

THE XAVIER ZUBIRI REVIEW

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A Theology Textbook Based on Zubiri's Philosophy and Theological Writings
Editorial

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Book Reviews

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A Theology Textbook Based on Zubiri's Philosophy and Theological Writings

Editorial

What is the purpose of life? How do we know about God? Why do people sin? What is sin? Why would God choose to redeem men? What is evil? How should one live in the world? What are our responsibilities to others, to nature, to God? What is the nature of truth, and how do other truths and other knowledge about the world mesh with faith? These and many other questions have intrigued, vexed, and mystified people for millennia. They call for answers, and these answers are provided by that branch of knowledge we call *theology*. Zubiri also realized the importance of these questions, and wrote extensively on theological topics.

Zubiri recognized that any theology, to be relevant and compelling, must start from humanity's current state of knowledge, the situation of belief that is common, the general attitude toward religion prevalent, and the psychological state of the epoch. This means that it must be grounded in experiences, knowledge, and belief that are fundamental, widely accepted, and beyond question. But it does not mean that the answers are relative, or that truth is relative; only that theology must speak to each epoch in ways that it can understand. St. Augustine (354-430) did this for the ancient world, taking into account pagan knowledge, the situation of the late Roman Empire, and the attitudes of the people of that time. His famous *Dei Civitate Dei*, or *City of God* (c. 415), written in the context of the sack of Rome in 410 by the Visigoths, sought to teach readers that Divine goals, not human empires, are what is most important. It is a testament to the greatness of Augustine that his writings, and Augustinian spirituality, continue to have great influence even today. St. Augustine was heavily influenced by Platonic thought, and though him (and many others) Platonic ideas permeated Christian theology.

Among the first and in many ways the greatest effort to create a systematic theology in the West was St. Thomas Aquinas' (1225-1274) *Summa Theologica*, left unfinished at his death. It was written partly in response to a crisis in Christian theology, brought about by the reintroduction of Aristotelian thought into Medieval Europe from the Islamic world. Aristotle represented an apparently complete, secular form of knowledge that competed with, and seemed to contradict in many ways, the established version of Christian theology, which at that time utilized primarily elements of Platonic thought. St. Thomas sought to integrate Aristotelian knowledge with Christian thought, tradition, and scripture, and thereby created a comprehensive new systematic theology which has endured and inspired for more than seven hundred years. He starts from the general situation prevalent at the time, which was a belief in the God of Abraham (whether from the Muslim, Jewish, or Christian traditions). He also grounds his work on what was widely considered the foundation of all knowledge at that time, namely Aristotle's metaphysics. St. Thomas had a profound grasp of Aristotle, the Bible, many of the Fathers, and the general knowledge of the time, which made his synthesis especially compelling.

But much has changed in the last 750 years: Aristotle is no longer the unquestioned source that he once was; a new type of knowledge has emerged that scarcely existed in St. Thomas' time, namely empirical science; the world does not so universally acknowledge the God of Abraham; and the exposition style used by St. Thomas, characteristic of debate in the Middle Ages, is quite foreign to modern discourse. Moreover, Protestantism and other forms of religious expression not known in the Middle Ages are

now part of everyday life, as are political systems such as modern industrial representative democracy. To be sure, there are advocates of Thomism who seek to modernize St. Thomas' thought, and harmonize it with today's world and developments since the time of St. Thomas. These efforts were spearheaded in the 20th century by profound thinkers such as Étienne Gilson (1884-1978) and Jacques Maritain (1882-1973), among others.

Nonetheless Zubiri believes that all such efforts to ground theology, however well-intentioned, are ultimately doomed to failure because of fundamental errors in the metaphysical underpinning of Thomistic philosophy, going back to Aristotle. At the deepest level, the problem centers on the ability of rational thought to capture reality and serve as our primary mode of access to it. If the Greeks made a serious mistake, it was their belief the human reason, by thought alone, could arrive at truth. This has been corrected to a considerable degree by modern experimental science, but not entirely: the belief still persists that rational activity—mainly science—is the only path to reality. For Zubiri, this error, which he refers to as the logification of knowing, must be also be corrected before any new systematic theology can be erected. Of course, this does not mean that all previous theology is wrong and must be discarded; rather it implies that a new foundation for theology must be laid that does not rely upon weak or erroneous assumptions about knowledge and reality. Much of what was developed in the past will be retained and given a more solid grounding—Zubiri himself was very partial to the thought of the Eastern Church Fathers; on the other hand, some theological ideas perforce will be superseded.

For Zubiri, human knowing has a foundation that is prior to rational inquiry; and rational methods, though powerful, are unable to fully capture reality. His groundbreaking philosophical insights and their development in *Sentient Intelligence* as well as *On Essence* and *The Dynamic Structure of Reality* show that there is a need to completely rethink aspects of theology in order to take into account these insights. Zubiri himself did explore many issues in the theological trilogy *Man and God*, *The Philosophical Problem of the History of Religions*, and *Christianity*. Among other things, in those works he explains how the progression of theological knowledge begins with human experience (religion), not rational proofs of God's existence. Zubiri also wrote essays on particular topics, such as the Eucharist. What he did not do was to synthesize all of his works and combine them with traditional theology to create a new systematic theology.

As a result, the Xavier Zubiri Foundation of North America has set out to create such a systematization of Zubiri's theology, and write a theology text based on Zubiri's philosophy and theological writings. As this task is enormous—greater than any single person can accomplish—we have formed a small group of Zubiri experts, and are looking for others who may be interested in this project. In this issue two of the papers are examples of writing that will be in the proposed book: the essay on proofs of the existence of God, by Thomas Fowler, and the essay on the sources of Zubiri's theology, by Guillerma Díaz Muñoz. The book has been outlined, and several chapters exist in draft form. If you are interested in this project please contact Thomas Fowler, tfowler@zubiri.org for further information. We are looking for people to write chapters or assist with translation. We plan to publish the book in Spanish and English. The anticipated date for publication is 2015.

Thomas B. Fowler
January, 2013

La noción metafísica de “amor”: nuevo enfoque hermenéutico de la filosofía de Xavier Zubiri

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Abstract

In “Supernatural being: God and deification in Pauline Theology”, written in the 1930s, Zubiri argued that love, in Greek patristic theology, rather than being a feeling or an act of the will, is a metaphysical structure of reality. Such a structure consists, ultimately, at the transcendental level, in unity and activity. Being as being is love because it consists in unity and activity. This transcendental structure is the foundation for Zubiri’s mature metaphysics as he expounds it in *On Essence* and in *Dynamic Structure of Reality*. Also, Zubirian metaphysical anthropology presents the same transcendental structure of love, which allows us to define the human person as a loving reality. This metaphysics of love implies a certain ethics of love, according to which the human reality realizes itself fully in being loved and loving.

Resumen

En “El ser sobrenatural: Dios y la deificación en la teología paulina”, elaborado en los años treinta, Zubiri sostenía que el amor, en la patrística griega, antes que un sentimiento o un acto de la voluntad, es una estructura metafísica de la realidad. Dicha estructura consiste, en última instancia, a nivel trascendental, en unidad y actividad. El ser en cuanto ser es amor porque consiste en unidad y actividad. Esta estructura trascendental es el cimiento sobre el que Zubiri edifica su metafísica madura, tal y como la expone principalmente en *Sobre la esencia* y en *Estructura dinámica de la realidad*. Asimismo, la antropología metafísica zubiriana presenta dicha estructura trascendental amorosa, permitiendo definir a la persona humana como realidad amorosa. De esta metafísica del amor se deriva como consecuencia una ética del amor, según la cual la realidad humana se realiza plenamente siendo amada y amando.

Introducción

El amor ocupa un lugar central en la vida humana: hace que vengamos a la existencia, nos mueve, nos entusiasma, nos atrae y cautiva, nos desgarra y nos cura, nos precipita hacia el abismo y nos eleva hasta el cielo. Se encuentra en la raíz de las decisiones más importantes de la vida de las personas, en sus ilusiones y decepciones más profundas. En fin, no es necesario observar con demasiada profundidad a los seres humanos para darse cuenta de que el amor ofrece una perspec-

tiva hermenéutica privilegiada a la hora de entender a la persona y su vida. Con todo, el fenómeno amoroso no ha conseguido hacerse con los derechos de nacionalidad en el país de la filosofía, sino que se limita a entrar y salir con visado de inmigrante, en el mejor de los casos. Es decir, numerosos filósofos le han dedicado sus reflexiones, en ocasiones extensas y profundas, pero no se la ha llegado a dedicar un tratado filosófico al nivel de las demás disciplinas. El conocimiento, el lenguaje, la vida moral, la política y muchas otras

áreas de la vida humana y de la realidad en general gozan de la atención de una disciplina filosófica propia, pero no el amor. Tenemos filosofía del conocimiento, del lenguaje, moral, etc., pero es menester elaborar una filosofía del amor o una erótica filosófica¹. En dicha tarea, Xavier Zubiri tiene algo que aportar.

En la obra de Xavier Zubiri encontramos una importante contribución a la filosofía del amor, aunque sea de manera implícita en su mayor parte. La primera vez que leí “El ser sobrenatural: Dios y la deificación en la teología paulina”², me llevé una gran y grata sorpresa. En este escrito de los años treinta, Zubiri comentaba la teología de los Padres griegos y decía que, para ellos, a diferencia de lo que sucede con los latinos, el amor, antes que un sentimiento e incluso antes que un acto de la voluntad, es “una dimensión metafísica de la realidad, que afecta al ser por sí mismo, anteriormente a toda especificación en facultades”³. La envergadura conceptual de esta afirmación es de dimensiones formidables: considera el amor como uno de los trascendentales del ser⁴. Dicho de otro modo: antes que algo que se siente o que se hace, el amor es algo que se es, algo en lo que se consiste. Más aún, si sentimos amor, si amamos y somos amados es porque somos amor. “Las personas son amor”⁵ –afirma allí Zubiri– y en sus actos desborda la plenitud de su ser. Los actos de amor y los sentimientos amorosos son expresión y desbordamiento del amor que se es.

Pues bien, el propósito de este artículo es mostrar que esta concepción metafísica del amor, tan extraordinariamente sugerente y que se adivina de gran fecundidad explicativa, no es sólo una reflexión circunstancial de Zubiri acerca de un tema de la teología paulina en el contexto de la preparación de un curso oral⁶, sino que por el contrario, es un planteamiento desarrollado por el autor a lo largo del resto de su vida y que constituye un verdadero pilar sobre el que se asienta su pensamiento metafísico, antropológico y ético⁷. Eso sí, las más de las veces, de manera velada.

Procederé en cuatro pasos. (1) En primer lugar presentaré la noción metafísica de “amor” que maneja Zubiri en “El ser sobrenatural: Dios y la deificación en la teología paulina” (SSDD), (2) para después mostrar cómo dicha noción le sirve de base sobre la que articular su metafísica madura en general, (3) así como su metafísica de la realidad humana en particular. (4) Por último, señalaré brevemente algunas de las implicaciones éticas de dicho planteamiento metafísico del amor.

1. Noción metafísica de “amor” en SSDD

Veamos en qué consiste dicha noción metafísica de “amor”, tal y como la esboza Zubiri en SSDD, para después explicar en qué medida afecta a la metafísica madura del autor.

1.1. “Ser” y “amor” se identifican

La afirmación neotestamentaria “Dios es amor” (1Jn 4, 8), en la patristica griega, no es “una vaga metáfora” ni mucho menos se refiere a “un atributo moral de Dios”, sino que es precisamente “una caracterización metafísica del ser divino”⁸. Es decir: en Dios, amor y ser coinciden. Mas ¿cómo se puede ser amor? Explicar que el ser consiste en amor requiere una definición de los conceptos de “ser” y “amor”. El concepto de ser que subyace a la citada afirmación de la primera epístola de San Juan se articula sobre dos caracteres metafísicos fundamentales: la unidad y la actividad. El ser en cuanto ser es unidad y actividad. La consideración de la unidad como trascendental del ser es una idea de sobras conocida en la metafísica occidental y Zubiri la desarrolla extensamente en su libro *Sobre la Esencia*. Sin embargo, el carácter trascendental de la actividad es una idea menos común, que nuestro filósofo toma principalmente de la teología de los Padres griegos, para después aplicarla al análisis de la noción de “devenir” en la metafísica clásica y elaborarla de manera brillante en su metafísica de madurez, en la obra *Estructura dinámica de la realidad*. El ser es, en última instancia, unidad y

actividad y es precisamente en esta su estructura metafísica última en lo que el ser se identifica con el amor, ya que éste, a su vez, no consiste, en definitiva, en otra cosa que en unidad y actividad. Veámoslo.

1.2. El “ser” como unidad en SSDD

Decir que algo “es”, equivale a decir que constituye una unidad metafísica: el ser es uno (*hen*). Así lo concibe Zubiri al afirmar que “lo que constituye el ser es su unidad, y esta unidad es una actividad dirigida a realizarse a sí mismo, a realizar su propia forma”⁹. Por tanto, la unidad a la que nos referimos no es mera ausencia de división, sino la unidad que consiste en unificación (*henopoíesis*)¹⁰. Se trata, pues, de una unidad activa o bien de una actividad unificante. Empezamos ya a ver la identidad con el amor, el cual es también una realidad dinámica y unificante. Los Padres griegos basan su argumentación en el ser de Dios: explican la unidad de Dios a partir de la actividad de donación recíproca que unifica a las tres personas. En Dios actividad y unidad son dos momentos constitutivos de la misma realidad. El ser de Dios consiste en su unidad y ésta es idéntica con su actividad. Actividad y unidad que, a su vez, no son sino amor. Pero esto no sólo se afirma de Dios, sino del ser en cuanto tal: “lo que constituye el ser es su unidad, y esta unidad es una actividad dirigida a realizarse a sí mismo, a realizar su propia forma”¹¹. A su vez, esta unidad del ser que es una actividad dirigida a realizarse a sí mismo no es otra cosa que amor: “su realidad es su realización, su ‘llegar efectivo’, su tender a ser sí mismas, su *éros*”¹². La misma caracterización metafísica se aplica al ser de Dios y al ser finito: cada ente es uno y activo. El ser del ente finito constituye una unidad activa: su ser uno consiste en *estar siendo* uno, en estar manteniéndose activamente en el ser. El ser de las cosas consiste en la unidad consigo mismas, en la unidad interna, y esta unidad no es sino “el eros mismo en que el sujeto consiste”¹³. Así pues, el ser consiste en unidad y dicha unidad es, en última instancia, amor en sentido metafísico.

1.3. El ser como actividad en SSDD

La actividad en que el ser consiste, es tanto unificación como éxtasis. Ambas actividades son, en última instancia, amor, ya que el amor es “el fondo metafísico de toda actividad”¹⁴. Ya hemos mostrado que en SSDD la actividad unificante es, en definitiva, amor. Analicemos ahora la actividad extática. El ser es en sí mismo extático y su éxtasis constitutivo no es sino amor¹⁵. Todo ser posee la tendencia intrínseca a salir fuera de sí. En el caso de los entes finitos, su éxtasis es tendencia a la plenitud, es un salir fuera de sí movido por la necesidad de aquello de lo que carecen. Esta actividad extática intrínseca a todo ser finito es lo que los Padres griegos, tomándola terminología al uso, denominan *éros*: el amor entendido en el sentido de deseo¹⁶. Sin embargo, se refiere a algo más profundo que el deseo, ya que se trata de una actividad que es constitutiva del ser de los entes finitos, mientras que el deseo es consecutivo al mismo. El *éros* de las cosas es precisamente la actividad que los hace mantenerse en el ser y consiguientemente, seguir siendo uno. La realidad de las cosas “es su realización, su ‘llegar efectivo’, su tender a ser sí mismas, su *éros*”¹⁷. El ser de las cosas consiste en actividad – de unificación y de éxtasis – y esa actividad es *éros*, amor.

En el caso del ser de Dios, el éxtasis que lo constituye no consiste en ser sacado fuera de sí por la necesidad de completarse, antes al contrario, se trata de una efusión de su ser en virtud de la plenitud del mismo, como por desbordamiento. Mientras que el *éros* arrastra al amante fuera de sí para llegar a ser lo que aún no es plenamente, la *agápe* es “la efusión consecutiva a la plenitud del ser que ya se es”¹⁸. Además, como Dios es un ser absolutamente personal, la efusión de su ser es efusión personal, esto es, donación libre de sí: es lo que los Padres designaron con el término cristiano *agápe*. El amor no es una acción consecutiva a su ser, sino constitutiva del mismo. La *agápe* en que Dios consiste es actividad unificante y extática *ad intra* tanto como *ad extra*. Ca-

da persona consiste en la donación total de sí misma a las otras dos (éxtasis de cada persona) que al mismo tiempo es unificación entre ellas (unidad de la Trinidad). Esta actividad extática y unificante en la que Dios consiste *ad intra* desborda *ad extra* por el exceso de plenitud del ser divino, convirtiéndose en donación de Dios al hombre y en unión de éste con Dios en virtud de dicha donación. Así pues, Dios es actividad unificante y extática y dicha actividad es *agápe*, amor.

Por último, en el caso del hombre –ser finito personal– se da una combinación de ambos tipos de éxtasis. Por un lado, en cuanto ser finito, también él tiende a su propia plenitud y esta tendencia es constitutiva de su ser, es decir, el hombre es *éros*. Pero, al mismo tiempo, es persona, tiene la capacidad de darse libremente al otro. Por ser persona, su *éros* o “amor natural” es tenido por su persona. La persona es el sujeto de la naturaleza, es aquello que tiene a la naturaleza. Por ello, “la efusión y expansión del ser personal no es como la tensión natural del *éros*: se expande y difunde por la perfección personal de lo que ya se es. Es la donación, la *agápe* que nos lleva a Dios y a los demás hombres”¹⁹. De este modo, el *éros* o “amor natural” es en el hombre asumido por la *agápe* o “amor personal”. La tendencia del hombre a su plenitud –*éros*– sólo alcanza su meta, la plenitud, mediante la acogida de la donación de Dios y del prójimo y la entrega a Dios y al prójimo como respuesta a la donación recibida. También el hombre es actividad y esa actividad es *éros* y *agápe*.

El caso único del hombre vemos la unidad de *éros* y *agápe*, algo que podría parecer contradictorio, ya que, estrictamente hablando, en el *éros* el amante se busca a sí mismo, mientras que en la *agápe* ama al otro hasta el olvido de sí. Sin embargo, esta oposición a nivel existencial y moral se da dentro de una unidad a nivel más profundo, a saber, el trascendental: “esta oposición se da siempre dentro de una raíz común; es una oposición de dirección dentro de una misma línea: la estructura ontológica de la realidad. Por esto

es preferible emplear en la traducción el término genérico de *amor*. Los latinos vertieron casi siempre *agápe* por *caridad*. Pero el vocablo corre el riesgo de aludir a una simple virtud moral. Los padres griegos emplearon unánimemente la expresión *éros*; por esto nosotros usaremos la de *amor*”²⁰.

De este breve análisis de *SSDD*, se desprende con claridad que el ser consiste en unidad y actividad, las cuales, a su vez, no son sino amor. Por supuesto, no nos referimos al amor en el sentido de un sentimiento o de un acto de la voluntad, sino en el sentido de la estructura trascendental del ser. Ésta es la noción de “amor” que maneja Zubiri en *SSDD* y que es el sentido primario del término “amor”, ya que afecta al ser en cuanto ser y es condición de posibilidad del amor como sentimiento y como acto volitivo y moral. Este planteamiento metafísico de la teología patristica griega influye de manera determinante en la metafísica madura de nuestro filósofo, tal y como mostraremos en las páginas que siguen.

2. La noción metafísica de amor en la metafísica madura de Zubiri

En primer lugar hay que aclarar a qué nos referimos con la expresión “metafísica madura”. El mismo Zubiri nos lo dice en el prólogo a la edición norteamericana de *Naturaleza, Historia, Dios*²¹, escrito en 1980. Allí distingue el filósofo con exactitud entre ontología y lo que él entiende por metafísica. En la ontología, lo primario es el ser, se trata de hacer filosofía del ser en cuanto ser. En cambio, gracias a su descubrimiento de la inteligencia sentiente, Zubiri se da cuenta de que lo primario no es el ser, sino la realidad, a saber: aquello que aprehendo en la aprehensión primordial. La realidad es lo aprehendido (“inteligido”) en la impresión como siendo “de suyo” lo aprehendido. La realidad no es “en sí” ni tampoco “para mí” sino que es “de suyo”²².

En la metafísica tomista –que Zubiri considera ontología– lo primario es el ser, mientras que la realidad es un aspecto

derivado del ser, a saber, *esse reale*. Por el contrario, en la metafísica Zubiriana lo primario es la realidad, de tal manera que el ser es un aspecto de la realidad: *realitas in essendo*²³. Toda realidad tiene su ser, su estar presente en el mundo, su «es así», que es justamente actualidad. Eso aprehendido (la realidad) es actual en el mundo. Pues bien, el ser es la actualidad de la realidad en el mundo²⁴. Esta redefinición de “realidad” y “ser” es una de las ideas esenciales para comprender la radical diferencia y el salto cualitativo que se produce entre la “etapa ontológica” de la filosofía de Zubiri y su “etapa metafísica”. El orden trascendental no pertenece al ser en cuanto ser, sino a la realidad en cuanto tal, por ser la realidad lo primario. No obstante, en medio de la enorme originalidad que supone el nuevo planteamiento metafísico de Zubiri, la caracterización de la estructura metafísica última de la realidad como unidad y actividad continua estando en la base de su pensamiento, así como la identidad de esta estructura con el amor. Empecemos por la unidad.

2.1. Unidad

En su principal obra metafísica, *Sobre la esencia (SE)*, Zubiri dedica la mayor parte de sus páginas a definir la realidad como unidad.

a) En primer lugar, cada cosa real consiste de suyo en un sistema unitario de notas, que Zubiri designa como “sustantividad”. La realidad de la sustantividad es, primariamente, unidad consigo misma, unidad de sus notas constitutivas entre sí: “[...] ‘constitutivo’ significa aquello que precisa y formalmente dentro de esta unidad constitucional [...] forma primariamente y *simpliciter* dicha unidad física. [...] Sólo con estas notas tendríamos la unidad primaria de lo real, es decir, el modo primario de ser intrínseca e irreductiblemente ‘uno’²⁵. Sobre esta unidad de la esencia se articula la sustantividad entera como sistema unitario de notas.

Hasta tal punto la unidad es trascendental, que las notas que constituyen la sustantividad no son primero notas y después llegan a ser “notas-de”, sino que son

en sí mismas, constitutivamente “notas-de” la unidad primaria. Por eso, la unidad de un sistema no es unidad aditiva, sino unidad *primaria*, en la que “cada nota es función de las demás, de suerte que sólo en y por su unidad con las restantes es cada nota lo que es dentro de la cosa real. (...) Por eso, una vez constituida esta unidad primaria, los elementos constituyentes no guardan formalmente su individualidad dentro de aquélla”²⁶. Lo primario, el principio intrínseco de la realidad sustantiva es su unidad constitutiva. Tanto es así, que “la unidad misma es *en algún modo* ‘anterior’ (*próteron*) a las notas que son unas, de suerte que lo primario no es que éstas sean ‘componentes’ de la unidad, sino por el contrario, que sean ‘analizadores’ de la unidad misma. Esto es: las notas no fundan la unidad sino que la unidad funda las notas”²⁷.

b) En segundo lugar, Zubiri define la realidad entera como unidad de cada realidad sustantiva con las demás realidades sustantivas. En este sentido, entiende que el “cosmos” entero –es decir, el conjunto de todas las sustantividades– tiene el carácter de una gran sustantividad en la que las cosas reales serían como notas constitutivas.

c) En tercer lugar, la realidad es definida en *SE* como unidad de “la” realidad como tal. En virtud de la respectividad de la realidad, toda realidad sustantiva está en sí misma y desde sí misma, formalmente, es decir, en cuanto realidad, en cuanto “de suyo”, vertida a la realidad del resto de sustantividades y a “la” realidad *simpliciter*, constituyendo así la unidad formal de toda la realidad. Por eso, el “mundo” –concepto zubiriano que equivale a la pura y simple realidad–, es definido por Zubiri como la unidad trascendental de todo lo real en cuanto real. “En este respecto, cada cosa real es más que sí misma: es justo trascendental, tiene la unidad trascendental de ser momento del mundo”²⁸. Está claro, pues, que la noción de unidad ocupa un lugar central en la metafísica más acabada de Xavier Zubiri. Es el carácter por excelencia del orden trascendental en *SE*.

2.2. Actividad

Con respecto a la actividad, Zubiri dedicó un curso entero, en 1968, a explicar y recalcar que la estructura unitaria de la realidad que había expuesto en *Sobre la Esencia* es constitutivamente dinámica²⁹. En dicho curso afirma que la realidad es en sí formalmente activa, que una sustantividad no es una estructura puramente quiescente de notas, sino una “unidad accional” de notas, porque cada realidad “está siendo” lo que es y lo que “da de sí”³⁰. El dinamismo constituye y define la realidad en cuanto tal, es un carácter transcendental.

Compárese este dinamismo transcendental de la realidad con la caracterización metafísica del ser como actividad en *SSDD*. Allí se afirma que “el ser es acción”³¹, más aún, que “en definitiva: (...) el ser es siempre *acción* primaria y radical”³². Al hacer un análisis comparativo de *SSDD* y *EDR* se aprecia con facilidad la dependencia del dinamismo transcendental de la realidad descrito en *EDR* con respecto a la actividad en que consiste el ser de *SSDD*. Veamos otro ejemplo.

El dinamismo transcendental de la realidad expuesto en *EDR* consiste precisamente en “dar de sí”. Nótese la similitud entre el dar de sí de la realidad y la difusión de sí del ser. El ser es, en *SSDD*, difusivo de sí; la realidad, en *EDR*, “dar de sí”. Para la patrística griega el ser es actividad y esa actividad es éxtasis, difusión del ser. Por eso, “cuanto más perfecto es algo, más honda y fecunda es su actividad operante. El ser, dice Dionisio Areopagita, es extático: cuanto más es ‘es’, más se difunde, en uno u otro sentido”³³. Del mismo modo, para el Zubiri de la etapa metafísica, la realidad es dinamismo y este dinamismo es dar de sí: “el dinamismo no es algo que se tiene, y no es algo en que se está, (...) sino que se es dinámico. (...) Y este dar de sí lo que ya se es, es justamente el dinamismo”³⁴. Con estas muestras queda ilustrada la dependencia de la metafísica madura de Zubiri respecto de la ontología del amor de su etapa anterior, ni la importancia de ésta para entender aquella.

Ahora bien, en *SSDD* el ser es transcendentalmente activo porque ser “es una ‘tensión’ interna, correlato del arrastre ascensional, del éros hacia Dios. Por esto el ser es acción”³⁵. La actividad transcendental del ser es éros. Zubiri lo deja bien claro al definir el amor en *SSDD* como como “el fondo metafísico de toda actividad”³⁶. El dinamismo transcendental de la etapa metafísica no es sino una radicalización y reelaboración del amor transcendental de la etapa ontológica expuesto en *SSDD*. La realidad es, en definitiva, amor en sentido metafísico.

Este dinamismo transcendental de la realidad, se actualiza de distintas maneras en las distintas realidades concretas. En las realidades no personales, el dar de sí se despliega en diferentes dinamismos como la variación, la causación, la conservación de la mismidad, etc. En las personas, además de todo eso, el dinamismo de la realidad llega a su culmen en la donación total que tiene lugar en el amor. El hombre va constituyendo su ser y cuando ha llegado al máximo de la realización de su Yo, aún le queda un último estadio de realización personal: la entrega al otro. “En la vida se cambia primero para ser el mismo, aunque nunca se sea lo mismo; segundo, para ser más sí mismo, y tercero, cuando se ha dado todo, cuando la vida es tan perfecta que ya no cabe dar más de sí, en orden a sí mismo, le cabe, por lo menos al hombre, una posibilidad superior: la de darse entero a otro, y devenir en otro, por ejemplo en el fenómeno del amor”³⁷. Así, el mero “dar de sí” de la realidad –correlato del éros de *SSDD*–, culmina en la donación –trasunto metafísico de la *agápe* de *SSDD*–. Por último, Dios, como realidad personal absolutamente absoluta, consiste en dinamicidad absoluta, donación absoluta y fundamento del dinamismo de la realidad³⁸.

En conclusión, podemos afirmar que la metafísica zubiriana madura se articula sobre la estructura de la “ontología del amor” expuesta en *SSDD*: la estructura metafísica del amor en el que Dios consiste –unidad y actividad– reluce en la estructura transcendental de la realidad. Estructura

tura y dinamismo, los dos caracteres trascendentales por excelencia en la etapa metafísica de Zubiri, son precisamente desarrollos radicalizados de la unidad y actividad de SSDD. No cabe duda de que la clave hermenéutica del amor es adecuada, más aún, fundamental, para comprender la metafísica zubiriana.

3. Filosofía del hombre

Si en la metafísica zubiriana, en general, la noción de amor es central, más aún lo es, si cabe, en su metafísica de la realidad humana.

3.1. “Esencia abierta” y religación

Zubiri define trascendentalmente al hombre como “esencia abierta”³⁹ por razón de la inteligencia. Ser una esencia abierta implica tener que hacerse. Ahora bien, la apertura trascendental de la realidad humana no implica en modo alguno indeterminación, es decir, que el hombre tiene que hacerse en el vacío, en la ausencia total de orientación intrínseca para esta realización. No. En el hombre, por razón de su inteligencia, la apertura consiste en religación. Inteligir no es otra cosa que un físico “estar” en la realidad y un “estar” de la realidad en mi aprehensión. Por eso el hombre está irrefragablemente religado a y por la realidad. La religación, pues, determina la orientación de mi realización personal. Esta apertura esencial que consiste en religación, no es una religación de signo neutro, sino que posee la estructura del amor. La apertura implica éxtasis amoroso. Ser una esencia abierta significa, para Zubiri, estar constituido por un éxtasis estructural de entrega a Dios y al otro⁴⁰.

3.2. “Versión” y “amor como estructura”

Pues bien, en su religación a la realidad, el hombre está *eo ipso* religado a la realidad de Dios y a la de las demás personas. Está religado a Dios porque él es el fundamento de la realidad que religa al hombre⁴¹. Está religado a los demás en virtud de la constitutiva versión de cada uno hacia los otros. Esta versión, en principio, no es más que la mera versión del hombre a la realidad. El hombre está ver-

tido a la realidad de los demás como lo está a la realidad de cualquier otra cosa, por el mero hecho de estar “en” la realidad. Ahora bien, esta versión o religación del hombre a la realidad en general, es el presupuesto necesario para la versión hacia la realidad del otro como realidad personal y por ende para la acogida del otro y la entrega a él en cuanto persona, esto es, es el presupuesto para el amor⁴². La inteligencia del hombre está abocada, por su propio dinamismo interno de religación, a inteligir al otro como realidad personal y en consecuencia a reconocerlo como persona. La versión a la realidad es, en definitiva, una expresión del éros clásico, que saca al sujeto de sí mismo, en un éxtasis inevitable, hacia la realidad. Es, pues, es amor incoado; de manera especial en el caso de la versión a la realidad del otro. La religación o versión a la realidad es amor como estructura, cabría decir, que no aún como acto⁴³. Es amor entendido como dinamismo trascendental, que posteriormente puede o no desarrollarse en los actos concretos de cada cual como amor en sentido pleno.

3.3. Suidad y respeto moral

El amor incoado o amor como estructura, para ser amor personal en el sentido pleno del término tiene que desplegarse en los actos de la persona. El primero de estos actos es el respeto moral por el otro tal y como corresponde a su reconocimiento como persona⁴⁴. Zubiri define la persona como “realidad suya” o “suidad”. En virtud de su inteligencia el hombre se tiene a sí mismo en cuanto realidad. Consiguientemente, el reconocimiento del otro como persona, exigido por el propio dinamismo de religación, implica verlo como “otro que yo”, como realidad suya, que excluye por su esencia ser poseída y objetualizada por otro. Aprehender al otro como persona implica la obligación moral de respetarlo como tal. El respeto moral por el otro es ya amor en sentido estricto pero no en sentido pleno. El amor en sentido pleno, como se da, según Zubiri, por ejemplo, en el contexto de la amistad, de la familia y del amor sexual⁴⁵, tiene siempre como base el

reconocimiento del otro como persona y el consiguiente respeto moral, pero va más allá de él. El respeto moral puede así ser llamado “amor” en sentido básico, ya que es el presupuesto del amor en el orden del actuar.

3.4. Objeción y respuesta

A esto se podría objetar que una versión constitutiva de la realidad humana hacia las demás no implica amor, ya que aun estando constitutivamente vertidos al otro en el orden trascendental, a menudo vivimos destruyéndonos mutuamente, utilizando al otro como mero medio, etc. Y es cierto que, efectivamente, uno puede desplegar esa versión a los demás como versión “contra” los demás, pero en ese caso estaría frustrando la realización plena de su Yo, porque estaría construyendo su ser en contra del carácter intrínseco de su realidad. Y es que, para Zubiri, la trascendental apertura de la realidad humana, lejos de ser una apertura vacía es una apertura con una estructura bien determinada: la del éxtasis que conduce a la *agápe*⁴⁶. Podemos decir, con toda propiedad, que el hombre es, para Zubiri, una *realidad constitutivamente amorosa*. Puesto que el ser es *realitas in essendo*, la actualidad mundanal de la realidad, el ser del hombre será en cualquier caso la actualidad de una realidad amorosa. Consecutivamente, el hombre está orientado por su propia realidad a construir su ser siendo amado y amando, como veremos en seguida en el apartado de ética.

3.5. Análisis de la vida psico-biológica del hombre

Esta concepción del hombre como realidad constitutivamente vertida al otro en sentido benevolente la confirma Zubiri mediante el análisis de la vida psico-biológica del hombre. Desde el mismísimo momento del nacimiento y ya antes hay una versión física del animal humano a los otros animales humanos. Versión física porque arranca de estructuras biológicas y porque físicamente los otros están en mí. Por un lado, sus acciones –nutrirme, am-

pararme, etc.– están en mí por sus efectos –crezco en peso y estatura, sobrevivo a los peligros, etc.–. Soy biológicamente inviable sin esa versión benevolente de los otros hacia mí. Por otro lado, están en mí porque están interviniendo de manera constitutiva en mi vida psicológica: vivo y soy como soy en virtud de su intervención⁴⁷. No sólo en virtud de la intervención personal e individual de mis padres, etc., sino también en virtud de la intervención comunitaria: el lenguaje, el saber, las tradiciones, toda la inmensa riqueza de la transmisión cultural no es otra cosa que una donación de los demás hacia mí. La necesidad biológica, psicológica y cultural de los demás para que el hombre sea hombre, lleva a Zubiri, con toda razón, a inferir una estructura metafísica de versión del hombre a los otros de carácter primariamente benevolente.

4. Ética

4.1. El amor, modo de ser de la realidad humana

La ética Zubiriana consiste en el estudio de la realización del hombre. Como decíamos, toda realidad tiene su ser, su estar presente en el mundo. El ser es el despliegue de la realidad en el mundo. En el caso del hombre, su realidad se despliega en ser mediante sus actos, mediante su vida, constituyendo así su yo. “El ‘yo’ del hombre no es la realidad de su persona, sino su ser”⁴⁸. El hombre, por ser una esencia abierta en virtud de su inteligencia, no está determinado, sino que es libre y tiene que elegir, tiene que hacerse. Con cada elección y con cada acto el hombre va construyendo su ser, su yo. Hasta con los actos aparentemente más insignificantes, el hombre va apropiándose de ciertas posibilidades y excluyendo otras. Las posibilidades apropiadas mediante cada uno de los actos intelectivos, volitivos o afectivos, constituyen el ser del hombre, que es su manera de estar actualmente en la realidad, su modo de ser, su yo, su vida⁴⁹. Vivir es hacerse, el ser del hombre es su vida. El ser del hombre, su yo, se articula sobre

su realidad, en virtud de la realidad abierta y religada-vertida en que el hombre consiste a nivel trascendental.

En consecuencia, puesto que el hombre es una realidad amorosa –realidad constitutivamente vertida al otro–, no cabe duda que vivir siendo amado y amando, esto es, desplegar dicha versión trascendental mediante la entrega actual al otro, es la manera de vivir más acorde con la realidad humana. La realidad amorosa tiene que desplegarse en un Yo amado y amante. El hombre construye su ser, su vida, con sus actos. Así pues, los actos de acogida del don del otro y de entrega al otro son los que despliegan la realidad amorosa en un Yo amado y amante, en un hombre realizado.

Por “amar” entiendo aquí, fundamentalmente, darse al otro o, más concretamente, hacer el bien al otro⁵⁰. Pero no un hacer el bien fortuito o meramente ocasional, sino un hacer el bien que brota de la estructura íntima de la realidad humana. Zubiri lo expresa en una de las más bellas y certeras definiciones del amor que jamás he leído: “El bien no es tan sólo las cosas buenas que se hacen, sino que es antes que todo una íntima disposición bondadosa. La efusión en lo que *se hace* emana de la bondad que *se es*. Y a esto es justamente a lo que se llama amor”⁵¹. En consecuencia, aunque el hombre es amor ya desde que viene a la existencia en el orden de las estructuras y dinamismos trascendentales, tiene que hacerse un ser amante en cada instante de su vida en el orden de las acciones, es decir, en el orden del ser, en su vida.

Así, aunque no dejan de tener cierta razón los que afirman que el amor no es un sentimiento, sino un acto de la voluntad, desde el punto de vista radical es necesario ir más allá, buscar más a fondo. Antes que un sentimiento o un acto de la voluntad, el amor es un dinamismo trascendental de la realidad entera y muy especialmente de la realidad humana. El amor personal es la realidad humana en cuanto realidad, constitutivamente amorosa, que se hace actual en el mundo, es decir, despliega su ser, constituye su yo,

mediante los actos amorosos de la persona. El amor no es “un” sentimiento, ni tampoco “un” acto de la voluntad, sino que es un modo de ser de la realidad humana, precisamente su modo de ser por excelencia. Es el modo de ser que radica en la índole propia de la realidad humana, que es de suyo una realidad amorosa.

El ser, como decía más arriba, no es lo primario ni lo trascendental, una aprehensión de la inteligencia en su función concipiente, basado en algo más primario: la realidad en cuanto tal. La inteligencia sentiente es la aprehensión primordial de la realidad, mientras que la inteligencia concipiente profundiza en lo aprehendido en inteligencia sentiente. En palabras de Zubiri, “la inteligencia concipiente está fundada en la inteligencia sentiente, lo cual cambia de alto en bajo las dos ideas de realidad y de ser”⁵². Mientras que para los clásicos y muy especialmente para Sto. Tomás, lo trascendental es el ser y la realidad no es sino un modo de ser –*esse reale*–, para Zubiri lo trascendental es la realidad y el ser no es sino un modo de la realidad, concretamente, *realitas in essendo*⁵³. Así pues, el amor, antes incluso que un modo de ser, es un dinamismo trascendental de la realidad, de manera eminente de las realidades personales. En cuanto modo de ser del hombre, el amor no es sino *realitas humana in essendo*: el amor es la persona (realidad) amando y siendo amada (siendo).

En definitiva: por ser amor en el orden de la realidad –el de las estructuras y dinamismos trascendentales, el orden más profundamente real– el hombre está llamado a ser amor también en el orden del ser –el de las acciones humanas–. La esencia abierta en que la realidad humana consiste, en virtud de su constitutivo dinamismo amoroso, está orientada a realizarse en el amor personal de donación y entrega. Por ello, como decía más arriba, según Zubiri, el modo más perfecto de ser persona, la vida más perfecta, es la dedicada a “darse entero a otro, y devenir en otro, por ejemplo en el fenómeno del amor”⁵⁴.

4.2. *La comunión, culmen del amor*

El amor en el orden del ser, es decir, de los actos, tiene niveles, como ya apuntaba anteriormente. Si el más básico y por ello imprescindible es el del respeto moral, el más alto es el de la comunión de las personas⁵⁵. Ésta se da cuando hay “mismidad” de vida, es decir, cuando los ejes que aglutinan la vida de las personas coinciden⁵⁶. Cuando aquello que es fundamental y de la máxima importancia para uno también lo es para el otro. Pero dicha mismidad de vida no basta por sí sola para que exista verdadera comunión, sino que es necesario que eso que es fundamental y de máxima importancia para uno sea precisamente la persona del otro. Y ello, recíprocamente. Semejante amor de comunión puede realizarse en el contexto del amor de amistad, del amor familiar o del amor sexual, entre otros⁵⁷. Más aún, si vamos a los textos teológicos de Zubiri, encontramos que dicha comunión se da por excelencia en el seno de la comunidad cristiana⁵⁸.

4.3. *La vivencia del amor es “deificación”*

La noción metafísica de amor en Zubiri surge, como hemos visto en el análisis de *SSDD*, de consideraciones teológicas acerca de la realidad de Dios. A ellas volvemos ahora en la conclusión del discurso.

Para Zubiri, la religación del hombre a la realidad es *eo ipso* religación al fundamento de la misma, esto es, a Dios. El hombre está irrefragablemente instalado en la realidad y lo está hacia dentro de ella, hacia su fundamento. Por ello, al “ir a las cosas reales se entrega a Dios que está en ellas mismas constituyéndolas formalmente, esto es, dando de sí realidad. El hombre, en las cosas, se entrega a lo trascendente en ellas.⁵⁹ [...] A la donación personal que es la presencia fundante de Dios en las cosas y en el hombre, responde la persona humana con esa forma especial de donación que es la entrega de sí mismo”⁶⁰.

