Nature, History, God

Xavier Zubiri

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Introductory Material

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Translator's Introduction

Xavier Zubiri is a man whose knowledge is both extremely broad and very profound. These essays are the fruit of his long meditation on some of the most urgent and important questions confronting twentieth century man. Zubiri addresses these questions fully cognizant of his vantage point, as heir to 25 centuries of intensive intellectual struggle; and he permits no aspect of them-philosophical, theological, historical, or scientific-to escape him. It is this complete integration of knowledge which makes this book at once searching and difficult, but unique and compelling as well. For at last the reader can perceive that man is indeed rector of the immense quantity of knowledge he has amassed, and that this knowledge can be a tool for understanding his situation in the universe rather than an oppressive, "menacing heap", to use Jacques Barzun's splendid phrase.

Zubiri makes no attempt to parade His immense learning and scholarship before the reader, but uses it as necessary to make his arguments clear and convincing. These essays are not directed particularly to scholars, but due to the nature of the questions addressed, some general familiarity with the subjects dealt with is presumed and quite essential for a grasp of Zubiri's thought. Even with this, the reader may not be able to fully comprehend any particular essay at one sitting; in this respect, of course, Zubiri's book is no different than that of any great philosopher. But the effort necessary to understand will be richly rewarded. Of course, there is no need for the essays to be read in sequential order; the reader may choose those dealing with subjects of interest to him.

Special thanks are owed to Mrs. Yvonne Daughters, of the National Institutes of Health, for help with innumerable difficult passages; and as well to Professor A. R. Caponigri, of the University of Notre Dame , for discussions about Zubiri's philosophy and the meaning of many technical phrases and words. Finally, I wish to thank Prof. Zubiri for hours of extremely valuable discussions about the essays in this volume and contemporary philosophical questions generally.

T.B.F.

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Preface to the Sixth Edition

I have not deemed it appropriate to make any changes in this new edition of the book, other than to correct the errors, some serious, left from prior editions. The published essays have their date indicated as much for me as for the questions treated; and bear in mind that what thirty years ago was the "new" physics no longer is new. With respect to both me and the problems dealt with, time has realized its work. There is nothing but to respect it. I have only permitted myself to add to the third part a new chapter: Introduction to the Problem of God. It is basically a lecture given some 15 years ago, which will enable the problems treated in the chapters In Regard to the problem of God and Supernatural Being: God and Deification in Pauline Theology to be situated in proper perspective. I gratefully acknowledge the opportunity given me by Editora Nacional to clarify this portion of my thought.

X. Zubiri

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Introduction

This book is comprised of a series of independent works, written under quite varied circumstances over the course of 10 years. In whole or part, they have already been published in domestic or foreign periodicals, which are often difficult to find today. Much against my will, and only at the insistence of voices which I cannot ignore, I have agreed to the idea of bringing them together in these pages.

In general I limited myself to reproducing the original text, though in some of the essays I have modified expressions, and in others developed an idea which seemed opportune to stress. In the essay dedicated to Socrates and the Greek Idea of Wisdom, I have inserted several new pages. The text of In Regard to the Problem of God is that which served as the basis for a detestable French translation which I completely disown. Finally, the book contains three previously unpublished works: Our Intellectual Situation, which was my final university lecture; The Idea of Philosophy in Aristotle, and Supernatural Being: God and Deification in Pauline Theology. In order to facilitate reading of the book I have somewhat arbitrarily grouped the studies into three parts, from the third of which the book draws its title.

Despite their varied character, taken together these essays are endowed with a certain unity. The reader should not think that this unity reflects any underlying system. {X}

On the contrary, it thematically and deliberately bespeaks a modest reaction before some of the more serious undercurrents presently agitating philosophical thought, in the broadest sense of the term. Such undercurrents are sometimes born of internal conflicts; in other cases they are due to the pressure of science, philosophy, or theology. The unity of these studies is conferred upon them solely by the situation in which the "philosophical mentality" is today implanted-something which, naturally, is quite distinct from the personal mentality of each thinker, and never identifiable with him, but in a way still inseparable from him. By way of introduction, I have summarily dealt with this situation in the first pages of the book.

In addition, these writings represent the general line and spirit in which I developed my university courses starting in 1926. 1 cannot but think with affection about the students and disciples of [vii] those years, to whom I have consecrated the greater part of my modest and silent labor. Many times I have been asked to publish my lectures. It is too much to ask of me. My work today proceeds at a snail's pace. But in these pages, at least, is the substance of some of those lectures.

If there is still a beginning student whose eyes should chance to fall upon these fragmentary lines, full of repetitions, let him recall that philosophy is a perpetual search. "Let us seek," said St. Augustine. "like those who are going to find, and we shall find like those who are about to seek, because when a man has finished something, that is when he begins. " (De Trin., IX, 1). Bear in mind that at all levels of the arduous struggle of the intellect-from the ingenuous beginner to the most subtle thinker-a singular fruition is hidden, one which, faithful to my office, I have sought to awaken in the soul of those who have asked for my help. As Plato said, "It is impossible for anyone except the lover of wisdom to have savored the delight that the contemplation of true being and reality brings."(Rep.582c7-9). But this is a delight which is not immune to weariness. Plato himself had Socrates say, "Investigating reality left me exhausted." (Phaedo

99 d). But if a man is able to rise above himself, he will be more than amply compensated for his efforts. For this is not some hollow {XI}

delight, but one full of the plenitude of the being of what is real. Centuries later Plutarch would write, "I believe, moreover, that the felicity of eternal life, which is the patrimony of God, is simply this, that nothing which occurs escapes His full knowledge; for if we despoil Him of thought and complete understanding of reality, His immortality would be a simple duration, but not a life (De Is et Os., 351, d). God is happy because He possesses

the fullness of life, founded on the transparent plenitude of being, in the plenitude of truth. We, who are men, only glimpse this happiness from afar, replete with "philia"; we are "philosophers", lovers of knowledge of what is most real in reality, of a knowledge which permits us to be the most real ' part of ourselves. Of love and friendship Aristotle wrote, "It is the most necessary thing in life". (Nicomachean Ethics , 1155a4) .

Madrid

December, 1942

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Author's Introduction to the English Edition

This book brings together a series of studies published at diverse times during the years 1932-1944.

The fact of pertaining to those years gives the book its unique character, and this is essential for orienting the reader. For that period of time has a twofold significance. First, it concerns each of the studies taken by itself; and secondly, it concerns the totality of them. Permit me to explain.

Above all it concerns each of the studies, because each has its exact date, and should be read with reference to it. This I cannot stress too much. There is, needless to say, a

considerable distance between the date of publication of each study and the present time. And during this interval many things have happened. Primarily, it has been a time in which I have conserved the essential part of my ideas, but still have been compelled to develop them along the appropriate lines.

Thus, consider the concept of history. In the study "The Phenomenon of Humanity: Greece and the Living on of the Philosophical Past", I conceived of history as a

happening of possibilities. I still fully maintain this view, but it has borne me to an even more radical concept: history as a happening of possibilities as 'founded in history as a capacitating or "capacitation". Only thanks to this capacitation is the occurrence of possibilitation and possibilities given-indeed, can it be given. History as capacitation was the theme of a study published in Realitas 1, p. 11-41 (Madrid, 1974).

The same occurred in a certain way with the study "In Regard to the Problem of God." The problem of God was discussed as a structural moment of man: this is religation. But this religation needs further conceptual development, development in the line of a systematization of the problem. I have already indicated this in the study "Introduction to the Problem of God" published in the fifth Spanish edition of the book. But I have also developed the idea of religation in another direction, that of religation as a structural moment of man. This is what I have termed his "theologal dimension". It has been the theme of various of my courses, as yet unpublished, and especially of two: the course on [ix]

The Theologal Problem of Man: God, Religation, Christianity

(Madrid, 1972) and later the course on Man and God given in the Faculty of Theology of the Gregorian University (Rome, 1973). A sketch of this point of view was published in the volume of homage to Karl Rahner (Madrid, 1975). 1 wish to note that the study "Supernatural Being: God and Deification in Pauline Theology" is one which is essentially historical. Its specifically theological content has since been more precisely developed in my courses at the Sociedad de Estudios y Publicaciones [Society of Studies and Publications, Madrid].

Finally, in other cases the actual state oil scientific knowledge is much richer and more precise than in those earlier years. For this reason the study "The Idea of Nature: The New Physics" would today have had to deal with

many other essential concepts. To be sure I still maintain the idea of nature there expounded, but the problem of elementary particles leads to essential philosophical problems. For example, What is the elementality of a particle? What is a virtual particle, and what is the individuality of a particle? What is the breaking of symmetry, etc., etc.? They are philosophical themes with which today I would have to come to grips; but, I repeat, I maintain the idea of nature expounded in 1934.

Moreover, the time period 1932-1944 has a meaning which goes beyond that of fixing the date of my studies. This period constitutes an epoch of my intellectual life. The difference between "period" and "epoch" is essential because it is inscribed within the very concept of time.

Time, in fact, is not a summation of dates, but rather possesses a proper unity which is not merely additive. Dates are nothing but moments of this unity which we call time. What is this unity? This is not the place to treat such a difficult problem. In its merely descriptive aspect I have expounded it in Realitas II (Madrid, 1976). But now I do not allude to this descriptive concept but to a more profound one: the structural unity of time. Time is not something separated from things but rather is only a moment of them: things are not in time, but rather are temporal. I will shortly return to this idea. In virtue of it, on account of being temporal, these things qualify their time: it is time itself which is qualified. And this time thus qualified is what I call structural unity of time. This structure, then, rests on the nature of things.

If temporal things are those which we call physical things, then [x] these physical things confer upon time a unique quality: number and measure. Physical things, in fact, have a successive actuation. Succession is a purely physical character. Now, succession confers upon time a unique quality. Time is the measure of the succession; one hour, two days, ten years, etc. Time as measure is thus chronometry. If temporal things are living things, their time is biologically qualifying. And the quality of time biologically qualified is the age. Age is not a number but a unique temporal quality. Young, mature, old, etc. are biological structures, and their temporal quality is the age. Of course, age can be measured because living beings are also physical things. But this number is not age itself, only the numerical aspect of it. The age of a cell can be given a number, but this number is not age. If temporal things are of psychic nature, or rather psychophysical, then time has a distinct structural quality. Psychic life constitutes, as has been said since the beginning of this century, a stream, a flow. Thus it has been called the flow of consciousness (we leave aside for now this appeal to consciousness). So, the psychic flow, the psychic stream, confers upon time an original quality: it is duree, duration. The numerical character of what endures is not duration itself, but rather the numerical character assigned by the numberer. Duration is prior to its presumed numerability; its measure is extrinsic because duration in itself cannot be adequately comprehended through numbers. When temporal things are in men in the integrity of their life, then a new temporal quality arises: the life of man in this its totality has; an essential constitutive moment: this is the project. Thus, the project qualifies his time with a unique quality, viz. time as happening. Here we have the four structural unities of time, the four qualities of time itself: measure, age, duration, happening. There remains the problem of what time is in itself. This is the modal concept of time which I call temporality. But I cannot here enter into that problem.

Each one of the temporal structures has aspects which are quite diverse. Thus happening can be biographical, social, or historical. When human projects falling within a period of time correspond to what we might call a common inspiration, then the time of happening has a proper temporal aspect, viz. the epoch (which can be by turns biographical, social, or historical). An epoch is a happening qualified by a common inspiration. So now we see that an epoch is not the same thing as a period of time. The epoch is a quality of a period of happenings. A change of common [xi] inspiration is the beginning of a new epoch.

Hence, the period 1932-1944 is in a strict and rigorous sense an epoch of my intellectual life. My philosophical reflections corresponded during this period to a common inspiration which is difficult to define, but easy to perceive.

Philosophy found itself determined prior to these dates by Husserl's phenomenological lemma: zu den Sachen selbst, "to the things themselves". Needless to say, this was not the dominant philosophy prior to that time. Rather, it had been a mixture of positivism, historicism, and pragmatism based ultimately on the science of psychology; and this basis was expressed as a theory of knowledge. Out of this situation, Husserl created phenomenology by means of a thoroughgoing critique: a turn from the psychic to things themselves. Phenomenology was the most important of the movements opening a unique field to philosophizing as such. It was a philosophy of things and not only a theory of knowledge. This was the remote common inspiration of the epoch 1932-1944: philosophy of things. Phenomenology thus had a double function. First, that of apprehending the content of things. Second, that of freeing philosophy from slavery to psychology or science. And this latter function was for me the decisive one. To be sure, the influence of the first function is quite clear not only in me, but as well in all those who have dedicated themselves to philosophy since this date. But my personal reflection had a unique inspiration within this common inspiration. Because, What are the things about which one philosophizes? Here we have the true question. For phenomenology, things were the objective and ideal correlate of consciousness. But this, for reasons that were somewhat obscure, always seemed to me insufficient. Things are not merely objectivities, but things endowed with a proper entitative structure. To this investigation about things, and not just about objectivities of consciousness, the names "ontology" or "metaphysics" were given indiscriminately. Heidegger himself thus called it in his book Sein und Zeit. In this epoch of my philosophical reflection the concrete common inspiration was, ontology or metaphysics. With it phenomenology was relegated to being a preterite inspiration. This does not refer to an influence-though inevitable-of phenomenology on my reflection but to the progressive constitution of a philosophical ambience which is of an ontological or metaphysical character. An inspection, even if superficial, of the studies contained in Nature, History, God will [xii]

reveal that this is their common inspiration. The book already represented in incipient form a superceding of phenomenology. Therefore, as I expressed myself in the study "What is Knowledge?", what I zealously sought is there called Logic of reality. I gathered all these studies in the present volume as a testimony to an epoch which is concluded.

A new epoch has succeeded this one. Because we may ask, Are metaphysics and ontology the same? Are reality and being the same? Already within phenomenology Heidegger perceived the difference between things and their being. And with this metaphysics for him remained founded on ontology. My reflections followed an opposite route: being is founded in reality. Metaphysics is the foundation of ontology. What philosophy studies is not objectivity, nor being, but reality. Since 1944 my reflection has constituted a new epoch: the rigorously metaphysical epoch.

In it I bring together, as is obvious, the cardinal ideas of the previous epoch, that is to say of the studies already published in this volume. But these ideas acquire a metaphysical development which goes beyond all objectivity, and beyond all ontology.

This was no easy task. Because modern philosophy, despite all of its variations, has been erected upon four concepts which to my way of thinking are four false substantivations: space, time, consciousness, and being. It has been thought that things are in time and in space, that they are all apprehended in acts of consciousness, and that their entity is a moment of being. Now, to my way of thinking this is inadmissible. Space, time, consciousness and being are not four receptacles of things but only characteristics of things which are already real; they are characteristics of the reality of things, of some things-I repeat-which are already real in and through themselves. Real things are not in space or in time as Kant thought (following Newton), but rather real things are spatial and temporal-something quite distinct from being in time and in space. Intellection is not an act of consciousness as Husserl thought. Phenomenology is the great substantivation of consciousness which has run

through modern philosophy since the time of Descartes. Nonetheless, there is no consciousness; there are only conscious acts. This substantivation was introduced in much of the psychology of the end of the 19th century, for which psychic activity was synonymous with activity of consciousness, and it conceived all things as [xiii]

"contents of consciousness". I believe this also includes the concept of "the" subconscious. This is inadmissible because things are not the content of consciousness but only the objects or boundaries of consciousness; consciousness is not the receptacle of things. Psychoanalysis has conceived of man and his activity by referring them always to consciousness. Thus it speaks to us of "the" conscious, "the" unconscious, etc. Man would ultimately be a stratification of zones qualified with respect to the conscious. This substantivation is inadmissible. "The" activity of the conscious does not exist; "the" conscious does not exist, nor "the" unconscious, nor "the" subconscious. There are only conscious, unconscious, and subconscious acts. But they are not acts of the conscious, unconscious, or subconscious. Heidegger went a step further. Though in a particular form (which he never managed to conceptualize or define) he brought to conclusion the substantivation of being. For him, things are things in and through being; things are therefore entities. Reality would be nothing other than a type of being. This is the old idea of being real,

esse reale. But being real does not exist. Only what is really being exists; realitas in essendo, I would say. Being is only a moment of reality.

In the face of these four enormous substantivations, of space, time, consciousness, and being, I have advanced an idea of the real which is prior to them. This is the theme of my book

Sobre la essencia (Madrid, 1962): philosophy is not philosophy of objectivity or, being, nor is it phenomenology or ontology; but rather it is philosophy of the real as real; it is metaphysics. Thus intellection in turn is not consciousness but rather mere actualization of the real in the sentient understanding. This is the theme of the book which I have just published, Inteligencia sentiente (Madrid, 1980).

In this way the present book Nature, History, God is an epoch which is not so much superceeded as assumed into the metaphysics of the real, in which for the last 35 years I have been engaged. This is, I repeat, the epoch determined by the common inspiration of the real as real. It is an epoch rigorously metaphysical. In it I have found myself compelled to give a distinct idea of what is intellection, what is reality, and what is truth. They ,are the central chapters of the book

Inteligencia sentiente.

[xiv] I sincerely thank my friend, the fine physicist Thomas B. Fowler, for his initiative, his enthusiasm, and the fidelity with which he has realized the translation of this book. Thanks to his labor I can now be read in America and other English-speaking countries. Many thanks as well to all those who have made this edition possible.

X. Z.

Madrid

November, 1980

Our Intellectual Situation

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OUR INTELLECTUAL SITUATION

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I. THE INTELLECTUAL FUNCTION

II. TRUTH AND SCIENCE

III. SCIENCE, PHILOSOPHY, INTELLECTUAL LIFE [7]

{5}

I

THE INTELLECTUAL FUNCTION

The intellectual life today finds itself in a profoundly paradoxical situation.

On one hand, there are only two or three moments of history which can be compared with the present in quantity and quality of new scientific discoveries. It is important to emphasize this without the least reserve; indeed, it should be recognized with enthusiasm and pride. Greek metaphysics, Roman Law, and the religion of Israel (leaving aside its divine origin and destiny) are the three most stupendous products of the human spirit. The act of absorbing them in a radical and transcendent unity constitutes one of the most splendid historical manifestations of Christianity's internal possibilities. Only modern science can be equated in magnificence to the legacy of these three. Yet at the same time it is difficult to understand the uneasiness which inevitably pursues anyone who dedicates himself to an intellectual profession. Despite so much science, so true, so fertile and so central to our life, to which so much human toil has been consecrated, the intellectual of today, if he is sincere, finds himself surrounded by confusion, disoriented,

and intimately discontented with himself. This, naturally, is not the result of his knowledge.

I. Confusion in science. This does not refer to the radical confusion which may reign in some of the most perfect sciences of our time, such as physics and mathematics. Such presumed confusion is on the contrary more a sign of vitality, because it involves a crisis of principles. A {6} science is, in fact, really knowledge and not simply a collection of facts insofar as it derives formally from its principles, and insofar as it returns to them from each of its results. Ordinary scientific progress is never comparable to that which is made when old principles are clarified and new ones sketched out and modeled; Aristotle, Archimedes, Galileo, Newton, Einstein, and Planck are names marking off the decisive epochs in the history of physics, each inaugurating a new era of this science.

The confusion to which I refer is not this crisis of principles. It [8] is something different and more serious:

1. Each one of the many sciences existing today almost completely lacks a "border" circumscribing the realm of its existence. Any conjunction of facts which is homogeneous constitutes a science. And when, within this science, a group of problems, methods, or results acquires sufficient development to attract

by itself the attention of the scientist and distract him from other problems, it is automatically constituted as a "new" science. The system of the sciences is identified with the division of intellectual labor, and the definition

of each science is identified with the homogeneous conjunction

of questions with which the scientist deals. In fact, all that is necessary to constitute a new science is a certain quantity of items known. But it is unclear where a science begins or leaves off, because it is not known, strictly speaking, of what the science treats. In order to know of what something treats, it is necessary to fix its proper object, both formally and specifically. The first confusion reigning in the present-day scientific panorama is due to the confusion about the object of each science.

2. All of the sciences find themselves situated in the same plane. Not only do they lack systematic unity, they do not even have a unity of perspective. One viewpoint is as good as another. There exists no difference of rank among the diverse "knowledges" of present-day humanity. In being "scientific", all fields of knowledge possess the same rank. It seems as though exactly the opposite situation has come about from what Descartes described when he said that all the sciences, taken {7}

in conjunction, constitute one single thing: the understanding.

In place of this unity, which essentially implies unity of perspective, with differences of rank, we have a conjunction of disparate fields of knowledge, projected onto a single plane. The second confusion which science produces is owing to this unparalleled dispersion of human knowledge.

And this "scientific plane" is determined by the knowledge of what are called the "facts". Every science begins, in effect, with a positum: the object, which "is there", and which is not considered except insofar as it is there. It seems, then, that all sciences are supposed to be equivalent insofar as they are sciences, precisely because all are "positive". The radical positivization of science acts as a leveling influence on principles. Yet no one stops to consider that perhaps not all objects are susceptible to equal [9] positivization. And in such case, if this "being there" were not the same for every class of objects, the positivization would not be leveling, and the sciences, even the most positive, would have in their proper integral object a principle of hierarchical subordination.

II. Disorientation in the world. The problem is that the intellectual function does not have a definite place in today's world. Not, certainly, on account of any lack of interest, but because this function has been converted into a kind of secretion of truths, let them come from where they may and be about what they will. Before this deluge of bits of positive knowledge the world begins to form a dangerous sieve of truths, based squarely on the presumed interest which they offer; interest which is quickly converted into immediate utility. The intellectual function is measured only by its utility, and everything else tends to be dismissed as simply curiosity. In this way, science goes on converting itself into a technology.

And this, which might appear nothing more than unfortunate, is in reality something much more serious. The world, which thus measures everything by its utility, progressively begins to lose the consciousness of its ends, ie. begins to not know what it wants. And then there supervenes all the deafening clamor, pro and con, about the "intellectual", because in reality the world does not know where it is going. In place of a world,

we have a chaos, and in it {8}

the intellectual function likewise varies chaotically. More than a century ago Hegel said:

...it is not difficult to see that our epoch is a birth-time, and a period of transition. The spirit of man has broken with the old order of things hitherto prevailing, and with the old ways of thinking, and is in the mind to let them all sink into the depths of the past and to set about its own transformation. It is indeed never at rest, but carried

along by the stream of progress ever onward. But it is here as in the case of the birth of a child; after a long period of nutrition in silence, the continuity of the gradual growth in size, by quantitative change, is suddenly cut short by the first breath drawn-there is a break in the process, a qualitative change-and the child is born. In like manner the spirit of the time, growing slowly and quietly ripe for the new form it is to assume disintegrates one fragment after another of the structure of its previous world. That it is tottering to its fall is indicated only by symptoms here and there. Frivolity and again ennui, which are spreading in the established order of things, the undefined foreboding of something unknown-all these betoken that there is something else approaching. This gradual crumbling to [10] pieces, which did not alter the general look and aspect of the whole, is interrupted by the sunrise, which, in a flash and at a single stroke, brings to view the form and structure of the new world.

And a special way of sinking consists in just doing nothing but living on in the imagination. A good number of "intellectuals", and not always those of minor scientific importance, live on contemplating their past image, impressively ignorant of the radical transformation which the physiognomy of the intellect is undergoing. One of the things which most impresses a historian who takes up the study of the epoch of Cassiodorus (c. 480-575) is to observe the ingenuity with which those men, who for us already find themselves in a new age of history, try to believe that they are doing nothing but continuing in an unbroken line the history of the Roman Empire. And listening to the best intellectuals, it seems as though we are doing nothing but returning to march along the "secure road of science". Everything will be resolved by reconquering the "scientific spirit", the "love of science". They forget that the intellectual function comes inscribed in a world, and that truths, even the most abstract, have been conquered in a world endowed with a precise meaning. The fact that such truths can float, without prejudice to their validity, from one world to another {9} has led to the impression that they are born outside of any world. This is not true. Mathematics itself got underway, in Greece, because of the cathartic function attributed to it by the Pythagoreans; later it was the road of ascent from the world to God and descent from God to the world; in Galileo it is the formal structure of nature. Grammar was born in ancient India, when the need was sensed to manipulate with absolute liturgical correctness the sacred texts, to whose syllables a magic, evocative value was attributed; the necessity to avoid sin engendered grammar. Anatomy was born in Egypt of the necessity to immortalize the human body. One by one the most essential members were taken and solemnly declared sons of the Sun god; this inventory was the origin of anatomy. In India history was born of the necessity to faithfully set down the great past actions of the gods; fidelity and not simple curiosity engendered history in that country. No science escapes this condition. Therefore the fact that sciences acquire an extrahistoric and extraworldly character is an unequivocal index of [11]

the fact that the world finds itself affected with internal decomposition.

Man, instead of limiting himself as the animals to acting in an environment, has to realize or lose objectives and sketch out methods or plans for his actions. The total system of these plans is his world. When the plans are converted into simple rules, when the objectives are transformed into pigeonholes, the world crumbles gradually. Men are converted into cogs and ideas are used, but not understood; the intellectual function lacks a precise meaning. One step more, and truth is deliberately renounced: ideas are converted simply into schemes for action, into recipes, and etiquettes. Science degenerates into an office, and the scientists into a social class: the "intellectuals."

III. Intimate discontent with himself. If the scientist, the "knower of things," and "possesser of ideas," upon seeing himself alone and isolated in the world, meditates and turns in upon himself, what does he find there by way of justification?

{10} He possesses, of course, some

methods for knowing, which give splendid results, such as there have never been in any other epoch of history. The exuberance of scientific production reaches such degrees that we are left with the impression that the quantity of scientific discoveries enormously exceeds the actual capacities of men to understand them.

This is not an attempt to cast doubt on science or to support a facile pessimism which, in the final analysis, can only take hold in weak and pusillanimous intellects. Never has the human mind found itself with more possibilities than those which it now has at its disposal. But peering deeper and examining the situation honestly, we see:

1. That, for the scientist, his methods at times begin to have little to do with his understanding. The methods of science continue to be converted with dizzying speed into a simple technology of ideas or of facts-a species of meta-technology; but they have ceased to be what their name indicates: organs which examine evidence, ways which lead to truth itself.

2. That the scientist begins to be bothered that he knows too much. This is no accident. What confers an eminent rank on scientific production is the meaning which it possesses in the order of intellection of things, in the order of truth. By this meaning man is rector of his investigation, and by it he affirms himself to be in full possession of himself and his science. Now, in this conjunction

[12] of methods and of results of enormous proportions, today's man, instead of finding himself in the truth,

is lost among so manv truths. The intellectual is invaded, in the depths of his being, by a profound loathing of himself, which ascends, like a dense fog, from the exercise of his proper function.

And the problem is that his knowledge and his methods constitute a technology, but not an intellectual life. He is, at times as if asleep to truth, abandoned to the efficacy of his methods. It is a profound error to think that science is born through the mere fact that its object exists and that man possesses a faculty for understanding it. The Altamiran man and Descartes are distinguished not only by the fact that the latter is a philosopher and the former no; but also in that the

{11} Altamiran man cannot philosophize. In order for science to be born and continue existing more is necessary than the naked faculty of producing it. Certain other possibilities must be given. Painfully and slowly, man has continued to weave a subtle and delicate web of possibilities for science. When it disintegrates, science ceases to be a living force and becomes an arid product, a cadaver of truth. Science is born only in an intellectual life. Not when man was, as if by chance, in possession of truths, but rather the other way around exactly, when he found himself possessed by the truth. In this "pathos" of truth science was created. The scientist of today has often ceased to carry on an intellectual life. In its place, he thinks he is able to content himself with its products; to satisfy, in the majority of cases, a simple

intellectual curiosity.

* * *

Thus we have defined a situation by some of its essential characteristics:

1. The leveling positivization of knowledge

2. The disorientation of the intellectual function

3. The absence of an intellectual life.

More than fixed characteristics, these are tendencies observable in varying degrees. I said at the beginning of these lines that, for example, in some sciences a fertile crisis of principles is a symptom of abundant vitality. But it is evident that the reality of these three characteristics which we have just pointed out constitutes a radical danger to the understanding, an immanent

risk that the life of truth may cease to exist. In this tragic fight where the fate of the intellect is decided, the intellectual and science are both engulfed at the same time in a peculiar situation, in our situation. Accordingly, the first thing [13]

which ought to be done is to accept it as a reality and confront the problem which it poses: restoration of the intellectual life.

[14] {13}

II

TRUTH AND SCIENCE

If we look carefully, it is easy to see that these three characteristics are not the product of chance. They represent the three deviations to which, due to its makeup, the intellectual life finds itself exposed.

All science has as its ultimate goal truth. And in the very structure of truth the three dangers to which we have just referred are already lurking.

Truth is the intellectual possession of the "nature" of things. These things are held out to man and truth consists in nothing but the understanding examining their form. When the understanding expresses this situation we say that its thoughts possess truth. Or in other words, truth is, according to the traditional formula, an agreement of thought with things. What are the conditions of this agreement?

1. In the first place, there is something which is antecedent to exercise of the intellectual function: things themselves must be put-before" the understanding; that is, things have to be present to man. We leave aside any subsequent complications. Whatever may be the means and ways by which man can have things present, they have to be there. Otherwise it would be impossible to even begin to understand. We could, perhaps, think; but such pure thoughts would not by themselves be knowledge or true or false. And to this patency of things the name "truth" can be given in the most fundamental sense. Thus the {14} Greeks called it a-lethia -discovery, making patent. If all things were present [15] and manifest, in every detail and in their internal structure, the understanding would be nothing but a faithful mirror of reality. This is not what occurs. On the contrary, the presence of some things obscures that of others; the details of things do not manifest without further to-do their internal structure. For this reason the understanding sees itself enveloped in a problematic situation. It must learn to bring itself close to things, so that they manifest {15}

themselves to it more each time. This mode or way of approaching things is what, since ancient times, has been called methodos,

method. Method is nothing but the road which brings us to things; it is not a simple intellectual ordinance. So here is the first condition of truth: reliance on things themselves.

