 52.
82 Ibid., p. 47.
In such a universe, therefore, structures can be 'natural' in the phenomenological sense of universally given, without being 'natural' in the Aristotelian/Thomist sense of essential or formal. Hence, there is no systematic necessity within Thomism for regarding either creation or human reason as simply 'natural,' and, in fact, as it has been the purpose of this dissertation to establish, there are good reasons for supposing a methodological necessity within Thomism for regarding both creation and human reason as substantially graced.

Transcendental Thomism's turn to the subject is also unwarranted and mistaken. First, such a turn to the subject, as we have already noted, can reveal to us only that which is universally given. It provides no criteria by virtue of which we may distinguish the natural and the gratuitous.

Secondly, such a turn to the subject, as we have also already noted, cannot, the claims of Rahner and Lonergan to the contrary, tell us whether the dynamism which we experience is absolute in some sense (Rahner's Vorgriff of infinite being or Lonergan's unrestricted desire to know) or relative in the Aristotelian sense of a movement toward that perfection of being and knowledge which is proper to the human species as a whole and therefore always beyond the limits of any particular individual. 83

Thirdly, such a turn to the subject attempts to apply a phenomenological (Platonic) solution to an analytical (Thomist) problem. The phenomenological approach not only fails to resolve the problem, it also

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83 This, incidentally, is also the reason why neither Rahner nor Lonergan answer the atheist/humanist critique of religion as formulated by men such as Feuerbach and Bloch. For the absolute character of human dynamism is precisely what such a critique denies.
seems to have lost sight of the problem. The problem is that of providing a methodologically coherent account of how grace can be regarded as intrinsic to the concrete human being. Even if one posits without methodological warrant, as do Rahner and Lonergan, a human dynamism characterized by some absolute feature, one has still not given an intrinsic account of that dynamism. To conclude, as both Rahner and Lonergan do, that the condition of possibility for such a dynamism is God Himself, while true enough, signals a Platonic resolution to a Thomist question, that is to say, it does not answer the question at all. For the Thomist question asks about intrinsic conditions of possibility, not about an extrinsic agent.

To suppose that the structured dynamism of human experience is intelligible solely by virtue of its reference to God is to locate the world's intelligibility outside the world itself. It is a Christian version of Platonic extrinsicism. It has nothing to do with the Aristotelian/Thomist project of locating within the world itself those intrinsic conditions of the world's intelligibility. For that reason, transcendental Thomism, as a method, is incapable of providing any account of the intrinsic character of grace.

Furthermore, to appeal to God as the condition of possibility for such a desire indicates a clear realization on the part of both Rahner and Lonergan that the desire to which they refer is no longer the 'natural' desire of which Aristotle spoke. For that desire required only the essence itself as its condition of possibility. Once some absolute quality is added to it, the essence no longer suffices to account for it. Hence the appeal to God. But in what sense can the desire now be called 'natural'? This is precisely the problem which
Blondel raised. De Lubac recognized the graced character of such a desire, but failed to account for it. Transcendental Thomists deny its graced character.

In fact, grace would appear to be the major casualty of transcendental Thomism. First, the accidental character of grace which was called into question between Pascendi and Humani Generis has been rehabilitated in so convincing a fashion by transcendental Thomism that the very problem of intrinsic grace raised by Blondel and de Lubac has very nearly been lost to sight. Secondly, and more importantly, the 'naturalizing' of human transcendence has had the effect of enlarging enormously the bounds of the natural realm. Divine transcendence is no longer simply a matter of doctrinal necessity, it has become a practical necessity as well. The notion of divine immanence, in the sense of a world structured from within by grace, has vanished altogether from the minds of a great many contemporary theologians. Today the 'natural' encroaches everywhere on territory which was until recently regarded as the prerogative of grace. As Keefe points out,

The pre-Vatican II emphasis upon the natural (as in natural law, the natural knowledge of God, the natural virtues) has recoiled upon its scholastic advocates, for its cosmological and quasi-sacramental meaning, taken for granted by St. Thomas, is now displaced by an entirely secular calculus of value.\[84\]

The contemporary interest in the natural or human realm, coupled with a rehabilitated notion of grace as accident, could easily produce today a more radical sterilization of grace than neo-scholasticism at its worst produced. In fact, the old neo-scholasticism may well have helped pave the way to the new secularism. As de Lubac has observed,

\[84\] Keefe, "Toward a Renewal of Sacramental Theology," p. 358.
While wishing to protect the supernatural from any contamination, people had in fact exiled it altogether—both from intellectual and from social life—leaving the field free to be taken over by secularism. Today that secularism, following its course, is beginning to enter the minds even of Christians. They too seek to find a harmony with all things based upon an idea of nature which might be acceptable to a deist or an atheist: everything that comes from Christ, everything that should lead to him, is pushed so far into the background as to look like disappearing for good. The last word in Christian progress and the entry into adulthood would then appear to consist in a total secularization which would expel God not merely from the life of society, but from culture and even from personal relationships.85

The greatest danger theology faces today is that the two-storey universe of neo-scholasticism will be replaced by a notion of reality as a single storey which is wholly natural. In fact, many theologians already judge such a shift to have taken place. In the view of Langdon Gilkey, for example, science has made it clear to us that the universe is a wholly natural realm. The notion that the meaning and value of our lives is recognized by reference to a supernatural order of being no longer makes any sense. "There is no separate realm more significant than this natural realm."86 Under these circumstances, the view that God desires our divinization must be recognized as an inappropriate, because outmoded, expression of Christian belief.

To live a fully human life, in thinking human thoughts, doing human things, creating human works, and loving other human beings, and in working in society for a more human life for all, is all that could be of value in life and therefore all that the God who sent us here could possibly ask of us.87

Grace must, therefore, be harnessed to the human realm.

To be real for us and to be able to be experienced by us, the divine must be creative of life here, the dynamic source and ground

85 de Lubac, The Mystery of the Supernatural, pp. xi-xii.
87 Ibid., p. 50.
of what we are, whose purpose it is that we be what we are; and thus a God immanent in all creative things, related to all human and cultural concerns, and intent not on heaven but on a better world. 88

This concern for the integrity of the natural order as natural signals that shift in human consciousness to which reference was made earlier. The impact which this shift has had on the Church made itself keenly felt in the deliberations of the Second Vatican Council and in the changes which have taken place in the Church in the wake of that Council.

By starting to unblock a number of channels, by signalling the official abandonment of certain elements of immobilism, of triumphalism, of exclusivism, Vatican II opened up the possibility of a new surge of expansion, sustained from beneath by the profundities of the Gospel message and swept along by the combined efforts of all available Christian forces. But by calling into question so much that many people regarded as a settled part of the tradition, the council also precipitated a crisis which we see unfolding before our eyes, a crisis whose seriousness is deepened by the concomitant crisis in Western civilisation and the advent, after two centuries in gestation, of the 'secular city'. Is this crisis, as many hope is the case, simply a crisis of growth, similar to the upheavals which rocked the Church so violently at the end of the Middle Ages or again in the late eighteenth century? It will be a generation or two before historians can hope to begin to provide any meaningful answer. 89

Although historians can provide no answers until a good deal more evidence is provided, much of the evidence which they will someday evaluate will be the systematic theology which is done in the interim. We must, therefore, examine this shift in historical consciousness more closely, with a view to determining whether it sheds any light on the search for a new perspective in systematic theology, particularly with regard to the nature/grace problematic and its resolution.

88 Ibid., pp. 68-69.
89 Aubert, The Church in a Secularized Society, p. 638.
In 1968, Johannes B. Metz, in a book entitled *Zur Theologie der Welt* (published in English translation the following year), addressed himself explicitly to what he understood to be the predominant experience of the world today. He characterized that experience as "the transition from a divinized to a hominized world."¹ This experience, in Metz' judgment, involves a shift from 'nature' to 'history' as the primary category by means of which contemporary man understands the world.

To see the world not as a cosmos, not as nature interpreting itself, but as history, to see it in its relation to man, as mediated by him, means to interpret the world in its formal *anthropocentricity.*² This "anthropocentric apex"³ which dominates modern thinking marks, in Metz' view, a radical departure from earlier theocentric/cosmocentric approaches to reality.

Metz himself exemplifies well the changed perspective which many Christian theologians have today adopted with regard to the world. One need only compare him with Bonaventure to see how radical this change

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² Ibid., p. 53.
³ Ibid.
in perspective is. For St. Bonaventure, in his spiritual classic, the *Itinerarium*, written in 1259 and describing the stages of the soul's journey to God, tells us how, in the first two stages of that journey, the world itself leads us to God.

From the first two stages in which we are led to behold God in vestiges, like the two wings covering the Seraph's feet, we can gather that all the creatures of the sense world lead the mind of the contemplative and wise man to the eternal God. For these creatures are shadows, echoes and pictures of that first, most powerful, most wise and most perfect Principle, of that eternal Source, Light and Fulness, of that efficient, exemplary and ordering Art. They are vestiges, representations, spectacles proposed to us and signs divinely given so that we can see God.  

Metz, on the other hand, tells us in 1968 that what shines out of the world today, primarily and directly, are not the *vestigia Dei* but the *vestigia hominis*. The "creation" of God, in the process of hominization, seems mediated everywhere by the "work" of man. In everything with which we are concerned in our secular life we encounter, more or less, not really nature as created by God, but the world that is projected and transformed by man, and in this we encounter ourselves.

Even a theologian such as Mersch, who is concerned to retain many of the elements of our traditional theocentric view of reality, agrees with Metz' understanding of the relationship between man and the world. As Mersch puts it, "man does not deal with the universe as with a stranger, but as with himself, with an aspect of himself. He seeks

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4 *Itinerarium*, II, 11.

himself there, and there he finds himself."⁶

This shift from a theocentric to an anthropocentric experience of the world signals more than just a change in how man views that reality which is external to himself. It also signals a change in human consciousness itself, something of which Metz is well aware.

This transition is connected in intellectual history with another event, with a development within the history of mind itself, namely, that formal re-orientation of thought away from the world towards man, away from nature towards history, away from substance to the subject and its free subjectivity, in short, away from a more "cosmocentric" towards an "anthropocentric" way of thinking, the historical beginning of which we commonly connect with the beginning of the modern period (without going into the question of when this "modern period" began in terms of intellectual history). Here man grasps himself in his free historical subjectivity. He experiences and fulfills himself no longer as an existent beside other existents in the world, but as the world's subjectivity, to whom the modes of the world's being, nature, culture, society, are ever more available and who now draws this world ever more profoundly into the history of his own free subjectivity.⁷

Although a close analysis of this transition in the history of human consciousness was not a part of the project Metz set for himself, it is the explicit subject of Owen Barfield's book, Saving the Appearances, published three years earlier than Zur Theologie der Welt. While Metz approaches this shift from the perspective of history, Barfield examines it more closely in terms of the rise of science.

Barfield agrees with Metz that a shift in the orientation of the human mind has taken place in the modern era. Barfield characterizes that shift as one from a notion of the universe (including man) as a participation in divinity to a notion of the universe as 'dis-godded' or de-divinized. The transition, in Barfield's judgment, began with

⁶Mersch, Theology of the Mystical Body, p. 100.
astronomers such as Copernicus, Kepler and Galileo, and culminated at the close of the nineteenth century. In the period prior to this transition, extending from early Greek philosophy through the Middle Ages, man understood both himself and his world to be representative of divinity. As Barfield notes with regard to the Middle Ages, "For medieval man, then, the universe was a kind of theophany, in which he participated at different levels, in being, in thinking, in speaking or naming, and in knowing. And then--the evolutionary change began."  

This evolutionary change was, epistemologically speaking, a differentiation in human consciousness which allowed man to experience the phenomena of the world not only as representations of a reality within or beyond the phenomena themselves (a reality which was also thought to be within man as well), but also as realities complete in their own order of being apart from the human mind.

The earlier awareness involved experiencing the phenomena as representations; the latter preoccupation involves experiencing them, non-representationally, as objects in their own right, existing independently of human consciousness. This latter experience, in its extreme form, I have called idolatry.

This evolutionary change was, ontologically speaking, the replacement of exemplary by mechanical causality. Buttressed by the discovery in physics of 'impetus' or the theory that a moving body moves indefinitely on its own (thus eliminating the need to posit an immanent mover), astronomy began to view the universe as a machine.

The whole point of a machine is, that, for as long as it goes on moving, it 'goes on by itself' without man's participation. To

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8 Barfield, Saving theAppearances, pp. 43, 50.
9 Ibid., p. 92.
10 Ibid., p. 142.
the extent therefore that the phenomena are experienced as machine, they are believed to exist independently of man, not to be participated and therefore not to be in the nature of representations.\footnote{Ibid., p. 51.}

Although science began to rely increasingly on a view of reality as objectively given, de-divinized and mechanized, nature was not to be robbed of life quite that easily. Men, as Barfield points out, found in nature things beyond what the microscope and telescope are capable of revealing. Those who sought to avoid scientific idolatry, which is idolatrous precisely because it locates reality solely in the appearances or phenomena themselves, were sometimes tempted to seek refuge in a return to pantheism, or what Barfield calls 'original participation'.

If nature is indeed 'dis-godded', and yet we again begin to experience her, as Wordsworth did—and as millions have done since his time—no longer as dead but as alive; if there is no 'represented' on the far side of the appearances, and yet we begin to experience them once more as appearances, as representations—the question arises, of what are they representations? It was no doubt the difficulty of answering this question which led Wordsworth to relapse occasionally into that nostalgic hankering after original participation, which is called pantheism—and from which Coleridge was rendered immune by his acquaintance with Kantian philosophy.\footnote{Ibid., p. 130.}

The temptation to suppose that we must choose between idolatry and pantheism is, as we have already had occasion to see, reminiscent of the distinction between thick and thin essence Thomism. For the former presupposes the existence of a de-divinized and non-representational reality available to scientific inquiry, while the latter so emphasizes the principle of esse as the single constituent of reality as to come perilously near, if not actually embrace, pantheism.
Metz and Barfield would agree that neither pantheism nor idolatry offers a valid perspective on reality. Neither the divinized world which prevailed in the Middle Ages and before nor the idolatrous world which prevails today offers reliable access to reality. The key to a new perspective lies, in the judgment of both, in recognizing that the universe is neither theocentric nor cosmocentric, but anthropocentric. As Barfield notes, the difficult question facing Wordsworth has only one answer. "Henceforth, if nature is to be experienced as representation, she will be experienced as representation of--Man."\textsuperscript{13} Here we return to the "anthropocentric apex" of which Metz speaks.

Beyond this point, however, Metz and Barfield differ enormously with regard to why such an anthropocentric perspective and consciousness have arisen and where their significance for us and the future lies. In this chapter, we shall examine first, the history of human consciousness and secondly, Metz' theological views with regard to contemporary secularity, before considering 20th century science (chapter 9) and the alternative which Barfield offers to the perspective Metz proposes (chapter 10).

The History of Human Consciousness

The question of human consciousness is, at its most fundamental level, the question of what the human mind perceives to be the "really real." To say that human consciousness itself has a history is to say that the human mind has undergone changes in what it perceives reality to be.

As Ratzinger has pointed out (following the insight first formulated

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., p. 131.
by Auguste Comte), the human mind has adopted, in turn, a magical, a metaphysical and a scientific view of reality. Today we are witnessing the flowering of a fourth view, the historical. The first is pantheist in orientation, the last anthropocentric. The middle two can be characterized as theocentric and cosmocentric respectively.

Pantheism

The first stage of human consciousness, what Barfield calls pantheism or 'original participation', was one in which the human mind made no distinction between the phenomenological and the noumenal. In this view, all phenomena were understood to be, as Barfield puts it, "the stopping-places for mana [the spirit world]." No explicit distinction was drawn between the stopping-place and the spirit. The 'treeness' of a tree, for example, was identified with the 'spirit' which the tree represented. It was the spirit that was perceived, not the tree.

Theocentrism

A more sophisticated form of original participation arose when human consciousness began to make a distinction between the phenomena and the underlying reality in which the phenomena were understood to participate. This differentiation in human consciousness, the achievement of Greek philosophy, is best exemplified by Plato's notion of reality. For Plato, as for the pantheist mentality, the really real remained the world of spirit, or, as Plato now characterized it, the world of 'pure form'. The phenomenal, because constituted by a mixture of form and matter, could not be regarded as reality itself, but only

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15 Barfield, Saving the Appearances, p. 42.
as a participation in reality. A distinction was now drawn between the imperfect 'treeness' of any given sensible tree and Treeness Itself. His notion of form and matter as contradictory, not complementary, was the methodological statement of the phenomenal character of the cosmos as contrasted with the ultimate reality that is pure form.

The theocentric possibilities latent in such a view of reality were missed neither by Plotinus and the neo-Platonists nor by Christian theologians. We have already observed how the Platonic notion of reality became, in Neo-Platonism and Christianity, the Porphyrian hierarchized universe of graded participations in the One (neo-Platonism) or God (Christianity). Thomas himself was the heir to this neo-Platonic view of the world and, despite his Aristotelianism, attempted to retain it within his own theology. Here, in fact, we have the origin of the 'thin' essence. For if the really real is Ipsum Esse and the universe is a manifold imitation of Ipsum Esse, then essences must be regarded as little more than the finite 'modes' in which Ipsum Esse is able to manifest itself.

Already present in this Platonic differentiation between the phenomenal and the noumenal, however, lay the seeds of a new problem. The problem itself could be stated in two different ways, and therefore seemed to admit of two different resolutions. The first way of stating the problem was epistemological. If the mind is capable of making a distinction between the noumenal (Being) and the phenomenal (cosmos), then is not the mind an active participant in the knowing process? Must not a new distinction be drawn between the known and the knower?

The second way of stating the problem was empirical. If a distinction can be drawn between the phenomenal and the noumenal, perhaps
this is because there is no noumenal at all. Or, more precisely, perhaps the phenomenal is the noumenal. The epistemological question, by casting doubt on the notion of the mind as simply a tabula rasa, opened up the possibility that 'treeness' arises, in part at least, because the mind organizes sense data in ways which are determined from the side of mind and not from the side of the tree. The empirical question, by casting doubt on the existence of any reality beyond the phenomenological, raised the possibility that the material tree is, in fact, the only reality with which we need deal. In the final analysis, the Kantian critique had the effect of underwriting the Humean scepticism. For, although Kant did not deny the existence of a reality beyond the phenomena, his view that we cannot get to it meant, scientifically speaking, that we need no longer consider it.

Cosmocentrism

If by science we mean idolatry in the sense in which Barfield employs the word, i.e., the notion that the phenomenological is the real, we must go back to Aristotle to discover the origin of this view of reality. Although Aristotle would no more than Plato have reduced reality to the phenomenological, he did take the first step in this direction by his attempts to locate the really real in the material world rather than in a realm of pure forms. Unlike Plato, however, he was unwilling to reduce the material 'many' to an immaterial unity. Instead, he sought to account for material reality in terms of intrinsic causality, not by means of an extrinsic immaterial substance. In his judgment, neither 'treeness' nor any particular material individuation of treeness could exist apart from its correlation with the other. His notion, therefore, of form and matter as complementary, not contradictory,
was a methodological statement of his view that this world is far more real than Plato's realm of pure forms. As we have had occasion to see, however, Aristotle was never able to develop a notion of immanent substance which could simultaneously account for material multiplicity and formal unity. The closest he came was in his notion of the material singular as substantial.

When Thomas took up Aristotle's work, he did so for purposes not unlike those of Aristotle himself. He wished to find some methodological principles by means of which he could account for the integrity of the created order. Here, then, we have the origin of the 'thick' essence. For if the material order is to be understood as really real, then essence must be regarded as a positive principle of intelligibility within things which has its own integrity apart from its power to mediate Ipsum Intelligere. It must, in short, be incapable of reduction to esse.

Unfortunately, Thomas was also heir to the notion that the material singular is substantial. Consequently, he too was unable to provide any intrinsic account of the conditions of possibility for both a material multiplicity and a formal unity. He was forced back to a Platonic notion of extrinsic causes (God and the Divine Ideas) to account for both the specific multiplicity and the universal unity.

While Thomas ultimately went back into a Platonic grounding of material reality, the overall character of his work reflects the balance which he tried to strike, as a Christian theologian, between the reality of God (the Platonic immaterial reality) and the reality of creation as distinct from God (the Aristotelian material reality). His esse/essence correlation is the methodological statement of his insistence, as a
Christian theologian, upon both a divine and a creaturely intelligibility which are distinct but concretely inseparable from one another.

Because Thomas was unable to find a means for reconciling the 'thick' and 'thin' essences of his Platonic and Aristotelian methodologies, the overall balance which we find in his work is largely a product of his having moved back and forth between the Platonic and Aristotelian perspectives which he had adopted. Consequently, not only did his work constitute within Christian theology a definite step in an Aristotelian direction, his work also seemed to warrant, at those times when he adopted an Aristotelian rather than a Platonic view, the notion that material reality can be regarded as autonomous in its own right.

This notion was continued, as we have had occasion to observe, in the work of Gilsonian Thomists, who suppose that science can and even should study the phenomena without reference to their existential component. Hence, to the extent that Thomas and subsequent Thomists suggested that the Aristotelian intelligibility (essence) is not only distinct but separable from that intelligibility which constitutes our participation in God (esse), they hastened the advent and reinforced the plausibility of that scientific idolatry which would first disregard and ultimately reject any link between the phenomena and Being.

Scientific idolatry is, as Lonergan points out, the notion that knowledge is attained solely "by taking a good look at the 'real' that is 'already out there now'."¹⁶ Just when this notion of reality became decisive in human consciousness is impossible to pin down with certainty. In Barfield's judgment, the turning point in the scientific community itself came when Copernicus and Galileo began to regard

heliocentrism not only as a hypothetical account of astronomical phenomena, but as the ultimate truth with regard to that phenomena.

It was this, this novel idea that the Copernican (and therefore any other) hypothesis might not be a hypothesis at all but the ultimate truth, that was almost enough in itself to constitute the 'scientific revolution'.

The methodological statement of this view of reality is the principle of verifiability, which reduces reality to that which can be submitted to empirical analysis.

This shift to a scientific view of reality had enormous implications. First, it destroyed every notion of original participation which had heretofore obtained. Reality had finally been de-divinized or 'dis-godded'. Secondly, it not only eliminated all notions of an intrinsic relation between the phenomena and God (Being), it also eliminated all notions of an intrinsic relationship between the phenomena themselves. For as soon as reality was reduced to that which is empirically verifiable, knowledge was restricted to the external behavior of the phenomena. According to this view, to know a thing is not to know what it is, but how it functions. And to know the relationship between things is to know nothing more than their external impact upon one another. Therefore, human knowledge itself is perceived as arising out of the external (sensible) impact which the phenomena have on human beings. As Hans Reichenbach puts it, "In contrast to the transcendental conception of knowledge, the philosophy of the new empiricism may be called a functional conception of knowledge."

17 Barfield, Saving the Appearances, p. 50.

Furthermore, words no longer refer to any 'inner' reality within things, but solely to that external behavior which is empirically available to us. Hence, language itself must submit to the same principle of verification to which reality itself is submitted. By submitting all statements which purport to be about reality to a linguistic analysis based on the principle of verification, we discover that "the question of the existence of the external world and of the human mind . . . is found to be a question of correct use of language rather than a question of a 'transcendental reality.'" For all extra-sensory use of language is found to have no functional, ergo no real, term of reference. The functional notion of reality thus finds its counterpart in a strictly nominalist use of language, in which words no longer refer to the inner nature or essence of a thing, but solely to the ways in which it is observed to function.

Thirdly, this scientific notion of reality eliminated the previously-held notion of science as theoretical or hypothetical. Scientific accounts of reality were now understood to be literal statements about reality. Such a notion of the really real put science in opposition not only to theology but also to metaphysics. For the new science claimed to replace both. As Reichenbach says in the preface to his book on 'scientific philosophy,' the purpose of the book is to show that "philosophy has proceeded from speculation to science."

Fourthly, and more importantly for our purposes here, science, in reducing reality to the phenomenal and functional, simultaneously reduced causality to the extrinsic impact of object upon object. This

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19 Ibid., p. 307.
20 Ibid., p. vii.
process reached its apogee in the theory of evolution, which could find a place for man in this new scheme of things only by treating him as simply one object among others and by treating all objects as products of a chain of extrinsic causes which could, at least to some extent, be empirically verified. Because original participation had vanished from the minds of most men, as Barfield points out,

... the only link with the phenomena was through the senses; and [men] could no longer conceive of any manner in which either growth itself or the metamorphoses of individual and special growth, could be determined from within. The appearances were idols. They had no 'within'. Therefore the evolution which had produced them could only be conceived mechanomorphically as a series of impacts of idols on other idols. 21

This impact of object on object, however, signalled the abandonment of any coherent notion of causality. In its place we are left with the random play of force upon force. Carl Sagan is an excellent example of a contemporary scientist who continues to find this notion of causality plausible.

Were the Earth to be started over again with all its physical features identical, it is extremely unlikely that anything closely resembling a human being would ever again emerge. There is a powerful random character to the evolutionary process. A cosmic ray striking a different gene, producing a different mutation, can have small consequences early but profound consequences later. Happenstance may play a powerful role in biology, as it does in history. 22

Causality is, under these circumstances, replaced by 'laws' of statistical probability.

The issue is whether causality is an ultimate principle or merely a substitute for statistical regularity, applicable to the macroscopic domain but inadmissible for the realm of atoms. ... From the investigations of modern quantum mechanics we know that the individual atomic occurrences do not lend themselves to a causal

21 Barfield, Saving the Appearances, p. 63.
interpretation and are merely controlled by probability laws. This result, formulated in Heisenberg's famous principle of indeterminacy, constitutes the proof that the second conception is the correct one, that the idea of a strict causality is to be abandoned, and that the laws of probability take over the place once occupied by the law of causality.23

The abandonment of the notion of an inner dimension to reality required abandoning the notion of strict (intrinsic) causality as well.

**Anthropocentricity**

Long before the theory of evolution arose, however, it had become apparent to at least one man that, once reality is no longer understood as a participation in being, we can no longer rely, as earlier ages had, on our human participation in that same being to provide us with an inside track on understanding that reality. The man was the Italian philosopher Giambattista Vico (1668-1744), and his point was very simple. If the Aristotelian notion that we can know a thing only by knowing its causes is correct, then we can no longer claim a familiarity with the inner workings of the universe. The only reality with which we can claim any such familiarity is ourselves, and therefore the only things which we can know are those things which we ourselves have caused. As Ratzinger notes with regard to Vico, "Against the scholastic equation 'Verum est ens' ('Being is truth') he advances his own formula, 'Verum quia factum'."24

This notion of reality as the facticity of man's past retained some important elements of the scientific mentality. First, the reality of history was understood to be objectively available in the same sense in which science understood the reality of the cosmos to be objectively


24 Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, p. 31.
available. The really real shifted from the 'already out there now' to the 'already back there then', to paraphrase Lonergan. History became, as Ranke among many other historians thought it ought to be, the study of what really happened. The principle of verifiability was applied to the documents of human history. Historical reality was therefore reduced, as the cosmic reality before it had been, to the phenomenal and the empirically verifiable.

At the same time, however, this notion of reality as that which has been made by man signalled an enormous shift in human perspective, greater in fact than the scientific shift to cosmic phenomena. It was, as Ratzinger notes, the shift that produced "that revaluation of all values which makes subsequent history really a 'new' age as compared with the old one."25 From this new perspective, nothing is regarded as real which cannot also be regarded as historical.

Through Hegel, and in a different way through Comte, philosophy became a historical question, in which being itself is to be understood as a historical process. With F. C. Baur, theology turned into history and its path became that of rigorous historical research, which asks what happened in the past and thereby hopes to reach the bottom of the matter. With Marx, economics was given an historical slant. Indeed, even the natural sciences were affected by this general tendency towards history: with Darwin, the classification of living beings was understood as a history of life; the constancy of what stays as it was created was replaced by a line of descent in which all things came from one another and could be traced back to one another.26

The shift to an anthropocentric view of reality was not, however, fully effected solely by the notion of reality as factuality. For such a view of reality still retained one element from the earlier metaphysical and scientific viewpoints which mitigated against a thoroughgoing anthropo-

25 Ibid., p. 33.
26 Ibid., p. 34.
pocentrism, namely, the notion of reality as something already given, whether by God, cosmic processes or past human activity. This notion of an external source of reality sufficed as long as the really real itself was understood to be located outside the strictly human realm. Once, however, reality was located within that realm, it became impossible to suppose that man was simply the recipient of reality. He now had to be understood as the agent of reality. Karl Marx' formulation of this new principle is today well-known: "So far philosophers have contemplated the world; now they must set about changing it."

Translated into the language of the philosophical tradition this maxim meant that "verum quia factum"—what is knowable, tending towards truth, is what man has made and what he can now contemplate—was replaced by the new programme "verum quia faciendum"—the truth with which we are now concerned is feasibility. To put it again in another way: the truth with which man is concerned is neither the truth of being, nor even in the last resort that of his accomplished deeds, but the truth of changing the world, moulding the world—a truth centered on future and action.27

Here we have a complete rejection not only of theocentrism but of cosmocentrism as well. Not only are the phenomena to be understood as de-divinized, they are also to be understood as having no reality apart from their capacity to be molded and shaped by the human mind. The phenomena which were once understood to be real by virtue of divine actuation are now to be understood as real only to the extent that they are capable of a human actuation.

As Ratzinger points out, Christian theology attempted to answer the factum notion of reality by shifting to a notion of Christianity as salvation history and by an historico-critical reanalysis of Scripture designed to demonstrate the historical (factual) character of Christian belief. Unfortunately, the shift from factum to faciendum

27 Ibid., p. 35.
had the effect, in a great many minds, of relegating the 'already back there then' facticity of Christianity to the limbo of irrelevance. Therefore, Christian theology shifted a second time.

Instead another idea is now in the air—people feel tempted to shift belief away from the plane of the fact on to that of the \textit{faciendum} and to expound it by means of a 'political theology' as a medium for changing the world.\footnote{Ibid., p. 38.}

This 'turn to political theology' manifests the most serious effort in Catholicism today to respond to the contemporary anthropocentric/historical notion of reality. We must, therefore, examine more carefully the general character of this response. To that end, we shall consider the work of Johannes Metz, particularly \textit{Theology of the World}. Metz has been chosen, first, because of the importance of his work within Catholic political theology as a whole, and secondly, because, as a former student of Rahner, Metz offers a good example of those theologians who, though trained in transcendental Thomism, believe that the perspective it offers is inadequate to the demands placed upon theology in the 'post-metaphysical' age into which these theologians believe we are moving. What follows is not intended to be a complete analysis of the entirety of Metz' works, but rather an exploration of the implications of those aspects of his thought which have a direct bearing on the new perspective that he believes contemporary historical consciousness requires Catholic theology to adopt.

\textbf{Christian Praxis: Hominization of the World}

Metz opens \textit{Theology of the World} with two statements which define the scope of the book. He first observes that the world today is
secular. He then notes that such a world challenges faith to state its position with regard to that secularity. In a footnote to the first remark, he characterizes Theology of the World as "a first attempt to give a positive interpretation of this permanent and growing secularity of the world in the light of Catholic theology."\(^29\) We shall first examine what Metz believes to be the distinctive features of today's secular world and then consider the attitude which he thinks Christianity ought to take with regard to each of them.

The Secular World

Although Metz nowhere gives a single comprehensive description of secularity, six of its features strike him as particularly important where Christianity is concerned. The first of these we have already had an opportunity to observe, namely, the transition from a divinized to a hominized world.\(^30\) Today's secularity sees the world in relationship to man, not God. In other words, the contemporary worldview is explicitly anthropocentric, not only in its notions of reality but in its desires. Humanity today wishes to be worldly (hominized), not divinized.

A second important feature of today's secularity is the fact that it views the world in historical, not metaphysical, terms. Modern man is interested primarily in the future not the past, in change not permanence, in possibility not actuality, in the genuinely new not the already established, in process not structure. This shift to an historical consciousness signals a corresponding shift in the notion of reality. Metz cites, in this regard, an observation by Gerhard Ebeling which is


\(^30\) See p. 290.
This fascination with the future transforms the existing and subsisting reality into a changing and a challenging reality, so that the real of this reality emerges as its possibilities for the future.\(^3\)\(^1\)

The really real today lies in exploiting the possible, not in contemplating the actual. The world is a quarry to be mined, not a reality to be studied.\(^3\)\(^2\) This shift in the notion of reality is enormously important, for it governs the remaining features which Metz finds in today's secularity.