La entrega a Dios es, por tanto, un acto que el hombre realiza de manera inexorable, lo quiera o no, al entregarse a las cosas inteliéndolas. Sin embargo, dicha

entrega puede ser consciente o inconsciente, aversiva o conversiva. De hecho, si el hombre se entrega a Dios sin querer, sin saberlo, no se está entregando plenamente a Dios, sino a las cosas⁶¹. Del mismo modo, el que despliega su versión trascendental a Dios de modo aversivo, en actos contrarios a Dios y al bien, no lo ama actualmente y no llega a darse a Él, a devenir en Él. Ahora bien, dice Zubiri que cuando la persona se entrega de manera conversiva a hacer algo, no sólo se entrega a ese algo, sino que se entrega a ser de una determinada manera. “El que quiere algo, aunque sea dar un paseo, está entregándose como persona a ser un Yo paseante o deambulante, a realizarse como persona paseante”⁶². Por tanto, cuando alguien quiere ser amado y amar, se entrega a ser un Yo amado y amante. Así, la persona que se entrega a Dios de manera conversiva, ya sea explícita (mediante la fe) o implícitamente (mediante la buena voluntad), en definitiva, la persona que ama, que desea hacer el bien, se encamina a darse por entero a Él y a devenir en Él: se entrega a ser un Yo deificado. La *realidad amorosa* en que el hombre consiste, tiene como fundamento la presencia de Dios en el hombre y está orientada por esencia a entregarse a dicho fundamento: es, en consecuencia, *realidad deificanda*.

Quiero terminar este artículo con un texto de Zubiri que he citado parcialmente más arriba y que expresa espléndidamente lo que acabo de exponer. El filósofo lo escribió con motivo de la muerte de su amigo Juan Lladó, un año antes de morir él mismo. Habla de la bondad de su amigo de un modo entrañable y en unos términos que revelan toda la riqueza de su pensamiento acerca del hombre y Dios, así como la centralidad del amor en la mente del filósofo: “El bien no es tan sólo las cosas buenas que se hacen, sino que es antes que todo una íntima disposición bondadosa. La efusión en lo que *se hace* emana de la bondad que *se es*. Y a esto es justamente a lo que se llama amor. Decía San Pablo que aunque diera todos sus bienes para socorrer al prójimo, y aunque diera su vida entera por el prójimo, si no lo

hiciera con amor de nada le serviría. Dura frase, pero que nos hace penetrar en la índole más profunda de una persona. La bondad está anclada en el amor. Nos dice San Juan que Dios es amor. Es, por tanto, bien. Pero nos dice también que sólo Dios es bueno. Lo cual significa recíprocamente que todo lo bueno de la persona es, a su modo, de Dios, es divino. Ésta es la esencia de la religiosidad”⁶³.

Este texto, escrito por Zubiri al final de su vida, corrobora la tesis que he defendido en este artículo y que resumo a continuación a modo de conclusión. Dios

es, para Zubiri, el fundamento último de la realidad y como tal, está presente en toda ella configurándola últimamente. Por ello, puesto que Dios es amor, toda la realidad consiste en última instancia en amor, definido a nivel trascendental como unidad y actividad. Este amor en que la realidad consiste, define por excelencia a la realidad humana, de manera que el hombre está orientado, por el dinamismo propio de su estructura trascendental, a construir su yo siendo amado y amante con un amor de benevolencia o *agápe*.

Notas

¹A este respecto, resulta tan interesante como sugerente el análisis que Jean-Luc Marion realiza en la introducción a su libro *El fenómeno erótico*, a la que titula “El silencio del amor”. Cf. Marion, Jean-Luc. *The erotic phenomenon*. Chicago y Londres: The University of Chicago Press, 2008, pp. 1-10.

² Este escrito lo publicó Zubiri como un capítulo de su libro *Naturaleza, Historia, Dios*. Cf. Zubiri, Xavier. *Naturaleza, Historia, Dios*. 9ª ed. Madrid: Alianza Editorial/Sociedad de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1987, pp. 455-542. A partir de aquí me referiré a este libro con las siglas *NHD* y al capítulo “El ser sobrenatural: Dios y la deificación en la teología paulina” como *SSDD*.

³ *NHD*, p. 464.

⁴ Cf. Castilla y Cortázar, Blanca. *Noción de persona en Xavier Zubiri. Una aproximación al género*. Madrid: Rialp, 1996, pp. 352-355. En este libro, su autora insiste en la importancia del amor en la obra filosófica de Zubiri.

⁵ *NHD*, p. 502.

⁶ El texto fue publicado por primera vez en 1944 en *NHD*, pero procede de las notas redactadas por Zubiri para un curso y dos conferencias de años anteriores. Se trata del curso «Helenismo y cristianismo», impartido por Zubiri en la universidad de Madrid en el año 1934-35 y de las conferencias «Mystère du Christ» y «La vie surnaturelle d'après Saint Paul», pronunciadas en el *Cercle d'Études Religieuses au Foyer International des Étudiants Catholiques* de la ciudad de

París durante los cursos de 1937-38 y 1938-39 respectivamente. Cf. *NHD*, p. 456 y también Díaz Muñoz, Guillermina. *La teología del misterio en Zubiri*. Barcelona: Herder, 2008, pp. 50-53.

⁷ Ya en 1962, F. Wilhelmsen, profesor de filosofía de la Universidad de Dallas, descubrió que Zubiri estaba construyendo una metafísica del amor, especialmente en *SSDD*. Cf. Wilhelmsen, Frederick D. *The metaphysics of love*. New York: Sheed & Ward, 1962. Sin embargo, Wilhelmsen no conocía más que la etapa ontológica de Zubiri. En los últimos años, Guillermina Díaz, gran experta en la filosofía y teología zubirianas, ha declarado que es posible una relectura de la metafísica madura de Zubiri desde la “ontología del *agápe*” expuesta por el filósofo en *SSDD*. Cf. Díaz Muñoz, Guillermina. *La teología del misterio en Zubiri*. Barcelona: Herder, 2008, p. 76, nota 57.

⁸ *NHD*, p. 464.

⁹ *NHD*, p. 473.

¹⁰ *NHD*, p. 500.

¹¹ *NHD*, p. 473.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *NHD*, p. 458.

¹⁵ *NHD*, p. 483.

¹⁶ *NHD*, p. 464.

¹⁷ *NHD*, p. 473.

¹⁸ *NHD*, p. 464.

¹⁹ *NHD*, p. 478.

²⁰ *NHD*, p. 464.

²¹ Cf. *NHD*, pp. 14-15.

²² No cabe aquí una aclaración más detallada de la filosofía zubiriana de la realidad. Solo pretendo enunciar el hecho de que en los escritos de Zubiri posteriores a 1960 aproximadamente, lo propiamente metafísico, el nivel trascendental en sentido estricto, es la realidad en cuanto tal (y no el ser en cuanto ser). Así, cuando hablamos de unidad y actividad trascendentales en el Zubiri de la etapa metafísica, nos referimos a la unidad y la actividad en que la realidad consiste en cuanto realidad.

²³ Cf. entre otros lugares, *NHD*, p. 16 y Zubiri, Xavier. *Inteligencia Sentiente/Inteligencia y Realidad*. 5ª ed. Madrid: Alianza Editorial/Fundación X. Zubiri, 1998, p. 222 (en adelante me referiré a esta obra como *IRE*). Es un tema recurrente en el último Zubiri por ser el carácter distintivo de su metafísica.

²⁴ Cf. *IRE* 219-220.

²⁵ Zubiri, Xavier. *Sobre la esencia*. 5ª ed. Madrid: Alianza Editorial/Fundación X. Zubiri, 1985, p. 190. A partir de aquí me referiré a esta obra como *SE*.

²⁶ *SE*, p. 143-144.

²⁷ *SE*, p. 322.

²⁸ *IRE*, p. 122. Sobre esta misma idea de la constitutiva «mundanidad» de cada cosa real, cf. también Zubiri, Xavier. *El hombre y Dios*. 4ª ed. Madrid: Alianza Editorial/Sociedad de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1988, p. 24. En adelante me referiré a esta obra como *HD*.

²⁹ Complemento necesario de *SE* es el curso sobre “La estructura dinámica de la realidad”, impartido en 1968 y recogido en el libro del mismo título. Este curso lo dedica Zubiri a mostrar que, aunque en *SE* sea difícil apreciarlo, sin embargo se encuentra implícito el carácter intrínseca y formalmente activo de la realidad. La actividad y unidad constituyen, como decía, los dos caracteres trascendentales del amor en *SSDD* y son los temas centrales de *SE* y de *Estructura dinámica de la realidad* (en adelante: *EDR*), respectivamente. En consecuencia, *SE* y *EDR*, las dos obras centrales de la metafísica madura del filósofo, tienen, a mi juicio, implícitamente, como tema central la noción metafísica de amor esbozada ya en *SSDD*.

Además, en *EDR* Zubiri afirma de manera explícita que el amor humano, entendido como entrega, es culmen del dinamismo estructural de la realidad humana. Respecto a esta última idea cf. Zubiri, Xavier, *Estructura dinámica de la realidad*, Alianza Editorial / Fundación Xavier Zubiri, Madrid, 1989, p. 188 y también Antúñez Cid, José. *La intersubjetividad en Zubiri*. Roma: Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2006, p. 518.

³⁰ Cf., entre otros lugares, *EDR* pp. 61 y 65.

³¹ *NHD*, p. 496.

³² *NHD*, p. 470.

³³ *NHD*, p. 467.

³⁴ *EDR*, p. 64.

³⁵ *NHD*, p. 496.

³⁶ *NHD*, p. 458.

³⁷ *EDR*, p. 188, cit. en J. Antúñez, *op. cit.*, p. 518.

³⁸ Cf. *HD*, pp. 173ss.

³⁹ Cf., entre otros muchos lugares, *HD*, pp. 314-315.

⁴⁰ Cf. Zubiri, Xavier. *El problema filosófico de la historia de las religiones*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial/Fundación X. Zubiri, 1993, p. 253: “En el hombre la apertura consiste en religación, mientras que en Dios, como he dicho en otro lugar, consiste en donación. Ahora bien, esta apertura tiene una estructura determinada: es el salir de sí hacia otro. Es éxtasis. Y lo es tanto tratándose de Dios como tratándose de un amigo o de una persona querida. Es una salida de sí hacia otro, hacia otra persona. En segundo lugar, es una salida hacia otra persona pura y simplemente por liberalidad, es decir, sin ser forzado a ello, pues entonces no sería *qyáruḡ* –el amor del que habla san Juan (cf. 1 Jn, 8)-, sino que sería un *épōs*, un deseo”.

⁴¹ Sobre Dios como fundamento de la realidad cf. *HD*, p. 130-133.

⁴² Para entender la concepción zubiriana de la socialidad humana véase el capítulo “El hombre, realidad social” en Zubiri, Xavier. *Sobre el hombre*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial/Fundación X. Zubiri, 1998, pp. 223-341 (en adelante: *SH*). El mismo contenido se encuentra sintetizado en *HD*, pp. 62-68.

⁴³ Parafraseo aquí la célebre distinción de Aranguren entre la “moral como estructura”

- y la “moral como contenido”. El hombre es estructuralmente moral debido a su inteligencia, que le permite y le obliga a elegir. Después, en sus actos, el hombre puede actuar moral o inmoralmemente, puede ser una persona moral o inmoral. Pero en cuanto a su estructura, el hombre es de suyo e inexorablemente moral. Cf. J. L. Aranguren, José Luis. *Ética*. 9ª ed. Madrid: Alianza 2001, pp. 48-50. Aranguren desarrolló esta distinción en base a lo escuchado por él en los cursos orales de Zubiri, especialmente el curso sobre el problema del hombre de 1953-1954.
- ⁴⁴ Cf. *SH*, p. 246.
- ⁴⁵ Cf. *SH*, p. 270 y *IRE*, p. 214.
- ⁴⁶ Cf. Zubiri, Xavier. *El problema fundamental de la historia de las religiones*. op. cit., p. 253.
- ⁴⁷ Cf. *SH*, p. 238.
- ⁴⁸ *IRE* 219-220.
- ⁴⁹ Cf., por ejemplo, *HD*, p. 297.
- ⁵⁰ Parafraseo aquí a Santo Tomás de Aquino, quien, siguiendo a Aristóteles, define el amor personal como benevolencia (querer el bien para otro). Cf. *Summa Theologiae* I-II, 26, 4 in c.
- ⁵¹ Zubiri, Xavier. “Autoridad, bondad, eternidad”. *Ya* 3 de agosto de 1982. Cit. en Laín Entralgo, Pedro. *Esperanza en tiempo de crisis*. Barcelona: Ed. Circulo de Lectores – Galaxia Gutemberg, 1993, p. 212.
- ⁵² *IRE*, p. 218.
- ⁵³ Cf. *NHD*, p. 16 o *IRE*, p. 222.
- ⁵⁴ *EDR*, p. 188, cit. en Antúñez Cid, José. op. cit., p. 518.
- ⁵⁵ Cf. *SH*, p. 274. Zubiri habla de la comunión en *SH*, p. 270ss y la menciona en *IRE*, p. 214, pero su definición más detallada y su mejor exposición la hallamos en la sección “Qué es la Iglesia” en Zubiri, Xavier. *El problema teológico del hombre: Cristianismo*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial/Fundación X. Zubiri, 1997 (en adelante: *PTCH*). Allí la comunión es definida por Zubiri como una especial “versión de los unos a los otros” (*PTHC*, p. 426), que constituye una “una habitud en la que yo me dejo determinar como persona por otras personas en tanto que personas” (*PTHC*, p. 435).
- ⁵⁶ Zubiri explica la noción de “mismidad” en *PTHC*, p. 430. Pone como ejemplo la frase de *Efesios* 4, 5: “un Señor, una fe, un bautismo”; los cristianos son “mismos” porque tienen todos un mismo Señor, etc.
- ⁵⁷ Cf. *SH*, p. 270 y *IRE*, p. 214.
- ⁵⁸ Cf. *NHD*, p. 460ss y *PTHC*, p. 436: “La comunión de los santos [...] es la expresión suprema de la comunión personal”.
- ⁵⁹ Es una entrega *per accidens*. Lo explica Zubiri en *HD* 183-184. En realidad, si el hombre accede a Dios «sin querer», no está realmente accediendo a Dios, sino a las cosas.
- ⁶⁰ *HD*, p. 198.
- ⁶¹ *HD*, pp. 183-184.
- ⁶² *HD*, p. 297.
- ⁶³ Zubiri, Xavier. “Autoridad, bondad, eternidad”. *Ya* 3 de agosto de 1982. Cit. en Laín Entralgo, Pedro. *Esperanza en tiempo de crisis*. Barcelona: Ed. Circulo de Lectores – Galaxia Gutemberg, 1993, p. 212.

Structures, Systems and Whiteheadian Societies: The Quest for Objectivity¹

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Abstract

Systems theory is a laudable attempt to restore a sense of objectivity in the quest for the understanding of physical reality, given the tendency of modern deconstructionism to reduce all points of view to subjective bias. But, insofar as it reduces human subjectivity to a *sine qua non* condition for the operation of an objective system, it too is anti- or post-metaphysical. Xavier Zubiri and Alfred North Whitehead in different ways tried to fashion a new metaphysics which would include human (and divine) subjectivity as a necessary component within an overall structural or process-oriented approach to reality. Zubiri claims that evolution is not only an objective change of structure in physical reality, but also the capacity of the entity to integrate that objective change into its own subjective existence and activity. Each real thing subjectively determines its function within the field even as it contributes to the overall objective structure of the field. For Whitehead too physical reality is both subjective and objective. Actual entities, momentary subjects of experience, by their dynamic interrelation determine the future structure of the field in which they are located, but the field in turn with its already existing structure heavily conditions the way in which they are interrelated. Thus, both Zubiri and Whitehead claim that the *cosmos*, the unity of all things in an overarching world order, is the work of both subjectivity and objectivity in finite imitation of the presence and providential activity of God in the world. .

Resumen

La teoría de sistemas es un loable intento de restaurar el sentido de la objetividad en la búsqueda de la comprensión de la realidad física, dada la tendencia de la deconstrucción moderna para reducir todos los puntos de vista al sesgo subjetivo. Pero, en la medida en que reduce la subjetividad humana a una condición *sine qua non* para el funcionamiento de un sistema objetivo, también es anti-o post-metafísico. Xavier Zubiri y Alfred North Whitehead de diferentes maneras trató de diseñar una nueva visión metafísica que incluiría la subjetividad humana (y divina) como un elemento necesario dentro de un enfoque global o estructural orientada a los procesos de la realidad. Zubiri afirma que la evolución no es sólo un cambio objetivo de la estructura de la realidad física, sino también la capacidad de la entidad para integrar el cambio objetivo en su propia existencia subjetiva y actividad. Cada cosa real subjetivamente determina su función dentro del campo a la vez que contribuye a la estructura objetivo general del campo. También para Whitehead la realidad física es subjetiva y objetiva. Entidades reales, temas momentáneos de experiencia, por su interrelación dinámica determinan la futura estructura del campo en el que se encuentran; pero el campo, a su vez, con su estructura ya existente condiciona fuertemente la forma en que se relacionan entre sí. Así, tanto Zubiri y Whitehead afirman que el cosmos, la unidad de todas las cosas en un orden mundial, es el trabajo de la subjetividad y la objetividad en la imitación finito de la presencia y actividad providencial de Dios en el mundo.

Introduction

In his ground-breaking work *Being and Time*, Martin Heidegger proclaimed the end of classical metaphysics. Since it was based on an unconscious confusion of Being in itself with God as the Supreme Being, classical metaphysics in Heidegger's view lacked real objectivity. For, it never addressed the true reality of Being as that which manifests itself at intervals to *Dasein*, defined as a human being who reflects on the contingency ("thrownness") of her own existence and seeks to achieve intelligibility and order in her life through a self-constituting decision.² Because Heidegger was also critical of the classical notion of substance in terms of traditional subject-object or subject-predicate relations,³ the influence of his thought was clearly felt in still other anti-metaphysical positions such as structuralism, post-structuralism and deconstructionism. But the persistent need for some kind of objectivity in the natural and social sciences eventually led to the development of systems theory in the natural and social sciences. Systems theory focuses on the objective rule-governed context of observable events rather than on the human and non-human agents at work in those contexts. Human subjectivity and other forms of subjectivity within Nature are thereby reduced to being no more than *sine qua non* conditions for the operation of an objective system.⁴ In this sense, systems theory is post-metaphysical, at least in the mind of Niklas Luhmann, one of the principal proponents of systems theory in the late twentieth century. For, it basically eliminates the need for metaphysics as ultimate rational explanation of the way things work within this world.⁵

Even within systems theory, however, interdependence among component parts or members of a system seems to be taken for granted. Admittedly, individual systems operate according to their own internal rules of operation and thus on one level are closed to one another. But there is at the same time operative within sys-

tems theory the phenomenon of structural coupling, "a state in which two systems shape the environment of the other in such a way that both depend on the other for continuing their *autopoiesis* [self-constitution] and increasing their structural complexity".⁶ Living systems (e.g., organisms, above all, those with a central nervous system and a brain) represent the necessary environment for psychic systems like the operation of the human mind; living systems and psychic systems in turn together provide the necessary environment for social systems (communities or various other forms of communication between and among human beings). So perhaps there is a way to incorporate systems theory within the scope of a new world view or metaphysics based on principles of relationality rather than on principles of substantiality, on principles of Becoming as well as on principles of Being.

After all, as Luhmann himself admits in his book *Social Systems* there is need for a general systems theory that would legitimate a systems approach to biology, psychology and sociology.⁷ Such a general systems theory, to be sure, would be oriented to a commonality of method rather than a commonality of content: "general systems theory does not fix the essential features to be found in all systems. Instead, it is formulated in the language of problems and their solutions and at the same time makes clear that there can be different, functionally equivalent solutions for specific problems".⁸ But is there in his notion of "self-referential systems" which critique their own operations as well as the operations of other systems⁹ a blend of contingency and necessity which seems to demand a metaphysical explanation? After all, as Etienne Gilson commented years ago in his book *The Unity of Philosophical Experience*, metaphysics has a way of burying its undertakers.¹⁰

Perhaps the only way to test this claim for the possibility of a new metaphysics of Becoming instead of the classi-

cal metaphysics of Being is to overview the efforts of two twentieth century philosophers who tried in different ways to combine principles of Becoming and principles of Being into their own metaphysical schemes: Xavier Zubiri and Alfred North Whitehead. Both wanted to retain the dynamics of human subjectivity as starting-point for their cosmological systems, but both felt that the classical notion of subjectivity as substance or unchanging substrate for accidental changes, had to be replaced by a new focus on structural continuity and/or process within human experience as the paradigm or prime analogate for how the cosmic process works at all levels of existence and activity within Nature. So, in what follows, I will review some key concepts in the philosophies of Zubiri and Whitehead and compare them both to one another and to the reflections of Niklas Luhmann about general systems theory. The results will inevitably be quite tentative, not really settling any major issues among the three philosophers but only pointing to key differences and unexpected similarities in their overall approach to reality.

A. What is Reality?

The notion of reality plays a major role in Xavier Zubiri's philosophy. For him, reality is what is in its own right (*de suyo*) and essence is its "suchness," the "substantivity" of the entity as a determinate system of constitutive and adventitious characteristics.¹¹ As Alfonso Villa comments in a recent article, there is in Zubiri's philosophy a dynamic interrelation between subjectivity and objectivity in *sentient intellection*, the simultaneous activity of sensing and knowing proper to human beings:

If I put my hand in fire, not only do I feel that "heat warms." I feel that "heat is something warm." There is a content sensed as real in its own right, the *heat*; there is a formality of reality apprehended, *warm*; and finally there is the *is* of the real...Reality-

real-being belong to intellection itself and are the theme of Zubiri's philosophy of intelligence; but they also pertain to the very reality of what is known by intellection, and are the constituents of it, so they are also the theme of Zubiri's philosophy of reality, of a metaphysics.¹²

Zubiri is here removing the artificial distinction between subjectivity and objectivity which arose in Western philosophy as a result of Descartes' turn to the subject (*cogito; ergo, sum*) as the first principle for knowing what is objectively real and therefore certain for human knowledge of self, the world of Nature and God. Reality is common to both the subject of cognition and the object of cognition, albeit in different ways. This seems to be in agreement with what Thomas Aquinas argued in the *Summa Theologica*, I, Q. 85, art. 2, ad 2, that the intellect in act and the thing understood in act are one and the same reality under different formalities, either as an intelligible species for the intellect or as an objective essence for the thing known. But what Aquinas and presumably Zubiri as well seem not to have recognized is that Reality is not simply a fact of experience here and now (something *de suyo*) nor is it just another name for God as Creator of heaven and earth. It might instead be a foundational activity (equivalently Being as a verb or participle rather than a noun) which makes particular things actual or real, each in its own way. That is, much like Creativity in the philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead, Reality would have no entitative status proper to itself, but is actualized, comes into existence, in and through the entities which it empowers to exist.

Perhaps because Zubiri does not always distinguish between what he means by the terms 'Reality,' 'the real,' and 'Being,' his discussion of the role of Reality in his epistemology and his metaphysics seems, in my judgment, to be at times quite ambiguous. Evidence for my argument here is to be found in Zubiri's book *Structures of Reality* where he analyzes

different dynamic structures of reality. Among these structures is to be found what he calls alteration and in particular evolution. "Evolution is not mutation, but just the reverse: it is the capacity for integrating mutation. It is giving of oneself what one is precisely by integrating the mutation."¹³ So evolution is apparently both an objective and a subjective reality at the same time. As a structure it is an entity or objective thing. As a capacity for integrating mutations it is a subjective reality reflecting in its operation a predetermined plan or structure of development for a given entity. Zubiri describes mutations as "positive moments" in the genesis or gradual development of essences: "The positive moment is the one according to which a structure, say that of a determined reptile, has enough vitality to integrate the mutation and survives precisely in the form of a bird".¹⁴ But does a structure possess vitality in and of itself or is this structure rather an objective component in the capacity of a subject to undergo change?

Zubiri and his followers would presumably counter-argue here that reality itself evolves because of "the potentialities of reality that things have by virtue of their particularity".¹⁵ So Reality is not an unchanging essence or Platonic form which is forever both the same as and different from its external manifestations at any given moment. Reality is to be found first and foremost in a particular entity in its own right [*de suyo*] with its inbuilt potentialities.¹⁶ But this line of thought seems to lend itself to something like nominalism: the assertion that things are the way they are because in the end this is the way they are. Yet Zubiri also claims that "evolution relates to reality as such precisely in the form of determining the degrees of reality within it. The degrees of reality are not a series, a kind of scale of realities present in the universe; but they have a strictly dynamic character in which higher or lower forms of reality keep appearing. Both can happen. This is precisely becoming".¹⁷ Yet if reality admits of degrees so that some things are more real than

others, then something other than the things themselves in their particularity here and now would seem to be responsible for the existence of these degrees of reality. If, however, Reality is a foundational activity which achieves actuality only in and through the entities which it empowers to exist, then Reality does admit of degrees of instantiation even as it likewise serves as the underlying ontological principle (*raison d'être*) for change or becoming.

Zubiri also maintains that essences as dynamic principles for the self-constitution of an entity are self-giving.¹⁸ But does this imply a distinction between essence as that which makes an entity to be in its own right [*de suyo*] and essence as that which enables an entity to change into something else altogether? In a later chapter of *The Dynamic Structure of Reality*, for example, Zubiri claims:

Without a doubt, there is a difference to establish between what reality is as a substantive structure and what the structure is as a dynamism. The moment of primary cohesive unity constituting the formal essence and the reality *simpliciter* [without qualification] of all the substantivities that there are in the universe, that moment *in its own right* is not *formaliter* [formally] an active moment or a moment of activity...This does not hinder the notes of that reality from being active by themselves...Dynamism does not behave with respect to essence as a consequence with respect to its principles. Dynamism is nothing but essence giving of itself what it constitutively is.¹⁹

Thus Zubiri does seem to distinguish between essence as the objective structure of an entity's self-constitution and essence as a subjective principle of activity whereby one entity evolves into another entity of a different class or species. In my own view, however, structure as such has to do with objectivity, that which at least for the moment is fixed, rather than with subjectivity, that which is intrinsically dynamic and

thus open to progressive change. Zubiri seems to conflate the two.

In fairness to Zubiri, however, one should realize that in the view of Niklas Luhmann and other systems thinkers structure or system is “autopoietic,” capable of transformation into new forms of self-organization in virtue of its own properties and laws.²⁰ Even though “structural coupling,” as noted above, regularly takes place between separate systems, yet each system is still basically closed to external influences upon its own internal structure and operation. Thus in the thinking of systems theorists like Luhmann as well as in the work of Zubiri, there seems to be too little recognition of the basic difference between subjectivity and objectivity in the workings of Nature. The two notions are, of course, basically interdependent. Subjectivity cannot operate without reliance on objectivity in the form of pre-given structures that condition the mode of operation of subjects and the inevitable limits within which they can properly function. Yet, taken by itself, objectivity is simply a reflection of the *status quo*, the way things are right now. For a new form of objectivity to arise and have its effect on the capacity of existing things to evolve and in this way change form, the potentiality for evolution and change of form must also be present in the form of subjectivity within those same entities. As Teilhard de Chardin pointed out years ago in *The Phenomenon of Man*, there must be an “inside” as well as an “outside” to even the smallest entities such as a grain of sand.²¹ To ignore the need for subjectivity as the capacity for transformation within even a grain of sand is to miss how evolution has worked to produce over time structures of greater and greater objective complexity.

A more positive feature of Zubiri’s cosmological scheme which in my judgment also has affinities with the notion of system in the writings of Niklas Luhmann is his use of field imagery to describe the reality of things as apprehended by human beings in *sentient intellection*. In Part Two of his book *Sentient Intelligence*, Zubiri first defines what he means by

“field” as the “ambit” of reality: namely, the unity of things “insofar as all of them are *actually* in it, and therefore the field *encompasses* them”.²² Thus understood, the notion of field embraces both the way things are humanly perceived and in some sense the way that things are related to one another. From the perspective of the individual perceiver, a field can be subdivided into separate levels: namely, first level (what is for the perceiver the thing or things in the center of the field), background (what things are in the vicinity of this central thing or things for the perceiver), and periphery (what is to be found in the more extended ambit of the thing in question). Every perceptive field, accordingly, is bounded by a horizon “which does not pertain directly to the things apprehended; but it does pertain to them insofar as they are encompassed in my apprehension of them”.²³ Likewise, when something new is introduced into the observer’s perceptive field, the structure of the field changes; there is a change in first level, background and periphery of the perceptive field as a result of the introduction of new things into the field.²⁴

Important for a comparison with systems theory is what he says in the same chapter of *Sentient Intelligence* about the “field of reality,” the field-character of things in relation to one another. The “field of reality” is not constituted by the mere sum of the real things in the field but is the formal or constitutive unity of those things, “a unity which exceeds what each thing is individually”.²⁵ The field, accordingly, is “an opening toward others”²⁶ and expresses the “transcendentality” of each moment of reality, “that moment in virtue of which reality is open both to what each thing really is, to its ‘its-own-ness,’ and to what each thing is *qua* moment of the world”.²⁷ “The field as exceeding real things is the field of their transcendental respectivity [intrinsic relation to one another]. In this way, the field is a moment of physical character”.²⁸ It expresses the “supra-individual unity” of all the things in the field, the “ambit” of each and every thing in the field.²⁹ Strictly speaking, the

field is not empty space but spaciousness, that which makes any given space possible. That is, by their respectivity toward one another, real things generate their ambience or field-reality. The field, therefore, is not only more than each real thing but is *in* each real thing as its respectivity or intrinsic relationality toward other things.³⁰

From this starting-point in the field-character of reality, Zubiri proceeds to discuss the structure of the field of reality as “something given in the primordial apprehension of reality”.³¹ That is, “reality, such as it is given to us in impression, has different forms, one of which is the ‘toward’ by which reality inexorably leads us to other realities”.³² Elaborating on this “towardness” as a moment of reality, Zubiri explains:

This means that every thing *by virtue of being real* is in itself of field nature; every real thing constitutes a form of reality ‘toward’ another. . . . This is a structural and formal moment of the field; the field determines the reality of each thing as a reality “among” others. The “among” is grounded in the field nature and not the other way around; it is not the case that there is a field because there are some things situated among others, but rather some things are situated among others only because each and every one of them is in the field. And there is a field precisely and formally because the reality of each thing is formally of field nature. The “among” is not just a conglomeration; nor is it the mere relation of some things with others. Rather, it is a very precise structure, that of the actualization of one thing among others.³³

So nothing is actualized in isolation from others but only in conjunction with them. Yet every real thing in the field is still *de suyo*, something existing in its own right. “Prior to encompassing things, and in order to be able to encompass them, the field includes things in itself. And this inclusion is grounded in the field-nature char-

acteristic of each real thing *qua* real”.³⁴

Yet real things exist not only among others in the field of reality but also as a function of other things: “Each real thing in a field is actualized not just ‘among’ other things but also as a function of them. Position, so to speak, is proper to a thing ‘among’ others, but this is an ‘among’ in which each thing has the position it does as a function of the others and changes as a function of them”.³⁵ For example, “a real thing can change as a function of another real thing which has preceded it; this is pure succession. Succession is a type of functionality. The same must be said of something which is not successive but rather coexistent, namely, when one real thing coexists with another. Coexistence is now functionality”.³⁶ Similarly, real things necessarily exist outside of one another, and this “outside of one another” creates the “spaciousness” of things, their capacity for spatial relations vis-à-vis one another and as a result the functionality of spatial relations in the field of reality. “Functionality, then, is not a relation of some things with others, but it is a structural characteristic of the field itself *qua* field; some things depend upon others because all are included in a field which is intrinsically and formally a functional field. This means that every real thing, by virtue of its moment of field nature-ness, is functional reality”.³⁷ That is, each real thing determines its own function within the field by reason of its field-nature, that whereby it is necessarily included in the field and contributes to the overall structure of the field: “each thing determines the field-nature-ness, and therefore its own functionality. Field-nature reality itself is, *qua* reality, of a functional character”.³⁸

Functionality, however, is not to be confused with causality.³⁹ Causality is only one type of functionality and it is not automatically given with the perception of the real *qua* real. In our sense perception we only infer the existence of causality from the ordered succession of events but we perceive functionality immediately and in every instance “by the way in which

individual things are related to one another, in the way that they exist “toward” or “among” one another.⁴⁰ “Each thing is real in the field among other real things and as a function of them”.⁴¹ To sum up, in every “sentient intellection” in which there is a distinction between self and other, the knower and the thing known, reality is apprehended as an already structured field for the individual real things that either co-exist or succeed one another within the field. “Therefore, the field as a dimension of the actuality of the real is not a moment of the real beyond apprehension; but neither is it a subjective moment. It is a moment of the real as real in sentient intellection”.⁴² Yet here too there seems to be some ambiguity in what Zubiri is saying. Does the field-character of reality pertain to things apart from human cognition or only in conjunction with human sentient intellection of those same things? Zubiri claims that the field-character of reality is not something purely subjective, that is, something that may or may not be present in any given act of cognition, but is something invariably present in every human cognition. But is it then a transcendental structure of the human mind, a phenomenal and strictly epistemological reality? Or is it an ontological structure of the real *qua* real, quite apart from the workings of the human mind? For that matter, what is the nature of Reality apart from human apprehension of the real? Is the source of its alleged self-giving in human *sentient intellection* something beyond our human comprehension?

At this point we are in a position to compare and contrast Zubiri’s metaphysical scheme with the notion of system in the work of Niklas Luhmann. Where Zubiri’s scheme seems to run parallel with Luhmann’s is in the emphasis on structure and function in the “field of reality.” Essence for Zubiri, as noted above, is both the given-ness of an entity, its reality or *de suyo* character here and now, and the structural principle of the substantivity of an entity, its set of dynamically interrelated notes or characteristics as an entity

within the field of reality. The field functions as an organized whole with every real thing in the field having a position and a specific role to play in relation to the other things in the field. This understood, Zubiri’s description of the field of reality roughly corresponds to Luhmann’s notion of an autopoietic self-referential system.⁴³ But, whereas Luhmann thinks of a self-referential system as “one among many, a subsystem of a subsystem of a subsystem of society”,⁴⁴ the notion of the field of reality for Zubiri is unlimited in its scope, altogether different from the perceptual field of the individual human being which is limited by its own finite “ambit” or horizon. Is then the field of reality a transcendent entity akin to the notion of Being, everything that exists? If so, then Zubiri’s emphasis on the field-nature of reality and on substantivity as the intrinsic dynamic structure of physical entities is more closely aligned with the presuppositions of classical metaphysics than with strictly empirical self-referential systems for Luhmann. What Zubiri and Luhmann do have in common, however, is a renewed emphasis on system and function, the “how” of things rather than the “why” of things. Perhaps this is the best that one can do in terms of combining principles of Being and principles of Becoming within a single metaphysical scheme. But let us now see whether a suitably modified version of Whitehead’s cosmological scheme could offer an even better synthesis of principles of Being and principles of Becoming that would be able to incorporate at least some of Luhmann’s general systems theory into its own operational methodology and metaphysical presuppositions.

B. Whiteheadian societies as structured fields of activity

Whitehead, like Zubiri, was of the view that the notion of substance-quality in early modern Western philosophy conceived along the lines of the subject-predicate bifurcation in classical logic was mistaken and should be replaced by some-

thing more dynamic:

Descartes allowed the subject-predicate form of proposition, and the philosophical tradition derived from it, to dictate his subsequent metaphysical development. For his philosophy, 'actuality' meant to be a substance with inhering qualities. For the philosophy of organism [Whitehead's own metaphysics], the percipient occasion is its own standard of actuality. If in its knowledge other actual entities appear, it can only be because they conform to its standard of actuality. There can only be evidence of a world of actual entities, if the immediate actual entity discloses them as essential to its own composition.⁴⁵

For Whitehead, then, "[a]ctual entities"—also termed 'actual occasions'—are the final real things of which the world is made up.⁴⁶ These actual entities are not mini-things (like material atoms) but momentary self-constituting subjects of experience, equivalently spiritual atoms, which "prehend" or internalize all the previous actual entities in their world of experience and incorporate them into their individual self-constitutions here and now in terms of both the feeling-tone or energy of those past actual entities and their patterns of self-constitution. Every new actual entity is, accordingly, a microcosm of its entire past world but one shaped in terms of its own pattern of self-constitution here and now.⁴⁷

Likewise, very much like Zubiri, Whitehead claims that "it is not 'substance' which is permanent, but 'form.' Forms suffer changing relations; actual entities 'perpetually perish' subjectively, but are immortal objectively".⁴⁸ In similar fashion, Zubiri in *On Essence* claimed: "The essence of a living being is a structure. This is the reason why the structure is not an informing substantial form, because its notes co-determine each other mutually and because the structure is not a substance but substantivity".⁴⁹ So substantivity as understood by Zubiri has some analogy to a Whiteheadian actual

entity as a "superject," a completed actual entity with an objective structure, a fixed form or pattern of existence.⁵⁰ But actual entities are strictly momentary events, destined to be superseded by still other actual entities in their own process of self-constitution. So, while the notion of structure or pattern is just as important for Whitehead as for Zubiri, ongoing subjectivity in the form of newly concrescing actual entities is necessary for the perpetuation and transmission of that structure or form into the future. Unlike Zubiri, Whitehead does not believe that essence or structure is itself dynamic. Subjectivity is necessary for the structure inherited from past actual entities to be a factor in the new entity's process of self-realization. But this subjectivity is not that of a single substance, an unchanging thing, but that of an ongoing series of momentary subjects of experience with basically the same pattern or structure of self-constitution.

In *On Essence*, to be sure, Zubiri distinguishes between open and closed essences: "The structure of the closed essence is the principle 'whence' something is a fact; the open human essence is the principle 'whence' something is an event".⁵¹ Closed essences, in other words, actualize fixed potentialities within a material entity. Open essences, specifically the essence proper to fully self-conscious human beings, actualize contingent possibilities that have been consciously "accepted" or "approved".⁵² Certainly, the "eventual" character of an open (human) essence for Zubiri resembles higher-order actual entities for Whitehead which consciously distinguish between possibility and actuality in making their self-constituting decision. Likewise, Zubiri's notion of a closed essence has some resemblance to a lower-order actual entity for Whitehead which simply repeats the pattern of self-constitution proper to its predecessors. But the major difference between Zubiri's and Whitehead's schemes is that the essence or the internal constitution of an entity for Zubiri is a dynamic structure, whereas for Whitehead it is in the first place the subjectivity of an actual

entity and only afterwards a structure or pattern of existence proper to its reality as a “superject,” an objectified subject of experience.

Yet Whitehead may have overplayed the notion of an actual entity as a self-constituting subject of experience and underplayed, failed to develop, the notion of that same actual entity as a “superject,” something objectively “prehensible” by subsequent actual entities, above all, those actual entities in the same “society” or ongoing series of actual entities. Here Zubiri’s notion of “the field of reality” might be quite valuable in rethinking what Whitehead should have meant by “society” as a reality resembling an Aristotelian substance in its continuity and yet quite different from it in its internal constitution.⁵³ Furthermore, such a revised understanding of what Whitehead meant by society might have affinity with what Luhmann says about self-referential systems as the focus of his general systems theory. To make this clear, however, I will first summarize what Luhmann in *Social Systems* says about self-referential systems and their “autopoiesis,” and then explain how a Whiteheadian “society” could be reconceived as a stable structured field of activity for ongoing sets of constituent actual entities and thus as the equivalent of a self-referential system for Luhmann.

In the chapter entitled “System and Function” in his book *Social Systems*, Luhmann begins by noting that, while there are multiple types of real systems to be found in the world, his focus will be on self-referential systems: namely, “systems that have the ability to establish relations with themselves and to differentiate those relations from relations with their environment”.⁵⁴ Instead of employing the conventional distinction between parts and wholes in his analysis of self-referential systems, Luhmann thus distinguishes between systems and their environments with the consequence that relations between and among entities within the system are more important than their individual relations with entities in the

environment. As I will indicate below, such a definition of self-referential systems likewise seems to hold for Whiteheadian “societies” if they be considered as structured fields of activity for their constituent actual entities rather than simply as aggregates of individual actual entities with a similar pattern of self-constitution. Luhmann, to be sure, would be wary of this comparison because for him specifically social systems like those governing communities, organizations and environments are “nonpsychic”.⁵⁵ Their components are “elements” with objective relations to one another in virtue of the structure of the system;⁵⁶ they are not momentary subjects of experience with “internal” relations to one another.⁵⁷ Yet Luhmann also describes social systems as able to distinguish between themselves and their environment:

The theory of self-referential systems maintains that systems can differentiate only by self-reference, which is to say, only insofar as systems refer to themselves (be this to elements of the same system, to operations of the same system, or to the unity of the same system) in constituting their elements and their elemental operations. To make this possible, systems must create and employ a description of themselves; they must be able to use the difference between system and environment within themselves, for orientation and as a principle for creating information.⁵⁸

Yet can a self-referential system make such self-referential decisions without some form of subjectivity for the system as a whole or some kind of intersubjectivity operative between the elements in their objective relations to one another?

Luhmann clearly wants to remain objective in his analysis of the workings of systems. Hence, while in Luhmann’s view the concept of “subject” as used by Immanuel Kant and others should be replaced by the concept of self-referential systems,⁵⁹ the language of subjectivity is still present in his analysis of the workings

of self-referential systems: "A system's internal organization for making selective relations with the help of differentiated boundary mechanisms leads to systems' being indeterminable for one another and to the emergence of new systems (communication systems) to regulate this indeterminability.⁶⁰ Yet how does a system as a purely objective reality make "selective relations with the help of differentiated boundary mechanisms" without any form of internal self-awareness or subjectivity? Luhmann claims: "Selection can no longer be conceived as carried out by a subject, as analogous with action. It is a subject-less event, an operation that is triggered by establishing a difference".⁶¹ But then he adds: "Difference does not determine what must be selected, only that a selection must be made. Above all, the system/environment difference seems to be what obliges the system to force itself, through its own complexity, to make selections".⁶² Here too, the language of subjectivity is present: the objective system/environment difference "obliges the system to force itself...to make selections."