2. But the problem of truth is by no means exhausted with that. If it were, the understanding would do nothing but register things, once they were presented to it. To be sure, for centuries and centuries the understanding did only this, at least for the most part. But man does not always wait for things to pass before his eyes. The greatest conquests of modem physics are due to the audacious impulse with which man, instead of following nature,

anticipates it by means of a question. Truth, as an agreement of the understanding with things, supposes a certain manner-fortunate or lucky-of asking after them. This does not refer to the generic questions which the intelligence, by its very nature, cannot [16]

but ask. Every search, even the most modest, supposes that man asks himself why something occurs, what something is, etc. We do not mean this. Rather, we have in mind a concrete mode of formulating these generic questions. The meaning of "why?" is different in philosophy than in psychology. If someone asks why I move my arm, it is meaningless for the physiologist to reply "because I want to." It is one thing to ask why a phenomenon occurs, another to delimit with my question the area in which I am going to investigate the phenomenon and moreover force nature by questions to present phenomena which she otherwise would not have presented. These concrete methods of stating questions, or rather this primary and antecedent mode of approaching reality, is a prerequisite for any possible agreement with it. If one wishes to speak of methods, this one is not a method that leads simply to resolving problems which things of the world present, but rather a method which leads us to force things to present to us new problems. It is a method of interrogation more than of resolution. Thus, mathematics serves as a method of interrogation for physics. Truth, then, presupposes a system of antecedent questions with which the understanding confronts reality. {16}

3. Where is this system of questions born? Though indisputably part of them may belong to reality itself, this is not sufficient to illuminate the entire set. If it were, science would be consubstantial with man. There have been things ever since the world was the world, and there has been human understanding moving about asking "why" ever since there have been men. Nevertheless, science has a delayed history, slow and tortuous. Even in the most objective of the sciences, this historical conditionality is undeniable. There are problems which are only posed in certain epochs; moreover there are problems which are posed and resolved-perhaps by chance-in an epoch, but which are ignored in science because its historic state does not permit it to give meaning to them. The system of questions is born from the total structure of the situation of the human understanding.

These three conditions can be expressed, then, and ought to be expressed in reverse order: in his concrete situation, man sketches a Plan, a mode of bringing himself close to things and interrogating them, and only then do they give the reply which constitutes agreement with them: truth.

And here appears the tripartite danger to which the [17]

understanding finds itself exposed in its quest for truth.

Man, in fact, does not have before him either all things or all of any one of them. But with these fragments of fragments, thanks precisely to the fact that their fragmentary character is unknown to him, man proceeds to constitute his world, that totality alone in which each one of the things is and can be given. It is obvious then that science begins by breaking down this ingenuous world so as to reduce it to its just cognitive proportions. These just proportions are expressed in the term "the facts:" what is before me, only in virtue of being there and insofar as it is there, without the least intervention on my part. Now, the facts thus understood tend to be reduced to empirical data. Scientific truth will consist in nothing but agreement with these data, and science will be simply a knowledge about their ordered concatenation. The reduction of things to facts, and of facts to sensible data, leads inexorably to the idea of an intellectual life in which all branches of knowledge are {17}

equivalent and whose overall unity is given only in the encyclopedia of complete knowledge. Such was the work of positivism.

But above all during the 19th century, with another science at hand-theoretical physics-man understood the insufficiency of this construction. Modern physical science was born when the scientist decided to interrogate nature mathematically. Science needs to know how to interrogate things. And this "necessity" is imposed on the

scientist by the mere act of proposing to himself to discover an intelligible order among empirical data. Truth is not something which is simply given, something which man happens into; truth is something more than a fact: it is a necessity. Man needs to know what things are going to occur, if he does not want to see himself lost among them. And this necessity is what led man to formulate his manner of confronting them. And like every necessity, it was then said, necessity of truth is a phenomenon of biological structure, and like all life, that of the understanding has to obey at least the law of maximum yield with minimum expenditure of energy. Via its questioning science manages to reduce the enormous variety of sensible data to a few simple relations which permit it to foresee the course of various phenomena. More than seeing, science is foreseeing. And therefore, as it used to be said fifty years ago, economy of thought leads to examination of phenomena with precision and to [18]

encapsulating them in mathematical formulae. Each formula is a potential conjunction of innumerable phenomena, which enables man to manage their future course with maximum security and simplicity. Truth is an agreement with things, but above all with things in the future; therefore viewed from the present, a true law of nature is nothing but an attempt to dominate the course of these things. The intellectual life is then the progressive creation of formulae which permit reality to be managed with maximum simplicity. Its truth is measured solely by its efficacy. This is pragmatism,

the natural extension of positivism.

But pragmatism, while emphasizing the formulative and symbolic character of all interrogation, has pointed out a deeper root: the vital necessity. For pragmatism, the mental life is a special case of biology. Now, this assimilation {18}

seems to go too far, because it is so simplistic. The mental life, and human life generally, are not purely biological. With biological roots and mechanisms, man the zoion unites a bios. It would be more exact (although still insufficient) to say that human biology is a particular case of the human bios.

And life thus understood always arises from a situation, in which it moves and unfolds. Only within this situation does thought acquire meaning and structure. It is certain that truth cannot be achieved other than by a special manner of drawing near to things, but this manner is already given in the general mode with which man by his bios is situated before them. The dynamism of historical situations is what conditions the origin of our mode of approaching reality, be it moulded in an explicit question-set or no. And this historical situation also subtly alters the meaning of truth. Historical situations-thus it was believed, at least during the 19th century-are states of the Spirit; however objective one may wish to make them, they remain only states of the Spirit, and truth itself as well as science are nothing but an aspect of these states. Employing the terminology then in use, if we call the product of historical reality "culture," science will be nothing but a form of a cultural state. It expresses the intellectual aspect of an historical situation; it is a cultural value. Truth is the value corresponding to understanding, and, like every other value, it exists only by virtue of the meaning it acquires in a situation. Each epoch, each people, has its system of values, its own way of understanding the universe-more valid in some than in others, but a reflection always of an historical situation-with out [19]

any of them having the right to usurp the character of unique and absolute. Historicism is a ready ally of pragmatism.

Positivism, pragmatism, and historicism are the three great aberrations to which, in one form or another, truth is exposed due to its tripartite intellectual structure. Truth is the expression of what there is in things, and if these are understood as mere empirical data, one slips gradually toward positivism. Truth is not conquered except through a mode of interrogating reality; and if this interrogation is understood as a human necessity of successfully controlling the course of events, one steers {19} toward pragmatism. Truth does not exist except in a determinate

situation; if this is understood as an objective state of the Spirit, one is submerged in historicism. And these three aberrations are not independent. Viewed from its ultimate source, the historical situation of European man leads him to invest a good part of his life in scientific intelligence; therefore he sees himself compelled to give intellectual form to his way of drawing near to things, and thanks to this formulation he is able to discover and state precisely what things are as facts.

It is probably not difficult to recognize that at the bottom of the three characteristics which we previously discovered in our intellectual situation, there lie more or less explicitly these three attitudes toward truth and toward science. It is certain that except in isolated cases, no one could be found today capable of subscribing wholeheartedly to any of these three conceptions. Anyone even slightly concerned with philosophical questions will sense in them something definitely dated and past. But it would be a great illusion to believe that their effects disappear when their intellectual hegemony disappears. They are no longer fashionable perhaps as theories of science, but they left us in the intellectual situation in which we debate today. The dispersive and levelling character of knowledge is the natural result of the positivist attitude. The technicism of our scientific labor is nothing but pragmatism in action. The absence of a true intellectual life and the attention directed preferentially to various states of civilization with their different "ways of viewing" things are, to a very great degree, a radical historicism. If one asks, then, what is understood today in the majority of cases by an intellectual life, it would be easy to obtain replies such as these: the intellectual life is an effort to order facts in an ever increasing and more coherent scheme; it is [20]

an enrichment of the encyclopedia of knowledge. The intellectual life is an effort to simplify and dominate the course of events; it is the efficacious technology of ideas. The intellectual life is our manner of seeing the facts; the expression of our European curiosity. And in all three cases a mere enunciation of the formula makes anyone who is considering an intellectual profession today slow down and proceed with caution. They are three conceptions

{20} which express, more than the nature of science, the immanent danger of its internal decomposition.

Let us linger a bit, nevertheless, on a reflection about the common root of these aberrations. Truth began presenting itself to us as an agreement with things, or if one prefers, as effort to be in agreement with them. But included in this idea of "agreement" there is a serious equivocation which must be brought to light. Listening to these diverse conceptions of science, one observes that in all of them the effort of arriving at this agreement is emphasized ever more energetically, so energetically, that one has the vague impression that, for them, the primary situation of man must be that of being deprived of things. It seems that science consists in giving us things of which primarily and radically we would be dispossessed. That in large measure this is so, there is no need to insist here. But I am not referring to that; it is not a question of ascertaining the greater or lesser quantity

of things which man knows or does not know primarily. I refer to something more serious: to whether, by its own proper internal

quality this privation of objects is basic to the understanding. And this is not a question of science, but rather something which affects the general structure of thought inasmuch as it is thought.

By an external analogy with the presumed "sensible world," one is inclined to believe that the primary function of thought must be that of forming ideas, in the same way that the senses, abandoned to themselves, would give us nothing but impressions. Thought would be a species of intellectual sensibility or sensation. Is this correct?

Ideas are rather the result of thinking activity. And many times this has caused an overlooking of the hidden principio

of thought itself By its proper objective structure, thought, in contrast to the senses, does not have its roots in a mere impression; or in other words, it is not the impression which primarily constitutes the nature of thinking. Thought, by virtue of its proper structure

[21] cannot receive any impression if it is not unfolding, so to speak, its content. The most elemental act of thinking unfolds something in two planes: The thing that is and that which it is. The "is" is the formal objective structure of thinking. In virtue of it, for thought, things are not its (thinking's) impressions, they are not simply something

{21} which thought happens upon, but rather the mode of "having them" is paradoxically "placing them at a distance," understanding that they "are". We do not only "have" things, but also things "are" in such and such a manner. The radical difference between the senses and thought is, then, a difference of placement," so to speak, before their object: the senses "have" impressions, thinking understands that they "are." Without this primary objective dimension of thinking, one could not speak of thought. It is what distinguishes thought fundamentally from every form of sensing. The most modest of sense data is for thought an expression of something which is. And as thought and sensibility are not functions necessarily separated, it follows that in every sensible perception this aspect of the "is" must be included because of the fact that man, even within the empirical sphere, moves in a world of things, and is not simply immersed in impressions. I am not discussing philosophical theories here, only giving a mere immediate description of the act of thinking. Thanks to this constitutive unfolding of the "is", thinking finds itself before things, understanding from them what they are. And what they are to this understanding is what are called "Ideas.' Therefore, as I said, the idea is not the beginning, but the result of the thinking function. And moreover ideas, although in me, are of things.

It is certain, then, that thought must conquer things, but this is so because thought is already moving among them. And here is the great equivocation to which I alluded above. Truth, as an agreement with things, always supposes a previous "being among them." There is a radical and primary truth (and if one wishes also a falsity, we prescind from the problem) of the understanding: its constitutive immersion in things. Therefore one can resolve to be [22] or not be in agreement with them, because antecedently one is with them and among them. Truth, as an agreement between an affirmation

{22} and a reality, is always something secondary and derived; there is a primary truth, which is precisely that which establishes the necessity of discerning some things from others, and of evaluating this discernment with the logos.

It is for this reason that a primary and ineluctable unity between thought and things is constitutive to the three conditions of truth, to which I alluded above. We leave aside the philosophical problem posed by this unity.

Now, it is easy to see that the common root of the three aberrations discussed above is to be found in the simultaneous theoretical and practical neglect of this radical objective dimension of thinking and of truth. Such neglect puts us in the presence of an interpretation of thought which continues ever reducing it to a mere impression. From here to considering it as only a state of man (of the senses, of life, or of an historical situation, it matters little), there is only a short step. Or in other words, present day thought in science is tending vertiginously to the loss of its object: things. This loss is the common essence of the three characteristics of our intellectual situation. One ends up not knowing what he knows or what he is looking for. But if one considers science as a penetration ever deeper and more extensive into a world of objects in which we are constitutively immersed, the situation changes instantly and completely. The positum is not a mere sensible impression; simplicity in the control of phenomena is not a blind biological utility; the historical situation in which we find ourselves placed is not a mere objective form of the Spirit. In any of these three aspects, man cannot conceive of himself nor understand himself unless he is in and with things. And therefore the three essential conditions of truth cannot be

identified with positivism, with pragmatism, or with historicism. It is things which instruct our efforts. Therefore science is not a simple addition of truths which man possesses, but rather the unfolding of an under standing possessed by truth. Hence the sciences cannot be found merely juxtaposed, but rather stand in need of each other to capture diverse facets and planes of diverse profundity, of a single real object. The intellectual life is a constant struggle to maintain itself in this primary and integral unity.

{23} But clearly, it is not enough to merely say so. The three [21] characteristics which we have singled out above define, by some of their features, our situation, and manifest the urgent need to reconquer the sense of the object. Our task consists in large measure in accomplishing this given our own situation. It is certain that the object, precisely in virtue of being constitutive of thinking, is never absent from it, not even in our present-day situation. But in this situation it happens to be particularly obscured. Perhaps in this obscurity many conceptions of the "object," probably insostenable, are very seriously guilty. We must bear in mind that through varying in scope and depth, depending on the situation, nothing which has ever occurred lacks meaning. Therefore I do not refer here to a mere reconquest, but rather a radical restatement of the problem, with clear eyes and an open mind.

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III

SCIENCE, PHILOSOPHY, INTELLECTUAL LIFE

With all of the foregoing, nothing but the first step imposed by our situation has been shown: man's turning in upon himself to see clearly "where he is." It is by no means evident that man possesses sufficient energy to maintain himself alone with himself, an not shun or flee this aloneness. Therefore the salvation of the intellectual life does not depend only or even primarily on understanding itself. Science, as we said, was born only when the possibilities which permitted its existence were produced. Man had to put into play something which induced him to know. And this something posed the deepest problem of existence. The present-day extirpation of the understanding is nothing but an aspect of the extirpation of integral existence. Only that which can newly refound existence in its primigenial root can reestablish in full measure the noble exercise of the intellectual life. Since ancient times, this refounding of existence has had a well defined overseer: it is called "religation" or "religion." In a work published five years ago I treated of the problem. I refer the reader to it, so that he will not jump to the conclusion that I am thinking in terms of vague romantic notions, or that I allude to any type of religious practices. I mean the primary and fundamental religation of existence.

But if in this reestablishment the understanding is not a sufficient condition, it nevertheless remains a necessary one. And the primary mission of the understanding is that of clarifying the situation to which it has come and converting it into a problem.

{26} But in trying to confront the radical dimensions of the situation in which it finds itself, the understanding confronts itself (by a process very different from the Cartesian), and observes' that it is involved in a series of questions presented by that situation.

1. The problem of the positivization of knowledge is a problem

[25] which affects every form of positive knowledge and every positive reality. And the understanding does not simply see itself buffeted from one region of this reality to another, nor from one mode of positive knowledge to another; rather, by encompassing in its glance everything positive, the understanding makes it the object of a trans-positive or transcendental consideration. And such knowledge is not of this or that, but of everything, albeit in a different manner. It is not one more branch of knowledge among others, but a new type of knowledge.

2. Analogously the problem of disorientation in the world will lead us to a consideration of the diverse forms and visions of the world, not so that we can hop from one to another, nor so that we can take pleasure in the simple contemplation of a museum of conceptions of the world and of life, but so that we can encompass them together in one consideration which is, so to speak, trans-mundane, transcendental.

3. The problem of the absence of an intellectual life will lead us, finally, to a consideration of the understanding, a consideration which embraces all possible forms of its exercise, not to opt for one in preference to the others, but in order to clarify the nature of the intellectual function as such. This is one species of trans-intellectual or transcendental consideration.

Once one reflects a little, he will see that under one form or another, in its radical solitude-not an abstract solitude, but the concrete solitude of its present day situation-the understanding, upon performing this task of turning in upon itself, is moving squarely in the direction of the three fundamental ideas aforementioned. The positivization of knowledge conduces to the idea of everything that is, through the mere fact of existing, i.e. to the idea of

being. The disorientation of the world leads to clarifying the idea of the world as such. {27} The absence of intellectual life reveals to us the nature of the understanding as such, that is, the theoretical life. Upon exercising this function, the understanding finds itself exercising an authentic intellectual life, in a world of problems perfectly oriented, with all realities in their deepest and total concretion.

Philosophy is nothing else. Philosophy is simply "transcendental knowledge." I do not believe it necessary to insist that this adjective involves no allusion whatever to idealist terminology.

Philosophy is not, by any means, a sufficient condition for [26]

restoring the life of the understanding; but it is nonetheless a necessary condition for doing so. And this, not on account of any fortunate congruence of philosophy with that mission, but rather because philosophy consists precisely in the problems of being, of the world, and of theory, which are posed by the simple turning in of the understanding upon itself.

Reciprocally, one can say that, from a purely intellectual point of view, the problematic and paradoxical situation in which man finds himself today signifies, in the final analysis, absence of philosophy. "As strange," said Hegel at the beginning of his Logic "as a people for whom their political rights, inclinations, and habits have been abrogated is the spectacle of a people who have lost their metaphysics, of a people in whom the spirit has no existence, and who are preoccupied with their own essence." And, like Plato, he invites us to retire "to the tranquil anterooms of thought, where the interests which move the life of peoples and individuals are quiet."

The difficulty in this case is that philosophy is not something done, finished, of which one may take a draught at his pleasure. In every man, philosophy is something which has to be fabricated by personal effort. This does not mean that each person needs to start from scratch or invent his own system. On the contrary. Precisely because we are dealing with a radical and ultimate knowledge, philosophy finds itself mounted on a tradition. And this means that, even in the case of philosophies already formulated, such an adscription is itself the result of a personal effort, of an authentic intellectual life. The rest is a {28}

brilliant "apprenticeship" of books or a splendid course of grand lectures. One can, indeed, write book after book and spend a long life as professor of philosophy, yet not even graze the outskirts of philosophical life. Conversely one can totally lack any "originality, " yet possess in the most recondite part of himself the internal and silent movement of philosophy.

Philosophy, then, has to be done, and therefore it is not a question of an abstract apprenticeship. Like every truthful doing, it is a concrete operation, executed from a situation. What is that situation today? It is difficult to respond to this question. Every situation is marked by certain problems posed by the obscure instability and inconsistency which underlie it. We have already seen that starting from science one arrives at three ideas: being, the world, and theory. Science must live on them, and since ancient times they have been the object of philosophy. But [27]

contemporary philosophy debates about these very same ideas. Being, world, and theory are the names of three great intellectual problems and vexations, not three ideas already formulated and available in textbooks.

These three problems are posed in contemporary philosophy by three realities which constitute, without doubt, the most real contents" of the man of today.

Since the 18th century, history has more and more been putting pressure on human existence. But up until then, except in isolated cases and isolated circumstances, history was considered as something which happened to man; now historicity fights to be introduced in its own state of being. With this the idea of being, upon which nearly all of philosophy has been built since its origins until our time, vacillates and turns into a serious problem.

On the other hand, the colossal development of technology has profoundly modified the way in which man exists in the world. It can be said, really, that technology constitutes that concrete manner in which contemporary man exists among things. But although technology, for the ancients, was a mode of knowing, for modern man it is progressively taking on an ever more purely operative character. Homo sapiens has been yielding his place to

homo faber. {29}

Whence the grave crisis which affects the very idea of the world and of the proper function of man in his life.

Finally, the complications of every order, in day-to-day private and public life, convert the most elementary means upon which we have moulded our existence into an acute problem. Urgency

prompts contemporary man; his interest is inverted and now includes only the immediate. Whence the grave confusion between the urgent and the important, which leads to an overestimation of spontaneous decisions as opposed to remote and "inoperative" theoretical speculation. Whereas, for a Greek, the supreme form

of praxis (creation, action) was theory, for contemporary man theory is separated so far from what he calls "life" that, at times, "the theoretical" becomes synonymous with "the false," with "the removed from reality."

History, technology, and vital urgency convert these three ideas (being, world, and theory), which constituted the incontrovertible content of previous philosophy, into a grave problem. With this the very idea itself of philosophy is left enveloped in a radical problematicism. The predominance of each one of these problems led, in the course of time, to three [28]

distinct conceptions of philosophy: philosophy as a theoretical knowledge of the things that are; philosophy as a right knowledge of the world and of life; philosophy as a form of personal life. As being, world, and theory are today becoming a radical problem, they remain dangling and leave floating before the man of today the central problem of the possibility and of the very meaning of philosophizing. Since we are conscious of the historical character of every situation, since the world is dominated by technology, since man is importuned with more pressing needs, what meaning can philosophy have? Can a form of understanding be given which, without radical and distressing equivocation, comes designated with the same philosophical vocabulary with which the Greeks designated the supreme form of knowledge? The problem of the philosophy of today reduces, in the final analysis, to the very problem of philosophizing; it is philosophy as a problem.

What is it that brings about this problem? In what, precisely, consists the intellectual situation in which we find ourselves so strangely {30} implanted? No one elects his primary situation. Even the first of men was created by God in a situation which was not of his doing: paradise. Philosophy is not exempt from this condition. It was born founded on nature and on man, who forms a part of nature, though they both were dominated in their internal structure and their destiny by the action of gods. This was the work of the Ionians, and it constituted the permanent theme of Hellenic speculation. A few centuries later, Greece witnessed the collapse of this attempt to understand man as a purely natural being. Nature, hidden and fleeting, drags along the human logos: Greece ruined itself forever in its vain attempt to naturalize man and the logos.

Now without a world, one day Greece receives the Christian preaching. Christianity saves the Greek, discovering to him a spiritual and personal world which transcends the natural. From this moment, man embarks upon a new and different intellectual path; from a nature which is disintegrating, he turns in upon himself and approaches God. The horizon of philosophizing changed. Philosophy, created reason, was possible as something founded in God, uncreated reason. But this created reason takes off on its own, and in a vertiginous unfolding during two centuries will go on progressively emphasizing its created at the expense of its rational character, with the result that at the end reason will be converted into a pure creature of God, infinitely removed from the [29] Creator and ever more shut up in itself. This is the situation reached in the 14th century.

Only now, without a world and without God, man sees himself forced to remake the road of philosophy, based upon the sole substantive reality of his reason; this is the beginning of the modern world. Removed from God and things, in possession only of itself, reason has to find in its breast the motives and the wherewithal which will permit it to reach the world and God. It does not succeed. And, instead, while seeking to discover these worldly and divine wellsprings of reason, it ends up converting them into the very reality of the world and of God. This is the idealism and pantheism of the 19th century.

The result was paradoxical. When man and reason believed they were everything, they lost themselves; they were left, in certain respects, annihilated. Thus the man of the 20th century {31}

finds himself even more alone; this time without the world, without God, and without himself. A singular historical condition. Intellectually nothing is left to the man of today except the ontological place where the reality of the world, of God, and of his own existence were at one time able to be written. It is absolute solitude. Alone with his past, without any other support than what used to be, contemporary man hides from his vacuity; he takes refuge in the mnemonic revivification of a past; he extols the marvelous technical possibilities of the universe; he races to the solution of the urgent problems of day-to-day life. He flees from himself; he makes his life pass superficially. He renounces adoption of radical and ultimate attitudes and goals; the existence of contemporary man is constitutively centrifugal and penultimate. Whence the anguishing coefficient of provisionality which threatens to dissolve contemporary life. But if, by a supreme effort, man is able to fall back upon himself, he will sense the ultimate questions of existence pass by his unfathomable depth like umbrae silentes. The questions of being, of the world, and of truth echo in the depths of his person. Imprisoned in this new sonorous solitude, we find ourselves situated beyond the totality of what merely is, in a type of transreal situation, a situation which is strictly transphysical; it is in fact metaphysical. Its intellectual formula is precisely the problem of contemporary philosophy.

Barcelona, May 1942.

What Is Knowledge?

[31] {33}

WHAT IS KNOWLEDGE?

[32] {34}

I. KNOWLEDGE IS DISCERNING.

II. KNOWLEDGE IS DEFINING.

III. KNOWLEDGE IS UNDERSTANDING. THE THREE DIMENSIONS OF UNDERSTANDING THINGS.

A Demonstration of Their Necessity.

B. Speculation About Their Origin.

C. The Impression of Their Reality.

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KNOWLEDGE IS DISCERNING

Suppose that we are shown a cup of wine. We take it as such. But it turns out not to be so: it is imitation wine. What does this mean? In order to understand, let us reflect upon how we correct our error. We call upon another liquid which is undoubtedly authentic, i.e. which presents all the characteristics or traits of wine. That is to say, our error stems from the fact that the wine, there in front of me, is imitation, is false, and is false because it presents a deceiving aspect obscuring its true aspect. It appears to be wine, but it isn't. To correct the error, we oblige the liquid in question to reveal its true aspect, and we compare it with that offered earlier as real wine. All this supposes, then, that in one form or another what we call things are constituted by the conjunction of fundamental traits which characterize them. For this reason it is possible that they may seem to be one thing and be another. This type of "physiognomy" or "aspect" is what the Greeks called eidos, literally 'figure'. The denomination truth was reserved for its patency. From here on we shall employ the term "aspect" not in the sense of appearance, but in this other of true figure of things.

Let us direct our attention now to a particular issue. When we wish to teach someone ignorant of it what wine is, we do nothing but show it, i.e. manifest the true aspect of the {35} wine to him. Upon apprehending it through his experience, the first thing he has apprehended, even without realizing it, is something

peculiar to wine, and consequently not exclusively of this glass. The "aspect," in the sense we are here giving to this word, is something which has no particular significance, but is so to speak typical. For this reason Plato called it Idea.

"Idea" for Plato does [34]

not primarily mean a mental act, as it does today, nor the content of such an act, but the conjunction of those physiognomical traits or characteristics of something. It is, then, what is in something, its proper traits.

The word 'aspect' gives rise to some confusion. In its most obvious meaning it signifies the conjunction of all and only actual traits. This primary meaning is not foreign to the Platonic eidos.

But the inspired discovery of the latter caused men to concentrate more on another dimension of 'aspect'. A thing, in fact, is not limited to possessing certain characteristics or lacking them. The fulfillment or defect of certain perfect characteristics (and those to which reality approximates either positively or privatively) is reflected as much in their possession as in their absence. In a government we see not only how it governs in fact, but we see as well by exemplification or privation the qualities of good government. In this second meaning the aspect a thing presents to us is not made up only of the conjunction of its true characteristics, those which it really possesses, but also of this conjunction of these other "perfect" traits, which realized in varying degrees are reflected in the form. These latter characteristics are found in reality, but in a different way. The so-called 'real characteristics' simply "exist" in reality; the others "are" not in it, but rather "shine" positively or negatively therein. Plato was most concerned with this second point of view as the resplendence of something, and he called it Idea, the aspect of things in their second dimension. Sensible reality in itself does nothing but realize in varying degrees the idea which shines in it. This can be seen from the point of view of sensible things: these things approximate well or poorly the ideas which are resplendent in them. Now, a little reflection will show that the qualities of good government, which through absence or presence {37} shine in all politics, are identical for everyone dedicating himself to the task of governing. Ideas are thus converted into "the essential" of things, something common to all of them. And this is the decisive step.

We leave aside all theoretical complications; this recursion to the idea is an immediate event of our everyday experience. To be sure, if we had nothing more than senses, it would be impossible. By itself each sense does no more than give a few characteristics of things. Neither does the sum total of the senses suffice, because wine is one thing and not many, be they isolated or conjoined. Therefore what we call a "thing" is, for the senses, a simple [35] " appearing" to be such a thing, and they have no ability to decide whether it is so or not in truth. But, besides the senses, man has a mode of experience with things which gives him, fully and completely, in a simple and unitary way, a contact with them, such as they are "from the inside," so to speak. One who suffers from an infirmity has a knowledge of it, he "knows" what it is to be sick and what his sickness is better than the healthy doctor, however extensive the doctor's knowledge may be; likewise one who "knows" a friend, "knows"

who he is better than any of his biographers. It is a knowledge which touches the intimate nature of each thing; it is not the perception of each of its characteristics, nor their sum or conjunction, but something which situates us in what it truly and intimately is; "one" thing which "is" in truth, such and such a way, and not simply what it "seems." It is a kind of sense of being. It is not, then, a mystical or transcendental act: every comportment with things carries within itself the possibility of this "experience". And that alone is what properly speaking we call "knowing" what a thing is, knowing to what to direct our attention, what precisely it is and not merely what it seems to be. To this experience the Greeks gave the name nous, mens. So the aspect of things to which we earlier alluded is not merely the content of the senses, but above all, this elemental and preeminently simple phenomenon of the mental act, of the noein, which gives us what a thing is. Thanks to it, I said, we "know" things in the most excellent sense; we can, in fact, univocally and indubitably discern what they in truth "are" from what they only "seem" to be; who "is" a friend, or a just man, from who only has the appearance of such.

{38} Man is not simply before things, but moves among them, deciding in each case what they are. Thanks to this experience which we have described summarily, he can formulate a judgement or verdict about them; he can rely on things and confide in them. This decision or verdict is a "making his own" what things are, "surrendering" himself to them. Such is the "judgement." It is like a judge who makes his own the result of judicial proceedings, "giving" himself to it, i.e. speaking the truth about what has happened. Upon "judging" that such and such thing is true, he "discerns" the real from the apparent, and passes judgement on these true things, separating those that are

true from those that are not. He does not concern himself with what things seem to be, but with what they are. This decision is one of [36]

the essential dimensions which the logos possessed for the early Greeks. And, in accordance with it, to know meant primarily to discern what is from what is not, or as they said, being from apparent being; in other words, to possess the idea of things. The truth of our decisions, of our logos, consists entirely in containing this "experience." Parmenides was the first to perceive it clearly, and Plato accepted this old lesson from him.