The third of these is the primacy of praxis over theory, of operation over contemplation. If the really real has not been given, but remains to be achieved, then theory divorced from praxis no longer offers us access to reality.

Mankind in this new age seems to be fascinated by only one thing: the future as something that has not yet existed. The future is essentially reality that does not yet exist, that has never existed, that is truly "new." Our relation to this kind of future cannot therefore be purely contemplative or purely imaginative, since pure contemplation and pure imagination refer only to reality that already exists. Our relation to this future is markedly operative in character, and any theory of this relationship is therefore a theory that is related to action: it is characterized by a new relationship between theory and practice.\(^3\)\(^3\)

This notion of a future which must be achieved in praxis rather than revealed in metaphysical theorizing (\'a la Hegel) gives rise to the


\(^3\)\(^2\) Metz, *Theology of the World*, p. 84. This concern for the primacy of the future over structure or metaphysics is operative in his earlier study of Thomas, *Christliche Anthropozentrik* (München: Kösel-Verlag KG, 1962), in which, as Roger Dick Johns points out, "He [Metz] stresses . . . the teleological, rather than the epistemological or ontological implications of the history of revelation" (Man in the World: The Theology of Johannes Baptist Metz, American Academy of Religion Dissertation Series [Missoula, Mt: Scholars Press, 1976], p. 71 (hereafter cited as Johns, *Man in the World*).

fourth important feature of today's secularity, viz., the primacy it
gives to freedom over nature. This primacy of freedom over nature is
actually another way of stating the primacy of history over metaphysics.
For what Metz has in mind here is the primacy of possibility over actual-
ity. The key to this primacy lies in what Metz calls the "essential
hidenlness of the future." What this notion of history rejects is the
Aristotelian conception of 'nature' as that which contains within itself
the term of its own movement. Natures are, in such a view, predetermined,
not free. To construe reality as 'natural' (metaphysical) is therefore
to deprive it of any genuine historicity (freedom).

An historical consciousness, on the contrary, supposes the future
to be essentially hidden not only because it does not yet exist, but
more importantly because it has not yet been chosen.

The essential hiddenness of the future in metaphysics is . . . at
the same time the essential hiddenness of history altogether. For
the future is the constitutive element of history as history. So
long as history is conceived in terms of the primacy of origin and
present, it can be conceived as a reality that has come about, that
already exists, and hence again seen as nature and thus ontologized.
Only in relation to the future can history also be distinguished
from all "becoming," which does not really have a future but a
goal (conceived and hence already existing) and which belongs
again within the ontology of nature. Only in relation to the
future can the soul of all history, namely, freedom be finally
grasped. Insofar as the problem of the future remains hidden from
metaphysics, so too does the problem of history remain hidden from
it. All attempts to bring history and the metaphysics of being
together show again indirectly that metaphysics is meta-physics:
a contemplative laying hold on reality as a whole within the frame-
work of what exists, that is, of nature.34

Recognizing the essentially hidden character of the future is therefore
the means by which we are able to recognize not only our own freedom to
choose what the future will be, but also the fundamental inadequacy of
a rationalist metaphysics which would falsely ontologize the future by

34 Ibid., p. 99.
This notion of reality as fundamentally historical and therefore free brings us to the fifth important feature of today's secularity, namely, its public rather than private character. The public or political character of contemporary society is indissociable from a kind of paradox inherent in our manner of viewing reality. Previous notions of reality as something objectively given and therefore publicly available, have lent themselves to a privatized or individualized appropriation of that reality. For when reality is perceived as the 'already out there now,' and understanding it consists solely in taking a good look at it, the burden for becoming acquainted with that reality lies entirely with the individual, who can only know reality by looking at it himself. Furthermore, since reality is completely unaffected by his contemplation of it, his decision to know or not to know is a private matter affecting only himself and not reality per se.

As soon, however, as reality is understood not as given but as achieved, then its objective and publicly available character must also be achieved. This requires a public (political) praxis. For the only reality which we can now share in common is the reality which we achieve in common. We can no longer simply plug into reality; we now have to participate in it. Therefore, the relationship of the individual to reality is no longer private but public, his responsibilities no longer solely to himself but to others as well, his failures damaging not only to himself but to the community as a whole. For his failure to participate in reality diminishes reality itself.

The sixth and final feature which Metz underscores with regard to contemporary secularity is its permanence and its irreversibility.

35 Ibid., pp. 1, 17, 18.
A worldly world--this is not a metaphysical definition of the world, which would ultimately prove to be an empty pleonasm. It is, rather, an historical definition of the world in its present nature. And if it is described further as a world that remains and grows in its worldliness, then this means that worldliness does not have merely a transitional character, but that of an epoch, which helps to determine the world situation for the foreseeable future. 36

It is this permanent character of secularity which makes it incumbent upon theology to state its attitude with regard to it.

Christian Theology in a Secular World

The attitude which Christian theology ought to take toward modern secularity is, in Metz' judgment, one which should proceed from the realization that "the historically irreversible process of secularization does not mean that Christianity is disappearing, but that it has become truly historically effective." 37 With regard to the first feature of secularity, this means that the transition from a divinized to a hominized world is a shift for which Christ is largely responsible.

"God took on flesh" is the central proposition of our faith. Verbum caro factum est. In order to bring out the important thing of this Gospel for our faith, let us say: Verbum homo factum est. For in the incarnation of the eternal Word it was not the world itself that was immediately divinized. The final turning of God towards the world took place, rather, in man. He and only he is the place where God has for ever accepted the world and its history. God's relation to the world and to history is mediated and perfected in man. Its divinization takes place via its hominization. . . . Again we see the radical "anthropocentricity" of the Gospel of scripture. Precisely in the light of the Gospel of the incarnation of God the world loses its numinously shimmering divinity and is given into the hands and responsibility of man and hence liberated to find its own worldliness. 38

The Incarnation is therefore God's irrevocable acceptance of the world as world. It is also the revelation that, from God's perspective, the

36 Ibid., p. 142.
37 Ibid., p. 16.
38 Ibid., pp. 66-67.
world is explicitly a human world, man's world, and not just a cosmos. 39

In the second place, Christianity need not be intimidated by the primacy which contemporary consciousness gives to history over metaphysics. For the very realization of the world's historical character is made apparent because of God's actions within it. His actions reveal the world to be not a fixed framework (metaphysics) but an event (history). 40 The Biblical promises of God, which are responsible for that 'turn to the future' which characterizes modern secularity, also require that Christian theology be eschatology. 41 Christianity must recover the historicity of its own language. God's transcendence is better translated as "I will be who I will be" (absolute future) than as "I am who I am" (absolute being). The former translation conveys the fact that

God revealed himself to Moses more as the power of the future than as a being dwelling beyond all history and experience. God is not "above us" but "before us." His transcendence reveals itself as our "absolute future." This future is grounded in itself and is self-possessed. It is a future that is not erected out of the potentialities of our human freedom and human action. Rather, this future calls forth our potentialities to unfold themselves in history. Only such a future—one that is more than just the projection of our abilities—can call us to realize truly new possibilities, to become that which has never existed. 42

The fact that God Himself is calling us to act in the world means, in the third place, that we are called upon to participate in the creation of the world's reality as world. A true Christian praxis is one which seeks not to divinize the world, but to secularize it. 43

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39 Ibid., p. 23.
40 Ibid., p. 18.
41 Ibid., p. 87.
42 Ibid., pp. 88-89.
43 Ibid., p. 49.
order to do so, it must recognize that a true Christian mysticism is neither a contemplation of the world as an already-given reality nor a flight from the world to a divine reality conceived as 'above' the world, but a consent to be drawn into "the descensus of God, into the descent of his love to the least of his brothers," a descent which constitutes "not a flight out of the world, but a flight with the world 'forward'." This means that "being a Christian is to accept special responsibility for the world, to be ready to be exposed and given over to it."45

This special responsibility which Christians have to participate in the creation of the world's reality means, in the fourth place, that Christians more than anyone else must give primacy to freedom over nature. Christianity is fundamentally eschatological, seeking God as the absolute future in front of us, not as the absolute being above us. Not surprisingly, this historical notion of transcendence makes the distinction between the natural and the supernatural less relevant to contemporary theology.46 Grace is no longer to be conceived as the power by which we are elevated or divinized, but as the freedom by which the world, through us, achieves the perfection of its worldliness.

... grace is freedom, it bestows upon things the scarcely measured depths of their own being. It calls things out of all their sinful alienation into their own. It calls the world into its perfect worldliness. Gratia perficit naturam—this is true also of the "consecration of the world" by grace. It seals the world within its deepest worldliness, it gives, in a supreme way, the world to itself, bestowing on it an unexpectedly rich

44 Ibid., pp. 104, 92.
46 Ibid., p. 91.
existence of its own. Grace perfects the true worldliness of
the world.47

Therefore, just as the world exists for the sake of man (the primacy of
history over metaphysics), so does the world also exist for the sake of
human freedom (the primacy of that freedom over nature). Hence the
reality of the world is something to be achieved in freedom, not con-
templated in nature (the primacy of praxis over theory).

Although this grace (which is freedom) empowers us to perfect the
world in its worldliness and non-divinity, it is also, according to
Metz, the one place in which the world retains its link with the numinous.

Because the world itself, as a result of its hominization, loses
its numinous character, it does not follow that its connection
with the numinous completely disappears. There simply appears
a new, as it were "anthropocentric" place in which the numinous
is experienced: no longer the comprehensive openness of the pre-
given world, but the freedom that acts on this world; no longer
all-embracing nature, but the history of this hominized nature,
taken in hand by men, in its free futurity.48

Hence, the anthropocentric is also the transcendental. For the human
experience of freedom, in its capacity to go beyond the limits of nature,
reveals "not simply the future of unbelief, but the greater future of
belief, in which what has already happened for man's experience of the
world reaches us through the event of Christianity."49

Because Christianity is eschatological and therefore places its
faith in a truth which must yet be realized in the grace of human free-
dom, this means, in the fifth place, that Christian praxis must be public,
not private, for it must concern itself not with an already-given cosmic

47 Ibid., p. 49.
48 Ibid., p. 69.
49 Ibid., p. 49.
reality but with an emerging political and social reality. The primary negative task of the Church today is therefore the deprivatization of theology. Noting the New Testament emphasis upon the individual in his relationship to God, Metz insists that deprivatizing theology is important today precisely in order that the individual not be overlooked.

... it is our contention that theology, precisely because of its privatizing tendency, is apt to miss the individual in his real existence. Today this existence is to a very great extent entangled in societal vicissitudes; so any existential and personal theology that does not understand existence as a political problem in the widest sense of the word, must inevitably restrict its considerations to an abstraction.

The primary positive task of the Church today is to assess the relationship between the Church and contemporary society. A critical part of this task is determining the relationship between faith and social practice (theory and praxis).

Political theology seeks to make contemporary theologians aware that a trial is pending between the eschatological message of Jesus and the socio-political reality. It insists on the permanent relation to the world inherent in the salvation merited by Jesus, a relation not to be understood in a natural-cosmological but in a socio-political sense; that is, as a critical, liberating force in regard to the social world and its historical process.

In the sixth, and final, place, the permanent secularity of the world ought not to disturb the Christian theologian, because it is the product, not the opponent, of Christian faith. "Faith itself ... produces a fundamental secularity of the world." It is precisely this concrete experience of secularity in the world today which testifies to the effectiveness of God's actions in history, particularly His acceptance.

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50 Ibid., p. 96.
51 Ibid., pp. 110-111.
52 Ibid., pp. 113-114.
53 Ibid., p. 64.
in Christ of the world in its otherness or non-divinity.

**Political Theology: The Failure to Find a Perspective**

Metz' shift of theology from ontological to historical categories represents both an improvement upon and a diminution of the theology of transcendental Thomism. It is an improvement inasmuch as it takes seriously the 'post-metaphysical' world which is constituted by shifts in human consciousness from the theocentric through the cosmocentric to the anthropocentric. Recognizing the irreversibility of that process, Metz accepts the de-divinization of the cosmos effected by the scientific mentality. He therefore understands, as the transcendental Thomists apparently do not, that the cosmos is a human world, not a mirror of God. That in turn enables him to recognize the centrality of praxis and the communal character of reality.

In methodological terms, the transcendental Thomists trace the major crisis today back to the Greek metaphysical differentiation in consciousness and the seeming dichotomy which that introduced between theocentrism and cosmocentrism. The esse/essence correlation is, as a result understood by transcendental Thomists to be a metaphysical statement about the God/world relationship. They use the correlation, therefore, to account for created beings as finite participations in Ipsum Esse (the really real) and for the world as an image of divinity. The dynamism in things is, according to this view, a product of their participation in that infinite being which transcends every limit. The participation is privatized (individualized) and present at the level of being (ontological) apart from doing (praxis). Transcendental method is the means by which we are able to recognize that the dichotomy between
the world and God is a false problem.

Metz, on the other hand, sees the theological task today from quite a different perspective. Because the world has been de-divinized by scientific cosmocentrism, the world can no longer be seen as existing in a direct relationship with God. Rather, the world exists in a direct relationship with man. The primary problem today, therefore, is that of understanding the relationship between God and the human community. In Metz' terms, therefore, esse/essence is not a statement about the God/world relationship, but about the God/humanity relationship. Because the world, as a human world, is not simply given, but must be achieved, the problem involves both the human community as a whole and its praxis.

The God/world resolution of the problem is a false resolution, from Metz' point of view, because it attempts to reimpose the theocentric type of consciousness on an anthropocentric ('post-metaphysical') reality. Praxis is not only the method which enables us to recognize the true contours of the contemporary situation, but also the means by which we are able to overcome the dichotomies inherent in that situation.

Metz is correct that history, to be significant, must be irreversible. A history that reverses itself is a history that cancels itself out. If Christ is to be understood as truly effective within the historical process, then that process itself must be linear, not cyclical or reversible. Therefore, the de-divinization of the cosmos and the anthropocentric character of contemporary consciousness must be recognized as irreversible. It is no longer possible for us to return to the theocentric consciousness of medieval metaphysics. The failure of
transcendental Thomism to recognize this is its most serious error.

Metz' theology, however, operates under a handicap which does not burden the transcendental Thomists, the handicap of proceeding from a perspective which, from the outset, contradicts the fundamental purposes of his theology. His project, on the one hand, is that of establishing the value of the historical realm. His perspective, on the other hand, is Platonic. A Platonic perspective, by definition, locates the really real outside the material (historical) realm. To adopt such a perspective in the service of history is to undercut history at the outset.

The Platonic character of his perspective is most apparent in the primacy which he gives to freedom over nature. Because nature is that which proceeds to an immanently pre-determined end, Metz rejects it as an inappropriate category for any theology which seeks to come to terms with the genuinely historical character of the world. For possibility and novelty in the future require that finality be essentially hidden and not simply given. Furthermore, human freedom consists of that transcendental ability to overreach any limits which would be imposed by nature. The primacy of history over metaphysics and of praxis over theory are extensions of this fundamental primacy which freedom enjoys over nature.

The Platonic character of this approach becomes immediately apparent once the terms which Metz employs here are shifted into a form/matter framework. Within such a methodology, freedom/nature represents the historical counterpart to Plato's form/matter dichotomy. Just as matter, for Plato, is that which impedes form, so nature, for Metz, is that which impedes freedom. And just as Plato's form/matter dichotomy serves
as the basis for his account of the relatively illusory reality of the material realm as compared to the absolute reality of the formal realm, so does Metz' freedom/nature dichotomy serve as the basis for his account of the relatively illusory reality of the historical realm as compared to the absolute reality of the eschaton. The really real, for Metz as much as for Plato, lies outside the material/historical realm.

The problems which such an approach creates manifest themselves both at the level of the nature/grace problematic and at the level of human consciousness and its implications. First, at the level of the nature/grace problematic, this approach reintroduces Rahner's supernatural existential in the guise of a 'worldliness' which is to be understood as not divine, not natural and not achievable in history. No a priori conditions of possibility for this worldliness are offered, not even God, for God is to be understood as He who acts eschatologically, not protologically. No intrinsic conditions of possibility whatever are offered.

Secondly, at the level of human consciousness, we are confronted with the problem of accounting for Christ's effectiveness in an historical process within which the really real cannot be found. Metz maintains that "the formal reorientation of thinking from a 'cosmocentric' to an 'anthropocentric' approach, bound up with the beginning of the modern world, has ultimately emerged not against, but through the impulse of the Christian spirit." But how is the Christian spirit able to actualize such a reorientation of human thinking?

The problem only deepens when we consider what Metz regards to be

54 Ibid.
the fundamental hermeneutical problem facing theology today.

Properly speaking, the so-called fundamental hermeneutic problem of theology is not the problem of how systematic theology stands in relation to historical theology, how dogma stands in relation to history, but what is the relation between theory and practice, between understanding the faith and social practice.55

The implication here that faith and social practice are separate entities, the relating of which must be a fundamental concern to today's theology, together with the explicit statement that this is a hermeneutical problem, belies the assertion that Christ has been or could be effective within history. For, according to Metz, praxis is the means by which reality is achieved. Therefore, a praxis dissociated from faith is incapable of mediating a "Christian spirit," whereas a faith dissociated from praxis is incapable of mediating anything. If Christ is actually effective throughout history, the only condition of possibility for that effectiveness is a concrete public faith praxis already effectively pervading the material/historical realm. No social praxis is conceivable apart from that faith praxis. The problem, therefore, is one of relating faith praxis and social praxis, not faith and social praxis.

To say, however, that a faith praxis is the condition of possibility for a social praxis is to say that this faith praxis is a permanent structure within history which is incapable of being transcended by human freedom because it is itself the condition of possibility for that freedom. But to say that is to violate the a priori of Metz' theology, that structure and freedom are dichotomous, not correlative. For, in Metz' judgment, history is an ongoing praxis which seeks to transcend the limits or structures of any given situation. The achievement of

55 Ibid., p. 112.
reality is always a transcending of what has already been achieved at any given stage in the process. Historically unconditioned freedom is the only constant Metz acknowledges.

Although Metz seems genuinely to desire that his theology be an affirmation of the goodness of history as anthropocentric, worldly and non-divine, his application of Platonic methodology to contemporary secularity and historical consciousness has the unfortunate effect of producing the historical counterpart to transcendental Thomism's ontological 'thin' essence. For the esse/essence distinction, in Metz' historical frame of reference, translates into freedom/nature. Instead of correlating them, however, Metz gives primacy to freedom over nature. By reducing nature to freedom, he in effect reduces essence to esse.

The result is the Porphyrian universe laid out on the horizontal instead of the vertical line. The flight of the mystic is now a flight not from the many to the One, but from history to the eschaton. The fallenness and alienation of the Platonic material realm has simply been transferred into the historical realm. And so flight into Absolute Being becomes flight into Absolute Future. The flight is now horizontal, not vertical, but it is flight all the same, from the relativities of history to the security of the eschaton.

The source for Metz' failure to affirm the value (reality) of history seems to be threefold. In the first place, he had adopted a perspective with regard to modern consciousness which is Marxist, not Christian, a perspective which could be characterized, in Metz' words, as "the categorial pre-eminence of the future in modern man's attitude to life." As Metz goes on to observe,

56 Ibid., p. 148.
... the whole of the modern critique of religion, especially Marxist, could be summed up by saying that Christianity, like religion in general, is helpless against this primacy of the future in our understanding of the world. 57

It is, therefore, this categorial pre-eminence of the future which, in Metz' judgment, requires us to give primacy to history over ontology, freedom over nature, eschatology over protology, praxis over theory.

But this Marxist perspective is, by definition, a Platonic perspective. For it supposes that polarities cannot be correlated or complementary; rather, unity is achieved by reducing one to the other. Such a perspective automatically makes it impossible to locate the really real in the world and history, for that realm is complex, not simple.

The Thomist act/potency methodology, on the other hand, supposes that unity is achieved by the correlation of principles, not by the reduction of one to the other. Attempts to locate real value in the world or in history must therefore proceed by means of a Thomist, not a Platonic, methodology, for only a Thomist methodology seeks in the correlation of complexity that intrinsic unity which is the world's goodness and reality.

In the second place, Metz seems to suppose, as do many Thomists, that all structure and intelligibility in the world must be identified with essence (nature). Esse, in such an understanding, translates into an unstructured dynamism or freedom capable of transcending the limits of an essentially-structured and therefore pre-determined (self-enclosed) universe. This identification of nature and structure/intelligibility is, of course, Aristotelian in origin. It is not, however, Thomist. As

57 Ibid.
was pointed out in chapter 6, the esse/essence distinction by which Thomas adapted Aristotle to Christian purposes provided the means by which one could account for intelligibility as contingent rather than as necessitated by essential principles (nature). As Keefe points out, the resultant Thomist ontology, whether taken as theological or philosophical, is no longer Aristotelian, for it has rejected a priori the necessitarian universe which Aristotle presupposed as the price of its rational consistency, and for it has substituted the created universe in which the Word has become flesh. And yet, by retaining the act-potency methodology, this Thomist ontology is quite as intent upon the intrinsic rationality of being as was Aristotelian metaphysics, for that ontology proceeds by the analysis of the intrinsic conditions of possibility, the intrinsic "causes," of substantial reality, whether nature or grace. The difference is that for Thomism this reality, whether as nature or as grace, is contingent, without any intrinsic necessity, although intrinsically rational.58

In other words, one need not, in a Thomist methodology, sacrifice either structure (intelligibility) or freedom (non-essential or supernatural dynamism). They are complementary, not contradictory.

Metz' unwillingness, therefore, to ground human freedom in an a priori principle or structure constitutive of concrete human beings, for fear of having that dynamism confined to the natural limits of an Aristotelian essence, is unwarranted by a proper understanding of Thomist methodology. Metz' refusal to ground that freedom anywhere within the material realm, furthermore, leads to a fundamental incoherence at the center of his theology. For God's activity as final cause, while accounting for the goal of human dynamism, cannot account for that dynamism itself. The Aristotelian supposition that real immanent movement requires an underlying intrinsic principle to account for that movement does not lose its validity in this situation. The principle need not be essential, as Aristotle supposed, but it must be intrinsic. Otherwise

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the movement can only be attributed to an extrinsic agent. In Metz' theology, that would mean having to say that the reality of human dynamism is not intrinsic (historical) but extrinsic (eschatological). That, in fact, is what Metz' method does require him to say. What it does not do is permit him to save the value of the historical realm.

The incoherence which invades Metz' theology at the level of nature/grace reappears at the level of historical praxis, where Christ's effectiveness in history is given no intrinsic grounding. Only a faith praxis (that is, an intelligible or structured praxis) as a permanent element within the historical process can account for such effectiveness within history. Yet his view of an 'emergent' Church, that is to say, a Church which distances itself from notions of a 'realized' eschatology, can hardly serve as the underlying principle whereby such an effectiveness is given an accounting. 59 Once again the impetus

59 Metz seems to want to distance the Church from notions of 'realized' eschatology for four reasons. First, such notions are indissociable, in his view, from a kind of 'triumphalism' in Christianity which has victimized people in the past. "Does there not break through within Christianity, again and again, a dangerous triumphalism connected with saving history, something the Jews above all have had to suffer from in a special way? But is this the unavoidable consequence of Christian faith in the salvation definitively achieved in Christ?" (The Emergent Church, trans. Peter Mann [New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1981], p. 24). Secondly, such notions are not meaningful in the contemporary world, which is prone to accepting evolutionary rather than eschatological [realized or otherwise] accounts of reality. "It is not primarily a question of the relationship between eschatology in the present and eschatology in the future (or a question of a balanced mixture of both), but rather of the relationship between an eschatological and an evolutionary consciousness of time, in which the idea of evolution is still misunderstood by many theologians, who think of it as pointing to a meaningful teleology" (Faith in History and Society, trans. David Smith [New York: The Seabury Press, A Crossroad Book, 1980], p. 177). Thirdly, any emphasis on a definitively achieved salvation in history blunts the critical acumen of Christianity. "It is not only necessary to be careful about the overworked specifically Christian element, the Christian identity that, at every opportunity, insists on the salvation that has already been given in Christ. There may also be a special kind
for this achievement would appear to be solely eschatological, which is
to say extrinsic. Under these circumstances, the real Church is eschato-
logical, not historical. Therefore, the same dynamism by which the human
community is able to transcend all societal and political structures can
be understood as operative in the Church as well, enabling the faith com-
munity to transcend the structures of the historical Church in its flight
toward the real (eschatological) Church. 60

of weariness with regard to this identity, with the result that the
dictatorship of what has already experienced is preferred to the
way of hope and expectation" (Ibid., p. 179). Finally, locating a
realized eschatology in the Church erroneously suggests that the Church
is an 'end in itself'. "What is specifically Christian about the be-
behavior of the institution? Is it really evident in the image the church
manifests of itself that it is not an end in itself; that its purpose
is to 'unmake' itself, in the literal and dialectical sense of the term,
on behalf of the reign of God? And that by this very fact the church
would have to differ from all other institutions with their laws of
self-preservation and survival?" (The Emergent Church, p. 113).

As a result, Metz refuses to Church structure any permanence in
history. This is reflected most clearly in his reduction of the Church's
insistence upon the sacramental indissolubility of marriage and the
celebacy of the priesthood to "legal rigorism" (Ibid., p. 6) or to
"church ordinances" which have no permanent value (Ibid., p. 64), in
his characterization of monogamy as "ideal" (Ibid., p. 6) and in his
insistence that 'basic communities' ought to "assimilate into their
eucharistic table fellowship the fundamental social conflicts and suffer-
ings surrounding them" (Ibid., p. 63).

Metz' refusal of a 'realized' eschatology, realized explicitly in
the Church, is the basis for his insistence upon hermeneutics over his-
tory. For nothing given historically, even in the Church, lies beyond
the theologian's hermeneutical critique. This insistence upon the
priority of hermeneutics, even with regard to the Church itself, places
Metz and others who 'eschatologize' the Church in a difficult position
vis a vis the Church. As Johns points out, "The church has remained
... the most conservative aspect of present-day Catholicism. This
results in a kind of schizoid relation to the church by many contemporary
theologians. The available alternative is not satisfactory. It forces
theologians to choose between developing a theoretical, theological con-
struct, not related to the church as it actually is, or abandoning the
existing church" (Man in the World, p. 182).

As Johns put it, in his study of Metz' theology, "The suggestion
that present monarchical forms of administration are sacred is belied by
the fact that they were modeled on secular systems. These secular forms
of government have been overcome for the most part in the modern,
This notion of the Church, however, has the effect of cutting faith off from intelligible structure, since faith is the only constant in the process. Once again, therefore, the problem emerges of how a faith cut off from such intelligibility is capable of mediating an explicitly Christian spirit. Such a question cannot be answered solely by reference to an eschatological reality. For if the reality is not already concretely present somewhere within history, it cannot be historically effective.

To eschatologize the really real is to dehistoricize it. Our only access to it then is either an overleaping of history into the 'eternal now' which is the eschaton (Bultmann et al) or a praxis which allows us to transcend, step by step, every structural blockade which, as the stuff of history, impedes our movement (freedom). But there is no reason to suppose that the praxis itself has any explicitly Christian effect upon history, any more than the overleaping does, since the praxis is without any intelligible Christian structure. It is, in fact, the whole point of praxis as praxis to transcend every structure.

The separation, therefore, which Metz supposes to exist between faith and praxis is overcome, in his theology, by reducing faith (theory) to praxis. But this is incoherent. For faith is knowledge (intelligibility). Faith as a praxis which transcends structure is no longer faith in any intelligible sense of the word. It has become Kierkegaard's leap into darkness or blind trust in that which can not only not be seen revolutionary, Western history of freedom. It is well known what the feudal and paternalistic model of priestly office is. What the priestly function of a witnessing and emancipating priesthood would be needs to be developed in a new model of the church" (Man in the World, p. 145). We see operative here the notion that all structures achieved in history, including ecclesiological ones, are capable of being "overcome" by freedom in history. No ecclesiological structure can therefore be accepted as permanent this side of the eschaton.
but cannot be known in any serious sense either. Faith reduces to a contentless hope projected into the future. \(^{61}\) Once faith loses its intelligibility, it can no longer inform the praxis to which it has been reduced. Therefore, such a praxis is incapable of making Christianity effective in history.

Methodologically speaking, one can suppose that faith and praxis enjoy, in the historical realm, either an a priori unity (Thomism) or an a priori separation (Platonism). If one supposes the former, then one supposes that their unity is already concretely given in history. The theological task, under these circumstances, is an historical task, that of identifying the concrete locus of their unity in history. If, on the other hand, one supposes their separation in history, then the

\(^{61}\) As Metz expresses it in Faith in History and Society (p. 73), "This theological approach is strongly characterized by the primacy of eschatology, and faith is primarily expressed in it as hope in solidarity." At this point, Metz' political theology joins hands with Moltmann's 'theology of hope'. For we see the same reductionism in Moltmann. Moltmann first rules out any metaphysical relationship, whether immanent or transcendent, between God and man, maintaining that the 'God of hope' is "the God whom we . . . cannot really have in us or over us but always only before us, who encounters us in his promises for the future, and whom we therefore cannot 'have' either, but can only await in active hope (Theology of Hope, trans. James W. Leitch [New York/Evanston/San Francisco/London: Harper & Row, 1967], p. 16). Having completely removed God from history, he takes up the relationship between faith and hope: "Hope is nothing else than the expectation of those things which faith has believed to have been truly promised by God. Thus, faith believes God to be true, hope awaits the time when this truth shall be manifested; faith believes that he is our Father, hope anticipates that he will ever show himself to be a Father toward us; faith believes that eternal life has been given to us, hope anticipates that it will some time be revealed; faith is the foundation upon which hope rests, hope nourishes and sustains faith" (Ibid., p. 20). In other words, faith is really indistinguishable from hope, for its object is not only invisible, as Paul tells us, but also as yet unrealized in history. Its object is therefore indistinguishable from hope's object. And their common object is, most significantly, unhistorical, unmetaphysical, disincarnate, not only not yet realized in history but incapable of being realized there.
theological task is one of working out the relationship between them. The theological task becomes an hermeneutical, not an historical, one. Metz, as we have already seen, supposes that the theological task today is an hermeneutical one. The de-historicizing of reality turns history into hermeneutics.

The notion that faith and praxis are separate entities brings us to the third problem in Metz' theology. Although Metz rightly supposes that pure theory (knowledge divorced from praxis) is incapable of achieving anything, he has not worked out the full implications of that position. Were he to do so, he would recognize that pure theory has never been an historical reality, even in those ages in which human consciousness has perceived it to be. For, if human knowledge had ever been purely theoretical, it would have been incapable of achieving anything and history would have ceased to be genuinely historical, i.e., capable of realizing novelty.

In other words, history did not begin when Vico called our attention to it, anymore than praxis began when Marx decreed that it should. Yet much in Metz' theology seems to suppose a kind of imaginative picture of history, in which pure theory and human praxis are viewed as separate from one another in history because human consciousness supposed them to be so. Human consciousness today is therefore thought to be confronted with the task of putting together those elements which human consciousness had heretofore kept separate, not only within its own consciousness but within history itself.

But this makes no sense. For if the unity of knowledge and praxis has yet to be achieved, then the achievement itself is impossible. For

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62 See p. 321.
the a priori condition of possibility for its achievement is precisely that underlying unity of theory and praxis which permits our actions to be informed and our knowledge to be operative. Without that a priori unity, history is meaningless and shifts in human consciousness are incapable of being explained. Nor can Christ's effectiveness in history be accounted for, since faith is a form of knowledge and therefore requires a praxis to make itself historically effective. The recognition of the importance of praxis may be a recent realization, but the praxis itself must have been previously given to us and not something which we today bring into existence by our own conscious efforts.