In his book *Luhmann Explained*, Hans Georg Moeller makes clear that Luhmann does not deny the de facto reality of human beings but only affirms that human beings exist on several levels at once (e.g., bodily, mentally, socially) and that these levels as autonomous self-referential systems do not make up an organic whole, a complete human being in the traditional sense.⁶³ Generalizing even further, Moeller argues: for Luhmann "[r]eality is not an all-embracing whole of many parts, it is rather a variety of self-producing systemic realities, each of which forms the environment of all the others. There is no common 'world' in reality, because reality is in each instance an effect of 'individual' systemic autopoiesis".⁶⁴ The term *autopoiesis* Luhmann consciously borrowed from Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela, two biologists from Chile who applied systems theory to the study of biological reproduction, the way in which living cells are from moment to moment the product of their own internal processes of

reproduction.⁶⁵

Granted the usefulness of general systems theory as a common methodology for objective analysis in various otherwise loosely related scientific disciplines, one may still question whether one is thereby presented with an adequate understanding of human nature and the world of Nature. Moreover, as Moeller comments in *Luhmann Explained*, the latter's understanding of systems theory as a "super-theory":⁶⁶ "does little outside of theory. With supertheory, the world does not become morally better, more rational, or spiritually complete. It only becomes more distinct".⁶⁷ So general systems theory with its passion for objectivity is an excellent tool for growth in knowledge but clearly inadequate for assisting human beings both as individuals and as members of society to live a better human life in greater harmony with the natural world. These latter goals would presumably be better attained by a world view or metaphysics with a starting-point in subjectivity or, even better, intersubjectivity as the basis for moral activity as well as philosophical reflection. Yet such a world view or metaphysics should also aspire to the same levels of objectivity as Luhmann's systems theory. Hence, in the concluding pages of this essay, I will briefly indicate how a Whiteheadian society when understood as a structured field of activity for its constituent actual entities generally corresponds to the need for objectivity in terms of systems theory and yet has its necessary grounding in the ongoing intersubjective relations of its constituent actual entities.

To begin, I repeat Luhmann's definition of self-referential systems, namely, "systems that have the ability to establish relations with themselves and to differentiate these relations from relations to their environments".⁶⁸ In my view, this definition of a self-referential system also seems to fit the notion of a Whiteheadian society when understood as a structured field of activity for its constituent actual entities from moment to moment. Whitehead himself, of course, did not describe a "society" as a structured field of activity. But in his

book *Process and Reality*, he says:

Every society must be considered with its background of a wider environment of actual entities, which also contribute their objectifications to which the members of the society must conform. . . . But this means that the environment, together with the society in question, must form a larger society in respect to some more general characteristics than those defining the society from which we started. Thus we arrive at the principle that every society requires a social background, of which it is itself a part.⁶⁹

One may surmise that the terms “environment” and “field of activity” are basically synonymous. Hence, the environment/field of activity is in each case structured by the patterns of self-organization of its constituent actual entities in their ongoing succession. “Thus in a society, the members can only exist by reason of the laws which dominate the society, and the laws only come into being by reason of the analogous characters of the members of the society”.⁷⁰

Where I differ from Whitehead on this point is that he seems to confuse the objective pattern of organization for the “society”/field of activity as a whole with what can be derived from comparing the individual patterns of self-constitution for each of its constituent actual entities. But this means that the “society”/field of activity has no objective reality, no pattern of organization proper to itself, which is distinct from its parts or members in their dynamic interrelation. It is reductively an aggregate of interrelated individual entities, not an objective, specifically social reality with its own pattern of existence and activity. Thus, for many years now, I have argued that the patterns proper to the self-constitution of individual actual entities are ultimately incorporated into the objective pattern for the field of activity as a whole.⁷¹ In this sense, my understanding of a Whiteheadian society corresponds closely to Luhmann’s understand-

ing of a system and its constitutive “elements”: “Elements are elements only for the system that employs them as units and they are such only through this system. This is formulated in the concept of autopoiesis”.⁷²

That is, just as in Luhmann’s understanding of systems and their elements, in my interpretation of Whiteheadian societies there is clear top-down causality from the objective pattern of organization of the society as a whole upon its constituent actual entities in their individual self-constitution from moment to moment. But whereas Luhmann, given his focus on objectivity, basically ignores the indispensable role of individual elements in the formation of a system’s governing structure, I agree here with Whitehead in his insistence that the source of this governing structure of a “society” comes from the interrelated activity of its constituent actual entities as self-constituting subjects of experience. Thus, whereas Whitehead in his understanding of a society focuses almost exclusively on the efficient causality of constituent actual entities in shaping their “common element of form” as a society,⁷³ and while Luhmann emphasizes the formal causality of the governing structure of the system in organizing its various elements, I choose the middle path in my claim that a Whiteheadian society and a self-referential system for Luhmann should be considered as constituted in equal measure by bottom-up efficient causality and top-down formal causality. In this way, there is a suitable combination of subjectivity and objectivity in producing the functional unity of either a Whiteheadian society or a self-referential system for Luhmann.

Still another feature of self-referential systems for Luhmann is to found in his notion of system differentiation: “System differentiation is nothing more than the repetition of system formation within systems. Further system/environment differences can be differentiated within systems. The entire system then acquires the function of an ‘internal environment’ for these subsystems, indeed for each subsystem in

its own specific way".⁷⁴ This can be usefully compared with Whitehead's notion of a "structured society," a society "which includes subordinate societies and nexuses with a definite pattern of structural interrelations. . . . A structured society as a whole provides a favorable environment for the subordinate societies which it harbours within itself. Also the whole society must be set in a wider environment permissive of its continuance".⁷⁵ Luhmann's notion of system differentiation and Whitehead's understanding of "structured societies," however, are brought into even closer conceptual alignment if one thinks of Whiteheadian societies and Luhmann's self-referential systems in terms of structured fields of activity for their constituent elements or constituent actual entities. A common field-metaphor, in other words, can unexpectedly bring together Whitehead's notion of "structured society," a society of subsocieties, and Luhmann's concept of systems within systems. Reality, in other words, is made up of fields within fields. Yet each field or system possesses its own internal unity and thus has an individual identity by reason of the structural principles proper to itself even as it contributes to the structure of fields of activity or systems more comprehensive than itself.

What is to be said, however, about an ultimate or inclusive field of activity? For Whitehead, this ultimate field of activity would seem to best correspond to the consequent nature of God, God's ongoing experience of the world as a whole in which "[t]he revolts of destructive evil are dismissed into their triviality of merely individual facts, and yet the good they did achieve in individual joy, in individual sorrow, in the introduction of needed contrast, is yet saved by its relation to the completed whole".⁷⁶ For me, as one who

believes in the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, the ultimate and all-inclusive field of activity is the Kingdom of God, the participation of all creaturely actual entities and the societies to which they belong in the divine field of activity, the communitarian life of the three divine persons.⁷⁷ But, as Moeller points out in *Luhmann explained*, for Luhmann the global society is not synonymous with a harmonious whole:

Global society is a complex multiplicity of subsystems, which are not integrated into an overarching global unity. Function systems [e.g., the natural and social sciences, economics, international politics] operate beyond geographical borders; in this sense they are universal. There is no geographical space where they cannot go, but at the same time they are all functionally particular. They are bound by their function, not by space. Global society consists of a plurality of systems that are both universal and particular.⁷⁸

So in the end Luhmann as a purely secular thinker with strong affinities for postmodernism and French deconstructionism stands apart from Xavier Zubiri, Alfred North Whitehead and myself. All three of us are metaphysicians with strong beliefs in the classical notion of *cosmos*, the unity of all things in an overarching world order dominated by belief in a transcendent God. Likewise, even though all three of us share with Luhmann an evolutionary approach to reality, we disagree that a functional systems-oriented approach to reality can more or less dispense with human subjectivity as necessary starting-point for explanation of how evolution works in the world of Nature.

Notes

- ¹ The text of this article is also being published in Spanish in the journal HUMANITAS, Año 40, Núm 40, Vol. 1, Enero-Diciembre 2013. This journal is from the Centro de Estudios Humanísticos, Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León, México.
- ² Heidegger, Martin, *Being and Time*. Translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson. New York: Harper & Row. 1962, pp. 67-77, 312-315.
- ³ *Ibid.*, pp. 71-75.
- ⁴ Moeller, Hans-Georg, *Luhmann Explained: From Souls to System*, Chicago: Open Court, 2006, p. 8.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-21.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 19.
- ⁷ Luhmann, Niklas, *Social Systems*. Translated by John Bednarz, Jr., with Dirk Baecker, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995, pp. 12-16.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 15.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 487-488.
- ¹⁰ Gilson, Etienne, *The Unity of Philosophical Experience*, Westminster, MD: Four Courts Press, 1982, p. 306.
- ¹¹ Zubiri, Xavier, *On Essence*. Translation and Introduction by A. Robert Caponigri. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America, 1980, pp. 408-429.
- ¹² Villa, Alfonso. "Xavier Zubiri: First Philosophy of the Real," *Theoforum* 40 (2009), pp. 36-37.
- ¹³ Zubiri, Xavier. *Sentient Intelligence*. Translated by Thomas B. Fowler. Washington, D.C.: The Xavier Zubiri Foundation of North America, 1999, p. 96.
- ¹⁴ Zubiri, Xavier. *Dynamic Structure of Reality*. Translated by Neson R. Orringer. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, p. 98.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁸ Zubiri, *Dyanamic Structure*, p. 97, 207.
- ¹⁹ Zubiri, *Dyanamic Structure*, p. 207.
- ²⁰ Luhmann, *op. cit.*, p. 34.
- ²¹ Teilhard de Chardin. *The Phenomenon of Man*. Translated by Bernard Wall. New York; Harper & Row, 1965, p. 59.
- ²² Zubiri, *Sentient Intelligence*, *op. cit.*, p. 22.
- ²³ Zubiri, *Sentient Intelligence*, *op. cit.*, p. 23.
- ²⁴ Zubiri, *Sentient Intelligence*, *op. cit.*, p. 24.
- ²⁵ Zubiri, *Sentient Intelligence*, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
- ²⁶ Zubiri, *Sentient Intelligence*, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
- ²⁷ Zubiri, *Sentient Intelligence*, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
- ²⁸ Zubiri, *Sentient Intelligence*, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
- ²⁹ Zubiri, *Sentient Intelligence*, *op. cit.*, p. 29-30.
- ³⁰ Zubiri, *Sentient Intelligence*, *op. cit.*, p. 31.
- ³¹ Zubiri, *Sentient Intelligence*, *op. cit.*, p. 33)
- ³² Zubiri, *Sentient Intelligence*, *op. cit.*, p. 33.
- ³³ Zubiri, *Sentient Intelligence*, *op. cit.*, p. 34.
- ³⁴ Zubiri, *Sentient Intelligence*, *op. cit.*, p. 35.
- ³⁵ Zubiri, *Sentient Intelligence*, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
- ³⁶ Zubiri, *Sentient Intelligence*, *op. cit.*, p. 36-37.
- ³⁷ Zubiri, *Sentient Intelligence*, *op. cit.*, p. 38.
- ³⁸ Zubiri, *Sentient Intelligence*, *op. cit.*, p. 38.
- ³⁹ Fowler, Thomas B. "Zubiri and Science," *Theoforum* 40, 2009, p. 110-114.
- ⁴⁰ Zubiri, *Sentient Intelligence*, *op. cit.*, p. 40-41.
- ⁴¹ Zubiri, *Sentient Intelligence*, *op. cit.*, p. 42.
- ⁴² Zubiri, *Sentient Intelligence*, *op. cit.*, p. 42.
- ⁴³ Luhmann, *op. cit.*, p. 483-488.
- ⁴⁴ Luhmann, *op. cit.*, p. 487.
- ⁴⁵ Whitehead, Alfred North. *Process and Reality*. Corrected Edition. Edited by David Ray Griffin and Donald W. Sherburne. New York: Free Press, 1978, p. 145.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 18.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 47-48.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 29.
- ⁴⁹ Zubiri, *On Essence*, *op. cit.*, p. 454.
- ⁵⁰ Whitehead, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
- ⁵¹ Zubiri, *On Essence*, *op. cit.*, p. 457.
- ⁵² Zubiri, *On Essence*, *op. cit.*, p. 456.
- ⁵³ Whitehead, *op. cit.*, p. 204.
- ⁵⁴ Luhmann, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
- ⁵⁵ Luhmann, *op. cit.*, p. 14.
- ⁵⁶ Luhmann, *op. cit.*, p. 20-23.
- ⁵⁷ Whitehead, *op. cit.*, p. 58-59.
- ⁵⁸ Luhmann, *op. cit.*, p. 9.
- ⁵⁹ Luhmann, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

⁶⁰ Luhmann, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

⁶¹ Luhmann, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

⁶² Luhmann, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

⁶³ Moeller, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

⁶⁴ Moeller, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

⁶⁵ Moeller, *op. cit.*, p. 12-13.

⁶⁶ Luhmann, *op. cit.*, p. 4-5.

⁶⁷ Moeller, *op. cit.*, p. 201.

⁶⁸ Luhmann, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

⁶⁹ Whitehead 1978, 90.

⁷⁰ Whitehead 1978, 91.

⁷¹ See, e.g., Bracken, *Society and Spirit: A Trinitarian Cosmology* (Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press, 1991), 43-49; *The Divine Matrix: Creativity as Link between East and West* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1995-1996), 60-61; *The One in the Many; A Contemporary Reconstruction of the God-World*

Relationship (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001), 134-135; *Subjectivity, Objectivity and Intersubjectivity: A New Paradigm for Religion and Science* (West Conshohocken, PA: Templeton Foundation Press, 2009), 133-134; *Does God Roll Dice?: Divine Providence for a World in the Making* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2012).

⁷² Luhmann, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

⁷³ Whitehead 1978, 34.

⁷⁴ Luhmann, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

⁷⁵ Whitehead 1978, 99.

⁷⁶ Whitehead 1978, 346.

⁷⁷ Bracken, Joseph A. *Christianity and Process Thought: Spirituality for a Changing World*. Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press, 2006, pp. 8-10, 53-56.

⁷⁸ Moeller, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

Introducción a la lectura del texto *El hombre y Dios* de Xavier Zubiri

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Abstract

Man and God by Xavier Zubiri is a book that must have a place of honor place in the history of philosophy. But just what does “and” mean in its title: *Man and God*? The main thrust of the book is to decipher the meaning of the word “and”. Understanding this book necessarily takes our research back to the *very root* of “human existence”. In this paper, I present a simple way of clarification: to point out Zubiri’s position regarding some key issues in Heidegger that function as a starting point for the reading of this book. This is accomplished in three brief studies: I. The problem of the word “and”. II. On “*Erschlossenheit*”. III. From “*Geworfeinheit*” to “religation”.

Resumen

El hombre y Dios de Xavier Zubiri es una obra que por derecho propio ha de ocupar un sitio en la historia de la filosofía. ¿Qué significa esta “y” del título del texto *El hombre y Dios*? Toda la *clave* del libro *radica* en descifrar qué sentido tiene esa “y”. Acceder, pues, al texto *El hombre y Dios*, implica *forzosamente* retrotraer nuestra investigación a la *raíz misma* de la “existencia humana”. Pretendo presentar una humilde vía de esclarecimiento. Mostrando la postura de Zubiri frente a Heidegger en ciertos puntos que considero capitales como “puerto” de acceso a la lectura de *El hombre y Dios*. Por tanto, llevaré a cabo esta investigación en tres breves navegaciones: I. El problema de la “y”. II. Sobre la “*Erschlossenheit*”. III. De la “*Geworfeinheit*” a la “religación”.

Introducción

Xavier Zubiri, nació en San Sebastián el 4 de diciembre de 1898. Cercano ya a los 85 años, estaba en plena producción filosófica, a punto de terminar un libro sobre Dios, cuando repentinamente muere el 21 de septiembre de 1983.¹ La humanidad pierde irremediamente uno de los filósofos más importantes del siglo XX. Zubiri fue discípulo de Ortega y Gasset, de Husserl y de Heidegger y además un profundo conocedor de todas las ciencias y lenguas orientales e historia antigua. Poco

más de un año después de su muerte, somos testigos de un extraordinario, genial y estremecedor libro. Es el primero de los libros póstumos de Zubiri, *El hombre y Dios*.²

I. El problema de la “y”

Su más cercano amigo, colaborador y discípulo, Ignacio Ellacuría, estuvo a cargo de la preparación del texto para su publicación. Es un libro de Zubiri desde el principio hasta el fin, sometido tan sólo a un levisimo arreglo redaccional.³ *El hombre y Dios*, es un texto apasionante. Es

una obra que por derecho propio ha de ocupar, sin duda alguna, un sitio en la historia de la filosofía. Cada una de sus líneas, con sus 383 páginas, posee una riqueza filosófica desbordante. Sin embargo, su *contenido* plantea enormes problemas. Es un libro muy difícil de comprender y de analizar. Introducirse en la filosofía de Xavier Zubiri es todo un desafío intelectual y una aventura espiritual. *Máxime* si se trata de un problema que ocupó la mente de Zubiri por más de seis décadas.

i) En líneas muy amplias el esquema del libro *El hombre y Dios* se articula en sus tres momentos o partes. I^a *La realidad humana*. II^a *La realidad divina*. III^a *El hombre, experiencia de Dios*. En la Primera Parte, Zubiri busca determinar qué es ser hombre y cómo se es hombre. En la Segunda Parte, Zubiri necesita ver que lo que ha encontrado en su búsqueda es Dios. En la Tercera Parte, Zubiri desde el planteamiento de lo que es el hombre y de lo que es Dios nos lleva a discutir el problema de Dios “y” el hombre. Estas tres partes están articuladas por una *bisagra* que requiere nuestra atención.

ii) Quiero dejar consignado que Zubiri comentaba a Jorge Eduardo Rivera Cruchaga que el libro, *El hombre y Dios*, estaba ya en líneas generales listo en 1972.⁴ Pero; no es de extrañar, de parte de Zubiri, las minuciosas revisiones que padecería este libro en más de una década. Es importante destacar, además, tres puntos centrales, que corresponden respectivamente a las tres partes del libro, y que debe tener presente todo lector al introducirse en la lectura de *El hombre y Dios*. Muchos comentaristas pasan de largo las advertencias de Ignacio Ellacuría en la “Presentación” (HD, i-x., 24 de marzo de 1984). De no observar bien este punto, esto puede levantar, sin lugar a dudas, una enorme ola de inadecuadas interpretaciones del texto. Esta presentación es muy importante, pues, en ella quedan indicadas las Tres Partes del libro. La Primera Parte: iniciada y concluida en la primavera y verano de 1983. La Segunda

Parte: realizada de regreso de Roma, a finales de 1973 y casi todo el año 1974, incluso principios de 1975. La tercera Parte: sería la transcripción del curso de Roma explicado en el otoño de 1973. Desde esta interesante perspectiva preguntémonos: ¿No cabría la posibilidad de acceder a toda la “obra zubiriana” desde esta Primera Parte finalizada ya en el verano de 1983?

iii) He de advertir que mi esquema no es exactamente el que sigue Zubiri, sino que se aparta ligeramente de éste. La razón de ello es el deseo de simplificar el acceso a este libro, ya de suyo muy difícil de leer. Empero -y estoy consciente de ello y el lector lo advertirá inmediatamente- hay temas que desbordan considerablemente el propósito de esta breve investigación.

Así pues, desde el capítulo primero que versa sobre el hombre brota inexorablemente el capítulo segundo, que trata sobre Dios, hasta el florecimiento del capítulo tercero, el hombre “y” Dios. Y, en este sentido, este esquema refleja lo abordado en el texto *El hombre y Dios* de Xavier Zubiri, esto es, “*El hombre*”, “*Dios*”, “*y*”. ¿Qué significa esta “y” del título del texto *El hombre y Dios*? Esta es la pregunta axial de esta investigación. ¿En qué consiste esa “y” con que decimos el hombre “y” Dios”? Toda la *clave* del libro *radica* en descifrar qué sentido tiene esa “y”. En una frase apretada y muy difícil de dilucidar, dice Zubiri en la Introducción: “La ‘y’ del hombre y Dios es una versión *constitutiva* experiencial”.⁵ ¿Qué significa esta “y”? ¿Qué significa que sea una “versión *constitutiva* experiencial”?

Grosso modo, el problema de la “y” del hombre y Dios es el más alambicado problema filosófico que Zubiri tiene en sus manos. La “y” es “abertura” a algo “más”. Zubiri quiere desentrañar esta “versión *constitutiva* experiencial” en la realidad en “*hacia*”.⁶ (Permítaseme, una breve “fórmula”: El hombre “y” Dios = El hombre “*hacia*” Dios. Este punto lo he tratado en otro lugar, sólo lo dejo consignado aquí, indicando que hay un grave problema en esta

“y”, para una posterior “revisión”). Sigamos, pues, navegando en dos puntos esenciales: A) El problema filosófico de Dios. B) La “existencia humana”.

A. El problema filosófico de Dios

El problema filosófico de Dios, fue una permanente preocupación de Zubiri ya desde los años de Bachillerato, hasta los últimos días de su vida. Pues bien, acceder al texto *El hombre y Dios*, implica *forzosamente* retrotraer nuestra investigación a la raíz misma de la “existencia humana”.⁷ ¿Qué quiere decir aquí “existencia humana”? ¿En qué sentido hay que concebirla? ¿Acaso ésta existencia humana “coincide” con lo que dice Zubiri en *El hombre y Dios*: la realidad humana? No voy a entrar a desentrañar todo el problema de la existencia humana. Sólo quiero indicar el ordo del problema de Dios en un primer artículo de Zubiri.

“*En torno al problema de Dios*”,⁸ artículo publicado en la *Revista de Occidente* 149 (1935) 129-159., constituye la primera formulación del problema de la *religación*, y, que junto a otros artículos apareció ya recopilado.⁹ Este texto fue corregido y ampliado en Roma por Zubiri en marzo de 1936, que es el que definitivamente apareció en *Naturaleza, Historia, Dios* (NHD, 417-454). Es un hermoso, conciso y profundo ensayo que constituye la primera formulación del concepto de “*religación*”, en el cual se inscribe el problema religioso y, sobre todo, la posibilidad del ateísmo. Zubiri, dicho sea de paso, está viviendo situaciones dramáticas en torno a la fe, la religión y Dios.

“La *religación* -nos dice- *religatum* es- se, *religio*, *religión* en sentido primario -es una dimensión formalmente constitutiva de la existencia”.¹⁰ En otras palabras, el problema de Dios está inscrito en la constitutiva y ontológica *religación* de la existencia.¹¹ ¿Qué significa esto de que la “*religación*” es una dimensión formalmente constitutiva de la existencia? ¿Es el ateísmo un modo de estar “des-ligado”? El tema de Dios, pues, el problema filosófico de

Dios en Zubiri lleva un largo camino de elaboración.¹²

B. La “existencia humana”

Forzosamente, he tenido que embarcarme en este ensayo, *pues*, la lectura del texto *El hombre y Dios* se torna inaccesible e intolerable, justamente, al ingresar a la Segunda Parte, *La realidad divina*. Porque, esta obra no está con la figura que Zubiri hubiera querido presentarla al mundo filosófico. En efecto, al principio, incluso el mejor deseo tropieza con insospechadas dificultades y se encuentra con sorpresas impensadas. Sin embargo, este ensayo de 1935 es el “umbral” necesario para iniciar la navegación en *El hombre y Dios*. Teniendo presente que hay una distancia de más de cuatro décadas de este ensayo en relación al primer texto póstumo.

En su estancia en Roma, se le pidió a Zubiri autorización para una versión francesa en *Recherches Philosophiques*. Introdujo para ello algunas leves modificaciones de detalle, especialmente en el acápite IV. Así, la forma definitiva la alcanzo en marzo de 1936¹³. A pesar de las modificaciones que sufrió el texto base que apareció en *Naturaleza, Historia, Dios*, el texto base de 1935 es lejos definitivamente mucho más inteligible que su posterior modificación de 1936.

Así, “*En torno al problema de Dios*” (1935), en esta breve investigación posibilita el más accesible “puerto” desde donde desplegaremos velas y elevaremos ancla con el concepto de “*religación*”, con el fin de navegar *hasta* la forma que alcanzó su “reformulación” definitiva,¹⁴ en su libro póstumo *El hombre y Dios*.

Zubiri realiza un análisis de lo que él llama la “existencia humana”. En el ensayo: “*En torno al problema de Dios*” (1935), señalaba: “...la posibilidad filosófica del problema de Dios consistirá en descubrir la dimensión humana dentro de la cual *ha* de plantearse (...) La existencia humana, se nos dice, es tal que consiste en *encontrarse* entre las cosas y, *cuidándose* de

ellas y arrastrada por ellas, hacerse a sí misma".¹⁵

Y años después en el artículo: "*Introducción al problema de Dios*" (1963), Zubiri hace una expresa referencia a la existencia humana, como punto de partida del problema de Dios: "Es menester -nos decir- partir de un análisis de la existencia humana".¹⁶ Recoge, sin duda, ideas heideggerianas,¹⁷ pero no se queda en ellas reposando, sino que radicaliza más su pensamiento, desentrañando penosa y lentamente el concepto de "*religación*". Aquí Zubiri se propone *anclar*, como diría Martínez¹⁸, el problema de Dios en la entraña, en la raíz misma del existir humano.

Zubiri, tiene presente en su reflexión la estructura de la "*Geworfenheit*", que literalmente significa el "estar arrojado".

Sin embargo, pienso que no es sólo ésta estructura heideggeriana la que está presente en Zubiri y la única que tenía *in mente* en su ensayo "*En torno al problema de Dios*" (1935). Hay otras estructuras que juegan, tal vez, en mayor o menor medida, un papel más importante que la "*Geworfenheit*".

Zubiri establece claramente, y, dicho sea de paso, dos direcciones en torno al problema de Dios. De un lado, en la dirección de la sistematización del problema de Dios. De otro lado, el momento estructural del hombre, es decir, la dimensión teológica.¹⁹

Con lo anterior es suficiente para dejar enmarcado globalmente el problema del hombre y Dios. Pasemos, pues, a nuestro segundo apartado.

II. Sobre la "*Erschlossenheit*"

Heidegger en *Ser y tiempo* en el § 28 habla de una "*Erschlossenheit*", "apertura". "*Das Dasein ist seine Erschlossenheit*",²⁰ "El Dasein es su apertura",²¹ ¿Qué es esta "*Erschlossenheit*"? La palabra que en alemán es "*Erschlossenheit*", significa *el hecho de que el Dasein, está abierto*, entiéndase: abierto al mundo, abierto a sí mismo, abierto a los demás Dasein y, *maxime*, abierto al ser.²² Es un abrir radical en que consiste el ser del

"*Dasein*". La existencia está abierta a sí misma y lo está en y por sí misma. Esto es, la "apertura" forma parte de la existencia en cuanto tal.

Esta "*Erschlossenheit*" está constituida básicamente por la "disposición afectiva", "*Befindlichkeit*" y el "comprender", "*Verstehen*", articulados ambos por medio del "discurso", por medio de la "*Rede*". ¿Qué es eso de "*Befindlichkeit*"? ¿Qué es eso de "*Verstehen*"?

Veamos más de cerca esta "disposición afectiva" y el "comprender".

A) "*Befindlichkeit*".

"*Befindlichkeit*", "disposición afectiva". Es la condición según la cual el "*Dasein*" siempre se encuentra en algún "estado afectivo", "estado de ánimo". El *Dasein* se encuentra, se siente consigo mismo en sus *estados de ánimo*. Tengo una manera de estar dispuesto en mis estados de ánimo. No es una intelección intelectual, teórica, sino un estar abierto al ser de las cosas, a las demás personas, a mi mismo, por ejemplo, cuando percibo la inocencia de mi sobrino de once meses. Sólo lo siento en un determinado sentimiento. Aquí el sentimiento descubre la inocencia. La "*Befindlichkeit*" me abre al *pasado*, yo ya estoy instalado en una situación particular. "*Die Befindlichkeit erschließt das Dasein in seiner Geworfenheit*". "*La disposición afectiva abre al Dasein en su condición de arrojado*".²³ ¿Qué es esta "condición de arrojado"? Más adelante veremos este punto.

Cuando hay un sentimiento ya estoy en una situación determinada y, desde ahí me abro. Expresaba San Buenaventura en el "*Itinerarium mentis in Deum*": "*magis exercitatio affectus quam eruditio intellectus*".²⁴

En este sentido va a decir Zubiri: "El hombre no puede *sentirse* más que religado o bien desligado".²⁵ Así, la posibilidad del ateísmo se abrocha en esta posibilidad de la *Befindlichkeit*, de sentirse "desligado". "La existencia que se siente desligada es una existencia *atea*".²⁶ Heidegger

indica en *Ser y tiempo*, que el “*Dasein*” está abierto a su propio ser, pero al mismo tiempo lo encubre, lo distorsiona. “Al *Dasein* existente le pertenece el ser-cada-vez-mío como condición de posibilidad de la propiedad e impropiidad. El *Dasein* existe siempre en uno de estos modos o en la indiferencia modal de ellos”.²⁷ Es interesante que Zubiri sostenga en la Segunda Parte de *El hombre y Dios*, que, ante Dios, además, de teísmo, ateísmo, agnosticismo, hay también, “*in-diferencia*”.²⁸ La “*Befindlichkeit*” abre al hombre en su “*Geworfenheit*”.

Desde Heidegger y más allá de Heidegger podríamos preguntarnos: ¿La *Befindlichkeit* abre al hombre “positivamente” en su “ser” “religado” y “cierra” negativamente su ser al “sentirse” “desligado”? Por lo pronto, esta cuestión desborda plenamente lo expuesto.

Pues bien, la *Befindlichkeit*, está entretrejida con el “*Verstehen*”. Este último, no es un comprender teórico, sino un comprender vital de sí mismo.

Zubiri va a cambiar esta postura de la *Befindlichkeit*, de “sentirse” religado o desligado. Hay un notable progreso de su pensamiento en *El hombre y Dios*. La religación ya no está inscrita en un puro sentimiento, sino que la religación es esencialmente el acontecer del problematismo de la fundamentalidad. Estoy “afectado”, por ejemplo, porque *previamente* “ya” estoy en la realidad.

Es decir, la religación no es un sentimiento de dependencia incondicional. Porque todo sentimiento tiene un momento intrínseco y formal de realidad. Hay afección. En el sentimiento el hombre está afectado. Esta afección es un modo de estar en la realidad., “...para que haya un sentimiento de dependencia tiene que actualizarse el momento de realidad como algo a lo que estoy ligado, como algo anterior al sentimiento mismo (...) Toda dependencia incondicional presupone una realidad relativamente absoluta. Es decir, presupone la religación”.²⁹ “La religación no es mera vinculación ni es un sentimiento de dependencia sino la versión constituti-

va y formal al poder de lo real como fundamento de mi vida personal”.³⁰ Pasemos, pues, a nuestro segundo aspecto. ¿Qué se entiende, en líneas más amplias, por “*Verstehen*”?

B) “*Verstehen*”.

“*Verstehen*”, “comprender”. ¿Puede ser entendido “*verstehen*”, “comprender”, en un sentido teórico? Nada más alejado de lo que Heidegger quiere decir. No es una comprensión teórica. “Con el término comprender - dice Heidegger- nos referimos a un existencial fundamental, y no una determinada especie de conocimiento, diferente, por ejemplo, del explicar y del concebir, ni en general, a un conocer en el sentido de aprehensión temática”.³¹ El “*Verstehen*”, heideggeriano es estrictamente un *comprender de sí mismo*, me abro a mi mismo, a las cosas, a los otros hombres, en última instancia al ser. Esa abertura a mi ser, de mi mismo, es cuando, de algún modo, comprendo mi situación, desde la situación en la que *ya* estoy, por ejemplo, estoy leyendo. El ser se abre al futuro. En ese sentido la “*Befindlichkeit*” es el pasado. Porque precisamente me encuentro *ya* en un determinado estado de ánimo, y desde ahí me abro a las posibilidades futuras de mí ser. Hay un pasado radical. En cambio, en el “*Verstehen*” me encuentro abierto al futuro. “Concebido -señala Heidegger- en forma existencial originaria, el comprender es el proyectante estar vuelto hacia un poder-ser por mor del cual el *Dasein* existe cada vez. El comprender abre el poder-ser de cada *Dasein* (cf. §31, p.166 ss), de tal manera, que, comprendiendo, el *Dasein* sabe cada vez, de algún modo, qué pasa con él”.³²

“*Verstehen*” es futuro. En otras palabras, la vida del ser humano es un “quehacer”. Es un hacer que hay que hacerlo, y eso es mi existencia. Cuando estoy haciendo algo en mi vida aparece el futuro. La palabra “quehacer” tiene una riqueza innegable en castellano. En Ortega leemos: “De toda circunstancia, aun la

extrema, cabe evasión. De lo que no cabe evasión es de tener que hacer algo y, sobre todo, de tener que hacer lo que, a la postre, es más penoso: elegir, preferir. ¿Cuántas veces no se ha dicho uno que preferiría no preferir? De donde resulta que lo que me es dado cuando me es dada la vida no es sino quehacer. La vida, bien lo sabemos todos, la vida da mucho que hacer. Y lo más grave es conseguir que el hacer elegido en cada caso sea *no uno cualquiera*, sino lo que hay que hacer -aquí y ahora-, que sea nuestra verdadera vocación, nuestro auténtico quehacer”.³³

En el ensayo “*En torno al problema de Dios*”(1935) casi al final del acápite II, leemos: “El hombre al estar abierto a las cosas, va *hacia* ellas y las encuentra. Al estar religado el hombre viene *desde* Dios y está ya en Él”.³⁴ ¿Qué es esto de que el hombre está “abierto” a las cosas? ¿En qué sentido va “hacia” ellas?

En primer lugar, vemos el papel implícito de la “*Erschlossenheit*”, “apertura”. El hecho, de que *el hombre está abierto a las cosas*. Es decir, su ser está abierto.

En segundo lugar, observamos en el pasaje ya “incoado” el “*hacia*”, estructura zubiriana absolutamente capital y tan recurrente en *El hombre y Dios*. Este “*hacia*” va a ir cobrando un volumen enorme – y al mismo tiempo imperceptible– al interior de *El hombre y Dios*. Esto detonará más adelante que Zubiri afirme que: “...nos encontramos lanzados del hombre a Dios...”.³⁵ Para enmarcar esto de mejor manera véase un par de textos: “La realidad de Dios es por lo pronto una realidad en el modo de ‘*hacia*’”.³⁶ “En esta dimensión de apertura religada, el hombre está lanzado desde el poder de lo real ‘*hacia*’ aquello en que éste se funda, *hacia Dios*”.³⁷

En tercer lugar, aparece la “disposición afectiva”, “*Befindlichkeit*”, y el comprender, “*Verstehen*”. En efecto, repasemos nuevamente el pasaje: “El hombre al estar abierto a las cosas, va hacia ellas y las encuentra. Al estar religado el hombre viene desde Dios y está ya en Él”.³⁸ En

Heidegger vemos un pasaje clave: “El comprender se funda primariamente en el futuro; en cambio, la *disposición afectiva* se temporiza primariamente en el haber-sido”.³⁹

Zubiri en *El hombre y Dios*, al sostener que el hombre es constitutivamente una esencia formalmente abierta a su propio carácter de realidad,⁴⁰ sin duda, tiene *in mente* el ensayo “*En torno al problema de Dios*” (1935). Zubiri fue discípulo de Heidegger por los años 30. Zubiri parte de la situación abierta por Heidegger, pero va más allá de Heidegger. Declaraba Zubiri: “...se ha visto que el ser del sujeto consiste *formalmente*, en una de sus dimensiones, en estar ‘abierto’ a las cosas”.⁴¹

No hay duda, sobre la referencia implícita a la “*Erschlossenheit*” de Heidegger. Zubiri está haciendo mención permanentemente a nociones heideggerianas. En efecto, “no es que el sujeto exista y ‘además’ haya cosas, sino que el ser sujeto consiste en estar abierto a las cosas”.⁴²

Pero, Zubiri reprocha a Heidegger la insuficiencia de su análisis, pues, siempre hay “algo” *más*. “Además de cosas ‘hay’ también lo que hace que haya”.⁴³ En esta época el “hay” ocupa el lugar de la *realidad*.

Para Zubiri lo *radical* no es la propia existencia. Lo radical no es un hecho entre otros, sino algo previo a todo hecho, esto es: la realidad misma. Y esta realidad inexorablemente se me hace presente no en un comprender existencial, sino en un acto fundamental de la propia realidad humana, *el sentir*.

Zubiri abrirá una vía más radical que Heidegger: “Es de Heidegger -nos decía- la tesis de que *das Dasein*, la existencia humana tiene una *Erschlossenheit*, está abierta a sí misma y a las cosas por algo que es *Seinsverständnis*, la comprensión del ser [cf. *SuT* §18 y §31] (...) Pero ¿es verdad que el hombre está abierto a las cosas primariamente por comprensión? Toda comprensión es un acto de inteligencia -Heidegger no emplea este vocabulario, pero no importa para el caso-. De esto no hay duda ninguna. Pero no es ese el acto

elemental y radical de la inteligencia, que primariamente no aprehende la realidad por vía de comprensión sino en un sentir del que la inteligencia es intelección intrínseca y que la convierte, por consiguiente, en inteligencia sentiente”.⁴⁴ Teniendo presente estos breves pasajes se entiende que Zubiri en *El hombre y Dios*, exprese que: “...por ser una realidad sustantiva dotada de inteligencia, el hombre es constitutivamente una esencia formalmente abierta a su propio carácter de realidad. (...) la esencia abierta está formalmente religada”.⁴⁵ Su apertura es, en consecuencia, una “apertura religada”.⁴⁶ Así, vemos que, gracias a la atenta mirada que Zubiri puso en la “*Erschlossenheit*”, radicaliza el acto elemental y radical de la inteligencia. Que primariamente no aprehende la realidad por vía de comprensión, sino en un sentir intelectual o inteligencia sentiente. Observa Zubiri en un pasaje iluminador, “Y así como el estar abierto a las cosas nos descubre, en este su estar abierto, que ‘hay’ cosas, así también el estar religado nos descubre que ‘hay’ lo que religa, lo que constituye la raíz fundamental de la existencia”.⁴⁷

A “eso” que “hay” y que religa Zubiri lo llama: “Dios”, es decir, “aquello a que estamos religados en nuestro ser entero”.⁴⁸ Zubiri pasa muy rápido a la identificación con Dios. Cosa que no sucederá en *El hombre y Dios*. El camino será mucho más largo, penoso y complejo. ¿Qué es esto de estar religados “en” nuestro ser entero”? ¿Qué alcance tiene este “en”? Pues bien, lo que me ocupa *a radice* es indicar la cercanía por estos años entre Zubiri y Heidegger y que lo podemos constatar con más claridad al seguir navegando, en la “*Geworfenheit*”.

III. De la “*Geworfenheit*” a la “religación”

La “*Geworfenheit*” ha sido considerada⁴⁹ el “umbral” desde dónde arranca la compleja idea de la “religación”. El concepto de la “religación” no florece sólo y exclusivamente de la “*Geworfenheit*”.⁵⁰ Pero sí es su detonante fundamental. Ya hemos

visto la insuficiencia de la existencia humana como “*Erschlossenheit*”, y como irrumpe esta idea del *sentir intelectual*. En el sentido que el hombre primariamente no aprehende la realidad por vía de comprensión, sino en un sentir intelectual. Para Zubiri el hecho radical no es el lenguaje, pero tampoco la propia existencia. Lo radical para Zubiri no es un hecho entre otros, sino algo *previo* a todo hecho, esto es: *la realidad*. Y esta *realidad* se hace presente en nosotros no en un “comprender existencial”, sino en un acto fundamental de la propia realidad humana: *el sentir*. (Analizar minuciosamente cada una de las articulaciones de toda esta teoría de la inteligencia sentiente⁵¹ es una tarea titánica que muy bien lo están haciendo los comentaristas y discípulos de Zubiri).

i) Volvamos a la “*Geworfenheit*” y su repercusión en Zubiri. Demos algunos pasos que configuren de mejor manera lo que quiero con más precisión indicar.

Leemos en el ensayo de 1935: “...el fenómeno de ‘estar arrojado’ que otros a que voy a referirme, no pueden adquirirse sino en el análisis mismo de la existencia. Todo el sentido de lo que va a seguir consiste en tratar de hacer ver que no está descrita la existencia humana con suficiente precisión....”.⁵²

“La existencia humana, pues, -dice Zubiri- no está solamente *arrojada* entre las cosas, sino *religada* por su raíz”.⁵³ Este es el texto axial de este apartado. ¿Qué significa que la existencia humana no está “solamente” *arrojada* sino que está “religada” por su raíz? ¿De qué raíz se trata?