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KNOWLEDGE IS DEFINITION

But here new difficulties arise. Up to what point can this discernment be called "knowledge," however radical it may be? Plato saw the problem quite clearly. Knowledge is more than discerning appearance and reality. One can distinguish a circle and a triangle perfectly, without being a geometer. In order to be the latter, besides knowing "that" this is a circle or a triangle, it is necessary to be able to say what a circle or triangle is. It is not simply discerning what is from what only appears to be, but discerning "what" a thing "is" with respect to other things which also "are." This presupposes a kind of split between "that it is" and "what it is," between the "thing" and its "essence." We only "know" what a thing is when, after the split or unfolding has been effected, we can go on linking to the thing (taken as a firm point of departure and of reference) that which, by our unfolding, we have "extracted" from it, And what is it that we have extracted? Precisely the characteristic traits of the thing in question, one by one, taken separately with respect to each other an the thing in question of which they are the characteristics (auto kath'auto, as Plato said). That is, the unfolding is nothing but an explanation of each of the moments of the "idea," of the " aspect;" of each one of the characteristics of the "physiognomy" of the thing. Hence, not only do we discern a thing from its appearance, what it is from what it is not, but moreover we circumscribe precisely the limits where the thing begins and ends, the unitary profile of its aspect, of its idea. This is the "definition."

Knowledge is not discerning, but definition. Such is the great accomplishment of Platonism.

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KNOWLEDGE IS UNDERSTANDING

But neither is this sufficient. Plato himself sensed the inadequacy, but it remained for Aristotle to give the question its decisive architecture. Knowledge is, in a certain sense, more than discerning and defining. We know something completely when, besides knowing "what" it is, we know "why" it is. This is what lies at the base of all pre-Aristotelian knowledge. Having made it patent, historically and systematically, is one of the immortal creations of Aristotelianism. And in order to understand that this is so, one need only reflect attentively upon the significance of the "idea" or aspect which we have been discussing. When we have been shown the true aspect of authentic wine, not everything has been said that can be said merely by proclaiming this the aspect or idea of the wine. In reality there is something more: the true wine has such an aspect because it "is" wine. This idea or aspect is nothing but the patentization of what it is, of what it already was prior to being shown. The truth of the thing is based in its very being. If one desires to continue speaking of idea, it will be necessary to understand by it the conjunction of traits, not only insofar as they are "characteristics" of the wine, i.e. insofar as this conjunction offers itself to whomever contemplates the wine, but as traits which antecedently "constitute" the wine in question; the essence, not only as the content of a definition, but as what essentially constitutes the thing. The idea or "figure" is what antecendently "configures" a thing, gives it its proper "form", and with which it is established sufficiently and peculiarly with respect to other things. This "being proper," {42} this "property" or "peculiarity"

and the sufficiency it fittingly bears, is what the Greeks termed ousia , substance of something, in the sense that this expression has even in English, when we speak of a meal "without substance" or of an "insubstantial person." Although coinciding through its content with this "why," the "what" has a [39] completely different meaning. Previously we had a simple what;" now, a "what" which is so "because" things "are" the way they are and not another way. Upon knowing things in this way we know the necessity for their being as they are and consequently why they are not another way. We have not only defined the thing, but have demonstrated in it its necessity. De-monstrate does not mean here a rational proof, but an exhibition of the articulation of something, as when we speak of a "demonstration" of military force or public opinion in a popular demonstration. Knowledge par excellence is demonstrative knowledge of the necessary "why" of things. In this demonstration we have done nothing but explain once again the traits of the idea, in a way different than the simply indicative fashion.

Knowledge is not discerning or definition: knowledge is understanding, demonstrating. Only the internal articulation of the "what" and of the "why" makes possible a science sensu strictu

telling us what things are. This is when the idea fully acquires the distinction of "being constitutive" of a thing. The question about what things are is thus linked definitively to the question about the Idea. And that will be essential for the future of the human mind. From this moment, in fact, human knowledge is going to be a road directed toward conquering "ideas."

How?

A) "De-monstration," in the very full sense we have given to this word, is something which is nonetheless problematic and difficult. Perhaps not everything is demonstrable in the same sense. Not everything can be understood in the same way. Not all {43} things, nor everything in them, are equally accessible. To the path of access to things the Greeks gave the name methodos. The problem of method thus acquires, on top of its apparently propadeutic character, a genuine metaphysical meaning. Method is not limited to any special way of access to things: the senses quite as much as the logos are methods. But preferentially attention was concentrated upon the logos, because it is the path leading us to understand things. The internal articulation of the elements of the logos is the object of logic. The problem of method is thus converted into "logic," through an elaboration of the idea [40] of the logos itself; and bearing in mind that the idea is, as we have said, the form of things, that which formally constitutes them, we can understand that logic studies what formally constitutes the logos; and in this sense formal logic is something eminently real. Thus logic was the organon of real knowledge, that which permits us to conquer new ideas and therewith new traits of things.

And, even at this point, we observe that the traits of an idea or form, when removed or separated from a thing, do not naturally subsist independently of it, even when they are joined together by a definition. Hence, when a thing is separated from its essence or form, and that essence or form is broken down into its component traits, we do not attribute to these traits any independence, except mentally, i.e. except by the very act of nous which separates them. Thus separated they are nothing but concepts or modes by which the mind, when it captures a thing, captures along with it all of its traits and each one of them in and by itself. Whence it follows that if in one or more concepts we find others necessarily implied, these will also be traits necessarily pertaining to the thing in question. Hence demonstration acquires a special form: the mediated discovery of ideas; it is not a simple logos, but a syllogism, what in a more common sense is usually called "a demonstration." It is natural that maximum effort be put into this task, and that it not be considered as a science sensu strictu, but rather that knowledge which refers concepts to things via a reasoning process.

Knowledge, understanding, {44}

is thus reasoning, disputing, argument. Something is understood insofar as discourse or reasoning manifests it as necessarily true; everything else is uncertain or unscientific. Ockham said,

Scientia est cognitio vera sed dubitabilis nata fieri evidens per discursum. Science is true knowledge, but possibly false, which by its nature can be made evident through discourse. Thus it was throughout the Middle Ages, and likewise after the 16th century (despite the different type of reasoning) in almost every science; mathematics and theoretical physics are an authentic testimony of this triumph of demonstration and rational knowledge. Philosophy itself has suffered, for a long time, under the tyranny of this "model."

B) But the foregoing is not sufficient for knowledge. If reasoning is supposed to make us understand things, it must not be limited to discussing their momentary aspects. It is supposed to [41]

present them in their internal necessity, based or founded upon each other. Some of them, therefore, come necessarily from others. Since antiquity this "to come from" has been called "to begin," "to originate," and that from which something comes, its arkhe, beginning principle, source. Knowing a thing is not only proving that we must necessarily admit such and such characteristics pertain to it, but seeing, demonstrating why they pertain to it necessarily; and moreover showing how some conduce inexorably to others. If reasoning has cognitive force, it is owing to its demonstration of this necessity, and not to any sort of polemical necessity. Knowing a thing is to know it through its principles. If one desires to continue speaking of logic, it will have to be a logic of principles,

infinitely more difficult than the logic of reasoning.

Since the principle has to be a principle such that a thing is truly what it is, it cannot be discovered except in that intimate contact with things which we call mens, nous. But the

mens is not limited to seeing what a thing truly is. It begins by "making it" visible. Anyone not endowed with enough sensitivity to make friends and see in others more than copies, partners, or companions, cannot himself be a friend. Only one {45} possessing that sensitivity can discern in someone else's personality the quality of being a friend, or not being one but only another person. Aristotle compares the mind in this respect with a light illuminating an object, "making it" visible for whomever possesses that light: the mind confers, simultaneously, "visibility" on the object and "capacity" to see on the man; it makes, simultaneously, of the former a noema and of the latter a noesis. This obscure relation, dimly perceived by old Parmenides, becomes fully mature in Aristotle. Thanks to this double dimension of the mind (the "active" and the "passive," said Aristotle), it is possible to look at things from the point of view of what they truly are, and seek, therefore, the primary being of things, in order to come to see what they are. Aristotle called nous the "principle of principles"; the Fathers of the Church and the Scholastics gave one of its essential qualities the name lumen, something carrying us to the intimate part of each thing: intima penetratio veritatis,

said St. Thomas.

How is the mind the principle or source of principles? How do [42] we know things in their principles?

The multiplicity of facets of something is what makes it possible that its true being not shine through, and justifies the question as to which are its true principles. Every error comes from a falsification, and every falsification supposes a duality, in virtue of which something can seem to be one thing and actually be another. Every "falsum" leads to an "error." If, then, we resolve a thing into its ultimate and most simple elements, these cannot be untrue: the simple is, by nature, true; it can be ignored or overlooked, but once discovered, cannot deceive; it lacks "duplicity." Every other facet is based on these simple facts, which will therefore be its principles. Let us recall now that the facets of the idea are expressed in concepts which the logos ties together. Treating of simple elements, the logos cannot err, since it finds itself before relations which are "manifest" and "obvious" by

themselves, which do not require, in order to be made patent, anything more than a simplex intuitus into things, as St. Thomas said. The "principles" of things are expressed thus in primary truths, and these are perforce primary in every act of understanding. It is possible for man to ignore some of them, if they concern {46} certain objects exclusively; but there are those which cannot be ignored. He perceives them by the mere act of existing, because they refer to things in the mere act of being things. Such truths (for example, the principle of contradiction) are primary, and not just because their truth is prior to all others, but moreover because they are effectively known before all others, though perhaps we are not aware of it. The internal necessity characterizing each act of knowledge is realized in them in exemplary fashion; they deserve to be called knowledge in the most dignified sense. For this reason the Greeks called them axioms, which means "dignities." As they do not require anything to be true, they cannot be false, and are necessarily known. They are truths, in a certain way, which are connatural to the mind, and which constitute the primary sense of a mind which explains what it understands, the primary sense of what it is "to be truly." The principles are thus principles that something is, in truth, what it is. The mental vision which makes them patent is not a simple opening of the eyes, but an inquiry into the roots of a thing. The Latins gave this vision the name in-spectio, "inspection." The simplex intuitus is a simplex mentis inspectio,

resolving a thing into its ultimate simple components. One can easily comprehend [43] that once principles are obtained in this way, knowing a thing will be showing the internal necessity with which the thing itself is the way it is, and not another way. It is no longer enough to prove that we must necessarily affirm that it is the way it is.

So we take the principles, irresoluble in themselves, and we combine them in an orderly way so as to reconstruct something, without taking leave of this inspective vision in truth. If we succeed, the reconstruction will demonstrate the true necessity of the thing. Resolve into basics and recompose with them that which was resolved: this is the principle mode of knowledge culminating in Descartes and Leibniz.

But perhaps this is not sufficient for knowing things through their principles. We want to know what wine is truly, because the mind, as we saw, makes us look at it from the point of view of what it truly is. The resolution and combination give me to know, in its principles, what the wine is; but not that what is here in front of me is truly wine. If knowledge is de-monstrating

{47} by principles, it is not enough to understand what the wine is truly: it is necessary to understand how that which it truly is, is here and now wine and not something else; it is necessary to understand not only the essence, but the thing itself; not only the idea in itself, but as principle of the thing. The first is expressed by saying, "The wine is red..."; the second by saying, "What this truly is, is wine." Now. in "being truly" everything is encompassed, and what we call "everything" is nothing but the entirety of all things insofar as they "truly are." Being wine truly and not something else then signifies discriminating from among everything which truly is, "being wine" from everything else. Understanding wine based upon its principles will then be understanding it based upon "being truly." The principle of things is this "being truly," and, therefore, everything, the "all." That which we determinately call each" thing is that in which the principle, the all, has concentrated what has "come to be." Everything in principle is then in each thing; any individual thing is nothing but a type of mirror,

speculunt, which when the light of the mind strikes it, reflects the all, the one which in the most full manner truly is. The being of things is a "specular" being (taking this word as an adjective). The "all" is in a thing " specularly " - and

knowing a thing through its principles will be knowing it speculatively ;

it is seeing everything which truly is reflected in its idea; seeing how what "truly" is has come to be wine in this case. When a thing is [44] understood along these lines we also understand, in a certain respect, everything else. This radical and determinate community of each thing with everything else is what has been called a system. To

know something is to know it systematically, in its community with everything. Science is thus a system. This system expresses the way in which what truly is has come to be "this," wine. The logos systematically enuntiating the specular being of things does not simply say what is, but expresses this very "coming to be"; it is not syllogism, but dialectic;

whereas the former deduces or induces, the latter educes.

It is not a combination but a principle-oriented generation of truths. Ideas are captured dialectically. When this has been accomplished, then not only "why" that which truly is, is wine, has been understood; but also why it had to seem like something else. "Being truly" is, at one and the same time, the principle of {48} seeing. Speculative knowledge is absolute. Thus we come full circle. The nous not only has discovered the principles of what it sees, but the principle of visibility itself, of being truly. Upon making them visible, the mind sees itself reflected in the mirror of things inasmuch as they are. Truth is made patent in the things which truly are. Speculative knowledge is thus, finally, a discovering of the mind to itself. Only then is the mind effectively and in the fullest sense the principle of principles, the absolute principle. Such is the inspired work of German Idealism from Fichte to Hegel.

The first half of the 19th century witnessed the romantic frenesi

of this speculation. The scientist was the elaborator of speculative systems. But in his face was raised the hue and cry of "return to things." Knowing is not reasoning or speculation; knowing is attending modestly to the reality of things.

C) Principle-oriented knowledge of things, in its speculative form, contains a justified exigency which confers upon it its special strength in the face of any rational discursive knowledge. Knowing is not only knowing the essence, but also the thing itself. The thing itself: here we have the question. Up to what point is it described through speculation? When I want to know what this truly is which seems to be wine, the thing itself, the wine itself, the "truly" is not an addle "being true," filled with predicates and notae . In [45]

the expression "the wine itself," the "itself" means this real thing. The thing "itself" is the thing in its reality. Reality does not mean exclusively "material being." Numbers, space, and fiction also have, in a certain sense, their reality. Three is not the same as the idea of three; nor is the idea of a character in a novel the same as the character in the novel. Likewise a true idea of wine is not the wine, here and now in front of me. Speculative knowledge has developed the problem entirely from the side of truth, leaving in abeyance-though intending to return to it-the question of the reality of what is. But it did not succeed in going from the

idea to reach things. Hence that which we used to be able to call ideism was, in the final analysis, idealism.

This is its downfall. Knowledge {49} is not only understanding what a thing is from its principles, but really gaining possession of the reality; not only the the " truth of reality, " but also the " reality of truth. " In " reality of truth" is how things must be understood.

Reality is a characteristic of things which is very difficult to express. Only one who has been sick, or who "knows" a friend, "feels" the sickness or "feels" the friendship. Let us prescind from every other reference: feeling, qua feeling, is real reality; the man without feeling is like a cadaver. But feeling is a reality sui generis. In every sensation a man "feels himself," so to speak; he feels "himself," whether good or bad, agreeable or disagreeable, etc. Moreover this sensation of his is feeling something which in that sensation acquires its meaning; he senses a sound, an aroma, etc. The feeling or sensing, as reality, is the "real" patency of something. In virtue of it, we can say that feeling is being truly; i.e. feeling a sensation is the primary reality of truth. It is possible that not everything a man senses is reality independently of his sensing. But the illusion and the irreality

can only be given precisely because every sensing is real and makes patent to us reality. Illusion will consist in taking for real some [46] thing

which isn't. More precisely: the reality of truth really manifests to us the truth of a reality sensed in our sensing. So the problem now will be to distinguish within this truth the reality, the really true thing, and the true reality of a thing. These three expressions are thus found constitutively united: reality of truth, truth of reality, and true reality. Together, they pose the problem aforementioned, for which not only will a logic of principles be required, but also, in a certain sense, a logic of reality. How does sensing assure us of the knowing possession of reality?

{50} In order to see how, it is necessary to clarify a little of the matter of human sensation. Man senses, of course, through the "senses." The salient characteristic of the senses in man is not their being "sensory," but rather "senses." The sensory is not what sensation is, but rather sensations are the root of the sensory. The eyes, ears, etc. are nothing but sense "organs"; the sensation itself is something having a deeper and more intimate root. As sense organs they are special ways of sensing things, that way of sensing them which occurs when material things "affect" these organs. Affections or impressions of things: this is the primary mode of sensing. When man feels himself affected, the sensation of his affection is plain to him. That which we call the "given" or "datum" of each sensation is the sensation of its affection. Each organ, as I said, is a special mode of sensing; but sensing or feeling itself has a root still more intimate. Sensing is something primarily unitary, it is my sensing, and each one of the senses is nothing but a diversifying facet of that primary sensing. Hence Aristotle said that man possesses an intimate or common sense. He was not referring to the "synthesis," which is described in scientific works, but to a primary unity in the face of which the organs would be rather an analysis, or analyzers of sensation. Thanks to this, a "sensible thing" is "a" thing constituted in the sensation" of our affections or impressions. The eidos or idea of a thing is, therefore, primarily a schema, or figure of it, what is expressed in the impression produced in us. As a sense [47]

impression, it outlasts the thing itself. A thing leaves an impression on a man which lasts longer than the action of the thing itself. The impression is prolonged, said Aristotle, in a type of consecutive movement. Upon lengthening the impression of things, {51} the figure of the sensation no longer is eidos but image . The image is not exactly a photograph of the thing which a man keeps in his soul for the duration of the impression. When something is shown to him, especially through the senses, the Greeks referred to it as "phenomenon," from phaino, to show. The enduring of something being shown is expressed by a verb derived from phaino, phantazein. imagining is "fantasing," making the showing of something last. The essence of imagination

is fantasy . The image is what is sensed in the fantasy. It is no longer a phenomenon, but a phantasm. But the sensing is not always patent; it can be latent as well. This being latent iw what the Latins called cor , and the act of making it patent is, therefore, a recordare or recalling. Thanks to memory, perception is refined; whoever possesses a sure sense we say is an expert and skillful ; he has experience. Emperia , experience, primarily refers to this experience of the expert. It is only then that an impression may conserve just the traits common to many others. The idea that it is only an image then gives way to the idea that it is a type common to many individuals. And whoever possesses this sense of the common is skilled or tekhnites, as Aristotle said.

Nevertheless, if man had no other way of sensing than this, could not say that he possessed a "knowledge" of things.

Because in fact, in every sensing, the thing sensed in the impression is a "thing," but "at the moment", as we say, and quite rightly. It is a thing while I sense it. To be sure, the impression as such prolongs the "act," as we have seen; but this very thing which guarantees a longer duration makes the thing insecure. We have an impression without being affected; the "figure" of the thing has disappeared as an affecting reality, and only its "phantasm" is left. If one desires to continue speaking of a thing, it will be the thing as sensed. I can now no longer say that this

is wine, but that this,

in my sensing , is wine. When something is only in my sensing, then it only seems to be what it is. Now we understand why the senses do not give us the being of things, but only their appearance. In other words, an impression, as such, only discovers to us reality, but things are not necessarily real: without an impression there would be neither things nor [48]

phantasms; but with just these impressions we do not {52} know if what there is is a thing or a phantasm. It is only one or the other "in our sensing," and therefore a thing is one or the other "at the moment." In the reality of truth, which is sensing, we have the truth of reality, but not the true reality.

But this does not mean that it is something frivolous or elusive. When something is "in my sensing," as we saw, it "seems" to be what it is. This "seems" is always a seems "to me." When I say that this seems to be in such a way, I pronounce an opinion (doxa). To understand, then, what the real knowledge is, it is necessary to see what this opinion is.

To utter an opinion is, provisionally, to say something about my sensing. But this "saying" itself need not be taken as a declarative sentence, but as a "speaking." When we speak we say things. But we say this and not something else, because a type of interior "voice" tells us what things are. When something unexpected surprises us, we are left speechless. The logos is, then, fundamentally a voice which tells us what must be said. As such, it is something which forms part of sensing itself, of "intimate" sensing. But, at the same time, this voice is the "voice of things," it tells us their being and makes us say it. Things support man by their being. Man says what he says by the force of things. With respect to this voice of things, Heraclitus said that the logos was the substance of them all. My intimate sense senses the voice of things; and this sensing is in the first place a "listening to" in order to "follow" what is said and thus "give" ourselves to these things. Hence, our speaking is just and right. As a decision or verdict the logos is an intimate sense of the rectitude of speaking, and is based in sensing its voice. Whoever is deaf to this voice speaks by talking "without sense," and this mode of being among things is dreaming. In it there is nothing but the voice of each thing. On the other hand, whoever attends to the voice of things is awake to them, is vigilant. This is in fact a vigil. When one discovers a thing, it is as if he awoke to it. And the first logos of awakening, therefore, is an exclaiming. Each thing carries with it its voice, and this voice, in its turn, unites all things in a unitary voice. {53} Therefore all men who are awake have the same world; it is the cosmos.

Joining or uniting is termed in Greek legein. Hence, this vocalizing is called "logos." The speech of a man awake is not [48] the pure "loquacity" of one asleep; it is not a pure lexis, but the diction of a spokesman of things. Man awake is the spokesman of things.

Now, just as impressions endure in the sensing, the logos "composes" the sensations of sensing as it unites them; since each offers nothing but things of the moment, the logos as an expression of the cosmos, or of the unity of things sensed, will be a composition of moments, of movements. Knowing something will be knowing that it has "become" such in this instant. This becoming has nothing to do with the becoming of the dialectic. The latter deals with the all coming to be "this." Here we are concerned rather with something "at the moment" coming to be, and "at the moment" turning into something else. Knowledge, for the senses, will be possessing the direction of this movement, predicting.

But this knowledge which opinion represents, on account of the fact that it is a knowing only "through impressions," is insufficient. Anyone who knows only what is in his impressions proceeds on the basis of impressions; in spite of everything, he does not have a "sense of things," of what is always true. For this reason we call him insensate. The "sensate" man has a sense of things different than their pure impression. Through

having a sense, which is that of things and not his own, the sensate man is at one with all those who are likewise sensate. This sense of thing is mens, nous.

Anyone lacking it is mindless or demented.

This being of things, proper to the sensation of them, must be taken literally. The sensation is of them; man has it as a type of gift; on this account the Greeks called it something divine. And thanks to it, the mens has in itself the security, not only of its reality, but of the true reality of what is "mented", i.e. "thought." This unity caused Parmenides to say that the reality of the mind and its object are "the same." This is the supreme manner of sensing, and therefore Aristotle compares it not only to light, but also to touch. The

nous, he says, is a "touching," a "feeling." Among all the senses, in fact, touch is the one which most surely gives us the reality of something. Eyesight, aside from being clear vision, senses a type of contact with {54} light. And with just this clarity we would have, in the majority of cases, "ideas", but "ideas" which would not be anything but "visions", "specters"; therefore the mens, besides seeing clearly, is a "touching," a "tactile" seeing which puts us into actual contact

[50] with "palpitating" things, i.e. real things. So much so that at bottom it is more a palpitating of us in things than things in

us This palpitating affects the intimacy of each thing, at its deepest and most real point, as when we say that an event "touched the heart" of something. The actuality of the palpitating is what the Greeks called "actuality." Real things have, in a certain sense, palpitating actuality before the mind. Nevertheless, things are not their actuality before the mind. Rather, actual things have actuality because previously they are actual. And this other actuality is what the Greeks called reality: a type of operation in which something is affirmed substantially. Aristotle called it energeia. The ,mens, upon touching a real thing, touches what it "is" actually, not just its actual impression. This is how man discerns what is "at the moment" from what is "at every moment," i.e. always. That which is always true presupposes that it is always. To be is to be always. The ens of Parmenides is, therefore, immovable and invariable. Each thing eo ipso must be always the same as it is. The idea or essence of things is converted thus into what is essential to them so that they can always be the same. The essence is ousia. Thanks to the ousia,

the 'momentary" manifestations of things are movements of that which is not essential, which emerge from what the thing is and not what it was at the previous moment. Ousia

is thus the nature of things, Nature presupposes ousia, and ousia the "being always". This connection is fundamental.

The logos which announces this new voice of things is not an opinion about what has become something "in our sensing," but what "is" with sensation. Before, something was, inasmuch as it was sensed; now, something is sensed, inasmuch as it is. Therefore the logos which predicts what will be, presupposes a logos which predicts what is. Each "sensation," in the act of sensing, "is" insofar as in it the real and true being is "declaimed" which always is. This declamation or accusation in Greek is called kategorema,

or predication. The modes of declaration are, therefore,

categories. Thanks to it the logos can {55} have a congruent sense; if I am asked "where" we are and I answer "yellow," the answer is neither true nor false; it has no [51] meaning; it is an "incongruity" between the being which is declaimed in the "where" and that which is declaimed in the yellow." The truth or falsity is not primary, either in things or the logos; both presuppose a meaning, and this in turn presupposes the categories. The meaning here is not a "signification," but the meaning of mental sensing. The nous, the mens, is sensing itself put in the open, clarified; conversely, this clarity is of a sensation.

Thanks to this, true reality is found in the truth of reality. And thus, the search for principles is more than speculation; it touches the thing itself, and its results are real principles. Whoever has conquered principles this way, whoever deals with

things in this radical intimacy which is found in their principles, is said to enjoy their reality. He has gusto for things, he tastes them. Therefore he is said to have a sapere,

a taste, sapientia, a

cultivated desire for the principles of the really true. Wisdom is not simply a logical manner, but a refinement and radical inclination of the mind, a "disposition" of it toward real and true being; knowledge not only knows what always is, but also in a certain respect, always knows it. For this reason, the ancients termed it a hexis,

a habit of principles.

This sense, I said, is something interior to us, at the same time as it is likewise interior to things. And not only is it interior to us, but it is what is most interior, the "intimate." To this "intimacy" of sensing the ancients gave the name "abyss of the soul"; the soul has an essence, in the sense of abyss, bottom. This idea passed into mystical theology with the name of scintilla animae, the spark of the soul.

Knowing "what this is" truly and knowing in "what" this wine consists is only possible as an explanation of what is sensed in this luminous sensing. Therefore, the principles or elements of things are not for Aristotle primarily just concepts, as I said with deliberate imprecision a few pages back; rather, they are also the elementary sensations of our organs. What is sensed, as such, is always true: error can arise when the logos bases itself on sensing and goes to a thing, mentalizing it without thinking, {56} so to speak. The search for real and true being hinges, then, in the last analysis, on the search for those infallible and elemental sensings, so that attending to their infallible truth, one can have the same true reality of things.

A large segment of philosophy and science have gone off on this search. It is necessary that the ideas constituting the being of [52] things should be reduced to these elements which are real, besides being true, and are so infallibly, so that they can be true and actual ideas or forms of things. This does not mean "speculating" with or combining" truths to discover ideas, but encountering their real origination. The origin of ideas was the problem of human knowledge during much of the Middle Ages and the first centuries of the Modern era.

The problem is implied in what we have just finished saying. Knowing is knowing things and not just impressions; and this is the work of the mens. But this mens, whose sensing gives us things, is not sufficiently delineated but only set forth as a problem in Aristotle's description. Regardless of how many things there may be, this sensing of the mind will always be human. In every sensation, in fact, whether of the senses or the mind, not only is something sensed, but man senses himself. In the sensing of the mind, man senses himself among things, but he senses himself. As in any sensing, then, so in the sensing of the mind man is "con-sensing," "conscious"; alongside the "science" of things which gives rise to sensing, we have a "conscience" of man. The mens

has been converted into conscience. And thus, just as man senses the real, so he senses at the same time himself in his real and true being. Hence the mens can serve man as a "guide" in the universe: hegemonikon, the Stoics called it, for this reason. Its proper mission is not, then, just sensing, but rather pre-sensing the universe. In a certain respect it carries the universe within itself. Thus the entire problem is centered on this governing or managing, this "pre-sensing" function of the mind. The mind receives its special security and penetration within human sensing precisely because its sensing is presensing the entire universe. How?

The mind as a way of sensing which man possesses implies an "organ" of his sensing; it is no longer "the" sensation, but his "organ". As such, it does not sense things otherwise than by affection. Hence it will be

necessary to say that besides sensible impressions, {57} man possesses other mental affections which give him the real and true idea of the thing itself. But as the mind senses things in this special way of "pre-sensing" them, the affection has no other role than awakening the presentiment, changing what is presented into what is sensed. The ideas of [52] things will therefore be radically creative-innate, the 17th century would say-for man, illuminated and made clear by the "mental" affection of things. Such is rationalism, from Descartes to Leibniz.

But even this is not enough. As an organ of sensing which does not sense otherwise than by affection, the only thing which the

mens can give us is things "in its sensing"; and this is a sensing different from the sensible, but a sensing which does not give anything but the presensing as human sensing. The mens is nothing more than the "organ" of an "interior" sensing. The origin of ideas must be referred then to two distinct sources of equal rank: external sensation, and internal reflection, as Locke said. There is no more reality than what is sensed in these two types of sensations. Reality is empeiria. If there is a logos of ideas, an idealogy, it will be essentially empiriology. Everything else is absolute truth, but only "truths," i.e. relations of ideas. Such is the work of Hume. Empiricism, besides being a reduction of reality to empeiria, is an affirmation of the absolute meaning of the idea as such. This excision is going to have grave consequences.