The major reason why Metz seems not to have thought through the implications of his own position would appear to lie in the fact that he confines himself to the social and political realms of human life. In those realms, the relationship between praxis and reality is not difficult to establish. Social and political goals are participated realities, i.e., they are not given but have to be achieved. Such a frame of reference, however, leaves untouched the question of human knowledge with regard to that which human praxis has not created. Metz recognizes the existence of a 'given' when he speaks of the world as a "quarry." But he does not consider the implications of that givenness with regard to human praxis. After all, how a quarry is mined depends, to some extent at least, on what kind of quarry it is. It conditions or controls what we are able to do with it.

The scientific quest for knowledge raises directly the question of the relationship between the human mind and the external 'given' which it investigates. Is the cosmos also real only to the extent to

63 See p. 309.
which we participate in it, or does it enjoy an existence independently of us? The question has important theological implications. For faith is a form of knowledge. And both faith and scientific knowledge refer to a reality which is not of man's making. Or so, at least, have scientists and theologians heretofore presumed. To understand better, therefore, the character of faith, we would be well advised to examine, not the social and political realms, but contemporary science, specifically those developments in quantum physics which have forced the scientific community to reexamine its own notions of the really real and our knowledge of it.

Such an examination has a second advantage, for, as was previously noted, Owen Barfield agrees with Metz as regards the anthropocentric character of contemporary consciousness, but does not agree with him with respect to its implications. Since Barfield raises the question from within the framework of contemporary science and its significance with regard to the relationship between knowledge and reality, a brief consideration of that science is indispensible for understanding both Barfield's theory of the history of human consciousness and the methodological implications of such a theory.

64 See p. 295.
CHAPTER 9

INDETERMINISM IN 20TH CENTURY QUANTUM PHYSICS:

THE SEARCH FOR REALITY

At that time when Marx was advising philosophers to change reality, the scientific community entertained few doubts as to its own ability to explain reality. Classical or Newtonian physics was enjoying unprecedented success in virtually every direction. It even developed its own variation of the faciendum, when William Thomson, Lord Kelvin, declared that Vico's certum quod factum must be replaced by certum quod facibile. English scientists, at least, concurred, providing mechanical models designed to exemplify the intelligibility of the mechanical universe which science understood to be the really real. When that universe collapsed, therefore, not only scientific knowledge, but also the assumption that science bore any relationship to reality, was called into question.

Out of Galileo's discoveries and those of Newton in the next generation there evolved a mechanical universe of forces, pressures, tensions, oscillations, and waves. There seemed to be no process of nature which could not be described in terms of ordinary experience, illustrated by a concrete model or predicted by Newton's amazingly accurate laws of mechanics. But before the turn of the past century certain deviations from these laws became apparent; and though these deviations were slight, they were of such a fundamental nature that the whole edifice of Newton's machine-like universe began to topple. The certainty that science can explain how things happen began to dim about twenty years ago. And right now it is a question whether scientific man is in touch with "reality" at all—or can ever hope to be.¹

In order to understand why the scientific road to reality has been called into question today, we must examine some of the changes contemporary science has gone through in understanding itself, particularly in light of the original Greek notion of science.

**Saving the Appearances: Greek Philosophy**

Plato divided knowledge into three categories: pure sense knowledge as the lowest type, pure intelligence as the highest, and a middle ground which he assigned to geometry or mathematics. Given Plato's notion of the negative character of matter, on the one hand, and the pure intelligibility of the formal realm, on the other, this middle knowledge was essential for bridging the gap between the misleading data provided by our senses and the true knowledge provided by our participation in the purely formal realm. Because the really real (pure form) manifested itself in material appearances (phenomena) which were imperfect imitations of the really real, it became the task of science (astronomy primarily) to reconcile the two from a position midway between them.

It was for the science of astronomy . . . to 'save' the 'appearances', that is, the apparent movements of the heavenly bodies, and particularly of sun, moon and planets, which were the most difficult to account for, by devising hypothetical patterns of movement, which would account for the appearances without infringing the fundamental principles.²

Whether or not the hypotheses were true was a matter of indifference, since truth had a bearing only with regard to the realm of pure forms and could be attained only by participating directly in that realm.

Such a notion of astronomy, and, indeed, the notion of science itself, could only have arisen once a distinction was made between

²Barfield, *Saving the Appearances*, p. 47.
extrasensory reality (form) and its material embodiment (phenomena). For only then could a gap between the two be recognized and the need to give some account for it felt.

From the Platonic presumption of an extrinsic formal reality, in which we directly participate, several important consequences followed. First, the phenomena were understood to be 'appearances', not 'things'. Secondly, any theory which could successfully account for the appearances without jeopardizing the pure forms was hypothetical, not true, knowledge. Plato's own use of the dichotomy between form and matter to account for the disparity between the really real and the appearances, therefore, has this same hypothetical character. Thirdly, true intelligibility was reduced to the immanent necessity of form. That which could not be reduced to intelligibility was therefore associated with the extrinsic and chaotic impact of matter. Fourthly, and as a consequence, Plato's notion of reality itself was reductionistic and extrinsic, residing in 'pure' intelligibility found only outside the material realm. Finally, Plato's notion of reality required an intuitive a priori participation in and knowledge of reality, not an analytic, discursive, a posteriori elaboration of that participation in reality and intelligibility.

Although, as we have seen, Aristotle's act/potency correlation of form and matter provided an important alternative view with regard to reality, that view was never fully exploited, either by Aristotle or by his followers. Instead, the primary notion of reality continued to be Platonic, whether Aristotle's Prime Movers, neo-Platonism's notion of the One or Christianity's notion of the one God. Through the Middle Ages, therefore Platonic notions of reality and of our

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3 See Phaedo 100a3; 101c9.
participation in it continued to define the character of scientific theories.\(^4\) The clash between the Catholic Church and Galileo was, as Barfield has pointed out, the first public indication that the traditional notion of science no longer commanded the allegiance of all scientists.

As Whitehead has noted, "The Greeks were over-theoretical. For them science was an offshoot of philosophy."\(^5\) This is certainly true, nor could it have been otherwise. For both Plato and Aristotle understood true knowledge to be participated, not scientific, knowledge. In fact, participated knowledge of reality provided the only basis upon which any other knowledge could be pursued. Furthermore, the Greeks placed much more emphasis upon the love of knowledge (philosophia) than upon knowledge alone (gnosis). Truth was to be contemplated, not controlled. Participation and contemplation were two sides of the same epistemological coin. After Galileo, the epistemological coinage of science changed radically.

**Realifying the Appearances: Scientific Idolatry**

Galileo's reluctance to have scientific theories relegated to the status of hypotheses became, in Newton's science, an outright refusal. Newton's "hypotheses non fingo" became the trademark of Newtonian science and classical physics. It was the epistemological counterpart of the newly discovered principle of impetus, which freed the phenomena from any need for immanent movers and therefore from any need for participation.

\(^4\) See ST I, 32, 1 ad 2, and In 2 De cael., I, 17, for a Thomist re-statement of the hypothetical character of scientific theory.

in a reality which went beyond the phenomena themselves. The notion of a mechanistic universe which this absence of participation produced lent itself well to the Cartesian separation of mind from extension. The Greek quest for hypothetical accounts of the relationship between form and matter was, for the new science, a non-problem.

Since the new methodical principles of natural science, especially of mechanics, excluded all tracing of corporeal phenomena back to spiritual forces, matter could be considered as a reality of its own independent of the mind and of any supernatural powers. The "matter" of this period is "formed matter," the process of formation being interpreted as a causal chain of mechanical interactions; it has lost its connection with the vegetative soul of Aristotelian philosophy, and therefore the dualism between matter and form is no longer relevant.6

For classical science, reality is composed of objects and forces, the external impact of idol upon idol, as Barfield has called it.

The break with Greek thought was enormous. Because the phenomena no longer participated a reality beyond themselves, they were now regarded as reality itself. And because hypothetical statements bridging the gap between sense knowledge and real knowledge were no longer required, scientific theory became truth, not hypothesis. It replaced the participated knowledge which from the Greeks through the Middle Ages had been regarded as the only true knowledge. It was also a gnosis, for having eliminated from reality the notion of mind, it supposed that the human mind can eventually know everything there is to know about material reality. It was therefore singularly well-disposed toward the Marxist directive to change reality. For, having once mastered reality, it believed it would be in an excellent position to control and manipulate that reality.

The new science attempted to be a kind of Platonism without participation. This forced it into a notion of the relationship between mind and matter unenvisaged by Plato. For, while Plato supposed the separation of form and matter in order that there might be a realm of pure forms and a material reality into which formal intelligibilities had somehow 'fallen', he never supposed that the material world as we know it is constituted by a strict separation of the two. The scientific separation of mind and matter produced enormous problems, two of which are particularly relevant to our purposes.

The first of these lay in the fact that, while the new scientific idolatry drew the same connection between intelligibility and necessity which had been drawn by Plato and Greek philosophy in general, that intelligibility was now the mechanical intelligibility of matter and not the conscious intelligibility of mind. As Whitehead notes,

Tennyson goes to the heart of the difficulty. It is the problem of mechanism which appalls him.

"'The stars,' she whispers, 'blindly run.'"

This line states starkly the whole philosophic problem implicit in the poem. Each molecule blindly runs. 7

Tennyson and the whole Romantic movement set themselves resolutely against such a dehumanized notion of reality. Wordsworth's pantheism was an attempt to escape scientific idolatry by a return to that 'original participation' of which Barfield speaks. But that escape hatch was, in fact, no longer available. For the Kantian critique of Descartes had, if nothing else, revealed the naivety involved in any notion of reality which left out the workings of the human mind.

The second problem lay in the scientific notion of reality as objectively given and mechanical. Newtonian physics supposed that the

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phenomena are 'things' or objects located spatially in a 'thing' called ether. Every phenomenon from the atom to the universe was a 'thing'. But nobody could verify the existence of the ether. Newtonian physics also supposed that all motion could be reduced to mechanical principles. But no one could reduce gravitation to such principles. The problem was masked somewhat by continuing to call gravitation 'action at a distance,' as though a description of the phenomenon could be regarded as an account of the force. But the problem would not go away, and scientists knew that 'action at a distance' explained nothing.

The true contours of the Newtonian notion of reality, however, did not really become apparent until Max Planck introduced his quantum theory in 1900. His theory that radiant energy is propagated not continuously but in discrete quanta, together with Einstein's later suggestion that all forms of radiant energy (light, x-rays, etc.) travel in space as discrete quanta, called into question the notion that atoms were the undifferentiated chunks of matter (things) which Newtonian science had supposed them to be. The building block of the universe was beginning to fray around the edges, if not actually dissolve, under the impact of these new theories. When Einstein went on to suggest that the results of the Michelson-Morley experiment be taken at face value (the ether can't be discerned, therefore there is no ether) and that gravitation is not a force but a function of acceleration, the Newtonian 'reality' simply gave way. Its sudden collapse, as Jaki points out,

... left a whole generation wondering about a long array of "final conclusions," "demonstrated principles," "self-evident truths," and "absolute certainties" that were only imperfect reflections of nature in her true reality.8

Gary Zukav notes that "The theory of the ether was the last attempt to explain the universe by explaining something." While he is somewhat overly optimistic in his judgment that the 'thing' mentality disappeared from science with the ether, he is correct with regard to the scientific community as a whole. That community is no longer committed to the Newtonian notion of reality. In fact, one of the major problems within that community today centers precisely around the question of an objectively-given reality and to what degree, if any, scientific knowledge bears upon that reality.

**Saving Reality: Scientific Metaphysics**

One lesson which the collapse of Newtonian physics drove home to the scientific community was the fact that the theories of Newtonian physics, because they were treated as truth itself, had become a creed. As a result, scientific empiricism had become, in practice, a form of Platonic apriorism. "For the classical physicist understanding a phenomenon meant simply reducing it to the Newtonian laws." Reality was forced to submit to the 'truth' of science. Experiments were conducted not to determine whether or not the ether exists, but solely to confirm the existence of the ether which Newtonian principles required in order that their own validity might be confirmed. Newtonian physics was, in that sense, a state of mind in which the ether existed in scientists's minds because the worldview they had constructed within their minds required its presence. It took not only some courage, but

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10 Jaki, *The Relevance of Physics*, p. 73.
an enormous mental conversion from such a worldview, to be able to suggest, as Einstein did, that there is no ether in the universe, the state of the scientific mind to the contrary.

With Einstein and Planck, therefore, science returned to a notion of itself more in line with the original Greek view of science as hypothesis rather than as truth. The phenomena also returned to the realm of appearances rather than of things. The return was only partial, however, for now the hypotheses were explicitly understood to be, in the words of Einstein, "free creations" of the human mind. Furthermore, these hypotheses were thought, by Einstein and Planck, among others, to carry us beyond the sensory data to a type of scientific knowledge which was not just physical but metaphysical. These men were Kantian enough to suppose that we have no direct access to the thing-in-itself, but they did believe that scientific theories were capable of providing an account of reality which did not simply mirror our sense perceptions or the structures of our minds. As Einstein noted in a letter to a friend, written in 1952,

You find it surprising that I think of the comprehensibility of the world (insofar as we are entitled to speak of such a world) as a miracle or an eternal mystery. But surely, a priori, one should expect the world to be chaotic, not to be grasped by thought in any way. One might (indeed one should) expect that the world evidenced itself as lawful only so far as we grasp it in an orderly fashion. This would be a sort of order like the alphabetical order of words. On the other hand, the kind of order created, for example, by Newton's gravitational theory is of a very different character. Even if the axioms of the theory are posited by man, the success of such a procedure supposes in the objective world a high degree of order, which we are in no way entitled to expect a priori. Therein lies the 'miracle' which becomes more and more evident as our knowledge develops.\(^{11}\)

In one very important sense, however, Planck and Einstein remained wedded to a classist science. For they both supposed that scientific

\(^{11}\) Cited in Jaki, The Relevance of Physics, pp. 192-193.
theory and the phenomena ought to enjoy a one-on-one relationship. Only by supposing this could one ever envisage science being able to construct a complete theory of reality, and Einstein and Planck were both committed to the construction of such a theory.

Whatever the meaning assigned to the term complete, the following requirement for a complete theory seems to be a necessary one: every element of the physical reality must have a counterpart in the physical theory.12

In other words, the hypothetical character of scientific theories is provisional, not permanent. Science is hypothetical not in relation to a true knowledge which is acquired elsewhere, but only in relation to the incompleteness of its own theories. As Planck puts it,

A constant, unified world-picture is, as I have tried to show, the fixed goal which true natural science, in all its forms, is perpetually approaching; and in physics we may justly claim that our present world-picture, although it shimmers with the most varied colors imparted by the individuality of the researcher, nevertheless contains certain features which can never be effaced by any revolution, either in nature or in the human mind. This constant element, independent of every human (and indeed of every intellectual) individuality, is what we call "the real."13

There is, therefore, already an element of "reality" in scientific theories. And the closer science gets to a complete theory of reality (one which contains within the theory an explanatory principle for every phenomenon), the more complete will be the truth of the theory as well.

This is precisely the notion with which Newtonian physics began. It was, in fact, the very success of Newton's principles in accounting


for virtually everything that turned that enterprise from a scientific (empirical) quest into a state of mind or creed. Although Einstein and Planck, more than any other modern physicists, were responsible for overturning that creed, they were never able to detach themselves from the notion that science, given enough time, will someday be able to provide a complete account of the phenomena.

This confidence that a complete account of the phenomena will someday be possible rests upon a combination of Platonic and Aristotelian assumptions about reality. It is Platonic in that it looks to a single theory (Einstein's search for a Unified Field Theory is an example of this) and a single undifferentiated principle to which all of the phenomena can be reduced. In an Einsteinian universe, this single principle would appear to be energy. According to this view of things, matter is "frozen energy," and it is this "frozen energy" which "creates space and time."\(^{14}\) Einstein's approach is, however, also Aristotelian to the extent that it locates this single principle (energy) within the material universe and not outside it.

At the same time, however, there is a tendency in both Einstein and Planck to seek something beyond mere energy to account for the intelligibility of things. Although both are reluctant to speak of a personal God, neither is unwilling to speak of God in the sense of Mind and to attribute to that Mind the fundamental intelligibility which both believe the universe to exemplify. Hence, although Einstein and Planck retain the notion of an intelligibility that is irrevocably linked with necessity, they avoid the notion of a "blind necessity" dissociated from Mind.

They also avoid the notion of an intelligibility which is in any way anthropocentric.

What really matters is that we recognize such a fixed goal, even if it can never be quite attained: this goal is not the complete adaptation of our ideas to our impressions, but the complete liberation of the physical world-picture from the individuality of the creative mind. There is a paraphrase, in rather more precise terms, of what I previously called the emancipation from anthropomorphous elements; we should not be misunderstood as implying that the world-picture ought to be completely detached from the creative intellect itself, which would be an absurd conclusion.

It would appear that what Planck has in mind here is the need for human intelligence to become as detached from the sensory as is that intelligence which underlies the material phenomena. Therefore, while Planck would never deny that scientific knowledge always begins with the sensory, he would most emphatically insist that it is capable of rising above the sensory to a pure intelligibility not immediately given in the sensory data. Hence, there is in Planck, and Einstein as well, a strong Platonic streak which seeks in scientific theory that pure intelligibility which Plato reserved for our participation in the realm of pure forms.

In quantum physics, that 'pure' intelligibility has taken the form of mathematics. The move from classical physics to quantum physics was a move from the use of mechanical models to the use of mathematical abstraction. The very name, quantum physics, is itself an indication of that quantifying of all qualities which constitutes panmathematicization. The enthusiasm for such a procedure is today almost unbounded. As Whitehead points out,

In a sense, Plato and Pythagoras stand nearer to modern physical science than does Aristotle. The two former were mathematicians,

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whereas Aristotle was the son of a doctor, though of course he was not thereby ignorant of mathematics. The practical counsel to be derived from Pythagoras, is to measure, and thus to express quality in terms of numerically determined quantity. But the biological sciences, then and till our own time, have been overwhelmingly classificatory. Accordingly, Aristotle by his Logic throws the emphasis on classification. The popularity of Aristotelian Logic retarded the advance of physical science throughout the Middle Ages. If only the schoolmen had measured instead of classifying, how much they might have learnt!  

The Einstein/Planck notion of science, therefore, is a gnosis which looks to science to provide that access to the phenomena which will one day produce a complete theory capable of accounting for all of the phenomena. In such a theory, the necessary intelligibility of the world will find its pure expression in mathematical formulas.

Unfortunately for Planck and Einstein, they had hardly begun to topple Newton's world-picture before they were confronted by other scientists claiming to topple their own. The major assault on their position took the form of Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, put forth in 1925. According to this principle, we cannot measure simultaneously the position and velocity of a sub-atomic particle. We must make a choice between the two. Whichever of the two is not chosen in a particular experiment remains uncertain or undetermined by the experiment. This limit is not, according to Heisenberg, a temporary setback to science which can someday be overcome by brighter scientists and/or better instruments. It is a permanent feature on the scientific landscape.

At once that latent apriorism which had almost made shipwreck of physics in its Newtonian phase began to make itself felt in the views of Einstein and Planck. Gnosticism invariably requires, as Voegelin

has pointed out, that "In the clash between system and reality, reality must give way." The thought that reality itself makes it impossible for us to submit the phenomena to a complete scientific analysis (and therefore to a complete scientific theory as well) was anathema to both Einstein and Planck. Einstein began speaking of 'hidden variables' underlying the phenomena, while Planck began speaking of scientific error and the need to return to the drawingboard.

Clearly in these circumstances the differential equations of classical physics lose their fundamental importance; and for the time being the task of discovering in all their details the laws underlying the real physical processes must be regarded as insolvable. But of course it would be incorrect to infer that no such laws exist: the failure to discover a law will, on the contrary, have to be attributed to an inadequate formulation of the problem and a consequently incorrect posing of the question. The question now is wherein the mistake consists and how it can be removed.17

All of this is uncomfortably reminiscent of the earlier failure to discover the ether and of the repeated attempts to reformulate the problem and repose the question, in search of an error and an ether which no one could find. Despite the protests of Einstein and Planck, however, "the fuzziness of indeterminacy enveloped everything."18

Handling the Appearances: Scientific Positivism

Newtonian physics had developed over three centuries a very large set of concepts which were thought to relate to the 'things' of reality on an either/or basis. Things were either waves or particles, either space or time, either objects or forces. What quantum physics discovered, to its discomfiture, was that these characteristics are not


18Jaki, The Relevance of Physics, p. 93.
found in separation from, but in correlation with, one another. Reality is a space-time continuum. Light waves are particles; subatomic particles are waves. Objects are forces. The Heisenberg uncertainty principle is a statement of the limits which this dual character of the phenomena places on scientists. For, in order to determine the velocity (a function of the wave length) of a sub-atomic phenomenon, one must suppress its particle characteristics. Conversely, in order to discover the precise location of the phenomenon (a function of its particle characteristics), one must suppress the spatial spread of the wave length.

The problems did not stop here, however. They extended to the very language which physics uses to express its theories. It soon became apparent that words like 'wave' and 'particle,' 'space' and 'time,' no longer enjoyed a one-on-one relationship with the phenomena. To many scientists, in fact, it became unclear as to whether such language referred to reality at all, for its terms seemed to bear rather on the ways in which scientists described their own perceptions of the phenomena than on the phenomena themselves.

A new notion of science and its relationship to the phenomena began to take shape. Known as the Copenhagen Interpretation of Quantum Physics, it was anticipated by Ernst Mach and formulated by Werner Heisenberg and Niels Bohr. According to this interpretation of quantum theory, the phenomena are solely appearances and scientific theories are solely hypothetical. Against Einstein and Planck, however, the new interpretation supposes that the hypotheses never go beyond the sensory data. As Mach puts it, "Such a concept is no more than the ability, designated and stimulated by the word, to recall the single experiences
from which the concept was gradually formed."  

Fundamental to this notion of concepts which do not go beyond the sensory has been Bohr's theory of complementarity. According to this theory, all of the phenomena available to science are characterized by the unavoidable duality which has been found in the subatomic realm. Bohr concludes from this that the duality is not a function of the phenomena themselves, but of the scientific investigator. For, by the very way in which he constructs his experiments, he pre-determines that aspect of the phenomena which his experiment shall investigate. 'Waves' and 'particles' are therefore a product of the interaction between the scientist and the phenomena, and not independent characteristics of the phenomena themselves. As Heisenberg puts it, "we have to remember that what we observe is not nature in itself but nature exposed to our method of questioning."  

The nub of the problem, according to Heisenberg and Bohr, is that we are forced to use the concepts of classical physics to deal with the phenomena of quantum physics, even though the phenomena no longer match the concepts. The development of a new set of concepts is ruled out, simply because the concepts of classical physics reflect the way in which the human mind thinks. We are therefore in the unhappy position of having to impose upon the phenomena the a priori conceptual framework we bring to them.

This, of course, is pure Kantianism. It supposes that the a priori

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20 Heisenberg, Physics and Philosophy, p. 58.
categories which Kant described, at a time when Newtonian physics was in full stride, are absolute structures which shall forever be valid, just as Kant described them, despite the fact that the worldview within which they were formulated has long since collapsed. It also introduces into physics a subjective element which can never be overcome.

Objectivity has become the first criterion for the value of any scientific result. Does the Copenhagen Interpretation of quantum theory still comply with this ideal? One may perhaps say that quantum theory corresponds to this ideal as far as possible. Certainly quantum theory does not contain genuine subjective features, it does not introduce the mind of the physicist as a part of the atomic event. But it starts from the division of the world into the "object" and the rest of the world, and from the fact that at least for the rest of the world we use the classical concepts in our description. This division is arbitrary and historically a direct consequence of our scientific method; the use of the classical concepts is finally a consequence of the general human way of thinking. But this is already a reference to ourselves and in so far our description is not completely objective.21

According to the Copenhagen Interpretation, therefore, science is not in the business of accounting for but rather of handling the phenomena.

Expressed very briefly, the task of scientific knowledge now appears as: the adaptation of ideas to facts and the adaptation of ideas to one another.22

Scientific positivism has nothing to do with the really real; its primary concern is not what is but what works.

In this new interpretation of quantum physics, two things manifestly do not work. The first of these is the notion of substance. Because our knowledge is incapable of going beyond the sensory data, it is no longer relevant to speak of any reality underlying the phenomena.

We imagine an extrasensory group of elements, a carrier of qualities, a substance of the objects, in the philosophical sense.

21 Ibid., pp. 55-56.

This idea has no foundation in the elements which we have called ABCDE . . . ; it is purely a product of creative fantasy.23

Furthermore, every attempt to locate some fundamental, irreducible material particle which could be regarded as a building block of the universe, as atoms once were, has failed. Although there are still scientists to be found who assure us that "physicists are about to take the important leap toward a complete understanding of matter" based on "the concept of quarks as the fundamental constituents of matter,"24 Jaki's assessment of the situation seems more reasonable.

Little over half a century ago the atoms were still pictured as the ultimate, absolutely hard, indivisible building stones of matter. Later the electrons, protons, and neutrons inherited these majestic attributes. Today, however, many a physicist prefers to compare the structure of matter to a succession of layers that, like the layers of an onion, reveal themselves only one at a time. What is more, today's physicist is beset with the premonition that the number of those layers for all practical purposes might turn out to be infinite.25

The inability to find any purely material substrate underlying the phenomena, together with a Kantian epistemology which turns the scientist back upon himself, has led some members of the scientific community to suppose that quantum physics is a modern rediscovery of the insights of Buddhist mysticism. Mach himself was led from quantum physics to Buddhism. And Zukav's book, The Dancing Wu Li Masters, makes repeated attempts to link the Copenhagen Interpretation to the Buddhist mythos. In this scientific turn to pantheism (original participation), all phenomena (including the human mind) are regarded as participations in a single, undifferentiated flux or chaos which is immediately available

23 Ibid., p. 42.


25 Jaki, The Relevance of Physics, p. 141.
to human sensory experience (mythos) but incapable of being reduced in any way to human thought (logos).

According to Finkelstein, a language of mythos, a language which alludes to experience but does not attempt to replace it or to mold our perceptions of it is the true language of physics. This is because not only the language that we use to communicate our daily experience, but also mathematics, follows a certain set of rules (classical logic). Experience itself is not bound by these rules. Experience follows a much more permissive set of rules (quantum logic). Quantum logic is not only more exciting than classical logic, it is more real. It is based not upon the way that we think of things, but upon the way that we experience them.  

The phenomena are, accordingly, incapable of being integrated by any theory which would render them intelligible. The appearances cannot be saved.

According to Buddhist theory, reality is "virtual" in nature. What appears to be "real" objects in it, like trees and people, actually are transient illusions which result from a limited mode of awareness. The illusion is that parts of an overall virtual process are "real" (permanent) "things." Enlightenment is the experience that "things," including "I," are transient, virtual states devoid of separate existences, momentary links between illusions of the past and illusions of the future unfolding in the illusion of time.  

As The Heart Sutra of Mahayana Buddhism puts it, "form is emptiness, emptiness is form."  

Although not all scientific positivists would care to travel down such a Buddhist road, the fact remains that their interpretation of quantum physics does, to all practical intents and purposes, empty the phenomena of all intelligibility (form). As Bohr remarked to Einstein, "through a singularly fruitful cooperation of a whole generation of physicists we are nearing the goal where logical order to a large extent

26 Zukav, The Dancing Wu Li Masters, p. 141.
27 Ibid., p. 236.
28 Ibid., p. 240.
allows us to avoid deep truth."  

The second thing which does not work is the notion of causality. The Heisenberg uncertainty principle indicates that no laws of causality can be formulated for predicting the activity of individual subatomic phenomena. Laws of statistical probability replace laws of causality. This replacement is enormously significant, for it signals a shift, as Zukav points out, in one of our most fundamental assumptions about the universe, namely, that of the relationship between chaos and order. The laws of causality gave us a picture of order beneath chaos. Statistical probability, on the other hand, "is a picture of chaos beneath order."  

What works, therefore, are laws of statistical probability. Such laws suppose the universe to be governed by both necessity and chance. Quantum physics was not the first scientific discipline to reach this conclusion. Many biologists, starting with Darwin, have supposed the evolutionary process to be comprised of just the same combination. Nor is the idea a recent one. It goes back to Democritus and his notion that "Everything existing in the universe is the fruit of chance and of necessity."  It is this notion of pure chance that Einstein found so obnoxious about the Copenhagen Interpretation, provoking his remark that "God does not play dice."

It is also this notion of chance, as Barfield points out, which


30Zukav, The Dancing Wu Li Masters, p. 194.

signals the breakdown of the scientific enterprise. As he notes with regard to the Darwinian theory of evolution formulated during that period of a Newtonian (idolatrous) worldview,

... astronomy and physics had taught men that the business of science is to find hypotheses to save the appearances. By a hypothesis, then, these earthly appearances must be saved; and saved they were by the hypothesis of—chance variation. Now the concept of chance is precisely what a hypothesis is devised to save us from. Chance, in fact, = no hypothesis. Yet so hypnotic, at this moment in history, was the influence of the idols and of the special mode of thought which had begotten them, that only a few—and their voices soon died away—were troubled by the fact that the impressive vocabulary of technological investigation was actually being used to denote its breakdown; as though, because it is something we can do with ourselves in the water, drowning should be included as one of the different ways of swimming.32

The central problem in the Copenhagen Interpretation seems to revolve around the fact that it, like Newtonian physics, attempts to be Platonic in a way unenvisaged by Plato. Whereas Newtonian physics attempts to reduce all of reality to a single theory, it does so without Plato's notion of participation, and hence concludes that truth resides in its theory and not in an extrasensory reality. The Copenhagen approach, on the other hand, attempts to retain the Platonic notion of participation, but it does so without Plato's notion of reality as form. Because "form is emptiness," reality is chaotic and the phenomena are illusions. Hence, although the Copenhagen Interpretation continues to draw the same connection between intelligibility and necessity as had previous scientific thinkers (aggregates of subatomic phenomena behave in necessary and intelligible patterns), it introduces an element of contingency (individual phenomena do not behave in predictable fashions) which can only be regarded as irrationality.

32 Barfield, Saving the Appearances, p. 64.
or pure chance. No complete theory of the phenomena is possible under these circumstances, since the phenomena themselves are not completely rational. Such a view of science, therefore, is either a pragmatic gnosis (one can manipulate the phenomena) or an Eastern mysticism (one can surrender oneself to the irrationality).

Einstein and Planck saw the breakdown implicit in the Copenhagen Interpretation, but they were unable to formulate any alternatives to it. They have not been without their successors, however. We have already seen how Fritzsch looks to the quark to provide the cornerstone of a complete scientific account of reality. Another much more promising alternative has been offered by Louis de Broglie and his followers.

Louis de Broglie, whose work in the 1920’s marked the beginning of wave mechanics, had originally hoped to find some means to account for particles as synthetic entities with definite velocity and position. He therefore opposed Bohr and Heisenberg at the Solvay Conference of 1927. It was only in 1952, however, that he seriously set about the task of developing an alternative theory with regard to subatomic particles. His work convinced him that the indeterminism which Heisenberg attributed to subatomic particles actually reflects the uncertainties of scientific measurements, not a fundamental indeterminism in the particles themselves.

Although de Broglie agreed with Bohr and Heisenberg that the classical models of waves and particles were inadequate, he did not think that it would be impossible to give a complete description of a particle; instead, he proposed a new model. His conception of a particle was that of a wave with a hump—that is, a wave whose amplitude is not regular over its whole extent, but comes to a marked peak in one particular region. 33

Hence de Broglie made a distinction between the particle itself and its dual characteristics, which he called 'wave' and 'corpuscle' respectively. In this way, he was able to speak of waves and corpuscles as a complementarity within the particle rather than as a product of the interaction between the scientist and the particles.

As against Bohr's image of the complementary properties of wave and corpuscle, the theory shows that it is possible to consider the particle as a complex entity which is always well defined. It follows that the duality has become a synthesis--both localised and extended, and both a corpuscle of matter and a field of energy. 34

That scientific measurements of such particles can never be wholly accurate indicates, in de Broglie's judgment, not that the universe is ungoverned by laws (Heisenberg, Bohr), but that it is governed by an infinite number of laws which can never be reduced to a single formalization. Quantum particles act as though some new force were added to those postulated by Newton. De Broglie attributed this force to what he called the "subquantum medium," which in turn manifests the same statistical probabilities as does the subatomic realm. The statistical probabilities with which quantum physics deals are, therefore, to be found throughout the universe. They do not, however, manifest a fundamental lawlessness or chaos in reality. "The statistical character of quantum laws provides us with an example of the endless complexity of natural phenomena, rather than a fundamental indeterminism."