Vemos, ante todo, que la “*Geworfenheit*” está íntimamente inscrita en Zubiri. “La existencia humana está *arrojada* entre las cosas, y en este arrojamiento cobra ella el arrojado de existir”.⁵⁴

Martínez de Pisón, nos decía: “La clave Zubiriana para abordar el problema de Dios se encuentra en la religación del hombre al *poder de lo real*. ‘La existencia humana, pues, no solamente está *arrojada*

entre las cosas, sino religada por su raíz` (NHD, 373). Esta es la posición de Zubiri como contraposición, o complemento, al *ser arrojado* heideggeriano.⁵⁵

ii) Al carácter fáctico del existir humano Heidegger lo llama el “*estar arrojado*”, “*Geworfenheit*”. Rivera hablando sobre la facticidad y su articulación con la religación, nos dice: “La facticidad no es un mero *factum*, sino una estructura de ser, y como tal tiene una función positiva en la constitución de ser del Dasein. Heidegger no ha explotado plenamente este aspecto positivo de la facticidad. En cambio, sí lo ha hecho Zubiri, para quien en la estructura del ‘tener que’ se manifiesta una ligazón al ser (o a la realidad) que Zubiri llama ‘religación’, y que es el fundamento que nos lanza a la búsqueda de esa realidad enigmática que llamamos Dios. (...) Al carácter fáctico del existir humano Heidegger lo llama también el *estar arrojado* (*Geworfensein* o *Geworfenheit*). Este concepto implica, además de la facticidad del ‘tener que’ ser, el que el Dasein tiene que ser cada vez en una situación absolutamente concreta, en aquella en que fácticamente es”.⁵⁶

Así, de un lado, la “*Geworfenheit*”, “*estar arrojado*”, indica que el hombre en el primer acto de inteligencia *ya* está existiendo. Es decir, “*yecto*”: es el pasado radical “*ya*”. Es el primer momento. A mi ser le pertenece mi “*yectidad*”. No se *arroja* él. Es, “*estar arrojado*”. Es tener ya dado o recibido el “*ser*” desde el primer momento. No lo pongo yo; estoy arrojado en la existencia humana.

iii) Hay, de otro lado, una pequeña distinción con la “*facticidad*”. Esta es la concretización de la existencia humana. *Estoy arrojado*, en un lugar concreto y muy determinado. En efecto, normalmente yo hago muchas cosas, me levanto por las mañanas, leo, camino, me alimento, etc., etc., pero hay algo que está permanentemente presente en lo más hondo de mi vida y que no está expuesta explícitamente. Es la *existencia*. Me encuentro que yo

tengo una deuda con mi propia existencia, la cual yo no me la he dado; me encuentro con ella, nací en un hermoso país, Chile, en Chuquicamata, en 1966, en el desierto más árido del mundo y en el cielo más diáfano de la tierra; con unos padres, con una determinada lengua materna, etc., etc., es decir, me encuentro en este mundo *existiendo* “*ya*”, estoy *arrojado* a la existencia, mi vida es una “*facticidad*”. Y de todo eso yo soy “*deudor*”. Es mío y no soy plenamente dueño, esa es la “*paradoja*”: la deuda. Tengo algo que es mío, pero no es mío. Es lo que en Heidegger es el ser *culpable*. Ser culpable y estar en deuda son exactamente iguales. Si yo tengo una cosa que me pertenece, pero no es mío, es prestado, es una deuda, mi ser es un ser prestado. Volvamos a Zubiri, leamos completamente un pasaje clave: “La existencia humana, se nos dice, es tal que consiste en *encontrarse* entre las cosas y, *cuidándose* de ellas y *arrastrada* por ellas, *hacerse* a sí misma. En este su hacerse, la existencia humana adquiere su mismidad y su ser, es decir, en este su hacerse es ella lo que es y como es. La existencia humana está *arrojada* entre las cosas, y en este arrojamiento cobra ella el arrojamiento de existir. La constitutiva indigencia del hombre, ese su no ser nada sin, con y por las cosas, es consecuencia de estar arrojado, de esta su nihilidad ontológica”.⁵⁷

Este texto es clave de “*En torno al problema de Dios*”, del acápite II, que refleja las emanaciones de Heidegger en Zubiri.

iv) Nuevamente: ¿Qué es esto de la *existencia humana*? ¿Por qué Zubiri habla en *El hombre y Dios* de realidad humana y no de existencia humana? ¿Qué es esto de que la existencia humana está arrojada “entre” las cosas? ¿Qué papel están jugando las cosas para el hombre?, “el Dasein -dice Heidegger- es una existencia arrojada, *no* se ha puesto a sí mismo en su Ahí”.⁵⁸ ¿Cómo entender una existencia arrojada?

Heidegger quiere mirar la existencia del hombre tal como se da de *facto*, antes de toda filosofía, de toda ciencia, de toda

teoría. Lleva a cabo lo que llama la “analítica existencial”. Es decir, al ser sólo se llega a través de un análisis del *Dasein*, de una analítica existencial. Es lo más difícil de llevar a cabo. Lo más grave es que el ente que va a ser analizado, la *existencia humana*, se escapa tenazmente a todo análisis. La *existencia humana* rehúsa ser, por decirlo de algún modo, “fotografiada”. Ella huye a ser “escaneada”.

Este ente que es el hombre es *huidizo*. Pero, además, la dificultad crece, pues, es difícil de hacer porque la existencia humana es en sí misma *inanalizable*; porque para analizar algo tengo que mirarlo y para mirarlo tengo que tenerlo al frente y detenerlo.⁵⁹

v) “Dialogando con Heidegger -dice Diego Gracia- es como en 1935 describe Zubiri el fenómeno de la *religación*, su doctrina más conocida del gran público. Pienso que este concepto surgió a partir del heideggeriano de *Geworfenheit*, pero para transformarlo y superarlo internamente. *Geworfenheit* es un sustantivo abstracto alemán, derivado de un verbo, el verbo *werfen*, que significa ‘lanzar’, ‘tirar hacia adelante’. De él procede también el sustantivo *Entwurf*, ‘proyecto’, que Heidegger eleva a categoría ontológica en su libro *Sein und Zeit*. *Geworfenheit* puede traducirse como propone Gaos, por ‘estado de yecto’(a). Jorge Eduardo Rivera lo traduce por ‘condición de arrojado’(b). Las dos traducciones son correctas, pero la primera tiene la ventaja de que permite conservar en castellano el juego *Entwurf*, ‘proyecto’. Por eso convendría traducir *Geworfenheit* por ‘estar yecto o yectado’ más que por ‘estar arrojado’, o también por ‘yección’. En tanto que ser yectado, yectivo o yecto, el hombre no puede no estar realizando continuamente pro-yectos y ser responsable de ellos. De ahí la categoría de *Sorge* o cuidado, tan ubicua en el libro de Heidegger. Éste advierte expresamente que no se trata de ‘ética’(c), como tampoco la yección tiene que ver directamente con la religión, sino que se trata de algo previo, de su propia condición de po-

sibilidad. Ese algo previo es ‘destino’ y es ‘entrega’. ‘Existencia’ significa estar destinado al ente, como tal, en una entrega al ente que le está destinado como tal’(d). No se entienda *Geworfenheit* de un modo negativo, como si el ser humano estuviera lanzado o arrojado sin ninguna consideración. Nada de eso. Se trata de una *Geworfenheit* o experiencia fundamental, que Heidegger llama también *Offenbarung*, revelación o patencia”.⁶⁰

Diego Gracia tomando como base los análisis heideggerianos de la *Geworfenheit* piensa que Zubiri pretende ir más allá, es decir, profundizar en el carácter “yectivo” de la existencia humana. Sin embargo, por otra parte, “condición de arrojado” podría reflejar más hondamente la *previa* condición del existir del *Dasein*.⁶¹ Pero, “estar arrojado” en rigor es lo que Zubiri afirma en su texto de 1935. Dice Zubiri: “¿Cuál es la relación del hombre con la totalidad de su existencia? ¿Cuál es el carácter del hombre de este estar arrojado [*Geworfenheit*]* entre las cosas? ¿Es un ‘simple’ encontrarse o es algo más? ¿No será algo más honda y radical aún su constitutiva nihilidad ontológica?”.⁶² ¿Qué es eso de algo “más”?

Observando Zubiri la insuficiencia del análisis hecho por Heidegger de la existencia humana, ha transitado más allá de Heidegger -la prueba de ello es su ensayo de 1935-.

Así, ganado lo anterior. Hemos visto sucintamente que Zubiri va más allá que Heidegger. Podemos concebir de modo más claro lo que expresa Zubiri al sostener que: “El hombre, al estar abierto a las cosas, va *hacia* ellas y las encuentra. Al estar religado el hombre viene desde Dios y está ya en Él”.⁶³

vi) La cuestión central aquí es: ¿qué sentido, entonces, tiene que Zubiri pretenda en *El hombre y Dios* en la Segunda Parte realizar una “marcha intelectual” si *ya estamos en Dios*, (teniendo, sobre todo, presente, además, el ensayo de 1935)? ¿Qué sentido tiene “buscar” “algo”, en este caso Dios, si *ya* Dios está “en” mi ser?

Eo ipso, cualquier intento de “encontrar” a Dios, al parecer, es absurdo. El hombre, no puede, propiamente hablando “encontrarse con Dios”. Porque, Dios no es una cosa más. Pero el hombre lo puede “encontrar” en sí mismo, en su propio “existir”. ¿Es tan claro esto? “Existir -dice Zubiri- es, en una de sus dimensiones, estar habiendo descubierto ya a Dios en nuestra religación”.⁶⁴ Lo anterior se abrocha con lo siguiente: “El hombre se encuentra a sí mismo en las cosas, bosquejando un mundo de posibilidades, de hacerse algo con ellas; se encuentra a sí mismo en Dios al estar ya teniendo que hacerse”.⁶⁵

Lo anterior, y dicho sea de paso, echa por tierra todo posible debate, estéril por lo demás, que especula que Zubiri promueve un cierto elitismo religioso al hablar del encuentro con Dios en la plenitud humana, y no en la fragilidad humana.⁶⁶ Porque Zubiri, desde sus inicios está apuntando a un “análisis ontológico”.⁶⁷ Zubiri apela a la situación límite, esto es, a la muerte súbita de un ser querido, no en el sentido que “no somos nada”, sino en aquellos casos en que el que muere lo hace haciendo suya la muerte misma, aceptándolo, como justo coronamiento de su ser. Ahí “sentimos” la “realidad, el fundamento de la vida”.⁶⁸

Pues bien, lo que Zubiri ha llamado el “problema de Dios” no es una “demostración” -es una declaración permanente de Zubiri en sus obras-, sino que es un “análisis ontológico de una de nuestras dimensiones. El problema de Dios no es una cuestión que el hombre se plantea como un problema científico o vital, algo que en última instancia podría o no ser planteado, sino que es un problema *planteado* ya en el hombre por el mero hecho de hallarse implantado en la existencia”.⁶⁹

vii) ¿Qué es esto de “implantado”? Zubiri piensa a la altura de 1935, que el hombre se encuentra en algún modo *implantado en la existencia*.⁷⁰ Pero, la palabra existencia para él es bastante equívoca; prefiere hablar de “ser”.⁷¹ El hombre

se encuentra implantado en el ser. ¿Qué significa “implantado”? ¿Qué significa que el hombre esté implantado en el “ser”? Volviendo al ensayo de 1935, nos dice Zubiri: “...la persona es el ser del hombre. La persona se encuentra implantada en el ser para realizarse”.⁷²

Ahora bien, López Quintás, comentando el punto de partida de Zubiri sostiene que el uso del término “arrojado” implica la convicción de que el entorno en que se halla situado el hombre le es extraño, hostil. En cambio, el término “implantado” sugiere, más, bien, que el entorno juega el papel de tierra acogedora en que el hombre puede y debe echar raíces y desplegarse fecundamente.⁷³

Sin embargo, Rivera advierte que la imagen de “implantación” se presta a equívocos. Porque no se trata de que el hombre esté “*plantado*” en la realidad, “sino que, justo al revés, jamás está quieto en ella: tiene que ejecutar actos precisamente *para* estar en la realidad y *por* estarlo. En esos actos estriba lo que llamamos ‘vida humana’. Tomados todos ellos a una, constituyen el *efectivo poseerse* del hombre como realidad propia, esto es, personal”.⁷⁴

En *El hombre y Dios*, nos dirá que el hombre, la persona, es un modo de estar “implantado en la realidad”.⁷⁵ Más, bien, “el hombre está *implantado* en la divinidad”.⁷⁶ Esto levanta una tormenta de graves problemas. ¿Acaso esto de estar “implantado” en la divinidad no arrastra una oleada de “panteísmo”? ¿Cómo de estar el hombre “implantado” en el “ser” pasa a estar más adelante “implantado” en la divinidad? ¿Divinidad *coincide con* “ser”? ¿Son lo mismo?

Así, en Zubiri lo *radical* no es la propia existencia. Lo radical no es un hecho, sino algo previo a todo hecho, esto es: la realidad misma. Y esta realidad se me hace presente no en un comprender existencial, sino en un sentir. En un sentir intelectual. La denuncia de Zubiri es evidente, la existencia humana no está descrita con suficiente precisión, pues, la relación del hombre con la totalidad de la

existencia no es simplemente “estar arrojado”, hay algo “más”. Porque la existencia humana no está *solamente* arrojada, sino “religada”. Y este es el “fundamento” que nos lanza a la *búsqueda* de esa realidad “enigmática” que llamamos Dios. Esta

investigación –finalmente– que pretendía ser la introducción a la lectura del texto *El hombre y Dios* se ha convertido sólo en una humilde “introducción” a la Introducción del texto mismo.

Notes

¹ Se pueden leer las sinceras y hermosas palabras sobre la vida de Zubiri que Jorge Eduardo Rivera Cruchaga escribiera en el artículo: “*Recordando a Xavier Zubiri*”, Anuario Filosófico-Volumen XVII/1-1984. Universidad de Navarra.

² Xavier Zubiri, *El hombre y Dios*, Alianza Editorial. Sociedad de Estudios y Publicaciones, Madrid, (Primera edición: 1984; Segunda edición: 1985 (febrero); Tercera edición 1985; Cuarta edición: 1988. [HD] Con esta última edición trabajaremos en esta investigación). En un diario español, dicho sea de paso, en el lanzamiento de este libro, señalaba Carlos Baciero: “*No cabe un tratamiento del hombre sin un tratamiento de Dios: y a su vez un tratamiento de Dios forzosamente ha de ir incurso en un tratamiento del hombre, porque desde sí mismo se encuentra el hombre con Dios*”, “*El hombre y Dios, obra póstuma de Xavier Zubiri*”, artículo aparecido en: “*Cultura Ya*”, Madrid, 1 de Diciembre de 1984., p. III.

³ cf. HD, x.

⁴ Conversaciones que hemos tenido en el Seminario de doctorado en la Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Primer Semestre 2001. Véase nuevamente este artículo. Jorge Eduardo Rivera Cruchaga: “*Recordando a Xavier Zubiri*”, Anuario Filosófico-Volumen XVII/1-1984., p.178. Universidad de Navarra.

⁵ HD, 13.

⁶ HD, 103. Véase: Juan Patricio Cornejo Ojeda. Tesis de Doctorado en Filosofía. *El hombre “y” Dios en Xavier Zubiri*. Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso. 2004. Director: Dr. Jorge Eduardo Rivera Cruchaga.

⁷ Esta idea aparece claramente expuesta en dos artículos de Zubiri. Uno del año 1963: “es una cuestión que afecta a la raíz misma de la existencia humana”. (Naturaleza, Historia, Dios [NHD], 398). En 1963, un año después de publicado, *Sobre la esencia*, se publicó en

NHD este artículo, que lleva por título: “*Introducción al problema de Dios*”. Véase: Xavier Zubiri, *Naturaleza, Historia, Dios*, 9ª edición, Alianza Editorial/Sociedad de Estudios y Publicaciones, Madrid, 1987, páginas 393-416. En adelante trabajaremos con esta edición. El otro publicado en 1936: “*En torno al problema de Dios*”. (Revista de Occidente 149 (1935) 129-159; NHD, 429). Dice Sáez en una nota sobre este último artículo: “Sobre el significado de este artículo, cf A. PINTORRAMOS, ‘Dios y el problema de la realidad’, en *Cuadernos de Pensamiento* 1 (Madrid 1987) 110. Una interpretación diferente puede consultarse en M. ROVALETTI, “Voluntad de fundamentalidad. Enigma y transcendencia en el último Zubiri”, en *Universitas Philosophica*, n° 9 (1987) 20; quien supone que este artículo recoge una lección dada 15 años antes. Por lo cual debería ser encuadrado en 1949”, Jesús Sáez Cruz, *La accesibilidad de Dios: su mundanidad y transcendencia en X. Zubiri*, Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, 1995, p. 191. (En adelante citaremos este texto de Sáez con las siglas AD).

⁸ Madrid, diciembre de 1935.

⁹ Xavier Zubiri, *Sobre el problema de la filosofía y otros escritos* (1932-1944), Alianza Editorial, S.A. Fundación Xavier Zubiri, Madrid, 2002, páginas 215-241, y que en adelante identificaremos con las siglas (PF).

¹⁰ PF, 225; No hay variación con la versión de 1936. Salvo, la nota al pie de página que precisa este concepto de “religación”, “...ha podido verse que resulta mucho más probable derivar *religio* de *religare*...”, en NHD, 430.

¹¹ cf. PF, 241.

¹² Decía Zubiri, y dicho sea de paso, que la religación lleva a la religión como la moralización lleva a una ética cf. SSV, 404. Para Juan Bañón uno de los problemas filosóficos centrales que tiene que afrontar la inteligencia sentiente zubiriana es el acceso a Dios,

- nos dice: “La posibilidad de probar la existencia de Dios en el último Zubiri depende del carácter intrínsecamente sentiente de la inteligencia”. Véase: Juan Bañón Pinar, *Metafísica y noología en Zubiri*, Publicaciones Universidad Pontificia Salamanca, 1999, p. 112.
- ¹³ cf. NHD, 9ª edición. Hay una gran cantidad de estudios de este artículo véase, por ejemplo: Ignacio Ellacuría, S.J. *La religación, actitud radical del hombre*, ASCLEPIO. Archivo Iberoamericano de Historia de la Medicina. Vol. XVI, Año, MCMLXIV. Ceferino Martínez Santamarta, *El hombre y Dios en Xavier Zubiri*, Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 1981. María Lucrecia Rovalletti, *La dimensión teológica del hombre*, Editorial Universidad de Buenos Aires, 1979.
- ¹⁴ ¿Es realmente definitiva? ¿Cómo saberlo si Zubiri estaba *todavía* trabajando en este libro cuando lo sorprendió la muerte?
- ¹⁵ PF, 219-220.
- ¹⁶ NHD, 410. (“Introducción al problema de Dios” 395-416.)
- ¹⁷cf. Martin Heidegger (1889-1976). Véase, su texto fundamental: *Sein und Zeit*, Vittorio Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main, 1977. (Siglas: SZ). Martin Heidegger, *Ser y tiempo*, Traducción, prólogo y notas de Jorge Eduardo Rivera Cruchaga, Editorial Universitaria, Santiago de Chile, Primera Edición, 1997. (Siglas: ST). Indicaba Heidegger, dicho sea de paso, en un texto muy posterior a *Ser y tiempo* que sólo a partir de la verdad del ser se puede pensar la esencia de lo sagrado, la esencia de la divinidad, y decir lo que significa la palabra Dios., cf. Martín Heidegger, “*Brief über den Humanismus*”, Vittorio Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main, 1967. p.181-182. Cf. PFHR: 24. Véase además el interesante estudio de Juan Antonio Estrada, *Dios en las tradiciones filosóficas*, Editorial Trotta, S.A, Valladolid, 1994, pp. 141-167.
- ¹⁸ cf. Ceferino Martínez Santamarta., op.cit.
- ¹⁹ Véase: NHD, “Prólogo a la traducción inglesa” (Madrid, noviembre 1980, página 10); HD, 13.
- ²⁰ SZ, § 28.
- ²¹ ST, § 28, 157.
- ²² cf. ST, 474. ¿Qué es el “*Dasein*”? “El *Dasein* - dice Rivera- es un estar (*sein*) en el Ahí (*Da*) del ser. No un ‘ser ahí’, como a veces se dice, sino un ‘estar en el Ahí del ser’. El ser humano no es un animal dotado de una capacidad pensante llamada razón, sino que consiste en el ‘estar’ mismo o, lo que es igual, en el ‘habitar’ en el ser”, Jorge Eduardo Rivera Cruchaga, “*La verdad implícita en Ser y tiempo*”, Heidegger y Zubiri, Editorial Universitaria. Ediciones Universidad Católica de Chile, 2001, pp. 16-17. (En adelante citaremos este texto de Rivera con las siglas HZ).
- ²³ SZ, §29, 181; ST, §29, 160.
- ²⁴ “más el ejercicio del afecto que la instrucción del intelecto”, *Itinerarium, Prolugus*, 5
- ²⁵ PF, 238.
- ²⁶ PF, 236.
- ²⁷ ST, § 12, 79
- ²⁸ HD, 277.
- ²⁹ HD, 94.
- ³⁰ HD, 128.
- ³¹ ST, § 68, 353, párrafo 1.
- ³² ST, § 68, 353, párrafo 2.
- ³³ José Ortega y Gasset, *El Hombre y la Gente*, Revista de Occidente. Madrid. 1964, pp. 69-70.
- ³⁴ PF, 226.
- ³⁵ HD, 111.
- ³⁶ HD, 182. Segunda Parte.
- ³⁷ HD, 182.
- ³⁸ PF, 226. (El subrayado es mío).
- ³⁹ ST, § 68, 357, párrafo 2. Véase: SZ § 68, 450. “*Das Verstehen gründet primär in der Zukunft, die Befindlichkeit dagegen zeitigt sich primär in der Gewissenheit*”.
- ⁴⁰ “...el hombre es constitutivamente una esencia formalmente abierta a su propio carácter de realidad...” (HD, 182)
- ⁴¹ PF, 217, NHD; 421.
- ⁴² PF, 217; NHD, 421.
- ⁴³ PF, 225; NHD, 428.
- ⁴⁴ SR, 195 [1966].
- ⁴⁵ HD, 182.
- ⁴⁶ HD, 182.
- ⁴⁷ PF, 226.
- ⁴⁸ PF, 226.
- ⁴⁹ Véase: Diego Gracia, “Zubiri y la experiencia teológica”, en *La Filosofía como pasión. Home-*

- naje a Jorge Eduardo Rivera Cruchaga en sus 75 cumpleaños. Editorial Trotta, S.A. 2003. Página, 252. Ramón Martínez de Pisón Liébanas, "La religación como fundamento del problema de Dios en Xavier Zubiri", *Religión y Cultura*, XXXIX (1993) p. 560., cf. Alfonso López Quintás, "La metafísica de X. Zubiri y su proyección al futuro", en *Realitas. Seminario X. Zubiri. Tomo I: Trabajos (1972-1973)*, Sociedad de Estudios y Publicaciones, Madrid, 1974.
- ⁵⁰ "Condición de arrojado", en alemán, *Geworfenheit* (destacado en el texto original), que literalmente significa el estar-arrojado."(ST, 475; Véase. § 29, § 55, § 57, § 58).
- ⁵¹ Los tres volúmenes: Xavier Zubiri, *Inteligencia y Realidad*. Alianza Editorial/Sociedad de estudios y publicaciones, Madrid, 1980. Xavier Zubiri, *Inteligencia y Logos*. Alianza Editorial/Sociedad de estudios y publicaciones, Madrid, 1983. Xavier Zubiri, *Inteligencia y Razón*. Alianza Editorial/Sociedad de estudios y publicaciones, Madrid, 1983.
- ⁵² PF, 220.
- ⁵³ PF, 225.
- ⁵⁴ PF, 220.
- ⁵⁵ Ramón Martínez de Pisón, "La religación como fundamento del problema de Dios en Xavier Zubiri", *Religión y Cultura*, XXXIX (1993) p. 558.
- ⁵⁶ Jorge Eduardo Rivera, HZ, 36-37. Dice Heidegger: "Faktizität ist die Bezeichnung für den Seinscharakter 'unseres' 'eigenen' Daseins. Genauer bedeutet der Ausdruck: *jeweiling dieses Dasein...*", *ONTOLOGIE, Hermeneutik der Faktizität*, Vittorio Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main, Germany, Band 63, 1988, p.7. En una traducción al castellano (versión de Jaime Aspiunza), leemos: "Facticidad es el nombre que le damos al carácter de 'nuestro' existir 'propio'. Más exactamente, la expresión significa: ese existir *en cada ocasión*", Martin Heidegger, *Hermenéutica de la facticidad*, Alianza Editorial, S.A., Madrid, 1999. p.25
- ⁵⁷ PF, 220.
- ⁵⁸ ST, § 58, 303.
- ⁵⁹ Dice Rivera: "...para examinar el propio ser es necesario no empezar por ponerlo delante de nosotros, como si fuera un objeto, porque el Dasein jamás se nos da primariamente como un simple objeto, sino que siempre se nos da en la efectiva ejecución del existir, y sólo de esta manera. Para examinar el propio ser es necesario sorprenderlo, por así decirlo, *in fraganti*, o sea, tomarlo allí donde está y tal como está" Jorge Eduardo Rivera, HZ, 39.
- ⁶⁰ Diego Gracia, "Zubiri y la experiencia teológica", en *La Filosofía como pasión. Homenaje a Jorge Eduardo Rivera Cruchaga en sus 75 cumpleaños*. Editorial Trotta, S.A. 2003. Página, 252. Notas del texto: (a) J. Gaos, *Introducción a El ser y el tiempo de Martin Heidegger*, FCE, Madrid, 1986, p. 148; (b) M. Heidegger, *Ser y tiempo*, traducción, prólogo y notas de J. E. Rivera, Universitaria, Santiago de Chile, 1997, p.475; (c) M. Heidegger, *Kant y el problema de la metafísica*, FCE, México, 1973, p.196; (d) *Ibid.*, p.190.
- ⁶¹ En el §29 de *Ser y tiempo*, apreciamos que "este carácter de ser del Dasein, oculto en su de-dónde y adónde, pero claramente abierto en sí mismo, es decir, en el 'que es', es lo que llamamos la *condición de arrojado* [*Geworfenheit*](*) de este ente en su Ahí; de modo que, en cuanto estar-en-el-mundo, el Dasein es el Ahí. El término 'condición de arrojado' mienta la *facticidad de la entrega a sí mismo*" (ST, 159)
- ⁶² PF, 220, (*la inserción de la palabra alemana es mía).
- ⁶³ PF, 226.
- ⁶⁴ PF, 226.
- ⁶⁵ PF, 226.
- ⁶⁶ Véase: José Demetrio Jiménez, "Religación, Religión, Cristianismo en torno a la trilogía 'El problema teológico del hombre' de Xavier Zubiri", *Religión y Cultura*, XLVI (2000) pp. 522-523.
- ⁶⁷ PF, 227.
- ⁶⁸ PF, 238. El subrayado es mío.
- ⁶⁹ PF, 227.
- ⁷⁰ cf. PF, 220
- ⁷¹ PF, 220.
- ⁷² PF, 223.
- ⁷³ Cf. Alfonso López Quintás, "La metafísica de X. Zubiri y su proyección al futuro", en *Realitas. Seminario X. Zubiri. Tomo I: Trabajos (1972-1973)*, Sociedad de Estudios y Publicaciones, Madrid, 1974, p. 464.

⁷⁴ Jorge Eduardo Rivera Cruchaga, HZ, 200-201.

⁷⁵ HD, 23; 170.

⁷⁶ HD, 163.

The Existence of God in Zubirian Theology¹

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Abstract

Proofs of the existence of God have been a mainstay of Western theology for many centuries, and can be traced back to St. Augustine or earlier. New proofs continue to be offered. The proofs can be divided into five major classifications, and analyzed with respect to their premises and their validity. In this article that task is accomplished in light of Zubiri's philosophy and contemporary knowledge, especially scientific knowledge. Zubiri's approach to proofs and theological knowledge recognizes that rational proofs are not our first contact with Deity or the transcendent, just as rational knowledge is not our first or primary contact with reality. As a result, the analysis done here reveals serious problems with many of the proofs, especially with respect to their starting point, and indicates more effective ways to address the question and more realistic expectations about the power of these proofs to convince contemporary audiences.

Resumen

Pruebas de la existencia de Dios han sido un pilar de la teología occidental durante muchos siglos, y se remonta a San Agustín o antes. Nuevas pruebas continuarán ofreciéndose. Las pruebas se pueden dividir en cinco clasificaciones principales, y se analizaron con respecto a sus premisas y su validez. En este artículo se lleva a cabo esa tarea a la luz de la filosofía de Zubiri y el saber contemporáneo, especialmente el saber científico. El enfoque de Zubiri en torno a las pruebas y el saber teológico reconoce que las pruebas racionales no son nuestro primer contacto con la deidad o lo trascendente, del mismo modo que lo racional no es nuestro primer contacto con la realidad ni el primario. Como resultado, el análisis hecho aquí revela problemas graves con muchas de las pruebas, sobre todo con respecto a su punto de partida, e indica formas más eficaces de abordar la cuestión junto con expectativas más realistas sobre el poder de estas pruebas para convencer a las audiencias contemporáneas.

Introduction

Since theology is about God, theological works often begin with "proofs" or demonstrations of God's existence. This is reasonable, since a solid ground for both faith and theology is important. But the idea of "proving" God's existence using a rational demonstration did not arise until the marriage of Judaism and Greek philosophy was consummated by early Christianity. That marriage entailed the need to understand at least some aspects of reli-

gion in a rational way, and to show that Christianity (and later Islam) was not at variance with rational knowledge and could be integrated with it. This enormous, difficult task was begun in the second and third centuries and was the source of much fruitful understanding of theological issues; St. Augustine and the Fathers of the Church all drew heavily on classical thought, especially Platonism. But this task is never really complete; it must be periodically redone because of the

march of history and the growth of human knowledge, and so notions of proving God's existence also evolve. From early efforts at integration of faith and reason first arose the idea of a demonstration of the existence of God, though of a somewhat informal nature, as we see in St. Augustine. Later the idea of a rigorous demonstration developed, first among Islamic philosophers and theologians, and subsequently among Christians in Western Europe, culminating in St. Thomas' famous "Five Ways". Most of the major types of proofs still used were developed by the year 1300. In this article we shall consider the major proofs in light of Zubiri's philosophy, and then examine his approach to the question.

Background

The idea of proving God's existence would have made no sense to either the Old Testament Hebrews or the polytheistic peoples of the ancient world. Indeed, for them God (or gods) was simply a fact of life, just as much as (and perhaps because of) the religious rituals pervasive in those cultures. It was of little interest to the Greek fathers and Eastern theologians, whose focus was on other pressing issues, such as the Christological controversies. In general, Eastern theological thought tends to stress the *deification* of man made possible by Christ's redemptive sacrifice; St. Athanasius (c. 300-373) famously said that Christ "was made man so that we might be made God."² On the other hand Western thought has concentrated more on man's *alienation* from God and the way that Christ's sacrifice heals this alienation. Alienation implies separation and distance, and thus the West was more inclined to look for "proofs" of that from which we are separated.

At the time of Augustine (fourth century), Aquinas (13th century), and even Suárez (16th century), belief in God (or gods) was the norm, so for them proving the existence of God was more about completing a structural framework for theology than about actually converting anyone. Indeed, one common "proof" was the so-

called "argument from universal consent", which claimed that essentially everybody believed in God, so the idea of God had to have been placed in everyone's mind by God Himself. St. John Damascene remarked, "the knowledge of God is naturally implanted in all."³ By the 18th century this universal belief was no longer true, and it is certainly not true in our day. Few people have or acquire faith through rational proofs, and fewer still shed their belief on account of any critique of such proofs. Even in the case of those who concede that the proofs yield some type of conclusion, it is unclear that the thing demonstrated is identifiable with "God" in any traditional sense—no one prays to an Unmoved Mover, as the saying goes. Moreover, the general loss of faith in the world today—at least the industrialized world—suggests that these proofs may be deficient in some way, at least with respect to establishing a basis for solid religious faith. This situation, as well as the importance traditionally ascribed to such proofs, dictate that we must examine not only the proofs themselves but the whole idea of proving God's existence, to understand how the proofs really work, what they show or purport to show, whether their might be some basic problem lurking at the core of some of them, what their real purpose is, and whether there is a better way to confront the problem of God's existence. Let us note at the outset that by "proof" or "demonstration" we refer to some type of logical inference, based on premises assumed to be widely or universally held. We do not refer to cases where someone is converted through the example of someone else, or through some interior conversion experience. Such experiences can be very powerful—far more powerful in some cases than any type of intellectual demonstration—but they are not the subject of this chapter. So considering only rational demonstrations, we are concerned with two things: the nature of proofs of God's existence, and what function and value these proofs ultimately have. Here we shall not consider every proof offered for God's existence—that would be the

subject of a rather long book in itself; rather, we shall concentrate on the proofs and arguments that are the most important and influential.

It is important to realize at the outset of this discussion that *no proof for the existence of God can be constructed without a philosophical underpinning or framework, nor can any criticism of a proof be made without such a framework*. There is no exception to this rule. The framework often goes unnoticed; and because philosophical commitments are very deep and very far below the surface, they can be difficult to identify and grasp. But such commitments ground one's beliefs about what classes of things are considered as real, what phenomena can be accepted as genuine, how we can know things, and what are the limits to our knowledge. And make no mistake: these are *philosophical* commitments (or "beliefs" or "convictions" or whatever one chooses to call them); they are not scientific theories or facts. Science itself is ultimately based on such commitments, though the progress of science can influence them. Obviously, the certainty, value and impact of any proof cannot be greater than the certainty of the philosophical framework upon which it is based.

Division of Proofs

The unwavering belief in Western thought since the time of the Greeks has been that it is *reason* or *rational thought* that is our primary access to reality. This immediately suggests the idea of *rational proofs* for God's existence, and such proofs have indeed been the mainstay of Western theology for the better part of a millennium. Of course, most of these traditional proofs have been analyzed and criticized many times over the last few hundred years, notably by Hume, Kant, and others. We shall consider Kant's critique in due course. For now, let us observe that proofs for the existence of God can be divided into five main categories:

- (1) *Conceptual*. These proofs utilize only our concepts and do not refer to the world. The best-known example is the

ontological argument, first propounded by St. Anselm (c. 1033-1109) and later adopted by Descartes, Leibniz, Hegel, and more recently, Gödel. St. Augustine's proof (somewhat informal) based on necessary and immutable truths is another example, as is Scotus' proof in *De Primo Principio*, based on the notions of possible and actual.

- (2) *Cosmological*. These proofs rely on some fact about the cosmos, i.e., the world (κόσμος = "world" in Greek). They could also be called "fact based", but "cosmological" is the accepted term. They encompass St. Thomas' "Five Ways", Scotus' argument *a simultaneo*, arguments based on design, Avicenna's argument from contingency and necessity, and many others.
- (3) *Morality-based*. These proofs rely on some aspect of morality for their basis. Kant utilized this method.
- (4) *Experiential*. These proofs rely on some aspect of our direct experience of reality. This is Zubiri's preferred approach.
- (5) *Inference to best explanation*. These proofs do not claim certainty, but argue that the existence of some higher power is the best explanation for a group of phenomena.

By far the majority of proofs offered to date have fallen into the second category, the Cosmological proofs. The categories of proof are quite different with respect to assumptions, method, goal, and result. Hence, with regard to each proof, several key questions need to be asked:

1. What *assumptions* does the proof make? In other words, what is the *starting point* of the proof?
2. What is the *basis* for these assumptions?
3. What type of *metaphysics* is used for the proof? Observe that it is impossible to have any type of proof without some type of philosophical framework.
4. What *type of argument* is used in the proof? This can be deduction, induc-

tion, or something else.

5. What is the *degree of certainty* attained or sought?
6. What is the *goal* of the proof? That is, what, precisely, are we trying to demonstrate? As we shall see, this is an extremely important question, the answer to which is not so straightforward as it may seem.
7. What is the *notion of God* that emerges from the proof? This can be quite diverse, including "first cause", "unmoved mover", "that greater than which nothing can be thought".
8. Who are the *proponents* of the proof?
9. Who is the *audience* for the proof?
10. How *successful* has the proof been?
11. What *criticisms* are leveled against the proof? What validity do they have?

Some of these questions are discussed in the text, and some are left to the reader to ponder.

Conceptual or A Priori Proofs

These proofs rest on concepts and intuition alone; they make only very indirect reference to things of the world. As such, they are extremely interesting because they involve key issues in our mental interaction with the world. Specifically, they touch on the question of just what logic and reasoning alone can tell us about reality, and *the extent to which reality must be in agreement with the way we are constrained to think about it*. This is a difficult problem and in many respects is one of the principle themes of modern philosophy, beginning with Descartes. Attempting to answer it led Kant to his now-famous "Copernican Revolution" in philosophy. To set the stage, let us examine some simple examples. Take the syllogism "All men are mortal, Socrates is a man, therefore Socrates is mortal", or the mathematical computation, "Two sticks of wood plus three sticks of wood equal 5 sticks of wood". In both cases we have used an abstract form of reasoning (logic or arith-

metic) in conjunction with some statements (truths) about the world to arrive at a new truth about the world that, given the truth of the original statements, we accept as certain. Why does this work, and what are its limits? At the very least, it is clear that our method works provided that the statements about the world are verifiable and of ultimately finite scope (the number of men is finite, not infinite). When we start dealing with things that are infinite, for example, the method breaks down. For example, an infinite number of sticks plus an infinite number of sticks equals an infinite number of sticks (not two). When we try to think about things that are unlimited in some way, our reasoning methods likewise may cease to be reliable. The reader should bear this in mind when considering any conceptual proof.

We begin with St. Augustine, whose entire theology is based on the attitude of the soul toward God, and so places little stock in formalistic systems. Augustine's somewhat informal proof of the existence of God based on *necessary and immutable truths* confirms this. Augustine starts from the fact that the mind apprehends necessary and changeless truths, which are universal in the sense that "...thou canst not call [them] thine, or mine, or any man's, but which [are] present to all and [give themselves] to all alike."⁴ These truths must be founded on something, viz. the Ground of all truth. That is, the realm or sphere of such immutable truths cannot be conceived without some Ground or basis for all truth. This is "the Truth, in whom, and by whom, and through whom those things are true which are true in every respect."⁵ This Truth, the greatest that can be thought, of course is what we call "God". Platonic or Neo-Platonic metaphysics stands behind this proof, especially with respect to its reliance on a realm of immutable truths that must somehow be grounded. Whether Augustine's immutable truths reflect something about the way the mind is constrained to work, and just how truths such as logical truths actually relate to the world, are key questions that

affect the soundness of this proof, as does the assertion that there must be some realm of immutable truths that exists “out there” somewhere, independent of humans. Nonetheless the proof does make an important point about truth as a transcendental which points to something outside of this world; and the notion of God as the source of truth, as the greatest Truth, was a stepping stone to Anselm’s ontological proof, discussed below.⁶

Persian philosopher and polymath Avicenna (980-1037) is sometimes credited with the first rigorous conceptual or ontological argument, his *contingency and necessity argument*, in his *Book of Healing*. However, this argument is part cosmological so we will consider it in connection with cosmological arguments. The first real purely conceptual argument is the *ontological* argument of Anselm, appearing in his work, *Proslogium*, chapter 3:

God cannot be conceived not to exist. --God is that, than which nothing greater can be conceived. --That which can be conceived not to exist is not God. And it assuredly exists so truly, that it cannot be conceived not to exist. For, it is possible to conceive of a being which cannot be conceived not to exist; and this is greater than one which can be conceived not to exist. Hence, if that, than which nothing greater can be conceived, can be conceived not to exist, it is not that, than which nothing greater can be conceived. But this is an irreconcilable contradiction. There is, then, so truly a being than which nothing greater can be conceived to exist, that it cannot even be conceived not to exist; and this being you are, O Lord, our God.

Descartes’ version is similar:

...because I cannot conceive God unless as existing, it follows that existence is inseparable from him, and therefore that he really exists: not that this is brought about by my thought, or that it imposes any necessity on

things, but, on the contrary, the necessity which lies in the thing itself, that is, the necessity of the existence of God, determines me to think in this way: for it is not in my power to conceive a God without existence, that is, a being supremely perfect, and yet devoid of an absolute perfection, as I am free to imagine a horse with or without wings.⁷

To simplify, the argument runs as follows: God is the greatest being that can be conceived. If He did not exist, we could conceive of Him as existing, which would be greater. But this is a contradiction. Therefore God must exist. QED. The reader may have an uneasy feeling about this argument, thinking that there is some sleight of hand involved. This impression is basically sound, though the problem with the argument is subtle and difficult to identify.

The ontological argument will probably be debated forever, and for that reason alone, its apologetic value is minimal. There are several standard criticisms of this argument, with that of St. Thomas probably the most acute. Basically, St. Thomas argues that while I cannot conceive of God as not existing, this does not mean that He must exist, “...granted that everyone understands that by this word “God” is signified something than which nothing greater can be thought, nevertheless, it does not therefore follow that he understands that what the word signifies *exists actually*, but only that it *exists mentally*.”⁸ This is an extremely important point, and it is worth quoting the commentary on Aquinas’ argument by Francisco Muñiz:

God is the most perfect being that the mind of man can conceive. In this case we are not dealing with a real being...but with a being *conceived* by man as the most perfect that can be thought. But does a being conceived in this way entail existence? Undoubtedly it entails *ideal* existence, which is to say *real conceived existence*, since it is impossible to conceive

something as the most perfect that can be thought without at the same time representing it as really existing. Therefore whoever thinks of God as the most perfect being that can be conceived also thinks of Him as really existing. But just because man's reason *thinks* of something as really existing, does it follow that it *really* exists? Here is the leap from the ideal order to the real order, from the logical to the ontological order. One's *thought* about real existence is one thing; quite different is the *reality* of the existence thought...Man can think of God as real and existing; but to infer from this that He exists really is to confuse two completely different orders, namely the order of being and the order of thought.⁹

That is, our way of thinking does not dictate reality—only, perhaps, our perception of it. So the root problem with the ontological argument is confusion about the relationship of *how we are constrained* to think about reality and how reality *actually* is. Curiously, Hume makes this same mistake in his critique of cosmological proofs when he questions the causal link used in those proofs. Hume argues that because we can *conceive* the cause as separate from the effect, it must be possible for it to be so, because he thinks that whenever we can conceive or think of things as separate, such things must be separate or separable in reality:

Every perception is distinguishable from another, and may be considered as separately existent...All these [impressions] are different, and distinguishable, and separable from each other, and may be separately considered, and may exist separately.¹⁰

This is, of course, an entirely gratuitous assumption, one which seems almost absurd, and can only be sustained if one subscribes to Hume's rather problematic analysis of human intelligence. Whatever may be the problems with causality, this is not the root of them.

There is another fundamental problem with the ontological argument related to the very idea of God. God is conceived as an entity, a being, albeit one greater than which nothing can be thought. But is it really licit to think that we can conceive of God as a being, even in an analogical sense? We shall return to this point later.

Kant had a completely different objection to the argument. On the basis of his theory of the mental life, according to which all experience is synthesized, Kant argued that existence is not a predicate in the same way as other predicates, such as color and length. According to Kant, it is not a predicate that really gives us any more *information* about the thing in question, only about its *position* in our mental framework. Therefore there is no sense in saying that God would be greater if He existed than if He did not, because *this does not convey any new information about the subject* (God). However, Kant's argument is grounded in his particular theory of the mental life, so his statement that "existence is not a predicate" (in the sense of conveying new information) is true only if one accepts Kant's belief that our experience of the world is the result of the mind's synthesizing activity in accordance with what Kant terms the "categories". This limits the value of his critique, even if we agree that existence, as a predicate, is different than predicates such as size or color.