If this in fact were true, man would never be able to know things, but simply "consider," skeptomai, ideas. Therefore any empiricist philosophy is necessarily "scepticism," i.e. simple consideration of what is sensed in our impressions. To speak about things requires something more, something which, without separating us from our impressions, "elevates" them to the rank of a sensation of things. As a sense "organ," the mind is not so much a font of new impressions as a distinct mode of sensing things, the same things sensed by the sense "organs." Through the mind, man does nothing but "give" meaning to sensations. The mind is not juxtaposed with sensible impressions. An animal senses" the wine; man senses that it "seems" or "is" wine. This is an essential difference: that between "naked" sensing and "sensing that it appears", or "sensing that it is" wine. We would not have this latter without {58}

mens. The mind is interpenetrated with a sensible impression. And its mode of penetration consists in "giving" meaning: the "pre" of presensing consists in "giving" meaning in order to sense. Thus, in sensing itself the characteristics of true being which the mind discovers in itself are [54]

found. Thanks to these "categories" of the mind human sensing has meaning. Man not only senses, but gropes, so to speak, with impressions until he gives them meaning. Without being given a second impression of things, we elevate these impressions to the rank of true an real "ideas" of things. This elevation is what is termed "transcending." Therefore, the action of the mind on impressions is transcendental. The problem of nous conduces, then, to the problem of transcendentality. When impressions are "probed," or become the object of groping, things are no longer a simple experience, but an experiment. As such, they are not simple entities which are there, but "facts." Science is experimental knowledge.

Such is the work of Kant. It would be a serious error to consider it only from the perspective of abstract ontology. The presentiment of the Stoics has been converted into a mental pre-sensing. Man does not carry within himself the universe of things, but only their real meaning. (Here the word "meaning" does not signify a simple meaning such as "the meaning of a sentence," but involves the essential dimension inherent in sensing.) Impressions give us true reality when they have meaning, the meaning of things.

With this, we do not lose the security of moving among real things, but the "meaning of reality" steadily gains in importance. Man has found in the meaning a mode of probing and sizing up impressions and therefore of capturing things, not just ideas. While speculative knowledge leads to the true idea, without arriving at real

things, now we move more and more among things, with a gradual obscuring of the idea. The man of the second half of the 19th century was interested in conquering things. But in this conquest, by dint of taking ideas back to things, he pursued things without ideas. Consequently he looked not at what things naturally always are, but rather at their invariable connections, their laws. And such is the characteristic, ever more prevalent, which physical science is acquiring. If in antiquity ideas predominated over things, sight over touch, now {59} things predominate over ideas to such an extent that our knowledge of the world is being converted into a touching of realities without seeing them, without having an idea of what they are. Even Kant called mental synthesis a blind faculty. Facing ideism without reality there is reism without ideas. Positivism is the culmination of this mode of knowing: things are facts, nature is law, science is experiment. [55]

Summarizing: human knowledge was at first discerning being from appearing to be; it was made more precise later, as defining

what is; it was finally seen as an understanding what is defined. But, "understanding" could mean either

demonstration, speculation, or experimenting. The three dimensions of understanding in Aristotle, viz. apodictic necessity, intellection of principles, and impression of reality, which arise from the linking of the problem of being to that of the idea, have meandered along various more or less divergent paths through history. But in this way the philosophical problem has been dislocated. I do not mean to imply that the entire history of philosophy has been a commentary on Aristotle. When one speaks of expounding systems, it is necessary to stress the absolute abyss separating our intellectual world from that of the ancients. Rather, I speak of something different. In the first place, I refer to discovering motives, and it is clear that however great the distance separating us from Aristotle, it is not such as to constitute a "mistake" in the employment of the word "philosophy" as applied to Aristotle's work and that of today. In the second place, I would dare say that Aristotle is interesting only accidentally; he interests us because through him emerge "from things," and not from theories already forged, the essential motives of the first mature philosophy, which has in large measure predetermined the later course of human thought.

Cruz y Raya , September 1935

Science and Reality

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SCIENCE AND REALITY

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I. "EPISTEME" AND SCIENCE

1. THE POINT OF DEPARATURE

2. THE PROBLEM OF EPISTEME AND SCIENCE

3. THE TYPE OF KNOWLEDGE ACQUIRED

II. THE IDEA OF REALITY

1. THINGS

2. THE UNIVERSE

3. THE IDEA OF REALITY

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During the modern era, since about 1700, man has lived so persuaded that reality is discovered to him by science that nothing seems able to make him even notice the existence of this basic persuasion. For him, there is no room for the least doubt about it. Perhaps science happens to be somewhat fragmentary and changeable; but modern man sees in these two characteristics something more than a sad human condition: he has elevated them to the category of

formal structure of science, and has thus made science a constitutive approximation to reality. Thus, everything there is in reality which is accessible to man, has to be so in a way eminently scientific. This rise of scientism has been determined not so much by rationalism or a positivistic critique of knowledge as by the profound conviction that in science man is served the only parcel of reality which is accessible to him with certainty. Whence the precipitous road along which modern man has embarked, multiplying enormously the number and kind of the sciences not only for the physical world, but also for human affairs and even matters concerning divinity. Among them we may note in passing psychology, sociology, the so-called "comparative religion," and the faith with which history has sought to identify what is known through the science of history with that portion of past reality accessible to man today.

It is not the case, as I have already indicated, that science has not recognized its own limitations; no, there is no question of that. Indeed, the 19th century itself, in its final decades, initiated a thoroughgoing critique of scientific labor, motivated and directed by the very content of science. But for philosophic purposes this critique has been generally muddled and confused. It has taken on various meanings ranging from a prudent "partialism" in the conquest of reality ("only a parcel of reality is accessible to us; we do not know everything about anything"), {64}

to a pragmatist symbolism ("science has nothing to do with reality, but with human necessities; it is a group of conventions useful for the manipulation of things"). But at the bottom of all these attitudes lies the profound conviction that the fate of reality accessible to us depends ultimately upon the fate of science, at least in respect of intellectual apprehension. And if in fact man has any other contact with reality, it would have to be through some sort of irrational intuition.

But if one inquires about what should be understood by "science," regardless of the specific reply given, emphasis is [60]

always on the science, in the singular, as a univocal

effort to intellectually conquer the reality of things. The history of science will thus be nothing more than the sum total of vicissitudes which its field of action has undergone. Having begun in Ancient Greece with unlimited scope, science has successively limited its pretensions and strictly refined the portion of reality it apprehends. Today indeed we perhaps know more and better than the Greeks precisely because we set out to know less. But it is only a question of degree. The grand theoretician of the knowledge of reality was Aristotle, in his Posterior Analytics. And it is almost a commonplace to say that this book constitutes the Aristotelian theory of the "science." When, after 1500, thee came about the rise of the Nuova Scienze, and the offensive of modern thought against Aristotelian knowledge began, the methodology of this new science was presented first and foremost as a critique of Aristotle's syllogistic, as a derogation of Aristotelian science, and as a new substitute for it. But the novelty affected only content and method, not the intellectual intent itself, Everything seems, then, to lead us to the idea that what the Greeks called episteme signifies the same thing which we call "science," and that the great work of modern science has consisted in showing the falsity or at least the poverty of Aristotelian "science," while at the same time giving man a new method for reaching the same goal. Although variously realized, and with different results in different moments of its history, science is thus always a {65}

univocal force directed toward intellectual conquering of the reality of things.

Only Kant broke with this univocal conception of scientific labor. He had the genial vision that the concept of reality is not univocal for the effects of human knowledge and that the effort to know radically lacks this very univocacy. His distinction between phenomena and noumena, in fact, is given at the very heart of objects; it is enough to recall the title of one of the paragraphs of the Critique of Pure Reason: "On the Foundation of the Division of of all Objects, in General, into Phenomena and Noumena." Whence it follows that the reality science apprehends is not the reality about which one speaks when referring to the "reality of things" in an unqualified sense. But this Kantian distinction is not always sufficiently clear, whether in regard to the term "phenomena" or with respect to "noumena," especially if this latter is identified with the world of metaphysics. On the other hand, if in fact the Kantian distinction renders clear the [61] non-univocal nature of the concept of reality, and consequently obliges us to distinguish in Aristotle what there is of science from what there is of metaphysics (a distinction rigorously established by Aristotle himself, but within a more elevated and strictly metaphysical concept), it nonetheless seems Kant still believed that Aristotle's science moved in the same line as modern science.

All this invites a meditation on the way science and reality interact. Without pretending to so much as delineate the outline of such an enormous question, I may be permitted to sketch out some observations which I deem essential and which for greater clarity I will group around two fundamental points:

1. What the Greeks termed episteme is essentially different than what we call "science." Although our dictionaries have no other expression, it is an error to translate the word

episteme by 'science'.

2. The idea of reality found in the two is radically different. Nevertheless, this does not mean that such a distinction {66}

touches the proper object of first philosophy, which remains outside our considerations.

And so if modern science is now justified, then the enormous problem of reality of things, as something extrascientific, urgently calls for attention. [62]

The expression and concept of episteme was born as an autonomous technical term only in the time of Socrates, and the problem it raised was fully developed in Plato and Aristotle.

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I.

EPISTEME AND SCIENCE

The Greek language lacks a generic term to designate all modes of knowledge; there is no word which signifies simply "knowledge," with all the neutrality and scope this word has in our languages. There exist, rather, terms which indicate different modes of this which we call knowledge, but with a concretion and richness of shading which unfortunately is nearly always irrecoverably lost when translated into modern languages. For example, there is gignoskein and synienai.

The first points to the knowledge of things acquired in normal dealing with them, especially through sight; and it is a mode of being acquainted with them unequivocally, such as they are present in daily life. It is a knowledge founded upon "having seen through one's own eyes;" for example, knowing that this which I see is an oak and not a maple tree, a rhombus and not a square, etc. The Greeks called the figure (broadly speaking) which things offer to sight eidos. And so the problem of this mode of knowledge was left intimately linked to the problem of unequivocally discerning things through their eidos, based on the real and true impression which they produce in man. There goes along with this mode of knowledge a mode of sensing, thanks to which {68} we have notice of things, in the etymological acceptation of the Latin word, which possesses the same root as the Greek: vision of the notae of the object. Similarly, the notoriety which the nota

carries places this mode of knowledge in intimate relation with public opinion, with the doxa, thus transforming the "sensing" into "sentence". [63]

Synienai points up more the power which man has to produce thoughts and formulate propositions and expressions which, in their details, may or may not be adequate with respect to things, but which imply the existence of a capacity to understand them, in perfect harmony and even a symbiosis with the complex structure of reality. It is the power of understanding something complex, of expressing it and being in accordance in our expressions with the way reality is put together. But this in no way prevents such a power in

the course of its exercise from leading to thoughts and explanations which are false.

Between these two terms arises the idea of episteme, which designates, provisionally, a mode of knowledge about things which goes beyond the sphere of simple notice. It is something more than knowing, for example, that this is a tree, or that this tree is an oak and not a maple. But neither it is a mere conjunction of thoughts which makes things explicit, because thought thus understood can by itself either conform or not conform with them.

Episteme is a mode of intellection which is determined by a vision of the internal structure of things and which, consequently, bears within it the characteristics which assure effective possession of what those things are in their

intimate necessity. That to which it most approximates is the idea of a known fact, as opposed to a simple piece of information or mere thought. It is the intellectual precipitate which things deposit, thanks to which we can declare them and explain them from themselves and be present at their internal unfolding. Therefore the concept of episteme

involves the idea of a toal body of truths in which the totality of traits constitutive of its eidos (construction of the eidos)

is articulated. In this sense, episteme is something which might approximate to what we call science.

Modern science, in fact, is another knowledge which goes beyond the simple notice of things. But in this case, notice does not

{69} signify the eidos or the rigorous and pregnant figure which we have of things, but rather the more or less precise, but always somewhat vague impressions which we acquire in daily life about their coincidences and regularities. "Notice" here signifies only empirical knowledge; and opposed to it is scientific knowledge, which purports to discover the inexorable objective necessity of things. Scientific rigor does not mean so much the possession of the internal necessity of things, but rather the objective precision ; so it is no accident that science does not achieve what it [64]

proposes except by substituting for so-called empirical things (things such as appear in our daily life) others which behave in a way related to the former, and are so to speak limiting cases approximating to them. Whereas the Greek episteme tries to penetrate into things so as to explain them, modern science tries, by and large to substitute others which are more precise for them.

We are not here attempting to compare the positive science of the Greeks with our own, nor the fertility of the methods upon which each relies. Guided by the idea of penetrating into things, Aristotle elaborated syllogistic thought and along with it what is usually called induction, epagoge. Guided by the idea of substituting for the normal world its precise and rigorous limit, modern man has elaborated a new scientific methodology, amply based on a new use of hypothesis. Time itself has undertaken to resolve this case in favor of our science, at least insofar as positive results are concerned. The problem we are addressing refers to something else. What separates our science from Aristotelian

episteme is not the richness of positive results it obtains, but something prior and more radical, without which we would not even have an adequate criterion for weighing these intellectual treasures. It is unjust to measure the scope of episteme by

comparing it with the positive results which our science achieves, for the simple reason that Aristotelian episteme proposed to do something radically different than what our science proposes. Considered from the point of view of what episteme sought to do, science is neither true nor false; it is something entirely different. In reality, the Greeks were unaware of our problem. And the fact that during the Renaissance Aristotle's logic {70}

was taken only as a mere formal, syllogistic organ of knowledge is the most eloquent testimony to what we have said. But at the same time this does not deny that episteme left open the door to the mode of knowledge we call science, or that science represents a difficult task carried to completion with indisputable success after a labor of centuries. The success of modern science has managed to obscure the legitimacy of the Aristotelian problem, even though it is an echo of the most authentic voices of man's being; but perhaps today these voices are beginning to make themselves heard more forcefully in spite of, or maybe because of, the very richness of science.

In order to show the abyss which separates the motive animating

episteme from that animating science we shall examine the question from three points of view: the point of departure, the

[65] problem which is raised, and the type of knowledge obtained, both in science and in episteme.

1. The Point of departure

For greater clarity, let us direct our attention to the example of physics, because episteme physike and the science of physics are without doubt the two most highly developed products of our endeavors to know things.

What has given rise to this knowledge is the fact of change in the material universe. If ours were a world which remained immobile, as does the mathematical universe, there could be neither episteme physike or a science of physics. Both were born as an answer to the questions raised by the fact that things are one way at one time and a different way at another. Let us agree to call the changes in the universe movements. What attracts man about these changes or movements is just what is manifest through them and what is hidden by them. We designate that which is manifest in these movements by the traditional expression phenomenon, in its purest and near-etymological sense, with no allusion to any philosophical system; it is that which is manifested or shown through itself in something. Movement and phenomenon are, then, the dual point of departure for our knowledge about the physical universe. {71} Let us see how different episteme and science are, even with respect to this point of departure.

a) Movement. Although we have taken movement in its fullest sense, i.e. as a change of state in any respect whatsoever, we shall nevertheless for greater clarity direct our attention to the simplest type of movement, local movement. If a body changes from place A to place B, we say that it has moved from A to B. What is there in this movement which is properly movement?

There is, to begin with, an initial state A and a final state B. As such, they form the limits of the movement; but they themselves are not involved in it; the movement occurs between A and B.

What is there in this "between"?

There is, undoubtedly, a series of intermediate states through which the moving object passes as it goes from A to B. But these intermediate states are, in fact, essentially distinct from the initial state. Among other things, the former are not the limits but the moments of the movements. Moreover, these intermediate states do not have the same type of real existence as the initial and final [66] states. In reality, the conjunction of these intermediate states is, in a certain way, arbitrary. Properly speaking none of them is a "state" because the moving object "is" not in any of them, at least Do in the way it is in the initial and final states. Each intermediate state can only be described as such by means of a real or mental intervention of man through which, really or mentally, we stop the movement, i.e. we consider what the state of the body would be if it did not continue, if it were to remain here where we really or mentally seek to keep it. As such intervention is quite arbitrary, the presumed conjunction of intermediate states is surrounded by a coefficient of arbitrariness which for the moment we need not define more precisely.

Let us suppose, nevertheless, that the Leibnizian fiction of an infinite intelligence has been realized, and that this intelligence has resolved the unity of movement into the infinite number of states which there are between the initial and final ones. A simple linking of all these states would not be enough to reconstruct the whole movement. As {72} Bergson keenly observed, this juxtaposition of states would lead to a cinematographic reconstruction of an unreal movement, rather than to the movement in question; the succession-though perfect and infinitesimal-of states would be a film, but not a movement. And to Bergson's judicious observation something more should be added. There is the simplest and frequently overlooked fact that all these states have to

be states of moving thing that truly has "states." The motion picture screen is not a subject which passes through the various states projected upon it; it therefore does not move. Nor is that all. Each one of the intermediate states which the moving object traverses has to be of such a nature that what moves does not remain in it, but through itself carries the object to the following state. Movement is not a remaining in each of the infinite intermediate states, but exactly the reverse: a not-remaining in any of them, a passing always from one to another. In each state there is, then, something which propels the moving object to the following state. Since the 14th century it has been called an impetus, the impulse inherent in a moving object once it has been set in motion, even though the factors which activated it are no longer operating. Modern mechanics was born at the moment mathematical expression could be given to the impetus.

Therefore it is clear that what mechanics considers in movement is the transition from one place to another. It is this

[67] change between various states, the course of the movement, which constitutes the point of departure of science. In other words, science considers the unfolding of movement as a function of several variables, the determination of which is its task.

When a Greek finds himself confronting movement, even local movement, his mind directs itself to something different. What interests him in movement is the moving thing in it. He does not ask himself about the unfolding of the movement, but about the state of what moves. Whatever may be the conceptions that the Greeks-at least those of the Academy and the Lyceum-formed of movement, they all agreed on a fundamental point of view, viz. orienting themselves to the point of view of the moving thing. Movement is not a function, but a state of what moves. In brief: from this standpoint, a moving thing is not in {73} movement because it passes from A to B, but rather it passes from A to B because it is in movement. Movement does not arise through an unfolding of states, but just the opposite; through a type of reconstruction of the moving thing itself we discover in it something making it unstable. Episteme does not seek the happening of movement, but the ens mobile; not the changes, nor the various states, but the condition of the changeable thing, its internal instability.

At the very point of departure, then, there is a radical difference of intention between episteme and science. For the former, movement is a mode of being. For movement as a function what counts are the states which "are": the trajectory; for movement as a state what counts are the states which "are not," what remains yet to happen. In episteme one sees the ens mobile perforated, in a certain way, with the opacity of not-being. I have already made this clear in another study. Thanks to this it has been possible for there to be a mechanics. But it is necessary to recognize that the structure of episteme in this case has nothing to do with the structure of science.

b) Phenomenon. In this movement, we said, the moving thing is shown in its diverse states. They are the phenomena. In reality, this is the trivial definition of all physical knowledge: knowledge of natural phenomena.

What does science understand by phenomenon? To be sure, nothing which makes the slightest allusion to what has been called "phenomenalism" in philosophy. A phenomenon is what is manifested in nature, hence something perfectly real from it: rain, the falling of bodies, temperature variations, etc. [68]

When phenomena are thus understood as real happenings, science proposes to determine when, how, and why they appear. It seeks to circumscribe with the greatest possible precision the temporal and spatial arena of their apparition, and for this it preferentially employs some type of measurement. In every case the phenomenon, as object of science, implies an essential allusion to someone before which it appears, and without which it would surely have real existence, but not an appearing. Nature is, in this sense, a spectacle; "spectacle of nature" is the best translation of "scientific phenomena." As such, it involves inevitable reference to a {74} spectator, real or imaginary. This reference is what makes a reality be a phenomenon. Let us imagine, in fact, what would happen

for the purposes of mechanics or chemistry if someone suggested one of the following to a scientist. To return to the example of local movement, suppose that in this type of point-by-point movement from one state to another, God annihilated the moving thing in order to recreate it identically in the following state. Such was the conception of axaries, of Geulincx, Malebranche, and others. Or suppose that someone were to say to a chemist analytically investigating the molecules of bread and wine that a supernatural action had made them, instead of bread and wine, the body and blood of Christ. Undoubtedly, our physicist and chemist would continue unperturbed. Neither one nor the other supposition would affect physics or chemistry in the slightest way. Physics would not be affected because the occuring of movement remains the same. Chemistry would not be affected because, as theology says, when the reactants act upon the consecrated bread, they decompose it and, therefore, recreate the natural being of the chemical elements. The spectacle of nature remains unaltered by these transcendental happenings precisely because there is nothing in them to alter the spectacle before the eyes of a human observer.

A Greek encounters the problem of phenomenon in a different dimension. Whereas science considers in a phenomenon or appearance that which appears before someone, the Greek considers the apparition of that which appears. Rather than the spectators, what is important to a Greek are precisely the personages of the spectacle. What is it that appears? Who is it that appears? Rain, the color of someone's complexion, the degree of clarity of things, etc. are events of nature, operations of it which, in the act of occuring, constitute the unfolding or manifestation of [69]

the operator. Each even and each thing removes a bit of the veil of nature and partially reveals it to us. Just, as when we were discussing movement the Greek inquired about the ens mobile, so now speaking of phenomena the Greek asks about the ens phenomenale. Thus we have the object of all possible Greek {75}

phainomenologia :

a thing which appears in its appearance. (Of course, nothing could be farther from contemporary phenomenology). As the men of the Middle Ages would later say, operari sequitur esse.

A thing and its action is what episteme seeks to take as its point of deparature. We understand now why the occasionalist hypothesis or the fact of transubstantiation, to which I alluded earlier, are critical for episteme.

Completing the above formula, we may say, then, that what constitutes the point of departure of science is the occurance of the spectacle of nature; the object of episteme is the things manifested in it.

As the phenomena of nature are not, for science, things in the Greek sense (which in this instance has greater affinity with the propensity of ordinary knowledge), it follows that the concepts taken from things, such as mass, energy, etc. acquire a different meaning when they pass into science. Thus it is possible for science to speak of the transformation or equivalence between mass and energy, for example. But it would be a serious error to believe that this involves a type of transmutation of material into pure force or any other similar conception; these interpretations are based upon concepts proper to the idea of a thing, while science is based upon concepts applied to phenomena. The homogeneity of vocabularly can involve us in fatal errors. Thus just as movement for science is a simple occurance, so also all concepts related to the idea of phenomenon involve relation to an observation and a measurement, but not to a "thing.

2. The Problem of Episteme and Science

Regarding movement and phenomena, episteme as well as science tries to study what we call nature. Nature is always envisaged as something all-encompassing from which natural phenomena emerge, as through a process of birth. Regardless of whether this birth is interpreted as a true generation a la Greek philosophy or as a mechanism

a la

{76} modern science, one still deals with an emergence or coming forth from phenomena with respect [70] to nature, conceived as a font or system of productive forces. And in fact, before that spectacle of nature man is not limited to contemplation; rather he tries to learn about what are termed "forces of nature.'

But in the idea of a natural force, and therefore in the idea of nature itself, this double dimension which we discovered at the point of departure is included.

A force, for science, is in fact something manifested through the intensity of mutation which it introduces in the course of phenomena. Or in other words, a "force" is disclosed by the "strength" of its effects. Consequently when there is no mutation or any physical change whatever, neither can there be any reference to a force, strictly speaking. A force is, then, something which has to be determined taking into account phenomena such as mass and acceleration. Thus understood a reality of the phenomenological order is translated into a force.

On the other hand, a Greek sees in a force primarily an allusion to the being exerting the force. He does not reify the forces of nature; rather, he sees forceful things in them, strictly speaking. Every dynamis, for the Greek, is essentially a mode of being of the thing possessing it. And therefore a thing possessing the power to produce something is called, in a strict sense, the thing-cause, aitia.

Here we have the essential difference between the system of forces handled by science and the causality which Greek episteme tries to describe. For science, a force acts on account of its own proper nature, uniformly. A scientific study of force is only complete when the conditions under which it appears and the way in which it acts are univocally determined. That is, one must determine a conjunction of manifestations which follow other earlier ones. Only when the former are found necessarily linked to the latter can we properly speak of scientific knowledge. In other words, precise formulation of the {77} uniformity in nature's actions is the goal science pursues; this is the lex,

law. But in terms of causes, this uniformity, this law, is not an object but the very problem: How must things be so that they act uniformly? Because the concept of cause is not identified with that of uniform [71] determination, causality is not synonymous with determinism. Therefore no crisis of determinism within science implies, however remotely, a crisis of causality.

For science, then, nature is a system of laws. For episteme

it is a causal founding of things. Once again, science seeks the lawful course of phenomena; episteme, the causal nature of things.

3. The Type of Knowledge Obtained

All physical knowledge is knowledge of the "why" of things. There is no knowledge except insofar as there is a "why" known. As soon as the "why" is known, then eo ipso

the inexorable necessity penetrating reality is also known. But this "why" that is known is different for science and episteme.

Necessity, in fact, has a very precise meaning in science. Knowing for example, why a balloon ascends or why eclipses occur or why water freezes means knowing how crystals form, how aerial navigation is done, or how the interference of shadows of luminous celestial bodies occurs. Knowing how is essentially knowing what things must happen so that others may then occur. The why of science is always a how which recoils upon a who. There is the question how and by whom was what happened produced. The fact that an explanation may be complicated is due to the number of "who's" which must intervene and the way they must intervene.

But on the other hand, for episteme the problem of why

is essentially the problem of ascertaining what there is in the cause which causes the effect in question. It is not a matter of determining how things are produced; rather, it is one of learning how the things produced {78}

must be. The question is not which agents produced them, but rather what these agents are which produced them. In reality, behind the "why" science seeks the how; episteme, the what.

* * *

To summarize: Science tries to ascertain where, when and how phenomena appear. Episteme tries to ascertain what things must be which are thus manifested in the world. With these preliminaries understood we may now attempt to delineate with [72]

greater precision the fundamental suppositions at the base of science and episteme, viz. their respective ideas of reality.

[73] {79}

II.

THE IDEA OF REALITY

The contrast of these two attempts to know reality-modern science and Greek episteme- had

no other goal than that of revealing to us the meaning which the word "reality" has in each case. But it is necessary to point out that science and episteme do not create that meaning; they do no more than subscribe to it. In themselves these two meanings arise from two wellsprings much greater than the human mind and they embrace zones of man immensely more vast than those which

intellectual labor occupies. The fact that it is in the laboring intellect where for the first time the idea of reality has shown its clear outline will require some explanation. We will not delve into that problem, however. But from this fact arises that incipient identification of the real and the scientifically knowable; from it proceeds the flood of scientism, in virtue of which the problem of reality has been posed in a very limited plane, not with respect to knowledge in general, but with respect to a special mode of it, namely the scientific. This nevertheless does not prevent the usual sense of reality, that which the mind employs in its work and in whose element it moves, from having much deeper roots. Scientism, with the rightful triumph of its splendid results, has managed to obscure these roots and drown the germ of true philosophical radicalism in respect to the problem of reality.

We shall not fully delve into this question, nor can it be said that the two meanings of reality about which we have been speaking are the only ones. But limiting ourselves to them let us attempt to expose some of their roots. {80}

As we have already noted, Kant had an inspired vision of the problem with his distinction between phenomena and noumena. We leave aside the philosophy that Kant ultimately wrought on this distinction-the distinction itself is a completely separate question-and direct our attention only to the terms themselves. This will permit us to articulate some important dimensions of the problem of reality. We may note that things are never discovered [74]

except in a universe, and their inclusion in it is what patterns the meaning which their reality has in each case. In every one of the three dimensions of the problem-things, universe, and reality we shall see how the basic idea of Greek episteme

is opposed to modern science. And this will lead us finally to describe the transcendence of this double perspective for philosophy and for the whole being of man.

1. Things

Since ancient times what we call a thing has been such precisely because it is something circumscribed and separated from all others. That which grants a thing its character as such is the combination of traits which constitute it, what the Greeks called eidos . Nevertheless, it is more than a simple "combination".

The unity of characteristics of the eidos does not derive from an external conjunction or a process of successive addition. Rather, it is in a certain sense prior to that which it unites. More than the bringing together of characteristics, the form of a living being is the result of life itself, the imprint of life in the living thing. The picture of the eidos is molded by this unum . And therefore knowledge of the eidos is the laborious result of mentally reconstructing the unity of a thing. In the unity thus understood the Greeks saw the essence of things encoded. If we were able to position ourselves at the very heart of something understood in this way, we would be present at the root of the internal unfolding of all its characteristics, and, instead of seeing in them "many unified characteristics"

{81} we would on the contrary see a "diversifying unity." Viewed from the essence of a thing, its diverse characteristics are in it sub specie unitatis;

and Leibniz said more or less the same thing when he claimed that reality is a "unity" endowed with "detail", but in such away that the latter is preincluded in the former. This is what he meant when he called the simple substances monads, unities. (Monadology, No.

1, 12, 13).

The many characteristics of things are then that in which the essence is manifested, and essence is the primary and constitutive being of a thing. Hence these characteristics are called [75]

phenomena. And since not everything which a thing possesses pertains to it equally, nor manifests directly what it is-for example, stature, hair color, etc.-the primary unity is something which mind, nous , must seek, i.e. it is a noumenon.

"Phenomenon" and "noumenon" do not designate two realities, but rather two modes of being of the same reality. The detail, taken from outside, manifests what a things is; detail is, then, phenomenon. Taken from inside, it is what constitutes the thing itself, it is noumenon. If we compare a thing to a luminous pencil of rays at its focus, the detail will be like the section obtained intercepting the surface by a movie screen. In the pencil, as we proceed from the focus, the detail is there, but sub specie unitatis. Only on the screen is it like pure ordered diversity.

Kant accepted this classical point of view intact. The thesis of Leibniz, to which I alluded earlier, serves as a sufficiently clear historical link.

What Kant did-once again placing himself in the line of traditional philosophy-was to penetrate deeper into the problem. For our purposes here, let us direct our attention to three cardinal points.