Thus de Broglie reintroduced into scientific theory first, a notion of substance (the particle which underlies and unifies wave and corpuscle), secondly, an Aristotelian notion of the synthetic character of material substance (particles are complex, not simple), and thirdly,

34 Ibid., p. 206.
35 Ibid., p. 207.
a notion of causality (indeterminism is caused by the subquantum realm). He also reintroduced the 'ether' (the subquantum medium) as the 'hidden' variable which accounts for indeterminism, not, however, in order to overturn Heisenberg's uncertainty principle but in order to make it intelligible. The uncertainty principle, according to this view, "expresses the uncertainty of our knowledge of an objective phenomenon which is vitally significant—the subquantum medium."  

Scientific Theories and Reality: The Problems

There are two primary problems with regard to the status of scientific theories today, one of which we have already seen in Thomism, the other of which appears in Metz. The first of these problems is that of the thick vs the thin essence, or, in scientific terms, the thick vs the thin hypothesis.

The Copenhagen Interpretation of quantum physics parallels, in a way, the position of Carlo and Clarke, in that both suppose the material realm to be, to some extent at least, unreal. In Carlo and Clarke, this relative unreality expresses itself in the reduction of essence to esse. In the Copenhagen Interpretation, it expresses itself in the reduction of the phenomena to illusion or to the subjective experiences of the scientist. For Carlo and Clarke, reality is meta-physical (Ipsum Esse); for the Copenhagen physicists, reality is physical or experiential, which is to say, fundamentally irrational.

Both positions are reductionistic, though in different directions. Carlo and Clarke reduce a plurality of intelligibilities to a single undifferentiated intelligibility (form is esse). The Copenhagen School

36 Ibid., p. 217.
reduces a plurality of unintelligibilities (all singularities) to a single undifferentiated chaos (form is emptiness). Thin essence Thomism is doubly Platonic, because it not only reduces material plurality to extrinsic unity but also reduces the relatively intelligible to the absolutely intelligible. The Copenhagen School is Platonic only in that it reduces a multiplicity of irrationalities to a single irrational flux. The irrationality, however, to which things are reduced is, as many scientists themselves have recognized, much more Buddhist than Platonic. For it is a rejection of metaphysics altogether.

The Einsteinian position resembles, in its own way, that of Gilsonian Thomists. Einstein seeks, on the one hand, a 'thick' hypothesis, that is, an hypothesis which contains theoretical counterparts for every intelligibility science discovers. This is precisely that substantialist or essentialist point of view which Gilson himself advocated for science, a point of view which prescinds from the existential character of reality. According to Gilson,

The true reason why the universe appears to some scientists as mysterious is that, mistaking existential, that is, metaphysical, questions for scientific ones, they ask science to answer them. Then they are puzzled, and they say that the universe is mysterious.\footnote{Etienne Gilson, \textit{God and Philosophy} (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1941), p. 123.}

Gilson's perturbation here is a mirror of that perturbation experienced by Einstein and Planck in the face of Heisenberg's uncertainty principle. A "substantialist" perspective, which seeks a one-on-one correspondence between essences and intelligibilities, must necessarily run into trouble, if the universe is existential and not essential, a point as unappreciated by Gilson as it has been by Einstein and Planck.
Furthermore, both the Einsteinian and the Gilsonian positions run up against a second problem, the problem of maintaining a 'thick' essence or hypothesis in the absence of any theory of participation which could account for the existence of specific perfections. We have already seen how those perfections, even in Gilson, tend to be reduced to esse. 38 We have also seen how the theoretical components of an Einsteinian hypothesis tend to be reduced to energy. 39 Both Einstein and Gilson try to preserve the absolute objectivity of the phenomenal realm. In the final analysis, both fail and for the same reason. For neither has a theory of participation which can save the universal.

We can continue to apprehend phenomena as participating one another, in a way which renders logical predication meaningful, only as long as we continue to apprehend them as participated by ourselves. When that ceases, they become idols, and idols do not participate one another. Nor are they connected in any necessary way with their names. They are simply 'there'. . . . Thus, early in the twentieth century, formal logic begins to boggle much more heavily at the notion of predication, and really to feel the difficulty of distinguishing it from an assertion of numerical identity. Sooner or later a Wittgenstein or an Ayer inevitably arises, convinced that all predication must be either false or tautologous—a state of mind which was playfully foreshadowed by Plato more than two thousand years ago in his dialogue, The Sophist. To this point of view, the belief that in the act of predication the mind is operating, not only on words but on things themselves, can only appear as a kind of survival of totemism. And that is indeed what it is, if for 'totemism' we substitute 'participation'. 40

Hence, in Einstein we find the same kind of Platonic reductionism as in the Copenhagen Interpretation, only this time in the direction of essential intelligibility. Form is energy. However, since energy per se cannot be immediately identified with intelligibility, Mind must somehow be associated with the energy. Einstein's rather vague pantheism

38 See pp. 182-183.
39 See p. 342.
40 Barfield, Saving the Appearances, pp. 98-99.
was a product of the reductionism latent in his notion of scientific theory.

The Platonism both in Einstein's perspective and in that of the Copenhagen School manifests itself identically with regard to intelligibility. Both seek a non-anthropomorphic account of intelligibility; hence both reduce it to mathematics (Plato's middle knowledge). In quantum physics, we have therefore witnessed a radical movement away from mechanical models and visual representations of the phenomena to mathematical abstractions designed to reflect more adequately the 'pure' as opposed to human (materialized) intelligibility which scientists suppose their knowledge to be. This has introduced a rift between scientific knowledge and general or common sense knowledge, and has in fact raised enormous problems in the minds of both the public and the scientific community as to what constitute the actual phenomena of the world. To employ the example used previously, is the actual phenomenon the tree or is it the quark (and other subatomic particles) which constitute the tree or is it the 'wave' or 'corpuscle' which constitutes the particle?

The second problem in quantum physics today (which it shares with Metz' theology) is a gnosticism which seems necessarily to accompany all 'dis-godded' or de-participated perspectives on reality. Once the phenomena are no longer regarded as participations in divinity, the notion of knowledge as contemplation (sophia) ceases to have any meaning. Knowledge is then sought 1) for the sake of devising a complete theory which can explain all of reality (Einstein), 2) for the sake of being able to predict probabilities (Copenhagen Interpretation) or 3) for the sake of changing the world or reality itself (Marx, Metz, liberation theology, technology).
Gnosticism, therefore, always links knowledge with some form of salvation from the apparent irrationality of the particular individual contingent event. If the world is thought to be intelligible (ordered), then knowledge is the key to our eventual control of all events. Such is basically the Einsteinian point of view, which supposes that science will eventually be able to explain and control everything. If the world is thought to be irrational (unordered), knowledge is the key which enables us to manipulate at least part of it. Such is basically the Copenhagen point of view, which supposes that quantum physics can predict and therefore control mass phenomena, since it is only the individual phenomenon that is irrational. 41 If the world is thought to be sinful and evil, knowledge (as praxis) is the key to transcending the world's alienating conditions. Such is basically Metz' point of view,

41 The Copenhagen approach has evidenced recently, among those scientists who have adopted it, a much more clearly defined proclivity for Eastern types of gnosis. Thomas Molnar, in a recent article on the Cordoba Colloquium of 1979 ("Science and the New Gnosticism," Modern Age 27 [Spring 1983]:132-138), dubs this scientific outlook as the New Gnosticism. Pointing out that the Cordoba Colloquium was attended by representatives of Iranian, Japanese and Hindu thought, but by no representatives of Christian religion, he asks, "Why this over-representation of Buddhism, Tao, yoga and Zen, why no Christian philosopher?" (p. 134). Noting the "epistemological impasse" into which the quantum physicists at the conference had been led by their inability or unwillingness "to distinguish between matter and spirit, between the subject who observes and the observed object" (p. 134), he concludes that the participants were philosophically naïve. "Following the Zeitgeist, they reject Western metaphysics, but rush to adopt oriental monism, with the excuse that it postulates the flux as the essence of the universe, and that things appear then as arbitrary stopping places in the endless cosmic process. This may still be called a metaphysics, but a better name for it may be gnosis: it allows being to fuse with a substanceless universe" (p. 135). This "new gnosticism," according to Molnar, is characterized by five theses: 1) the universe is uncreated, 2) spirit arises out of the potentialities of matter, 3) the Elect of the new gnosticism are scientists, 4) the new gnostic salvation "consists of the absolutization of the superior man, superior among all the other intelligent consciousnesses because he understands the working of the cosmos" (p. 138), and 5) the new gnosticism is not anti-religion, but a superior kind of religion (without God).
which supposes that human freedom is not bound to any structure and therefore can overcome all alienation.

The only significant difference between Einsteinian gnosticism and its theological counterpart is the fact that Einstein's scientific gnosticism rests upon an explicitly unhistorical view of reality, whereas political theology rests upon an explicitly unmetaphysical view of reality. (The Copenhagen Interpretation distinguishes itself by explicitly rejecting both metaphysics and history.) In the final analysis, however, Metz has nowhere to ground contingency just as Einstein has nowhere to ground intelligibility. Both slide into a Platonic notion of the really real as lying beyond both the structure of the world and its historical development. Both are therefore forced into calling upon 'hidden' factors (in Einstein, the hidden variables or the God who does not play dice; in Metz, the 'hidden' God of the absolute future), just as the Copenhagen people are forced to rely upon an undifferentiated chaos hidden behind the illusory phenomena, to save the situation.  

**Knowledge and Reality: Toward a Solution**

Eric Voegelin has pointed out that gnosticism always involves the suppression of some aspect of reality.

In order—not, to be sure, to make the undertaking possible—but to make it appear possible, every gnostic intellectual who drafts a program to change the world must first construct a world picture from which those essential features of the constitution of being that would make the program appear hopeless and foolish have been eliminated.  

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42 As Voegelin points out (Science, Politics & Gnosticism [Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, A Gateway Edition, 1968], pp. 10-11), the ancient gnosticism always appealed to a 'hidden' God to lead man out of the world and its alienating conditions.

43 Ibid., p. 100.
It would seem that where both contemporary science and political theology are concerned, several crucial elements have been suppressed or overlooked. Aristotelian Methodology

The first element which seems to have been overlooked is the fundamentally Aristotelian character of both the scientific enterprise and political theology. Because both accept the 'dis-goddedness' of the world, both seek (or should seek) the really real within the world. Science seeks a cosmic reality, political theology a historical reality. Both then require a method which is capable of analyzing the value of the world as world.

Both science and political theology have had to confront the antinomies apparent within the phenomena. Whether these be the wave/particle, space/time dichotomies of science or the nature/freedom, metaphysics/history dichotomies of political theology, they cannot be avoided. The inability to deal with them spelled the end of Newtonian physics. "To entertain the idea that nature might express itself through the paradoxical unity of irreducible aspects was for classical physics almost impossible to believe."44

Unhappily, subsequent attempts to deal with them have sought their resolution in a Platonic reductionism, not an Aristotelian correlation. The Einstein/Planck refusal to accept the Heisenberg uncertainty principle is an extension of the Newtonian mentality which demands a one-on-one correspondence between theory and reality. The Copenhagen School attempts to circumvent the dilemma by appeal to a theory of complementarity which reduces its paradox to correlations between the scientist and the phenomena rather than to genuine correlations

44 Jaki, The Relevance of Physics, p. 92.
within the phenomena themselves. Metz' starting point, the Marxist critique which gives primacy to the future over the past, avoids the paradox by denying it at the outset. The really real, therefore, is reduced to some single aspect of the phenomena which we encounter, whether that aspect be called Mind, energy, chaos or freedom.

The methodological escape from this type of reductionism lies in an Aristotelian methodology, precisely because it is Aristotle's notion of the complementarity of act and potency, form and matter, which allows us to take the synthetic character of the phenomena seriously. Given the difficulties which 'wavicles' posed for physics, Feyerabend is correct when he says of Bohr,

It was Bohr's great merit that in this situation he developed an intuitive idea, the idea of complementarity, which, although incompatible with a straightforward realism, nevertheless gave the physicists a much needed intuitive aid for the handling of concrete problems.45

While the idea itself is extremely good, the Copenhagen Interpretation which would reduce the complementarity to Kantian a priori categories which impose themselves upon scientific investigation has undercut the major value of the idea.

As we have already seen, Heisenberg accepts the Cartesian isolation of mind and matter. Therefore, the Aristotelian and Platonic attempts to deal with the dualities in reality are no longer, in his judgment, relevant.46 This enables him to trace the roots of quantum theory solely to those Greek philosophers who sought to account for matter without reference to form.47 Heisenberg is therefore able to

46 See p. 336.
47 Heisenberg, Physics and Philosophy, chapter IV.
conclude that "modern physics is in some way extremely near to the doctrines of Heraclitus." In other words, "change itself is the fundamental principle." This can be regarded as the pure chance of Heisenberg, the energy of Einstein or the chaos (the dance of the Lord Shiva) of Buddhism. The result of avoiding both Plato and Aristotle results in a curious combination of the two. The fundamental material principle is intrinsic (Aristotelian) and yet undifferentiated (Platonic).

Yet such a combination doesn't work. For if one seeks an undifferentiated principle of intelligibility (as does Einstein), then one has no way of dealing with the Heisenberg uncertainty principle and the Bohr theory of complementarity. And if one seeks an undifferentiated principle of chaos or pure chance (as does Heisenberg), then one has no choice but to locate intelligibility solely within the human mind, cutting scientific knowledge off from the phenomena. Here the work of de Broglie and his followers is enormously important, since it accepts the fundamentally Aristotelian character of reality.

Evidently the uncertainty principle, the statistical character of the laws of quantum mechanics and the duality of waves and corpuscles, are nothing more than different facets of a single complex reality which we must do our best to interpret. Only an Aristotelian methodology allows one to account for the dual characteristics of the phenomena within a framework which sacrifices neither the unity nor the intelligibility of the phenomena. To accept either the Cartesian split of matter and mind or the Marxist primacy of the future over the past requires that one overlook the Aristotelian form/matter correlation, a position which leads in all cases to a Platonic

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48 Ibid., p. 63.
49 Silva and Lochak, Quanta, p. 160.
reduction of reality to a single undifferentiated principle.

**Christian Doctrine of Creation**

A second element which generally gets overlooked is the importance of the Christian teaching on creation with regard to the rise of science, the value of the world and the reality of history. Metz and political theologians in general, with their enormous emphasis on the future and the eschaton, tend to ignore creation and the beginning of things, especially any aspect of the doctrine which would insist upon the intrinsic goodness and value of the created order per se. 50

The scientific community tends to overlook its own indebtedness to the Christian doctrine of creation. As Jaki points out,

> The deeds if not always the words of scientists show that they have always held a fairly steady set of propositions as verities, of which two are of fundamental importance for the scientific enterprise. One is the existence of a world intrinsically ordered in all its parts and consistent in all its interactions. The other is the existence of a human mind capable of understanding such a world in an ever more comprehensive manner. 51

The Christian doctrine of creation, by insisting that the world owes its existence to a personal, rational God and that man is made in the image of that God, produced in the Middle Ages an entire culture which accepted without serious question the notion of an intelligible world and an intelligent human agent capable of understanding that world. As Jaki points out, science was stillborn in every society outside of

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50 Liberation theology has similar difficulties with creation. For one example of this, see Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, trans. and ed. Sister Caridad Inda and John Eagleson (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1973), especially chapter 9, "Liberation and Salvation," where the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo* is replaced by a notion of creation as a struggle between God and chaos, and where the history of salvation, beginning with creation, is viewed as a continual war against a fundamental disorder from which liberation is a flight (exodus).

Western Europe, including ancient Greece. And it never was, properly speaking, even conceived in those oriental societies informed by the Buddhist notion of reality. For such a notion of reality gives no encouragement to the scientific enterprise.

Whitehead also notes the indebtedness of modern science to medieval scholasticism.

I do not think, however, that I have even yet brought out the greatest contribution of medievalism to the formation of the scientific movement. I mean the inexpugnable belief that every detailed occurrence can be correlated with its antecedents in a perfectly definite manner, exemplifying general principles. Without this belief the incredible labours of scientists would be without hope. It is this instinctive conviction, vividly poised before the imagination, which is the motive power of research:—that there is a secret, a secret which can be unveiled. How has this conviction been so vividly implanted on the European mind?52

He concludes that "the possibility of science, generated antecedently to the development of modern scientific theory, is an unconscious derivative from medieval theology."53

Newtonian physics, although it reduced the universe to a machine, still retained some sense of this medieval heritage in its faith in God as the great mechanic who had constructed such a rationally-ordered machine. Einstein's statement that we should, a priori, expect the universe to be chaotic,54 signals the modern break with that heritage. Copenhagen physicists have abandoned it altogether. Logical positivism and the rediscovery of Buddhism alike are the result of that abandonment.

... historically the belief in creation and the Creator was the moment of truth for science. This belief formed the bedrock on which science rose. It is a telling reflection on the tragic

54 See p. 340.
instability of human thought that, a century or two after the rise of science, its true origins could be ignored or fiercely attacked by so many gifted minds. The tragedy was their yielding to the illusion of idealism in which only the mind—not the stubborn, finite, contingent facts of nature and history—had true existence. That the most articulate spokesman [Ernst Mach] of the nineteenth-century positivism, the very opposite of idealism, was to drift into Buddhism, shows that extremes have the same logic and much the same consequences, boding ill for science no less than for theism. 55

As the same author goes on to note, "Once monotheism was no longer considered rational, molecules became mystical." 56

The Contingency of Intelligibility

The one assumption which the scientific community as a whole seems to make, whether it be voiced by a Newton, an Einstein or an Heisenberg, is that intelligibility and necessity go hand in hand. The same assumption prevails in Metz as well, in his identification of structure with nature and of nature with the Aristotelian essence which is predetermined in its activity and its end. This assumption goes back to Greek philosophy, where we find it deeply rooted in the thought of both Plato and Aristotle. Intelligibilities are, for both of them, firmly grounded in forms or formal principles, and those forms or formal principles are not free. They proceed by their own inner logic. It is precisely this notion of formal intelligibility as necessary intelligibility which Thomas had to overcome if Aristotle was to serve a Christian purpose.

The esse/essence distinction is the Thomist methodological transformation of Aristotle's necessary intelligibility into that contingent intelligibility which the Christian doctrine of creation requires. Unfortunately, however, Thomas himself had a tendency to emphasize the

55 Jaki, The Road of Science, pp. 143-144.
56 Ibid., p. 158.
intelligibility at the expense of the contingency, and for that reason never effected the full transformation of Aristotle which his esse/essence distinction made possible. Instead, he tried to find within that transformation a place for Aristotle's substance (essence) and therefore for Aristotle's notion of necessary intelligibility.

This suppression of contingent intelligibility is continued by both science and political theology. Physics embraces the link between necessity and intelligibility as a fundamental scientific principle. Metz accepts the general principle, but opposes the tyranny of such a necessitated intelligibility with the notion of an unstructured freedom or grace which is capable of overcoming it. The error in both cases consists in identifying intelligibility and essence (nature). If, as has been pointed out, the method which both science and political theology require in order to affirm the value of the world and of history is Aristotelian, then it must be added that both science and political theology require the Thomist transformation of necessary intelligibility into contingent intelligibility if such a method is to have any bearing on a world and a history which is freely created.

**Contingent Intelligibility and the Phenomena.** Three important indications of contingent intelligibility have arisen in quantum physics. We have already referred to two of them. The first of these is the apparent inability of science to locate a purely material building block for the universe. There seems little reason to suppose, as was noted earlier, that the quark will prove to be any more solid and indivisible than the atom. As Barnett points out,

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57 See p. 349.
... the fundamental mystery remains. The whole march of science toward the unification of concepts—the reduction of all matter to elements and then to a few types of particles, the reduction of "forces" to the single concept "energy," and then the reduction of matter and energy to a single basic quantity—leads still to the unknown. The many questions merge into one, to which there may never be an answer: what is the essence of this mass-energy substance, what is the underlying stratum of physical reality which science seeks to explore.58

The second indication of contingent intelligibility is the Heisenberg uncertainty principle, which reflects both our inability to reduce the phenomena to a single principle of explanation and our inability to reduce individual phenomena to mathematical necessities. If one supposes that intelligibility is necessitated and not contingent, the Heisenberg principle can mean only one of two things: either science has overlooked something (the Einstein/Planck position) or the phenomena are fundamentally chaotic (the Copenhagen Interpretation). Yet, as Jaki points out, the Heisenberg uncertainty principle would seem to indicate something else entirely:

... modern physics in general, and the indeterminacy principle in particular, made it abundantly clear that the mechanical intelligibility does not exhaust the whole range of intelligibility. Therefore one should not conclude on the basis of the indeterminacy principle that "the world is not a world of reason, understandable by the intellect of man." Those modern physicists who do so fall back unawares on the definition of intelligibility as formulated by classical mechanism.59

In other words, the uncertainty principle would seem to signal an existential intelligibility in the phenomena which cannot be submitted to any essentialist (necessary) framework or theory.

As Heisenberg notes, "Probability in mathematics or in statistical mechanics means a statement about our degree of knowledge of the actual

58 Barnett, The Universe and Dr. Einstein, p. 55.

59 Jaki, The Relevance of Physics, p. 55.
situation." What probability does not force us to conclude, as Heisenberg among others seems to, is that what we do not know is therefore unintelligible. Contingent intelligibility would, by definition, escape every essentialist attempt to confine it within a single, all-comprehensive explanation.

**Contingent Intelligence and the Mind.** Both the Heisenberg uncertainty principle and the irreducibility of matter to a single indivisible particle indicate the presence of both contingency and intelligibility on the side of the phenomena. The third indication of contingent intelligibility, Godel's proof, suggests that the mind itself also enjoys these dual characteristics. For Kurt Godel demonstrated, in a paper put out in 1931, that no complete non-trivial mathematical system contains within itself the proof of its own consistency. Appeal must always be made to principles extrinsic to the system. This means, in effect, that mathematics itself can never be reduced to a single, all-comprehensive system of logical truth.

As Godel's own arguments show, no antecedent limits can be placed on the inventiveness of mathematicians in devising new rules of proof. Consequently, no final account can be given of the precise logical form of valid mathematical demonstrations.61

Once again, however, this does not mean that the human mind itself is fundamentally irrational. It means rather that human rationality is incapable of being programmed, computer style.

Godel's proof should not be construed as an invitation to despair or as an excuse for mystery-mongering. The discovery that there are arithmetical truths which cannot be demonstrated formally does not mean that there are truths which are forever

60Heisenberg, Physics and Philosophy, p. 40.

incapable of becoming known, or that a "mystic" intuition (radically different in kind and authority from what is generally operative in intellectual advances) must replace cogent proof. It does not mean, as a recent writer claims, that there are "inevitable limits to human reason." It does mean that the resources of the human intellect have not been, and cannot be, fully formalized, and that new principles of demonstration forever await invention and discovery.62

Whitehead tells us that "the pursuit of mathematics is a divine madness of the human spirit, a refuge from the goading urgency of contingent happenings."63 Prior to the Middle Ages, it was primarily a Platonic refuge from the irrational contingencies of matter; it was that second degree of knowledge which constituted a kind of halfway house between sense knowledge and pure intelligibility.

Newtonian physics, with its mechanical models of the phenomena, assumed, despite its own Cartesianism, an Aristotelian notion of human intelligence as material. Human knowledge, in this view, has an irrevocably material component. In Thomist terms, human knowing always requires a turn to the phantasm.

The shift by quantum physics to mathematical abstractions signalled a movement back toward intelligibility as de-materialized, Platonic. For those physicists who follow the Copenhagen Interpretation, the shift is explicitly Platonic, i.e., away from the irrational contingencies which the Heisenberg view of things supposes to be inherent in the subatomic phenomena. Because, however, such an interpretation refuses the Platonic notion of a purely formal realm in which intelligibility participates, irrationality per se takes the place of Plato's forms, becoming for both scientific positivists and scientific Buddhists

the only realm which exists. Mathematics is, for these scientists, the de-materialized and therefore purely intelligible refuge which they seek from such irrationality. As Silva and Lochak point out, no imaginative representations of the world are possible under these circumstances.

According to the Copenhagen School, then, there must be an essential indeterminism, and Heisenberg's relations will become relations of indeterminism as well as of practical uncertainty. It is not enough to say that it is impossible to know the exact position and velocity of a particle simultaneously. It must be maintained that, in general, there is no such thing as a well-determined position or velocity. Matter and light become fugitive indeed, and any hope of representing the world in terms of pictures and motions becomes nothing more than an empty dream. 64

Since the Middle Ages, however, it has been possible to seek an Aristotelian refuge from the existential contingency of creation which is central to the Thomist view of the world. Mathematical abstraction in this context becomes a means of reducing the esse/essence distinction to essence alone. Mathematics is here a refuge not from irrationality or chaos, but from that existential intelligibility which is incapable of being reduced to a single mathematical scheme or scientific theory. We have already seen how Einstein and Planck sought such a refuge. (It is the same refuge which Gilson approves when he exempts science from having to deal with the existential character of the phenomena.)

The fact that the Heisenberg uncertainty principle cut them off from just such a refuge was, in their eyes, its primary fault.

Einstein and Planck have, however, also sought a Platonic refuge from material contingency. As we have seen, 65 Planck sought the liberation of knowledge from its anthropomorphous elements. Mathematics

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64 Silva and Lochak, Quanta, p. 164.

65 See p. 343.
is therefore a refuge from both the contingency of matter and the contingency of esse, i.e., from contingency qua irrational and qua incapable of submitting to formal structure.

Both the Heisenberg uncertainty principle and the inability of science to reduce matter to a single indivisible particle or building block indicate a contingent intelligibility on the side of the phenomena which can never be reduced to formal or material schemes and principles. Likewise, Godel's proof indicates a contingent intelligence on the side of the human mind which can never be reduced, a la Kant, to any a priori conceptual or logical framework. Furthermore, the notion of contingent intelligibility allows one to avoid both the chaos of the Copenhagen Interpretation and that essentialist a priorism of Einstein and Planck which could not accept the formal limitations implicit in quantum theory. Contingent intelligibility would not, in short, require science to abandon the quest for intelligibility, it would only require that it abandon the notion that scientific theory ever can give a total account of that intelligibility. For scientific theory is hypothetical intelligibility, always in potency to further actualization.

The persistent failure of a priori syntheses of physics, the evidence of the fundamentally experimental roots of geometry, the basic subordination of the heuristic values of mathematics to the experimental observation, and the relative uncertainty in which mathematics is ultimately enveloped all seem to indicate that the replacement of theories in physics will continue as before. This means, however, that only the kernel of scientific truth will become better defined as time goes on. The great aim of physical science, the overall synthesis of the scientific understanding of the universe will remain for all practical purposes what it has always been, the ever-remote objective of an intellectual faith.66

Contingent intelligibility would also not require science to abandon

66 Jaki, The Relevance of Physics, p. 136.
the notion of a relationship between necessity and intelligibility. Toulmin points out that, within the parameters of a given experiment, "it is the very business of the theory to tell him [the scientist] what must happen, i.e., what he must expect to happen, in such circumstances." To say that "what must happen" means "what the scientist must expect to happen" is enormously important. For it means that necessity determines not what will happen, but only what the scientist thinks will happen. Scientific necessity is, in other words, a hypothetical necessity which stands in potency to the actual experiment. Without such hypothetical necessities, scientists could never judge the value of their theories. But such necessity is not actual, for it does not determine, a priori, the results of scientific experimentation.

When hypothetical necessities are not confirmed by actual experiments, new theories are formulated. Through the replacement of one theory by another, the horizon of physics expands. Some questions are answered, new questions arise. New theories are, in fact, the necessary condition of possibility for raising new questions. Newtonian physics thought it had forever defined both the horizon and the questions, not to mention the answers. This was not only its greatest error, it was also its greatest poverty. For, as Toulmin points out, "what was repugnant was not just the fact that the theories advanced were so bare and mechanical but, quite as much, the fact that their idea of what it would be to have explained everything was so much smaller than life."  

Contingent Intelligibility and History/Metaphysics. What is most

68 Ibid., p. 117.
damaging about the suppression of contingent intelligibility is the
fact that it undermines both metaphysics and history. Its undermining
of metaphysics is perhaps more apparent in the theology of Metz, where
nature and metaphysics are explicitly reduced to freedom and history.
But the damage done to metaphysics by quantum physics is just as great.
For it produces either the absence of metaphysics altogether (the Copen­
hagen Interpretation) or the affirmation of a metaphysics which can
no longer be reconciled with scientific knowledge (Einstein, Planck).
The former option reduces reality to an interplay of necessity (intelli­
gibility) and chance (contingency), the latter reduces reality to neces­
sity (intelligibility) alone. One is finally forced to choose between
cosmic chaos and cosmic necessity.

The damage done to history is equally great, although here it is
perhaps more apparent in quantum physics than in political theology,
since quantum physics simply suppresses history altogether. Quantum
physicists accept either that notion of nature which Metz abhors, namely,
that of an intelligently necessitated universe (Einstein/Planck) in
which nothing genuinely novel can ever occur because all intelligi­
bility is pre-determined by its essential structures, or that notion of
chaos or chance which the Copenhagen Interpretation offers, in which
nothing genuinely novel can occur because all occurrences are random.
The 'event' character (the singular or individual) of reality is reduced
to a process (statistics) and thereby lost. Intelligibility resides
solely in process, not in events.

Whether one adopts Einsteinian necessities or Copenhagen probabili­
ties, the fundamental relationship between experiment and theory is lost
to sight. For scientific theory (which deals with universals or processes)
must always submit to experimentation (which deals with events or singulars). The statistical probabilities of quantum physics reveal not the irrationality of events (singulars), but the irrepeatability and contingent intelligibility of such events, i.e., the genuinely historical character of even the subatomic realm.

The damage which Metz' theology inflicts on history is less apparent, perhaps, but equally great. First, as we have already seen, the reduction of metaphysics to history requires that the really real be located outside history. For, as long as we are in history, nature will war with freedom, just as ontology will war with history. The historical realm is therefore one which offers no genuine goodness or value, only struggle and flight toward the absolute future (eschaton). Like the Copenhagen reduction of event to process, political theology reduces events to praxis. Qualitatively different freedoms (individual freedoms) are reduced to a single communal praxis in which one must participate, since not to participate, as noted earlier, 69 is to damage the community and diminish reality itself.

Secondly, the reduction of metaphysics to history has the effect of depriving history of any foundation. As Whitehead has observed, "You cannot have a rational justification for your appeal to history till your metaphysics has assured you that there is a history to appeal to; and likewise your conjectures as to the future presuppose some basis of knowledge that there is a future already subjected to some determinations." 70 To put the matter another way, the Christian doctrine of

69 See p. 311. This type of thinking is perhaps best exemplified by a popular poster which states, "If you are not a part of the solution, you are a part of the problem."

the good creation cannot be divorced from history, inasmuch as genuine novelty and freedom cannot be recognized apart from an intelligible structure. Even in science, as Toulmin has pointed out, necessary intelligibility is essential in order that the scientist may know what to expect. For only by knowing what to expect can he recognize a genuine departure from necessity (though not from intelligibility).

The Copenhagen School offers us a striking lesson in the need for a metaphysical grounding of history. Chaos does not produce novelty, it only produces random change. Because the Copenhagen physicists cannot appeal to God, they are left with chaos. Metz can and does appeal to God to bring liberation from nature (alienating structure), but in so doing he de-historicizes reality by locating goodness and intelligibility outside history. History is fundamentally restrictive and alienating. Only God's intervention to suppress its sinful structures makes possible our flight from nature and toward the eschaton.