Franciscan theologian and philosopher John Duns Scotus (c. 1265-1308) also advances a conceptual proof for the existence of God, related to the ontological argument. Scotus appreciates Anselm's general approach, and believes that his proof can be fixed, though it is only capable of "probable persuasion", not rigorous demonstration, since Scotus believed that a rigorous demonstration of God's existence had to be *a posteriori*.¹¹ Scotus rejects the general line of Aquinas' criticism of Anselm's argument, viz. that there is an illicit transition from possible to real existence (in fact this is not the root of Aquinas' argument). Rather, Scotus argues that Anselm never proved that our concept—

the concept—of the infinite is actually possible. The whole idea of a being “greater than which nothing can be thought” is ultimately a truth of revelation, of faith, not from any actual and distinct knowledge of God that we have. So he sets out to prove this, utilizing a negative proof, i.e., he attempts to show that the concept of an infinite being—an *ens infinitum*—does not involve a contradiction. Were there a contradiction in this concept, our minds would discern it, since they have for their object “being as being”, *ens in quantum ens*. Having established that the concept of an infinite being, at least, involves no contradiction, and therefore is possible, Scotus restates Anselm’s argument:

God is a being conceived without contradiction, who is so great that it would be a contradiction if a greater being could be conceived. That the phrase “without contradiction” must be added is clear, for anything, the very knowledge or thought of which includes a contradiction, is called “inconceivable”, for it includes two conceivable notions so opposed to each other that they cannot in any way be fused into a single conceivable object...It follows then that the greatest object conceivable without contradiction can actually exist in reality.¹²

This, however, is not yet the desired conclusion, so Scotus argues further, introducing a bit of causal metaphysics (proved in connection with an *a posteriori* proof) to bridge the gap:

...this being actually exists because the highest conceivable object is not one which is merely in the intellect of the thinker, for then it could both exist, because as something possible it is conceivable, and yet could not exist, because the idea of existing in virtue of some cause is repugnant to its nature...Therefore what exists in reality is conceivably greater than what exists only in the intellect...[because] whatever exists is greater than what is

solely in the intellect.¹³

Obviously this proof hinges on Scotus’ reasoning about the concept of an infinite being, and whether this involves a contradiction. His argument that it does not, because otherwise we would discern the contradiction, seems rather problematic today, since thanks to the work of Georg Cantor (1845-1918) we now understand how complex the concept of infinity really is, and that there is a hierarchy of infinities. This problem affects Scotus’ other (*a posteriori* or Cosmological) proofs as well, as we shall see. Moreover, Scotus’ version of the argument does not escape the criticism leveled against Anselm’s version, since the fact that we have to *conceive* of something existing in reality as greater than something existing solely in the intellect does not mean that it *actually* exists.

Before we leave the ontological argument, it is worth noting that the famous mathematician and logician Kurt Gödel (1906-1978) formulated a version of the argument in modal logic terms. Gödel of course is famous for his *Incompleteness Theorem* (1931), which showed (contrary to all belief up to that point) that large parts of mathematics, such as arithmetic, are fundamentally incomplete, i.e., there exist statements in them that are *true if and only if they are not provable*. Among other things, this showed that truth is a broader concept than provability. Before discussing Gödel’s version of the ontological argument, let us recall that there are two requirements for an argument to be sound: (1) it must be logically valid, and (2) the premises must be true. Complete discussion of Gödel’s modal logic argument is beyond the scope of this text, but we can note the following about it. Gödel claims as an axiom that there are *positive* properties which are “good” in a certain sense: “Positive means positive in the moral aesthetic sense (independently of the structure of the world)...It may also mean pure *attribution* as opposed to *privation* (or containing privation).”¹⁴ He also postulates that necessary existence is a positive property—essentially Anselm’s

critical assumption dressed up in modern logical form. He then defines a new property *G*, the “God-like” property, and any object that has this property is called *God*. The argument then goes roughly as follows: having *G* entails having all positive properties in all possible worlds, so it entails having necessary existence. He argues that in some possible world something is *G(x)*, i.e., God-like, and therefore is necessarily existing. But even if one grants that Gödel’s argument is logically valid (and this has been disputed), it falls victim to the same objection raised by St. Thomas against Anselm: even if we can’t conceive, in a logical sense, of God as not existing, it still does not follow that he actually exists in reality. In short, some premises are not known to be true of the real world. In particular, the premise (axiom) about positive properties is rather vague, so it is unclear whether it applies to the real world. This causes problems with the postulate about necessary existence. The claim that being God-like (having *G*) entails having all positive properties, which Gödel also uses as an axiom (premise), appears to be untrue in the real world because some positive properties, such as justice, may exclude others, such as mercy. The net result is that simply formalizing Anselm’s argument does not overcome the objections to it, which are based not on a defective logical structure, but on the questionable truth of some of the premises, and the falsity of the suppressed premise that *if we have to think about reality in a certain way, it must actually be that way*. It is perhaps not surprising that Gödel would make this mistake, since his life was devoted to the foundations of mathematics, where objects are real but in a different way than in the world—they are real by postulation, not physically real. All that Gödel’s argument could hope to establish is the reality of God by postulation, which is not what such arguments are intended to do. Rather they seek physical existence, so to speak.

Summary. The conceptual or *a priori* proofs, though not sound arguments, bring into focus some extremely important

questions: (1) To what extent does the way we are constrained to think about reality actually correspond to reality? Does it matter whether we are dealing with finite (limited) or infinite (unlimited) beings, entities, or concepts of them? (2) How do we know that our intuition and reasoning are sound when dealing with the infinite? (3) Does it make sense to talk about something infinite as an “entity”? (4) How do logic (and mathematics) link to the real world, and by extension, in what way do the things that they deal with exist? These questions apparently never occurred to the propounders of the ontological argument in its various forms, but they are important in the context of today’s knowledge. No ontological or *a priori* proof can have even “probable persuasion” value unless these questions are given definitive answers, which to date they have not been given. Zubiri’s notion of postulated reality greatly clarifies some of them, however, as we shall discuss in subsequent chapters.

Cosmological or A Posteriori Proofs

Cosmological proofs are one category of what are sometimes labeled *a posteriori* proofs, that is, proofs that are based on our knowledge or experience of the world. That such proofs can be constructed appears to be confirmed by the words of St. Paul: “The invisible things of Him are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.” (Romans 1:20). Cosmological proofs accordingly always start with some fact or presumed fact about the world. Contingency and causality are often chosen, because of our observation that things in the world are contingent, not necessary, and events always seem to have a cause. By induction or generalization the chosen concept is elevated to the status of a universal principle or truth, which applies to *all* of reality. In the case of causality, for example, it is “every event has a cause”. (“Cause” here is cause in the traditional sense of uniformity, determinism, and contiguity, and it refers to things in the “outside” world, not to our own ideas). The idea behind any cosmological proof is to show that *a*

paradox arises unless there is some type of entity existing outside of our world whose existence precludes the paradox, and who must therefore exist. In the case of causality, the paradox is that there will be an infinite regress of causes, and nothing would ever happen; therefore to prevent this impossible situation there must be a First Cause, which is then identified with God. Obviously the critical step in any cosmological proof is the induction, whereby a fact drawn from our realm of experience is converted into a universal principle. Ideally the fact is so self-evident, and conceptually so clear, that no one can seriously question it. In practice, questions are inevitably raised—causality for example is a very obscure concept in many respects—or human knowledge may advance in such a way as to reveal aspects of the world hitherto unsuspected, calling the principle into question. Science, in particular, has allowed us to experience aspects of reality far removed from our ordinary experience, but just as real—at the level of the extremely small, the extremely large, the extremely fast, the extremely hot, the extremely cold, and well beyond the limits of our vision. In many cases, what we have found—and verified experimentally—is at variance with “common sense”. If the result is that the presumed universal principle becomes too controversial, the value of the proof with respect to conversion quickly collapses, *even if the argument used is actually sound*. Appendix A has a detailed discussion of causality. An important subcategory of cosmological proofs are the *arguments from design*, which will be considered separately.

Avicenna's Argument from Contingency and Necessity

This argument appears in Avicenna's *Book of Healing (Kitab al Shifa'*, c. 1027), actually an encyclopedia of science and philosophy, not a medical text. Avicenna's philosophy is heavily weighted to contingency and necessity, so his proof naturally emerges from his consideration of these notions. He starts from the “fact” of exist-

ence, specifically, the fact that our experience of the world manifests to us that things exist. It also manifests that the existence of these things is non-necessary since we observe that they (all) come into existence, remain, and then pass out of existence. This is “contingent” existence, as opposed to “necessary” existence, which could not come into and the pass out of existence. Something whose existence is contingent cannot arise, cannot come into existence, unless it is made to do so by a cause. Every chain of causes in the world must trace to an un-caused cause; otherwise there would be an infinite number of causes in the chain, which would therefore never terminate. This actual infinite regress of causes is forbidden because nothing would ever actually start the chain, so nothing would happen in the world (according to Aristotelian metaphysics). Therefore any chain of contingent existent things (entities) must have a beginning, which is its ultimate causal principle, a self-subsistent entity that is Necessary. This entity, which cannot be in our world, of course, is what we call “God”.^{15,16, 17} There is a suppressed premise, namely that every cause takes a finite amount of time to act, so an actual infinite number of causes would take an infinite amount of time for any action to take place at the end of the chain. (More or less the same assumption made by Zeno in his famous paradox). This is important, because today we know a great deal more about infinity and infinite series than did the medieval philosophers and theologians. For example, we know that an infinite sum

can yield a finite number (e.g., $\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{1}{2^n} = 2$),

which implies that if the time for each step or link in an infinite chain was smaller by, say, a factor of $\frac{1}{2}$, the chain would not in fact require an infinite time. One can also argue that Avicenna's claim of universality for contingent existence, i.e., that all things come into existence and later perish, is a generalization that might not be true for everything in the universe; certainly the Greeks did not think that it was

true of the universe itself. Of course, Avicenna could argue that the origin of the universe in time is a truth of revelation; but that would in effect beg the whole question of the existence of God. And Avicenna's argument, of course, rests squarely on the usual causality principle, viz. that every event must have a cause, in particular, an efficient cause—another claim that does not seem to square with our understanding of the quantum world.

Aquinas' Five Ways

The most important and best-known cosmological arguments for the existence of God are those given by St. Thomas in Part I of the *Summa Theologica*. St. Thomas accepts Aristotle's philosophical principles as more or less as synonymous with reason itself, and therefore constructs his proofs *on the basis of those principles*. Perhaps the most important of these principles—or better, underlying assumptions—is the notion of *sensible intelligence*. This paradigm of knowing is the belief that all knowledge originates through the senses, which require the mind (reason) to assemble sense data into something that provides us with access to reality. According to this paradigm, the senses deliver confused content to the intelligence, which then figures out or reconstructs reality. The Scholastics said, *nihil est in intellectu quod prius non fuerit in sensu nisi ipse intellectus*. This is the version of the logification of knowing used by St. Thomas; and of course because *ratio* (reason) is our primary access to reality, and (intellectually at least) to God, rational proofs of God's existence should thus be the starting point of any systematic theology. God then becomes a reality-object which is "out there". Much of Medieval theological effort (and theological effort up to our own day) was devoted to such proofs, such as those of St. Thomas.

St. Thomas utilized notions such as cause and effect, motion, and contingency. But he did not make use of them as everyday knowledge, as one might expect. That is, he does not start from our daily observations about causes, movement, and the

contingency of things *simply as facts about the world*. Rather, he framed his proofs in strictly in the context of Aristotelian metaphysics. Among the Aristotelian assumptions he made is the idea that things in the world are separable and act upon each other; this is the idea of *substance*. With respect to change, or movement, he adopts Aristotle's notion that movement is a *state of the moving thing*, which consists in passing from potency to act. He also adopts Aristotle's basic physics, according to which substantial change (e.g., wood burning to ash in a fire) is the result of something losing its substantial form, going to prime matter, and then back up again with a new substantial form. He accepts Aristotle's (and the Greeks') view that reason, unaided, can penetrate to the truths about how the world works. Perhaps most important for his theology, St. Thomas adopts Aristotle's reasoning about causality, together with some of the ideas from the Islamic philosophers about the productive power of causes. St. Thomas believes that causes are "out there", that we can perceive them, and that, indeed, everything that happens is caused by something. Causality in this strong sense is used by St. Thomas throughout his philosophy and theology; in particular, it plays a key role in the second of his famous five proofs of the existence of God,¹⁸ and in his explication of the Sacraments and sacramental efficacy.

In many ways, causality is the key metaphysical notion for both Aristotle and St. Thomas, because it is the basis of change in the world and at the same time our knowledge of it. St. Thomas' principal contribution to the theory of causality has to do with creation *ex nihilo*, which is a fact of Revelation and which Aristotle never considered. Aristotle's definition of efficient causality requires that one thing act on another, already existing thing, to bring it from potency to act. St. Thomas basically generalizes the notion of efficient causality to mean contributing being to, or contributing to the being or becoming of something else. Or in other words, efficient causality in the sense of creation

does not refer to motion and applies to the entire being of the effect, whereas ordinary efficient causality has to do with motion and applies to only part of the being of the effect.¹⁹ Thus Aristotle's efficient causality is a special case of St. Thomas'. St. Thomas also utilizes other vocabulary and concepts of Aristotle's metaphysics, including the notion of change as reduction from potency to act (first proof), the notion of separable substances (first proof), certain ideas about possibility and necessity (third proof), distinct degrees of being and notion that higher cannot come from lower (fourth proof), and convergence of cosmos toward an end (fifth proof). In every case, the soundness of the proof depends on the truth of Aristotle's metaphysics.

(i) The First Way: Change in the World

The first proof is based squarely on Aristotle's notion of change (*kinesis*) or movement as reduction of potency to act:

The first and more manifest way is the argument from motion. It is certain, and evident to our senses, that in the world some *things* are in motion. Now whatever is in motion is put in motion by another, for nothing can be in motion *except it is in potentiality to that towards which it is in motion*; whereas a thing moves inasmuch as it is in act. For *motion is nothing else than the reduction of something from potentiality to actuality*. But nothing can be reduced from potentiality to actuality, except by something in a state of actuality... It is...impossible that in the same respect and in the same way a thing should be both mover and moved, i.e. that it should move itself. Therefore, whatever is in motion must be put in motion by another. If that by which it is put in motion be itself put in motion, then this also must needs be put in motion by another, and that by another again. But this cannot go on to infinity, because then there would be no first mover...Therefore it is necessary to arrive at a first mover, put in motion by no other; and this

everyone understands to be God. [italics added]

Observe that this proof does not refer to simple fact of change in cosmos, but change as interpreted in Aristotelian metaphysics. Specifically, it is based on fact that for Aristotle, change is passing from *potency* to *act*. Any such change requires something in state of actuality, and in order to eliminate an infinite regress (the paradox), leads to notion of a First Mover or Unmoved Mover. This is change in an absolute sense: the entity which changes has to potential (potency) to be in another state, and the agent of change causes this entity to reach this new state, i.e., for its potency to be converted to an act. The entity now possesses or is in this new state, for any observer who cares to look at it.

But the idea of change as a passing from potency to act is an *interpretation* of the reality of change, not the *change itself*. There are other interpretations of change; change need not be considered a "state" of the changing thing, but a *functional relation between things*. Modern science, in particular, the theory of relativity, tells us that notions such as time and simultaneity are a function of the relative velocity of the observer and what is observed. Thus events that are simultaneous for you may not be so for me—throwing into doubt the entire idea of change in the absolute sense assumed by this proof. A common example often given in elementary physics classes is the moving railroad car. For an observer on the moving railroad car, the car appears stationary, and since the speed of light is the same for all observers, light from a flash bulb hits the two ends of the car at the same time, as shown in Figure 3-1(a). However, for a stationary observer, the light will hit the left side of the car before it hits the right side, as illustrated in Figure 3-1(b). So what, in fact, is the state of the moving car—are both ends illuminated simultaneously, or not? This is a very serious problem for the Aristotelian metaphysics used in the proof, which assumes that the car has been reduced to

a new state in an absolute sense that should be the same for all observers. This is an example of one way in which our experience of reality, enlarged by science, gives us new and better insight into time, causality, matter, and other areas that earlier generations thought they understood well.

Moreover, things may not even be separable in the sense required (*substances* in Aristotelian terminology). That is, in Aristotelian metaphysics, things are separate entities which interact causally but retain their identity (unless they undergo substantial change). This description works fairly well at the scale of ordinary life. But at very small scales, matters are quite different. The electrons in an atom form a probabilistic “cloud” around the nucleus, and are really not distinguishable in any physically meaningful sense.

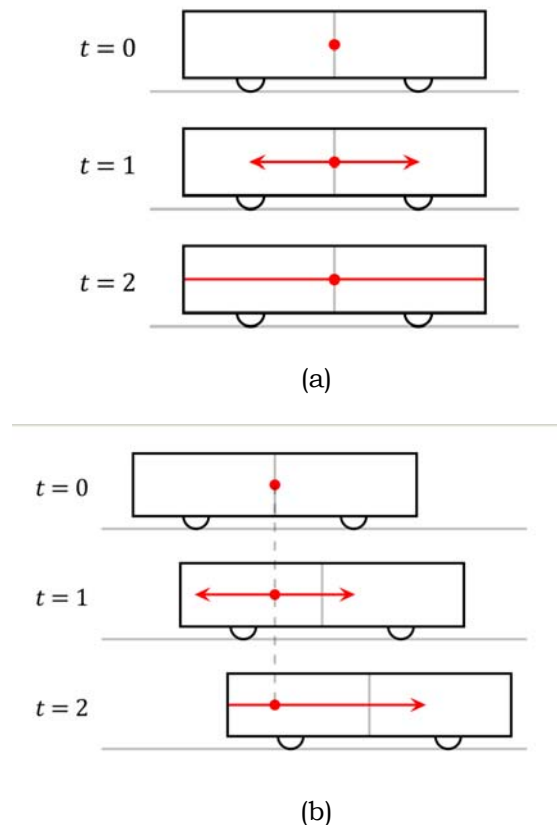


Figure 3-1. (a) Flash of light seen by observer on moving railroad car²⁰. (b) Flash of light seen by stationary observer

(ii) The Second Way: Causality

Consider the second proof, based on the notion of efficient causality:

In the world of sense we find there is an order of efficient causes. There is no case known (neither is it, indeed, possible) in which a thing is found to be the efficient cause of itself; for so it would be prior to itself, which is impossible. Now in efficient causes it is not possible to go on to infinity, because in all efficient causes following in order, the first is the cause of the intermediate cause, and the intermediate is the cause of the ultimate cause, whether the intermediate cause be several, or only one. Now to take away the cause is to take away the effect. Therefore, if there be no first cause among efficient causes, there will be no ultimate, nor any intermediate cause. But if in efficient causes it is possible to go on to infinity, there will be no first efficient cause, neither will there be an ultimate effect, nor any intermediate efficient causes; all of which is plainly false. Therefore it is necessary to admit a first efficient cause, to which everyone gives the name of God.

This proof utilizes the classical concept of causality, which includes uniformity, efficacy, the notion that every cause must have an effect, and the notion that a cause exerts a real influence on the effect. It is used because the idea of causality, in this sense, has been elevated through induction to a metaphysical principal with universal applicability, thus enabling us to draw inferences about things which cannot be directly perceived. *The proof absolutely requires belief in causality in this strict metaphysical sense in order to work.* The problem, of course, is that except for the case of human actions, we do not directly perceive the real influence of cause upon effect; it is, rather, an inference. Nowadays we commonly use probability and statistics to describe many phenomena. This can be merely a shorthand way

to get results, but in many cases it is not clear that everything that happens in fact does have a cause in the foregoing sense. And this is true in two senses, which merit further discussion.

First, in the quantum world, phenomena are governed by the *Uncertainty Principle*, which states that conjugate quantities cannot even theoretically be measured with arbitrary accuracy, and by Schrodinger's Equation, which replaces deterministic position and momentum with a probability cloud. Conjugate quantities include position and momentum, and energy and time. This means that prediction of the behavior of systems at the microscopic level is limited. Moreover, this limitation is not a function of our abilities; it is a reflection of the reality at that level: things behave *as if they did not have the classic deterministic quantities*. The position of particles can only be described by a probability distribution, and the particle has a finite probability that it can be *in many places at the same time*. When we observe it, and fix its place, we no longer know much about its momentum (speed). Moreover, this has been verified to an extremely high degree by experiments, and such quantum phenomena are behind macroscopically observable effects such as tunneling (a particle spontaneously appears outside a box within which, classically it should forever be contained) and superconductivity.

And second, at the macroscopic level, the level of everyday experience, we observe that causality frequently only exists in a statistical, not a uniform deterministic sense. For most practical purposes the nexus of causes is too complex to fathom and therefore to verify. The weather is an excellent example: the number of factors affecting weather is so enormous that we cannot say with any degree of certainty that every aspect of our weather is caused in the sense under discussion. If the weather is a chaotic system, which seems likely, exceeding small changes in one place can result in significant weather changes far away. If one objects by saying that if we could figure out all the contrib-

uting factors and measure them to the requisite degree of accuracy, we could exactly predict the weather, the response is that ultimately quantum mechanics limits the precision with which we can measure quantities. We would thus be unable to reach our goal. Many other examples can be cited where even ultra-small differences in value lead, over time, to significant divergences in behavior. The famous three-body problem in mechanics, or still more, the *n*-body problem (determining how three or more bodies interact under the force of gravity), is a perfect example. This makes it difficult to accept the classical idea of causality and of real production.

It is important to understand, in this context, that science is not some "different" knowledge of the world. When we look through a microscope, or through a telescope, or even use a particle accelerator to probe atoms, we are seeing the same world that we normally perceive, just smaller or larger aspects of it. So any principle such as "every effect has a cause" must be true at whatever level we explore. If our experience at these levels is different than that at our normal level, we must take the new experience into account. That experience, verified amply by experiment, is that causality in the classical sense breaks down at small scales, and this breakdown can be reflected at larger scales as well. If one objects that this may be true for science but is not true of reality in some other way, all we can say is that our experience of the world—that on which the traditional notion of causality is supposed to rest—when amplified by scientific instruments, tells us that every event does not have a cause in any observable sense. This renders causality in the classical sense extremely problematic for proofs of God's existence. It does not mean that God somehow has lost control of the world, or is constrained by the same uncertainty. God sees the world in a creative vision, not as a superphysicist, and certainly not piecemeal and in time, as we do. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," as we

read in Isaiah.²¹ To argue that God knows all things and therefore there must be determinism and causality in the classical sense is to beg the question with respect to proving God's existence. We must build proofs on what we can observe of the world, not on what our speculation about God's knowledge of the world might be.

As discussed elsewhere,²² causality is a *functional* relation among things rather than a deterministic connection mediated by a certain notion of causality. Thus the classical idea of causality required for the particular proof in question here is merely an hypothesis, or speculation, not a verified fact. Moreover, other metaphysical interpretations of "cause and effect" are possible, such as occasionalism. Curiously, Kant accepted the idea that at least as far as our mental processes are concerned, we are programmed to believe that every cause must have an effect, and that everything must be caused by something else that exerts a real influence on it. But he concluded that this belief is the result of the *way we synthesize experience*, not necessarily the *way things are in themselves*—they might or might not be causally related in this way, we do not know for sure. Thus he rejected the proof as a sound argument. Once again, however, Kant's rejection depends on acceptance of his own theory of the mental life.

(iii) Third way: Possibility and Necessity

This proof rests on the observation that things in the world are contingent—they do not have to exist or be the way that they are, and is similar to Avicenna's argument, discussed above:

We find in nature things that are possible to be and not to be, since they are found to be generated, and to corrupt, and consequently, they are possible to be and not to be. But it is impossible for these always to exist, for that which is possible not to be at some time is not. Therefore, if everything is possible not to be, then at one time there could have been nothing in existence. Now if this were true, even

now there would be nothing in existence, because that which does not exist only begins to exist by something already existing. Therefore, if at one time nothing was in existence, it would have been impossible for anything to have begun to exist; and thus even now nothing would be in existence---which is absurd. Therefore, not all beings are merely possible, but there must exist something the existence of which is necessary....we cannot but postulate the existence of some being having of itself its own necessity, and not receiving it from another, but rather causing in others their necessity. This all men speak of as God.

This proof hinges on induction from the observed fact things come into being and are destroyed, and hence they are not necessary, i.e., necessarily existing or necessary to exist. But this is true only if generation and corruption are not, in themselves, something necessary in nature. That is, nature itself may require generation and corruption of individual things, but still continue existing. The possible and the necessary are not given in nature, but are only inferences from it. If something can "not be", it does not follow that it must "not be" at some time.

(iv) Fourth Way: Gradation in Things

This proof rests on the notions of things being "better" and "worse", "more" or "less", "greater" or "lessor":

Among beings there are some more and some less good, true, noble and the like. But "more" and "less" are predicated of different things, according as they resemble in their different ways something which is the maximum, as a thing is said to be hotter according as it more nearly resembles that which is hottest; so that there is something which is truest, something best, something noblest and, consequently, something which is uttermost being; for those things that are greatest in truth are greatest in being, as it

is written in *Metaph. ii*. Now the maximum in any genus is the cause of all in that genus; as fire, which is the maximum heat, is the cause of all hot things. Therefore there must also be something which is to all beings the cause of their being, goodness, and every other perfection; and this we call God.

Clearly the proof depends on the observation or inference that there are distinct degrees of being, and a lower degree must somehow come from a higher. It also depends on the Aristotelian notion of classification of all things, and the formal causality inherent in that classification. Thus, the premise that “the maximum in any genus is the cause of all in that genus” only makes sense in the Aristotelian framework, and even then is highly dubious. We now know through science that fire is *not* the cause of all hot things (Aristotle confused *heat*, *temperature*, and *specific heat* or *heat capacity* in his writings); radioactivity or radiant energy in any form can cause things to become hot, for example. Nor does our experience give the required degrees of being—that is a very subjective inference that can only be generalized with great difficulty. Moreover, biological evolution can, if true, cause the superior to arise from the inferior.

(v) Fifth Way: Order in the World

This proof is an early version of what has become known as the *argument from design*. But because it is somewhat different in its approach and assumptions, we consider it separately here. The argument is based on the inference that bodies act for some end:

We see that things which lack intelligence, such as natural bodies, act for an end, and this is evident from their acting always, or nearly always, in the same way, so as to obtain the best result. Hence it is plain that not fortuitously, but designedly, do they achieve their end. Now whatever lacks intelligence cannot move towards an end unless it be directed by some be-

ing endowed with knowledge and intelligence; as the arrow is shot to its mark by the archer. Therefore some intelligent being exists by whom all natural things are directed to their end; and this being we call God.

The argument here clearly depends on the notion that all things act for an end. But the convergence of all cosmic processes toward an end is not a fact but a theory. Except for human affairs, we do not know if all things act for an end. This is certainly implied in the Bible, but without begging the question that cannot be introduced as evidence here. Therefore the proof is valid only if this theory can be validated without reference to Scripture, which will be very difficult. At least on the phenomenological level, living things act according to environmental stimuli, based on genetically programmed information and systems built on it. Sometimes this programming does not give the best result, as when a herd of animals stampedes and goes over a cliff. The degree to which the information seen in living organisms is the result of natural processes as opposed to external intervention is a hotly debated question in evolution.^{23,24} For entities such as rocks and stars, it appears that they behave according to physical laws which do not involve any end. Thus the premise required for this argument does not appear to be true.

Scotus' a posteriori proof

Duns Scotus' argument for God's existence is one of the great theological efforts of the Middle Ages. It is a very long and complicated affair, which comprises many interim conclusions and corollaries, and exists in at least four versions.²⁵ The argument involves a demonstration of what Scotus terms the “triple primacy”, a discarding of Aristotle's proof (of a prime mover) based on motion as unnecessary, Scotus' definition of essentially versus accidentally ordered causes, Scotus' argument from possibility, and perhaps most importantly, Scotus' demonstration of God as an infinite being. Indeed, for Scotus, the highest concept of God that

can be obtained by natural (as opposed to supernatural) means is of God as an actually infinite being. Thus any complete and comprehensive argument for God's existence must demonstrate that some being—presumably God—is actually infinite. This is in contrast to most Scholastic philosophy, such as that of Aquinas, for which infinity is a derived attribute, not something essential to the proof of God's existence itself.

There are three main steps in Scotus' argument: (1) there is a first efficient cause, which is also a final cause and a most perfect being; (2) these three orders or characteristics actually coincide in a single, unique nature; (3) this nature is in fact actually infinite. The first two steps together demonstrate the "triple primacy" of efficient causality, finality, and perfection or eminence. Scotus' procedure with respect to the orders is to establish that there is something first or primary in each order, next that it is uncaused, and finally that it actually exists.²⁶ The versions of Scotus' proof run to hundreds of pages and so only a few relevant portions of them can be discussed here; however, those portions cover key points. Here is a typical argument, this one concerning the primacy of efficient causality:

Among beings which can produce an effect one is simply first, in the sense that it neither can be produced by an efficient cause nor does it exercise its efficient causality in virtue of anything other than itself. Proof: Some being can be produced. Therefore it is either produced by itself or by nothing or by something other than itself. Now it cannot be produced by nothing, for what is nothing causes nothing. Neither can it be produced by itself...Therefore it can only be produced by another. Now let this other be called A. If A is first in the way we have described, then I have what I seek to prove. But if it is not first, then it is some posterior agent...Let us assume that this being is not first and call it B. Then we can argue of B as

we did of A. And so we shall either go on *ad infinitum*...or we shall reach something that has nothing prior to it. However, an infinity in the ascending order is impossible; hence a primacy is necessary because whatever has nothing prior to itself is posterior to nothing prior, for a circle in causes is inadmissible.²⁷

This argument is interesting because it shows both Scotus' great facility, and at the same time the lack of knowledge about reality that characterized the Middle Ages. We note two points: Scotus observes that something must be produced by itself, by nothing, or by something other than itself. He dismisses the second as impossible "for what is nothing causes nothing". But there is a problem here, which even Scotus missed. If we say that something is caused by nothing, we may simply mean that it came about *without an identifiable external cause*. This is not quite the same as saying that "nothing"—in the sense of *nihil*—caused it. It may have come about simply by the power of reality. This is exactly what happens in quantum mechanical phenomena, such as the spontaneous creation of particle-antiparticle pairs, or the spontaneous decay of a uranium atom. It just happens: there is no cause in the sense that Scotus considers. Of course, this discovery was the subject of great debate among scientists (see Appendix on Causality), but is now settled science. The degree to which this absence of causality on the micro scale affects events on the macro scale is not really known, especially with respect to extremely complex entities such as living systems; but that is irrelevant. Things can happen without causes, and this is enough to vitiate the argument. The second point concerns the *ad infinitum* argument. We now know, for instance, that an actual infinity can sum to a finite number, e.g.,

$$\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{1}{2^n} = 1.$$

So if the causes can act in shorter and shorter times, there can be an infinite number of them. For Scotus' ar-

gument to work, he needs to add some additional metaphysical premise to the effect that all causes require some minimal time to operate. This is actually an empirical statement and difficult to verify, rendering the argument problematic. When one makes metaphysical statements as the basis for an argument, and claim implicitly or explicitly that they are true of all reality, one must be able to justify the statements and the audience must understand all the terms well.

Now let us turn to the third phase of Scotus' argument, that which concerns the actually infinite nature of the unique nature determined in the first two phases. Scotus gives several arguments to justify his belief in the infinite nature as following from the triple primacy. Here is the first:

If the First Being, by itself and not in virtue of another, moves with an infinite movement, then it has not received such power of movement from another. Hence it has in its power at one and the same time the totality of its effect, because it has this power independently. But, whatever has an infinite effect in its power at one and the same moment is infinite.²⁸

Here is the second:

The things that can be known are infinite in number. But they are actually known by an intellect which knows all things. Therefore that intellect is infinite which, at one and the same moment, has actual knowledge of all these things. Now such is the intellect of the First Being.²⁹

Without digging too deeply into these arguments, we may note that they do turn on a presumed understanding of the infinite, both what it is and what it can do. What, for instance, is "infinite movement"? How do we know that there is an intellect which knows all things? In the years since Scotus' time, we have learned some things about the infinite and infinity, for example that there are multiple infinities: $\aleph_0, \aleph_1$ [Aleph null, Aleph one], etc. At

which of these levels does the presumed infinite intellect operate?

Scotus gives his conclusion as follows:

In the realm of beings there actually exists a being which has a triple primacy, and this being is infinite. Therefore some infinite being actually exists. This notion of God as an infinite being is the most perfect absolute concept we can have of him...Consequently, we prove that God, conceived under the most perfect aspect possible to us, actually exists.³⁰

This, then is the net result of Scotus' lengthy arguments. But it does leave the reader with an uneasy feeling that too many unverifiable assumptions about reality have been made, especially in light of the fact that assumptions at one time considered secure have since been overturned, with knowledge of events without causes, the failure of simultaneity, and the discovery of multiple infinities.

Common problem of all cosmological arguments

There is also a common problem with nearly all cosmological arguments: how does one get from what is supposedly proved (unmoved mover, first cause, supreme intelligence, plenitude of being, infinite being, etc.) to what we understand by God? How do we prove that an infinite being, for example, corresponds to our notion of God? With respect to Scotus' conclusion of infinite being, Zubiri notes:

The fact is that Scotus searches for what the Scholastics called "metaphysical essence", or the first metaphysical concept of Divine Being; Scotus believes he has found it in infinitude. But what we all understand by God, when we search for Him, is not a metaphysical essence, but something simpler: an ultimate reality, fountain of all the possibilities which the human being has, and from Whom the human being receives, through supplication, the aid and strength to be.

Therefore the infinite being of Scotus is not formally...this God *qua* God.³¹

Scotus' argument, in fact, seems to have things backward: God would be infinite because he is God; He would not be God because He is infinite. Of most importance is what function God has in our lives; if we cannot relate a metaphysical notion or proof to this, we have failed to meet our objective:

in order for this "ultimate" to be God it is necessary that He be at one and the same time and formally "possibilitating" and "impelling". Mere infinitude is not. Once again, at the end of these arguments we find ourselves in Scotus, as well as in St. Thomas, with a supreme being. But is this being God? That is the unresolved question.³²

This unresolved question suggests that other approaches to the problem should be investigated.

Arguments from design (teleological argument).

Things that are designed are all around us, and form part of our daily existence. They may be products, systems, or forms of organization (biological, societal, industrial, or political). We can readily recognize the hand of human beings in these things, and thus signs of intelligent activity responsible for design and execution, going all the way back to primitive stone tools. The argument from design builds on our capacity to recognize the tell-tale signs of intelligent activity, and looks at what may be termed *natural things*, such as flora, fauna, our planet, or even the universe, and infers that such things are too complex and too finely tuned (at least with respect to human existence) to be the result of blind chance. The inference is that the object in question had to be the product of some intelligence, some type of mind, and obviously it could not have been human intelligence or mind. Therefore it must be some supernatural power—God—that intelligently created

these things. The argument accords with key Biblical passages:

The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world. (Psalm 19:2-5).

For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, [even] his eternal power and Godhead. (Romans 1:20)

The argument from design has a long history, going back to pre-Christian times. According to Xenophon, Socrates (469-399 BC) observed that

...does it not seem to you like the work of forethought, to guard the eye, since it is tender, with eyelids, like doors, which, when it is necessary to use the sight, are set open, but in sleep are closed? To make the eyelashes grow as a screen, that winds may not injure it? To make a coping on the parts above the eyes with the eyebrows, that the perspiration from the head may not annoy them? To provide that the ears may receive all kinds of sounds, yet never be obstructed? and that the front teeth in all animals may be adapted to cut, and the back teeth to receive food from them and grind it? To place the mouth, through which animals take in what they desire, near the eyes and the nose? and since what passes off from the stomach is offensive, to turn the channels of it away, and remove them as far as possible from the senses?—can you doubt whether such a disposition of things, made thus apparently with attention, is the result of chance or of intelligence?³³

Later Cicero echoed this perception:

When you see a sundial or a water-clock, you see that it tells the time by design and not by chance. How then can you imagine that the universe as a whole is devoid of purpose and intelligence, when it embraces everything, including these artifacts themselves and their artificers?³⁴

There have been many variants on the argument, but these two early passages capture its essence very well. Aquinas' Fifth Way is closely related to the argument from design. The argument has a great deal of persuasive power, especially among those who study and meditate upon nature. One of its more famous versions appears in English theologian William Paley's (1743-1805) book *Natural Theology* (1802), which discussed design in the context of a watch:

In crossing a heath, suppose I pitched my foot against a stone, and were asked how the stone came to be there; I might possibly answer, that, for any thing I knew to the contrary, it had lain there for ever: nor would it perhaps be very easy to show the absurdity of this answer. But suppose I had found a watch upon the ground, and it should be inquired how the watch happened to be in that place; I should hardly think of the answer which I had before given, that, for any thing I knew, the watch might have always been there. Yet why should not this answer serve for the watch as well as for the stone? Why is it not as admissible in the second case, as in the first? For this reason, and for no other, viz. that, when we come to inspect the watch, we perceive (what we could not discover in the stone) that its several parts are framed and put together for a purpose, e.g. that they are so formed and adjusted as to produce motion, and that motion so regulated as to point out the hour of the day; that, if the different parts had been differently shaped from what they are, of a different size from what they are, or placed after any other manner, or

in any other order, than that in which they are placed, either no motion at all would have been carried on in the machine, or none which would have answered the use that is now served by it...the inference, we think, is inevitable, that the watch must have had a maker: that there must have existed, at some time, and at some place or other, an artificer or artificers who formed it for the purpose which we find it actually to answer; who comprehended its construction, and designed its use.

This version of the argument is famous because of its influence on Charles Darwin (1809-1882), whose theory of evolution was in some sense an answer to Paley. Darwin argued that natural processes could in fact mimic the activity of mind and create things that appear to be designed by some intelligent being. The theory of evolution, though widely accepted, is not without its critics, both inside and outside of science.³⁵ Some have noted that the observed complexity and fine-tuning in organisms and biological systems in general is extremely high, and so they have argued that the random processes postulated as the source by Darwinian evolution could not account for it even over time spans much longer than the estimated age of the universe (13.7 billion years). In addition they have argued that some of the transitions required by Darwinian evolution are not physically possible. They have therefore challenged biologists to demonstrate that they are.

Nowadays the argument from design is usually expressed in terms of physics and cosmology. Well-known versions have been advanced by cosmologists and physicists such as John Barrow, Frank Tipler, and John Polkinghorne. These arguments generally center on the fine-tuning of the universe with respect to its physical constants. Indeed, many scientists who are not "believers" have remarked on what appear to be extraordinary coincidences or unusual facts in physical theory and our ability to understand nature. Early on

Eugene Wigner commented on the unexpected effectiveness of mathematics in science.³⁶ Ward and Brownlee were intrigued by the confluence of conditions on earth that make life possible.³⁷ Michael Rowan-Robinson is fascinated by the fact that there appear to be only nine numbers needed to summarize our knowledge of the physical world.³⁸ Others are enthralled by the beauty and vastness of the cosmos, and this has led to high-profile conversions, such as that of astrophysicist Robert Jastrow (1925-2008). Many are fascinated by the sheer scale of the universe, as compared to human dimensions, and interpret it as a measure of God's greatness and transcendence. If our galaxy is taken to be the size of the continental United States (4200 km), then the earth would be the size of a virus (100 nm), and a human being about the size of an atomic nucleus (10^{-14} m). If the visible universe (about 13.7 billion light years) is taken to be the size of the continental United States, then our entire galaxy shrinks to 20 m, the earth becomes much smaller than an atom, and a human being is 100,000 times smaller than an atomic nucleus. But if complexity is considered, the tables are turned! As shown in Figure 3-2, humans are by far more complex than the vast galaxies. In a sense, these observations "answer" the rhetorical question in Psalm 8:4, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?"

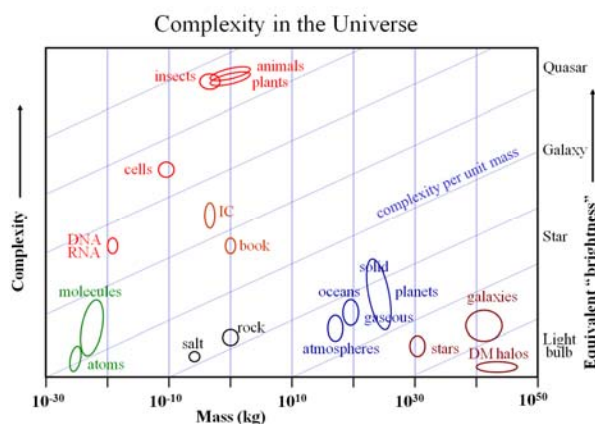


Figure 1. Complexity in the Universe.³⁹

Theological demonstrations often start from the observation that if any of the fundamental forces in the universe were slightly different in strength, or the density of matter in the universe was slightly larger or smaller, the universe would either have expanded too fast for structures to form, or would have collapsed, or even matter itself as we know it could not exist. In other words, the universe appears to have been designed in a sense to allow for the emergence of intelligent life. This is usually termed the *anthropic principle*.⁴⁰ For a rigorously sound argument, an additional premise is required, something along the lines of "such coincidences/harmony/beauty could not have happened without the direction of a superior designer". Such a premise is rarely enunciated, and in any case could never be proved; but it is clearly in the minds of those who advance the argument from design, which clearly has a great deal of persuasive power. This suggests that such arguments operate not at the strictly logical level, as do most types of cosmological proofs, but reach to a deeper level of human understanding, more akin perhaps to literature and art, which put us into contact with reality in a more profound way than purely rational arguments about prime movers or uncaused causes. From a strictly logical perspective, however, arguments from design all require a premise along the lines of "natural processes/blind chance could not by themselves account for observed complexity/organization/coincidence". It is extremely difficult to establish such a premise, because it is usually impossible to explore even theoretically all possible alternatives. For example, in the case of physical constants, while it is clear that changing one of them will make our universe impossible, it is not clear that there are not other combinations of them that could make inhabitable universes. Since there are an infinite number of such combinations, certainty about the uniqueness of our universe cannot be taken for granted (though it may be true). In the case of biological organisms, as discussed earlier, the theoret-

ical question of the “creative” power of random processes is not yet definitively resolved.