In the first place, we have the foundation of the distinction. Man is not the cause of phenomena. The characteristics manifesting what a thing is are in it and pertain to it. Moreover they are

the thing itself in its "detail." There is nothing more. {82} My voice, my speech, my movements, the color of my face, really pertain to me. There is no question of mere images produced in another man, as has been superficially maintained by phenomenalism. Man does not produce things, either as they are in themselves or as phenomena,

for the simple reason, I repeat, that ..phenomenon" and "thing in itself" do not designate two different "things," one in itself and the other in me, but two modes of being of the same thing. What man produces is only the distinction between these two modes of being. Kant recognized this explicitly: the foundation of the distinction between phenomenon and noumenon is in us. What does this mean? In order to understand it, let us recall that "detail" is not, by itself, a phenomenon. Aristotle had already distinguished carefully [76]

between schema and eidos. In the first we have only the aspect of a thing, the pure detail of its characteristics in their radical diversity; whereas in the eidos we have perhaps the same detail, but as a result and manifestation of an essential and constitutive unity. Therefore a cadaver and a sleeping man can have the same schema, though the former lacks the human eidos.

Detail is only a phenomenon considered as manifestation of the radical unity.

This unity is immediately operative. Through it things posses their own proper operations, their oikeion ergon. A cadaver has the same schema as a living being, but the absence of the

ergon of human life is an index that it lacks the human

eidos. It is essential, not only for Aristotle, but also for Leibniz and Kant, to insist upon this dynamic and operative characterisitic of the unum pertaining to the eidos. It is what Kant expresses when he affirms that in sensibility we have a simple multiplicity or diversity, and that it only deserves to be called a thing-in-itself when considered as the root of its many characteristics. The difference between phenomenon and thing-in-itself results, therefore, from the two ways of drawing near to detail. Placing oneself, so to speak, on the outside and looking in, detail appears to us as something manifesting what the thing is; detail is then phenomenon. If we now place ourselves within the detail and look out, detail appears to us as the content of the thing-in-itself; here {83} we have the thing-in-itself. And as this different placement is a human condition, it follows that man is the foundation of the distinction between these two modes of being; he is the foundation in the sense of principio. If we had the power of radically implanting ourselves in the unity of a thing-as Leibniz thought possible with his intellectual intuition-there would be no phenomena for the intelligence; everything, in all its detail, would be noumenon. For Kant however (and with this he returns to the best Aristotelian tradition), man has no other capacity than that of receiving the detail as such; the only thing he can do is consider it as a manifestation of the reality of a thing. In Kantian terms, the proper object of the understanding, when it leaves the sensible world, is phenomena. However if phenomenality and its distinction from noumenality are based upon this human condition, such is not the case with the content of the detail. But is there nothing here which is not perfectly traditional.

In the second place, Kant works constantly with the phrase "the impressions which things produce in us." To understand it

[77] properly one must recall what tradition, still very much alive in Leibniz, taught about these impressions. Corporeal things manifest their being not only by acting on other things, but also by acting on man, and especially so in his case, because only then does their manifestation as such arise. Therefore the manifestation of corporeal things is called "sensible impression." But one need not see in this expression what empirical psychology would later call "sensation." Since Aristotle, sensible affection, sensible pathos, has not meant that peculiar human reaction which the word has in its usual meaning; rather, the adjective "sensible" comes to mean what in the impression of something makes this something sensible, and therefore the impression consists primarily in a presence or manifestation. There are two dimensions in it. On one side, in the impression, "I feel affected;" on the other, the quality of the- thing present to me, "I have an impression of the thing.

Thus, for example speaking of heat, "I sense heat," and I sense at the same time the temperature of the warm object. Kant refers to this double actualization when he treats phenomena as sensible impressions. {84} They are not an effect which, for example, heat produces on my sight. It is not the case that my sensation of color, as an effect, manifests the activity of a strange cause-the real color-, but that in the color perceived which is my sensation and the color of the object at the same time-there is manifested what the colored thing is. The "being sensed" does not create the content of a phenomenon; it only reveals and makes it clear. To be sure, metaphysics from the 14th century up to Suarez increasingly accented the active role played by man in the constitution of that "patency," and it more and more interleaved the idea of phenomenon with that of subjectivity. But regardless of the mechanism of sensible impressions, and the participation which subjective activity may have therein, their formal result will still be, for this same metaphysics, what we have just finished describing. Without this modern philosophy from Descartes to Kant (including English empiricism) cannot be understood.

In the third place, finally, Kant tried to pin down the formal character of impressions as such. Since the patency of every characteristic for man is constituted in a sensing, it is necessary to determine the latter's formal structure. In sensibility we have, first and foremost, a resolution of the unity of a thing into pure detail. Sensibility takes each characteristic separately from the rest, each [78] being considered

outside the others. Exteriority is thus the formal character of detail as regards sensibility, because it is the formal structure of detail as such. And correspondingly sensing each characteristic will be sensing it in a where and in a

when.

The where and when are for Kant the formal structure of the impression. When we are told that it is likewise with respect to phenomena, we understand that we deal with phenomena insofar as they are sensible, i.e. of this mode of manifestation, peculiar to man, which is called "sensibility," and which consists in making things patent. For the thing itself, on the other hand, the when and where are characteristics which are absorbed in a superior unity. We recall, in fact, that in the face of Descartes Leibniz asked for something imo

extensione prius, the

vis, force, and considered extension and the corresponding exteriority of its parts as manifestation of the interior unity

which the force of impenetrability possesses. {85}

By bringing all these dimensions of phenomenon together, and not forgetting a single one of them, we have clearly before us the Kantian expression, "phenomenon is experience".

Here then is the double dimension of things: their "being phenomenon" and their "being in themselves." In it the difference between the object of episteme and that of science begins to emerge. That difference points to two quite distinct paths of development. In this simple point of departure there is still a fundamental unity. But when thought goes into action, the difference turns into a divergence. We shall see it in the second stage of the problem of reality.

2. The Universe

Man is not limited to having before him each one of the actualized notae in his sensible impressions. He is in addition a thinking being. And what is important to us here is not to investigate the elemental or complex acts which thought realizes or the thoughts which man forges. Rather, the essential thing is still more prior and more radical: the very way in which things are present to man through the mere fact of being objects of thought. Whereas in visual sensation, for example, nothing is produced but a mere "having color," in thought we have this

same color as the color of something which

is colored. The object of thought, through the mere fact of being so, presents this subtle and delicate [79]

unfolding of "that it is" and "what it is". Only then does the possibility exist, rigorously speaking, to talk about phenomena and things. For this same reason the Kantian theory of phenomena appears at times like a theory of sensation and at times like a theory of the understanding.

Thus human thought cannot know what a thing is except by "gathering together", i.e., referring each characteristic to a group of others, whether its purpose be to keep them dissociated or to unite them. Therefore each things is ."something." Human thought can only apprehend things as "something," and this {86} "something" can only be given as the circumscription of a thing in the midst of the rest. Thus, the outcome of its apprehension depends essentially on the primary horizon which confers meaning on the "something," within the universe in which it moves.

On the other hand, when we understand that something, we understand the "someone", the unity of characteristics making up the something. When we collect, when we associate or dissociate the characteristics constitutive of something, thought in fact collects the unity of the thing through the multitude of its possible characteristics. As the "someone" is not given except in its something," so also here the sense of unity, the sense of the someone, will depend essentially upon the universe, upon the horizon within which the mind in its totality moves.

For the Greek it is a question of inferring that there is something in the midst of all the other real things existing in the universe. The Greeks called the aggregate of terrestial things "nature;" above it they placed the sky, and beyond that, the Theos, the one or many gods. This conjunction is, in the expression of the ancients, a kosmos, something ordered and-Aristotle added-something classified (taxis), from prime matter to divinity. Within this cosmos, the Greek seeks to determine what a thing is as really existing, as a source of substantivity and principle of its own operations. And for this he needs to disentangle, step by step, the characteristics which by themselves make up the thing; he tries to discover beyond the simple coexistence of these latter the necessity linking them in the unity of the thing. In this way the Greek little by little continues to bring himself closer-at least that is the idea-to the reasons through which things can exist and act as such in the midst of the cosmos. The something of things is always circumscribed with respect to the real unity of the someone, within the totality of the [80]

cosmos.

For science, on the other hand, the "something" is not determined within the horizon of the cosmos. The totality which science presupposes, and within which it moves, is the totality of characteristics or details present in our sensible impressions. As in each sensible impression there is that double dimension through which it is, at one and the same time, my impression and an impression of the thing, it follows that science will undertake to secure for us the apprehension of the pure objective aspect of our impressions. For this it must extract {87} from the connections among the characteristics those that are necessary. But here the necessity of the connection is manifested by exactitude and objective constancy, as opposed to the vagueness and variability of its subjective aspect. Necessity thus becomes synonymous with objectivity. Whence the unity which science pursues in the totality of phenomena is just the objective connection, i.e. the law. The "something" does not function otherwise than as a law in science, and the "someone" itself, as an interference of laws. In Kantian terms, science goes beyond the compass of our impressions; not in order to carry us to things, but to elevate us to the objective synthesis which is actualized in those impressions. The schema is no longer converted into a problem of eidos in order to achieve autonomy. Neither immanent nor transcendent, the conditions of science are purely transcendental.

With this we do not obtain the position of things in a real cosmos. The totum presupposed by science is not the Greek cosmos, but rather what Kant termed world, the totality of objective experience. Taking detail in itself, science does not investigate the reasons for things, but rather the reasons for their objective presentation, through which a surreptitious priority of the ratio cognoscendi

over the ratio essendi comes about. It is clear that when the schema loses its character of eidos, what science gives us along with the presumed objectivity is as it were "things," but "things without idea." We leave aside, however, this serious complication.

Here it is most important to emphasize that what differentiates the Greek and Kantian positions and causes modern science to [81]

diverge from the paths forged by episteme is not exactly the idea of phenomenon or that of thing, but something prior and more radical: the difference between cosmos and world. World is objective structure of phenomena; cosmos, real ordering of realities. In Kant's idea of world the "things in themselves" remain outside of science; in the idea of cosmos, phenomena {88} manifest and discover what things are. And with this it becomes clear that we are not dealing with a problem limited to science, but one which affects the whole of man's position in the universe.

Face to face with phenomena, the Greek immediately directed his attention to the things which appeared. He did not know how to extract what is called "world" from this subtle structure which he possessed, the world that man has and in which he exists. Science has determined that the passing of phenomena obeys laws and not just causes, i.e. that phenomena constitute a world characterized by its own proper structure, a world which consists in its own occurrence or happening. The Greek paid little attention to the world, and preferentially directed his attention to the things in it; if he sought to discover structures, they were always the structures of things. On the other hand, science lives on the idea that phenomena constitute a world. Naturally the Greek did not regard things as a chaotic conjunction of entities; and it is the Aristotelian taxis which clearly illustrates what we have said. Aristotle did not hesitate to compare the taxis of the world to an army led by a general. In fact, the taxis of the physical world culminates in the Theos. Therefore the purpose of the Aristotelian taxis is, once again, to go to and stop at a thing, at the Theos, which explains the movement of the substances of the cosmos. Science, however, detains its glance in the world and what occurs therein.

The enormous conquest represented by this point of view is undeniable, but likewise undeniable is the fact that it is radically different from the point of view of episteme. For episteme, the concept of cosmos is decisive. So when a Greek is asked, "What are things?" he understands that he is asked about things themselves, independently of whether they form part of the world or their manifestations happen in it. The Greek episteme was never a world-ology. And it is necessary to stress this emphatically so we do not allow ourselves to fall into serious errors. The problem of the reality of things is essentially the problem of what they are, and not simply the problem of intramundane or transcendentally mundane conditions of their occurence. [82]

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From here the idea of reality upon which science and episteme

are nurtured begins to sprout; but both of them do nothing but receive it from much deeper strata of man.

3. The Idea of Reality

The meaning of what we call "reality" (leaving aside other larger dimensions of the problem) is constituted in a prior horizon which makes it possible. Science is itself the most eloquent testimony of what we have been discussing. To physics, freedom, for example, has no meaning; not because it isn't real, but because its reality has

no physical meaning, or as it were the meaning which physics gives to the word "reality" leaves the fact of freedom outside of the world. But this, of course, does not prevent freedom from being a fact nonetheless, i.e. a reality; though in a different sense than that which physics assigns. The idea of reality acquires its meaning through the "all" in which each real thing is inscribed.

In fact, for science, having reality signifies forming part of the world of phenomena, in the strict sense which we can now give these words in view of what was previously explained. Since in all cases the objectivity of a phenomenon is constituted through the where and when of its sensible manifestation, and since at the same time the where, inasmuch as it is an impression, is constituted in the when of its "being sensed," then ultimately reality must signify the following: given determinate conditions, we encounter, we should encounter, or we will encounter "something" in the form of a sensible phenomenon, i.e. have at some time the impression of that "something." Science understands by "real" what is, what was, or what will be, in the Purity of its temporal notation; i.e. for science, to be is to happen. This does not mean that time is taken as the abstract schema of real happenings, but on the contrary as a pure and {90} formal happening in which an impression is constituted and inscribed. Thus Kant says that for science the temporal scheme is the whole meaning of reality. Therefore we have here the extreme purity of happening. To happen is to have place in the world of phenomena or sensible impressions. For science anything

[83] removed from this condition would not be real; it might exist, to be sure, but would not happen in science.

When the Greeks speak of reality, they take the word in another way. Something is real inasmuch as it possesses, in one way or another, a place among the things which exist in the world. To have reality means to form part of the cosmos, to exist. And something has a place in the cosmos when it is "someone," and it is someone when it has "something" with which it can be sufficient unto itself, not living at the expense of other things; i.e. when it has in itself the principles and means to be among other things and act as itself. This is what the Greeks called ousia (and which Latin enthroned translating it technically by substantial, and what strictly speaking signifies more "entity," independently of whether or not it is manifested as a phenomenon in a sensible impression. Clearly not everything in the universe is ousia ;

but what is not has no more existence than that granted to it by ousia.

Therefore to form part of the cosmos is to exist, and not simply to happen.

But existence is not an empty mold; it must be understood in each case through the proper nature of what exists. Whereas the reality of a rock is its simple "being there," that of a living thing is "living." "The cause of being," said Aristotle, "is for all things their ousia ;

being is, for living things, their life, and the cause and principle of this latter is the soul". In every case Aristotle determines the reality of a thing, its ousia, by starting from the mode of being of that thing and investigating its cause or principle. Thus ousia appears as the radical meaning of reality. So for a Greek the word ousia, taken from ordinary speech where it has the meaning we just indicated, becomes the title of a problem the problem of first philosophy: in what does ousia

consist, where is it, how {91} does a thing receive its ousia, etc. For the moment, these questions do not interest us. The essential thing for our objective is to make clear that independently of the problems ousia may awaken in first philosophy, its common usage already expressed the meaning which reality had for a Greek thinker, even before he began to philosophize.

To see this with greater clarity and rigor, it suffices to recall a magnificent passage from Plato, where in aporetic form he [84]

suggests the whole of the problem which the word ousia encompasses for a Greek. Discussing whether the One does or does not have existence, Plato puts into the mouths of the dialogue's characters the following argument:

"So then! Do not 'was,' 'used to happen,' and 'happened' signify a participation in a past time?"

"Naturally."

"And similarly do not 'will be,' 'will happen,' and 'will have happened' refer to a time to come?" reasons which will shortly become apparent."

"Yes."

"And thus, are not 'is' and 'happens' in a time now present?"

"Without any doubt."

"If, then, the One does not participate in time in any way whatsoever, it follows that it never used to happen, never happened, nor was; that now it has not happened, nor happens, nor is; that later it will not happen, nor have happened, nor will be. "

"True."

"Now, are there other ways of participating in reality than these?"

"There are none."

"The One, then, has no part in reality?"

"No, as it seems." (Parmenides , 141e).

This is one of the thorniest passages to be found in Plato. Proclus already had noted it, and there are the labors of translation and criticism of Stallbaum and Schleiermacher as [85]

confirmation. If the reader {92} has the patience and curiosity to compare this translation with the Greek text, he will first observe that for Plato the various moments of time are presented in intimate unity; they are together, as abstract moments of the unfolding of a real action. The fact of employing the verbs "to be" (e■nai)

and "to happen" (gˆgnomai) character-in a certain way active-of the former. And conversely the use of the second in a substantive way indicates clearly that, when Plato speaks of being, he does not start from its most abstract and vacuous meaning, but rather tries to size it and place it before the eyes of his readers, starting from all the concretion which the verb in question encompasses. Only then does it properly acquire the strict sense of "happen." Thus, being and its modes are expressed through the three modes of a single real action. Clearly "happen" does not refer here-as it does in the case of science-to the schematic "when" in which phenomena are actualized under the form of impressions. Happening does not, in this case, look so much toward the simple temporal notation as to the unfolding of a productive action therein. Happening is not based in time, but rather time is a moment of happening. And here in this passage Plato begins to suggest aporetically that happening thus understood is not the adequate expression of reality. When he expressly formulates the question of whether there are modes of reality other than those of happening, the questionee, after first flatly denying the proposition, finally glimpses the opposite, and limits himself to saying. "No, as it seems."

And in fact the reader will be able to see that those places in the translation where I put reality the Greek text has

ousia. Now, it is immediately evident that ousia does not here mean simple existence, but neither does it mean essence or substance. Existence, essence, and substance are the great Aristotelian solution to the problem of

ascertaining in what ousia

consists and what its principles may be. None of this matters to Plato. Ousia does not represent the solution, but rather the formula of the problem; Plato is concerned only with "having reality," and makes no prior determination of what it means to have it. {93}

In the final words of the dialogue, Plato lets on that having reality cannot be identified with happening. We may be sure that when a

Greek read the word ousia in this passage, he would probably have perceived the conceptual game latent in it, and hence the problem which it raised and perhaps even the road together clearly indicates the [86]

which led directly to its solution, i.e. its Greek solution. Indeed, according to what we said earlier, ousia indicates the having or existing of each thing's proper resources, those through which the thing is sufficient unto itself, is independent, and consequently has a proper reality in the cosmos. But on the other hand-and this is what Plato most likely wanted to suggest to the reader in this passage of his dialogue- ousia is the abstract form of the present participle of the verb "to be". And, in this sense, it means the quality of what is being." So we understand that after saying there is no other mode of taking part in reality outside of those indicated, Plato still asks if the One has any reality at all. The timid response gives us to understand clearly that, without abandoning the temporal meaning, indeed, starting from it, one must aim at the other. The word "entity" perhaps fortunately involved the same duplicity of meaning. By virtue of containing these two dimensions of the real, the word and the concept of ousia are the point upon which, for a Greek thinker, the problem of reality is concentrated.

And the fact is that a real thing, even when manifesting itself through happenings (ousia

= what is being), is not identified with them. It can only have reality, happening can only be real, when it is the unfolding of the proper and peculiar being of a thing (ousia = there being). Reality, in its strict sense, is obtained not through the unfolding of a happening, but through a refolding of it which elevates it to the status of what serves reality as a presupposition. (Whence Aristotle as he developed the problem of ousia saw himself led to treat it as substantial. This "refolding" and the elevation" which mark a happening cause the Greek to call ousia "aei on ", that which always is. "Always" in this case {94} does not mean that the thing is going to exist through all time, but that it is above time, not to be sure separated from it, but embracing and absorbing it as its principle and presupposition. The "always" is the schema which leads us to go beyond the meaning of "to be" as "happening" and opens before our eyes ousia as reality. The "always" as the schema of ousia does not principally mean an identical

permanence at the base of the happening, but only an [87]

elevation toward the principle making it possible. Even Aristotelian substance, though finding its most frequent illustration in the example of a subject which remains the same underneath changes, does not acquire its primary meaning in that example. The guiding motive of the idea of substance is the "always," inasmuch as it leads to the ousia as "there is," making possible the unfolding of a happening. Speaking of material substances, their own materiality requires that this "there is" take on the form of a permanent substrate. But the converse is not true.

The two meanings of the word ousia are only articulated, then, thanks to the elevation of the "always." Therefore

ousia is the name of the problem of episteme and all of primary philosophy for the Greeks. The passage from Parmenides

is one of the golden treasures from the history of Greek thought. What a Greek understands by reality, for the purposes of episteme,

is not simply what was, what is, or what will be, but the very nature of that reality which by virtue of being it ,

was yesterday, is today, and will be tomorrow. To this the Greek gave the name einai, to be, to exist substantively.

Science tries to tell us how things happen in the world, and for it reality signifies simply an occuring before our eyes. Episteme

tries to tell us how real things are, and to be real signifies having one's own existence.

It is completely superfluous, then, to call upon the science of modern physics to resolve our problem, just as it is unnecessary to point up the physical errors to which use of Aristotle's syllogistic led during the Renaissance. The question is much more serious because it is not limited to the realm of physics, but has a much broader scope, engulfing man's entire being. {95}

Moreover man's actions occur in a world partially mental and partially exteriorizable. And through these dimensions, man finds himself endowed with a happening which possesses an interpersonal plot as well as a temporal and historical plot. Therefore men also constitute a world. We leave aside their relation with the world of physical phenomena. All of these latter, on the one hand, and human actions in their biographical, social, or historical reality on the other, are just this one entire thing, but only this: what happens in the world. Beyond this happening man discerns the problem of what he is. And since neither man's being nor that of things in the world can or should be ignored (which besides being an effective impossibility, would be an unfortunate [88]

error and an evident falsehood), it is certain that therein rests the entire destiny of philosophy and the being of man. We must know if philosophy and the being of man are going to nourish themselves ultimately, on what "goes on in the world" or on what things and men "are in reality."

Escorial, April 1941

The Idea of Philosophy in Aristotle

https://www.zubiri.org/works/englishworks/nhg/ideaofphilosophy.htm

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THE IDEA OF PHILOSOPHY IN ARISTOTLE

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Men were philosophizing in Greece, naturally, long before the time of Plato and Aristotle. The word "philosophy" appears as early as Herodotus, employed as a verb in a passage incorporating all essential elements of the question. Herodotus places in the mouth of Croesus these words directed to Solon: "Much news of you has reached us, on account of your wisdom

(sophie) as well as your travels; and moved by the love of knowing (hos philosopheon)

you have traveled to many countries to examine them (theories heineken)"

(1,

30). Here the three terms sophia , theoria ,

and philosophia appear intimately associated.

The word sophia is the abstract form of an adjective, sophos,

which meant "learned in something." This "something" could be quite varied: a manual skill, the government of cities, art, and above all, the most profound things concerning the world and life. But what is essential is that the noun sophia denotes, more than the subject to which it is applied, a mode of being of man, that which makes him a craftsman, an artist, or a "wise man." So there is then a clear distinction between sophia

as a way man has of dealing with things, and sophia as qualified by the diverse zones it confronts. These zones can be, as we said, quite varied; what especially interests us for our problem is the zone of ultimate things about the world and about life. Sophia is a knowledge of these ultimate things. But as a property of sophos, this sophia can and in fact does possess various shades of meaning. Thus, in the Orient sophia emphasized first and foremost the operative character of knowledge. In Greece, on the other hand, it assumed meanings which were increasingly intellectual. In Ionia sophia

was

the mode of being not of him who does, but of him who knows how to do, of him who knows how one must work or govern, or how the events of the gods or the world come about.

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Sophia associated itself ever more intimately with pure examination of the world, independent of human actions; "to examine them" is why Solon journeys through many countries, and for that reason Herodotus thought he merited the title of "wise man." Sophia, like theoria,

was one of the great creations of Greece, something which affects the mental way of situating oneself before things, rather than the zone of objects with which one deals. This Greek theoria

developed from the simple theoretical consideration of the lonians, and eventually found its rational articulation in episteme.

Alongside the thread of this intellectual development there is the development of its literary expression. While sophia

never went [91] beyond a simple examination of the world as a whole-something akin to religious knowledge-it found expression, as did the latter, in poetic form; when it began to dress in the character of rational knowledge, prose was introduced into philosophy.

Now, this distinction between a type of mental attitude and the zones which it encompasses must be extended to that special type of sophia called philosophia. As before we must distinguish on one hand the distinct zone of reality which it encompasses, and on the other the type of knowledge which constitutes it.

Philosophical knowledge in Greece continually discovers different zones of reality ,

each with its own peculiarity; it illuminates regions of the universe, each more unsuspected than the last, and makes of them its own object. At the outset, philosophical knowledge occupied itself preferentially with the gods, and saw in the world a kind of genetic extension of them. Alongside the gods, the Ionians discover nature as something proper by itself. Later, Parmenides and Heraclitus discover in nature that mysterious and subtle quality of "being," on account of which we say that this nature is reality. The Sicilian and Athenian physicists encounter the reality of nature in the obscure zone of its "elements." Alongside nature, mathematical objects appear with the Pythagoreans, and their reality is different than that of natural beings; the idea of reality then undergoes an {101} essential modification and amplification. The Sophists and Socrates put before the eyes of their contemporaries the autonomous reality of the orbe vital, political as well as ethical: discourse, virtue, and the good. In Plato, along with the gods and all of physical, mathematical, and human reality, appear the Ideas,

the world of ideal essences.

But together with this development affecting the size of its domain, there is another which affects rather the type of knowledge constituting philosophy. We must call attention to it, because it is something which almost always-and to be prudent I say "almost"-has been overlooked: not only were the zones of reality being enlarged before men's eyes, thus modifying the meaning reality had, but moreover the structure of philosophical knowledge as a form of knowing was being modified at the same

[92] time. The "definition" of philosophy through its content is something quite distinct from its definition as a form of knowledge.

This we pointed out above. Sophia, as a mental attitude, developed in the Orient through its operative dimension. In Greece, on the other hand, it restricted itself to mere understanding. Even taken in their most common acceptation, the expert (empeiros),

the technician (tekhnites), and the director of human life (phronimos), are always men who have the quality of knowing how to do something. This is what Aristotle expressed when he said that with these three modes of knowing (empeiria, tekhene, phronesis) man aletheuei, a word difficult to translate, perhaps "discovers truth." Knowledge is directed, then, toward the discovery of what is known. And in a latent sense all such men are called sophoi. Together with these three modes of knowledge, sophia properly so-called for a Greek is the supreme mode of discovering truth. Whereas in the three former modes man knows things as necessary for his use of them, in sophia he seeks to discover truth for its own sake; he seeks theoria. And this type of sophia, in which nothing is sought but the sophia itself, was termed the "love of knowledge," philosophia, in contrast to philokalia, the love of beauty. In Herodotus as we saw the idea of philosophy appears still in participial form; it only began to be used

as a noun in Socratic {102} circles, to indicate the quality or mental habit of this new mode of sophia.

The type of intellectual life of someone possessing that

quality was termed bios theoretikos, theoretical life.

Sophia as a mental attitude, we said, began to be what was vaguely referred to as theoria, examination or study of nature for itself, an effort directed toward truth for truth's sake. Immediately afterward this philosophical knowledge, theoria,

acquired in Parmenides and Heraclitus the form of a kind of

intellectual vision of the world, nous . Later, finally, in Athens that intellectual vision of the world unfolded into a rational explanation of it, into an episteme. So philosophy, thrust along a purely intellectual path, began by being a simple theoria, later became an intellectual vision of things, and ended as a science. And while new zones of reality were being illuminated, new forms of rational knowledge were being created to deal with them. Let us also recall for completeness that with the Sophists philosophy became an intellectual

culture, paideia. [93]

And thus, by the time of Plato and Aristotle there was a multitude of philosophical sciences about reality. For Aristotle this meant the word "Philosophy" was, rather than the name of a science, the name of a problem. What is there in all these philosophies" which justifies their common name? On account this situation Aristotle called philosophy zetoumene episteme, the sought-after science. The formula is ambiguous, and now we understand why: because we do not know whether it alludes to the first or second of the two dimensions of philosophy. That is, it may refer to either the content or to the type of knowledge constituting philosophy. I believe it is essential to call attention to this point.

The salient characteristic of Aristotle's formula is not the effort to discover the proper object of philosophy or the existence of it. Rather, Aristotle takes that for granted, given that his predecessors occupied themselves with creating, and in fact did create, philosophical systems. Aristotle does not primarily seek the philosophy. What he seeks is, first and foremost, the unique form under which, according to him, philosophical knowledge can exist in its most rigorous intellectual sense. And this is a question distinct from that of the object of philosophy, {103} and prior to it. Aristotle starts from the idea that philosophy has to be a theoretical knowledge. His search aims directly for the rational character that this theoretical knowledge (which philosophy is already) must adopt. What he formally seeks is thus its rational form. Might it be possible to make a philosophy an episteme ?

A special form, a type of philosophy: philosophy as episteme , and

not the existence of any particular philosophy, is what constitutes the primary thrust of Aristotle's search. As Hegel later would say, Aristotle tried to elevate sophia to the rank of science. That the idea and even the effort were partially underway before Aristotle is an undeniable fact. But Aristotle found his preoccupation justified in view of the immense variety of zones which the philosophical episteme encompassed during his time. In reality, there were many philosophical sciences, and the only unifying characteristic was the adjective "philosophical." But the meaning of this adjective was becoming more obscure and muddled as its content was enriched. What is there, then, in all these sciences which justifies their denomination as philosophical? At bottom, Aristotle tries to make us see that among so many philosophies, the philosophic part of all of them, the philosophy, had become more obscure on account of the exuberant flowering of philosophical

[94] knowledge. if we could rigorously know what the philosophic element is in all these philosophies, we would have discovered something which would be a new type of philosophy, superior to those existing, a philosophy

which would not be a philosophical knowledge about one more object, about a new zone of the world, but which would be the philosophy of all philosophic knowledge as such. Therefore Aristotle quite

pragmatically called it philosophy par excellence, philosophical knowledge properly so-called, or as he says, "first philosophy." In light of it, the philosophies of his time were more or less regional philosophies, as they have been termed for many years;

second philosophies, he called them.