The Particles, Praxis and Knowledge

A fourth element which today's scientific and theological gnosticisms tend to suppress is the relationship between the objectively given base of knowledge (the particles\(^1\)), the human contribution to the process of knowing (praxis) and knowledge itself (theory). Metz avoids the problem of stating this relation by refusing to consider the question of an objectively given base of knowledge. He concentrates entirely on the relationship between theory and praxis. Scientists, on the whole, tend to suppress one or another aspect of the relationship whenever

\(^{1}\)The word 'particle' will be used, in keeping with Barfield and de Broglie's use of language, to designate the objectively given base of knowledge apart from any activity on the part of the human mind. 'Phenomena' will refer to the mind's figuration of the particles.
they step out of their scientific roles to take on philosophic ones. It is very important, therefore, to follow the advice of Einstein when he said,

If you want to find out anything from the theoretical physicists about the methods they use, I advise you to stick closely to one principle: don't listen to their words, fix your attention on their deeds.\textsuperscript{72}

Physicists, as Toulmin points out, "seek the form of given regularities."\textsuperscript{73} Here, in a nutshell, we have a statement of the relationship between the particles and the contribution which the mind makes to them. The particles present "regularities". These regularities define the starting point of scientific investigation. The observations of physicists are therefore not subjectively defined, but objectively controlled. The Copenhagen Interpretation, which reduces all sensory data to the subjective observations of the physicist, suppresses this controlling role which the particles play. "As one cannot start doing physics just anywhere, so also there are very definite limits to what will count in physics as an observation."\textsuperscript{74}

The human mind seeks the "form". What we have here is an Aristotelian approach to the particles, in which the human investigator seeks the formal conditions of possibility which can account for the observed regularities. In other words, the physicist seeks an intelligibility which is immanent in the sensory data but with implications which transcend what is directly and immediately given by that data. Scientific


\textsuperscript{73} Toulmin, \textit{The Philosophy of Science}, p. 53.

\textsuperscript{74} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 54.
method is therefore both empirical and analytical, always controlled by the particles and yet intending an intelligibility which goes beyond them. The Copenhagen Interpretation also suppresses this dual aspect of scientific method, reducing the analytical to the empirical in its insistence that scientific method is never capable of carrying the physicist beyond the empirical data and his own interaction with or experience of it.

Furthermore, neither the regularities immanent in recurrent material events (particles) nor those of human reason, as we have had occasion to observe with regard to Heisenberg's uncertainty principle and Gödel's Proof, are capable of being reduced to any logical, essential or self-enclosed formalities, be they qualitative or mathematical. Both the Copenhagen and the Einstein/Planck interpretations suppress the historical, existentially contingent intelligibility of the particles and the free intelligence of the human mind. Nevertheless, the virtual infinity of regularities which successive layers of "matter" reveal guarantees a virtually infinite quest in pursuit of the forms which can account for those regularities.

By now it should be apparent that scientific knowledge (theory) is a product of the interplay between the objectively given data (particles) and historical and free human analysis (praxis). If either one is missing, human knowledge is impossible. There is, as Metz maintains, no true knowledge apart from free and responsible existence in history. But there is also, as Metz overlooks, no valid theory or praxis apart from the objectively given regularities with which the world confronts us.

According to Voegelin, the central refusal of any gnosticism is
the denial of intrinsic and ordered structures in the material realm.

The world is no longer the well-ordered, the cosmos, in which Hellenic man felt at home; nor is it the Judaeo-Christian world that God created and found good. Gnostic man no longer wishes to perceive in admiration the intrinsic order of the cosmos. For him the world has become a prison from which he wants to escape; 75

In both quantum physics and political theology, we can see this central refusal at work with regard to the regularities or structures with which the world confronts us. In each case, the refusal would seem to rest upon some a priori assumption about the relationship between the human mind and the structured realm within which it finds itself.

Einstein/Planck (and classical physics) suppose an essentialist isomorphism between the mind and the particles, such that, for them, the proper goal of science is the development of a complete theory of reality which enjoys a strict correspondence with the particles themselves. Newtonian physics therefore denied the altogether hypothetical character of scientific knowledge. Einstein and Planck acknowledged scientific theories to be provisionally hypothetical, i.e., hypothetical with regard to that complete theory which had not yet been developed, but not hypothetical per se. They continued to seek that complete theory which Newtonian physics mistakenly thought itself to have found.

As a result, Einstein and Planck were forced, by the logic of their own assumptions with regard to knowledge, to deny the implications of the Heisenberg uncertainty principle, since a one-on-one theory cannot be accomodated to particle regularities which manifest dual characteristics. Since the theory cannot be accomodated to the particles, the particles must therefore be accomodated to the theory. Hence, both Einstein and Planck in effect counseled physicists to go back to the particles and discover something else (Einstein's hidden variables, for

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example). Theory, in other words, became their refuge from the epistemological implications of the world's structure.

The Copenhagen School, on the other hand, supposes a Kantian dichotomy between the structures of the mind and the regularities of the particles, such that, for members of this school, the goal of quantum physics is to develop a complex of concepts which can be used to handle (predict) the phenomena. The Copenhagen Interpretation, therefore, accepts the permanently hypothetical character of scientific theory, for the simple reason that scientific theory (which is determined by the structures of the mind) can never enjoy any correspondence with the objectively given chaos.

As a result, the Copenhagen physicists have been forced, by the logic of their assumptions, to deny any metaphysical import to scientific theory. Since the theory, and therefore the human mind, can never be accommodated to the actual structures of the particles, one must relegate the particles to the hinterlands of chaos and irrationality and the mental concepts (forms) to the hinterlands of emptiness and illusion. Hence, physicists such as Mach, Heisenberg and Bohr have counselled scientists to abandon the notion that scientific knowledge goes beyond the sensory or the experiential. Logical positivism and/or Eastern mysticism have become their refuge from the metaphysical implications of a structured particle realm.

Metz supposes a kind of reverse Kantian dichotomy between the human mind and the phenomena. Nature or structure as alienation is attributed to the phenomena, freedom or the ability to transcend alienating structure is attributed to the human spirit. Unlike Kant, who understood the human mind to impose a structure on the particles, Metz understands the objectively given realm to be that which seeks to impose its regularities on the
human spirit, thereby imprisoning humanity in its own essentialist, self-enclosed (alienating) fatality. The human task lies therefore in recognizing both the true character of the objectively given and the human power (freedom) to transcend the structures of that givenness. Any pure knowledge (theory) which arises from an analysis or contemplation of those structures is therefore not only unable to help us but even likely to harm us, by suggesting that the human mind must submit to rather than overcome those structures.

As a result, Metz is drawn by the logic of his own assumptions into the same blind alley in which the Copenhagen School finds itself. For Metz, no less than the Copenhagen School, is forced into denying the value of metaphysics. The only difference between the two positions arises from the fact that the Copenhagen Interpretation supposes the human mind can never be accommodated to the regularities of the subatomic realm (since there are none), whereas Metz supposes the human mind ought never to allow itself to be accommodated to the objectively given structures of the political and ecclesiological realms. To accept the primacy of the objectively given over human freedom is, in his judgment, to involve oneself in pure theory or pure knowledge which is gained at the price of reducing freedom to necessity. One must therefore assert the primacy of such freedom over necessary structure. One must, that is to say, assert the primacy of praxis over theory. Praxis therefore becomes Metz' refuge from the alienation of the objectively given realm.

In each of the above cases, we have seen again a failure to recognize the correlation between intelligibility and contingency, both on the side of the human mind and on the side of the objectively given. Einstein/Planck and classical physics simply deny contingency. The
Copenhagen School and Metz oppose intelligible structure (theory) and contingency. The Copenhagen Interpretation places contingency (chaos) on the side of the objectively given and intelligibility (structure) on the side of the human mind. Metz reverses the two, placing contingency (freedom) on the side of the human mind and intelligibility (nature) on the side of the objectively given. (Pure theory occurs on the side of human intelligence only when the mind submits itself to nature rather than exercising its freedom to overcome nature.)

Whether one suppresses contingency or places it in opposition to intelligence, the result is the same. There can be no genuine interplay between the mind and the particles. One must always be subordinated to the other. The really real is then identified with either an absolute contingency (whether it be chaos or freedom) or an absolute intelligibility (whether it be mind or nature) intrinsic to the material realm or with an extrinsic being who is both intelligence and freedom. In either case, the solution is Platonic, for either it reduces contingent intelligibility to one of its component elements or it locates contingent intelligibility outside the world and history. Flight from the actual givenness of the world, whether into theory, linguistic analysis, mysticism or praxis, is unavoidable.

Metz' problems are much more complex than those of the quantum physicists, for Metz has to concern himself not only with the general relationship between human activity (praxis) and knowledge (theory) but with the particular relationship between a notion of social praxis which has arisen within the context of and been explicitly informed by a secularized (dis-godded or de-divinized) view of reality and the existence of a Christian faith which arose within the context of and has
been explicitly informed by a theological (theocentric or divinized) view of the world's reality. Hence, his problems are considerably more difficult even than those of Marx. In fact, the Marxist critique is unable to address the theological dilemma which confronts Metz.

The Marxist admonition to philosophers to stop contemplating and to start changing reality was itself based on the assumption of an isomorphism between the mind and that which is objectively given—not an isomorphism of intelligence and contingency, but an isomorphism of malleability. Marx supposed that we are confronted with a choice: either we subordinate ourselves to the objectively given or we subordinate the objectively given to ourselves. If one supposes this, the philosophic task, though perhaps painful, is not impossible. It consists in reassessing the priorities between theory and praxis. Such a reassessment may produce a fundamental dichotomy between the old theoretical philosophy and the new practical philosophy, it may overturn the entire philosophical enterprise as it had up to that point been understood, but it does not introduce into what one is doing any glaring contradictions. One has simply switched from the wrong to the right track.

Such an admonition, when addressed by Metz to Christianity, however, produces problems which Marx never encountered. For Metz must find a way to accept the Marxist revaluation of all values without simultaneously denying the value of Christian faith. Although scarcely a practical goal, Metz attempts to achieve such an end by affirming the contemporary secular and praxis-oriented consciousness as precisely that consciousness which Christ intended and has successfully effected in history.

This view of things immediately involves Metz in two acute problems from which he is unable to extricate himself. The first of these
problems is that of accounting for Christ's effectiveness in history. One cannot fall back on Marx' simple dichotomy between a theoretical past which merely contemplated reality and a practical future which must change reality. For what Metz is asserting is a Christian faith which has been historically effective in the past and in the absence of modern historical consciousness and its praxis orientation. One must either abandon the Marxist dichotomy or one must abandon the view that Christ has been effective. Metz does neither, and that refusal introduces a fundamental incoherence at the heart of his theology.

The resolution to Metz' dilemma, as mentioned earlier, lies in recognizing the relationship between praxis and knowledge (faith). Einstein's advice to look at physicists' deeds rather than their words is enormously important, for it enables us to recognize that knowledge (faith) arises together with praxis (human activity) and cannot exist in isolation from it. If Christ has already been effective in changing history, the only condition of possibility for that is the existence of a concrete historical Christian praxis which Marx, eyes on the future alone, overlooked. To say this, however, requires one to abandon the notion that praxis can be opposed to structure, for it is itself a part of the givenness of history, not something which contemporary consciousness has created.

The theological task with regard to this praxis is, therefore, an historical task, that of identifying Christian praxis in history (a point to which we shall return in the next chapter). It is not the hermeneutical task which Metz defines, that of relating faith and social praxis. To suppose the latter is to reduce history (contingency) to

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76 See pp. 329-330.
hermeneutics (intelligibility). It is simply another variation on that flight from an historical order thought to be chaotic or alienating. It is the reduction of material reality to a de-materialized formulation which can then only be imposed upon the future, not found in the past.

The second problem which Metz runs into is that of grounding praxis itself. We have already, at least indirectly, seen this problem arise in the thinking of Einstein and Planck with regard to their quite vague references to God. If one supposes or discovers, as they do, that the universe is fundamentally intelligible, then one must fall back on some notion of intelligence to account for that fact. The obvious answer lies in pantheism or an immanent Mind somehow at work in the processes of the universe. The fact that neither Einstein nor Planck advances to the affirmation of a transcendent God should not be surprising. The immanent intelligibility which they have discovered requires an immanent, not a transcendent, source of intelligibility. (This is why, as has previously been pointed out, scientific methodology is Aristotelian, not Platonic.)

Metz' position is the reverse of Einstein's. As a Christian theologian, Metz must affirm the transcendent God. His problems begin at that point when he also tries to affirm an historically effective mediation of Christ (which is the historical problem of locating the concrete praxis which makes possible Christ's effectiveness) and when he affirms that shift in human consciousness from theocentrism to anthropocentrism which liberates the human mind to the task (praxis) of changing the world. The very possibility of such a praxis requires us to suppose that some degree of intelligible process can operate in the world. What is the condition of possibility for such a process?
The problem is made particularly acute by Metz' insistence upon the de-divinized or secular character of the world. If the world itself has been emptied of divinity, then it must be regarded either as the source of its own intelligibility (Aristotle's uncreated world) or as a realm fundamentally devoid of intelligibility (Heisenberg's universe of chaos or pure chance). An extrinsic God is of no help at all, unless one can affirm that such a God is capable of communicating some measure of His own intelligence to the world. In other words, some notion of participation is indispensable.

Reference was made earlier to the fact that, while Barfield agrees with Metz as to the irrevocable character of that shift in human consciousness which has today produced an anthropocentric rather than a theocentric notion of reality, he does not agree with Metz' interpretation of that shift. The source of the disagreement lies precisely in this question of participation. The secular or humanized world which Metz understands to be a permanent feature in both human consciousness and human perceptions of reality is, in Barfield's judgment, simply another one of the stages through which human consciousness is passing on its way from 'original' to 'final' participation. To understand what he means by 'final' participation and to examine the ontological implications of such a notion is the purpose of the next and final chapter.
Plato's form/matter dichotomy supposes that the world is constituted by necessary intelligibilities (forms) fragmented by contingent chaos (matter). Form does not, properly speaking, belong in this realm. It has fallen into matter. Its materialization, therefore, is not a necessity of form per se, but the contingent and unintelligible condition in which it finds itself.

Aristotle accepted Plato's notion of necessary intelligibility. What he rejected was the notion that the materialization of such intelligibility is either contingent or irrational (fallen). While matter does not contribute to the intelligibility of things, it does, in his judgment, make possible that essential multiplicity which the world requires in order to be world. Aristotle, therefore, reduces the Platonic contingency to formal necessity—the a priori cause of multiplicity.

When Thomas decided to make Aristotle's method his own, he recognized that the absence of contingency in Aristotle could not be reconciled with the Christian doctrine of creation. Nor could the chaotic contingency in Plato be reconciled with the notion that creation is good. Thomas therefore required some methodological principle whereby the unity and intelligibility of the Aristotelian world could be correlated with the freedom and goodness of the Christian creation. Esse/essence is the methodological statement of that correlation by which he transformed Aristotle. It was an extraordinary achievement, for it made
available to the theologian what had never been available before—a methodological tool for justifying literal statements about the intelligibility and freedom of the world as world. For the esse/essence correlation breaks once and for all the Greek link between intelligibility and necessity. It states that all created intelligibility is contingent, not necessitated.

Unfortunately, Thomas was as much a son of Greek philosophy as he was of the Catholic Church, a fact which makes itself most felt in his repeated attempts to maintain the Aristotelian link between intelligibility and necessity and the Platonic link between intelligibility and de-materialization. Hence, when Thomas speaks as an Aristotelian ('thick essence texts), he speaks of essences as though they were somehow detachable from esse and therefore capable of being considered in their own right as necessary intelligibilities. And when he speaks as a Platonist ('thin essence texts), he speaks of created things as though they were, in the metaphor of Carlo, chunks of esse and therefore imperfect manifestations of perfect (immaterial) intelligibility.

Einstein and Planck are the legitimate offspring of Thomist Aristotelianism, the Copenhagen School the illegitimate offspring of Thomist Platonism. For while the former simply follow Thomas in suppressing the contingent character of the world, the latter not only follow Thomas in denying any ultimate intelligibility to the world, they deny any ultimate intelligibility whatever, something which Thomas himself (not to mention Plato) never contemplated doing.

All scientists to date agree about the necessary character of intelligibility. And in that sense, all of them are heirs not only of Greek thought but also of the rationalizing character of medieval
theology, particularly with regard to the doctrine of creation. As Butterworth points out, one of the major problems with the doctrine of creation as traditionally presented within the Church is the fact that it has been to such an enormous degree rationalized.

... there is nothing in the official doctrine which links creation with the Christian revelation. In other words, creation is not presented as a specifically Christian mystery, but rather as if it were a truth which Christians held in common with non-Christians--apart, perhaps, from some minor adjustments.¹

A great share of the responsibility for this situation must be borne by medieval theologians, Thomas in particular, because they insisted so much upon the rationality of creation as to lose sight of its contingency. Science is indebted to medieval scholasticism for its insistence upon a rational world, but science has not been helped by the corresponding and needless suppression of the contingent character of the intelligibility of that world.

Contemporary theology is indebted to Metz, and to political theology in general, for restoring the centrality of freedom. The fact that Metz and political theologians as a whole are primarily concerned with the political, not the scientific, realm enables them to recognize the fundamental importance of the contingent, of that which is not necessitated. And by recognizing the fundamentally human character of contingency (i.e., freedom), they are trying to do what Thomas did when he introduced the principle of esse, namely, to introduce a contingency which avoids being Platonic (chaotic or destructive). Contingency is therefore not a negative factor, but the very condition of possibility for there being a genuine history of the world. History and freedom

are two sides of the same coin. There can be no novelty without freedom. There can be only stasis or process (the unfolding of a pre-determined or necessary intelligibility).

The problem which political theology cannot overcome, however, is its own Platonic starting point. Unlike Thomas, who could introduce esse as the principle of a new correlation, political theologians are forced to introduce freedom as the principle of a new dichotomy. Since the Platonic notion of form and matter is itself already a dichotomy, a new dichotomy can be set up only by suppressing one of the elements of the original dichotomy. Hence, political theologians have two choices. They can, like Gutierrez (a liberation theologian), suppress the Platonic form and oppose freedom and chaos (matter). Or they can, like Metz, suppress the Platonic matter and oppose freedom and nature (form). In either case, the good or intelligible creation is sacrificed to a contingent creation. God does not create ex nihilo; rather His creative activity consists in rescuing the world from either chaos (Gutierrez) or from the restrictive and self-enclosed structures of a necessitated nature (Metz).

The primary problem confronting Greek philosophy was that of reconciling the one and the many. For medieval theologians, it was reconciling the universal and the particular. Today, it is reconciling the intelligible and the contingent (free). These are all statements of the same problem, but today we see this problem most clearly in the contrast between the scientific concern for intelligibility and the political concern for freedom. Without intelligibility, there is no science, only mystification. Without freedom, there is no genuinely political realm, only tyranny. In order to secure the permanent value
of intelligibility, science tries to suppress contingency (Einstein/Planck) or reduce it to chaos (Copenhagen School). In order to secure the permanent value of freedom, politics tries to reduce historical structures to determinism (Metz) or to chaos (Gutierrez).

The doctrine of the good creation does not permit either of these alternatives, while the esse/essence correlation offers a methodological way to avoid them. Both the doctrine and the method have assumed a new importance in contemporary society and theology. Before examining the relationship of esse/essence to creation, we shall first consider why contemporary society so much stands in need of a doctrine and a method which insist upon the contingent intelligibilities of the world and the free intelligence of the human community.

Human Consciousness and Final Participation

We have noted the quandary in which Thomism finds itself, caught between thick and thin essences. We have also found the same quandary to reappear in contemporary science. Owen Barfield is concerned with that science, or, rather, with the contemporary relationship between science and religion. His book, Saving the Appearances, is explicitly designed to open up a new perspective or a "different 'slant'" on that relationship.

He begins with the fact that the world which contemporary physics studies is radically different from the everyday world in which all of us live. He points out that if any sense is to be made of the subatomic realm that physicists study, we must re-assess the character of those 'things' which constitute the normal world of our experience. Drawing

2 Barfield, Saving the Appearances, p. 11.
a distinction between the 'phenomena' (the everyday objects of our world, viz., trees) and the 'particles' (the subatomic realm which physics investigates, viz., the quarks which compose the tree), he concludes that the objects of our everyday world are "collective representations," that is to say, objects which we perceive to be there and which are accepted as being there because we as a community share a common perception that they are there. What distinguishes pink elephants from green trees is that the whole community agrees on the presence of the green trees, whereas we have only the testimony of a single individual, whose perceptions are more often than not informed by distilled spirits, as to the presence of the pink elephants. The 'particles' which physicists study are the 'unrepresented'; that is to say, they are the invisible substratum of those phenomena which we do perceive.

The critical problem, of course, is what Barfield means by 'perception' and 'representation'. What does it mean to 'perceive' something and what does it mean to say that something is a 'representation'? In order to answer these questions, Barfield examines the history of human consciousness (perception) and its relationship to the phenomena (representations). He discovers, in the process, that new perspective which he believes we need today.

Human Consciousness and the Phenomena

Barfield points out that the phenomena are related to the mind in three different ways. The first of these ways, which he calls figuration, is that experience of the phenomena in which the representation seems to be given to us whole and complete. The experience itself is misleading, for the 'representation' is not simply given; it requires a human activity of some kind.
Ought it to be called a 'mental' activity? Whatever it ought to be called, it really is the percipient's own contribution to the representation. It is all that in the representation which is not sensation. For, as the organs of sense are required to convert the unrepresented ('particles') into sensations for us, so something is required in us to convert sensations into 'things'.

That 'something' which is required to convert sensations into things is what Barfield means by figuration. We perceive that which we figurate.

Once the mind has figurated sensations into things, it is capable of thinking about those things as 'things'.

For now our very attitude is, to treat them as independent of ourselves; to accept their 'outness' as self-evidently given; and to speculate about or to investigate their relations with each other.

Such thinking can be called 'theoretical'. Since, however, it is not confined to science and need not be systematic, Barfield prefers to designate it by a more general expression which does not convey such a priori restrictions. He therefore calls this second relationship between the mind and the phenomena alpha thinking.

Finally, the mind can regard the phenomena in relation to itself. We can think about thinking. Such thinking can be called 'reflective' or 'critical', but again Barfield prefers a more general expression. He calls this third relationship beta thinking.

Thus far Barfield has done nothing more than point out relationships between the mind and the phenomena which have long been known to exist. Often ignored, however, is the correspondence between these three types of mental activity and the four stages through which human consciousness has thus far passed, and, more importantly, the correlation of human consciousness with the phenomena in each of those stages.

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3 Ibid., p. 24.
4 Ibid.
The first stage of human consciousness was spontaneously pantheist, relying upon what Barfield calls 'original' participation. In this first stage, the figurating character of the mind was not yet recognized. Representations (the phenomena) were thought to be given whole and complete in experience. No distinction was made between the sensory data which are experienced and the mental activity which figures that data into representations. In other words, no distinction was drawn between the sensory experience and the extra-sensory figuration which the mind employs vis a vis that experience. A corresponding lack of differentiation was presumed with regard to the sensory and extra-sensory character of the phenomena themselves. The phenomena were not understood to be 'representations' of mana or spirit. They were identified with spirit. The sensory (the tree) and the extra-sensory (the spirit) were one.

The second stage, the metaphysical, arose when a distinction between the sensory and the extra-sensory was recognized. That process of differentiation took place in two steps. The first step, reflected in Plato's form/matter dichotomy, drew a distinction between the extra-sensory form (pure form) and the sensory form (form/matter). The phenomena were explicitly recognized as 'representations' of an invisible reality outside them. Although Plato recognized the synthetic character of the phenomena, he nevertheless continued to regard the mind as enjoying an unmediated participation in the realm of pure form. As a result, the mind was, in his judgment, able to discern intelligibility in the material world by virtue of its a priori contemplation of pure intelligibility. The movements in the phenomenal realm had their counterparts in the mind by virtue of the mind's participation in pure movement. Both
the phenomenal and the mental movements participated in that pure movement.

The second step, reflected in Aristotle's form/matter correlation, restored reality to the world without undercutting the differentiation which Plato had drawn between the sensory and the extra-sensory. It did, however, require a further statement of that differentiation, since form/matter itself was now understood to be the immanent and indivisible substructure which manifested itself in the phenomena. Therefore, Aristotle developed the notion of a substance/accident differentiation to account for the distinction between the underlying extra-sensory reality (substance) and its sensory or phenomenal manifestations (accidents). The phenomena were, in his account, the 'representations' of that underlying substance.

Aristotle's relocation of reality in the world also required a radical reassessment of the mind. For the elimination of Plato's formal realm eliminated the possibility of the mind enjoying an a priori participation in pure intelligibility. If phenomenal movements are to be understood by the mind, then the mind must in some sense reproduce or 'figurate' those movements by its own immanent activity. This, in turn, means that the activity of the mind must differ fundamentally from the activities of the phenomena. "The proper movement of a circle is revolution; but the proper movement of the mind, he [Aristotle] insists, is—thinking." As Barfield goes on to note, we have in Aristotle the detachment of thought from movement in space and, indeed, from movement at all.

5 Ibid., p- 103.
Hence, the correlation between sensory/extra-sensory which Aristotle placed in the world he also extended to the mind. The mind has a potency (passive intellect) corresponding to the material principle in substances and to their accidental manifestations. But it also has an act (active intellect) corresponding to the formal principles in substances and to their extra-sensory reality. The passive intellect provides the link between sensible substances and mind, but the active intellect is required to move the mind beyond the sensory to the substantial. The isomorphism between the mind and reality is, therefore, no longer a one-on-one identity between intelligence and intelligibility. It is rather a correspondence between two activities which, though quite different in themselves, are grounded in the same act/potency structure. In Aristotle, therefore, the figurating (synthetic) character of the human mind arises in human consciousness at the same time that the phenomena are recognized to be the 'representations' of a reality which is intrinsically synthetic in character (form and matter) and yet unified (correlated).

Aristotle's break with Plato, however, created an enormous number of problems which Aristotle could not solve. Although in Aristotle the mind continued to participate in knowledge through an immanent activity which allowed it to reproduce and therefore unite itself with the movements of the phenomena, it was no longer clear whether the mind and the phenomena were themselves participating in any deeper reality. Indeed, having distinguished the activity of the mind from the movements of the phenomena, it was no longer clear whether the mind and the world participated in the same reality. The mind might be regarded as some faint reflection of Thinking Thought and the movements of the world
might be traced to 49 or 55 Prime Movers, but Aristotle no longer had any way of bringing them all together into a single unity. Nor would doing so have helped, since he sought to establish the reality of the world, not its participation in a de-materialized reality, whether it be Thinking Thought or Prime Mover.

The agent intellect might seem to offer a solution to the dilemma, were it not for the fact that Aristotle was unable to find an appropriate place for it. When he placed it inside the concrete individual, he merely underwrote that noetic individualism which the agent intellect was designed to resolve. When he placed it somewhere in the spheres, he undermined the immanent unity which his intelligible world required, qua intelligible. In the end, he was never able to overcome the problem.

The medieval world was heir both to the Platonic and to the Aristotelian differentiations. The Platonic differentiation, since it placed a space between the really real and the world, seemed to Christian theologians the perfect vehicle for distinguishing between God and creation while maintaining the participation of creation in God. And Plato's notion of the mind knowing truth by virtue of its participation in the realm of pure form seemed the perfect vehicle for a doctrine of divine illumination.

The only apparent difficulty was that of accounting for how participation in a single divinity could produce a variety of intelligibilities. But even here Plato's Forms seemed to fit comfortably into the Divine Mind, so comfortably, in fact, that the problematic character of such a solution was quickly lost to sight. In the neo-Platonic Christianity of Augustine and his successors, the human mind was interposed between God and the world, and the world itself was thought to be
illumined by that divine illumination which suffused the human mind. The intelligibilities of the world were not the condition of possibility for knowing God. Rather, God's illumination of the human mind was the condition of possibility for knowing the world.

Thomas and his successors accepted the Platonic differentiation between God and the world, but they also added to that the Aristotelian notion of 1) the world as really intelligible in its own right and 2) the human mind as a correlation of active and passive intellects. The shift to Aristotelianism produced a corresponding shift in the relations among God, the human mind and the world. Instead of the human mind being interposed between God and the world, the world was now understood to be interposed between the human mind and God. The world was no longer thought to be intelligible to man by virtue of his participation in God (at least not in the Platonic/Augustinian sense). Rather, the existence of God was thought to be recognizable by reference to the world's intelligibility, and the world's intelligibility was no longer simply given; it had to be reproduced or figured in the human mind. Knowledge therefore continued to be a participated knowledge, a union between knower and known. *Intelligibile in actu est intellectus in actu.* And knower and known alike continued to be regarded as participations in God.

This more Aristotelian approach had the same problem which confronted the Augustinians, namely, the problem of accounting for a multiplicity of intelligibilities from a single divine agent; it also accepted the same solution, the Divine Ideas. The Divine Ideas, however, created a much more difficult problem than the one it was presumed to have solved, a problem which the Augustinians did not face, viz., the problem
of accounting for how the same Divine Ideas which grounded the world's participation in God could simultaneously be called upon to ground the world's intelligibility apart from God. Plato had maintained that the phenomena were 'representations' of an extrinsic realm of intelligibility. Aristotle had maintained with equal steadfastness that the phenomena were 'representations' of an intelligibility intrinsic to the world. Augustinians were content to go along with Plato. Thomists wanted to have it both ways. They therefore posited a world which is simultaneously opaque (thick) and transparent (thin). The opaque world can be understood apart from its participation in God, the transparent world cannot. The phenomena, in other words, are to be understood as 'representations' of both God and an immanent reality.

In the final analysis, Thomas was more Platonic than Aristotelian, for, like Aristotle before him, he failed to locate within the world an immanent source of its intelligible unity. Placing the agent intellect in the individual was Thomas' acknowledgement of defeat. For, having thereby underwritten the notion of substantially complete individuals, he was forced back onto an extrinsic source (God) to explain the world's unity. But, in accepting the notion of the world as understandable apart from its existential actuation or participation in God, he not only freed philosophy from theology, but also hastened the advent of that day when science would proclaim its autonomy from metaphysics.

The third stage of human consciousness, the scientific or cosmo-centric, arose when man discovered that he could treat the phenomena as independent entities, as realities in their own right. It was simultaneously that stage in human consciousness when alpha thinking took over. Man discovered that he could treat the phenomena not only as
independent of God but as independent of his own mind as well. Alpha thinking, the thinking about the phenomena as though they were 'things' outside the mind, the 'already out there now' of which Lonergan speaks, requires that those 'things' participate neither in a divine reality nor in the human mind.

... alpha-thinking involves pro tanto absence of participation. It is in fact the very nature and aim of pure alpha-thinking to exclude participation. When, therefore, it is directed, as it has to be to start with, on phenomena determined by original participation, then, at first simply by being alpha-thinking, and at a later stage deliberately, it seeks to destroy that participation.6

Alpha thinking is reflected most clearly, in metaphysics, by the Cartesian split between mind and matter and, in science, by the Newtonian 'turn to the object' which constituted classical physics. In the latter case, it produced those 'things' or idols of which Barfield speaks.

... a representation, which is collectively mistaken for an ultimate—ought not to be called a representation. It is an idol. Thus the phenomena themselves are idols, when they are imagined as enjoying that independence of human perception which can in fact only pertain to the unrepresented.7

Classical physics began with two simple and, as it turned out, quite erroneous assumptions. The first of these, that the phenomena can be regarded as intelligible in themselves, without reference to any other reality, broke down in the Newtonian universe where, although a machine once in existence can be plausibly presented as running virtually forever without any extrinsic impetus, the existence of the machine itself cannot be so understood. Newton was forced to call upon the deus ex machina to account for the machine. This first assumption also broke down in the biological sciences, where, as we have already seen, Darwin

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6 Ibid., p. 43.
7 Ibid., p. 62.
was forced to call upon pure chance to account for evolutionary change. This 'hypothesis' of pure chance was simply another acknowledgement that the phenomena, when considered solely in their own right, are ultimately unintelligible.

Classical physics also assumed a congruence between the human mind and the cosmos. So much so, in fact, that to all practical intents and purposes, it returned to the pantheist notion of reality whereby the phenomena are "out there", simply given to us. We need only take a good look. Figuration was once again lost to sight. This naive assumption shipwrecked on the 'wavicles' of quantum physics. The synthetic character of reality, which had led Aristotle to recognize the synthetic character of human knowing, forced the scientific community to re-examine its own naive assumptions about simply looking at things. Alpha thinking and the non-participated phenomena to which it irrevocably committed itself began simultaneously to disintegrate.