Proofs based on morality

German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) criticized both conceptual proofs (the ontological argument) and the varieties of cosmological proof for God’s existence, and his critiques of these proofs have become a mainstay of the subject. These critiques are naturally based on his own grand philosophical theories. Kant is best known in the English-speaking world for his so-called “critical philosophy.” Kant proposed that all previous philosophers made the same fundamental mistake: they believed that the mind, through sense data, tells us about how things work in the world. For example, the mind learns about such things as causal relations between things, Newtonian mechanics as regulating motion, and Euclidean geometry as descriptive of objects of all sizes. Kant said no, this is just backwards: the world does not *impose* order on our sense data, our minds *synthesize* those data in accordance with various categories, which include causality.⁴¹ This is the reason that we think things are related causally, the reason why Newtonian physics works, and the reason why mathematics—abstract knowledge—is so effective in describing what we see: the mind makes it so. This shift in the locus of causality and other characteristics of things from external things to the things our mind synthesizes is Kant’s famous “Copernican Revolution.”

The categories, by themselves, do not give us any knowledge of “things” in the world “except insofar as they can be applied to empirical intuition. That is to say, they serve only to make empirical knowledge possible. But this is called ‘experience’.”⁴² We can only perceive things as being and being related in certain ways, because this is the only way that our minds can work on raw sense data. But the down side of all this is that the categories (such as causality) are *unable to give us knowledge of any realities that transcend the realm of sense*. Once again, this

is because causality is ultimately the way we synthesize experience, and thus a type of order that the mind imposes on phenomena, not the other way around, as classical philosophy thought. This leads to a certain skepticism about what things are in themselves—the *Ding an sich*, in Kant’s terminology, and therefore about their causal connections; thus it undermines traditional proofs of the existence of God based on causality, such as Aquinas’ famous Five Ways.⁴³ In particular, Kant argues that we cannot know external things intimately enough to understand if there really are causal connections between them in the classical sense of strict and ineluctable determinism. Thus causality cannot be used as the basis for inferences about anything outside of our own realm of experience, and therefore cannot be generalized by any process of induction to be a truth about all reality. Hence it is not suitable as a basis for inferring God’s existence based on the presumed need of every effect to have a unique, sufficient cause. Because existence in Kant’s system follows upon the mind’s synthesizing activities—that is, the mind must synthesize sense data into something before we can say that it exists—Kant also argued that “existence is not a predicate” in the sense of predicates such as “red” or “hot”, but just a “position” in our mental picture of the world, not necessarily a reflection of something really “out there”. Therefore the ontological argument fails, according to Kant, as it requires existence to be a real predicate of being, something that makes a being “greater” than it would be without that predicate. Kant’s theory of mental activity leads him to propound another problem for traditional metaphysics: concepts such as “God” and “immortal soul” do not have meaning as representational concepts (concepts with which we can reason) because our mind’s synthesizing activity cannot give them any such meaning. So proofs in the traditional sense, that rely on at least some meaning for these terms, as most arguments do, will necessarily fail.

Kant’s theories, propounded two hun-

dred years ago, have a number of serious problems, among them the fact that they claim that Newtonian physics and Euclidean geometry work to describe our world because that is how we synthesize experience. We now know that Newtonian physics is wrong, and that non-Euclidean geometries not only exist but actually describe parts of the universe more accurately than Euclidean geometry, so Kant's entire theory of the mental life as synthesis is extremely problematic. Unfortunately a critique of Kant's philosophy is beyond the scope of this book; here we only wish to present the thrust of Kant's criticisms of traditional proofs in order to set the stage for his own unique approach.

Yet despite his criticisms of traditional proofs, Kant did not abandon the idea of demonstrating God's existence altogether, though he was compelled to take an entirely different approach. We say "demonstrating" rather than "proving" because, as we shall see, Kant did not provide—nor think it possible to provide—a "proof" along the lines of Aquinas' Five Ways, i.e., using what he terms "speculative reason" operating on concepts and knowledge gleaned from the world. This is because according to Kant, the key terms involved, such as "God" and "infinity" do not really have meaning for us; they go beyond any possible experience and so cannot be given meaning by our normal mental processes for acquiring knowledge of the world. Hence, as noted above, Kant argues that we cannot know God in the usual intellectual-based way, i.e., through causal arguments and the like, and therefore knowledge of God as envisioned by St. Thomas, Scotus, and others is simply not possible. Therefore Kant had to find a secure new basis for his demonstration. He concentrated on a key fact: we can know ourselves in a way that we cannot know the external world, and this—rather than the external route based on causality—is the real source of moral knowledge. This opens the door to a new approach, albeit one that does not yield the kind of knowledge the Medievals sought. Indeed it was Kant who first noted that *moral* truths

are important in what may be termed the objective sphere. According to Kant, some truths are known through morality, in the sense that certain actions are known to be right or wrong without need for any type of causal reasoning based on natural laws or empirical observations. Morality is unconditional because it is intelligible "in itself", and man is something knowable in the fullest sense (unlike physical objects). Thus moral knowledge is more secure than knowledge of the external world. This moral knowledge is impressed on man's conscience; in Kant's terminology:

...the moral law, although it gives no view, yet *gives us a fact absolutely inexplicable from any data of the sensible world*, and the whole compass of our theoretical use of reason, a fact which points to a pure world of the understanding, nay, even defines it positively and enables us to know something of it, namely, *a law*.⁴⁴ [Italics added]

This is ultimately the foundation for a demonstration of God's existence based on what, for Kant, is an incontrovertible fact, the fact of morality. However, it is not a "demonstration" in the usual sense—a point widely misunderstood. Because morality involves the performance of duty for the sake of duty, as a free act, freedom is the condition for the moral law, and as Kant's remarks above make clear, we do know that law. The existence of freedom, then, is known through speculative reason, i.e., can be demonstrated, while the immortality of the soul and the existence of God cannot.⁴⁵ But for Kant, the three notions of morality, freedom, and duty are inseparably bound together, and from them emerge, by necessity, immortality of the soul and the existence of God. Proceeding step-by-step, let us first review Kant's remarks on freedom in his *Critique of Practical Reason*:

The concept of freedom, in so far as its reality is proved by an apodictic law of practical reason, is the keystone of the whole architecture of the

system of pure reason and even of speculative reason. All other concepts (those of God and immortality) which, as mere ideas, are unsupported by anything in speculative reason now attach themselves to the concept of freedom and gain, with it and through it, stability and objective reality. That is, their possibility is proved by the fact that there really is freedom, for this idea is revealed by the moral law.⁴⁶

So for Kant, morality is not some subjective feeling, as it ultimately was for Hume; it is an imperative. Specifically, it is an imperative of reason, an *objective* imperative. Hence what it requires of us, what it demands, is included in and forms part of the objective world. Since morality consists in duty, and performing duty for the sake of duty is Kant's transcendental freedom, freedom is the "keystone" of the whole of metaphysics. Why does Kant say this? Because the fact that morality is thus objective entails, *as a requirement of intelligibility*, the existence of God and the immortality of the soul.⁴⁷ Now we can understand why Kant claims this:

The ideas of God and immortality are...not conditions of the moral law, but only conditions of the necessary object of a will which is determined by this law, this will being merely the practical use of our pure reason. Hence we cannot say that we know or understand either the reality or even the possibility of these ideas. Nevertheless, they are the conditions of applying the morally determined will to the object which is given to it a priori (the highest good). Consequently the possibility of these conditions can and *must* be assumed in this practical context without our knowing or understanding them in a theoretical sense...⁴⁸

So practical reason does not give us any clear "vision" of God or of immortality—that we cannot have—but does assure us of their reality. This pure or speculative

reason cannot do by itself. Freedom thus is what binds pure and practical reason together:

Thus, through the concept of freedom, the ideas of God and immortality gain objective reality and legitimacy and indeed subjective necessity (as a need of pure reason)...This need is not just a hypothetical one for some *arbitrary* speculative purpose, of the kind that one must assume if he *wishes* to complete the use of reason in speculation; it is rather a need, *with the status of a law*, to assume that without which an aim cannot be achieved which one ought to set before himself invariably in all his actions.⁴⁹

In what way are immortality and the existence of God objective reality, and how do they acquire subjective necessity?

The immortality of the soul stems from the fact that morality, which is purely moral, could not be accomplished physically in the course of a finite life and needs an infinite life. It also stems from the fact that *the happiness of which human being is capable would not be achieved perfectly if there were no cause outside of him*. Why is this so? Here a conflict between nature and morality surfaces. What Kant tells us is that this conflict cannot exist. The postulates of practical reason, i.e., the conditions of intelligibility of the moral imperative, are the real and formal coincidence between the moral and the natural, between nature and morality. Immortality is something demanded by duty in the order of nature; God is something demanded for the achievement of happiness. Precisely because because morality is an objective imperative, these conditions of coincidence have to exist; you must, therefore you can (*Du sollst, also du kannst*). Otherwise, whence is a categorical imperative to come, if this imperative does not have an adequate objective, and one which is objectively imposed? Because of

this, what pure reason has declared as merely possible—the transcendent—practical reason actually reaches; in this sense, at the hands of practical reason we have achieved a transcendent metaphysics, which speculative reason by itself was radically incapable of achieving.⁵⁰ [italics added]

So the fact that transcendental freedom is intelligible conceptually compels human beings to admit the immortality of the soul and God's existence in an intellectual way, not in an irrational or sentimental way. But this does not mean that the immortality of the soul and God's existence are now understood intellectually, through what Kant refers to as "representative" concepts, such as we might use for animals or physical objects. Kant argued based on his theory of the mental life that these two notions (God and immortality) cannot be understood in that way because our minds do not have the ability to synthesize sense data so as to form them, i.e., through pure reason. Attempts to do so go beyond sense experience and ultimately lead to contradictions—what Kant calls "antinomies". Why are these concepts of immortality and God constitutive and not representative, as are our other concepts, which come from speculative reason?

Simply because here the fact is not an *object*, but something that *ought to be*; it is something in the practical order, not a fact of the representative order; that is why the concepts are not representative. ...transcendental synthesis depends on the type of the given; and here the given is not a *subject*, but a *free determination*; however, it is rigorously intelligible, which means that it has intellectual predicates.⁵¹

Nonetheless, the reality of immortality and the existence of God is assured objectively by *practical* reason. So while they cannot be apprehended by the representative concepts that pure reason utilizes, the constitutive concepts of practical reason assure us of their reality, a reality of which we are unable to make a representative concept

(*uns keinen Begriff machen können*).⁵² Just what are the immortality of the soul and God? What does it mean to say that they are *conditions* of the necessary object of the will? Kant calls them *conditions of intelligibility of transcendental freedom*. Zubiri notes:

...they are not propositions that can be demonstrated; in this sense, Kant calls them *postulates*. What does Kant understand by "postulates"? They are not postulates in the sense of Euclid's parallel postulate. For sure they are propositions that cannot be demonstrated by speculative reason, but are objectively included and required in that of which they are postulates, i.e., in the very intelligibility of freedom; they are objective exigencies of freedom.⁵³

There remains the issue of causality, which Kant rejected as a basis for speculation about God and the soul in his *Critique of Pure Reason*. Causality is necessary for any significant moral theory; if no one *causes* anything to happen, no one can have any responsibility either. Kant is explicit about the need for causality in the moral context:

In the concept of a will...the concept of causality is already contained; thus in that of a pure will there is the concept of causality with freedom, i.e., of a causality not determinable according to natural laws and consequently not susceptible to any empirical intuition as proof...⁵⁴

Speculative reason recognized causality, and indeed made it one of the categories. But Kant, heavily influenced by Hume, would not grant to causality any objective reality in the traditional sense. Rather, it is restricted to temporal determination. But in the case of practical reason, the situation changes, because we now have strict causality in the intelligible world:

Because of this, what for pure reason was a possibility, for practical reason is an objective reality. Why? Because

practical reason has a fact completely absent in theoretical reason, i.e., the absolute fact of morality, the fact of the will. As a determination of the will in and by itself, this determination is duty for the sake of duty. Morality exists only when something is done because it should be done, independently of any other empirical consideration: duty for the sake of duty. Consequently the self-determination of the will, which involves the formula of duty for the sake of duty, consists purely and simply in freedom. In other words, freedom, for Kant, is not the decision to break or change some temporal succession, but of now being determined to myself and by myself in the intelligible order; it is a *transcendental freedom*.⁵⁵

Summary of Kant's "demonstration" of the existence of God

The moral law—duty for the sake of duty—is an objective imperative that requires the notion of transcendental freedom. What is “duty” is determined by the categorical imperative. Morality itself cannot be attained in a finite life, and man’s own happiness requires something outside of himself as guarantee. So immortality of the soul and the existence of God are two *conditions* for the existence of morality as an objective imperative. We do not understand immortality and the existence of God as representative concepts, and therefore cannot use them in logical arguments; but through the concept of freedom we know that they have objective reality.

It is important to understand the real nature of Kant’s argument, because it is widely misunderstood and misrepresented. The usual argument employed in morality-based proofs for the existence of God goes as follows:⁵⁶

1. Morality would not be a rational enterprise if there were no moral order in the world.
2. Only the existence of God traditionally conceived could support

the hypothesis that there is a moral order in the world.

3. Therefore, there is a God.

Kant’s argument is sometimes put into the form of a logical deduction in the following way:⁵⁷

1. It is rationally and morally necessary to attain the perfect good (happiness arising out of complete virtue).
2. What we are obliged to attain, it must be possible for us to attain.
3. Attaining the perfect good is only possible if natural order and causality are part of an overarching moral order and causality.
4. Moral order and causality are only possible if we postulate a God as their source

However, as we have seen, this is not really the thrust of Kant’s demonstration, since this schematized version runs along the lines of demonstrations that treat God and immortality as common or representative concepts—something they are not in his philosophy. The real flow for Kant’s demonstration is morality, duty, transcendental freedom, and the implication of immortality of the soul and God’s existence, as realities which are indeed real but not knowable as representative concepts. However, as noted above, immortality of the soul and God’s existence emerge as intrinsic requirements of intelligibility from the objectivity of morality. They are not “demonstrated” or “proved” in a formal sense. Nor do they become concepts in the way envisioned by this schematization.

As a result, any critique of Kant’s proof must center on his philosophy as a whole, and in particular, his theory of the mental life. If his conception of knowledge as the result of synthesis of sense data according to his categories is incorrect, then much of the rest of his philosophy goes down with it. There is considerable reason to doubt Kant’s system. On the one hand, it is clear that his ideas about synthesis of sense data in accordance with

Euclidean geometry and Newtonian physics is just plain wrong: there are other geometries besides Euclidean, and Newton's laws are only an approximation to more accurate descriptions of nature. We now understand much more about nature and physical reality than Kant, and also realize much more about how mathematics and theories interact to produce that knowledge. On the other hand, Kant's view that we cannot have direct experience of reality, but can only have it as mediated by the synthesis activity of the mind, is also wrong. Kant was ultimately a prisoner of empiricism, the belief that we are given only sense data, from which we must construct reality using reason. As Zubiri has pointed out, rational knowledge—the only kind Kant considered—is the last, not the first stage of human knowing. The first stage puts us into direct contact with reality, and it is on that foundation that the second stage (logos) and the third stage (reason) can be erected. In effect, Kant missed a large part of human knowing. Nonetheless he had some valuable ideas about the importance of our knowledge of morality and causality.

Proofs based on direct human experience

Zubiri reflected on this situation—endless argument about causality, predicates, perfection, conception and so forth—and realized that we must step back from these controversies and reexamine the whole enterprise, especially before embarking upon something as complicated and far-reaching as a proof of God's existence. In particular, Zubiri believes that three crucial assumptions have been made in the past, but never really examined critically or even recognized in an explicit way. First is the notion that God is some type of reality *object*—different perhaps than rocks, animals, stars, and so forth, but still an object whose existence is to be proved or demonstrated, like that of any other object. Second, all proposed proofs and demonstrations have operated at the level of reason,

that is, they are based on “arguments” that make use of some more-or-less complex chain of reasoning. Third, it is usually assumed that we can immediately reach the notion of “God” and know what we are talking about. For Zubiri, all of these assumptions are wrong. God is not a reality *object*—objects are what form our world of finite intelligence—but a reality *ground*. This will be discussed below. The second assumption reflects a seriously confused view of human knowing. We shall address this assumption first. The third assumption does not reflect the way our knowledge of God proceeds. This will also be discussed below.

Human Knowing and Proofs. While both Hume and Kant attempted an examination of human knowing, both ultimately failed. According to Zubiri, they failed because they sought our direct or at least most important contact with reality through “higher” reasoning processes, through knowledge such as science. Zubiri observed that our process of knowing actually involves three steps that unfold logically if not chronologically in the following sequence, which constitutes the core of Zubiri's theory of human knowing, called *Sentient Intelligence*:

- Primordial apprehension of reality (or basic, direct installation in reality, giving us pure and simple reality)
- Logos (explanation of what something is *vis à vis* other things, or what the real of primordial apprehension is in reality)
- Reason (or *ratio*, methodological explanation of what things are and why they are, as in done in science, for example)

Our most direct contact with reality is not by any reasoning process, but directly in the first phase of sentient intelligence, what Zubiri refers to as *primordial apprehension of reality*. In contrast, for Aristotle, St. Thomas, and most of the Western philosophical tradition, knowledge *par excellence* was rational knowledge,

knowledge at the third level. For them it is reason which puts us into whatever contact we have with reality. This belief Zubiri terms “logification of knowing”. For Zubiri, rational knowledge is extremely important but cannot be the basis for knowledge in general, as it is a derivative form of knowledge. In consequence, Zubiri does not construct “rational” proofs of the existence of God for two reasons: (1) such proofs, based as they are on *ratio* or higher reasoning (such as that about causality or act and potency), being at the third level of human understanding are *eo ipso* far removed from the most certain level, the first (primordial apprehension of reality), and thus cannot have the level of confidence claimed for them. Any “proof” needs to be based on a more incontrovertible foundation. (2) St. Thomas’ proofs and most other cosmological proofs require difficult metaphysical notions such as causality in the classical sense, notions which are not suited as a premise in the universal sense required for the proofs to work. This is because the universality of causality in the strong, deterministic sense required for St. Thomas’ proofs and most other cosmological proofs is never actually verified, only inferred from limited human experience. Except in the case of some human affairs, we cannot actually perceive the influence of one thing on another, only draw inferences. In any practical case, the causal nexus is too complicated. Ordinary knowledge of the world only requires functionality—a much weaker notion than classical causality, making the latter poorly suited as a base for proofs of God’s existence. Moreover, much of our knowledge stems from methods that do not involve causality at all.

Steps in knowledge of God. Just as human knowledge itself, and our contact with reality, are based on the three phases of human understanding, so any effort to know or prove anything about divinity must likewise proceed appropriately. And attempting to do so first at the level of reason, of *ratio*, is akin to trying to learn to run before learning to walk, as discussed above. This is the fundamental error of

virtually all earlier efforts to prove God’s existence: they started at the level of reason when they should have started at the level of primordial apprehension. But just what does this mean? It means that we must begin with our most basic experiences of the world, and those that are relevant are our experience of the *power of the real*, the *nature of the human person*, and what Zubiri calls *relegation*. All of these are grounded in our primordial apprehension of reality. Understanding how they fit together is key to a more grounded approach to the whole question of proving God’s existence.

We begin with a discussion of the power of the real. Things not only act “in their own right” [*de suyo*] on others, but also have, *de suyo*, a certain dominant power over them. As part of the *de suyo*, power in the sense of power of the real, like causality in some of its meanings, is apprehended in primordial apprehension. It is a pivotal aspect of our direct contact with reality, both because of its link to relegation, its role in compelling us to make ourselves as persons, and its bearing of some of the traditional meanings and functions of causality. This “power of the real” or “force of things” or “force of reality” has long been recognized and reappears throughout history in various guises. Among them, there is the *moira* or idea of destiny in Greek literature. *Nature* is often regarded as the manifestation of the power of the real, especially when we are confronted with our inability to control it. The power of the real also affects us through things that are real by postulation, such as political entities. Today it is a scientific *law* that expresses some type of necessity or force in natural things, though the type and character of the law may vary, and its expression in mathematical terms is given by a functional relation.⁵⁸ The power of the real finds application in natural theology, because it pertains to real things.⁵⁹ Zubiri notes:

...In what measure does this power pertain to reality? Reality, by the mere fact of being real, has a capacity to

dominate us in the manner I just described. That is an incontrovertible fact, and not a theory. Hence, at no level is this capacity —by virtue of which a reality (not reality itself, but any ordinary reality) makes sense to man— independent of the properties which reality possesses. Obviously: if I wish to fabricate a door, I cannot make it out of liquid water, which has no capacity to be a door. The capacity which a real thing has to be constituted into any meaning, is precisely what in this context, not in others, I call *condition*. And thus, reality *qua* reality comprises that condition which affects it, and only by virtue of which can it be dominant in the form I have just described. If causality strictly speaking is the functionality of the real *qua* real, condition is the capacity of the real to have meaning, and consequently belongs to the real thing. Power is the dominating condition of the real *qua* real, in contradistinction to causality which is the functionality of the real *qua* real. And precisely because it pertains and belongs to reality in itself *qua* real, it is something which affects not only the attitude of man, but the very structure of things *qua* real.⁶⁰

This leads immediately to the notion of the deity:

...to this ultimate, possibilitating, imposing power I give the name *deity*. Deity is not God. I call it “deity” because of two reasons; because it will be the way that will take us to God, and also because in the end man has always sensed as power of deity that universal and dominating characteristic that reality *qua* reality has over him, and over all real things. Deity is not something different from the world, and real things. It is rather that condition which real things have, by the mere fact of being real, of some having dominion over others, and all of them over man, and man over the

rest of them: this is reality in its condition as power.⁶¹

Thus our first experience is a vague but forceful notion of the power of the real, the recognition that we cannot do anything we like but are constrained by something outside of and greater than ourselves. So our first, primordial apprehension is that of *deity*, not God.

Religion and reality ground. However this power of the real directly affects us—it is not just an abstract concept. This is because each person is, in his very constitution, turned toward a reality which is more than he is, and on which he is based. This reality is that from which emerge the resources he needs to make his personality, and which supplies him with the force necessary to carry out this process of realizing himself. This turning of a person to reality is what Zubiri terms “religation”. It is a turning toward some ground not found among things immediately given, something which must be sought beyond what is given. The theist calls this ground ‘God’. So the ultimate source of theological knowledge is direct human experience, given in primordial apprehension, not abstract reasoning at the level of reason. This is not direct human experience of God, as in a mystical vision (though that is not excluded), but rather our direct experience of a power outside of us, which provides us with essential resources to realize our lives:

Natural Theology has generally approached God in a conceptual way, making of Him what Zubiri calls a “reality-object” and concentrating all its efforts in establishing ways of “demonstrating” His existence....[O]n the contrary, God, if He is something, is not a “reality-object”, but what he called “reality-ground”, a ground to which, if it exists, we will be “religated” (religados), that is, re-connected. In contrast to the demonstrative ways, purely idealistic, Zubiri proposes the way of religation, for him the only one truly real.⁶²

In Zubiri's view, we are relegated to reality, because reality imposes itself on us in an especially forceful tripartite way, as ultimate, possibility-making, and impelling:

The experience of this imposition, of this power of the real which is a fact, is...the experience of the ground of reality, the fundamental experience which each man possesses as a theist, an agnostic or an atheist. The divergences begin at the time of intellectual discernment and volition when confronting this ground. For the theist, the experience of the ground is an experience of God, a God which is not transcendent "to" things, but transcendent "in" things. To reach God it is not necessary to leave the world, but to enter more into it, reaching its foundation or ground. God is at the bottom of things as their ground; and in his experience of things man has the fundamental experience of God. The life of man is woven into his experience with and of things; and as this experience is in itself an experience of God, it turns out that the life of each man is in some way a continuous experience of God. This means that the real God of each person is not a concept or the result of reasoning, but the very life of man.⁶³

Our understanding of God consequently changes in some ways from the traditional understanding. God is not a prime mover, first cause, or a superphysicist who rules universe by physical laws. Nor is He a concept, or terminus of a reasoning process, or a reality object. Rather, our fundamental experience in primordial apprehension is of God as a *reality ground*, something more immanent. This means that the separation of man and God, the traditional starting place for Western theological thought, is in some ways incorrect or at least inadequate:

...there is a human dimension formally and constitutively involving the problem of divine reality, of the *Theos*. The theologic is such by involving the

dimension that opens onto the divine. The theologic is, consequently, a strictly human structure accessible to immediate analysis...The clarification of that dimension is the true proof that the problem of God is a problem. The problem of God, *qua* problem, is not one arbitrarily posed by human curiosity; indeed, *it is human reality itself in its constitutive problematic quality*.⁶⁴ [italics added]

Thus far, then, for Zubiri the progression in thought is not directly to God, but involves three steps: Deity—divine reality—God. One cannot reach God directly by means of rational proofs, but there is a dimension of human beings that is connected to the divine in primordial apprehension, the surest contact with reality. But it does not give us knowledge of God as perfect, infinite, self-existent, or characterized by other high-level predicates. Rational investigations of God and God's characteristics, such as appear in part I of St. Thomas' *Summa Theologica*, are derivative in nature and require the grounding of the first two steps. Zubiri notes, "A person is not simply linked to things or dependent upon them, but is constitutively and formally relegated to the power of the real."⁶⁵ This power of the real *eo ipso* constitutes the very ground of personal life. Religion is not mere *linking* or *sentiment of dependence*, but the constitutive and formal turning towards the power of the real as ground of my personal life. This means that religion is a fact, first and foremost, and the key fact on which my life, my living, consists:

...religion is something precisely and fundamentally affecting the whole of my human reality, from my most modest physical characteristic to the most elevated "spiritual" traits. What is relegated to the power of the real is not one aspect or another of my reality, but my own personal reality in all its dimensions, because it is in accordance with all of them that I make myself a person. Therefore religion is a fact, indeed an integral *total* fact,

Finally, religation is something basic and radical. Religation is the very root of my personal reality. Not only is it verifiable and complete, but above all a radical fact. Therefore, religation is not one function among a thousand others of human life, but the root from which each life may become, physically and really, not only an I, but my I.⁶⁶

Religation is not a relation between humans and things, but rather the respective structure, the framework, in which the power of the real occurs.

The power of the real is the power of each thing *qua* reality, be it cosmic or human. My own substantive reality is enclosed by the power of the real. From this it follows that religation is not something human in contradistinction to the cosmic, but the very occurrence of all reality in human beings and of human beings in reality. Religation is at one and the same time and in a radical sense, something human and cosmic.⁶⁷

So given that we experience the power of the real through primordial apprehension, that we are in direct contact with this aspect of reality, and furthermore that religation expresses our turning toward the power of the real, does this lead to God? It points to God in a threefold manner, but is not yet a demonstration:⁶⁸

1. God has to be the ground of the power of the real. Therefore, he is *eo ipso* an ultimate ground, possibilitating and impelling. If, by way of religation, we reach God, we shall have then reached a God *qua* God.
2. This God has to be a supreme reality, but not a supreme being.
3. [God] will be a reality that is the ground of my relative absolute being. Therefore, He will be an absolute reality, not in His own mode, but *simpliciter*, a reality which is fully real and absolute, not "confronting" reality as such, but "in and by itself" *qua* real. This is what I

shall call "absolutely absolute reality"... "supreme" means "absolutely absolute". And this would be, if it exists, divine reality.

So we have the following summary of the argument thus far:

The way of religation to the power of the real is then an experience that sketches the figure of a God before my eyes as absolutely absolute reality, highest reality, possibilitating and impelling, which is the ground of the power of the real. Such would be the point of arrival of our way: not only God, but God *qua* God.⁶⁹

But this is not yet a proof; an atheist or an agnostic can still claim that this power we experience, while having all the aforementioned characteristics, is merely "mother nature" or an expression of our evolutionary roots. Indeed, *nature* is often deified, if only metaphorically. The final step is to note that the power of the real is itself grounded in certain properties that the thing, which exhibits the power, must have. But, this power of the real is ultimately grounded on the constitution of reality itself, not specific, concrete real things. That is, all things are real, but none of them is reality as a whole, none is reality itself. But

...reality itself is real because it determines me physically, making me be relatively absolute. Therefore, there is another reality on which reality itself is grounded. And this reality is not one more concrete thing, because it is not "a" reality but the ground of reality itself. And as ground of a power determining my relatively absolute being, *it must be an absolutely absolute reality*. This is just what the reality of God is. *Only because this reality exists can there be a power of the real determining me in my relative absolute being.*⁷⁰ [italics added]

As we have seen, we find this power of the real in the reality of each individual, concrete thing. Since this power must be

grounded on an absolutely absolute reality, i.e., the reality of God, it follows that God is present in things *formally*, constituting them as real, as real things. Hence the reality of each thing is itself constituted “in God.”⁷¹ So God is not in each real thing as some sort of addition to it, but is there in a formal way. Hence every real thing is, intrinsically, ambivalent: it has its own irreducible reality, its power; but it is constituted, formally, in the absolutely absolute reality, God. This means that without God in each thing, in this formal way, it would not be real. Thus each thing is both “its own” reality *and at the same time* a presence of reality itself—the reason why the power of the real is in it and manifest to us. Therefore God exists, and is the ground of both the reality of each thing and source of the power of the real in it.

The four steps in the argument can now be summarized:⁷²

1. Through primordial apprehension, we know that each human being, as such, has life as a person. That life consists in self-possession, self-actualization, which, through religation, making its own *I*, making its own being. This type of being is absolute but an acquired absolute—we do not make ourselves from nothing. So it is therefore a *relatively absolute* being.
2. Also through primordial apprehension we understand this absolute being as something acquired by the physical determination of the power of the real as something ultimate, possibilitating, and impelling, which allows us to carry out the process of making ourselves, while at the same time manifesting to us something about reality. This indicates that there is something transcendent about reality, which is not yet God.
3. But this power of the real goes beyond the power of each individual real thing; it is “more” than that power, thus indicating that we cannot stop here.
4. The power of the real must itself be grounded in something, and that “something” is the nature of reality itself. That is, this power of the real is grounded on an *absolutely absolute reality*, which is distinct from real things. This reality, which thus formally constitutes things as real things, is God.

Thus by the constituting presence of God in each thing, and at the same time the presence of each thing in God, does the power through and by which I live become possible. This is the power through and by which I make my absolute *I*; through and by which I make my life, I create my life, with things. Without them, naturally, I would not be able to live. So:

...what I do with them, I do thanks to the fact that they are constituted as real in God. Without God as a formally constitutive moment of the reality of things they would lack their primary and radical condition of being determinants of my being, simply because they would not be “reality”. And conversely, only by being real do they have that power, and they are real only by being so in God. Thanks to this, my being is grounded in God insofar as He is constitutively present in a formal way in what things have of reality. Real things, through their power of the real, give me God in their very reality when they give me their reality. *To justify the existence of God is simply to explain the truth of this phrase.*⁷³ [italics added]

But this argument is not a speculative argument along the lines of the various cosmological proofs, or a chain of reasoning with strict logical rigor. It is an intellectual knowing of the true course of religation in our lives. Indeed, it is something whose force only becomes apparent through the progression of one’s life. Any discussion of proofs of God’s existence must look first at the fundamental nature of human person, a knowledge based more on primordial apprehension of reality.

This is because our knowledge of human person much better than that of things of world—on this point, at least, Kant had the right idea. The person is, in his very constitution, turned toward a reality which is more than he is, and on which he is based. This reality is that from which emerge the resources he needs to make his personality, and which supplies him with the force necessary to carry out this

process of realizing himself. This turning of a person to reality is *religation*. It is a turning toward some ground not found among things immediately given, something which must be sought beyond what is given. The theist calls this ground 'God'. Thus the progression in our knowledge of God's existence is not the cosmological route:

rational reasoning
process

Fact about the world $\Rightarrow$ God as first cause, prime mover, etc.

Rather, the progression is:

primordial primordial logos, reason
apprehension apprehension

Power of the real $\Rightarrow$ Religation $\Rightarrow$ Deity $\Rightarrow$ God as reality ground

Thus the proof, which is not a strictly deductive argument, but one that makes us look into ourselves at a deep level, ends up with a God whom we can worship and to whom prayers can be made, not an unmoved mover.

Proofs based on inference to the best explanation.

Inference to the best explanation is a commonly employed tool in many areas of study, including science, history, and philosophy. The basic idea behind it is simple: when one considers the range of possible explanations for some phenomenon or set of phenomena, one explanation emerges as significantly better than the others—better in the sense that it gives a more plausible explanation, covers a wider range of phenomena, relies less on *ad hoc* hypotheses, is simpler, is more elegant, or some combination of these. The result is not certainty, but varying degrees of probability. Inference to the best explanation is the idea behind Sherlock Holmes' famous dictum, "when you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth".

Consider the following example: in the United States, one can purchase "vanity" license plates, which may contain words. Imagine that you walk down the street and see that the license plates on eight successive cars spell out Hamlet's famous speech, "Oh that", "this too" "too solid" "flesh" "would melt" "and resolve" "itself" "into a dew". Now, there are several possible explanations, among them: (1) it could just be a grand coincidence; (2) the license plates were covered over by someone with cardboard sheets containing the words as some sort of a prank; (3) the cars belong to members of a Shakespeare club or other organization. Few people would accept (1); the coincidence is just too great. A quick inspection might rule out (2), which most people would reject anyway because tampering with license plates is very unusual. This leaves (3) as the best explanation. It is not certain, but has a high degree of probability, which is all that this type of argument can provide.

In a similar way, one can examine the world and conclude that the existence and perhaps benevolence of God is the best explanation for things such as widespread

belief in God, order and beauty in the universe, self-denial on the part of Christians or other religious believers, existence of monasteries, beautiful churches, and miracles, just to give a few examples. The argument is especially telling with cases of extraordinary coincidence, such as that involving the physical constants responsible for the structure of matter, including the speed of light c , the fundamental electric charge q , Planck's constant h , the gravity constant G , and several others. What is remarkable about this coincidence is that were even one of these slightly different than it is, the universe as we know it would disappear. This coincidence is the basis of the *anthropic principle*, discussed above in connection with arguments from design. In fact there is some overlap between the argument from design and inference to the best explanation; but the inference to best explanation does not have to rely on perceived design. As we have seen, coincidence or beauty will also do quite well. For example, with respect to the origin of life, many have looked at the extraordinary coincidences necessary for a self-replicating entity to emerge spontaneously from an organic "soup", and concluded that the odds against it are so astronomical that it could never have occurred spontaneously, involving as it does many complex proteins that would have to form and come together under just the right conditions.⁷⁴ Despite the fact that they do not yield absolute certainty, such "proofs" can be very useful and quite influential for certain people who are open to supernatural explanations and who deeply perceive beauty, order, and other such experiences of daily life.

Along these same lines, one could also cite the increasing reliance of modern physics on symmetries in nature. Indeed, symmetry principles are often used not only to justify theories or to formulate them, but as a tool for discovery of new particles. The current "standard model" of high-energy physics is heavily indebted to symmetry, and formulated in terms of it.⁷⁵ The great symmetries of nature point to design as perhaps the best explanation.

Scientifically-based cosmological proofs

Another area where inference to the best explanation comes into play is scientifically-based cosmological proofs. Recently arguments for the existence of God have been advanced based on scientific developments, especially in the area of cosmology.⁷⁶ The primary finding of cosmologists over the past 80 years or so has been evidence for the Big Bang theory of the origin of the universe. In particular, the discovery that the universe is expanding (galaxies moving away from each other at high speed) has a particular implication:

If all galaxies are rushing away from each other now presumably they must have been closer in the past. Unless there was some new physics involved, extrapolating back in time there would be a moment, "the big bang", when all objects were concentrated at one point of infinite density.⁷⁷

According to the Big Bang theory, the universe began in an unimaginably violent event about 13.7 billion years ago, starting from a "singularity"—a point in time when matter was so densely packed in such a small volume ("infinite density") that the laws of physics, as we know them, cease to apply. Cosmologists do not attempt to understand the singularity, but instead focus their attention on the ensuing events. Evidence for the Big Bang theory is fairly compelling, and includes the observed Cosmic Microwave Background (CMB) radiation and the measured expansion of the universe. The notion of the Big Bang immediately suggests the question, "What caused the Big Bang?" Thus the new scientifically-based proofs argue from the fact of the Big Bang to the need for something to create the initial singularity from which the universe as we know it emerged. This creation is assumed to be *ex nihilo*, in order for the proof to work. The implication, of course, is that something non-contingent had to be responsible for what was a contingent event, the origin of our universe. It is thus akin to

Aquinas' Third Way, discussed above. The existence of God, as agent, would be the best explanation of the Big Bang.

The soundness of the proof depends perforce on the certainty of the scientific theory on which it is based, and this is always the risk with use of science as a basis for proofs of the existence of God. Cosmology is still a somewhat speculative venture, though the fact of the Big Bang is not seriously questioned outside of Creationist circles. Still it is a theory, not as well established as others such as relativity or quantum mechanics. Some have even argued for a cyclic view of cosmic history, wherein the Big Bang as we know it is just the latest installment (though there is no evidence for this). Others have argued for a "multiverse"—a theory in which our universe, with its Big Bang, is just one of many. Again, there is no evidence for this theory. Overall it would appear that the premises of the argument based on the Big Bang are reasonably well established, though not absolutely certain.

Another area where some have found fertile ground for a scientifically-based proof is evolution, or specifically, the Intelligent Design theory of evolution. Now it is important to realize that Intelligent Design itself is actually a scientific theory, which looks at the question of whether the mechanisms proposed by standard evolution theories (random mutation and natural selection) are in fact capable of generating the degree of complexity we observe in organisms. This is a scientific, not a religious question.⁷⁸ But if the Intelligent Design school is correct, and the mechanisms are inadequate, then the inference is that some external agent must have somehow caused the otherwise impossible transitions. That is, the best explanation is that God was responsible in some way for what we observe. The Intelligent Design theory is, however, much more controversial than the Big Bang theory, so the value of such a proof is correspondingly less.

Though these scientifically-based proofs are cosmological proofs in the sense that they start from some fact about the

world, they belong here because the provisional nature of most science means that absolute certainty cannot be claimed for them. This is an important point, so we shall expand upon it briefly. Science has taught us some things about the world that are as incontrovertible as anything that we know about it, such as the heliocentric theory, the existence of atoms, and the periodic table. The scientific proofs, however, are not based on these findings of science, but on much more speculative areas such as cosmology and evolution, limiting their certainty. It is possible but not extremely likely that this will change in the foreseeable future; so for now these proofs must be considered as delivering probable but not certain conclusions.

Summary

Proofs of the existence of God fall into five main categories: conceptual, cosmological, morality-based, experiential, and inference to the best explanation. (1) Conceptual or *a priori* proofs attempt to prove God's existence based solely on our concept of God, with strict logical rigor. The best-known of such proofs is the *ontological argument* first propounded by St. Anselm, and later taken up by Descartes, Leibniz, Hegel, and even Gödel. The main problem with these proofs is that they confuse the way we are constrained to think about reality with how reality actually is. So just because we *think* of something as existing, the thing in question does not necessarily have to exist. (2) Cosmological or *a posteriori* proofs start with some fact or presumed fact about the world, and then proceed by generalization or induction to make it a universal truth, on the basis of which a rigorous logical inference to the existence of a supreme being can be made. Most commonly *causality* or *contingency* is the fact chosen. For example, "every event has a cause" is taken to be universally true, and then the need for an Uncaused Cause or Prime Mover is deduced. There are two major problems with cosmological proofs. First, they depend upon the universal truth of the selected statement, which can rarely be estab-

lished. The progression of knowledge, especially in science, has allowed us to experience reality in ways far removed from daily life, and has revealed that what appears to be true at that level can be false at high speeds, small distances, or large sizes. We now know, for instance, that there are events at the quantum level that are “uncaused”, such as “virtual particles”. As a result, cosmological proofs suffer from an unease about the required universality of their premises. Second, there is the difficulty of getting from the supreme being they seek to prove to the God that we actually worship and want others to accept. (3) Proofs based on morality move closer to direct human experience. Their basic premise is that if morality exists, if there is such a thing as moral behavior, then some agent—God—must exist to guarantee the whole edifice. Kant’s proof is probably the best-known, but it requires his notion of *duty* as the foundation of morality, followed by a rather difficult argument to reach the notions of eternal life and the existence of God. Again the proofs purport to be strictly logical and arrive at God as a reality object. (4) Experiential proofs do not seek the type of logical necessity involved in the other three types of proofs, especially since

it leads to a rather sterile conclusion in addition to the problems of establishing the required premises. Rather, they start from aspects of human life, specifically our basic perception of the power of the real, and build on it. That is, they do not attempt to utilize unverifiable metaphysical principles such as “every event has a cause”, but are based on our directly experienced notion of dependence on something outside of ourselves to make our lives, something ultimate, possibilitating, and impelling. This experience is that of *religation*. Through it, we recognize the need to acknowledge something that is not yet God, but “Deity”. Then we recognize (at a higher level) the necessity of the power of the real to be grounded on something outside of itself. This is God, who is thus a *reality ground*, not a *reality object*. (5) Proofs based on inference from the best explanation, unlike those in the other categories, do not aim for certitude but just a high probability, in this case that God’s existence is the best explanation of some phenomenon or set of phenomena or facts. Most arguments utilizing scientific theories fall into this category, as do arguments based on beauty and order in nature. The various classes of proof are summarized in Table 1.