And what is it that Aristotle finds problematic in the idea of this first philosophy? Above all, he said, it is the type of knowledge which first philosophy furnishes. Since Parmenides men had the impression that philosophical knowledge was directed toward what is {104} most real in reality. But in fact this conception did not go beyond a vague intellectual perspective; it was an intuition only, not a concept. And therefore the unfolding of philosophy, from Parmenides to Aristotle, was characterized much more by a progressive discovery of different zones of reality than by an elaboration of the idea of properly philosophical knowledge as a form of knowledge.

The many existing philosophies had already adopted that form of knowledge which was termed episteme: a rational explication of the necessity and internal structure of reality. The aforementioned vague intuition of reality took on the form of scientific knowledge. But episteme then became qualified much more by the facts which it supplied than by the mental form constituting it. Aristotle, following in the footsteps of Plato, maintained that this scientific character likewise affects the very structure of the philosophic inasmuch as it is philosophic. The philosophic part of all philosophical sciences must have scientific character. This is the point of departure of Aristotle's search.

Aristotle, then, must first of all raise the following question: In what does the character of philosophic knowledge as science consist? All these philosophic sciences start from some primary suppositions about the structure of the real things they study. But for these sciences those principles or suppositions are only the beginning of their knowledge. With them they explain things, but the principles themselves are not an object of their investigation. hence the philosophic part of scientific knowledge as a form of

[95] knowledge must consist above all in converting the particular principles into objects for clarification. And with this things themselves end up involved in philosophy. At this juncture Aristotle had the brilliant idea of ascribing these principles to an intellectual vision, to the nous about which Parmenides spoke. hence that intellectual vision of things is now more concrete as a vision of their principles. But this alone is not sufficient. It is necessary for such a vision to be something more; it must be unfolded and articulated in the form of a rational explication. If that were possible, we would have a science which, in contrast to the rest, would seek its own principles and would move about in their internal intellection. The presence of the nous, of the {105} intellectual vision in episteme, is what gives to the latter its properly philosophical character; it is the philosophic part of science qua science. If one wishes it is a science which not only makes use of principles, but moves about internally in their intimate justification; Aristotle therefore referred to sophia as

nous with episteme.

But if no more than this were involved, philosophical science would simply be a theory of secondary philosophies. However, nothing was farther from Aristotle's mind. For Aristotle, as for any good Greek, every science must have a real object and some principles of its own. Consequently that science of the principles of all other sciences must base itself upon something real, if it wishes to exist. Indeed it is essential that this investigation of all the principles of things base itself on their real principles, which, if they exist, must not be particular principles, but supreme principles, principles of principles, absolute principles (ta prota).

The effort to construct a philosophical science thus carries Aristotle in consequence (and only in consequence) to a second effort, to an effort to find within reality an object which is appropriate for that science. The genius of Aristotle on this point is based upon his not claiming that the proper object of philosophy is a special zone of reality, as it still was for Plato. Philosophy must encompass reality as a whole. Its object, then, must be determined in a way different from that of the secondary philosophies. While these latter sciences study each of the different zones of reality, i.e. the distinct modes which things have [96]

as real beings, first philosophy must study reality as such. From the point of view of its object, the philosophic part of all philosophical sciences is found squarely in the fact that the real qua real must constitute the character of the philosophic qua philosophic. {106}

And here the two thrusts of Aristotle's search converge: philosophy properly so-called will only be possible as science if the reality of the real has a structure capturable by reason, if it has some primary real principles of its own, principles not of things as they are (hos estin), as the physicists who speculated about the elements claimed, but principles of reality qua reality

(on hei on). In Aristotle's formula: reality as such has a "fundamental" structure, and philosophy as science must consist in the investigation of these primalities of being, as Duns Scotus would so aptly put it many centuries later.

The discovery of first philosophy as science of reality qua reality was only possible for Aristotle as the conclusion of his effort to give rational structure to philosophical knowledge. The unfolding of this effort is what led him to discover reality as such. And this is what is important to emphasize.

The essential thing, then, is that with Aristotle we have not

the philosophy as such, but a determinate form of philosophy: philosophy as science. There are other possibilites; on one hand, philosophy, the Veda, was something different in the Orient, viz, an operative knowledge. In Greece, after Aristotle, philosophy was also something different. And in postclassical Europe philosophy also took on several different mental forms.

Philosophical Knowledge and Its History

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PHILOSOPHICAL KNOWLEDGE AND ITS HISTORY

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I. PHILOSOPHY AND ITS HISTORY

The Three Concepts of Philosophy-Philosophy as Strict Knowledge- Difference Between Philosophical Knowledge and Scientific Knowledge-Philosophy as a Knowledge About Things as They Are.

II. PHILOSOPHY AND THE JUSTIFICATION OF ITS OBJECT

History of Philosophy as history of the Idea of Philosophy-Development and Maturity.

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I

PHILOSOPHY AND ITS HISTORY

To occupy oneself with history is not a matter of simple curiosity. It would be so if history were a simple science of the past. But:

1. History is not a simple science.

2. One does not occupy oneself with the past, inasmuch as it no longer exists.

History is not a simple science ,

but rather there exists an historical reality. Historicity, in fact, is a dimension of the real being we call 'man'.

And this historicity does not arise exclusively or primarily on account of the fact that the past advances toward a present, and pushes it on toward the future. This latter is a positive interpretation of history which is completely inadequate. It presupposes, in fact, that the present is just something which passes, and that the passing means what once was no longer is. The truth on the contrary is that an existing reality, and hence one which is present, man, finds himself constituted partially through a possession of himself in such a form that when he turns in upon himself, he discovers himself being what he is because he had a past and is being formed for a future. The "present" is that marvelous unity of these three moments whose successive unfolding constitutes the historical trajectory, the point at which man, a temporal being, paradoxically becomes tangent to eternity. Since Boethius, in fact, the classical definition of eternity has involved not just interminabilis vita, a never-ending life, but tota simul et perfecta possessio. Furthermore, the reality of man present is constituted among other things by that concrete point {110} of tangency whose geometric locus is termed situation. Upon entering into ourselves, we discover that we are in a situation which pertains to us constitutively, and in which our individual destiny is inscribed, a destiny which is elected by us sometimes, imposed on us others. And while the situation does not ineluctably predetermine either the content of our life or that of its problems, it clearly circumscribes the general nature of those problems, and [100]

above all limits the possibilities for their solution. Hence, history as a science is much more a science of the present than a science of the past. In respect to philosophy, this is even truer than it could be for any other intellectual occupation, because the character of philosophical knowledge makes of it something

constitutively problematic. Zetoumene episteme, the sought after science, Aristotle almost always termed it. Therefore it is pot at all strange that to profane eyes, the problem

has an atmosphere of discord.

In the course of history we encounter three distinct conceptions of philosophy, emerging ultimately from three dimensions of man:

1. Philosophy as a knowledge about things

2. Philosophy as a direction for the world and for life .

3. Philosophy as a way of life and therefore as something which happens.

In reality, these three conceptions of philosophy, corresponding to three different conceptions of the intellect, lead to three completely different forms of intellectuality. The world has continued to nourish itself on them, simultaneously and successively, at times even in the person of one thinker. The three converge in a special way in our situation, and once again keenly and urgently pose the problem of philosophy (and of intellect itself). These three dimensions of the intellect have reached us, perhaps somewhat dislocated, through the channels of history; and the intellect has itself begun to pay for its own deformation. In trying to reform itself, it will surely reserve for the future new forms of intellectuality. {111} Like all of the earlier ones, they will be defective, or rather limited; but that does not disqualify them, because man always is what he is thanks to his limitations, which permit him to chose what he can be. And if they perceive their own limitations the intellectuals of that time will return to the source from which they departed, just as we see ourselves referred back to the place from which we departed. And this is history: a situation which implies another previous one, as something real making possible our own situation. Thus, to occupy oneself with history is not a simple matter of curiosity; it is the very movement to which the intellect sees itself subjected when it embarks on the enormous task of setting itself in motion starting from its ultimate source. Therefore the history of philosophy is not extrinsic to philosophy itself, as the history of mechanics could be to mechanics. Philosophy is not its history, but the history of philosophy is philosophy, because the turning in of the intellect [101]

upon itself, in the concrete and radical situation in which it finds itself placed, is the origin and take-off point for philosophy. The problem of philosophy is nothing but the problem of the intellect. With this affirmation, which ultimately goes back to old Parmenides, philosophy began to exist on the earth. And Plato used to tell us, moreover, that philosophy is a silent dialogue of the soul with itself concerning all things in being.

Still, the practicing scientist will only with difficulty succeed in freeing himself from the notion that philosophy becomes lost in an abyss of discord, if not throughout its domain, at least insofar as it involves knowledge about things.

It is undeniable that throughout the course of its history, philosophy has understood its own definition as a knowledge about things in quite diverse ways. But the first responsibility of the philosopher must be that of guarding himself against two antagonistic tendencies which spontaneously arise in a beginning spirit: that of losing oneself in skepticism and that of deciding to adhere polemically to one system in preference to another, even if it be one the philosopher himself just formulated. We shall renounce these attitudes. And if we now review the rich collection of definitions, we cannot fail to be overwhelmed by the impression that a very serious matter is {112} at the heart of this diversity. If the conceptions of philosophy as a theoretical form of knowledge

are truly so diverse, it is clear that this diversity means that not only the content of its solutions, but the very idea of philosophy continues to be problematic. The diversity of definitions manifest the problem of philosophy itself as a true form of knowledge about things. But to think that the existence of such a problem could disqualify philosophy as theoretical knowledge is to condemn oneself to perpetually remain outside its vestibule. The problems of philosophy are not, at bottom, other than the problem of philosophy.

But perhaps the question will resurface with new urgency when we try to pin down the nature of this theoretical knowledge. Nor is the problem even new. For quite some time, several centuries in fact, this same question has been formulated another way: Does philosophy have scientific character? However, this manner of presenting the problem is not quite the same. According to it, "knowledge about things" acquires its complete and exemplary expression in what is termed "a scientific form of knowledge." And this supposition has been decisive for the course of philosophy [102] in modern times.

In diverse ways, in fact, it has been repeatedly observed that philosophy is quite far from being a science; that in most of its hypotheses it does not go beyond an attempt to be scientific. And this may lead either to skepticism about philosophy, or to maximum optimism about it, as occurred in Hegel when in the opening pages of the Phenomenology of the Spirit he roundly affirms that he proposes to "help to bring philosophy nearer to the form of science.... show that the time process does raise philosophy to the level of scientific system..." And he also affirms that it is necessary for philosophy to abandon, once and for all, its character of love and of wisdom so as to be converted into an active wisdom. (For Hegel, "science" does not mean science in the usual sense.)

With a different objective, but with no less energy, Kant begins the preface to the second edition of the Critique of Pure Reason by saying:

Whether the treatment of such knowledge as lies within the province of reason does or does not follow {113} the secure path of a science, is easily to be determined from the outcome. For if after elaborate preparations, frequently renewed, it is brought to a stop immediately it nears its goal; if often it is compelled to retrace its steps and strike into some new line of approach; or again, if the various participants are unable to agree in any common plan of procedure, then we may rest assured that it is very far from having entered upon the secure path of a science, and is indeed a merely random groping.

And in contrast to what occurs in logic, mathematics, physics, etc., with respect to metaphysics we see that

... though it is older than all other sciences, and would survive even if all the rest were swallowed up in the abyss of an all-destroying barbarism, it has not yet had the good fortune to enter upon the secure path of a science.

A quarter of a century ago Husserl published a vibrant study in the periodical Logos, entitled "Philosophy as a Strict and Rigorous Science." In it, after having shown that it would be nonsense, for [103] example, to discuss a problem of physics or mathematics in such a way that the participants injected into the discussion their own points of view, their opinions, preferences, or Weltanschauung, Husserl boldly proposes the necessity of making philosophy likewise into a science of apodeitic and absolute evidence. But in he last analysis, he merely refers to the work of Descartes.

Descartes, very cautiously but at bottom saying the same thing, begins his Principles of Philosophy as follows:

As we were at one time

children, and as we formed various judgements regarding the objects presented to us, when as yet we had not the entire use of

our reason, numerous prejudices stand in the way of our arriving at the knowledge of truth; and of these it seems impossible for us to rid ourselves, unless we undertake, once in our lifetime, to doubt of all these things in which we may discover even the smallest suspicion of uncertainty.

From this exposition of the question we may draw several important conclusions:

1. Descartes, Kant, and Husserl compare philosophy to the other sciences from the point of view of the type of knowledge {114} which they yield: Does philosophy or does it not possess a type of apodeitic evidence comparable to that of mathematics or theoretical physics?

2. This comparison later reverts to the method which leads to such evidence: Does philosophy or does it not possess a method which leads securely, through internal necessity and not merely by chance, to types of evidence analogous to those obtained by the other sciences?

3. Finally it leads to a criterion: insofar as philosophy does not possess this type of knowledge and this secure method of the other sciences, its defect in that regard becomes an objection to its scientific character.

Now, faced with this statement of the question we must energetically affirm:

1. That the difference which Husserl, Kant and Descartes point out between science and philosophy, though very important, is not in the final analysis sufficiently radical.

2. That the difference between science and philosophy is not an objection to the character of philosophy as a strict form of [104]

knowledge about things.

And this is so because, in the last analysis, their objection to philosophy derives from a certain conception of science which, without prior discussion, is assumed applicable to all strict and rigorous knowledge.

I. The radical difference separating philosophy and the sciences does not arise from the scientific or philosophical state of knowledge. It would seem, listening to Kant, that the only thing which matters is that, relative to its object, philosophy (in contrast to science) has not yet managed to give us a single reliable step leading to that state of knowledge. And we affirm that said difference is not sufficiently radical, because frankly it presupposes that the object of philosophy is there, in the world, and that all we need do is find the secure road leading to it.

The situation would be much more serious if what were problematic turned out to be the object of philosophy: Does the object of

{115} philosophy exist? This question is what radically separates philosophy from the other sciences. Whereas these latter start from the possession of their object, and then simply study it, philosophy must begin by actively justifying the existence of its object, the possession of which is in fact the end, not the presupposition of its study. And philosophy can only be an on-going concern by constantly recovering the existence of its object. When Aristotle termed it Zetoumene episteme, he understood that what men sought was not only the method, but the very object of philosophy as well.

What does it mean to say that the existence of the object of philosophy is problematic?

If this meant simply that we were ignorant of what that object is, the problem, though serious, would ultimately be quite simple. It would be a question of saying either that humanity has not yet discovered that object, or that it is so complicated that its apprehension is still obscure. To be sure, the former is what happened for many centuries in the case of each of the sciences and therefore their respective object!: were not simultaneously

discovered during the course of history; some sciences were born later than others. On the other hand, if it were true that the object of philosophy were excessively complicated, the question would be that of trying to show it only to those minds who had acquired sufficient maturity. This would be analogous to the difficulty encountered by someone who tried to explain the object of [105]

differential geometry to a student of mathematics in elementary school. In either of these cases, owing to historical vicissitudes or didactic difficulties, we would be dealing with a deictic problem, with an individual or collective effort to point out (deixis)

what that object is which goes about here lost among the other objects of the world.

Everything leads us to suspect that this is not the case.

The problematicism surrounding the object of philosophy stems not only from a de facto failure to come upon it, but moreover from the nature of that object, which, in contrast to all others, is constitutively latent. Here we understand by "object" the real or ideal thing with which science or any other human activity deals. In this case, it is clear that: {116}

1. This latent object is in no way comparable to any other object. Therefore, however much we wish to say about the object of philosophy, we shall be moving on a plane of thought far removed from that of the other sciences. If each science deals with an object, either real, fictitious, or ideal, the object of philosophy is neither real, fictitious, nor ideal; it is something else, so much so, that it is not a thing at all.

2. We thus understand that this peculiar object cannot be found separated from any other object, be it real, fictitious, or ideal; but rather is included in all of them, without being identified with any particular one. This is what we mean when we affirm that it is constitutively latent, latent beneath every object. Since man finds himself constitutively directed toward real, fictitious, or ideal objects, with which he must create his life and elaborate his sciences, it follows that this constitutively latent object is on account of its own nature essentially fleeting.

3. What this object flees from is none other than the simple glance of the mind. In contrast, then, to what Descartes maintained, the object of philosophy can never be formally discovered through a simplex mentis inspectio. Rather, after the objects beneath which it lies have been understood, a new mental act reworking the previous ones is necessary to position the object in a new dimension so as to make this other new dimension not transparent , but visible. The act by which the object of philosophy is made patent is not an apprehension, nor an intuition, but a

reflection, a reflection which does not, as such, discover a new object among the others, but a new dimension of each object, whatever it may be. It is not an act which enriches our [106]

understanding of what things are. One must not anticipate that philosophy will tell us, for example, anything about physical forces, organisms, or triangles which is inaccessible to mathematics, physics, or biology. It enriches us simply by carrying us to another type of consideration.

To avoid misunderstandings, we should observe that the word 'reflection' is employed here in its most ingenuous and common meaning: an act or series of acts which, in one form or another return to

{117} an object of a previous act through this latter act. 'Reflection' here does not mean simply an act of meditation, nor an act of introspection, as when one speaks of reflective consciousness, as opposed to direct consciousness. The reflection here described consists of a series of acts through which the entire world of our life is placed in a new perspective, including the objects therein and all the scientific knowledge we may have acquired about them.

Secondly, note that though reflection and what it discovers to us cannot be reduced to a natural attitude and what it discovers to us, this does not mean that in one fashion or another, in one degree or another, reflection is not just as primitive and inborn as any natural attitude.

II. It follows then that the radical difference between science and philosophy does not fall upon philosophy as an objection. it does not mean that philosophy is not a rigorous form of knowledge, but only that it is a different type of knowledge. Whereas science is a knowledge which studies an object that is there, philosophy, since it deals with an object that on account of its own nature hides, which is evanescent, will accordingly be knowledge which must pursue its object and detain it before human gaze, which must conquer it. Philosophy is nothing but the active constitution of its own object; it is the actual carrying out of this act of reflection. Hegel's fatal error was just the opposite of Kant's. Whereas Kant, in short, divorced philosophy from any object of its own, thus making it refer back to our mode of knowing, Hegel reified the object of philosophy making of it the all out of which every other object emerges dialectically and in which each is sustained, also dialectically.

For the present it is unnecessary to further clarify the nature of the object of philosophy or its formal method. Here the only thing I wish to emphasize is that irrationalism not withstanding, the object of philosophy is strictly an object of knowledge, but this [107] object is radically different from the rest. Whereas any science or any human activity considers things that are and such as they are (hos estin), philosophy considers them inasmuch as they are (hei estin, Metaphysics

1064a3). {118} In other words, the object of philosophy is transcendental, and as such accessible only to a reflection. The "scandal of science" not only isn't an objection to philosophy which must be resolved, but a positive dimension which it is necessary to conserve. Therefore Hegel said that philosophy is the world in reverse. The explanation of this scandal is the problem, content, and destiny of philosophy. Hence (although not quite what Kant said) "one does not learn philosophy, one learns to philosophize." And it is absolute certain that one only learns philosophy by starting out to philosophize.

Barcelona, December 1940.

From the prologue to Historia de la Filosofia, by Julian Marias, Revista de Occidente, Madrid, 1941. [Not included in the English edition published by Dover, 1967-trans.]

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II.

PHILOSOPHY AND THE JUSTIFICATION OF ITS OBJECT

Every science , whether history or physics or theology (and likewise every natural attitude of life) makes reference to a more or less determinate object, with which man has already

come into contact. The scientist may, then, direct himself

to it, and set himself one or more problems about it

the attempted solutions of which constitute the reality of science. If the presumed science does not yet enjoy a clear conception of what it pursues, then it is not yet a science. Any wavering on this point is an unequivocal sign of imperfection. That does not mean the science is immutable, but what changes in it is the concrete content of the solutions given to the one or more problems it has set out to solve. The problem itself, I repeat, remains unaltered.

The physical view of the universe has profoundly changed from Galileo to Einstein and quantum mechanics; but all these changes occurred within the scope of a general endeavor known and defined all along, viz, measurement of the universe. Sometimes perhaps the very formulation of the problem may change. But this occurs extremely rarely and across long spans of time; and when it does happen it is owing to a new formulation of the problem which is equally as clear and determinate as the previous one, so that one may ask, indeed, whether ultimately the science has not ceased to be what it used to be, and become something else, a different science. Thus in the Middle Ages physics studied the principles of the ens mobile; after Galileo it was measurement of the material universe. In both cases physics was

{120} a science when it had begun

to tell itself what it sought to do.

Very different is the course of philosophy . In fact, philosophy begins by not knowing whether it has a proper object; at least, it does not start formally from the possession of an object. Philosophy presents itself, above all, as an effort, as a "pretension". And this, not on account of any simple ignorance de

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facto or a simple lack of knowledge, but on account of the constitutively latent nature of that object. hence it follows that the strict separation between a problem clearly formulated beforehand and its later solution, which is basic to all science and to all natural attitudes of life, loses its primary meaning in connection with philosophy. Hence philosophy must be, first and foremost, a perennial revindication of its object

(let us call it that), an energetic illumination of it and a constant and constitutive "making room." From Parmenides' entity (on), Plato's Ideas, and Aristotle's analogical being as such, up to Kant's transcendental conditions of experience and the absolute of Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, passing through all the theological strata of medieval thought and the first centuries of the modern era, philosophy has been first and foremost a justification of or demonstrative effort for the existence (sit venia verbo)

of its object. Whereas science deals with an object which it already clearly possesses, philosophy is the effort directed toward a progressive intellectual constitution of its own object, the violence of yanking it from its constitutive latency and clearly revealing it. Therefore philosophy can only exist revindicating itself, and in one of its formal dimensions consists in an "opening a path." Consequently, philosophy cannot have a greater ascendancy than that fixed by the intellectual narrowness which de facto

oppresses the philosopher.

In virtue of this, it is only clear to the philosopher after he finds himself philosophizing what a mighty labor he carried out to reach the point where he could begin to philosophize. And this is true whether one deals with obtaining rigorous evidence or rising to transcendental intuitions. In this labor of opening a path one sketches and outlines the figure of the problem. It is possible for the philosopher to have begun with a certain subjective intellectual purpose. But this does not mean that such a beginning is formally the origin of his philosophy.

{121} And if we agree that the nature of the problem is the origin of principles, we must say that, in philosophy, the origin is the end, and moreover in its first original and radical "step" all of philosophy is already there. Throughout this process philosophy properly speaking does not evolve, is not enriched with new characteristics; rather, the characteristics become more explicit, they continually appear as aspects of a self-constitution. Whereas an immature science is imperfect, philosophy is the very process of its own maturity. The rest is dead academic and scholarly philosophy. Hence, in contrast to what [110] happens in science, philosophy must mature in each philosopher. And therefore that which properly constitutes its history is the history of the idea of philosophy.

hence the original relationship existing between philosophy and its history must be clarified.

It may occasionally happen that the philosopher begins with an already existing concept of philosophy. But, what meaning or function does such a concept have within philosophy? it is, obviously, a concept which he, the philosopher has created and which therefore is his possession or property. But, once things are underway, because philosophy consists of the "opening a path," it follows that therein the idea of philosophy is constituted. The definition of physics is not the work of physical science, whereas the work of philosophy is the conquest of its idea of itself On this point, that initial movement has no bearing whatsoever; philosophy has achieved its own consistency, and with it an adequate concept, the concept which philosophy has created for itself. Nor is it any longer the philosopher who bears the concept of philosophy, as happened at the beginning; rather, philosophy and its concept are what bear the philosopher. In that apprehension or conception which the concept is, it is no longer the mind which apprehends or conceives philosophy, but rather philosophy which apprehends and conceives the mind. The concept is not the property of the philosopher, but rather the philosopher is the property of the concept, because this latter springs from what philosophy is in itself. Philosophy is not the work of the philosopher; the philosopher is the work of philosophy.

Whence, before and only before a mature philosophy do we see that it is not only possible but necessary {122} to ask how far and in what way does that philosophy answer its own concept. A typical case, to speak only of recent history, is shown to us by German Idealism, from Kant to Hegel. It makes perfect sense to scrutinize this entire current of transcendental idealism, and determine in the case of each philosopher an original philosophy, absolutely compatible with the common root of all of their thought, and even with Kant's singular merit of being the first to discover the root and bear the first fruits.

Cruz y Raya , September 1935

Historical Notes

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HISTORICAL NOTES

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SUAREZ - DESCARTES - PASCAL - HEGEL - BRENTANO

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SUAREZ

The growing awareness of metaphysical problems today alone suffices to justify inclusion of Suarez in a library of philosophical texts. And not only that. The richness and infinitesimal precision of Scholastic vocabulary constitutes a treasure which it is most urgent to place in wide circulation. A large part of it has passed into our national language, and only the abandonment which philosophical studies have suffered in this country could have caused so many essential semantic dimensions of our words to be forgotten. It is most important to revive them, and along with them the intellectual vigor of philosophy, which on account of its very nature is always in danger of dissolving into vague and nebulous "profundities."

Suarez' Disputations comprise the encyclopedia of Scholasticism. Suarez has let no essential idea or opinion of the philosophical tradition escape him, from its earliest Arabic and Christian directions, through the openly nominalistic turn adopted in the 14th century, up to the inflexible character of the 15th and 16th centuries. But more is involved than a simple catalogue. The systematization to which he subjected these problems and his originality in rethinking them had as a consequence that ancient thought would continue in the breast of the nascent European philosophy of the 17th century; and many of the concepts upon which it based itself were given to it by him. Only ignorance of Suarez and Scholasticism could have led to the conviction on the part of historians that these concepts were totally original creations of modern idealism.

The influence of Suarez, in this sense, has been enormous. The better he is known, the clearer this becomes. For the rest, it is already quite well known that {128} his

Disputations served as the official text of philosophy in almost all German universities during the 17th and a large part of the 18th century. So by any measure Suarez is an imprescindable factor in the understanding of modern philosophy.

But perhaps still more interesting is the fact that Suarez' work represents the first attempt since Aristotle to construct a body of independent philosophical doctrine out of metaphysics. Up until Suarez, first

philosophy either existed in the form of commentaries on Aristotle, or constituted the intellectual framework of Scholastic theology. With Suarez it is elevated to the rank of an autonomous [116]

and systematic discipline. The exclusiveness that attempted to center Scholasticism entirely in St. Thomas has been responsible in large measure for the relative obscurity of the philosopher from Granada, whose work is still far from being intellectually exhausted, and whose vigor and originality situate him, in many(l) essential ways, very much above the "classic" Scholastic thinkers of the 13th and 14th centuries.

Prologue to the translation of Suarez' Sobre el concepto del ente, Revista de Occidente, Madrid, 1935.

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DESCARTES

We are accustomed to see in the Method of Doubt and the

Cogito not only a principle of Cartesian philosophy, but an expression of the very problem of philosophizing. Yet reading Descartes' correspondence, which is rather of a moral character, one is left with a singular impression, namely that it compels us to assign ethics a rank which seemed to pertain exclusively to logic. Indeed, for Descartes the theory of truth is essentially linked to a theory of human perfection. The matter is of supreme importance. Perhaps the turning in of the understanding upon itself, which characterizes the method and which has given the name "rationalism" to the philosophical attitude of Descartes, is in fact nothing more than an aspect of something deeper: the turning in of the whole man upon himself. In the end, the presumed Cartesian rationalism may turn out to be an enormous and paradoxical voluntarism, the voluntarism of reason: in metaphysics, because being and its situation are, for Descartes, arbitrary creations of God; in logic, because for him judgement becomes an assent of the will; and in ethics, because he believes that goodness is a free decision of the will.

This is not surprising. Since the 15th century man has felt that he is the work of a creator and is installed in the center of a world surrounding him; but the divine nature and infinitude he finds quite far removed from his interior life. To support his life, he cannot immediately call upon the world or God; he must first have recourse to something which will carry him to the world and to God, and the only thing immediately available to fill that role is man himself. Sagesse, wisdom, again becomes a problem. This is the epoch of Charron and Montaigne. But throughout the course of history man has been able to-and in fact has-turned {130} in upon himself through routes which are quite varied: Socrates, seeking true virtue in contrast to public opinion; St. Augustine, seeking peace in divine eternity in contrast to the fleeting things of the world and the vicissitudes of the heart; Charron and Montaigne, almost without seeking anything, contenting themselves with the changing panorama of life. In the fact of all these possibilities, Descartes opts for something different: he turns in upon himself seeking security, security in the ordering of life, and moreover security in himself. And for Descartes this desire for security is the motive engendering philosophy. Its content, the way man appears

[118] before his own eyes, is indeed predetermined by this way he has of turning in upon himself. The unfolding of philosophy will thus be the reverse of its initial folding up.

Man errs in life, and for Descartes his error stems from a primary error, that of allowing himself to be carried along by things, instead of being lord of himself and his actions. There would be no problem if man's actions were encompassed within the limits of the things which his understanding and senses reveal to him. But what is certain for Descartes is that freedom has a scope much broader than truth. Whence the necessity of anchoring free decisions is something firm and solid. Where can man find this radical security? What is it that constantly places this perfect human equilibrium in jeopardy? The reply to these two questions will be the doctrine of wisdom. Life in wisdom will be at one and the same time a perfect and happy life.

The only thing primarily incontrovertible in man is his reason. Everything which man does only deserves to be called human insofar as it is known; and of all knowledge there is none which by itself offers a guarantee of veracity save for that in which I know I am thinking. Thinking as such possesses in itself its own true firmness. The first seed of ontological truth is thinking. And for Descartes, in this firmness of the being of thought resides the font of all human truth. Truth is an exclusive attribute of clear and distinct ideas. The method thus appears as one aspect of the long and complex process through which {131} Wisdom is constituted. It is this method which discovers to us the incontrovertible foundation of humanity, that which is properly human in man.