Having detached the phenomena from any extrinsic (to the world) reality in which they might be regarded as participating and yet feeling keenly the need to locate somewhere the ultimate principle of their intelligibility, the human mind turned back upon itself. This fourth stage of human consciousness, the anthropocentric, therefore necessarily involved the rise of beta thinking, that thinking about the phenomena in relation to man. Vico's turn to history, Kant's turn to the subject, Marx' turn to human praxis, all manifest the breakdown of alpha thinking and of scientific idolatry.

Henceforth the phenomena are to have restored to them their status as 'representations'. In Kant they represent the structures of the human mind, in Vico and Marx the products of human praxis, in science
the structures of scientific investigation or the experiences of the scientific investigator. And the mind is no longer to be regarded as a tabula rasa upon which the phenomena impress themselves as whole and complete intelligibilities. Instead, the mind becomes the imposing structure (Kant) or at least the imposing agent (Marx, Metz). The phenomena of alpha thinking are therefore regarded by beta thinking as products of the human spirit (praxis). They are representations of man. Man is the creator of the representation.

As long as nature herself continued to be apprehended as image, it sufficed for the artist to imitate Nature. Inevitably, the life or spirit in the object lived on in his imitation, if it was a faithful one. For at the same time it could not help being more than an imitation, inasmuch as the artist himself participated the being of the object. But the imitation of an idol is a purely technical process; which (as was quickly discovered) is better done by photography. To-day an artist cannot rely on the life inherent in the object he imitates, any more than a poet can rely on the life inherent in the words he uses. He has to draw the life forth from within himself.8

Characteristics of the Development of Human Consciousness

The first characteristic which Barfield discusses with regard to the development of human consciousness is the correlative character of the relationship between human consciousness and the phenomena. The two are not identical, neither are they antagonistic. Instead, every stage in the history of human consciousness has been marked by corresponding changes in how the phenomena were regarded. The undifferentiated consciousness of pantheism corresponds to an undifferentiated notion of reality. The figuration of Aristotle (synthetic thinking) corresponds to the substance/accident correlation he attributed to the phenomena as representations of an immanent reality (form/matter). Alpha thinking corresponds to the scientific idols of Newtonian science. Beta thinking

8Ibid., pp. 128-129.
corresponds to the contemporary notion of the phenomena as 'representations' of man himself.

At each stage in the process, the phenomena reveal themselves to be 'representations' of human consciousness at that stage. The relationship between consciousness and phenomena is therefore an Aristotelian correlation, not a Platonic dichotomy. Furthermore, it is an anthropocentric (Aristotelian), not a theocentric (Platonic) relationship. The phenomena are intelligible by reference to an immanent (human), not a transcendent (divine), intelligence.

The second characteristic which Barfield notes is the genuine historicity of human consciousness, inasmuch as it is both a liberating and an irreversible development. The Platonic differentiation between pure form and material form liberated the world from its earlier identity with God. The Aristotelian differentiation between the activity of the mind and the movements of the phenomena liberated the mind from its previous identity with God (pantheism) or pure form (Platonism). Scientific idolatry liberated the phenomena from any intelligibility extrinsic to the world (something which Aristotle attempted and failed to achieve). The contemporary 'turn to the subject' or beta thinking has liberated the mind from the notion that it must submit itself to the dehumanized, cosmic intelligibilities of scientific idolatry.

The irreversibility of human consciousness stems from the fact that human consciousness and the phenomena change together. We are therefore always living in a world which corresponds to our consciousness. To try to return to any previous stage of consciousness would require us, therefore, to detach ourselves from the conscious world in which we live. That, in turn, would require us to consciously suppress some
part of our own consciousness. Original participation or pantheism is, quite literally, unconscious of its own character. It depends upon an unconscious identification of the sensory and the extra-sensory. To consciously return to such a stage of unconsciousness would be a contradiction in terms. The attempts of Wordsworth to reinstate pantheism and of Mach to revalidate Buddhism are individual aberrations which fail to gain a consensus precisely because they require a withdrawal from reality as it is generally perceived.

By the same token, any return to the Greek and medieval notion of the universe as a participation in divinity is also impossible. Alpha thinking 'dis-godded' the phenomena. We live in a world of 'things', not of divine manifestations. Nothing, perhaps, demonstrates this more clearly than the contemporary theological confusion which surrounds the complaint that we have 'reduced' God to a thing among things. The history of human consciousness would indicate the opposite. In pantheism, God (or the divine) was the only 'thing' (substance or reality). In neo-Platonism and medieval Christianity, God continued to be regarded, for the most part, as the only 'thing'. The phenomena were His analogues or manifestations (representations). Thomas' notion of the individual as substantial was an important step on the road to that scientific idolatry which would one day elevate all of the phenomena to the status of things. Then and only then did God become a thing among things. But He was not 'reduced' to the level of the phenomena; rather the phenomena were 'elevated' to the level of the really real. Because we today so much take for granted the 'thing' character of the phenomena, we have lost sight of the fact that they have not always been 'things'.

Beta thinking can force us to re-examine the relationship between
the phenomena and the mind, but the only phenomena which beta thinking has to work with are the 'things' or idols which have been produced by alpha thinking. There is no road back to the divinized phenomena of previous times.

By the same token, neither the Hegelian dialectic nor the Kantian 'turn to the subject' is able to offer an exit. The Aristotelian character of the relationship between mind and phenomena, as well as the genuinely historical (free) development of human consciousness itself, rule out any account of reality which would restate some form of the Platonic dichotomies or require a return to the notion of reality as pure idea. They also rule out the Kantian presumption that the mind and the phenomena enjoy some kind of permanent relationship with one another. As Barfield points out, "it is invariably assumed that, whatever the truth may be about the psychological nexus between man and nature, it is an unchanging one and is the same now as it was when men first appeared on earth."9 Such an assumption is not borne out by the actual history of human consciousness itself.

Barfield therefore agrees with Metz that the world's de-divinization is an irreversible process. He also concurs with Metz that human knowledge is public, not private. The phenomenal world in which we daily move is a world of 'collective', not individual, representations. Beta thinking is correct when it relates the phenomena to the human mind as their immediate source. The only other choice at this point is to suppose that we live in a wholly irrational universe. But it must be the collective human community to which the phenomena are related. Otherwise, reality fragments into as many pieces as there are human individuals. The

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9Ibid., p. 12.
phenomena are 'real' by virtue of their shared or collective character.

Barfield and Metz therefore also agree that the world in which we live, whether it be the political realm (Metz) or simply the everyday realm of phenomena (Barfield), arises out of human praxis. We 'produce' our phenomenal world just as much as we produce our political world.

Barfield does not agree with Metz, however, that the current anthropocentric and secular consciousness is permanent. His reasons for disagreeing are threefold. In the first place, the fact that the mind and the phenomena enjoy a correlative rather than dichotomous relationship rules out Metz' Platonic starting point. Such a starting point is further ruled out by the fact that the human mind reveals itself as having undergone a genuine historical development. Intelligence (mind) and contingency (history) are inseparable. Neither enjoys primacy over the other. They also are correlative.

In the second place, the position in which we find ourselves today is an untenable one. For, although beta thinking itself seems indispensable in order to restore intelligibility to 'things', it must nevertheless accept the 'thing' character of the phenomena which alpha thinking has produced. Hence, beta thinking can refer such 'things' to man, but what about man himself? In a 'dis-godded' world, nothing prevents man from becoming just one more 'thing' among things. Beta thinking alone cannot help, for it is the function of beta thinking to establish relationships between 'things' and the mind, not to determine the character of the mind. Alpha thinking determines the character of the phenomena, including the mind, and alpha thinking has already turned into a 'thing' every phenomenon, including the mind. Beta thinking, therefore, cannot by its own power escape the 'idols' of alpha thinking.
Nor is there any way to retreat from alpha and beta thinking. Under such circumstances, "The best way of escape from deep-rooted error has often proved to be, to pursue it to its logical conclusion, that is, to go on taking it seriously and see what follows." 10

Barfield's third reason for disagreeing with Metz has to do with the participated character of historical consciousness. If historical consciousness is a genuine development, then there must be some force at work from within human consciousness itself which is effecting the changes through which it has gone. We cannot identify that force with human consciousness per se, or we would be back into an Hegelian dialectic. But we also cannot suppose that it has been the purpose of such an agent to eliminate its own presence, since its own presence is the sole foundation upon which human consciousness can be understood as intelligible and historical. The phenomena can be safely de-divinized without emptying the world of intelligibility. But empty the human mind itself of divinity, and the world is at once emptied of meaning.

We have seen how Metz continues to speak of a 'numinous link' between God and man. 11 Metz does not pursue it. For Barfield, however, this numinous link is the key to understanding the history of human consciousness. It reveals that 'original' participation was the first step on the road to 'final' participation. First, we shall examine what Barfield understands to be the noetic significance of final participation. Then we shall examine its theological significance.

10 Ibid., p. 57.
11 See p. 315.
Final Participation: Human Actuation of the World

Scientific idolatry or cosmocentrism, by turning the universe into a great machine, de-divinized without humanizing the phenomena. We have already seen why their re-divinization is today out of the question. The task before us is, therefore, to humanize or hominize them.

... the mind in apprehending also experiences sensations which, properly speaking, are qualities of the mind alone. These sensations are projected by the mind so as to clothe appropriate bodies in eternal nature. Thus the bodies are perceived as with qualities which in reality do not belong to them, qualities which in fact are purely the offspring of the mind. Thus nature gets credit which should in truth be reserved for ourselves; the rose for its scent: the nightingale for his song: and the sun for his radiance. The poets are entirely mistaken. They should address their lyrics to themselves, and should turn them into odes of self-congratulation on the excellency of the human mind.12

This capacity of the human mind to invest nature with beauty and meaning is the central noetic element of final participation.

... the future of the phenomenal world can no longer be regarded as entirely independent of man's volition. This is the difference between original and final participation.13

Man therefore stands in what Barfield calls a 'directionally creator' relationship with nature.14

Zukav raises the question, "Who is looking at the universe?" Put another way, How is the universe being actualized?"15 Zukav's answer is man. Barfield would agree. The history of human consciousness is eo ipso the history of the world's actualization. It is not just that, in the absence of man, there would be no sound when the tree falls in

13 Barfield, Saving the Appearances, p. 160.
14 Ibid., p. 132.
15 Zukav, The Dancing Wu Li Masters, p. 79.
the forest; there would be no tree and no forest. There would be only particles or the 'unrepresented'. "Is God's creation less awe-inspiring because I know that the light, for instance, out of which its visual substance is woven, streams forth from my own eyes?"\(^{16}\)

Creation is therefore not the production of a world in which man is then placed. Creation is rather the making of man, through whom the polarization of consciousness and phenomena takes place and finite reality is actual.

Just as, when a word is formed or spoken, the original unity of the 'inner' word is polarized into a duality of outer and inner, that is, of sound and meaning; so, when man himself was 'uttered', that is, created, the cosmic wisdom became polarized, in and through him, into the duality of appearance and intelligence, representation and consciousness. But when creation has become polarized into consciousness on the one side and phenomena, or appearances, on the other, memory is made possible, and begins to play an all-important part in the process of evolution. For by means of his memory man makes the outward appearances an inward experience. He acquires his self-consciousness from them. When I experience the phenomena in memory, I make them 'mine', not now by virtue of any original participation, but by my own inner activity. It is from this activity in memory, it will be recalled, that the human word, according to Aquinas, 'proceeds'. For, once the phenomena are 'mine', I can reproduce them in the form of words.\(^{17}\)

Once we are able to reproduce the phenomena in words, we can 'recycle' the words, i.e., we can redeploy the words as metaphors. Words which are given to us by the phenomena of the world in which we live can then be used to retranslate the phenomena themselves or to enlarge upon them by 'phenomenalizing' or actualizing some part of the 'unrepresented' which had heretofore remained outside the realm of our consciousness.

The polarization of human consciousness and the phenomena is therefore the condition of possibility for the transition from an unconscious and

\(^{16}\) Barfield, Saving the Appearances, p. 159.

\(^{17}\) Ibid., pp. 154-155.
unreflective to a conscious and deliberate human actualization of the world.

Quantum physics is constantly engaged in such a process. Each new layer of 'matter' manifests regularities which, once they are discovered, provoke the search for a form. The form is expressed in a word or a name which is provided not by the regularity itself but by the scientist who analyzes the regularity. The words or names which scientists today give to new forms express the increasingly anthropocentric consciousness underlying the process. "Quark" is a good example. What does it mean to say that something is a "quark"? No one believes that a quark is a quark because it participates quarkity or Quarkness Itself. Not only is such a suggestion obviously absurd, its very absurdity immediately evidences the enormous distance which separates us from Thomas, not to mention Plato. Quarks are quarks because they participate a human consciousness familiar with the writings of James Joyce. 18

Another recently-discovered subatomic entity, the 'anomalon,' offers a second example. Described by one scientist as "a nucleus that interacts before its time," 19 the anomalon behaves in ways which at the moment puzzle physicists. Its name clearly derives from the current state of the scientific mind, not from the eternal state of God's mind.

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18 For those human consciousnesses not already informed by Joyce, the word "quark" appears in Finnegan's Wake, where the children of Mr. Finn are referred to as "three quarks". They are sometimes employed by Joyce to 'represent' Mr. Finn himself. Since protons are thought to consist of three particles or at least often behave as though they were so composed, a proton and its three particles (quarks) are interchangeable in the same way in which Mr. Finn and his three children are.

It is by no means fanciful, therefore, to say with Mersch that man, "by advancing toward [the phenomena], advances toward the reconquest of himself."\(^{20}\) For, in naming the phenomena, man invests them with a human significance. But this makes sense only if we recognize that the phenomenal realm is itself a realm of potential phenomena awaiting a human actuation.

Scientific labor consists in translating phenomena into terms which man derives from himself, as though they had no separate existence in themselves. So true is this that we see them readily embodied in a category of thought or an equation as in their proper domain. They exist as though they were potential thought and nourishment of thought, as though they had something human in them and were waiting to be taken up by man.\(^{21}\)

The correlation between human consciousness and the phenomena is therefore an act/potency relationship. In figuration, we unconsciously participate the phenomena. The phenomena are collective representations of the collective human unconscious which figurates them.

Original participation failed altogether to recognize that the world of human consciousness (the phenomenal world) stems from the mind's own unconscious act of figuration. It therefore identified that world, as well as the human mind, with the intelligibility or divinity it perceived in the phenomena. All phenomena, the human mind included, were thought to be participations in a single intelligibility or spirit.

Scientific idolatry emptied the phenomenal world of any participated reality whatsoever. The phenomenal world became a reality in its own right, set over against the human mind. It created the idols which constitute the world of human consciousness today. But in emptying the world of all vestiges of original participation, it enabled us to realize


\(^{21}\) Ibid.
for the first time that our conscious world, our phenomenal world, is actually a 'representation' of our own unconscious mental activity. It has therefore enabled us to become self-conscious and, in so doing, has opened the road to final participation. "For beta-thinking leads to final, by way of the inexorable elimination of all original, participation." The remains is that "final participation must itself be raised from potentiality to act." We can do that only by raising to the level of consciousness that figurating activity by which the phenomena themselves are raised from potency to act.

Barfield notes that there are already signs of an incipient final participation, negatively, in the attempts of the Romantic movement to destroy the scientific idols, positively in the work of Jung, Freud, Goethe and Steiner, and in the Impressionistic artists. With regard to Impressionism, Barfield notes,

They really painted nature in the light of the eye, as no other painters had done before them. They were striving to realize in consciousness the normally unconscious activity of 'figuration' itself. They did not imitate; they expressed 'themselves'--inasmuch as they painted nature as the representation of Man. Barfield goes on to say that, in them, we have a reminder that "the rejection of original participation may mean, not the destruction but the liberation of images." This liberation of images consists in our being able to recognize, as previous ages have not, that we, not nature or the phenomena, control the images. They arise from within us, they are not imposed upon

22 Barfield, Saving the Appearances, p. 139.
23 Ibid., p. 137.
24 Ibid., p. 132.
25 Ibid.
us, whether by God or by nature. Man is the Messiah of nature. But where does man stand vis a vis God? That is the crucial question which demands an answer, particularly within the context of political theology.

Once the relationship between human consciousness and the phenomena is recognized, we can no longer suppose ourselves to be in conflict with either nature (Metz) or chaos (Gutierrez). For all that is given outside us is the 'unrepresented' or the 'particles'. But the unrepresented is not chaotic, for it continually manifests itself in regularities. Nor is it 'nature' per se, for its structure is potential, not actual. The phenomenal world in which we live exists by virtue of its human actualization. Whatever chaos or alienation we find there has arisen from within ourselves. We therefore cannot undertake either our liberation or the liberation of our world without understanding our own unconscious.

Nor can we suppose that the current anthropocentricity or secularity is the final word. For if we can now say that man is the messiah of nature, we have yet to say who is the messiah of man. If nature is actual by virtue of its participation in man, how is man himself actual? If, as Barfield points out, "the phenomenal world arises from the relation between a conscious and an unconscious," and the human unconscious figurates or actualizes the phenomena, how does human unconsciousness become actualized? What is that consciousness which actualizes it?

Beta thinking (reflective or critical thinking) cannot help us here. It can enable us to understand the relationship of the world to the human mind, but it cannot tell us how that mind is actualized. Nor

26 Ibid., p. 160.
27 Ibid., p. 136.
is alpha thinking of any help. For while it does allow us to think directly about man, it does so at the price of turning man into just one more 'thing' or idol. It presupposes the answer (actualization) before the question can even be asked.

The only place in which an answer can be found is history itself. For if the development of human consciousness is genuinely historical, the only condition of possibility for such a history is the presence of an actual agent not identical with human potential consciousness (unconsciousness) and yet in which that potential consciousness participates. The only alternative would seem to be either an extrinsic agent whose effectiveness would not be genuinely historical because extrinsic or an agency which is identical with human consciousness, in which case human consciousness could not develop in an historical but only in an Hegelian fashion. Barfield finds in history two critical moments at which such a conscious agency is at work, first to eliminate original participation and then to implant the seeds of final participation.

**Final Participation: Incarnational Actuation of Man**

We are well accustomed to understanding the Old Testament as a rejection of that idolatry associated with original participation or pantheism, though by now we have lost sight of just how novel that rejection was.

The children of Israel became a nation and began their history in the moment when Moses, in the very heart of the ancient Egyptian civilization, delivered to them those ten commandments, which include the unheard-of injunction: 'Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image or any likeness of anything that is in the heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.' This is perhaps the unlikeliest thing that ever happened. As far as we know, in every other nation at that time there prevailed unquestioned the participating consciousness which
apprehends the phenomena as representations and naturally expresses itself in making images. For the Jews, henceforward, any dealings with those nations were strictly forbidden. Everywhere throughout the world original participation was in full swing. For the Jews, from that moment on, original participation, and anything smacking of it, became a deadly sin. And what is the Old Testament but the tale of their long struggle against that very sin, their repeated relapses and their final victory.28

We have also lost sight, after centuries of neo-Platonic theologizing, of the fact that the Old Testament rejects neo-Platonic notions of participation as well.

... here is not only no hint of mythology, but no real suggestion of manifestation. Everything proclaims the glory of God, but nothing represents Him. Nothing could be more beautiful, and nothing could be less Platonic.29

The Old Testament concerns itself exclusively with the relationship between God and man. Knowledge for the Jews was always legal or moral, not philosophical or cosmic. Barfield concludes that this extraordinary experience of a people rejecting the phenomenal world in which all of its neighbors lived could only have been deliberate.

We have seen that, before the days of 'hypotheses to save the appearances', knowledge was inconceivable except as a form of participation, and we cannot resist the conclusion that this detachment from knowledge arose, in the case of the Jews, not so much from any want of mental alertness as from a positive objection to participation as such. We cannot resist this conclusion because the whole history of the race, from Exodus onwards, is the story of that chronic objection.30

What happened in Israel, therefore, has direct bearing on our situation today. For Israel accomplished with deliberation in the ancient world what alpha thinking has accomplished with deliberation in the modern world.

28 Ibid., p. 109.
29 Ibid., p. 108.
30 Ibid.
We have seen how that polarization into man:nature, which was the means to man's self-consciousness, was exaggerated by the scientific revolution into an exclusive disjunction. It was still a polarity, so long as some image-consciousness, some participation survived. We have seen also... how the disjunction was deliberately purposed by the Jewish nation. I believe it will some day be realized that their mission was at the same time to prepare humanity against the day when it should be complete—that is, our own time.\footnote{Ibid., p. 124.}

The rejection of original participation by the Jews was not, however, a rejection of God's presence in the world. It was rather a rejection of His presence or manifestation anywhere except in man. Man was, for them, the nexus between divinity and cosmos.

They pinpointed participation in the Divine Name, the I AM spoken only from within, and it was the logic of their whole development that the cosmos of wisdom should henceforth have its perennial source, not without, and behind the appearances, but within the consciousness of man; not in front of his senses and his figuration, but behind them.\footnote{Ibid., p. 155.}

Unfortunately, the ineffability of the divine vis a vis the phenomena was eventually applied to Yahweh's relationship with man as well. His transcendence was absolutized such that He ceased to be understood as having any immediate relationship even with humanity.

By the time Jesus was born the Divine Name had ceased to be spoken by man in the Temple or elsewhere. The pharisees had made it the name of a Being exclusively objective, remote, inaccessible, infinitely superior to, yet imagined as existentially parallel with man. Thus, the Jews had barely glimpsed before they again lost sight of, that which is the opposite pole to man's otherness from the I AM, namely his supreme identity with it.\footnote{Ibid., p. 157.}

Christ was the revelation of man's otherness and identity with God. In Him the inwardness or immanence of divinity within humanity became manifest. This immanence was not, however, a revelation which
Israel was then able to accept. It was quite literally blasphemy to a nation which had grown accustomed to thinking of God as beyond all human utterance. Unable to accept the 'final' participation which He offered, they could only crucify a man whom they regarded as blasphemous. They quite literally did not know what they were doing. Having driven God so far from the world, they could no longer recognize His presence within them, much less among them. But neither His message nor His presence was lost. His message was retained in the words He spoke, His presence in the Eucharist He instituted.

With regard to the former, Barfield examines the parable of the sower at some length, concluding that

The parable, then, was about the sowing of the word, the Logos, in earthly soil. It was an attempt to awaken his hearers to the realization that this seed was within their own hearts and minds, and no longer in nature or anywhere without.34

Here we have, in Barfield's judgment, a conscious and deliberate liberation of the images, not unlike that of beta thinking, but with one quite crucial difference. Beta thinking liberates the images from the phenomena by locating them in man. Christ liberates the images in the same way, but goes one step further. He liberates them not only from cosmic but from human idolatry as well. The human mind actualizes the world, but Christ actualizes the human mind.

Original participation fires the heart from a source outside itself; the images enliven the heart. But in final participation—since the death and resurrection—the heart is fired from within by the Christ; and it is for the heart to enliven the images.35

Austin Farrer's analysis of the imagery of the Apocalypse of John leads him to the same conclusion. The Old Testament rejection of idolatry

34 Ibid., p. 179.
was not the death of images. Quite the contrary.

The rejection of idolatry meant not the destruction but the liberation of the images. Nowhere are the images in more vigour than in the Old Testament, where they speak of God, but are not he.\(^\text{36}\)

The Old Testament produced an enormous range of images—images of suffering, sacrifice, atonement, Messiah, Kingdom of God, divine sonship. All of these images were, as Farrer points out, fused and reborn in Christ.\(^\text{37}\) If the Old Testament liberated the images from the phenomena so that they might be redeployed in the service of God, Christ was the focus of that redeployment. In Him, the liberated images were indeed 'reborn', not within the phenomena but within us. For His death did not end final participation. It became rather the foundation of the new covenant, the covenant of final participation.

Therefore, as Barfield points out, Christ has been effective in history by His continued Eucharistic presence among and within us.

... the tender shoot of final participation has from the first been acknowledged and protected by the Church in the institution of the Eucharist. For all who partake of the Eucharist first acknowledge that the man who was born in Bethlehem was 'of one substance with the Father by whom all things were made'; and then they take that substance into themselves, together with its representations named bread and wine. This is after all the heart of the matter.\(^\text{38}\)

It is through the Eucharist that Christ becomes effective within us, not at the conscious (phenomenal) level, but at the unconscious (figurating) level. "... by the physical act of communion as such, men can only take the Divine substance, the 'Name apart' directly into the


\(^{37}\) Ibid., p. 15.

\(^{38}\) Barfield, *Saving the Appearances*, p. 170.
unconscious part of themselves; by way of their blood."39 It is by means of His ability to work from within the human unconscious that Christ is able to 'enliven the images' (that is, enliven the figurating process) as well as raise the process of figuration itself from the unconscious to the conscious level, i.e., raise final participation from potency to act.

His ability, however, to work from within human unconsciousness or figuration presupposes His presence in actuating that human unconsciousness in the first place. The historical Incarnation makes final participation itself an historical reality, but Christ's presence in history cannot be identified solely with the historical Incarnation, for the very possibility of final participation requires Christ's previous effectiveness in ousting original participation. This is, in Barfield's judgment, most apparent when we examine how the history of human consciousness has effected the use of the word or image in human history.

If we rapidly review the whole historical development of 'the word', we must say that, as soon as unconscious or subconscious organic processes have been sufficiently polarized to give rise to phenomena on the one side and consciousness on the other, memory is made possible. As consciousness develops into self-consciousness, the remembered phenomena become detached or liberated from their originals and so, as images, are in some measure at man's disposal. The more thoroughly participation has been eliminated, the more they are at the disposal of his imagination to employ as it chooses. If it chooses to impart its own meaning, it is doing, pro tanto, with the remembered phenomena what their Creator once did with the phenomena themselves. Thus there is a real analogy between metaphorical usage and original participation; . . . if, but only if, we admit that, in the course of the earth's history, something like a Divine Word has been gradually clothing itself with the humanity it first gradually created—so that what was first spoken by God may eventually be respoken by man.40

39 Ibid.
40 Ibid., pp. 126-127.
Barfield concludes, therefore, that "Christ is the cosmic wisdom on its way from original to final participation." 41

This understanding of Christ involves, at least for our purposes, three important corollaries. The first of these has to do with creation and speaks to the problems we have seen in Thomist metaphysics and transcendental Thomism. Creation must in some sense be regarded as Incarnational. Creation is not Logocentric but Christocentric. 42

As Barfield points out, attempts to universalize the historical Incarnation by reading its effects backward in time "involves a sudden

41 Ibid., p. 185.

42 A Logocentric notion of creation is invariably Platonic. As an example of this, see Seely Beggiani's article, "A Case for Logocentric Theology" (Theological Studies 32 [Sept 1971]:371-406). His primary thesis is stated early in the article: "We theorize that the two ideas, hypostatic union and indwelling, are two stages of the same reality. The conclusion is that all men have the same potential for total union with the divine Logos. The indwelling of the Trinity represents various stages along the way. Hypostatic union represents the culmination and climax" (p. 374). This thesis is Platonic, first, because it is explicitly theocentric, not anthropocentric, seeking an extrinsic source for the world's unity and meaning (creation is a "manifestation of God"--p. 378). This extrinsicism, secondly, leads to a fragmentation of the human community, inasmuch as each individual is understood to participate immediately and directly in the Logos, not in humanity or the Christ ("The divine Logos is to the human nature of Christ as the divine Logos is to each individual human"--pp. 374-375). Thirdly, and as a result, the difference between Christ and all other human beings is quantitative, not qualitative (he differs from us only by degree--p. 392; he received a greater abundance of grace than the rest of us--p. 405). Therefore, fourthly, Christ acts more as an exemplary (Platonic) than as an efficient (Aristotelian) cause (p. 405). Finally, our relationship with God and our salvation are dehistoricized, i.e., they are made to depend on our direct participation in the disincarnate Logos, not on our historical participation in the Incarnate Christ, whose activity, in any event, is not efficacious but exemplary (Christ is "exemplar, model and ultimate ideal for the rest of men"--p. 392).

It is not mere coincidence that Beggiani relies heavily on Rahner's theology, particularly the supernatural existential, to make his case. For Rahner's failure to provide intrinsic causes for human nature and the supernatural existential can issue in nothing but the extrinsicism and idealism we see operative in Beggiani's Logocentrism.
and uneasy jump in thought from time to eternity.\textsuperscript{43} Such attempts also cut us off from any understanding of not only the phenomenal world prior to the birth of Christ, but also its historical development during those centuries which did not know Him. Nor do they help us much to understand the significance of Christ for those who even today do not explicitly know Him.

Thomism has traditionally tried to circumvent these problems by attributing to the Logos what could not be attributed to the historical Incarnation.

\ldots if Christ's humanity, the instrument of the Word, is to act upon the entire human race, it must have contact with the entire human race, and that contact must be as real as its operation is real. But, since it is not the divinity, how can its presence be said to extend to all times and all places? \ldots Therefore, they say, inasmuch as, and only inasmuch as the human nature is one with the Word, it is not distant from anything.\textsuperscript{44}

But this jump from the finite to the infinite is simply a variation on the jump from time to eternity. Both undermine any possibility of our finding in the created order itself that intrinsic principle of unity without which the created and historical order cannot be understood as real and good. The jump from time to eternity, from finite to infinite, is the Platonic escape hatch to which Thomism, in all its forms, has always been driven. (Even Barfield, as we shall see shortly, failed to recognize the one alternative to this Platonizing of reality.)

The second corollary has to do with the cosmos in which we live and speaks to those problems we have seen in contemporary physics. Neither scientific development nor the cosmos itself are intelligible

\textsuperscript{43}Barfield, \textit{Saving the Appearances}, p. 169.

except by reference to the Incarnation. As Barfield points out, "the scientific revolution marked a crucial stage in that evolution from original to final participation, which is the progressive incarnation of the Word." For it was the de-divinizing of the cosmos by science which has, in modern human consciousness, opened the way to final participation. It cannot bring about that participation, but it has placed the cosmos at our disposal. We must choose whether we shall continue to construct a cosmos of idols or whether we shall participate with Christ in the building of the Kingdom of God. If we choose the latter, then science itself cannot avoid Christ. "There will be a revival of Christianity when it becomes impossible to write a popular manual of science without referring to the incarnation of the Word."

The third corollary has to do with Christ's effectiveness in history and human consciousness and speaks to those problems we have seen in political theology. Praxis is fundamentally neither secular nor political. It is Eucharistic. The Eucharist is the concrete historical event by which Christ is effecting that final participation which the historical Incarnation made manifest to a nation swept clean of original participation. That it has thus far liberated much greater areas of the earth from original participation is, as Metz points out, a sign of Christ's effectiveness in history. But it is not a sign that the anthropocentricity and secularity which we experience today are the final effect which Christ seeks.

If we accept at all the claims made by Christ Jesus concerning his own mission, we must accept that he came to make possible in

45 Barfield, Saving the Appearances, p. 165.
46 Ibid., p. 164.
the course of time the transition of all men from original to final participation; and we shall regard the institution of the Eucharist as a preparation—a preparation (we shall not forget) which has so far only been operant for the sidereally paltry period of nineteen hundred years or so.47

It also does not mean, as many traditional theologians might want to argue, that the Eucharist and, therefore, Christ Himself, have only a sacral meaning and effectiveness. Barfield sees in the medieval upsurge of legends concerning the Holy Grail a growing consciousness of the extra-sacerdotal significance of the Eucharist.48 Today's secularity and anthropocentricity, as products of the de-divinization of the world brought about through Christ's presence within it, should make us very much more conscious of the extra-liturgical significance of the Eucharist.