Type of proof	Basis	Method	Typical Variants	Certitude sought
Conceptual	Concept of God	Basically deduction	Ontological argument; Augustine’s argument on necessary and immutable truths; Scotus’ argument from <i>ens infinitum</i>	Absolute (probable for Scotus)
Cosmological	Fact(s) about world	Basically deduction; induction for some premises	Aquinas’ Five Ways; Avicenna’s argument on contingent and necessary truths; Scotus’ <i>a posteriori</i> proof.	Absolute
Morality-based	Fact of morality	Basically deduction	Kant’s argument based on intelligibility	Absolute
Experiential	Experience of religation	Basically deduction	Zubiri’s argument from our experience of the power of the real	Absolute
Inference to best explanation	Beauty; order; scientific theory	Inference	Arguments from order or beauty in nature; arguments from Big Bang or failure of Dawinian theory	High probability

Table 1. Summary of Types of Arguments for Existence of God

Notes

- ¹ The text of this article will appear in a revised form in a forthcoming book on Zubiri's theology, co-written by several Zubiri scholars.
- ² St. Athanasius of Alexandria, *De Incarnatione*, 54, 3.
- ³ St. John Damascene, *De Fide Orthodoxia*, i, 1, 3.
- ⁴ Augustine, *Confessions*, 1, 11, 17.
- ⁵ Augustine, *Confessions*, 8, 5, 10.
- ⁶ Proofs such as this, based on particular aspects of human experience, are sometimes termed "anthropological proofs".
- ⁷ Descartes, *Meditation* 10.
- ⁸ *Summa Theologica*, I, q2, a1, translation by Fathers of the English Dominican Province, 1920, available at <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/1002.htm>.
- ⁹ Francisco Muñiz, O.P., Introduction to question 2 in volume I of the bilingual edition (Spanish/Latin) of the *Summa Theologica* published by the Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 3rd edition, Madrid, 1964, p. 288.
- ¹⁰ David Hume, *Treatise on Human Nature*, I, 4, 2, 39; I, 4, 6, 3.
- ¹¹ Scotus, *Reportata Parisiensia*, 1, 2, 3, no. 8; Frederick Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, vol. 2, *Medieval Philosophy*, Part II, Garden City, New York: Image Books, 1962, p. 249-250.
- ¹² Duns Scotus, *Philosophical Writings*, translated by Allan Wolter, Library of Liberal Arts, Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1978, p. 77.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 78.
- ¹⁴ Kurt Gödel, "Ontological Proof". *Collected Works: Unpublished Essays & Lectures, Volume III*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995, p. 403-404.
- ¹⁵ Miguel Cruz Hernández, *Historia del pensamiento en el mundo islámico, vol. 2, El pensamiento de al-Ándalus (siglos IX-XIV)*, Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1996, p. 463.
- ¹⁶ Article on Avicenna in *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <http://www.iep.utm.edu/avicenna/>.
- ¹⁷ L. E. Goodman, *Avicenna*, London: Routledge, 1992, p. 64.
- ¹⁸ *Summa Theologica*, I, q2, a3.
- ¹⁹ Meehan, p. 187.
- ²⁰ Source: User Acdx, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Relativity_of_simultaneity.
- ²¹ Is. 55:8, NIV.
- ²² Thomas B. Fowler, "Causality and Power in the Philosophy of Xavier Zubiri", *The Xavier Zubiri Review*, Vol. 2 (1999), p. 83-102.
- ²³ Thomas B. Fowler, "The Scientific Status of Intelligent Design", *Faith & Reason* 31:4 (2006), pp. 503-538.
- ²⁴ Thomas Fowler and Daniel Kuebler, *The Evolution Controversy: A Survey of Competing Theories*, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007.
- ²⁵ *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Vol. 7, Taylor and Francis, 1998, p. 160.
- ²⁶ This discussion follows the *Routledge Encyclopedia* article, cited above.
- ²⁷ Duns Scotus, *Philosophical Writings*, tr. by Allan Wolter, Library of Liberal Arts, Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1962, p. 43.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 66.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 72.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 80.
- ³¹ Zubiri, *Man and God*, tr. by Thomas Fowler, Joaquin Redondo, and Nelson Orringer. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2009, p. 96.
- ³² *Ibid.*
- ³³ Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, Book 1, Chapter 4, Line 6.
- ³⁴ Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, ii. 34. Text at <http://thriceholly.net/Texts/Memorabilia.html>.
- ³⁵ See Fowler, T., and Kuebler, D., *The Evolution Controversy: A Survey of Competing Theories*, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007.
- ³⁶ Eugene Wigner, "The Unreasonable Effectiveness of Mathematics in the Natural Sciences", *Communications in Pure and Applied Mathematics*, vol. 13, No. I (February 1960)
- ³⁷ Peter Ward, Donald Brownlee, *Rare Earth: Why Complex Life is Uncommon in the Universe*, New York: Springer, 2003.
- ³⁸ Michael Rowan-Robinson, *Nine Numbers of the Cosmos*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

- ³⁹ Source: Professor Mark Whittle, University of Virginia. Used by permission.
- ⁴⁰ Barrow, John, and Tipler, Frank, *The Cosmic Anthropic Principle*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- ⁴¹ Kant, Immanuel, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Book I, Chapter I, Sec. 3, B95.
- ⁴² Kant, Immanuel, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B147.
- ⁴³ Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I Q2 A3.
- ⁴⁴ Kant, Immanuel, *Critique of Practical Reason*, tr. by Thomas Kingsmill Abbott, First Part, Book I, Chapter I, text available at http://www.knuten.liu.se/~bjoch509/works/kant/cr_pract_reason.txt.
- ⁴⁵ Xavier Zubiri, *Fundamental Problems of Western Metaphysics*, tr. by Joaquin Redondo and Thomas Fowler, Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2009, p. 156.
- ⁴⁶ Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, tr. by Lewis White Beck, Indianapolis: Library of Liberal Arts, 1956, p. 3. For the standard German edition published by the Prussian Academy, the *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* is volume 5, and the quoted text is pp. 3-4.
- ⁴⁷ Xavier Zubiri, *Fundamental Problems of Western Metaphysics*, p. 156-157.
- ⁴⁸ Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, p. 4; German p. 4.
- ⁴⁹ Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, p. 4-5; German p. 4-5.
- ⁵⁰ Xavier Zubiri, *Fundamental Problems of Western Metaphysics*, p. 157.
- ⁵¹ Xavier Zubiri, *Fundamental Problems of Western Metaphysics*, p. 158.
- ⁵² Xavier Zubiri, *Fundamental Problems of Western Metaphysics*, p. 158. [quote probably from *Träume eines Geistersehers, erläutert durch Träume der Metaphysik*, 1776, mentioned above].
- ⁵³ Xavier Zubiri, *Fundamental Problems of Western Metaphysics*, p. 156.
- ⁵⁴ Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, p. 57; German text, p. 55.
- ⁵⁵ Xavier Zubiri, *Fundamental Problems of Western Metaphysics*, op. cit., p. 153-154.
- ⁵⁶ Taken from "Moral Arguments for the Existence of God", *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/moral-arguments-god/#BasArgExeKan>.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁸ Xavier Zubiri, *Sentient Intelligence*, tr. By Thomas Fowler, Xavier Zubiri Foundation of North America, 1999, p. 71; Original Spanish edition, *Inteligencia y realidad*, Madrid: Alianza Editorial/Sociedad de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1980, p. 197.
- ⁵⁹ Thomas Fowler, "Causality and Personal Causality in the Philosophy of Xavier Zubiri", *The Xavier Zubiri Review*, Vol. 11, 2009, pp. 91-106.
- ⁶⁰ Xavier Zubiri, *The Philosophical Problem of the History of Religions*, translation of Mr. Joaquin Redondo, p. 42-43; original edition, *El problema filosófico de la historia de las religiones*, Madrid: Alianza Editorial/Fundación Xavier Zubiri, 1993. [PFHR]
- ⁶¹ PFHR, p. 43, translation of Mr. Joaquin Redondo.
- ⁶² Diego Gracia, editor, *Man and God*, back cover summary.
- ⁶³ Diego Gracia, editor, *Man and God*, back cover summary.
- ⁶⁴ *Man and God*, English edition, p. 20.
- ⁶⁵ *Man and God*, p. 99.
- ⁶⁶ *Man and God*, p. 99.
- ⁶⁷ *Man and God*, p. 100.
- ⁶⁸ *Man and God*, p. 101-102.
- ⁶⁹ *Man and God*, p. 102.
- ⁷⁰ *Man and God*, p. 113.
- ⁷¹ *Man and God*, p. 113.
- ⁷² *Man and God*, p. 114.
- ⁷³ *Man and God*, p. 114.
- ⁷⁴ For example, see Fred Hoyle, *The Mathematics of Evolution*, Memphis, TN: Acorn, 1999, p. 20.
- ⁷⁵ Vincent Icke, *The Force of Symmetry*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- ⁷⁶ Robert Spitzer, SJ, *New Proofs for the Existence of God*, 2010.
- ⁷⁷ Ta-Pei Cheng, *Relativity, Gravitation, and Cosmology*, 2nd edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010, p. 186.
- ⁷⁸ Thomas Fowler, "The Scientific Status of Intelligent Design", *Faith and Reason*, Vol. 31, No. 4, 2006, pp. 503-538.

Teología de Xavier Zubiri: Fuentes, Perspectiva y Aporte Ecuménico¹

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Abstract

The dogmatic theology of Zubiri is presented as a theology of *mystérion* or mystery. Zubiri adopts the perspective of “mystery” to realize his synthesis of the principal Christian realities and to rethink the sacramental mystery as a proximate reality that *here-and-now actualizes* Christ’s redemptive action—both deifying and unitive—of his death and resurrection. This theology is congruent with the Benedictine liturgical spirituality of Zubiri and his understanding of the task of theology as an expression of what occurs by virtue of real and physical contact with Christ in the sacramental mystery. The sources of this theology are the theology of the mystery of the Benedictines O. Casel (1886-1948) and V. Warnach (1908-1970) within the liturgical movement, who follow the doctrine of mystery in the Pauline, Patristic, and liturgical traditions, and use auxiliary sciences including philology and the history of religion. Zubiri’s theology is an exposition of the “theological”—or man’s constitutive turning toward the problem of God—with the help of the notion of mystery, or *enigma*, of the real. This theology compels Zubiri to replace the dominant Aristotelian-Thomist conceptual frame by his own philosophy of actuality. His notions of mass, sacrament and tradition as the here-and-now (actuality) of the completed reality of Christ’s redemptive work facilitates ecumenical unity.

Resumen

Este trabajo presenta la teología dogmática de Zubiri como una teología del misterio. Él adopta la perspectiva del “misterio” para realizar su síntesis de las principales realidades cristianas y revaloriza el misterio sacramental como realidad próxima que *actualiza* la acción redentora –deificante y unitiva– de Cristo, su muerte y resurrección. Esta teología es congruente con la espiritualidad litúrgica benedictina del autor y su comprensión del quehacer teológico como expresión de lo que acontece al ser en virtud de su contacto real y físico con Cristo en el misterio sacramental. Las fuentes de esta teología es la teología del misterio de los benedictinos O. Casel (1886-1948) y V. Warnach (1908-1970) dentro del movimiento litúrgico, que sigue la doctrina del misterio de la tradición paulina, patristica y litúrgica, y utiliza como ciencias auxiliares la filología e historia de las religiones. También la Teología fundamental de Zubiri es una exposición, a partir del análisis de los hechos, de lo teológico –o versión constitutiva del hombre al problema de Dios– con ayuda de la noción de misterio –o enigma– de lo real. Esta teología fuerza a Zubiri a reemplazar el marco conceptual aristotélico-tomista dominante en la teología en ese tiempo por su filosofía de la actualidad. Su noción de misa, sacramento y tradición como *actualidad* de la realidad *conclusa* de la obra redentora propicia la unidad ecuménica que él anhela.

I. Espiritualidad benedictina y quehacer teológico en Zubiri

El filósofo y teólogo español X. Zubiri (1898-1983),² tras un año de noviciado-oblato durante 1937-1938 en el que recibe unas *conferencias espirituales e instrucciones* para profundizar en la Santa Regla de San Benito y en su espiritualidad, el 26 de diciembre de 1938 se hace oblato benedictino –junto a su esposa– en el monasterio de Santa María de París de la Congregación de Solesmes³. Adopta como nombre monástico el del santo benedictino, filósofo y teólogo del siglo XI, *Anselmo*.

Como *oblato*⁴ Zubiri vive en su ambiente familiar y social con el deseo de alcanzar una mayor perfección, esto es, de ir progresivamente configurando su vida con la realidad personal de Cristo según el espíritu de la Regla de san Benito y de la tradición espiritual benedictina. Siente la llamada a promover la unidad –consigo mismo, con Dios, con los demás y con la creación– y con ello a obrar la paz, lo cual explica la centralidad de la categoría de *unidad* en toda la obra del autor tanto teológica como filosófica y su anhelo ecuménico.

La vida de Zubiri en París y a partir de 1939 en España –hasta 1943 en Barcelona,⁵ donde enseña filosofía en la Universidad, y posteriormente en Madrid, donde sólo imparte cursos privados– se acomoda a la máxima que sintetiza la Regla de San Benito, “Ora et labora” (reza y trabaja). En su vida rige la armoniosa unidad entre acción y contemplación. Vemos seguidamente las características de estos dos pilares.

Oración y vida litúrgica. Las fuentes espirituales de Zubiri son la liturgia y la Escritura, que son propias de toda espiritualidad católica, pero en particular de la benedictina. La vida litúrgica impregna toda la existencia del oblato español. Por la liturgia vive la vida de la Iglesia, que actualiza los misterios de la vida de Cristo con el fin de posibilitar la unión con Él. Todo en su vida converge hacia el centro de la liturgia, la misa y la comunión, que une plenamente a Cristo y deifica el ser

del cristiano.⁶ Zubiri, además de vivir una misa perpetua ofreciendo sus acciones en el sacrificio de Cristo, profundiza sobre qué es la misa y qué opera tanto desde el punto de vista teológico como litúrgico para unirse más íntimamente a lo que acontece en ella. Su mística surge ante todo en el misterio vivido y celebrado, y su oración es ante todo la litúrgica, el Oficio divino, por el cual se une a la Iglesia en su modo de hablar a Dios.⁷ Asimismo, su espiritualidad se nutre de la “Lectio divina” u oración con la Biblia –libro por excelencia del benedictino– que, como el sacramento, actualiza el misterio de Cristo. Dedicar largas horas a estudiar salmos, evangelios, epístolas paulinas, comentarios de los Santos Padres a las Escrituras y lecturas santas⁸. La misa, el misterio sacramental y la Escritura son las fuentes de su teología y a la vez son objeto de su profundización teológica.

Trabajo intelectual. Zubiri se siente movido por la caridad intelectual –a la cual exhorta el director de oblatos– en su trabajo mental filosófico-teológico, que es su modo de entrega personal a Dios. Aspira a crear ideas válidas para que “algunos hombres dados a pensar tuviesen mediante ellas mejor acceso al sentido de su propia vida personal, de las cosas del mundo, y al cabo de Dios –o cuando menos reconociesen la necesidad humana de enfrentarse con lo que es raíz última, patente o vislumbrada, de la realidad”. Su teología, fruto de la fe que inquiere a la inteligencia, lo sitúa en cierta manera “en la línea de los grandes pensadores místicos, que buscaron llegar al encuentro personal con Dios a través de un modo –diré mental– de bienhacer a los hombres.”⁹ Su trabajo intelectual está impregnado del espíritu benedictino que busca a Dios con sinceridad en todos y en todo¹⁰ y que desea dar gloria a Dios.

Hay una unidad entre la espiritualidad litúrgica benedictina vivida por Zubiri y la síntesis dogmática que ofrece del cristianismo como “misterio deificante” a lo largo de su pensamiento. Su teología brota de su vivencia mística o experiencia transformante en el contacto íntimo y real con

el misterio de Cristo en la liturgia sacramental, sobre todo en la eucaristía. Y consiste en la expresión con el logos de lo que en el misterio (sacramento) acontece al ser, con el fin de que su mejor comprensión suscite la íntima participación transformante en el misterio litúrgico-sacramental. Su obra, inseparable de su vida, se adhiere al esfuerzo de los teólogos benedictinos de la abadía alemana de Maria Laach para renovar la vida religiosa en su tiempo¹¹, restableciendo la unidad entre teología y espiritualidad, entre teología del misterio y mística litúrgica (en el sentido de unión real y física con Cristo en el misterio) que mantienen los Padres griegos.¹²

Frente a la pura especulación teológica o simple meditación intelectual sobre la revelación, Zubiri recupera el sentido originario paulino y patrístico de “teología” como el hablar concreto y activo no sobre Dios, sino más bien el hablar de Dios a los hombres sobre Sí mismo y del mundo creado por Él. Así, el autor aspira a que su teología remita siempre al hablar desde Dios, tal y como se da en Cristo. Él explica que “desde Dios” significa concretamente “desde donde Dios se nos da, directa o indirectamente, desde la interna unidad entre Cristo y los ritos litúrgicos, desde la realidad sacramental”¹³. Recupera así la estimación que tiene la Iglesia primitiva sobre el misterio sacramental como la principal fuente teológica –“locus theologicus”–, además de ser la principal fuente mística o de la deificación cristiana.

II. Fuentes y contexto de la teología zubiriana del misterio

La teología de Zubiri se inscribe en el movimiento litúrgico que va desde principios del siglo XX hasta el Vaticano II. Dicho movimiento lo inicia el fundador y primer abad de Solesmes P. Guéranger (1805-1875), quien hace volver los ojos a la liturgia, la Escritura y la Iglesia. Estas realidades eran mal entendidas y/o vividas en ese tiempo como prueba la desvinculación entre espiritualidad y liturgia, la reducción de ésta a mera ejecución de ritos y la dedicación de los fieles en las celebra-

ciones litúrgicas a rezar sus devociones privadas sin reparar en la Palabra de Dios y el misterio pascual cuya actualización se realiza. Frente al empobrecimiento de la vida religiosa cristiana a causa de la relegación de la vida litúrgica, el movimiento litúrgico impulsa la centralidad de la liturgia, sobre todo de la misa como celebración del misterio pascual que se actualiza, y promueve el estudio de los misterios.

La condición de pensador hace que Zubiri se sienta inclinado hacia la orientación que adquiere el movimiento litúrgico en torno a la abadía benedictina de Maria Laach (Renania). El abad desde 1913, I. Herwegen (1874-1946), atendiendo a la idiosincrasia del pueblo alemán, ve conveniente dotar al movimiento de renovación litúrgica de una sólida y rigurosa fundamentación teológica conforme al espíritu de la liturgia, la Escritura y los Santos Padres. Con este fin inaugura el “Círculo académico” de estudios litúrgicos, bíblico-patrísticos y científicos, instituye la serie de libros titulada *Ecclesia Orans* y funda en 1921 la revista *Das Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft*. La aportación más importante del movimiento lacense es la teología del misterio de O. Casel (1886-1948) denominada *Mysterientheologie* o *Mysterienlehre*¹⁴ y la de su discípulo V. Warnach (1908-1970), quien será el filósofo de la *Mysterientheologie*. Esta teología se extiende pronto a la mayoría de los monasterios benedictinos de Europa, a pesar de la polémica suscitada en torno a alguna de sus tesis como el modo de la presencia del misterio (*Mysteriengegenwart*)¹⁵.

Zubiri, durante su estadía en Alemania entre los años 1928 y 1931, tiene relación con el movimiento lacense en su momento de esplendor y expansión. En 1926 la abadía de Maria Laach se constituye como “Escuela Lacense” a raíz de la publicación –con la que se hace nuestro autor– *Mysterium. Gesammelte Arbeiten laacher Mönche*. En esta obra Casel y sus discípulos lacenses recuperan la perspectiva del misterio según la hallan en la Escritura –sobre todo paulina–, en los Santos Padres –en especial griegos– y en la liturgia, entendiendo por “misterio” la acción

santificadora de Dios en el mundo y en los hombres. Reaccionan frente al empobrecimiento teológico y espiritual aparejado al moderno sentido intelectualista de “misterio” como doctrina oculta o ininteligible. Frente al intelectualismo e individualismo que desemboca en las guerras mundiales, ofrecen a su mundo desacralizado el retorno a la noción paulina de “misterio” – inagotable para la razón y creadora de comunidad– como núcleo de la comprensión de las realidades teológicas y fuente del ágape. Subrayan que la acción deificante y unitiva de Dios se ofrece al hombre de modo próximo y concreto en el misterio sacramental, el cual actualiza la acción redentora de Cristo en su muerte y resurrección.

En su estancia en Roma durante el curso 1935-1936, Zubiri participa de la liturgia con los benedictinos de la abadía de San Anselmo y ya entonces desea hacerse oblatos benedictinos. Profundiza en la teología del misterio de Casel en el Centro Universitario Benedictino de San Anselmo. Ahí Casel en 1912 ofrece su intuición básica en su tesis doctoral sobre la Eucaristía en San Justino.¹⁶ El pensador español se encuentra con A. Stolz quien explica en Teología dogmática el *Sacrificium Missae* y en particular la concepción caseliana de que en la misa se hace actual el sacrificio de la cruz. Y muy importante va a ser su relación con el alumno interno el filósofo Warnach, con quien hace amistad y comparte inquietudes en torno a la *Mysterientheologie*,¹⁷ en concreto sobre la noción de “actualización” (*vergegenwärtigung*), la más utilizada en esta teología después de “misterio” y la que más malentendidos suscita.

Zubiri posee en su biblioteca algún ejemplar –con subrayados– de publicaciones de la Escuela Lacense: *Ecclesia Orans*, 1922; *Mysterium. Gesammelte Arbeiten laacher Mönche*, 1926; *Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft*¹⁸, 1941, que dirige Casel desde su inicio hasta esa fecha y en la que divulga gran parte de sus ideas. Asimismo, posee las siguientes obras de Casel: *De philosophorum Graecorum Silentio Mystico*, 1919 (tesis doctoral de filosofía); “Die

Liturgie als Mysterienfeier”, *Ecclesia Orans*, 1922; “Altchristlicher Kult in Antike”, *Mysterium*, 1926; “Die Messe als heilige Mysterienhandlung”, *Mysterium*, 1926; “Zur Idee der liturgischen Festfeier”, *Mysterium*, 1926; *Das christliche Kultmysterium*, 1935 (síntesis de sus ideas); *Das christliche Festmysterium*, 1941; “Glaube, Gnosis und Mysterium”, JLW, 1941; *Misterio de la Ekklesia*, 1964 (conferencias publicadas a título póstumo). Y, finalmente, posee en su archivo un inédito incompleto de setenta cuartillas en alemán de Warnach, *Das Christusmysterium in der Geschichte. Ein Aufriß der Mysterientheologie nach dem Neuen Testament*, 1940. A final de agosto de 1939, el autor interrumpe ese trabajo ante la dificultad que le ofrece la cuestión que suscita la *Mysterientheologie* de cómo es posible que un hecho ya pasado –el acto redentor– se haga presente aquí y ahora en la acción cultural.¹⁹ Este contexto explica la definición de Zubiri de la historia como actualización de posibilidades.

A lo largo de la obra zubiriana puede constatar la influencia del espíritu benedictino y en particular de Casel y los benedictinos lacenses.²⁰ El núcleo teológico del pensador español, como el de Casel, es el misterio de Cristo, que se compendia en su muerte y su resurrección, y su actualización en la Iglesia en virtud del misterio sacramental y de la revelación para posibilitar a los cristianos la participación en la obra de la redención. La teología del oblatos benedictinos español es, al menos en gran parte, una teología del misterio inspirada en Casel.²¹

En la obra teológica de Zubiri se constata el conocimiento y seguimiento de esta fuente por la existencia de dos alusiones claras a la *Mysterientheologie* y a Casel, si bien de modo inexplicable no cita los nombres. Transcribo los textos: “Algún teólogo contemporáneo ha intentado dar un paso más. (...). Pero en la nueva concepción a que aludo se precisa más concretamente la índole de ese modo: lo que está presente es el sacrificio redentor en todo el decurso de su integridad”²²; y “yo me sumo a la opinión de los que creen que

en la misa lo único que se hace es hacer actual el sacrificio de la cruz, sacramentalmente presente.”²³

Las mismas fuentes de la espiritualidad benedictina que profesan tanto Zubiri como Casel constituyen las fuentes de sus teologías del misterio. Ellos no buscan hacer una teología propia, sino restablecer la tradicional, de ahí la preponderancia en sus obras de las fuentes de la Escritura –sobre todo paulina–, los Padres –sobre todo griegos– y la liturgia. Además hay que añadir el interés que tanto Casel como Zubiri muestran por la filología y la historia de las religiones como ciencias auxiliares para contextualizar el lenguaje de los misterios que usa San Pablo y los Padres griegos a partir de los misterios helenísticos y explicar sus analogías de modo distinto al recurso del sincretismo al que se refiere la Escuela de la historia de las religiones (*Religionsgeschichte Schule*). A continuación especifico lecturas que realiza zubiri.

Fuente patristica, sobre todo griega. En la teología de Zubiri los Padres griegos ocupan un lugar importante en cuanto que testigos de la presencia real de la obra redentora en los misterios (sacramentos) y la participación de los fieles en ella. Si bien para este autor la tesis caseliana de que *la obra redentora está presente por ejemplaridad en todo su despliegue en el efecto sacramental* no se halla formalmente contenida en los Padres, sino que una conclusión lógica -o *theologoumenon*-,²⁴ “el espíritu, los conceptos y las expresiones de los Padres griegos convergen asintóticamente hacia esta interpretación”²⁵. En la biblioteca de Zubiri hay abundantes obras de los Padres, algunos de Occidentes como León Magno, Gregorio Magno, Jerónimo, Agustín e Isidoro; y otros de Oriente como Basilio, Juan Crisóstomo, Juan Damasceno, Clemente de Alejandría, Cirilo de Alejandría, Ireneo de Lyon y Gregorio Nacianceno; también obras de patrólogos y estudiosos de los Padres –sobre todo de Clemente de Alejandría y su noción de gnosis– como B. Altaner, G. Bardy, Z. Baumstark, F. Buri, F. Cayré, L. Cohn, J. Daniélou, P. Galtier, J. Ghellinck, M. Gor-

dillo, F. Graffin y Nau, J. Gross, J. P. Migne, J. Moing, J. Riviére, O. Stählin, G. Thörnell y J. Tixeront; obras de teólogos latinos de inspiración helénica como San Buenaventura, Hugo y Ricardo de San Víctor; y, por último, obras de ortodoxos que recogen la tradición griega como N. Cabasilas, N. Arsenieff, N. Berdiaeff, V. Lossky, M. Lot-Borodine y A. Slomkowski.

Filología e historia de las religiones. La teología zubiriana utiliza como ciencias auxiliares la filología y la historia de las religiones para comprender el contexto originario de nociones clave como “misterio”, “sacrificio” cristiano y “tradición” en el marco realista, cultural y religioso de los misterios antiguos. Zubiri posee fuentes de A. Bergaigne, J. B. Chabot, G. Dumézil, G. Furlani, K. F. Geldner, W. Jackson, A. Jeremias, A. Meillet y L. Renou; y de autores de la *Religionsgeschichte Schule* como W. Bousset, A. Dieterich, R. Reitzenstein y A. Harnack. Además, realiza estudios filológicos que le capacitan para leer las fuentes y combatir errores en torno al misterio cristiano en el terreno en que se originan. Entra en contacto con orientalistas tales como el benedictino L. Palacios y A. Deimel, en Roma; y con É. Dhorme, J. de Menasce, M. L. Delaporte, R. Labat, E. Benveniste y L. Masignnon, en París. Realiza cursos con Delaporte en el *Institut Catholique*, y con Benveniste en *L'École Pratique des Hautes Etudes. Sciences historiques et philologiques*. En 1938 obtiene el Diploma de *Hautes Etudes* y es admitido como miembro de la *Société Asiatique*. En el curso *Helenismo y Cristianismo* en la Universidad de Madrid durante 1934-1935 es manifiesto este enfoque. Zubiri pensó en dedicarse a estas disciplinas por la gravedad de la problemática.

Mientras que en la teología de Casel predomina el método positivo y recurre a citas escriturarias y patristicas, en la de Zubiri y Warnach predomina el especulativo para afrontar las dificultades intelectuales que la tesis de la *actualización* de la muerte y resurrección de Cristo ofrece al pensamiento aristotélico-tomista dominante en ese tiempo. Zubiri contribuye a clarificar esta tesis caseliana desde su filosofía

de la “actualización” que replantea las nociones de causa-efecto, ser-inteligencia, espacio-tiempo y naturaleza-historia.

III. Perspectiva teológica de Zubiri: el misterio deificante

Desde las exposiciones teológicas de Zubiri en los cursos precursores de su trabajo “El ser sobrenatural...” (1944) hasta su trabajo “Reflexiones teológicas sobre la eucaristía” (1981) el núcleo teológico de este benedictino español es el misterio paulino de Cristo, y su perspectiva es el misterio según la tradición y la teología benedictina lacense del misterio.

A. Cursos teológicos de 1934-1944

Helenismo y cristianismo (1934-1935) es el curso que dicta Zubiri en la Universidad de Madrid. Trata el misterio paulino de la redención de Cristo y su prolongación en los sacramentos. Se centra en la dimensión comunitaria del misterio de Cristo, cabeza y cuerpo místico, que ofrece Pablo en la Epístola a los Efesios. Rechaza el recurso al sincretismo con el cual explican los autores de la Escuela de la historia de las religiones las analogías entre el misterio paulino y los misterios helenísticos circundantes. Como Casel, defiende el uso paulino de conceptos místicos para actualizar las posibilidades internas del cristianismo.

Mystère du Christ es el título del primer ciclo de conferencias que Zubiri imparte en el *Cercle d'Etudes religieuses au Foyer international des étudiants catholiques* en París, durante el curso 1937-1938.²⁶ Desarrolla el sentido amplio del misterio paulino de Cristo, su revelación en la encarnación y su prolongación como “realidad actual” -y no como mero recuerdo- a lo largo del tiempo en la Iglesia en virtud del sacrificio de la misa y los sacramentos. La liturgia se presenta como el “lugar” próximo y la manifestación más concreta del misterio de Cristo que se actualiza para que los hombres de todos los tiempos participen en él como sus contemporáneos y sean deificados y unificados.

La vie surnaturelle d'après Saint Paul es el título del segundo ciclo de conferencias que Zubiri imparte en 1938-1939. Desarrolla la perspectiva paulina y griega de la vida sobrenatural como deificación óntica que consiste en la transformación del ser del cristiano por su unión a Cristo en los misterios (sacramentos). Profundiza la teología del misterio del bautismo y la eucaristía en cuanto que significan respectivamente la iniciación y la plenitud a la vida sobrenatural. Como Casel, muestra el sacrificio de la misa como una conmemoración tan adecuada del sacrificio del Calvario que es su actualización o reproducción exacta.

B. Trabajo teológico de 1944

En su trabajo “El ser sobrenatural. Dios y la deificación en la teología paulina” (1944) Zubiri recurre a San Pablo –sobre todo a sus epístolas a los Romanos y también a los Efesios y a los Colosenses- para exponer el misterio cristiano. Es indicio de su consideración de Pablo como ‘el’ teólogo del misterio por excelencia y de su doctrina como ‘la’ teología del misterio. Explicita que “el misterio deificante” es la perspectiva de su síntesis de las realidades cristianas²⁷. Rehabilita el sentido paulino y patristico de “misterio” como realidad histórico-salvífica, cultural-eclesial y escatológica, frente al sentido intelectualista de verdad de fe ininteligible o inescrutable que empobrece la percepción del sacramento y de la tradición.

Como hacen Casel y Warnach, Zubiri bosqueja el magno misterio paulino haciendo patente su confluencia en el misterio litúrgico. Éste aparece insertado en la historia salvífica como portador primario e indispensable del misterio deificante de Cristo para los hombres concretos. El misterio paulino envuelve el plan de la creación prefijado desde la eternidad –o misterio de la voluntad divina–,²⁸ su revelación y su realización en la obra redentora histórica de Cristo²⁹ y en la Iglesia³⁰, la realidad cúltico-sacramental, la realidad de la redención en los fieles: “Cristo en nosotros”,³¹ y su plenificación en la segunda venida de Cristo.³² Este planteamiento

orgánico y unitario del misterio se articula en el misterio de Cristo. Éste es el punto cardinal del magno misterio paulino en el cual están imbricados todos los sentidos neotestamentarios de “misterio”: el misterio de Cristo revela el arcano de la voluntad del Padre –misterio “radical”– y es ratificado en acto en cada cristiano por obra del Espíritu Santo en la Iglesia a través del depósito revelado íntegro y los siete sacramentos.

Como sucede a los teólogos benedictinos del misterio, la sensibilidad litúrgica benedictina de Zubiri le predispone a percibir en las epístolas paulinas y la interpretación de los Padres griegos la preeminencia del sentido litúrgico-sacramental de “misterio” –inseparable del cristológico, eclesiológico y soteriológico– en cuanto última concreción del misterio paulino. “La interna unidad, signitiva y eficaz, entre el misterio de Cristo y los ritos litúrgicos es a lo que, de un modo más especial y estricto todavía, llamó San Pablo “misterio”. Los latinos tradujeron esta expresión con la palabra *sacramentum*.”³³ El autor responde así a su preocupación de que si el sacramento se desvincula del misterio de Cristo se reduce a ritualismo, a indicación externa de la fe o acto piadoso, quedando oscurecido su verdadero significado de transformación radical del ser.

El oblato español espera contribuir a la restauración de la vida religiosa en España con la revitalización de la concepción antigua de que el sacramento reproduce y realiza *el* misterio redentor de Cristo, supremo acto cultural y sacerdotal de Cristo. Con Casel, Zubiri enseña que la obra redentora es “algo que tiene realidad actual” –en su contenido y modo de misterio– como causa *formal* que está presente en el misterio (sacramento) haciendo brotar el efecto. Y percibe la gracia sacramental como “la participación sacramental del hombre en la redención”,³⁴ frente a la teoría clásica aristotélico-escolástica del efecto (*Effektustheorie*). Esta visión muestra la preeminencia del misterio sacramental en la mística cristiana, la cual es la unión real con Cristo en virtud del con-morir y con-resucitar en y con Cristo en sus misterios. La vida cristiana es *ser* cristiano

(*alter Christus*), de este suceso óntico deriva la vida ética.

Zubiri subraya sobremanera la profundidad de la visión paulina de la dimensión comunitaria del misterio paulino de Cristo y su concreción en la Iglesia. Recuerda que “para San Pablo Sacramento e Iglesia son dos dimensiones congéneres. Los sacramentos son los que forman a la Iglesia, y la Iglesia es, si se quiere, el misterio sacramental de Cristo.”³⁵

A partir de la excelsa revelación del misterio paulino en Ef 1,3-12³⁶ y 1Col 1,12-20³⁷ cuyo compendio es que “todo se resume en Cristo como la Cabeza”³⁸, Zubiri hace patente la integración de la Iglesia en el misterio salvífico y su vinculación al sacramento. Explica que el misterio consiste en que todo –cosmos e Iglesia– tenga a Cristo por Cabeza. “Cristo-cabeza de la creación” significa que Él es comienzo ejemplar, término y consistencia de todo; y que su cuerpo glorioso, en virtud de su muerte y resurrección, constituye la raíz de la incorporación a Él de los hombres y la creación entera. “Cristo-cabeza de la Iglesia” significa que Él es principio unificador de vida divina para cada hombre y el género humano unitariamente considerado. Zubiri, como Warnach, explica la reunificación óntica constitutiva del misterio como la incorporación sacramental en Cristo, en la cual consiste la Iglesia. El ser de Cristo, o ágape, es principio y fin de todo, origen de la creación, de la regeneración sacramental del ser de los hombres –sobre todo en la eucaristía– y de la reunificación consigo mismo, con los demás y con el Padre. En toda la teología del misterio de Zubiri resuena la oración de Cristo: “Que todos sean uno como Tú Padre estás en Mí y Yo en Ti, que todos sean uno en Nosotros... y que el ágape, con el que me amaste, sea con ellos y Yo con ellos.”³⁹

C. Cursos teológicos posteriores al Vaticano II hasta 1980

Tras el Concilio Vaticano II, en el cual es notable el influjo de Casel, la síntesis teológica de Zubiri ofrece un desarrollo de su teología del misterio⁴⁰. Su núcleo sigue

siendo el misterio de Cristo, y su quicio, la re-actualización del misterio de Cristo tanto en los ritos litúrgicos como en la tradición (incluye Escritura, su transmisión y el dogma). Su contribución estriba, en primer lugar, en la gran radicalidad de su esfuerzo –aún mayor si cabe que el de Casel– por concentrar el conjunto del cristianismo en el misterio de la muerte y la resurrección de Cristo. “El Cristianismo –dice– consiste en la acción reproductora de la muerte y resurrección de Cristo.”⁴¹ Y, en consecuencia, la iniciación cristiana no es sino la incorporación a la muerte y la resurrección de Cristo. Y, en segundo lugar, en la luz que arroja su filosofía de la *actualidad*⁴² para entender el modo físico y real –y no sólo mental e intencional– de *estar* presente la única e irrepetible obra redentora en el misterio y la tradición.

Zubiri subraya que el cristianismo se funda en Cristo, en su muerte y resurrección, frente al intelectualismo y moralismo que lo reducen a la aceptación de doctrinas y valores abstractos, respectivamente. La vida entera de Cristo es *signo* de su divinidad, y, dado que un signo que revela una realidad teológica se denomina “misterio” (sacramento), la vida de Cristo sobre la Tierra es *el misterio subsistente de Cristo*⁴³. Añade que el *signo* por excelencia de su divinidad es la crucifixión porque expresa el ser de Dios, el amor o donación suprema de Sí mismo. De hecho para Zubiri la acción fundadora del cristianismo consiste en la acción de Cristo no de instituir normas, ritos o doctrinas, sino de plasmar real y efectivamente su misma muerte y resurrección en el ser de sus discípulos, *haciendo* cristianos, otros “Cristos”⁴⁴. El ser del “iniciado” pasa de estar bajo el poder del mundo –ser *aversivo* a Dios– a estar bajo el poder de Dios –ser *conversivo* a Dios–, y en su virtud adquiere un modo de ser que tiene consistencia en Cristo muerto y resucitado, y es en Él y por Él realmente hijo del Padre.

El pensador español muestra la unidad de los sacramentos (misterios) con el misterio de Cristo apoyándose en el carácter plasmático personal y concreto del cristianismo. Observa que para seguir

haciendo cristianos a hombres de otros tiempos obrando lo que *hizo* Cristo⁴⁵, la Iglesia tiene que re-actualizar la muerte y resurrección de Cristo como posibilidad para incorporarse a su tránsito al Padre, y esto sucede en los misterios (sacramentos).

Zubiri ve insuficiente el mero “simbolismo externo” entre muerte y resurrección de Cristo, y muerte al pecado y regeneración del cristiano “en el misterio”. Acentúa su *identidad numérica*. El misterio de Cristo que se realiza en Él, plena, histórica y fundamentalmente, se *actualiza* en el cristiano bajo el modo de ser sacramental o místico. Conceptúa la gracia sacramental de modo dinámico como el *poder* de Dios que configura de modo real e incrementativo en forma de pasión, muerte y resurrección, el ser de quien se lo apropia y queda apoderado por él⁴⁶. Así, la regeneración sacramental consiste en “la plasma-ción de ese tránsito de la tierra a la diestra del Padre (en que ha consistido formalmente la resurrección) en el ser de cada uno de los hombres.”⁴⁷ Esta visión del misterio muestra la primacía de lo ontológico. La vida ética es consecuencia del morir y resucitar de modo óntico con Cristo en virtud del misterio que hace accesible al hombre la obra redentora de Cristo, su ágape. La nueva vida cristiana no se origina en el esfuerzo humano, sino en el nuevo ser en Cristo.

Este autor asume la teología del misterio según la cual tanto la misa, “Sacramento de los sacramentos”, como el sacramento son acciones propias no sólo en sentido moral, sino real de Cristo, que transcurren en su vida, muerte y resurrección. Cristo no muere más que una vez en la cruz, pero su muerte “se repite adecuadamente en cada misa. Es la actualidad sacramental, pero real y efectiva, de aquella muerte de Cristo”⁴⁸. En la misa no se hace “otra vez” el sacrificio de la cruz, sea de modo incruento o por inmolación simbólica, sino que en ella –como dice Casel–⁴⁹ *se hace actual* el sacrificio de la cruz, sacramentalmente presente.⁵⁰

Zubiri ofrece una teología del sacramento fundada en el misterio de Cristo⁵¹.

Define sacramento (misterio) como la acción personal de Cristo numéricamente idéntica a la de su vida y reactualizada constantemente. El *sacramento* es la reactualización de la acción redentora. Ésta no tiene el modo de ser *natural* que tiene en el Calvario, sino un modo de ser *sacramental*, pero tan real como aquél. Esta reactualización no añade ni quita nada de la realidad que se hace presente. Si bien Cristo no muere otra vez cruentamente en el Gólgota, es más que muerte simbolizada. Es *signum facere*: hace un signo que produce intrínseca, dinámica y realmente lo significado⁵². El autor precisa que las acciones históricas de la muerte y resurrección de Cristo en su dimensión de *hechos* ocurren sólo en la vida de Cristo y son irrepetibles, pero en su dimensión de *sucesos* son fundantes del cristianismo y se repiten permanentemente (se reactualizan)⁵³. La teología zubiriana del sacramento culmina en una fructífera concepción del bautismo y de la eucaristía que hace patente su papel prioritario para la incorporación en Cristo muerto y resucitado. “El bautismo –dice– representa justamente la iniciación y la eucaristía es la plenitud de una sola cosa. Y esto es precisamente el Cristianismo”⁵⁴. Esbozo su teología de estos dos sacramentos.