But not everything in man comes from himself, from his own rational structure. Man finds in himself things which are there, but are not human; they do not arise from himself, from his own rational being, but from what is exterior to him. His reason finds itself surrounded by all types of irrational elements, i.e. elements external to his being. And this is what places man in constant anxiety.

Above all, the physical world produces multiple impressions in the soul, some of which claim to tell what happens in the universe (perceptions), and other which leave the subject in a determinate state (passions). Descartes does not disqualify perceptions or passions. What he disqualifies is the immediateness with which they seek to pull along free will. Sensible perception will only be true when it is in accord with clear and distinct ideas; passion will [119] only be good when it answers to a rational decision of will. The problem of wisdom then consists of free acceptance of the firmness which reason offers, in the face of the immediateness with which the sensible world solicits.

Man has to remake from himself, i.e. rationally, the world of sensible perceptions and the world of his rational inclinations. Error and tragedy in life arise only from the will placing perception before clear and distinct ideas (precipitation), and passion before rational inclination. Ultimately truth and perfection are only possible as rational fidelity to oneself. The man who decides to be faithful to himself, to his rational being, is the only one who possesses Wisdom. Hence for Descartes Wisdom has a precise definition: "rational life," where "rational" means that reason does nothing but offer security of various sorts. The will is free to accept them or not. The fidelity of man to himself is always the subject of freedom. Through this decision the fate of the human being is decided. When the will

assents to rational evidence, we have true judgements; when it consents to a rational inclination, we have good deeds. From this first decision, then, science and morals are born together; not {132} only good and bad, but truth and error of the understanding are, for Descartes, formally encountered in the assent of the will. When he freely accepts the commands of reason, of truth, man is a finite copy of divinity. According to Descartes, God created the entire world, including logical truth, by an act of will which was not only free but arbitrary as well. The man who resembles God through his will rather than his understanding must freely opt for following the commands of reason. Wisdom is this: peace which is free in truth. The true duality in Cartesian metaphysics is not that of thought and extension; rather, it is born from another duality much deeper: rational life-natural life. Therefore the ethics and humanism of Descartes, in spite of appearances, are anything but stoicism.

But Descartes, a man of his time, does not restrict to passions and perceptions the collection of ideas and sentiments which the soul possesses and which do not arise from itself. Along with perception and passion is tradition; tradition is everything which other men have thought about the world, about life, and about God. Again, Descartes does not disqualify the world of tradition, only its immediateness. It is only valid when found in accordance with and expressing the content of reason. This attitude, however serious its consequences may be for social life, takes on even more serious connotations for religion. The Church, in fact, regards [120] itself as the repository of a tradition representing the faith of believers. Descartes, who was prudent and respectful, accepts the Church's tradition sincerely and does not dissemble. Nevertheless, we cannot forget that since the 14th century theologians have carefully distinguished two different meanings of the "rational character" of faith. The expression can mean, on one hand, the objective validity of its proofs; but on the other, it can mean the subjective force of conviction in each person and in each situation where he may find himself. And although both aspects should coincide and normally do, they may in some cases diverge. According to these theologians, the objective validity of the proofs of faith requires a persuasive force of personal conviction to be complete. To be sure, in theology faith as a theological virtue emerges from the supernatural order, to which no creature {133} by himself may accede. Creatures possess, at most, a "potential for obedience." But in Descartes' very epoch Jesuit theologians were teaching that the potential for obedience is something more than a purely negative aptitude; for

them it involves a positive aspect as well. Finally, the emphasis on this positive cooperation of man in the increase of his supernatural virtue had received its supreme crowing in the ascetic method founded upon personal labor characterizing St. Ignatius' Spiritual Exercises. It has been frequently pointed out, and with reason, that the greatest analogues of Ignatius-style asceticism are found in the Fathers of the desert. The 15th century had made an immense desert of the entire world, for the purposes of a rational life. It had translated the desert to the court. And man himself, a hermit of the spirit, no longer had any other possible subjective salvation than the fidelity to his own being. And when he put his personal will into action, he made it converge with the will of God. This convergence is the ultimate meaning of Cartesianism. The world and man need God in order to become, to be. But once they are, "modern" theology (post 14th century) taught that each thing's being alone decides its operations, and decides them by itself only. For Descartes, geometry does this in the cosmos, clear and distinct Reason in man. Between them it is freedom which makes man more like God and unites man to or separates him from God. When man opts for reason, he has in himself the truth about the world and his union with God. The truth about the world is geometry; intellectual union with God is the ontological argument. One more step and we shall be in the metaphysics of the Oratory, with its [121]

vision of things in God (Malebranche).

Did Descartes arrive at a radical understanding of man's intimate being? The genial thinker carried the answer to that question with him to the grave. In his writings, Descartes passed over man's being so as to direct his attention only to man's operations: thinking and willing. Once again heir to the metaphysics of his time, Descartes reveals on one hand the radical error which metaphysically separates the three areas of reality (God, world, and soul), and on the other the univocal conceptual indifferentiation with which he understands the word "being" or res, as he

{134} says. And in this play between univocal concepts and real equivocations we see expressed the dislocation between understanding and will on one hand, and the dislocation between the soul and cosmic reality, on the other. In this state of double metaphysical dislocation Descartes finds himself, without a world, abandoned to himself; and within himself, abandoned to a free choice of his will. Nevertheless, beyond that "received" metaphysics, evidence points to the fact that Descartes left unsaid most of his thought, which may perhaps have touched upon the being of man. Descartes had an intense inner life, but it was, like his philosophy, sorrowful and reticent. Since he left it without complete expression, Descartes, faithful to himself, was the first Cartesian. His inner life did not repose there where all appearances and external circumstances made it seem to be. Indubitably, the complete legacy of his genial reason was only for someone who received it as a subtle gift of his inner life. Who might that be? God alone knows.

From the prologue to Descartes, Editorial Adan, Madrid, 1944.

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PASCAL

... Pascal worked during the triumph of Cartesian rationalism, and in the midst of the theological controversies stemming from the Reformation, Jansenism, and the Counter-Reformation. Whence the essentially polemic character of nearly all his writings and the imprescindable necessity of inscribing them in the polygon traced by these points.

But with respect to the Pensees themselves we must say more, and to begin, we are not dealing with a book written by Pascal. Rather its content is the random notes that he had been accumulating to write an apology of Christianity and perhaps an anti-Cartesian philosophical work. This accounts for the fragmentary and unfinished character of nearly all the Penseés.

Strictly speaking, then, they are the opposite of aphorisms. The Penseés are not, nor in Pascal's mind were they ever intended to be, aphorisms. The indiscreet aphoristic use made of them is something quite far removed from and independent of Pascal himself. Moreover, Divine Providence scarcely permitted Pascal to reach maturity. He died quite young, without completing the projected task. We must not forget this age factor when analyzing the scope of his notes.

In reality, no formal philosophy exists in the Penseés,

at least if by "philosophy" we understand (as we should) a unified and deliberately organized system of thoughts. But it would be quite frivolous to conclude {136} from this that the work of Pascal is not philosophy in any sense. In contrast to what happened in the case of Descartes, the exercise of a philosophical critique did not lead Pascal to any doubt. And in fact, with respect to the Cartesian doubt, however universal it may have been, it never left the realm of the purely intellectual, nor had any repercussions whatever in the deepest roots of the philosopher's personal existence. For Pascal, however, the critique led to a thoroughgoing anguish which, overcoming itself, paradoxically encountered in the abyss of the soul and the world the very cornerstone of support that compelled him to seize hold of the truth of the understanding and a transcendent divinity. If for anyone, then certainly for Pascal, there is that transport of his being toward the ultimate problems. And this is no small thing, in respect to philosophy. One can, in fact, amass enormous quantities of philosophical knowledge and still not even graze the outskirts of an authentic philosophical life. [123]

That of Pascal is in this regard exemplary. But it is also necessary to point out equally clearly that his thought, while securely placed in the orbit of philosophy, has perhaps only taken the first-though decisive-steps therein. Consequently in Pascal there is just what the title indicates, philosophical thoughts which have not yet become philosophy, rather than a philosophy already complete. Even so, insofar as thoughts go, those of Pascal while few in number are colossal efforts to accept the reality of the world and human life before the mind in an original and uncolored way. In Pascal we are witness in part to one of the few fully realized attempts to apprehend philosophical concepts which are capable of encompassing some of the most important dimensions of man. For example, his concept of "heart," so vague, is true but on account of its vagueness badly understood and poorly used. It does not mean blind sentiment as opposed to pure Cartesian reason, but the knowledge constitutive of the day-to-day and radical being of man.

The vigor of Pascal is without doubt most salient in his theological thought. Of deep Augustinian inspiration, as befits the epoch and the way his life developed, Pascal's theology starts from man's life and his historical concretion, and carries it to the point where it is entwined in the problematicism of divinity. Yet at the same time this divinity is not for Pascal that triple extract of a God likewise {137} abstract which, under the name of "Deism," shortly thereafter becomes one of the central themes of the French Enlightenment.

And here it is fitting to make a few observations that I deem essential to avoid being sidetracked in any study of Pascal.

In the first place there is the way in which Pascal feels himself based on and situated in Christianity. To be sure, at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century the concept of "heart," to which I earlier alluded, caused Pascal to become-in a hasty and irritatingly frivolous way-the champion of what was termed the religion and apologetic of sentiment. Precisely because the disjunction between reason and sentiment, which has a strictly Cartesian origin, is false, it would be an error-likewise of a paradoxical Cartesian origin-to ascribe to Pascal a philosophy of impression or sentiment, when in fact his central idea is to make of the heart the name of that type of strict knowledge, both rigorous and intellectual, which is constitutively integrated into the very root of human existence. In reality, the anti-intellectualism of that false sentimental apology lives on one of the most obscure and [124] twisted ideas of the very Cartesianism it seeks to attack, without even knowing it.

In the second place, Pascal never claimed to find in the heart, even when understood correctly, any type whatsoever of preinclusion of the supernatural order in human nature. At most he seeks what it is that causes the heart to leave itself in order to survey the horizons of the world and see if there is anything there which might resolve the anguish and tragedy of human existence. And among those things, which it does not create within itself, but rather "finds"-the word must be kept in mind-in the world, there is Christianity. It is astonishing that people could have thought differently, when in some of his Pensees, which the reader will find in this very selection, Pascal says all this explicitly.

And this must also be borne in mind so as to correctly understand the {138} presumptions and ultimate meaning of Pascal's celebrated "wager," which is anything but a Cartesian calculus of probability. As in the case of so many others, one sees in Pascal the disparity between what he wishes to say and that with which he must express himself; the unsuitability of personal thought with respect to the world in which it is inscribed. And this with which a thinker must express himself, and even tell himself what he wishes to think, is not just the words, but the repertory of concepts which his world offers, and upon which he must base his thought so as to carry his own understanding and that of his readers toward "what he wants to say." In truth, every rigorous theory of thought ought to carefully distinguish "idea" and "concept." Concepts permit intellectual articulation of that which one wishes to think and which, for want of a better expression, we might call "idea." The "idea of Pascal," even if conceived and expressed in terms which would incline us at times to sentimentalism, and at times to a kind of incipient Cartesianism (such as the case of the "wager"), is in fact above both of these positions.

For the same reason and with the same criterion we must adjudicate the delicate problem of the historical relation between Pascal and Jansenism. There is no doubt about Pascal's intimate relations with Port-Royal; but we should not forget that, after all, Pascal was not as professional a theologian as he always liked to think. Consequently his theological discussions often suffer from an ambiguity and imprecision that it would have been desirable to avoid. When Pascal speaks insistently about the corruption in which human nature has been left since original sin, one can [125]

scarcely avoid thinking of Jansenism. But nowhere does Pascal say that the corruption and the nature about which he speaks refer to the same Nature about which those theologians spoke who (with reason) contributed to the condemnation of Jansenism. Perhaps what Pascal calls human nature approximates more to what he himself calls, at times, the "second nature," which is a product not only of individual custom, but above all of the entire sediment of society and history. In {139} this case, however debatable it may be-that is another question-Pascal would have no connection with Jansenism. Clearly Pascal's presumed Jansenism turns out to be, at the very least, highly problematic.

Finally, Pascal speaks at length about the historical foundation of the Catholic Church. And it cannot be denied that in his interpretation of the Old Testament, Pascal received from his epoch not only concepts but at times the very idea of the chosen people. On account of some notions which are not personally imputable to him, but which have tenaciously survived for many centuries, a lamentable ambiguity has often arisen even among Catholic writers, the fruit of which has been use of the concepts of inspiration and revelation as if they were synonymous. One might come to believe that since God is the author of Holy Scripture, the sacred writer did nothing but transmit what God communicated to him. But it would not be enough to interpret the Bible and the sacred writer himself "only" from the point of view of God. In such case the sacred writer would have done nothing but copy down a sort of "dictation" from God. Thus the inspiration would practically be revelation. This to be sure is not the "formal" point of view of the Church, with respect to its requirements for understanding inspiration. Inspiration is not, "by itself," a revelation (although at times it could be so through addition), but rather a particular action of God on the will of the sacred writer so as to make him write and to guarantee (1) true comprehension to his mind and (2) the exact expression of what he wished to think and say under divine

influence. The true doctrine enuntiated by the First Vatican Council teaches that the Bible is an inspired book, and that "therefore" it has God as its author. The Council did not base inspiration on the fact that God is the author of the book, but on the contrary, starting from the fact that it is inspired, "concluded" God's authorship. Under these conditions the sacred writer can arrive at the knowledge of what he seeks to express through means which are purely human and circumstantial, such [126] as use of oral traditions, written documents, etc. If one wishes to look at the problem from {140} the side of God, it would be necessary to say that the sacred writer is not a secretary of the divinity, but the author in a strict sense of his own book, and therefore the notion of author, as applied to God, must be understood in the same way as other theological notions, in a purely analogical sense.

So there is even within the Church an ample margin for historical investigation of the vocation, life, religion, and destiny of Israel. It is just the lack of historical sense characterizing rationalism (however paradoxical this may seem) which has led to that ingenuous conception of Biblical history in many passages of Pascal's writing. This conception, in fact, acquired its most splendid expression in Bossuet, according to whom, for example, God revealed secrets to Adam, the Patriarchs learned from Adam, Moses from them, etc., except for what God revealed directly to each member of the chain. Such a conception is not necessarily identifiable with the thought of the Church.

The consequences of this Pascalian interpretation of the Old Testament is not only literalism in Biblical exegesis, but something more, a special kind of literalism, which we might call verbalism. When inspiration is understood in the sense we have described, it extends to everything, even to the words themselves. But at the same time we must not forget what St. Thomas pointed out, viz. that there may be many literal meanings. The fact that no more than one was recognized by Pascal (what we call the verbalistic) inevitably led to an allegorical interpretation of almost all the important passages from the Old Testament, including those from the days of Alexandria. But allegory is one thing and spiritual meaning another. Only a strict notion of inspiration can enable us to avoid a forced allegorism and at the same time situate divine authorship and the deeply true and historical meaning of the Old Testament in the proper perspective.

On the other hand, Pascal was one of those rare men who had {141} a clear and precise vision of the essence of messianic prophetism, as exegetes of such exceptional stature as Father Lagrange have pointed out. In spite of occasional vagueness and imprecision of detail, there is in Pascal a deep sense of what the prophetic argument is and what it ought to be.

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HEGEL

Hegel published his Phenomenology of the Spirit in 1807. The appearance of this book signified a profound crisis for Hegel personally as well as for his epoch.

Since his youth Hegel had been an intimate friend of Schelling and Holderlin in the theological seminary. Hegel was always Schelling's disciple. This meant that regardless of whether he was a private tutor in Frankfurt or an official instructor, Hegel taught the philosophy of identity, an irrational appeal to the Absolute, wherein all difference dissolves and fades away. Nevertheless, it was scarcely likely that a mind impregnated with theological concepts could persist indefinitely in this way of thinking. A profound crisis occurred in his understanding; profound, but quiet, just as it did for many others who suddenly found themselves in their conscience, not with some critical observations in regard to the philosophy of identity, but with a mature personal philosophy. The intellectual confession of this "change" in philosophic posture was the Phenomenology of the Spirit. Throughout this work an intellectual emotion and vehemency pulses which will not recur in any of Hegel's later writings. Beneath its abstract and recondite dress, the Phenomenology of the Spirit is in reality the

intellectual confession of the crisis in Hegel's understanding; "experience" he calls it, "experience of conscience." Indeed Hegel has the impression that he is not dealing simply with a personal quirk of fate, but with the radical transformation which "the" Spirit suffers whenever it conquers a new and decisive state of its conscious development. In Hegel the crisis of an epoch culminates. Hence the grandiosity-even of style-which arises from the vicissitudes that the "Absolute Spirit" {144} has triggered in the life of G. F. Hegel. But if we say that the Phenomenology

is a confession of Hegel's intellectual life, the reader must eschew any notion that it is an autobiography a la Confessions

of Rousseau. The similarity is rather to what his Confessions

were to St. Augustine, i.e. not an introspective search in the depths of his soul, but an " a Te audire de seipso. "

When God pours Himself into St. Augustine's soul, He converts it so as to make it re-vert to Him. In Hegel, this reversion has a dialectical structure. But, despite this and other more radical and extreme differences, the two geniuses are alike in that they do not understand themselves except in and from God, and therefore they are alike in understanding their particular

[128] existence as the history which God makes in it and with it, rather than the history it makes with God. Consequently, Hegel's crisis had to be, for him, a personal question, because riding on it was nothing less than the meaning of him as a person. Holderlin perceived that his friendship with Hegel had evaporated. Schelling likewise abandoned it, feeling himself hurt and defrauded. There are no questions more personal than those which question the absolute of existence, thereby converting us into a question.

This crisis, as I said, was the crisis of an epoch, of an epoch which was at the point of no longer amalgamating individuals except to leave them incomunicado; such was the work of the "sentiment." It was the crisis of an epoch which trusted almost exclusively in personal inspiration of genius. It was, finally, the crisis of an epoch which lived the French Revolution and which was present at the birth of the Historical Spirit. Hegel did not falter in singling out that "animal" sentimentalism, as he likewise did not waver in maintaining that personal individuality was nothing but a souvenir of something long gone. For Hegel, history is not inspiration, but supraindividual necessity. And the community of spirits yanks Spirit as such, viz. the concept, from that in which it has become rooted. For Hegel the essence of the spirit is in conceiving, and in the clear intellection of what is conceived we are all one. According to Hegel, when the conceiving spirit sets itself in motion, there is no longer any hope left for individuals; only that which is general guides history.

The Napoleonic wars emptied the halls of the University of Jena. Like many other instructors, Hegel found himself obligated {145} to give up his chair so as to earn the means of satisfying his barest necessities. From Jena he passed to Nuremburg, where he was a teacher in secondary instruction at the Gymnasium. Later he became professor at the Universities of Heidelberg and Berlin. Hegel was not oblivious to these vicissitudes in his personal life. But one has the impression that while he did not come to absorb them into his philosophy, he nevertheless passed through them as if they were reversals suffered by someone else. "He" was what his philosophy was. And his life was the history of his philosophy. Everything else was his contra-life. Nothing had a personal meaning for him which was not acquired through being relived philosophically. The Phenomenology was and is Hegel's awakening to philosophy. And philosophy itself is the intellectual revivification of his existence as a manifestation of what he called [129] Absolute Spirit. The human aspect of Hegel, on the one hand SO quiet and far from philosophy, acquires on the other a philosophical rank when elevated to a place of prominence in his philosophical system. And conversely, in Hegel as an individual, the conceiving thought apprehends with the force conferred upon it by the absolute essence of the Spirit and the intellectual precipitate of

all history. Therefore Hegel is, in a certain sense, the maturity of Europe.

Regardless of our ultimate position with respect to him, present-day initiation into philosophy has to consist, in large measure, of an "experience" of and an inquiry into the situation in which Hegel has left us.

From the prologue to Hegel, Fenomenologia del Espiritu, Revista de Occidente, Madrid, 1935.

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FRANCIS BRENTANO

... Keen opposition to all forms of transcendental idealism and the restoration of the spirit of Descartes and Bacon led

him, as is well known, to a reform of philosophizing. From it a considerable part of present-day philosophical thought was

born. Brentano finds himself firmly persuaded that "the true method of philosophy is none other than that of natural science." His contemporary Dilthey (born within three years

of Brentano) centered philosophy in the sciences of the spirit. Brentano and Dilthey are the two thinkers of greatest influence on the thought of our time. Behind Dilthey hovers Schleiermacher's pietist theology; behind Brentano is the intellectualist theology of St. Thomas, impregnated with Leibniz's rationalism. But if one turns to what Brentano understands by "knowing," in the sense of natural science, and what Dilthey attempts with his "understanding" human history and life, perhaps that apparent antinomy may bring about the fundamental unity of the problem of first philosophy. Meditation on the writings of Brentano is one of our most important intellectual obligations.

From the prologue to a Spanish translation of various works

of Brentano, grouped under the title El Porvenir de la Filosofia , Revista de Occidente, Mardrid, 1936.

Socrates and the Greek Idea of Wisdom

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SOCRATES AND THE GREEK IDEA OF WISDOM

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INTRODUCTION

Despite the paucity of reliable historical data available for studying the origins of the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle, there is nonetheless one indisputable fact, to wit, that their philosophy in its origins is linked to the work of Socrates, and that Socrates' work represents a decisive point of inflection in the intellectual trajectory of the Greek world and of all European thought. But that work too is found to be enveloped, if not in the obscurity, then at least in the anonymity of his immediate disciples. We possess only the direct testimony of Plato, Aristotle, and Xenophon, each of whom had a particular objective in mind. As occurred with the work of the pre-Socratics, we know that of Socrates only through its reflection in Plato and Aristotle. Hence, any attempt to positively and directly represent his mode of thinking must yield to a more modest task, the only one in fact realizable, viz. a determination of which dimensions of his work might have given rise to the reflections of Plato and Aristotle. Interpretation of Socrates hinges ultimately on an interpretation of the origin of the philosophy of the Academy and the Lyceum. Both questions are substantially the same. And something similar could be said with respect to nearly all pre-Socratic philosophy.

The earliest accounts all agree that Socrates occupied himself solely with ethics, and that he introduced dialogue as the method for ascertaining something universal about things. Innumerable interpretations have been given of these accounts. For some, Socrates was an Athenian intellectual, a martyr of science; for others, he dedicated himself only to ethical problems. But while Socrates appears as a philosopher in both of these conceptions, in still others he is presented only as a man {152}

betaken with a desire for personal perfection, having no philosophical trappings whatever.

On the other hand, it is apparent that Plato, in respect of any of these three hypothetical dimensions, carried on Socrates' work, as did Aristotle with respect to Plato. True, modern philology has found it necessary to do some significant retouching to the portrait, with respect to details. Nevertheless, the fact remains.

But this does not necessarily mean that the line "Socrates-Plato-Aristotle" is continuous or direct.

Perhaps we should slightly modify the geometric image of a trajectory, and substitute for it that of a pencil of rays at whose center we find Socrates himself. Aristotle, instead of being a linear

[134] continuation of Plato, is more a restatement of philosophical problems from the very root where Plato began. If we wish to go on speaking of a continuation, it is more than anything else the continuation of an attitude and a preoccupation, rather than that of a system of problems and concepts. To be sure, the continuity of attitude implies a partial community of problems and the ensuing discussion of points of view. But first and foremost in Aristotle is the effort with which he repeats a limine the intellectual thrust of Plato. Likewise, Plato repeats the intellectual thrust which he has learned from his master Socrates, starting indeed from the same root as that from which Socrates' own reflection began. Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle are, as I said, more like the rays of a pencil emerging from a finite point of history. What Socrates introduces into Greece is a new mode of Wisdom. This will require considerable explanation. The nature of this article authorizes me to concentrate upon just one general idea, and for this it is necessary to precisely fix the nature of what has been termed "pre-Socratic philosophy." This in turn will call forth some ideas about the historical interpretation of a philosophy.

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I.

THE PRESUPPOSITIONS OF A PHILOSOPHY

Every philosophy has at its base, as a presuppostion, a certain

experience. In contrast to what Absolute Idealism maintained, philosophy is not born of itself. And this is true in several respects. First, if what Idealism claimed were true, we could scarcely explain why philosophy should not have existed fully mature in every corner of the globe since the beginning of humanity. Secondly, there is the fact that philosophy exhibits a changing repertoire of problems and concepts. And finally, above all, the position of philosophy within the human spirit has undergone manifest changes. In fact, we shall have occasion in this study to point out how philosophy, which at its inception designated something very close to a religious wisdom (insofar as it occupied itself with the ultimate and permanent things of the world and life), later became a form of knowledge about the universe, giving rise still later to an investigation of things inasmuch as they are; and the list could easily be extended.

But the fact that all philosophy starts from an experience does not mean that it remains locked therein, i.e. that it is a theory of said experience only. No experience whatsoever is so rich that philosophy can limit itself to merely being its conceptual mold; nor is any philosophy so original that it implies an experience which cannot be reduced to others. Moreover, it is in no wise true that philosophy must be a conceptual extension of the basic experience. Philosophy may contradict and nullify the experience which serves as its base, or even ignore it altogether and anticipate new forms of experience. But neither {154}

of these two actions would be possible except by an immersion in the basic experience which will permit the intellectual leap of philosophy. This means that a philosophy only acquires a precise physiognomy when referred to its basic experience.

"Experience" means something acquired in the course of life's real happening. It is not a conjunction of thoughts forged by the intellect, either truly or otherwise; but rather that which the spirit captures in its commerce with things. In this sense, experience is the natural place of reality. Consequently, any other reality will of [136] necessity be implied and called forth by experience if it is in fact rationally knowable. We do not here prejudge the nature of that experience; in particular, we urge a complete uprooting of the notion of experience as a conjunction of some personal data of consciousness. In all probability, these data of consciousness, as such, do not belong to that radical experience. Rather, as I said earlier, we are dealing with the experience which man acquires in his commerce with real things.

It would be a serious error to identify this experience with personal experience. There are probably very, very few men who have a personal experience in the fullest sense of the word. But, even admitting that everyone has some such experience, even in the richest and most favorable case it only makes up an intimate and miniscule nucleus within a much greater arena of non-personal experience. This non-personal experience turns out to be integrated, above all, with an enormous mantle of experience that comes to man through his living with others, whether in the precise form of the experience of others, or in the form of a grey precipitate of impersonal experience, integrated through the uses and applications of the men surrounding him, etc. In a more peripheral, but still larger zone, this form of experience extends so as to constitute the world, epoch, and time in which one lives.

And this experience is made up not only of dealings with objects, but also of the consciousness which man has of himself, of which there are three aspects: (1) as repertory of what men have thought about things, their opinions and ideas concerning them; (2) the particular manner {155} in which each epoch senses its own insertion into time, its historical consciousness; (3) the convictions which man carries in the depths of his individual life, touching the origin, meaning, and destiny of his person and that of all others.

It would be of great interest to explore the peculiar relation subsisting between these diverse strata of experience. It is not possible to do so in the present study, but it is imprecindable to point out that each of these zones, in its solidarity with the others considered as moments of a unique experience, has a proper and, up to a certain point, independent structure. Thus experience, in the sense of structure of the world in an epoch, can at times even find itself in opposition to the content of the other zones of experience. The Jew and the heretic during the Middle Ages lived in a Christian world, within which they were eo ipso heterodox. Today we are at the point where Catholics are the true heterodox, [137]

relative to our de-Christianized world. In the Middle Ages there were heretical minds; the mentality was, nevertheless, Christian. For the effects of this study, what matters to us here is to point out the basic experience of a philosophy, in the modest sense of presenting the mentality from which it springs.

Analysis of the basic experience reveals, first, what immediately comes into view: its particular content. In reality, this is what men at times have understood formally by history: the collection of the so-called historical facts. But if history pretends to be something more than a documentary filing cabinet, it must seek to make the content of a world and an epoch intelligible.

And provisionally we may say that every experience arises only thanks to a situation. The experience of man, as I said, is the natural place of reality thanks precisely to its internal limitation, which permits it to apprehend some things and some aspects of them, to the exclusion of others. Every experience has a unique and proper outline, and this outline is the objective correlate of the situation in which man finds himself installed. Depending on how he is situated, the things of his experience will likewise be situated. History must try to place our mind in the situation of the {156} men whose epoch we are studying, not so as to lose us in diaphanous profundities, but so as to mentally repeat the experience of that epoch, to see the facts "from the inside." Naturally, this requires a painful effort, difficult and prolonged. The intellectual discipline which enables us to realize it is termed

philology.

Moreover, experience is always experience of the world and of things, including man himself; and this presupposes that man in fact lives in and among things. Experience consists of that peculiar manner by which things place their reality n the hands of man. Experience, then, presupposes something prior, something like the existence of a visual field within which diverse perspectives are possible. This comparison already indicates that the existence of man in and among things is not comparable to that of a point lost in the infinity of nothingness. Even in this dimension of man, apparently so vague and so primary, his existence is limited, as is the visual field for the eyes. This limitation is called

horizon. The horizon is not a simple external limitation of the visual field; it is rather something which, when limiting it, constitutes it and therefore fulfills the role of a positive principle for it. So positive, in fact, that it justly leaves before our eyes what may be outside of [138]

it, as "the beyond," which we do not see and which extends without limit and is constantly pricking man's deepest curiosity. And in fact, besides those things which are born and die in the world, there are other things which enter into it, coming from the horizon, or disappearing beyond it. In every case, the relations of distance and proximity inside the horizon confer upon things their primary dimension of reality for man.

And, being the limiting object it is, the horizon must be constituted by something from which it arises. Without eyes there would be no visual horizon. Every horizon implies a constituent principle,

a foundation which is proper to it.