Esse/Essence: Creation in Christ

Barfield's entire book is a discussion of human consciousness in terms of an Aristotelian correlative or act/potency structure. It is therefore enormously surprising to find Barfield maintaining toward the end of the book that the Aristotelian notion of participation looks backward to original participation, whereas the "hierarchical participation per similitudinem, derived in part from Dionysius, looks rather forward to the 'final' variety."49 Having discussed at length the Aristotelian character of the history of human consciousness and the phenomena and the distinctly un-Platonic character of that process in Israel by which the images were liberated from original participation, he offers a Platonic account of final participation. For the Pseudo-Dionysian per

48 Ibid., p. 173.
49 Ibid.
similitudinem notion of participation is precisely that neo-Platonic Porphyrian universe of graded participations in an extrinsic and undifferentiated unity which we have already seen to be insufficient.

The fact that everyone whom we have examined thus far has fallen back upon some Platonic notion of the really real suggests that some major stumbling block stands in our path here. I would suggest that there are, in fact, three stumbling blocks. The first of these exists in human consciousness itself. The only form of participation which that consciousness has heretofore recognized is Platonic. The temptation, therefore, is to return to that with which we are already familiar. Wordsworth's attempt to revive pantheism was just such an attempt. Its Christian counterpart is the Porphyrian universe which early Christian theology found so readily adaptable to the Christian notion of a transcendent Creator God.

This brings us to our second stumbling block, an explicitly Christian one. And that is the problem of supposing, as Christian theology always has, that the really real must be associated exclusively with the one God. To suppose this is to suppose a priori a Platonic resolution to all difficulties which arise in trying to understand the relationship between God and the world. The compositeness of the world will always, under these circumstances, be, reduced to the simplicity of undifferentiated divinity. 50

The third stumbling block is a methodological one. It is that problem which has, as we have seen, plagued both Aristotelianism and

50 Although this dissertation does not bear directly upon Christian Trinitarian doctrine, the point should be borne in mind that the arguments put forth here require our participation in a qualitatively differentiated divinity (i.e., the Trinity). See pp. 440-441.
Thomism, that of locating an immanent composite source of unity for the composite world in which we live. In the absence of such an immanent source of unity, the dichotomies or polarities of our world can be resolved only by reference to an extrinsic source of unity. The continual return to Platonic resolutions not only evidences a continuing failure within Aristotelianism/Thomism, but has also become so commonplace as to suggest to the unwary that no such failure exists.

Both Aristotle and Thomas, however, recognized, at least up to a point, that the unity of polarities must be given within the world itself or Plato was right. Aristotle recognized that if the unity of form and matter is not given a priori, it cannot be achieved a posteriori. If the world in itself is not constituted by such a unity, then the really real is either pure form or chaos. Thomas recognized that if the unity of contingency and intelligibility is not given in creation, it cannot be achieved in history. If the world in itself is not constituted by such a unity, then the really real is either pure intelligibility or pure contingency (another way of saying it is either pure form or chaos). What Thomas did not recognize, unfortunately, was the fact that what holds true for the polarities of form/matter and esse/essence also holds true for the polarities of God/man and grace/nature. If their union is not somehow given in creation, it cannot be achieved in history.

Thomas’ attempts to relate nature and grace are an excellent example of the quandary in which he finds himself. If grace is an accidental modification of an already substantially complete nature, then grace must come ab extrinseco. Furthermore, having nothing with which

51 See, for example, ST I-II, 9, 4 and 6 (on God as extrinsic mover); 63, 1 (on extrinsic character of gifts); 68, 1 (on divine principle of movement as extrinsic); 109, 7 ad 3 (on exterior character of grace).
to correlate at the substantial level, it must be regarded as an autonomous agent capable of raising the entire substance to a new level of being. This has the effect of turning an accident (grace) into a 'thing'. Within an Aristotelian act/potency framework, none of this makes any sense.

The neo-scholastic paradigm on nature and grace, with its extrinsic notion of grace and its two-storey notion of the universe, did not misunderstand Thomas nor did it misunderstand Aristotelian methodology. It simply recognized that grace, if one is to accept Thomas' account of it, must be regarded, first, as ab extrinseco, and, secondly, as introducing a second storey to the universe. For it recognized that grace as an extrinsic accident simply cannot operate as Thomas supposes it to. Rather than correct his notions of grace, they preferred to correct his notions of accident. By keeping Aristotle coherent, they made theology incoherent. They need not have done either, had they addressed themselves to the primary problem in both Aristotle and Thomas, that of locating the immanent composite substance which both require.

The following text by Thomas on the meaning of participation provides us with the keys to both the problem itself and the reason why Thomas did not solve it.

For what is such by participation, and what is mobile and what is imperfect always requires the pre-existence of something essentially such, immovable and perfect.52

There can be no participated existence apart from the "pre-existence" of that which is participated. This is the key to solving the Aristotelian problem of immanent substance. If the unity of the world is a composite unity, then the world must participate some "pre-existent" composite substance. Thomas never resolved this problem, because, as

52ST I, 79, 4.
the above text also indicates, he assumed a Platonic notion of participation, namely, that the world, although composite, participates a pure or simple substance. Perfection was, for Thomas as for Plato before him, identified with simplicity.

The Pre-Existent Christ

Christianity does offer an alternative to the Platonic notion of participation. In fact, the entire theology for such an alternative is already in place. Christ, the God-man, is Emmanuel, God-with-us. Through Him, we are united with or participate in that humanity and divinity which are His per essentiam. He is the Son of God, the Son of Man, the new Adam. In Him, humanity and divinity are distinct but inseparable. By becoming man, He united heaven and earth. By His continuing Eucharistic presence, He is immanently effective within history and humanity. In Him are united all of the polarities of our world and all of the polarities between our world and God.

Only one problem remains. It is the one mentioned earlier, that what is not united in creation cannot be united in history. The historical Christ can be understood as overcoming the polarities which arise from sin or the fallenness of creation, but He cannot be understood as overcoming dichotomies which are structured into creation from the beginning. If the created world is genuinely composite, i.e., a participation in both divinity and non-divinity, then that participation depends directly upon a 'pre-existent' composite substance. In short, the historical Incarnation must be placed within the context of a "pre-existent" Christ or Incarnation.

This notion of a "pre-existent Christ" is very difficult for theology to accept, in large part because it is so very difficult to grasp. Jumps
between time and eternity may be methodologically incoherent, but they can in some sense be imagined. A "pre-existent" Incarnation cannot be imagined at all. And our language continually conspires against all attempts to talk about it.

Barfield is a good example of this. Although explicitly conscious of the uneasiness of jumps between time and eternity, he himself makes them. Thus, we have already seen him speak of the Logos as "first" creating humanity and "then" clothing itself with humanity, as though the Logos who creates humanity could be separated from the Christ who takes on humanity. But such a separation cannot be made. For the actuation of human unconsciousness and union with that unconsciousness are identically the same act. We are actualized by the union, not before it. Our actualization is the union. Creation and Incarnation coincide. Where Barfield is concerned, in any event, only such an identification makes sense of what he says.

We have seen how Barfield seeks in the Incarnation a means of accounting for the whole of material reality. We have also seen how theological exegetes through the Middle Ages understood creation in terms of Christ. Their exegesis requires us to ask the question, "Does the emphasis on the Jesus of history replace or exclude the Incarnation (not eternal but) since the creation of the world (Rom 1:20)?" Vandermark provides a hermeneutical principle (drawn from Thomas) by which such a synthetic notion of Incarnation might be understood to be compatible with the Scriptural testimony.

53 See p. 419.
If we can agree that the statement "God has become" indicates a change in man and not in God (even though we do not and cannot see how the type of reality envisioned comes into being without change in God), then we may be closer to an understanding. If we can agree that it is the custom of Scripture to describe something as happening, i.e., as historical fact, when it becomes known, then we may be able to affirm the truth of historical and non-historical statements at the same time, without considering the latter as threatening or denying the former; for both proclaim the same mystery of God's incarnation. 55

The Scriptural basis for a link between Christ and creation is considerable. That link is one of the reasons why, as Bonnefoy points out, "The absolute primacy of Jesus Christ has received more attention in the past sixty years than it had received in the preceding six centuries." 56 Butterworth believes that the Scriptural assertion of a relationship between Christ and creation requires us to employ some notion of a pre-existent Christ.

Only God himself can have a full grasp of his own being and his doing. Men must await his revelation, and that revelation can be embodied only in human terms. There must be, therefore, a shortfall between what man can either discover or even be told by God about God's self and his actions on the one hand, and God's self and actions in themselves on the other. Theology must try to bridge the gap and promote such understanding as is possible, with such means of conceptualization as are available. Where the refinements of human philosophy with its man-made clarity fail to promote that understanding, then the believing mind has to make do with the humanly more unrefined notions which are to be found in Scripture. The pre-existent Christ is just such a notion: philosophically impossible but theologically necessary. 57

Although such a notion may be philosophically impossible, philosophers have, on occasion, seen the difficulties of accounting for God's immanent

55 Ibid.
57 Butterworth, Theology of Creation, p. 87. This book, though quite short, offers an excellent summary of Scriptural texts which link Christ with creation.
activity in the absence of such a notion. Rousselot, in an article entitled "Idealisme et Thomisme," recognized the need to account for the created universe in terms of Christ rather than of God. Although the article itself was never published, McDermott has summarized its major conclusion with regard to a pre-existent Christ.

One understanding saw totality as the infinite Esse of God in which all created beings participated, the other considered the totality of esse to be equivalent to the finite, material universe. Rousselot's easy gliding from one conception to another, from transcendental unity to a cumulative unity or vice versa, was justified only in view of the Primordial Adam. De facto the Jesuit identified this philosophical hypothesis with Jesus Christ, who in His person united the two meanings of totality and esse: As God He provided the beatifying goal toward which all strive and as man He comprehended the finite universe and supplied the normative intuition for conceptual imitations. This union of the infinite and the finite which allows man to attain the infinite through and in the finite constituted the sacramental meaning of reality. 58

Blondel also moved in the direction of a "panchristisme," a position which would understand Christ as He "who includes all men, the explicit [expression] of all that others possess only implicitly." 59 Blondel expressed the hope that someday the Church might express dogmatically the link between Christ and creation.

For if it is true that the least of sensible phenomena and the most elementary of corporeal existences cannot be conceived as real unless we see an element implied in it which cannot be accounted for by the merely creative decree of the First Cause; if it is true that we cannot bring our action to completion or remedy our faults or even have a real and living idea of God himself without appealing to this mediator; if it is true, as St Theresa teaches, that it is an illusion to think that we can detach ourselves better from material things and have a purer knowledge of God if we leave aside the humanity of Christ, whereas in fact this sacred humanity, 'which ought not to be put in that class', remains the only Way as well as the Supreme Truth, so that without


59 Daly, Transcendence and Immanence, p. 72.
it nothing in heaven or earth is intimately known, then it seems that philosophy, by demanding an element distinct both from nature and also from the Author of nature himself in order to conceive the effective realization of the whole order of things, would clarify and justify, from its own point of view, what is perhaps an implicit dogma, Emmanuel as the final cause of the creative plan.\(^{60}\)

Among recent Catholic theologians, Rahner more than most has recognized the importance and centrality of Christ to creation as well as to redemption. The following characterization of Rahner's theology is correct as far as it goes.

It starts not with nature but grace, not creation but redemption, not reason and natural theology but revelation and revealed theology, not God and man understood initially apart from Christ but Christ as crucial from the very beginning for the understanding of both creation and Creator.\(^{61}\)

Rahner's theology ultimately fails, however, to produce the transformation it promised, because Rahner was never able to get to the notion of Christ's pre-existence. As a result, he stranded his supernatural existential midway between nature and grace.

**Esse/Essence: Creation in Christ**

Any separation such as the one Barfield makes between the creation of the world or humanity by the Logos and the union of the Logos with that humanity automatically leads to a Platonic notion of how the world or humanity images God. For, by separating the Logos from the world which is caused, one is left with only an extrinsic exemplary cause, whether it be called the Logos or God. Esse must then be separated from any notion of divine immanence (formal causality) or all essential forms must be reduced to esse. The latter 'thin' essence position tends to blur the distinction between God and the world. The former 'thick'


essence position has to fall back on the Aristotelian accident to unite God and the world. The Incarnation is reduced to an accidental modification of history, just as grace is reduced to an accidental modification of substance. This not only undercuts the use of an Aristotelian methodology to speak about the created order, it also undercuts the universal significance of Christianity by supposing that the structures of the material world, as well as its history, are substantially natural, not Incarnational.

G. K. Chesterton once graphically expressed the universal significance of Christianity.

Now if Christianity be . . . a fragment of metaphysical nonsense invented by a few people, then, of course, defending it will simply mean talking that metaphysical nonsense over and over again. But if Christianity should happen to be true—that is to say, if its God is the real God of the universe—then defending it may mean talking about anything or everything. Things can be irrelevant to the proposition that Christianity is false, but nothing can be irrelevant to the proposition that Christianity is true. Zulus, gardening, butchers' shops, lunatic asylums, housemaids and the French Revolution—all these things not only may have something to do with the Christian God, but must have something to do with Him if He really lives and reigns.62

Thomas himself would never have questioned the truth of such a statement. But today, while connections between Christianity and the French Revolution may come readily to hand, it is by no means easy to see what specifically Christian insights could be brought to bear on gardening and butchers' shops. They 'seem to us to be 'natural' and therefore outside the orbit of Christianity.

The natural realm today is not restricted to things or activities, but is even extended to the human community. And such a notion of the natural realm is expressed not just by ordinary Catholics but has on at

least one occasion slipped into Papal documents. Simone Weil, herself not a Catholic, nevertheless recognized the undermining of Christianity which such double-think has provoked.

In a document promulgated by the Pope, one may read, "not only from the Christian point of view, but, more generally from the human point of view..." as though the Christian point of view—which either has no meaning at all, or else it claims to encompass everything in this world and the next—possessed a minor degree of generality than the human point of view. It is impossible to conceive a more terrible admission of religious bankruptcy.63

Behind such an attitude lies the notion that the universal (substantial) is natural and that only the particular (accidental) is Christian or graced. The broader reality is therefore natural; it is the a priori of a graced or Christian presence within it.

The only way to avoid reducing the universe to a de-Christianized image of divinity is to locate within the universe an immanent substantial exemplar. The answer cannot be the Logos apart from the Incarnation. As Butterworth points out,

The pattern is the incarnate, fully human Word and Son who is the Christ. It is towards him, and not towards some disembodied ideal, that God's activity looks from eternity. Created reality, and man especially, is eternally patterned on Christ. This is the basic truth that underlies the mentally frustrating conception of an eternal or pre-existent Christ.64

The conception of a pre-existent Christ must underlie any genuine Christian ontology of creation. Mersch, for example, points out that "the role of Christ with respect to mankind is ontological before it is operative."65 And Bonnefoy notes that "The primacy which faith recognizes

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64 Butterworth, Theology of Creation, p. 86.
in Christ is one of excellence: more precisely, an absolute and universal primacy in the ontological order.66 No sense can be made out of either of these statements as long as the Incarnation is regarded as an historical accident or as long as grace is regarded as an ontological accident. For each places the Incarnation in a position in which it must operate accidentally in order to become ontological (substantial). But substance is the prius of accidents, not the reverse.

Furthermore, the notion of a pre-existent Christ is necessary in order to ground the unity of the human community. Thomas recognizes the unity,67 but has no pre-existent substance within which to ground it. Mascall raises the question as to how "the impersonal manhood of Christ can be the medium of the redemption of all men."68 The answer lies in the notion of a pre-existent Christ.

Keefe's book, Thomism and the Ontological Theology of Paul Tillich, examines at some length the relationship between Christ and the human community, concluding that,

> Once the transcendent act of man's creation is understood to be identical to the Incarnation, and not to the appearance of some primal human pair, the dogma of the unity of the human species, the human community, is not imperilled by a multiplicity of aboriginal couples, for even in such a hypothesis, each human being would refer, with regard to his human credentials, to his creation in Christ, and not to his descent from a unique progenitor.69

Furthermore, such a perspective reveals that our participation in Christ constitutes a mediated participation in God through the incarnate Logos. Christ's humanity, therefore, constitutes, as Thomas says, "a certain

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66 Bonnefoy, Christ and the Cosmos, p. 7.
67 See In 2 Cael., 1.16; In Rom., c. 5, lect. 3.
68 Mascall, Christ, the Christian and the Church, p. 74.
69 Keefe, Thomism, p. 104.
universal principle of grace in human nature."

We need no longer account for such universality by appealing to the disincarnate God. For our imaging of God, as Keefe points out, is Christocentric, not Logocentric. "In Thomism, man's participation in Christ is the result of man's creation in the image of God who is the Christ."71

Finally, the notion of a pre-existent Christ is necessary if we are to salvage the Aristotelian notion of the form/matter composition of the world. A material universe requires an incarnate exemplar. Otherwise we are forced into Einstein's reduction of matter to 'frozen' energy or Rahner's reduction of the same to 'frozen' spirit. In either case, matter is accommodated only to the extent that it can be identified with form, i.e., only to the extent that it can be regarded as mirroring God. In short, the pre-existent Christ answers the methodological needs of both Aristotle and Thomas, while doing justice to the Christian revelation itself.

Gratia Christi: Quasi-Formal Causality

Another problem with Barfield's use of the image of the Divine Word clothing itself with humanity is that it supposes that the causality which is exercised here proceeds from the Logos as disincarnate and operates upon humanity in such a way as to conform humanity to that disincarnate Logos. In other words, it supposes that same separation between the Logos and humanity to which reference was earlier made. Under these circumstances, the causality of the Logos is extrinsic to humanity, and therefore operates to create its own image in humanity. We are back into the Platonic universe which images a disincarnate reality.

70 ST III, 7, 9 ad 11.
71 Keefe, Thomism, p. 275.
Rahner has the same difficulties when he attempts to set forth his own notion of quasi-formal causality. What he seeks is an intelligible account of "why and how the divine causality belongs to the constitution of the finite causality itself, without becoming an essential component of the nature of the finite being itself."\(^7\) Esse, as intrinsic to finite beings and yet extrinsic to their essential nature, would appear to solve his difficulty. Yet, in the final analysis, Rahner avoids that solution.

... the infinite cause, which as actus purus pre-contains all reality in itself, belongs to the constitution of the finite cause as such (in actu), but without forming an intrinsic constituent of the finite being as such.\(^8\)

If quasi-formal causality cannot be an "intrinsic constituent of the finite being as such," then it can be neither essence nor esse. How, then, can it be immanent? Rahner's quasi-formal causality shares the same fate as does his supernatural existential, in that he wants both to be immanent within beings without being constitutive of those beings. But there is no means within Thomism to account for this notion of causality. Immanent principles/causes are constitutive principles/causes. Rahner, therefore, falls back on the same expedient which Thomas himself employed, that of relegating immanent divine activity to the accidental level.

The only way out of this impasse is to associate God's immanent activity with esse. Once this is done, it becomes clear that God's immanent activity within the world cannot be divorced from His union with that world. In fact, His union with it is the prius of His being

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73 Ibid., p. 80.
able to act from within it. We are back to the pre-existent Christ as the prius of our world. As Keefe puts it, "the formal effect of the Incarnation is communicated throughout all that time and space."\textsuperscript{74}

The esse/essence correlation is therefore a statement of Christ's activity as "intrinsic formal and existential cause"\textsuperscript{75} of the world. It is also a statement of the contingent intelligibility of the world which Christ's causality effects. The world is not simply the actualization of Aristotelian necessary intelligibilities, any more than Christ Himself is simply the actualization of an Aristotelian human nature.

Thomas recognized the quasi-formal causality which the Logos effected upon the human nature it assumed. He, in fact, employed an analogy similar to Barfield's garment analogy.

\ldots the human nature of Christ is likened to a habit, i.e., a garment, not indeed in regard to accidental union, but inasmuch as the Word is seen by the human nature, as a man by his garment, and also inasmuch as the garment is changed, for it is shaped according to the figure of him who puts it on, and yet he is not changed from his form on account of the garment.\textsuperscript{76}

Both he and Barfield recognize the quasi-formal causality which Esse (the Logos) exercises in the Incarnation. What neither seems fully to appreciate is that this effect takes place from within the union, not apart from it. Thomas recognizes the substantial contingency which is constitutive of creation and the substantial grace which is constitutive of Christ, but he never recognizes the link between the two. Barfield recognizes that human unconsciousness cannot exist apart from its actuation by the Logos, but he fails to recognize that that actuation is

\textsuperscript{74}Keefe, Thomism, p. 101.
\textsuperscript{75}Idem., "Toward a Renewal of Sacramental Theology," p. 369.
\textsuperscript{76}ST III, 2, 6 ad 1.
Incarnation, since apart from it there is no humanity. Only if we keep in mind the link between Christ and creation, between Incarnation and human actuation, does the following statement by Mersch have a methodological basis in Thomism.

The manner of being, therefore, that God willed for man was an esse in Christo, an existence in Christ. Human ontology, viewed in its origins, was in reality a supernatural ontology, an ontology of members destined to be joined together in a body: we have existence in order that we may become members in the Saviour.77

The Analogy of Being: Covenant with Christ

A third problem with the Barfield garment analogy, one which it shares with Thomas' analogy, is that such an analogy tends to leave Christ out of the analogy itself (it is the Logos who creates and conforms man to His own disincarnate imaging of the Father). It is a variation on the Thomist analogy of being which tries to assert both the identity and the otherness of the world vis a vis God, but in the final analysis reduces the world to an image of God.

To identify creation and Incarnation avoids this problem, but creates a new one. Just as the God/world reading of esse/essence ultimately reduces the world to God, so the Christ/world reading runs the danger that the world shall be reduced to Christ. It can result in a Christomonism in which Christ is regarded as the sole effective agent in the world and in history. By this reading, His grace saves us but does not empower us to cooperate with Him in His work of salvation and sanctification. There is no genuine reciprocity between Christ and the humanity He actualizes.

The only way to avoid such a reductionism is to recognize the

77 Mersch, The Whole Christ, p. 22.
essentially synthetic or composite character of the Incarnation as event. It is to recognize that Incarnation is also Covenant.

... if, as is a commonplace today, it must be maintained that all such theology must be Christocentric, it must be insisted that this "center" is not a static hypostatic union, to be plumbed as an abstract intelligible structure, but rather is an event, a dynamic event, historical and free, the Augustinian Christus integer, the sovereignly free Trinitarian Mission of the Son by the Father to give the Spirit and, inseparably, the created freedom, Marian and ecclesial, in which the Mission and the Gift are received and actual. The center of Catholic theology is then the New Covenant, the center at once of being and of history in which the faith terminates and upon which Catholic theology must bear. It is this unit, at once Trinitarian, Christological, Marian and ecclesial, historical and ontological, which is the prius, the subject matter, of theology: there is no other. 78

Christ is not the only agent. His agency is correlative to that of the humanity which He actualizes.

To this immanence of God in man, the Logos sarx egeneto Who is the Christ, and the "firstborn of all creation," there is a necessary correlative: the free consent of creation, of humanity, to that immanence. It is never to be forgotten that this Covenant of God with man is a gift, not an imposition of the divine will upon a passive inconscient material. 79

We must always, therefore, keep in mind that Christ Himself is "constituted by a divine freedom which creates the free human response by which God is humanly present among us." 80

Creation itself is constituted by a polarity between the pre-existent Christ and the humanity which is actualized by Him. Eschatologically, this bi-polarity is expressed in the relationship between

78 Donald J. Keefe, "Mary as Created Wisdom, the Splendor of the New Creation," The Thomist 47 (July 1983):397.
79 Ibid., p. 405.
80 Ibid., p. 403. Here the Marian doctrines of the Church reveal their importance. For the free human response by which God is present is Mary's fiat. Her fiat, however, cannot be understood apart from the pre-existent Christ. For her perfect freedom (unfallenness), which is the necessary prius of her free response, has its source in Christ, not in Mary herself.
Christ and Mary. Historically, it is given in the relationship between Christ and the Church. The relationship is correlative, not reductionistic. That is to say, the union of Christ and the Church is not an organic unity (one body) but a marital unity (one flesh). "... the union between Christ and his Church is not organic, so as to constitute a single subject, but marital as a relationship between two subjects."\(^{81}\)

It is, in short, a single substance constituted by two subjects and their union with one another. It is trinitarian. The marital relationship of husband and wife is itself an image of the relationship between Christ and the Church.

The Trinitarian structure of the marital symbol is evident enough: the total self-donation of two persons to each other is constitutive of each, as husband, as wife, and is productive of a third reality, the marriage bond itself, the marital society, the substantive love of each for each which cannot be undone, and whose self-subsistent character is evidenced by its irrevocability. This love, or covenant, cannot be identified with either of the covenanating parties; this, and its radical permanence as a relation, makes the marital covenant of husband and wife the Trinitarian image and sacrament par excellence. It is only within this context that the Trinity is in fact "imaged" even by the Incarnate Son, for He is Image as sent, as obedient to the Father in a sacrifice which has no other finality than that sancta societas which is fallen humanity's sole means of union with God.\(^{82}\)

Earlier, it was noted that Aristotle distinguished the activity of human reason from the movements of the phenomena, but grounded each in the same act/potency structure. \(^{83}\) The notion of Covenant allows us to do something very similar with regard to the relationship between God and creation. Creation is a fundamentally different reality from God. It is not simply a manifestation of Him, any more than the mind's

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82 Idem., "Mary as Created Wisdom, the Splendour of the New Creation, p. 410.

83 See pp. 395-396.
activity is simply a reduplication of the phenomenal movements. At the same time, however, creation is like God in that it shares in God's Trinitarian structure. For creation is the Covenantal union constituted by the reciprocity of two subjects: Christ and humanity (Church). As Keefe points out, "The New Covenant, the Good Creation, . . . submits to one norm only, the Triune God in whose image it is made." 84

The analogy of being is, therefore, a Trinitarian analogy. Our participation in God is a mediated participation in the Trinity, and the term of that mediation is our covenantal creation in Christ.

This relationship of ours to God is fundamentally our creation in Christ, a creation which is radically complete in the presence of Christ in our world: that is, in his life, his passion, his death, and in the Eucharistic worship of the Church, by which he is present, in his risen humanity to the end of the world, for he has not left us orphans. He is risen, and still with us. 85

The act/potency methodology of Aristotle, therefore, has a threefold application when we are speaking of creation. Esse/essence is, first, a statement about the Incarnate Logos (God/man). It is, secondly, a statement about the humanity which the Incarnate Logos actualizes, a humanity constituted by its participation in the humanity of Christ as actualized by the Logos. It is, therefore, in the words of Florovsky, a "double-natured" humanity (divine/human or natural/graced). 86 Finally, esse/essence is a statement about the relationship between Christ and humanity (covenantal union of two distinct subjects).

84 Keefe, "Mary as Created Wisdom, the Splendour of the New Creation," p. 406.
Hence creation is neither the reduction of the world to God (divinization) nor the reduction of God to the world (secularization). It is not a reductionism at all. It is the correlation (covenantal union) of two subjects (Christ and the human community). As Keefe notes, "The fact of the Fall did not prevent Christ from being the creator, the giver of life, but it changed the manner in which the gift could be made." Because of the Fall, this covenantal union is given sacramentally in history, in Christ's Eucharistic presence. The Eucharist is constitutive of the Church just as the pre-existent Christ is constitutive of humanity. The good creation is hence sacramentally present in this fallen world.

The grace of Christ as constitutive of humanity, however, means that His grace is at the same time constitutive of every member of the human community by that existential actuation of humanity which is both creation and Incarnation. This substantial (sufficient) grace which is an intrinsic cause of every individual has its psychological counterpart, as Keefe points out, in an existential lumen. This substantial grace is not sanctifying grace, but the substantial prius or condition of sanctifying grace. Because of the Fall, not only man's operations but his substantial integrity as well have been effected.

Consequently, sin is a way of existing, a substantial and therefore created dynamic orientation, before it can be understood to be an activity, an operatio, however simultaneous and correlative substance and accident may be.

As a result, Christ's Incarnation is a work of redemption (restoring

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87 Keefe, Thomism, p. 125.
88 Ibid., p. 93.
89 Ibid., p. 102.
man's substantial integrity) as well as the work which was His primary
task, namely, the giving of the Spirit.

In Barfield's terms, we might say that redemption is the liberation
of human consciousness (the phenomenal world) from unreflective identi-
fications with spirit (pantheism), from Porphyry's universe (theocen-
trism), from scientific idolatry (cosmocentrism) and from secularity
(anthropocentrism). The work is threefold. It consists, first, in
the rejection of original participation (Israel), secondly, in the
raising of human consciousness to the reality of final participation
(Eucharist) and, thirdly, in the sanctification of the world through
that final participation. The historical Incarnation signals the shift
from the first to the second and third phases. The essential incompleteness of the Old Testament rejection of idolatry finds its significance
in the New Testament "rebirth of images".

The dilemmas posed by the Old Testament faith in the Lord of
history find no sufficient resolution in the Old Testament; they
await the concrete union of God and man, Christus integer, the
New Covenant, for there alone is the dichotomy resolved which
haunts our fallen reason—that dichotomy which has found, peren-
nially, the immanence of God to be in contradiction with His
transcendence.90

Christ's overcoming of the world is not, therefore, an overcoming of
its dichotomies by their reduction to one set of polarities or another. It
is rather the restoration of that covenantal unity-in-diversity which the
human mind finds so difficult to accept. The temptation is always to identi-
fy the world with an extrinsic reality (God, pure form, eschaton) or with
an intrinsic necessity (laws of nature, statistical probabilities, an im-
manent divinity). The Thomist analogy of being understands the world's
unity only by reference to its collective imaging of God and the individual's

intelligibility only by reference to its participation in God. Such a reductionism not only undercuts the unity of the human community, but in so doing also undercuts that revelation which is the Christ.

The cause of the participate human actuality of men is not found in Christ, but in the God beyond the revelation. This makes the truth of the revelation fundamentally unnecessary to men. The consequence is that while Christ, who is at once revealer and redeemer, is absolutely necessary as redeemer, he is only morally necessary as revealer. The very notion of what revelation is has then become obscure; it is no longer the God-man, Jesus Christ, but a series of propositions.91

The Thomist analogy of being arose out of a theocentric consciousness of the world which, because fundamentally Platonic, could not but issue in a form of Platonic reductionism (the Porphyrian universe). We know today that such an historical consciousness was not a permanent reflection of reality, but simply one stage in an historical process. That it still exercises a powerful influence today is apparent in Barfield's ultimate acceptance of it, despite his having argued so persuasively against it. The very power which it exerts should warn us that, in dissociating ourselves from it, we must avoid falling into its contemporary counterpart, namely, accepting modern secular consciousness as the last word with regard to reality.92 In either case, we are simply

91Idem., Thomism, p. 86.

92Such an uncritical acceptance of contemporary historical consciousness is a fundamental problem in contemporary Catholic theology. A good example of this is John W. O'Malley's article, "Reform, Historical Consciousness, and Vatican II's Aggiornamento" (Theological Studies 32 [Dec 1971]:573-601). Characterized by the editors of Theological Studies as "a break-through article, one of the most significant we have ever published in ecclesiology" (p. 571), the article itself does little more than submit Catholicism to a secular critique. Believing that men must change religion and not the reverse (p. 575), O'Malley contends that the Church today must accept the contemporary historical consciousness which understands history to be radically human and contingent (p. 596). History therefore must be freed from a classicist mentality, i.e., it must be desacralized and deprovidentialized (p. 596), relativized and neutralized (p. 597). We must recognize its fundamentally
The author argues that by confining Christ to a priori structures of consciousness, rather than permitting him to liberate us from them, the understanding of Christ as the Redeemer becomes limited. For, only by attending to Christ as the Revealer can we fully understand Christ as the Redeemer.

**Final Participation: The Whole Christ**

We have seen how we cannot simply reduce creation to the making of the world and/or man and how we cannot simply reduce Incarnation to the historical Christ. The reality of our existence, because covenantal, is much more complex than either of those notions would suggest. That complexity is also not taken into account by the Logos/garment analogies employed by Thomas and Barfield. Mersch employs a similar analogy, but in such a way as to indicate the complexity with which we are dealing.

> . . . God gives Himself in Christ, and . . . Christ, the divine life and light enveloping mankind, is the whole Christ: God who gives Himself to men in the God-man.⁹³

Discontinuous character ("for man is capable of reversing himself, of changing direction, and thus of being discontinuous with himself"—p. 596). Hence not only the future but the past itself is subject to change ("Thus we can with truth speak of a 'changing' or even a 'new' past"—p. 598). Since history is determined by man, whose freedom submits to no structure (the past "is to be understood in terms of man, who is free and contingent and who has not masterminded a coherent pattern for the history of his race"—pp. 596-597), we must recognize the radical contingency and reversibility of history ("If some given historical reality could have developed otherwise, we are free to change and even to reverse the direction of that reality if we so choose"—p. 599).