Teología del bautismo. Zubiri restablece la concepción mistérica paulina del bautismo según la interpretan los Padres griegos⁵⁵. Subraya el carácter crístico que el rito de los misterios denominado “baño de regeneración”⁵⁶ adquiere en Pablo “porque se trata de la reactualización sacramental de la muerte y resurrección de Cristo”⁵⁷. La iniciación cristiana, a diferencia de los misterios helenísticos, no es esotérica y significa la incorporación a Cristo. Con apoyo en Rm 6,3-11⁵⁸ –paradigmático de la *Mysterientheologie*– sustenta que en el bautismo hay *identidad numérica* entre el destino de Cristo –su muerte y resurrección– y el del cristiano –su muerte al pecado y su tránsito a una nueva vida superior, la del Padre–. El bautismo hace al iniciado un *con-sacrat*us o incorporado a Cristo –y en esto consiste el carácter impreso–, posee el poder de Dios

o gracia y es un ser nuevo, *revestido* de Cristo⁵⁹.

Teología de la eucaristía. La eucaristía –a la cual está ordenado el bautismo– es en Zubiri el punto culminante tanto de su espiritualidad litúrgica como de su teología del misterio⁶⁰. Es la donación de Cristo muerto y resucitado que confiere la plenitud de la incorporación a su muerte y resurrección. Es la acción personal de Cristo en la cual se da la acción *numéricamente idéntica* de Cristo en su muerte y en su resurrección a través de un rito que hace lo que significa, en cumplimiento del mandato de Cristo: “haced esto en memoria mía”⁶¹. El autor restablece su significación profunda y carácter preeminente en el misterio de la voluntad del Padre en cuanto misterio de la unidad: la eucaristía es *anámnesis, reactualización y promesa* de la unidad suprema en que consiste el ser de Cristo⁶². Esta unidad constituye el ágape que realiza la incorporación de todos los que reciben ese alimento al cuerpo de Cristo y su unificación consigo mismo, con los demás miembros del cuerpo y con la Santísima Trinidad.⁶³ La conversión eucarística es una apertura misteriosa de la unidad del pan a la unidad del cuerpo de Cristo. Las especies eucarísticas vehiculan esta unidad del cuerpo de Cristo, actualizan la unidad personal de Cristo de modo intrínseco y la producen de modo formal –y no por razón de efecto– en los partícipes en el ágape⁶⁴.

En la síntesis teológica zubiriana Cristo, los sacramentos y la Iglesia son realidades inseparables, aunque distintas. “La Iglesia es Cristo y el Cristianismo de unos para otros y de unos por otros”⁶⁵. La sacramentalidad (misterio) de la Iglesia está fundada en Cristo, el *sacramento radical*. “De ahí que todo lo que haya que decir de la Iglesia esté esencial, fundamental y radicalmente montado sobre la idea de la sacramentalidad”⁶⁶. De este modo, el aspecto jerárquico –esencial– de la Iglesia deriva de la presencia de Cristo en ella como principio vital para su sacrificio y se funda en la sacramentalidad, y no a la inversa. La Iglesia consiste en la unidad *sacramental* en Cristo. Zubiri explica en

qué consiste la unidad sacramental de la Iglesia según tres caracteres, cada uno de los cuales se funda en el siguiente: la unidad de la Iglesia es la “mismidad” de vida de Cristo en todos, la “comunidad” de personas en Cristo y, finalmente, la “concorporeidad” en virtud de Cristo-cabeza quien va incorporando a los miembros de su cuerpo a su *tránsito* al Padre. La ecle-siología de este autor desemboca en la escatología, la cual es la plenitud del misterio de Cristo en quien todos y todo queda recapitulado y, por tanto, deificado y unido a Dios

Zubiri en este período extiende su teología del misterio de Cristo a la tradición en la cual incluye tres momentos: inicial (depósito de la fe), continuante (enseñanza de la Iglesia) y definiente (definición de dogmas por el Magisterio)⁶⁷. Frente al intelectualismo teológico y su reducción de la tradición a conjunto de verdades de fe que se transmiten por repetición mecánica, contribuye a recuperar la unidad entre la tradición y el misterio de Cristo pareja a la unidad expuesta entre el misterio de Cristo y los ritos litúrgicos. También explica el significado profundo de la tradición desde su categoría de *actualización*. En primer lugar, restablece con Casel el sentido realista del vocablo paulino de *traditio* o *parádosis* de uso corriente en los misterios greco-orientales como *tradere*, algo que se entrega de modo concreto y personal. Subraya su sentido de entrega *de* Cristo, de su “realidad en verdad” o *verdad real*⁶⁸, “hecha en la efusión de su propia intimidad en el Espíritu de la Verdad: el Espíritu Santo”⁶⁹ para que, en y desde ella, se realice el hombre entero como ser deiforme⁷⁰. Recupera la unidad primigenia entre tradición y misterio (sacramento). Aquello que Cristo *hace* con sus discípulos y que sigue *haciendo* en el sacramento se va *manifestando* en la acción de transmitir física y realmente por contacto directo y personal. Este *hacer* consiste en dar de manera fija de unos a otros algo que queda fijado primariamente no en la mente, sino en la intimidad de quienes reciben la

Tradición.⁷¹

En primer lugar, la tradición inicial es para Zubiri no una ‘notificación’ por Dios de verdades divinas, sino la presencia *actual* y activa de Dios-donante en manifestación intelectual, que se transmite, junto a la realidad revelada, por contacto físico de unos a otros. En segundo lugar, la tradición continuante⁷² es la permanencia del depósito revelado de “entrega en entrega” de modo íntegro, *re-actualizando* en la forma concreta de cada tiempo la divina realidad manifiesta en su prístina frescura e inexhausta riqueza. Por último, la tradición dogmática es Cristo definiéndose a Sí mismo, *reactualizando* por la jerarquía eclesiástica y ante la presión de la situación histórica la mismidad (*identidad numérica*) de su realidad revelada en forma distinta⁷³. De este modo, definir un dogma no es tanto enunciar una proposición cuanto “hacerla” actualizando ante la inteligencia la realidad revelada; y aceptar un dogma no es tanto acoger con la mente una verdad cuanto apropiarse la posibilidad de vida divina que ofrece para deificar el ser entero. Así, lo importante no es que el dogma sea verdad –que lo es–, sino que hace presente de modo concreto y real, con estricta verdad, la realidad revelada en sus diferentes aspectos para deificar y unificar al ser humano⁷⁴. En este sentido, “el cuerpo místico de Cristo es cuerpo de mentes fieles en comunión con el cuerpo de la revelación.”⁷⁵

En definitiva, para Zubiri la tradición no es otra *fuentes* de revelación distinta de la Escritura, pues con ésta queda *conclusa*, sino otra *forma* de la revelación: su *re-actualización*. “La tradición es pura y simplemente la actualización de la presencia de Cristo en la Iglesia.”⁷⁶ La tradición como depósito *vivo* significa depósito *reactualizado*. La *actualización* de la revelación es necesaria para que hombres de otros tiempos reciban la misma (*numéricamente idéntica*) posibilidad de vida divina que Cristo ofreció a sus apóstoles y del modo concreto en que la recibieron.

D. Trabajo teológico de 1981 “Reflexiones teológicas sobre la eucaristía”

En su último escrito teológico, “Reflexiones teológicas sobre la Eucaristía”⁷⁷, Zubiri se ocupa del culmen del misterio, la eucaristía, y del problema “gravísimo” del *modo de la presencia* del misterio suscitado en torno a la *Mysterientheologie* y sin resolver entonces. Lo explica desde su noción de actualidad -o “estar presente” de modo real, físico y sin alterar las propiedades de la realidad- y desde su noción de “corporeidad” -o principio de la actualidad del hombre en el mundo. Distingue actualidad de localización y explica que por el cuerpo en tanto que *corporeidad* es posible *estar* presente en muchos lugares a la vez; mientras que en cuanto que *configuración* y *organismo* sólo se puede estar en un lugar al mismo tiempo. Afirma que el pan-alimento consagrado por ser principio de la actualidad de Cristo es *cuerpo* (corporeidad) de Cristo. Señala que en la actualidad común a Cristo y al pan-alimento consiste la esencia de la presencia real sacramental. Cristo en su corporeidad, que morirá y resucitará por todos, está real y físicamente presente en el pan eucarístico; de ahí que la presencia real es *anámnesis*, “repetición” de la pasión y muerte para la remisión de los pecados⁷⁸.

Explica en los términos de la actualidad el gran motivo paulino de la unidad personal o ágape en que consiste primariamente el misterio eucarístico: Cristo se hace actual en el partícipe del ágape y él se hace actual en Cristo, por ello hay entre los partícipes una común actualidad, que es verdadera comunión, fundada en la actualidad en Cristo, esto es, en la incorporación al cuerpo de Cristo. En definitiva, los cristianos son otros “Cristos”, siendo yo en y por el Yo de Cristo, miembros de un solo cuerpo y concorpóreos entre sí en y por Cristo.

IV. La perspectiva del misterio en la teología fundamental de Zubiri

Zubiri funda lo teológico en lo teologal y, con ello, la teología *simpliciter* en la teología fundamental cuyo objeto es lo teolo-

gal. Lo teológico envuelve a Dios mismo, mientras que lo teologal envuelve la versión al *problema* de Dios. Para el autor lo teologal es una dimensión humana que acontece en la *experiencia fundamental*. No significa que la teología sea antropológica o antropocéntrica pues lo teologal es la dimensión por la cual el hombre está fundado en la realidad como misterio. Esta noción de “misterio” en la teología fundamental de Zubiri cumple el papel fundante que tiene en su teología *simpliciter*⁷⁹.

Con el propósito de poner al descubierto el misterio de realidad, Zubiri elabora una filosofía que supera lo que considera errores de la filosofía occidental desde Parménides, a saber, la *logificación de la inteligencia* y la *entificación de la realidad*. Rechaza las nociones de inteligencia como facultad de conceptuar o juzgar (inteligencia concipiente) y de realidad como modo de ser (ser real), y propone la noción de “inteligencia sentiente” y de realidad como formalidad del “de suyo”. Para el autor el ser presupone la realidad y consiste en la actualidad -estar presente- de lo real en tanto que real en el mundo. Considera que el acto de la inteligencia sentiente es impresión de realidad: la inteligencia humana siente el contenido o cualidad de lo aprehendido y con ello siente su formalidad de realidad. Inteligir es la mera actualización de lo real como real en la inteligencia sentiente -según sus tres momentos de aprehensión primordial, logos sentiente y razón sentiente. Para Zubiri toda cosa real en cuanto real es “más” (transcendentalidad) de lo que es por el contenido de sus notas (talidad), porque su momento de realidad está abierto a todo lo demás. Por ejemplo, ser verde *real* es más que ser *verde* real. Cada cosa real es *más* que aquello que concretamente es. El hombre en virtud de su inteligencia sentiente vive sentientemente en la realidad. La razón sentiente es ser inquiriencia o búsqueda de lo que la cosa real dada (realidad campal) es en la realidad (realidad mundanal). La razón sentiente entiende la realidad-fundamento como problema que es la realidad sentida en “hacia” mundanal. La razón es *dinámica* porque mar-

chamos de lo real dado "hacia" lo real-fundamento, *direccional* porque en esta marcha lo campal inteligido es indicativo de la dirección a emprender y *provisional* porque la realidad es respectiva y abierta sin que pueda agotarse y cuanto se diga de ella está llamado a ser superado.

El pensador español utiliza a menudo con el mismo sentido que "misterio" el término "enigma", con el fin de evitar el abuso que se hace de la palabra "misterio" cuando se dice que todo es misterioso, en el sentido de incomprensible.⁸⁰ Él insiste en el sentido originario de la palabra misterio o enigma como realidad frente al sentido moderno como conocimiento de una realidad. "Lo que se dice o manifiesta es enigma porque lo dicho, lo real, es enigmático."⁸¹ El enigma no dice ni oculta, sino que *indica significativamente*. Toda cosa⁸² en cuanto real es enigma o misterio porque es la imbricación ambivalente de ser "esta" realidad (con un contenido determinado) y de ser presencia de "la" realidad (que es algo "más" que el contenido de la cosa pero en ésta). La realidad está *en* esta realidad, pero de modo misterioso. El misterio o enigma de la cosa real consiste en la unidad en ella entre su propia realidad y algo más que ella misma en ella. Este "más" es el dominio o poder físico de lo real que constituye –junto a la nuda realidad y la fuerza de la realidad– un momento de la realidad. La perspectiva del misterio o del enigma como presencia en las cosas del poder de la realidad es la importante aportación de la filosofía de Zubiri a la teología fundamental.

Supuestas sus nociones de inteligencia sentiente y realidad, Zubiri contribuye a la fundamentación de la existencia de Dios dentro de la teología fundamental con su vía de la religación al misterio de lo real. Explica que la persona humana es una realidad absoluta (suelta de todo lo demás) pero de modo relativo o cobrado, porque tiene que ir realizando su ser al estar *con* las cosas, las cuales son vehículos o vectores de "la" realidad. La persona va realizando su ser "en", "desde" y "por" la realidad que está presente en las cosas y que tiene los caracteres de ultimidad,

posibilitación e impelencia. La fundamentalidad de la realidad no es causa, sino dominación o apoderamiento. El poder de lo real se apodera de la persona y este apoderamiento acontece ligando a la persona al poder de lo real para ser. Esta ligadura es la religación, la cual de algún modo afecta a todo lo real, aunque sólo en el hombre es formalmente religación. La religación es *experiential* –no conceptual–, es *manifestativa* –no ciega– del poder de lo real y es *enigmática* porque el poder de lo real está actualizado como algo enigmático. "La religación es religación a la realidad en su enigma."⁸³ En la realización del ser se tiene vivencia física del misterio de la propia realidad en forma de inquietud, de voz de la conciencia y de voluntad de verdad real.

El carácter dinámico del misterio es esencial en el planteamiento zubiriano. El misterio o enigma es algo oscuro, pero no es algo que esté ahí y que se puede dejar de lado. Dice Zubiri: "el misterio es algo no solamente oscuro sino dinámico."⁸⁴ El misterio del poder de lo real actualizado en la inteligencia sentiente lleva inexorablemente a la razón sentiente a la búsqueda del fundamento del poder de lo real. Por ser el poder de lo real enigmático, la inteligencia no se halla sólo "ante" la realidad dada como ante algo que está presente, sino que está lanzada por la realidad "hacia" su radical enigma. La inteligencia no está sólo intencionalmente *dirigida* hacia, sino físicamente *lanzada* hacia. Es una estricta marcha intelectual. El "hacia" no es "hacia la realidad" sino "realidad en hacia", que Zubiri denomina realidad como problema, y es por tanto intelección 'en hacia' pero estricta presencia y por tanto estricta intelección. Es intelección *direccional* porque es la realidad direccionalmente presente. Para el autor lo problemático de la religación consiste en la vivencia de lo enigmático de la realidad.⁸⁵ No es que la realidad plantee el problema intelectual de resolver un enigma, sino que lleva a ello. La realidad-fundamento y no una realidad-objeto es la solución del enigma de la realidad. La realidad-fundamento del poder de lo real que la

inteligencia busca es la realidad absolutamente absoluta a la cual se denomina realidad divina. Dios es el término del “hacia” a que inexorablemente lanza el poder de lo real. Dios no es ente divino, sino realidad suprema, esto es, última, posibilitante e impelente que le hace a la realidad humana ser. El problematismo de la realidad-fundamento es el *problema de Dios*. La religación manifiesta experiencial pero enigmáticamente a Dios *como problema*. La experiencia de búsqueda de la fundamentalidad del poder de lo real es *experiencia teologal*.

Zubiri señala que la resolución del enigma de lo real consiste en la unidad misteriosa en la cosa real entre su realidad y la presencia formal constitutiva de Dios. La ambivalencia de la cosa real radica en este doble momento de no ser Dios y de estar formalmente constituida en Dios. Por esto la cosa real es su propia realidad y presencia de la realidad, y por esto hay en ella el poder de lo real⁸⁶. La cosa real es vehículo de Dios, y el poder de lo real es vehículo del poder de Dios o de Dios como poder. La cosa real y el poder de lo real no son meros efectos de Dios, son sede de Dios, esto es, deidad. En el misterio cristiano “ser real en Dios” consiste en ser *deiforme*, según modos y grados diversos. Es el supremo modo de ser real en Dios. Por ello, según el autor, la verdad cristiana es la verdad radical de toda religión, y “la historia de las religiones es para el Cristianismo el tanteo histórico por la verdad cristiana.”⁸⁷

El pensador español, además de ofrecer su vía de la religación al misterio, ofrece una crítica a las vías cosmológica y antropológica de la fundamentación de la existencia de Dios en la filosofía y la teología clásica. Por un lado, encuentra insatisfactorios los argumentos cosmológicos de la existencia de Dios, que culminan en las célebres “cinco vías” de santo Tomás. Frente a la pretensión de éste de partir de hechos cósmicos, el pensador español pone de relieve que parte de una interpretación de los hechos según la metafísica de Aristóteles. Considera discutibles las interpretaciones metafísicas aristotélicas del

movimiento como un estado del móvil que consiste en el paso de potencia a acto (primera vía) y del orden en las cosas sensibles como causación eficiente (segunda vía). Además, piensa que las nociones lo posible y lo necesario (tercera vía), los grados de entidad de las cosas (cuarta vía) y el orden de finalidad en la naturaleza (quinta vía) no son datos de experiencia, sino interpretaciones metafísicas de la realidad sensible. Considera discutible en esta vía cosmológica la visión del hombre como mera *res naturalis*. Finalmente advierte que el punto de llegada de estas vías, a saber, primer motor, primera causa eficiente, primer ente necesario, un ente en la plenitud de la entidad, una inteligencia suprema, no se identifica sin más con Dios. Dios es una realidad última de todo lo real y además posibilitante e impelente para el hombre. Hace extensiva esta crítica a la prueba de Duns Escoto quien identifica el ente infinito al que llega con Dios. Zubiri atribuye a Santo Tomás y a Duns Escoto *la entificación de la realidad* de Dios según la cual aparece como ente supremo.

Zubiri critica también la vía antropológica de la fundamentación de la existencia de Dios que parte de una determinada concepción del hombre como algo segregado del cosmos. Se fija en san Agustín, Kant y Schleiermacher que parten respectivamente de la inteligencia, la voluntad y el sentimiento, y llegan a una verdad subsistente, a un bien óptimo y a una realidad infinita. Pone de relieve la insuficiencia de estos puntos de partida porque consideran un aspecto del hombre y no al hombre tomado por entero. Además, rechaza la concepción radicalmente dual que estas filosofías tienen de la inteligencia (entre la verdad y las verdades), de la voluntad (entre la voluntad empírica y la voluntad inteligible) y del sentimiento (entre el sentimiento de la dependencia incondicional y el resto de sentimientos). El autor critica también el punto de llegada de esta vía, una realidad segregada y yuxtapuesta al mundo. Si la vía cósmica no llega a Dios posibilitante y impelente, esta vía antropológica no llega a un Dios como ultimidad

de lo real.

V. Apunte conclusivo: Valor de la teología zubiriana para la unidad ecuménica

Como colofón de la teología del misterio de Zubiri, inseparable de su espiritualidad litúrgica benedictina, subrayo su valor para impulsar la unidad ecuménica. En general, la clarividencia y belleza con que Zubiri pone ante nosotros el misterio de la unidad en y por incorporación a Cristo de todo y de todos estimula la voluntad de su realización. Además, hay elementos esenciales comunes entre la teología de Zubiri –que intencionadamente condensa lo esencial del cristianismo– y las corrientes ortodoxas y las confesiones separadas. Su seguimiento de Pablo, los Padres y la liturgia primitiva les sitúa ante la unidad de su pasado.

Zubiri y los ortodoxos adoptan de los Padres griegos los siguientes aspectos. Ofrecen una teología del misterio vinculada a la mística del misterio (sacramento) y como construcción orgánica unitaria de la doctrina de la salvación desde la acción redentora de Cristo. Acentúan que el fin de la vida del hombre es, según el plan divino, la deificación y la unión con Dios y con los demás por la incorporación en Cristo. Subrayan la dimensión comunitaria del misterio eucarístico como incorporación al cuerpo de Cristo. Reflejan el puesto de Cristo en el cosmos y la santificación de la creación por la encarnación y redención. Mantienen el nombre de “misterio” (*mystérion*) como signo que hace presente física y realmente de modo perceptible una realidad teologal. Subrayan el realismo del misterio, frente a su reducción a doctrina precisa o a institución jurídica. Afirman que los misterios ofrecen la misma (numéricamente idéntica) vida divina que reciben los coetáneos de Cristo. Mantienen el sentido de “icono” (*eikón*) como fuente de comunión por estar lleno de una presencia real, frente a la “imagen” latina como fuente de evocación o recuerdo. Vinculan la revelación al cuerpo de la Iglesia que lleva a sus miembros a su penetración y elaboración teológica.

Zubiri y las confesiones separadas. Acentúan la unidad patristica entre teología, espiritualidad, Escritura y ritos litúrgicos. La predicación del evangelio y la comunión es la presencia salvífica del único y perfecto sacrificio de Cristo a través de todas las generaciones. Lutero critica a los escolásticos la desvinculación de su teología de la vida litúrgica, lo cual conduce a una teología intelectualista y a una liturgia ritualista. Defienden que cualquier teología de escuela debe enraizarse en la teología de la liturgia y tiene que ser un despliegue reflexivo del contenido de la liturgia. Por otra parte, la comprensión zubiriana –como la de Casel y Warnachde la misa y la tradición como *reactualización* permite subrayar, junto a la permanente *actualidad* del sacrificio de Cristo y de la Palabra de Cristo, el carácter *concluso* del sacrificio de Cristo y del depósito de fe. La misa no es “otro” sacrificio distinto y autónomo del sacrificio del Calvario, y el dogma no es “otra” revelación distinta y autónoma del depósito de la fe. Misas y dogmas son *otro modo de ser* el mismo (*identidad numérica*) sacrificio del Calvario y la misma (*identidad numérica*) revelación inicial, respectivamente.

Finalmente, la concepción zubiriana clarifica en qué radica la plenitud en que consiste el misterio de Cristo –es la plena unidad misteriosa de Dios y hombre– y a la vez lo pone en continuidad con el misterio del hombre y el misterio de todo lo real. En esta perspectiva del misterio se acentúa que no hay nada en este mundo que esté totalmente separado de Dios o que sea absolutamente erróneo. De modo especial Dios está manifiesto en el fondo de todo hombre, al menos en la forma de la voz de la conciencia. Por tanto, el hombre, con religión o sin ella, accede real y efectivamente a Dios. Y toda religión accede al Dios cristiano. La historia de las religiones es “la palpación” real y efectiva de la divinidad en el seno del espíritu humano y es la plasmación diversa de la búsqueda “a tientas” de la divinidad a través de la experiencia del misterio al que todo hombre – en su dimensión individual, social e histórica– está religado.

Notas

- ¹ This article originally appeared in English in *Theoforum*, Vol. 40, No. 1 (2009).
- ² Ordenado sacerdote en 1921 sin vocación -según confiesa Zubiri-, recibe el 18 de enero de 1936 la dispensa del Papa Pío XI de las cargas inherentes a la ordenación sacerdotal, incluida el celibato. Sin impedimento canónico, el 23 de marzo contrae matrimonio con Carmen Castro en Roma.
- ³ En el archivo de Zubiri está la carta de filiación de la oblatura benedictina firmada por Dom Jean Olphe Galliard y también el texto multicopiado a máquina y en francés de las conferencias e instrucciones que recibe: *L'humilité* (28-1-1934), *La prière et la lectio divine. Instruction* (25-3-1934), *La charité* (17-6-1934), *La recherche de Dieu* (2-12-1934), *Le silence* (17-2-1935), *L'oblature bénédictine. Instruction* (15-12-1935), *La pauvreté et mortification* (16-2-1936), *La vie liturgique d'un oblat* (17-5-1936), *La vertu de religion, base de la vie spirituelle de l'oblat* (22-11-1936), *De l'obéissance* (22-5-1937). La fecha es la de su elaboración.
- ⁴ Indica la acción de ser *ofrecido*. El benedictino se ofrece a Dios, Nuestro Señor, a la Virgen y a san Benito.
- ⁵ En el archivo de Zubiri está la traducción del Psalterio para la edición de la Biblia del monasterio benedictino de Montserrat que realizan él y su esposa, con una nota de ésta que dice: "Montserrat no aceptó la 'lectura' de Xavier. Quería una traducción del catalán, no del hebreo. Fue un trabajo, sin embargo, que sirvió personalmente a sus autores (Barcelona 1940-1942)". La teología de Zubiri refleja cierto influjo de los salmos.
- ⁶ Cf. G. Díaz Muñoz, "La misa en X. Anselmo Zubiri", *Revista Española de Teología* 66 (2006) 415-430.
- ⁷ En el archivo de Zubiri se conservan los siguientes libros: *Diurnal monastique* de Abbaye Sainte-Marie, *Missel quotidien et vespéral* por G. Lefebvre, *L'Église ou la Société de la Lounge divine* por P. Guéranger.
- ⁸ Zubiri tiene abundantes obras de santos en su biblioteca, en particular de Santa Teresa y San Juan de la Cruz.
- ⁹ Cf. C. Castro, *Biografía de Xavier Zubiri*, Málaga 1992, 56s.
- ¹⁰ Esta búsqueda de Dios se refleja en la noción zubiriana de la transcendencia como dimensión metafísica de "la" realidad que no está 'fuera' de las cosas reales, sino que es algo más 'en' ellas. Así, las cosas reales -por el poder de lo real 'en' ellas- son deidad, esto es, sede de Dios. "Cosa" connota lo real concreto.
- ¹¹ Este propósito lo expresa en su carta inédita al cardenal Pacelli (Roma, 31-VIII-1936), en el archivo de Zubiri.
- ¹² En Occidente se va disgregando esa unidad, a lo cual contribuye el uso del método silogístico escolástico en los siglos XIV y XV y su tendencia a probar la revelación por una especulación de tipo aristotélico y un análisis racional que generaliza y opone.
- ¹³ "El ser sobrenatural. Dios y la deificación en la teología paulina", Barcelona 2008, 144s. Versión original en *Naturaleza, Historia, Dios*, Madrid: Sociedad de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1987, pp. 456-542. Uso las siglas SSDD.
- ¹⁴ Teología del misterio o doctrina del misterio, o también en plural "de los misterios" para destacar la riqueza de los aspectos del misterio.
- ¹⁵ Cf. T. Filthaut, *Die kontroverse über die Mysterienlehre*, Warendorf 1947 (*Teología de los misterios. Exposición de la controversia*, Bilbao 1963, obra traducida y completada por C. M^a. López) y I. Oñatibia, *La presencia de la obra redentora en el Misterio del Culto*, Victoria 1954.
- ¹⁶ O. Casel, *Die Eucharistielehre de hl. Justinus Martyr*, Roma 1914.
- ¹⁷ Cf. G. Díaz Muñoz, "Relación de Xavier Zubiri y Dom Viktor Warnach durante 1935-1944", *Xavier Zubiri Review* 8 (2006) 111-146.
- ¹⁸ La citaremos con las siglas JLW.
- ¹⁹ A pesar de que el mencionado inédito está finalizado en 1940-1941 no se publica hasta 1977, a título póstumo y reelaborado prácticamente por Warnach como manual de teología, bajo el título *Christusmysterium. Dogma-*

- tische Meditationen. Ein Überblick*, en una edición a cargo de B. Neunheuser, ed. Verlag Styria, Graz.
- ²⁰ Cf. G. Díaz Muñoz, "Influencia de O. Casel en X. Zubiri", *Estudios eclesiásticos* 324 (2008) 137-169.
- ²¹ Cf. G. Díaz Muñoz, *Teología del misterio en Zubiri*, Barcelona 2008. Esta obra incluye el texto de Zubiri "El ser sobrenatural. Dios y la deificación en la teología paulina", pp. 135-221, citado como SSDD.
- ²² SSDD 216s.
- ²³ X. Zubiri, *El problema teológico del hombre: Cristianismo*, Madrid 1997, 365. Cito la obra con las siglas HC.
- ²⁴ Cf. G. Söhngen, *Symbol und Wirklichkeit im Kultmysterium*, Bonn 1940, 49
- ²⁵ SSDD 217.
- ²⁶ En el archivo de Zubiri hay papeletas, esquemas y apuntes, algunos de los cuales están tomados por C. Castro.
- ²⁷ SSDD 145.
- ²⁸ Cf. Rm 16,25 ss.; Ef 1,9; Col 1,26.
- ²⁹ Cf. Ef 3,9-11; 1 Tim 3,16.
- ³⁰ Cf. Ef 3,9 ss; Col 1,24ss.
- ³¹ Cf. Col 1,27.
- ³² Cf. Rm 11,25; 1Cor 15,51.
- ³³ Cf. SSDD 144.
- ³⁴ SSDD 216.
- ³⁵ SSDD 218.
- ³⁶ "...dándonos a conocer el Misterio de su voluntad ... hacer que todo tenga a Cristo por Cabeza, lo que está en los cielos y lo que está en la tierra." Ef 1,9-10.
- ³⁷ Warnach lo transcribe en CMG 64s y Zubiri en SSDD 189: "Dad gracias a Dios Padre... nos transplantó al reino del Hijo de su amor, en quien tenemos la redención, la remisión de los pecados. Él es la imagen del Dios invisible, el primogénito de toda la creación, porque en Él fue creado todo cuanto hay en el cielo y sobre la tierra, lo visible y lo invisible, sean tronos o dominaciones, principados o potestades. Todo fue creado por Él y para Él; y es Él mismo antes de todo; y todo se sustenta en Él. Y Él es la cabeza del cuerpo de la Iglesia; es el principio, el primogénito de entre los muertos, para que sea Él quien ocupe el primer lugar entre todas las cosas, porque plugo a Dios hacer habitar en Él toda la plenitud, y que por medio de Él reconciliarse consigo todas las cosas, pacificando con la sangre de su cruz tanto las que están sobre la tierra con las que están en los cielos." Col 1.12-20.
- ³⁸ Ef 1,10 y cf. Col 1,20. Es la idea de la *recapitulación* en Cristo del universo y la historia de San Ireneo que plasma en el libro III del *Adversus Haereses* y en la *Demostración de la predicación apostólica*.
- ³⁹ Cf. Jn 17, 21-26.
- ⁴⁰ Está expuesta en los siguientes cursos privados en la Sociedad de Estudios y Publicaciones: 1965, "El problema filosófico de la historia de las religiones" y "El problema de Dios en la historia de las religiones"; 1967, "Reflexiones filosóficas sobre algunos problemas de teología"; 1968, "El hombre y el problema de Dios"; 1971-1972, "El problema teológico del hombre: Dios, religión, cristianismo"; 1973, "El problema teológico del hombre: el hombre y Dios"; 1981, "Reflexiones teológicas sobre la eucaristía".
- ⁴¹ Cf. HC 353.
- ⁴² Cf. *Inteligencia y Realidad*, Madrid 1980; *Inteligencia y Logos*, Madrid 1982; *Inteligencia y Razón*, Madrid 1983.
- ⁴³ Cf. HC 59.
- ⁴⁴ Cf. HC 319.
- ⁴⁵ Cf. HC 341.
- ⁴⁶ Cf. HC 349.
- ⁴⁷ HC 334. Su concepción sigue la del *Christmysterium* de Warnach.
- ⁴⁸ Curso de 1973, 234.
- ⁴⁹ Cf. O. Casel, "Eucharistia", *Das christliche Opfermysterium*, Styria 1968, 215-380.
- ⁵⁰ Cf. HC 365.
- ⁵¹ Cf. HC 338.
- ⁵² Cf. HC 345.
- ⁵³ Zubiri distingue *hecho* de *suceso*. *Hecho* es la actualización de capacidades o potencias de las personas o de las cosas; y *suceso*, la actualización o realización –o malogro– de posibilidades ofrecidas al ser humano, para que se las apropie. La Historia está constituida por sucesos, y consiste en alumbramiento u obturación de posibilidades (cf. HC 445).
- ⁵⁴ Cf. HC 357.
- ⁵⁵ Cf. HC 334-336 y 351-357.
- ⁵⁶ Cf. Ef 5, 26 y Tt 3, 5.

⁵⁷ HC 352.

⁵⁸ Cf. Col 2, 12-13; Tit 3, 5-7 y 1 P 3, 21-22

⁵⁹ Cf. HC 334. Tiene apoyo bíblico en: 2 Co 5, 17; Gal 6, 15; Ef 2, 5; 4, 24; Col 3, 10; Tt 3, 5 y Rm 13, 12-14.

⁶⁰ Cf. HC 357-396.

⁶¹ 1Co 11, 24-25 y Lc 22, 19.

⁶² Cf. HC 363.

⁶³ Es lo que expresa San Juan con la expresión: "Yo soy la vid, vosotros los sarmientos" Jn 15,5.

⁶⁴ Cf. HC 391ss.

⁶⁵ HC 441.

⁶⁶ HC 427.

⁶⁷ Cf. X. Zubiri, *El problema filosófico de la historia de las religiones*, Madrid 1993, 305-321; HC 454-486 (del año 1971) y HC 487-617 (del año 1967).

⁶⁸ "Verdad real" es "realidad manifiesta", o mera actualidad de lo real "en" algo, que no añade ni quita nada a la realidad que se hace actual. Es la verdad primaria y radical, propiedad de la realidad.

⁶⁹ HC 464.

⁷⁰ Cf. HC 494.

⁷¹ Cf. HC 463.

⁷² Cf. HC 531-535.

⁷³ Cf. HC 573.

⁷⁴ Cf. HC 572 y 590.

⁷⁵ HC 607. La ruptura de la unidad conlleva: división, adulteración y esterilidad.

⁷⁶ HC 471.

⁷⁷ Lección del 1-X-1980, en la universidad de Deusto, en su investidura como doctor *honoris causa* en teología. Se publica en *Estudios eclesiásticos* (1981) 41-59. Cito su reproducción en HC 397-421 como RTE.

⁷⁸ RTE 414.

⁷⁹ Cf. "Mientras en el curso de 1965 en Madrid Zubiri habla todavía de "misterio", a partir del curso de Barcelona del mismo año utiliza preferentemente el término "enigma", tal como apareció en el capítulo primero." Nota del editor, A. González, en X. Zubiri, *El hombre y Dios*, Madrid 1988, 151.

⁸⁰ Cf. *Ibid.*, 192.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 96.

⁸² "Cosa" lo toma Zubiri en su sentido amplio y vulgar de "algo", cualquiera que sea su índole.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 147.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 155.

⁸⁵ Cf. *Ibid.*, 145.

⁸⁶ Cf. *Ibid.*, 149.

⁸⁷ X. Zubiri, *El problema filosófico de la historia de las religiones*, Madrid 1993, 365.

Book Reviews

Guillerma Díaz Muñoz, *Teología del misterio en Zubiri*, paperbound, Herder (Barcelona), 2008, 221 pages, 17.8€.

The author of this fine book, Guillerma Díaz Muñoz, is well-known to readers of *The Xavier Zubiri Review* for her contributions to Zubiri research and exposition in both mathematics and theology. The subject of the present work is Zubiri's essay "El ser sobrenatural: Dios y la deificación en la teología paulina", originally published in *Naturaleza, Historia, Dios* in 1944. But it is not just an exposition of this seminal essay by Zubiri; rather it is an exposition of the essay's themes in light of Zubiri's later philosophical development and his great theological trilogy *Hombre y Dios*, *Problemas fundamentales de la historia de las religiones*, and especially *Cristianismo*. Thus it develops some of Zubiri's most penetrating insights into Christianity and what is really essential to the Christian faith. She notes:

Zubiri maintains that Christianity consists in acts that are "numerically identical" to those constituting Christ's own life, which culminated in His death and resurrection. The action that founded Christianity, by Christ, does not consist primarily in the creation of an organization with some doctrines, rites and moral norms, but in the action of forming "not symbolically, but really and truly" His death and resurrection itself in the being of the disciple. Christ founded Christianity primarily by *making* Christians, i.e., other "Christs, sons, as He is, of the Father". [p. 94-95, reviewer's translation].

Thus the book looks deeply into the relationship of sacramental theology with the life of a Christian, and in particular, how the sacraments—especially the Eucharist—are essential to the very nature of Christianity:

Zubiri, starting from his eminently Paschal conception of Christianity, sets out to demonstrate that the mass and the Eucharist are the real heart of the Christian mystery. And to do this he points out that in them there is an intrinsic relation between the death and resurrection of Christ on one hand, and the death to sin and regeneration of the Christian on the other. [p. 96, reviewer's translation].

The book begins with a discussion of the relationship of Zubiri's thought with that of the *Mysterientheologie* of Odo Casel (1886-1948) and Viktor Warnach (1908-1970), both associated with the Benedictine Abbey of Maria Laach near Andernach, Germany. (The Abbey is well-known for its leading role in the Liturgical Movement of the first half of the 20th century.) Professor Díaz Muñoz has made an in-depth study of Zubiri's research into the work of these two Benedictines, as well as his own commitment to a spiritual way of life through his profession, together with his wife, as a Benedictine oblate in Paris in 1938. As background to Zubiri's original essay, the book also includes a very enlightening discussion of *mysterion* in St. Paul's thought and its importance in the work of the Eastern theologians especially. The word *mysterion* was translated by the Latins as *sacramentum*, which does not really capture the original meaning (a *sacramentum* was an oath taken by Roman soldiers), though it does avoid the associations of *mysterion* with the Eleusinian rites of Demeter or Ceres. The book includes the complete text of the original essay, as it appeared in *Naturaleza, Historia, Dios*, and a useful bibliography.

Overall this book is an invaluable addition to Zubiri scholarship which should be read by all with an interest in any aspect of Zubiri's philosophy, but especially those with an interest in his theology.

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Francisco Ortega, *La teología de Xavier Zubiri*, Huelva: Editorial Hergué, Second edition, 2005, paperbound, 397 pages, 15.05€.

This book is an exposition of Zubiri's major theological ideas, including the relationship of Zubiri's thought with other well-known theologians. Though the book was published several years ago, it is reviewed here because of its relevance for the systematic theology project discussed in the Editorial. The author of the book carefully prepares the ground for his explanation of Zubiri's theology by first discussing Zubiri's philosophy of sentient intelligence and essence. He devotes considerable space to this (about 150 pages), putting Zubiri into historical context.

The main part of the book is its detailed exposition of Zubiri's theology (about 150 pages). It is divided into four main sections, as is appropriate for the subject: the theological dimension, the human person and religion, the Divine person (absolutely absolute reality), and faith (man's access to God). The exposition is extremely well done and easy to comprehend. It takes the reader carefully through the steps from the basic human experience of reality and the power of the real, the notion of religion and that of deity, and shows how all of these are linked. As an example consider the following:

In summary, the form of reality which every man adopts is grounded in the power of the real manifested in sentient intellection. Man is a mode of being that is absolute but which is relative to the real in which he is. This we call "religation"...Man has to adopt one form of reality among others that are possible. This is not an obligation (an ought); rather he inevitably begins to do it because he is an open energetic system (though substantive) insofar as he receives an input which destabilizes the energetic equilibrium of his system. To restore it he must realize an output. (p. 209, reviewer's translation)

We must search in every case for a viable response to any input, and the experience of this search, of the groundedness (fundamentality) of the power of the real, Zubiri terms "theological experience". *Theological* of course is distinguished from *theological*. As the author points out, *theological* refers to manifestation of the power of the real, whereas *theological* pertains to God as ground of the power of the real, and is thus a later conceptual development. As the author explains,

...deity is experienced as religating power. And what is the ground of this power? God. Deity is the way of access to God. To be sure, deity is not something distinct from the world and real things. Deity is reality in its condition as religating power. And this is not some isolated fact, whether the atheist would like it so or not; rather it is inscribed in things. For Zubiri the history of religion has been the slow and progressive discovery of the dimensions that the power of the real possesses. (p. 211, reviewer's translation).

As is also appropriate in any theological discussion, the author explains Zubiri's distinction between *being* and *reality*, as is of great importance to our understanding of deity and God. "God cannot be apprehended primordially as "subsistent being" or "supreme being" (as St. Thomas and Duns Scotus presumed), but as supreme reality. For this reason Zubiri says that God is beyond being." (p. 241-242, reviewer's translation). After a discussion of the ways of justifying the idea of God, the author goes on to cover the characteristics of Divine reality (as they can be known) and then faith as a surrender, as a "giving oneself up to". He notes:

Faith is not just assent to the truth of a statement, any more than revelation is a solemn judicative dictate that is communicated externally. Revelation is the manifestation of the reality of God, and faith is a surrender which admits this revelation; therefore one adheres to this faith inasmuch as it is a personal, transcendent and transcendifying font of all that there is. (p. 270-271, reviewer's translation).

The last part of the book discusses Zubiri in the context of several 20th century theologians including Brunner, Bultmann, Tillich, Bonhoeffer, and Rahner. Others such as Barth are discussed in various places in the text of this part and other parts.

There is far too much in this book to summarize here, and that is not the point of a book review in any case. The book is highly recommended to all who are interested in Zubiri's thought, his theology, or theology in general.

Thomas B. Fowler

Note to readers: both of these books can be purchased online from Casa del Libro, Madrid, www.casadellibro.com.

Call for papers...

The *Xavier Zubiri Review* is soliciting papers for its 13th edition, which will be published in 2014. Papers dealing with any aspect of Zubiri's philosophy or biography will be considered. Of special interest are papers that extend Zubiri's thought to new areas, expound and solve problems in his philosophy, and deepen our understanding of key aspects of his philosophical system. All papers are reviewed by the Editorial Review Board, and authors may be asked to make changes or corrections. Papers may be in any language, though English and Spanish are preferred. Papers should be 10-20 pages in length, and should be submitted electronically if possible. This may be done by including a diskette along with the printed version of the paper, or by sending the paper electronically, as an e-mail attachment. Charts, diagrams, and photographs are acceptable, though photographs will only be printed in black-and-white. All papers accepted will be published on the Xavier Zubiri Foundation of North America's web site, www.zubiri.org, as well as in printed form. Papers must be received no later than 1 April 2010 to be considered for this issue. Authors should also include a brief biography and a photograph, or be prepared to supply them after acceptance of their paper for publication.

We are also seeking Zubiri-related books to review. If you wish to have your book reviewed in these pages, or if you would like to serve as a book reviewer, please contact the editor at the address below, or send an e-mail message.

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