O'Malley is, of course, assuming the same dichotomies between past and future, freedom and intelligibility, history and metaphysics that we have seen in Metz' theology. Such an approach undermines not only the sacramental character of the Church, but, in so doing, deprives history of any meaning (reality). History is change without direction, movement without structure, freedom without intelligibility. Although O'Malley appears to depart from Metz' insistence that history is irreversible, that departure is actually compatible with and indeed a corollary to Metz' own position, inasmuch as Metz offers no principle of intelligibility by which history may be understood to have an intelligible direction. Christ's effectiveness in history, according to Metz, seems to lie precisely in his having freed us to that view of history which now makes it possible for us to manipulate history as we choose, not as God wills.

The Whole Christ is not simply the incarnate Christ, but the incarnate Christ in union with the humanity He creates. As Butterworth points out,

God's action in man's regard can be seen as having three major 'moments': creation, reconciliation and the final redemption and fulfilment of all things. Each of these three 'moments' takes place in and through Christ. The total action of man's God is Christoform. It starts with Christ, proceeds through Christ, and is completed in Christ.94

Because this is the case, we can say that in the historical Incarnation, "Christ comes to save and fulfil what is basically already His."95

Christ's union with the world takes place in man, but with man as a community, not as an aggregate of individuals. As Mersch points out,

There is something more than the union of subjects to any king, more than the insecure incorporation of members in an organism, more than the closest possible moral union. There is a "physical" union, we should say, if the very term itself did not appear to place this bond in the category of mere natural unions. At all events, it is a real ontological union, or, since the traditional names are still the best, it is a mystical, transcendent, supernatural union whose unity and reality exceed our powers of expression; it is a union that God alone can make us understand, as He alone was able to bring it into being.96

For this reason, Florovsky maintains that the world "was made to be and to become the Church, the Body of Christ."97

This notion of Christ's relationship to the world as centered on man requires us to return to the Platonic view of the human mind as interposed between God (pure form) and the phenomenal world in which we live. It also requires us to return to the Augustinian notion of divine illumination, now recognized to be not a direct participation in

94 Butterworth, Theology of Creation, p. 78.
95 Ibid., p. 79.
96 Mersch, The Whole Christ, p. 584.
97 Florovsky, Creation and Redemption, p. 77.
God but a mediated participation in Christ. As Mersch points out, "Human nature was made to be united to God in Christ, because the humanity of Christ was made that it might penetrate all things, ut imperet omnia (Eph. 4:10)." 98

The phenomenal world, as Barfield notes, is actualized by man's unconscious figuration. Man, therefore, stands in a 'directionally creator' relationship with the 'particles' or unrepresented which constitute the correlative objective data upon which his figuration works. As Keefe points out, "the material cosmos is actual in and by the actuality of man." 99 This actualizing of the world has been called by Einstein a product of the "free creations" of the human mind. As Toulmin points out, however, these creations may be free in the sense of arising out of no necessity of human thought, but they are not free in the sense of being arbitrary.

This is not work for the untutored imagination. It may be art, but it is one whose exercise requires a stiff training. Though there is nothing to tell just what new types of model and mode of representation scientists may not in time find it profitable to adopt, nor any formal rules which can be demanded for discovering profitable new theories, theoretical physicists have to be taught their trade and cannot afford to proceed by genius alone. One cannot teach a man to be imaginative; but there are certain kinds of imagination which only a man with a particular training can exercise. 100

Barfield goes further, pointing out that this imagination cannot be inculcated or self-created; it can only be self-willed. 101 It cannot be self-created, for its creation depends upon the actuation of the human

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99 Keefe, Thomism, p. 92.
100 Toulmin, The Philosophy of Science, pp. 43-44.
101 Barfield, Saving the Appearances, p. 179.
unconscious by Christ and upon His power to 'enliven' the images which it uses. But it can be self-willed, because His actuation of our unconscious is simultaneously the gift of grace by which we are able to respond to that actuation. By becoming aware of our own figuration and of its participation in that enlightenment of our minds which is the Christ, we can will that Christ penetrate all things, through our systematic use of an imagination (which is figuration raised to the level of consciousness) enlightened by Christ.

The covenantal structure of creation is a result of the Father sending the Son to give the Spirit. We miss the full significance of the Whole Christ if we neglect the gift of the Spirit. Herbert Richardson points out that man's creation on the sixth day is followed by the Sabbath holiness of the seventh day. He concludes that "man is made for Sabbath holiness." Therefore, we cannot, in his judgment, overlook that sanctification which it was the primary mission of Christ to make possible in the world.

... unless we undergird redemption with sanctification, i.e., unless we insist that the sanctification of the world by His mere Sabbath presence is the primary reason Jesus Christ is here, we lack the presupposition that makes His redemptive work worthwhile.

His presence makes possible a process of sanctification which works in man and, through him, in the phenomenal world he inhabits. It is a process by which the world is made neither divine nor secular, but holy. This holy world, united to Christ through His union with humanity and

102 Herbert Richardson, Toward an American Theology (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), p. 116. It should be noted, however, that Richardson understands both Christ and Sabbath holiness within a theocentric, not a Christocentric, framework.

103 Ibid., p. 132.
made holy by Christ's penetration of the entire phenomenal realm through humanity, is the Pleroma, the totus et integer Christus. As the covenantal imaging of the Trinity in which Christ participates, it manifests the holiness or glory of God.
PART III

CONCLUSION
Post-Tridentine theologians in the Roman Catholic Church have all too often made the serious error of confusing the historical issue of interpreting Aquinas with the systematic problem of nature and grace, particularly insofar as the latter asks the question whether man evinces a natural desire for the vision of God. One meets again and again the assumption that if Aquinas's doctrine of a natural desire to see God as he is in himself can be clarified once and for all, then the systematic problem is ipso facto solved as well.¹

This remark by Shepherd underscores two difficulties which the theologian confronts when attempting to apply Thomist methodology to the contemporary nature/grace problem. The first difficulty is that of clarifying what in fact Thomas had to say about the relationship between nature and grace, keeping in mind that he did not ask the explicit questions which we ask today. The second difficulty is distinguishing between what Thomas had to say on the matter and the systematic problem itself.

With regard to the first difficulty, this dissertation has argued that Thomas' doctrine on nature and grace does not admit a final clarification, because he himself was inconsistent with regard to it, seeking a synthesis between Plato and Aristotle which ultimately could not be made to work. If they are to derive coherence from his works, therefore, his interpreters must suppress one or another aspect of his thought. The wide-ranging disagreements among Thomists are a result of the fact that no consensus has been achieved with regard to what should be suppressed.

¹Shepherd, Man's Condition, p. 31.
Internecine disagreement within the Thomist tradition has been exacerbated, not resolved, by textual analysis; these disputes range across the whole of the Thomist system, to the extent that its inner coherence can no longer be shown by recourse to the text of St. Thomas.2

Not only does the theological problem here not admit a hermeneutical resolution, given the inconsistencies of Thomas himself, it points up the fact that the theological problem is not hermeneutical to begin with. As Keefe goes on to note, "In fact, the attempt to do so [i.e., resolve the problem by textual analysis] is an instance of the confusion of theology with another kind of scholarship; a systematic theology cannot be identified with the exegesis of St. Thomas. . ."3

The second difficulty, therefore, of distinguishing between what Thomas said and the systematic problem itself is of fundamental importance to any exploration of the nature/grace relationship today. The importance of Thomas' work to today's theological task lies not in re-examining what he said but in re-evaluating what he did. It is not, in other words, a question of uncovering Thomas' doctrine of nature and grace (theologians do not, after all, produce doctrines), but of uncovering his method. When we do that, we are doing what Thomas himself did. For, as Pegis points out with regard to Thomas' use of Aristotle, "To make Aristotle a sound philosophical vehicle of Christian thought was for him much more important than the correct historical interpretation of Aristotle's text."4 To recover Thomism as a sound vehicle for Christian systematic theology, therefore, requires us to recognize, first,

2Keefe, Thomism, p. 2.

3Ibid.

that it is a method, not a philosophy or doctrine, and, secondly, that it is hypothetical (theory) and not actual (truth).

With regard to the first point, Pegis points out that Thomas' use of Aristotle was guided by his Christian vision of reality.

Within the religious vision of Christianity, St. Thomas saw man not only in the history of his life but also in the nature that was itself the first moment and origin of that history. In short, St. Thomas saw the metaphysical meaning of human nature in the history that embodied its religious search for spiritual unity and repose.

Such an approach to St. Thomas Aquinas supposes that the Aristotelianism of St. Thomas Aquinas was not his "philosophy," but the technical language and instrument through which he expressed his personal philosophical ideas which he then went on to use in his theology.5

In short, Aristotelianism was in the hands of Thomas a tool or method for doing systematic theology, i.e., for using language in technical or systematic ways. The method itself, as Keefe points out, is "the act-potency schema which is St. Thomas' transformation of the Aristotelian ontological method."6

With regard to the second point, the hypothetical character of Thomist method, we have already had occasion to observe that Thomas recognized the hypothetical character of science.7 Rousselot, in commenting on one of these texts (In 2 De cael., I, 17), points out that this notion of hypothesis is something which extends to Thomas' own thought. "It is important to notice that this judgment affects the very system he himself accepts and in terms of which he writes in his own works."8

5 Ibid., pp. 17-18.
6 Keefe, Thomism, p. 2.
7 See p. 335n.
As Keefe points out, "any application of an ontological method, of a method of correlation, to theology rests upon the assumption that the Christian revelation and a given notion of substance are compatible." Any given notion of substance, therefore, which undergoes such a transformation can only be understood as potentially theological apart from this transformation. That is to say, the Aristotelian act/potency correlation is not compatible with the Christian faith until it is opened to creation by the Thomist essence/esse analysis of substantial contingency. "Truth is expressed by the correlation of method with the revelation, not by method in isolation from the faith." 

This, of course, requires us to recognize that the esse/essence correlation is a theological, not a philosophical, addition to Aristotle. Such a recognition is implicit in every statement that Thomas transformed, converted or baptized Aristotle into a Christian philosopher.

It is a little ironical that it was the irreligious Aristotle who became for Christians the Philosopher par excellence rather than the much more devoutly minded Plato, to whom the majority of the Fathers had leaned. The answer is really very simple. It is that Aristotle had no religion to speak of, and therefore could be given one, while Plato had one, and it was largely false.

This remark of Mascall's is very much to the point, if we remember that Thomas gave Aristotle a religion by giving him esse. Esse converted Aristotle not from an essentialist into an existentialist philosopher nor from an atheist into a theist, but from a pagan into a Christian.

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9 Keefe, Thomism, p. 41.
10 Ibid., p. 4.
As Grene points out, the Aristotelian necessitated universe of finite intelligibilities is far removed from the universe in which we live today.

No gulf here [in Aristotle] divides the infinite source of order and unity from the sheer existence of the creature; nor conversely does an indefinite ongoing of nature have to look beyond itself for the resolution of its own absurdity. Neither faith nor despair is needed in this universe.

Yet it is not our universe. We may admire its beauty and order, yearn for its security; it is not ours. If we are religious, it is not a finite God we worship; if we are scientists (not that these are contradictories), we have no hope, no desire, for completed systems, whose unique premises could be stated once for all with certainty. Both the infinite and the indeterminate are before us and around us; we live by our very natures on the edge of the abyss. The finite perfection of the Aristotelian world we cannot hope to restore.12

Whether we are talking about human intelligence in terms of an horizon of infinite being or an unrestricted desire to know (transcendental Thomism) or of the material universe as 'finite but unbounded' (contemporary astrophysics) or of human freedom as that which transcends all essentialist structures or natures (Metz), the Aristotelian universe is lost to sight.

What is also lost to sight, unfortunately, is the fact that infinity as positive and intelligent/intelligible was an explicitly Christian notion which, in medieval scholasticism, irrevocably severed the link which Greek philosophy had forged between finitude and necessary intelligibility. Or, rather, between God and necessary intelligence. God could no longer be understood as confined to any finite account of intelligence. Duns Scotus, in particular, understood God's infinity to be that which marks Him off from all created beings. To be creaturely

is to be finite. Scotus therefore retained, where creation is concerned, the Greek link between finitude and essential intelligibility. To avoid the Greek notion of necessitated finite intelligibility, he fell back upon the Divine Will to account for the contingent character of that intelligibility.

Thomas employed a more negative notion of infinity with regard to God (the absence of limitation) and therefore was not forced to rely on infinity as that which sets God apart from creatures. Thomas therefore left the door open to the possibility that creatures might, in some sense, be regarded as relatively infinite without infringing on God's prerogatives. As a result, 20th century Thomism, both philosophical and theological, has increasingly centered on the significance of esse as unbounded dynamism and on the 'natural' desire for God as exemplifying that unbounded dynamism. Hence, 20th century Thomism has severed the link between created intelligence and finitude. What it has not done is recognize that such a severing process also liberates that intelligence from necessity and therefore from anything which, in an Aristotelian universe, could be called 'natural'.

Owens comes as close as any Thomist philosopher to recognizing the fundamentally theological (i.e., graced) character of esse, when he writes with regard to man's desire for God,

Nothing will ultimately satisfy him except existence without limits, the direct union in cognitional existence with infinite being. In existence only can this union be achieved, for in essence man inevitably remains finite.\(^{13}\)

He concludes that "from the viewpoint of philosophy existence does appear to hold in its meaning the spiritual destiny of mankind."\(^{14}\) In

\(^{13}\) Owens, An Interpretation of Existence, p. 138.

\(^{14}\) Ibid.
other words, existence (esse) is precisely that element in Thomism which has irrevocably removed Aristotelian essences from the self-enclosed Aristotelian universe of finite, necessary intelligibility.

Mersch asks the question, "Is not God infinite, and can anyone be divinized without being raised to the order of infinity?" Mersch, unhappily, understands our being raised to infinity as the accidental work of grace.

In raising up a being from nothing, creation raises that being to the level of a creature; the Incarnation raises a being above that being's level up to the heights of the infinite. Such a separation of creation and Incarnation is unjustified, however, once we recognize that the 'unbounded' character of both the human mind (spirit) and the material universe is given with creation itself. Being raised to the heights of the infinite a second time may well mean that we are twice blessed, but it is not altogether easy to see what purpose such a second elevation would serve. Nor does it, from the viewpoint of Thomist methodology, make any sense, once the contingency of esse is recognized as that which is responsible for 'elevating' the Aristotelian universe from necessitated intelligibility to the "heights of the infinite."

Metz is right to identify freedom with grace. As Pegis has noted with regard to the relationship between esse and freedom,

Here lies the great moment of accomplishment for existentialism. Here is a world of existence--existence revealed within the life of the human person--in which the use of the verb to be is a personal act of free projection into the future, an act of risk and commitment, suspended in a world that is never given because we always meet it as unfinished and to come within ourselves.

16 Ibid., p. 213.
17 Pegis, At the Origin of the Thomistic Notion of Man, p. 54.
In an Aristotelian world, there is no place for such a notion of freedom. It has nothing whatever to do with the Aristotelian essence. It is pure gift. Not to recognize this is to naturalize the supernatural. It is also to duplicate the error of transcendent Thomism.

This gift, however, is not, as Metz suggests, opposed to intelligible structure. Barfield points out that the Greeks discovered 'form in space', that is to say, form as complete and static intelligibility. These forms are the self-enclosed natures which Metz dislikes so much, and rightly so. But what Barfield goes on to note is that the Jews discovered 'form in time'.

... just as by looking back through the Greek mind, we bring to life the apprehension of form in space as an image or representation, so, by looking back through the Jewish mind, we bring to life the apprehension of form in time—that is, of events themselves, as images, whether of the past or future, or of a state of mind.18

If the four-dimensional space/time world in which today's science tells us we live has any bearing on these ancient discoveries, it is that we can no more dissociate 'form in space' (metaphysics) from 'form in time' (history) than we can split our universe in half.

These ancient discoveries also tell us that we can no longer split our history in half, by postulating only the historical Incarnation sensu negante as the source of our contingent world and our graced freedom. The experience of Israel alone offers clear evidence of a divine immanence at work in the world prior to that event. As Mersch points out with regard to grace,

The gift that descends from heaven does not fall on the race to crush mankind; it rises up within the race and elevates mankind; it comes from God who gives it by appearing among us as one of

18Barfield, Saving the Appearances, pp. 150-151.
us. Accordingly, while it springs forth entirely from God, it also springs forth from our race.¹⁹

But this makes sense only if we can speak of grace as present from the beginning, from creation. For nothing could spring forth from our race which was not in some sense already present in it. And the experience of Israel admits of no explanation unless we admit its presence.

Plato and Aristotle confront us with a choice. We can either place the really real within the world and history (Aristotle) or beyond the world and history (Plato). Christian theology has heretofore chosen the latter path. This dissertation has argued that we ought today to re-examine that choice. The synthetic character of the particles, of the phenomena, of the human mind and of the history of human consciousness itself all argue for the need to employ a methodology which treats the ineluctable polarities of our existence as complementary, not contradictory. And the anthropocentric character of contemporary human consciousness bids us look within our world and its history, not outside it, for an account of its value and significance. In short, we require Aristotle’s form/matter correlation.

Moreover, the contingent character of created intelligence/intelligibility, whether we are speaking of the particles, of the phenomena, of the human mind or of the history of human consciousness, argues for the need to employ a methodology which treats this world and its history as contingently, not necessarily intelligible. In short, we require Thomas’ esse/essence transformation of Aristotle.

But we must recognize the genuinely transformational character of the real distinction. Esse is pure gift. It is given with creation

and it produces that "double-natured" humanity of which Florovsky speaks. It 'elevates' human nature to the level of the infinite without destroying that nature in the process. It does, however, mean that human nature and human being are not, in the universe God has chosen to create, identical. Human nature is potential not actual; it exists by virtue of a graced actuation which 'elevates' it from Aristotelian finitude and necessity to Christian 'infinity' and freedom. And, because this grace is given from the beginning, we need no longer regard God's activity in our lives as one which undercuts or deprives us of a 'natural' humanity by changing us into divinized beings. We need no longer fear that God seeks, by way of grace, to make us 'other' than what we have been from the beginning. For we have been 'divinized' or graced from the beginning. To suppose otherwise is to introduce a rift between creation and Incarnation which today's anthropocentric consciousness cannot accept and which theology finds itself increasingly unable to defend. As Keefe points out,

... if the causality of the mission of the Son is less in us than our creation, and is merely a modification of "natural" humanity created on some other basis, the recognition that his splendor is also his omnipotence is the recognition that the transformation he works in us must be the nullification of our antecedent "nature." The resulting piety must distrust all existential spontaneity.20

To continue to treat the Incarnation as an accidental modification of the structures of creation and grace as an accidental modification of the structures of human nature only ensures that a resolution to the nature/grace problem as it presents itself to us in theology today cannot be found.

There is, as we have seen, 21 no Church doctrine or teaching which would require us to deny that "God can, in one act, create a structured being, composed of both a natural and a supernatural element." 22 There is, in short, no a priori reason for denying substantial grace and a plethora of good reasons for affirming it. But to affirm it requires us to locate that immanent substance which escaped both Aristotle and Thomas.

Esse/Essence: Creation in Christ

Almost all attempts heretofore to account for divine immanence and human transcendence have succeeded only in reducing divine immanence to the accidental and in reducing human transcendence to an extrinsic cause (the transcendent God, the Divine Ideas, the Logos, the God of the absolute future) or to a 'natural' cause (esse as 'natural' dynamism). The failure to seek, much less find, an alternative to this Platonic reductionism is due, in large part, to the reluctance anyone must feel in contravening the traditional wisdom of Aristotle and Thomas in this matter. We have already seen how both of them ultimately relied upon extrinsic sources to account for the reality and value of the material order. Although Thomas himself did not place great weight on human authority in those areas which lie open to human scrutiny, 23 in the intervening centuries great weight has been placed on both his and Aristotle's authority.

A second reason for the failure to find an alternative to Platonic

21 See pp. 282ff.

22 Shepherd, Man's Condition, p. 91.

23 ST I, 8 ad 2.
reductionism is a more explicitly theological or even doctrinal one. It is that rationalization of creation which has separated creation from any explicit link with Christ. Because Scripture insists so much upon just such a link, Butterworth believes that one of the most important tasks lying before today's theologian is that of providing an account of the Christocentric character of creation itself.

There is urgent need for a new theological appreciation of creation in Christian theology. Creation must be seen as an essential element in the total mystery of Christ. And that mystery can never be properly appreciated without taking creation into account.

Unless we can identify Christ with creation, we can give no methodologically coherent account of His immanent activity in the world and in history.

The failure of Christian theologians to recognize the complete and universal centrality of Christ's presence and activity in the world and in history is itself the central failure of systematic theology.

Over the centuries systematizing theologians have been ignoring that Christocentrism which should have been their chief concern. They have failed to convert the conventional wisdom of their age to the truth, the goodness, the reality of the Revelation who is the Christ. For the first millennium and a half of the Christian era, this wisdom was cosmological, a basically religious understanding of the world as sacral. Since the Enlightenment it has been for the most part anthropological, turned rather to the autonomy of man than to the sacrality of the cosmic order. In both periods, the conventional wisdom has been too easily baptized, too easily judged assimilated to the Christian Revelation. The scholastics, and in fact most Catholic theologians up to and including Teilhard, were in the main wedded to a cosmological viewpoint, in which the Christ tends to be seen as the implication of the immanent order or the rationality of the world: theology had difficulty distinguishing itself from the "natural" truths of philosophy.

A theologian such as Mersch recognizes not only the importance of Christ,

24 Butterworth, Theology of Creation, p. 89.
but the fact that Christ Himself is the revelation.

... the relations of the Word are possessed by the humanity of Christ in the Word, through the possession of them by the Word who is the person of the humanity. To subsist and to possess these relations is one and the same thing for Christ's human nature. In this human nature, no separation between what is most secret in God and what is most secret in man is possible. For what is more secret in God than the mystery of the eternal processes, and what is more secret in man than the personality that makes him man?

In Jesus Christ, these two secrets coincide: the secret of God becomes the secret of man, because this man is God. The veil of the temple that kept the holy of holies hidden is rent. The light is given, the light is united to men, and this union is not a philosophical system or an inspired book, but is Someone living, the man Jesus Christ. The unity of His person is the abolishment and annihilation of every screen and every veil between the human mind and the splendor of the Trinity. Therefore Christ is revelation. And the revelation in Him is not the less universal because of the fact that He is but one Man; is not this one Man the life of all mankind?26

Regrettably, Mersch has no means of accounting for how this one man could be the life of all men. Mersch is forced in the final analysis, as we have seen,27 to rely upon the Logos to account for the mediation. But how was Christ present prior to the historical Incarnation, if the Logos is the sole principle of mediation?

The problem becomes particularly acute when we examine, as we have seen Barfield do, the significance of Israel in human history. In the absence of Christ, it would seem that we must posit either an extrinsic divine activity which simply guided Israel from on high or an immanent divine activity which can be accounted for only by supposing the unmediated participation of the individual directly in God or the Logos. The latter is not only a form of Platonic reductionism, it removes all possibility of accounting for Christ's centrality to us and our world.


27 See p. 421.
For if our participation in God occurs without Christ, it certainly does not require Him, as the central insight of Beggiani's article on a Logocentric approach to theology makes very clear. Christ can indeed continue to be regarded as an ideal, a model, but not as Emmanuel, God-with-us, and certainly not as a mediator of the divine.

Nor can any account be given of the unity of the human community itself, if in fact each of us participates directly in God. Past attempts to trace our unity back to a single primordial couple have had recently to contend with the very serious possibility that no single couple can claim credit for the entire race. We can, of course, adopt the posture of Einstein and Planck, and simply ask the biologists to go back to the drawingboard, but there is no likelihood of their taking seriously such a request and little more likelihood that, were they to do so, any immediate change in their position could be anticipated. They are not bound by theological a prioris, nor should they be, particularly when the a priori is as dubious as the one in question here.

We could take refuge in the Divine Ideas, but this once again involves us in an extrinsic and ideal, not an intrinsic and real, unity. If we participate, as Thomas insists we do, in both divinity and non-divinity, the only condition of possibility for such a synthetic notion of participation, within Thomist methodology, lies in a pre-existent synthetic substance. The substance, in short, cannot be God, the Divine Ideas or the disincarnate Logos.

Simply to identify Christ or the Incarnation with creation is not, however, sufficient, as we have seen. For it fails to take into account the full character of the revelation itself. As Schoonenberg points out, "In the Old Testament . . . the strongest emphasis is on the connection
between creation and covenant." Creation is not simply the bringing into existence of our world or our race, as theology all too often presumes, nor is it simply the Incarnate Christ. It is, rather, the bringing into existence of a covenantal community, a partnership, a relationship between two subjects within a single unity or substance. It is the covenantal unity of Christ and humanity, given historically in the covenantal unity of Christ and His Church. It is the composite unity (Christ/humanity) of two composite subjects, Christ (God/man) and humanity (grace/nature). The individual does not enjoy (or suffer, as the case may be) an isolated participation in God, but rather participates in God by and through his substantial participation in the human nature of Christ as actuated by the Logos.

In the fallen order in which we live, that participation is given completely only in the Church, which is actualized by Christ's Eucharistically covenantal presence. When Maritain says that, "in the community of saints, the person no longer tends to emerge above the community and pass into a better society, for it is in the Church herself that its participation in the divine life is accomplished," he is entirely correct. But such a notion of participation makes sense if, and only if, we keep before us the covenantal nature of our union with Christ.

Once we recognize the covenantal character of our relationship with Christ and of the created order itself, it becomes apparent that our imaging of God lies, first, in our composite imaging of the Christ who is God (our 'double-naturedness' corresponds to His two natures)


and, secondly, in our covenantal or marital imaging of the Trinity itself which our relationship with Christ constitutes. The two imagings are inseparable, for the Whole Christ as Covenant (creation) is the revelation of the Triune God. "The dogma of Christology is the dogma of the Trinity as made known to men; it is a truth revealed to men in a giving of life to men."\textsuperscript{30} For the giving of life to men is their incorporation into that truth (i.e., the Whole Christ). Our existence (esse) is our participation in Christ's existence (Esse).

Thomism: A Theological Method

Mersch remarks that "it is almost a general rule that theological aberrations begin with metaphysics, even when at first sight their roots do not appear to penetrate so far."\textsuperscript{31} In the case of Thomist theology, the aberration lies precisely in treating Thomism as primarily a metaphysics, and only secondarily as a theological method. This treatment, of course, stems directly from accepting the notion that esse, and therefore creation, is natural. For once this notion is accepted, it necessarily follows that the world is a 'natural' (i.e., metaphysical), not a 'graced' (i.e., Christian) realm. Thomist theology is then reduced, like grace itself, to an accidental role subordinate to Thomist metaphysics. But, as Keefe points out, this relationship between Thomist metaphysics and Thomist theology hurts both enterprises.

\ldots the philosophy which results from this separation is entirely foreign to the act-potency correlation which is the method of the Thomist ontology. It cannot serve theology, for it dominates it, deciding what theology can be on grounds which are untenable.

\textsuperscript{30} Mersch, \textit{The Theology of the Mystical Body}, p. 326.

\textsuperscript{31} Idem., \textit{The Whole Christ}, p. 501.
theologically and philosophically: theologically, because prior limits are placed upon what the revelation must be; philosophically, because it ignores the gratuity of existence, and reduces the existential human person to the positive intelligibility of essential necessity.32

The essentialism which such a separation of philosophy and theology introduces into Thomist philosophy itself is nowhere more operative than in the Thomist proofs for the existence of God. For the proofs suppose that the contingency of creation can be deduced from the necessities of finite intelligibility.

This deduction is essentialist; it places a necessary correlation between the creation and the creator. By this deduction, the creator is never separable from his effects.33

The process proceeds to a creator, but he is no longer free. He is the necessary correlative to finite necessities.

If, however, esse is in no way owed to Aristotelian essences, there is no way to proceed by way of deduction from essential intelligibilities to their existential actuation. There is, that is to say, no way to proceed from an Aristotelian universe of necessary intelligibility to the free Creator of Christianity. One must start with existential contingency (that is, one must start with the doctrine of creation itself) in order to get to the Christian God. Finite necessities (i.e., philosophy alone) can never get us to Him.

St. Thomas broke this chain of necessity, but in doing so he created a theology, not a philosophy, for the hypothesis upon which his ontology is founded is theological, not philosophical. It assumes the ontological truth of the faith, and then proceeds to form an ontological structure consistent with that assumption. The truth of the faith is the prius of this ontology, and it is therefore theological at the outset.34

32Keefe, Thomism, p. 58.
33Ibid., p. 57.
34Ibid.
The God of philosophy and the God of Christianity are not only not identical, they are even incompatible. As Schoonenberg points out,

The God of the covenant, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob ... is not the God of philosophy, and it would even be impossible for him to be so, because this covenant is free gift, is supernatural. 35

Creation is either covenantal (substantially graced) or rational (substantially natural). It images either a monist God (Ipsum Esse) or a qualitatively-differentiated God (the Trinity). Human beings participate in either the disincarnate Logos or the incarnate Christ. The a priori of theology is either revelation (Christ) or natural theology (metaphysics). These are either/or choices; they do not admit of a higher synthesis.

This dissertation has argued that creation is a covenantal imaging of the Trinitarian God as constituted by our participation in the incarnate Christ. The a priori of theology, including Thomist theology, is therefore the revelation itself, not Thomism or any other metaphysics. This requires the subordination of metaphysics to theology, not the reverse.

The new correlation implied by the new a priori [creation in Christ] would necessarily replace the former purely philosophical correlations, and the terms would acquire a new, theological meaning which would at once be intrinsically consistent and logically capable of rendering the dogma literally understandable. Philosophy was thus useful to theology only in subordination to the theological a priori—as a handmaid, in the classical expression. The evident implication of this point of view was that philosophical understanding alone was literally, because existentially, false, although logically correct; in subordination to the theological a priori it retained the act-potency correlation which supported its logic, but became literally true as well, in supporting the literal, existential truth of the dogma. 36

It also requires the subordination of every human discipline to the

35 Schoonenberg, Covenant and Creation, p. 29.

36 Keefe, Thomism, p. 46.
revelation. There will be a revival of Christianity not just, as Barfield points out, when popular scientific writings can no longer proceed without reference to the Incarnation, but when every discipline must proceed by way of it. Our creation in Christ is, as Keefe points out,

... the a priori of our humanity; our reality, our truth, our history are unified in Him in whom we exist, from whom we have fallen, in whom we are redeemed, the Creator immanent in His creation. Whether we theologize with insights drawn from anthropology, psychology, sociology, historical and literary criticism, law, ontology, or whatever other heuristic device, it is with this creation, specified and qualified as in Christo, that we are concerned, for there is no other. Its humanity, its historicity, its freedom, as its unity, truth and goodness, are not other than its relation to Him whom the Father sent to give the Spirit. This relation is that of total, absolute ontological dependence.37

To recognize our creation in Christ is, therefore, to recognize the fundamentally hypothetical character of all systematic thinking, including that of theology.

The rational constructs of the theological enterprise guard their value only as hypotheses, as possessing no true of their own save that of the relation they bear to the revelation.38

What is true of systematic theology in general is, of course, true of this dissertation in particular. The Thomist methodology proposed here is an hypothesis, not a doctrine, a creed or a standing truth. It offers a perspective from which the revelation might be explored and a method for conducting that exploration. It offers no final account of that revelation.

This dissertation also presumes that Thomas' own work was just such an exploration of the truth of our existence and not in any sense

38 Ibid., p. 359.
a final account of it. To turn Thomism into a truth in its own right
not only does an injustice to the enormous achievements of Thomas, it
also impedes our own attempts to conduct the same kind of exploration
which Thomas himself pursued. It is time that theology revive the
slogan of the Louvain philosophers:

"St Thomas must be for us a beacon not a barrier."
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