These three factors of the experience of an epoch, viz. its content, the situation and the horizon (which are one with respect of to their foundation) are three dimensions of the experience distinct changeableness. {157} Maximum lability characterizes the content of experience; much slower to change but ultimately more variable is the movement of situation. The horizon changes extremely slowly, so slowly, that men scarcely are aware of its mutation and tend to believe in its fixedness. Moreover on that very account they hardly even recognize its existence. Something similar happens to the passengers in an airplane, whose panorama varies as insensibly as the hands of a clock.

This change cannot be assimilated to a type of growth, maturity, and death of epochs or cultures, despite what the metaphor of biological evolution applied to history may have led some to believe for many years. This latter idea, which Spengler took as the basis for his works, is perhaps its most insostenable aspect. The experience constituting an historical epoch, while being the natural place of reality, is nothing more than its natural place. But man's existence is not limited to being situated in a place, even though real, The "reality of the world," in turn, is not the reality of life; the former reality is limited only to offering to that other reality called "man" an infinite conjunction of possibilities for existence. Things are situated, primarily, in that sediment of reality called "experience" as possibilities offered to man for existing. Among them, man accepts some and discards others. This decision is what transforms the possible into the real for his life. With it, man is subject to constant change because that [139]

new real dimension which adds to his life at the same time modifies the overall picture of his experience and, therefore, the group of possibilities offered to him the following instant. With his decision, man sets out along a determinate trajectory, on account of which he is never sure of not having definitively missed perhaps the best opportunities of his existence. The following moment presents a completely {158} different picture: some opportunities closed off, others dwindling, perhaps still others greatly enlarged, and even a few new and original ones. And since the actuality of the possible, inasmuch as it is possible, is movement in accordance with what Aristotle long ago told us, so likewise the being whose reality emerges from its possibilities is consequently a

changeable being. And so it changes through time, not remaining in any one state. Things are not in movement because they change, but rather change because they are in movement. When the actualization of possibilities is the fruit of a proper decision, then there are not only states

of movement, but happenings. Man is a being which happens, and to this happening is given the name "history."

For some time a free being has been defined precisely as the entity which is the cause of itself (St. Thomas). Therefore it follows that, in man, the root of history is freedom. Everything else is nature. The error of idealism centered on a confusion of freedom with an all-embracing indetermination. The freedom of man is a freedom which, like that of God, only exists formally in the manner of being determined. But, in contrast to the divine freedom, creator of things, human freedom is only determined by choosing from among diverse possibilities. Since these possibilities are "offered" to man, and since this offering in turn depends partially upon human decisions themselves, man's freedom takes on the form of an historical occurrence.

Out of the enormous complex of what there is to say about the study of the origins of Attic philosophy, I do not desire at the moment to discuss anything other than the mentality within which it was born, and then only in its purely intellectual aspects. Applying the considerations we have just noted to the intellectual life, we find ourselves noticing, for example, that the thought of each epoch, besides containing what it properly affirms or denies, points to other different thought, sometimes mutually self-contradictory. Every affirmation or negation, in fact, however categorical it may be, is incomplete or at least postulates other affirmations or denials, and only united with them does it possess the full measure [140] of truth. For this reason Hegel said that truth is always the all and the system. But this does not prevent-rather, it implies- {159} that an affirmation be true or false within its own limitations. In the face of this one can discern the various directions in which affirmations can be developed. Of them, some will be true; others, false. As long as the primitive affirmation is not disjunctively linked to one or the other, it is still true. Human thought, when taken statically in a moment of time, is what it is, i.e. true or false; but when taken dynamically in its future projection is true or false depending on the route upon which it embarks. The Christology of St. Iraneus, for example, is naturally true. But some of his affirmations, or at least, some of his expressions, are such that depending on whether one inclines his thought a little to the right or a little to the left, will fall on the side of Arius or that of St. Athanasius. Prior to this decision they are still true. After it they will be taken in one sense and won't be taken in the other. Together with thoughts in the fullest sense thought, history is replete with that type of thought which we might call incipient. Or, in other words, thought has an incipient dimension in addition to its declarative dimension. Every thought thinks something in a full sense and begins to think something in a germinal way. And this is not a reference to the fact that from some thought others can be deduced by logical reasoning. Rather, it refers to something prior and more radical, which affects not so much the knowledge which thought purveys as the very structure of thought as such. Thanks to it, man possesses an intellectual history. We shall see forthwith an exemplary case of the functioning of this kind o f incipient thought, with regard to some thoughts which offer two possibilities only slightly different, one of which has led to the splendid flowering of European intellectualism, while the other has born the mind to the dead ends of Asiatic speculation. And indeed we do not refer only to the fact that these possibilities which are offered to the mind are true or false, but whether or not the corresponding routes are dead ends. In each instant of his intellectual life, every individual (and every epoch) finds himself facing the danger that he could be advancing along a road which is a dead end.

Most likely Socrates' labor has caused us to walk not along a dead end road, but along that {160} leading to what will become the European intellect as a whole. The "work" of Socrates is inscribed in the mental horizons of Greek thought. It is situated there in a [141] particular manner, determined by the dialectic of earlier situations traversed by "the great thinkers." This allowed him a special experience of man and of things, from which will emerge in time the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle.

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II.

THE HORIZON OF GREEK PHILOSOPHY

The mental horizon of ancient man is constituted by movement, in the broadest sense of the word. Besides the movements or external alterations which things suffer, the things themselves are found to be subject to an inexorable caducity. They are born one day, only to die later. This universal change involves man too, not just as an individual, but considered socially; family, city, and country find themselves subject to an incessant change regulated by an inflexible destiny which determines the good of each. In this universal change the generation of living things acquires exemplary importance. One could even affirm, as we shall see later, that the radical form in which the Greek conceived cosmic movement is so definitively oriented toward generation that the same verb,

gignomai, expresses the two ideas of generation and happening.

For ancient man, this idea of movement as generation forms a dividing line in the fundamental schema of the universe. Here below is the earth, ge, the realm of the perishable and the corruptible, of things subject to generation and corruption. Above are the heavens, ouranos, made up of ungenerated and incorruptible things (at least in the terrestrial sense of the word), subject only to a local movement of cyclic character. And in the ouranos

are the theoi, the immortal gods.

Recall how different is the horizon in which the man of our era discovers the universe. He finds not the caducity, but the nihility. Whence his scheme of the universe is not at all like {162} that of the Greek. On one side are things, on the other, man. Man exists among things so as to make his life with them, a life which consists in the determination of a transcendent and eternal destiny. For the Greek heaven and earth exist; for the Christian, heaven and earth are the world, the seat of this life; opposite it, there is the other life. Therefore the Christian scheme of the universe is not the dualism of "heaven-earth," but that of "world-soul."

What is the foundation which makes it possible for movement to constitute the horizon of ancient man's visual field?

Man is a natural being. And, within nature, he belongs to the least constant region of it, the earth. Man is a being endowed with [143] life, a living being, a

zoion , which analogously to other living beings is born and dies after a life which is, ultimately, ephemeral. But in contrast to the others this living being carries within himself a strange property.

The other living things, though having life, do nothing more than he alive. This is true whether we speak of a tree or an animal; to live is simply to be alive, i.e. carrying out those acts which spring forth from the living thing itself and which are oriented to its internal perfection. In a plant, these movements are only oriented toward the atmosphere or the earth, at least in the sense of growth. In an animal, the movements are oriented by a "tendency" and a "notice," thanks to which it "discerns" and .works" toward the capture of things or flees from them.

But in man there is something completely different. Man is not limited to being alive, to carrying out his vital functions. His

ergon forms part of an overall scheme, of a hios, which in many ways is indeterminate; and man himself, in a certain sense, is the one who must determine what he is through deliberation and decision. He not only is alive, but partially is creating

his life. This is the reason man's nature has the strange power of understanding and manifesting what it does, in all its dimensions, to the man who does them and to the things with which he works, ta pragmata. The Greeks gave the name logos

to this power, which the Latins translated, rather unfortunately, by ratio, reason. Man is a living being endowed with logos. The logos gives us to understand {163} what things are. And, when expressed, gives others to understand, i.e. those who discuss and deliberate about these pragmata, which in this sense we might call "affairs." In this way the logos, besides making the existence of each man possible, also makes that form of human coexistence possible which we call living in society. Living in society is having common affairs. Therefore the plenitude of living in society is the polis, the city. The Greek interpreted man indifferently as an animal endowed with logos or as a political animal. If the concrete content of the polis is the work of a nomos, of a statute, and it tends toward eunomia, good government, then for a Greek its existence is a "natural" occurrence. The polis exists, just as rocks or stars exist.

By means of the logos, then, man regulates his daily actions, with the intention of "doing them well." The Greek ascribed this function of the logos to that part of the vital human principle which is not found "mixed" with the body, which does not serve to [144] animate it, but just the reverse, to direct its life, bearing it above the impressions stemming from its vital functions to the region of what things truly are. This part acquired the name of nous, mens . In reality the logos does nothing but express what the

mens thinks and discovers. It is the principle of what is most noble and superior in man.

For a Greek the mind has two dimensions. On one side, it consists of that marvellous power of concentration man possesses, an activity which makes patent to him an object in respect of its most intimate and proper character. For this reason Aristotle compared it to light. Let us call it reflection or thought. But it is not just a faculty of thinking which as such can be correct or can err, but a thinking which on account of its own nature is surely and infallibly directed to the heart of its object. It is something, therefore, which when it acts for itself in the fullest sense arranges all things-even the most distant-face to face with man, proclaiming their true physiognomy and make up above and beyond the fleeting impressions of life, The realm of the mind, the Greeks used to say, is the "always." (Plato, Republic 484b4).

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But on the other hand, the Greek never conceived the mind as a kind of inalterable focal point in the depths of man. It is a sure and infallible thinking; but in this respect it is a type of "sense of reality" which, like an astute presentiment, puts man in contact with the intimate part of things. For this reason Aristotle compared it to a hand. The hand is the instrument of instruments, since any instrument is so by virtue of being "handleable." Analogously, for man the mind is the natural location of reality. Therefore to a Greek it has a much deeper sense than that of pure intellection. It extends to all dimensions of life, and to everything real in it. This sense is, therefore, susceptible to sharpening or blunting. No one completely lacks it, though the sense may be found paralyzed at times (a demented person); but normally it functions invariably, according to the state of man, his temperment, age, etc. It is something which, through refinement stemming from use made of it during life, can only be mature in old age. Only an old man fully possesses this sense, this' knowledge of reality, acquired through the "experience of life," in the commerce and real contact with things. [145]

In any case, to work on conformity with nous, with the mind, is to work basing one's judgements on the unchangeable things of the universe and of life. This knowledge of the unchangeable, of what is always out there in the farthest reaches of the universe, the Greek (like every other nation that has learned to express itself) called Sophia, wisdom. Life participates unequally in it, from the senseless person all the way up to the wise man, and

including the merely "prudent." This Sophia, as experience of life, sometimes becomes a Sophia, an exceptional and superhuman knowledge of the ultimate things of reality. For a Greek, Sophia thus understood has a strictly supratemporal existence. It is a gift of the gods. Consequently it has a primarily religious character. Man is capable of possessing it because he has a property,

nous, in common with the gods. Hence Aristotle says of the mind that it is the most divine part of us (Met. 1074bl6). The primitive Greek had conceived it as a divine power fulling everything and {165} communicated to man alone among all living things, thus conferring upon him his special rank. Those to whom it was given in an exceptional and almost superhuman way (982b28), as harbingers of truth, are the wise men, and their doctrine is Sophia, Wisdom.

I have anticipated here some ideas which logically should have come later. But it seemed preferable to me to straightway point out the objective, even at the cost of having to immediately retrace a few steps.

To summarize, for a Greek, man as living being only exists in the universe basing himself on this presumed aspect of the permanence which his mind offers him. And then the mutability of everything real is converted into the horizon of his vision of the universe and of human life itself. And then too is wisdom born. Naturally, we need not assume that the Greeks had an explicit awareness of it. It may even have been impossible for them to have tiad such an awareness, because the salient characteristic of an horizon is not to. be seen as such when viewed directly, so as to compel us to see the things within it. But we, situated in a much broader horizon, can clearly recognize it. {166}

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III

SITUATION OF THE UNDERSTANDING:

THE MODES OF GREEK WISDOM

Within this horizon, Greek wisdom saw itself involved in a chain of situations which it is appropriate for us to set down.

1. Wisdom as possession of the truth about Nature. On the coasts of Asia Minor the kind of Greek thinker appears who for the first time confronts the totality of the universe. This was Anaximander. He deals not with nature only in respect of its birth through divine action or extra-worldly agents (as was the case in Oriental thought), but with its own reality. And this reality, though not excluding any of the aforementioned actions of the gods, nevertheless has in itself a unitary and radical structure by virtue of the fact that all things existing in the heavens or on earth are born, live and revert to the universe itself-and not just to the gods. This universal breeding ground, from which everything there is, is born, is Nature, physis. These thinkers, with Anaxagoras at their head, conceive of this birth as a great act of life. And there are two dimensions to it. On one hand, things are born from Nature, as something it produces "from itself" (arkhe).

Here Nature seems to be endowed with its own structure, independently of theogonic and cosmogenic vicissitudes. On the other hand, the generation of things is conceived as a movement in which they {168}

go on autoconforming in that type of substance which is Nature. In this sense, Nature is not a principle, but something which, for this first early bud of thought, constitutes the permanent underlying content which there is in everything, a mode of substance from which all things are made (Aristotle, Met. 983bl3). With the idea of "Permanence" of this content, Greek thought definitively abandoned all channels of mythology and cosmogeny,

in order to create what later will be science and philosophy. Things, in their natural generation, receive their substance from Nature. Nature itself is then something which remains eternally fertile and [147] imperishable, "immortal and always young," as Euripides termed it, at the base of as well as above the caducity of particular things, an inexhaustible fountain of them (apeiron). For this reason the Greek thought of eternity in a primitive way as a perfect returning to begin, with no change whatever; as a perpetual youth, in which actions revert to those executing them, so as to be repeated again and again just as youthfully. Even linguistically it has been possible to see (cf. Benveniste) how the terms aion and juvenis,

eternity and youth, have an identical root (*ayu- *yu-)

expressing eternity in a perennial youth, as an eternal returning, as a cyclical movement. Therefore the great Greek thinkers, and even Aristotle himself, called nature "the divine"

(to theion). For the ancient polytheistic religions, in fact, to be divine meant to be immortal, but with an immortality deriving from an inexhaustible reservoir of vitality.

For a Greek, Nature is also something "divine," theion,

in this sense. It embraces all things; it is present

in each of them. And this presence is vital; sometimes it is asleep, others, awake. These variations have a cyclical character. They happen in an orderly and measured way; and this is time (khronos).

Those who thus remove the veil hiding Nature and reveal what always is to man are called Wise Men (sophoi),

or as Aristotle says, "those who philosophize about reality." This truth consisted in nothing but the discovery of Nature. Therefore

{169} when speaking of it, Aristotle employed "seeking truth" and "seeking Nature" as synonymous (Phys. 19la24). The works of these wise men were inevitably poems entitled "About nature." With another name, but the same motive, Aristotle called them physiologoi,

those who seek the explanation of Nature.

Men brought this discovery to a conclusion through the exceptional power of their mind, which was capable of concentrating on and encompassing in its scrutinizing glance (this is what the Greek word theoria meant) the totality of the universe, and of penetrating even to its ultimate root, thus communicating with the divine. (Aristotle, Met. 1075a8).

The content of these various systems of thought is basically what today we would call astronomy or meteorology. The phenomena in which Nature manifests herself par excellence are [148]

just those great atmospheric and astronomical events through which the supreme powers governing all things in the universe are unleashed. For the rest, the theoria consisted primarily in "gazing at the sky and the stars." Contemplation of the celestial dome led to a first intuition of the regularity, proportion, and cyclical character of the great movements of Nature. Finally, the generation, life, and death of living things returns us to the mechanism of Nature. And this is manifest-above all in these three orders-to whomever possesses the energy to remove tie veil hiding it (Heraclitus had already said that Nature likes to hide itself). This is the truth which gives us that type of knowledge.

In order to fully appreciate the scope of this attitude, let us situate ourselves at the root from which it emerges. We are dealing, in fact, with a type of wisdom, and consequently with that kind of knowledge which touches the

ultimate things of the world and of life, fixing its destiny and directing its actions. Thus far, the Greek, Chaldean, Egyptian, and Indian are in agreement. {170}

But for the Chaldean and Egyptian, heaven and earth are products of the gods, who have nothing to do with their nature. Theogony thus becomes cosmogeny. What this shows us is the place which each thing possesses in the world, the hierarchy of powers hovering over it. Therefore the oriental wise man interprets the meaning of events. The content of his wisdom is, in large measure, to "presage."

But the glance of the Indo-European world will one day linger on the spectacle of the universe in its totality. Rather than refer it to a past time and describe its origin, or project it onto the future and so foretell its meaning, the Indo-European

pauses before it, "marveling," at least momentarily. Through marvel, Aristotle tells us, wisdom in fact is born. At this moment, things appear fixed and yet quivering in the compact bulk of the universe. This brief pause of the mind before the world sufficed to separate the Indians, Iranians, and Greeks from the rest of the Orient. We no longer have cosmogeny, or at least the cosmogeny will contain in incipient form something very different. Wisdom ceases to be "presage" so as to convert itself into Sophia and Veda.

Let us now direct our attention to what happens within this vision. If we attend to what they say, we shall see that the Greek wise men find themselves quite close to the Indo-Iranian. There is no more than a slight inflection signaling a difference which at this origin is almost infinitesimal and virtually imperceptible. But that [149] small difference will yield the route which, through the course of history, carries European man along new paths.

Just as with the Greek thinkers, there are in some Vedic hymns and in the Brahmanas and the most ancient Upanishads references to the universe as a whole, to the totality of what there is and what there isn't. The entire universe is fixed in the Absolute, in the Brahman. But upon reaching this point, the Indian directs himself to this universe, either to flee from it or to submerge himself in its divine root, and he makes this flight or immersion the key to his existence. Such is the identity of Atman and Brahman. Man feels himself part of an absolute totality, and reverts to it. The wisdom of the Veda has above all an operative character. True, one day it will attempt to pass through stages {171}

resembling a speculative form of knowledge. But this knowledge is always a cognitive action, oriented toward the Absolute; it is a communion with the Absolute. Instead of an Ionian physiology,

we have a Brahman theosophy and theurgy.

Very different is the situation of the Greek wise man. It is not the case that he does not wish to assume a governing function with respect to the meaning of life. Aristotle is still saying that one of the meanings which the word 'Wise man' had in his time is that of governing others, and not being governed by anyone else (Met. 982al7). His governing function is based on a thoroughgoing knowledge encompassing everything which exists, especially the most difficult and inaccessible things common to men (982a8-12). But this knowledge is not operative, or better, is not so in the same way it is for the Indian. Greek wisdom is pure knowing. Instead of compelling man to fling himself at the universe, or flee from it, Greek wisdom causes man to withdraw, before nature and before himself. And this marvelous withdrawal

allows the universe and things to remain before his eyes, so he can see things born from the universe, such as they are . The operation of the Greek mind is a doing which consists of doing nothing with the universe except letting it be, before our eyes, such as it is. Then the universe properly appears before our eyes as Nature. Such an operation has no other outcome than patency. Therefore its primary attribute is truth. If the Greek wise man governs or directs life, it is with the pretension of basing it upon truth, of making man live on the [150]

truth. This is the slight inflection on account of which Wisdom, as discovery of the universe, ceases to be a possession of the

Absolute so as to convert itself simply into possession of the truth of its Nature. By virtue of this almost insignificant decision the European intellect was born with all its fecundity, and it began to investigate the far reaches of Nature. The Orient, in contrast, directed itself toward the Absolute along a dead-end road with respect to the understanding. {172}

The wisdom of the great pre-Socratics seeks to tell us something about Nature, in no other way than through Nature itself. In the truth of the Greek wise man, the discovery of Nature has no purpose other than the discovery itself; consequently it is a theoretical attitude. Wisdom ceases to be primarily religious so as to become theoretical speculation.

But it would be a profound error to think that this speculation is, in the first Greek thinkers, something similar to what later would be called episteme, and what we tend to call "science." Rather than science, this theoretical knowledge is a theoretic

vision of the world. The fact that the few pre-Socratic fragments we possess have come to us through thinkers almost all of whom postdate Aristotle has managed to distort our image of Pre-socratic knowledge. Indeed if we possessed all their writings, most likely they would scarcely resemble what we understand by philosophy and science. Their contemporaries themselves must have perceived the expression and task of the wise man as an awakening

to a new world through marvel. It was like an awakening

to the light of day. And, as Plato makes reference in the myth of the cave, the man who for the first time sallies forth into the sunlight of midday from the darkness quickly senses the pain of the obfuscation, and his movements are an uncertain probing, directed by the remembrance of the past darkness more than by the new light. In his vision and in his life this man sees and lives in the light, but interprets everything from the darkness. Whence the markedly confused and bidimensional character of this wisdom in the state of awakening. On one side, he moves in a new world-in the world of truth, but he interprets it and understands with remembrances taken from the old world, from the myth. Thus, these wise men still have the clothing and accent of the religious [151] reformer and oriental preacher. Their "discovery" is still presented as a type of "revelation." When Anaximander tells us that Nature is "principle," the function he assigns it seems to be overwhelmingly that of domination. Wisdom itself still has many religious trappings; the men consecrating themselves to it end up leading a bios theoretikos, a theoretic existence, which recalls the life of the {173} religious

communities, and the philosophic schools have an air of

sect (cf. the Pythagorean life).

This still-confused character of the new Wisdom becomes clearly evident in the twofold reaction which ensued in the mind with respect to the idea of the Theos. Anaximander's "principle" continued in Pherekydes with what it possessed of "domination;" this was the Orphic theo-cosmogeny. But, at the same time this "principle", with respect to its content of "root" or physis, began to be converted into Theos; this was the work of Xenophanes. In Pherekydes the labors of the Ionians became lost once again in myth. In Xenophanes, on the other hand, theogony became a type of Ionian physics of the gods, a first sketch of theology.

Out of the origins of Sophia, then, we have the three ingredients of which it will never see itself deprived: a theory (Ionian); a life (Pythagorean); and a new theological-religious attitude (Xenophanes). But these three elements still possess a nebulous existence; nothing has been achieved except to point up a new vision of the

world, and with it a new type of Wise man.

One step yet remains to situate the mind of the Wise man in a different posture.

2. Wisdom as vision of being. In the first half of the 5th century BC a decisive epoch was reached in the work of Parmenides and Heraclitus.

Of course, there is a profound antinomy in their respective conceptions of the universe; Parmenides' is the quiescent one, Heraclitus' the changeable one. To be sure, things are not so simple and easy when we get down to detail. Still, we cannot deny that the antinomy, even when reduced to its just proportions, continues to be there. Nonetheless it seems to me much more important to emphasize the common dimension in which their thought moves, rather than stress the antinomy.

For the wisdom of the Ionians, speculation about the universe led to the discovery of Nature, the principle from which things emerge and, in a certain respect, the substance out of which they are made. So for Parmenides and Heraclitus, "to proceed {174}

from [152] nature" means "to have being, " and the substance of which things are made is equivalent to "what things are." Nature thus becomes the principle of what things "are." This implication between Nature and being, between physis and

einai, is the almost superhuman discovery of Parmenides and Heraclitus. In reality, one could say that only with them did philosophy begin.

It is nevertheless fitting to make a few observations about this intellectual operation.

It would be quite anachronistic to pretend that Parmenides and Heraclitus created a concept of being, however modest. Nor is it true that their thought refers to what we would today call being in general. It would be necessary to delve much deeper into the history of Greek philosophy, and go all the way to Aristotle, in fact, to reach the borders (and just the borders) of the problem involving the concept of being. Nor does there exist in Parmenides and Heraclitus any speculation that, without becoming a concept, still moves about in the element of being in general. For Parmenides, his presumed "being" is a spherical mass; for Heraclitus, fire. Naturally, this should have been sufficient for centering interpretation of their fragments on Nature, on that same Nature which the lonians discovered to us; and not on being or entity in general. Parmenides' poem in fact carries the title About Nature, the same as that of Heraclitus. But even with the question circumscribed this way, one should not forget that neither Heraclitus nor Parmenides seeks to give us anything like a theory of substance for each particular thing; rather, they tell us something in regard to Nature, i.e. what makes up the universe, independently of the caducity of the things with which we live. When they are facing Nature, and these things pass before their eyes, Parmenides and Heraclitus both relegate them (though for different reasons) to a secondary plane, always obscure and problematic, in which they appear to us as if they were not fully being. Therefore they are foreign to Nature, although confusedly founded upon it. On the other hand, the only thing which interests Parmenides and Heraclitus {175}

is that very Nature which, though sustaining all things, is not identified with them.

Both Parmenides and Heraclitus consider Ionian physics as inadequate, because ultimately it is a conception which pretends to tell us about Nature, and therefore about something which is principle and sustainer of all common things, but ends up restricting itself to only one of them-water, air, etc. That which [153]

Parmenides and Heraclitus are going to say "About Nature" is not this. The first thing they do is remove themselves from the "everyday dealing" with ordinary things, replacing it by a "knowledge" which man obtains

when he concentrates so as to penetrate into the intimate truth of things. The man who knows in such a way is rightly called the Wise Man. And the wisdom of the wise man should vouchsafe to us what Nature is; but it will not give us the everyday information which the layman requires for conduct of his usual affairs. "Way of truth" as opposed to "opinion of man," Parmenides called it; and Heraclitus affirmed for his part that the Wise Man is separated from all others.

Of what does this wise man make use? We have already anticipated the answer several pages ago: what the Greeks called nous (and what we, for the time being, have called mind). And in order to be in accordance with the new meaning of Wisdom, we should translate

nous by "mind thinking." But this thought is not a logical thinking, nor is it a reasoning process or a judgement. If one wishes to employ current academic parlance, we should have to appeal rather to an "apprehension" of reality. Only much later would the disciples of Parmenides and Heraclitus translate

this

apprehension into judgements. We shall soon see why.

This thinking mind has present before its eyes all things, and that which it apprehends in them is something radically common to everything which there is.

What is this common thing? The proper function of the mind is not to be a faculty of thinking, which can be correct as well as err, but to possess a kind of profound and luminous touch making us see things in a certain and infallible way. Therefore what we are given are things in their actual reality; {176}

or in scholastic terms, the formal object of the mind must be actual reality. And this is what is common to everything there is.

Both Parmenides and Heraclitus consider that things have reality, above all; they are, independently of whether they are in one or another way for the purposes of daily life. "What there is" becomes identical with "what is." Therefore Nature will consist, so to speak, in that in virtue of which there are things. It is then obvious that as root of what things "are" it is called to eon, "that which is being." With some justification Reinhardt observes that the neuter here represents a first archaic form of the abstract. Warm things have in themselves "the warm." The things that there are must have, analogously,-if I may be permitted the [154]

expression-the "is being." And I add the "is" to emphasize the idea that "to be" means something active, a type of actuality.

When we say, for example, "this is white," we wish to give someone to understand that the "is" has, in a certain way, an active acceptation, according to which the "white" is not a simple attribute dumped on the subject, but the result of an action emanating from it, viz. that of making the thing white, or making the thing "be white." The "is" is not a simple copula, nor "to be" a simple verbal name. We deal strictly with an active verb. One might replace it with "to happen," in the sense of being something which has reality. So, the manner in which Parmenides and Heraclitus conceive Nature actualizes, even without intending to do so, a sense of being as reality. They do not stop to give us a concept of the physical "is." But its meaning is shaped by the end to which this road leads. The underlying meaning (which is brought out in the results) is what there is of philosophy in the physics of Parmenides and Heraclitus; but, I repeat, it was not systematically thought out in the form of a concept.

The difference between Parmenides and Heraclitus becomes apparent when we pin down the active sense of the "is."

For Parmenides, the things of the universe "are" when they have consistency, when they are fixed , stable , and solid. Physical reality is eqivalent to solid fixedness, to solidity. Everything existing is real insofar as it is based on something stable and solid. Nature is the one thing (monon) which fully "is," the one solid thing truly such, i.e. complete, without lacunae or {177} emptiness. Non-being is empty and distant. Parmenides' Nature is a compact sphere. It alone fully deserves the name of "being;" not the changeable things of our daily life.

For Heraclitus, on the other hand, "to be" is equivalent to "having become." Heraclitus' celebrated becoming is not universal change, as Cratylus affirmed much later, but a gignesthai, a verb whose root possesses the double meaning of generation and happening, of an "is being produced." But in this case, "is being destroyed" too. And in both dimensions, things are;" if one wishes, "are sustained." The originating substance from which everything emerges, Nature, is fire. Fire is a principle [155]

which does not only produce some things, but nourishing itself on the being of others, destroys them. It is a principle which is superior, in a certain way, to being and non-being, since from it both of the latter are extracted. It is at one and the same time, and in one act, the force of being and of non-being; fire does not subsist other than by consuming some things (principle of non-being), just so that through this very act others acquire their being (principle of being). And this is not the dialectical unity of being and non-being, but the cosmic unity of generation and destruction in one natural force. Each thing thus proceeds from its contrary. And to this internal "structure" Heraclitus gave the name harmonia .

But, prescinding from the antithetical content of the two conceptions, there is something in a way common to them, and more important than the differences. Understanding being as a "being", the force making things "to be here" is either a pure power of being (Parmenides), or a power of being and non-being (Heraclitus). So employing an a priori denomination, we could say that Nature is something like a stable " power of being. " Even in Plato being will be spoken of as dynamis,

power or capacity.

And this "power of being" is shown to man in a special "sense of being," which is, therefore, a principle of truth. For Parmenides and Heraclitus this sense, call it thinking mind or logos (or the internal articulation of both), is above all a cosmic principle. In Parmenides the matter is clear. And it is no less so for the logos of Heraclitus. The logos is, in man, {178} something which says one thing with many words, and the many words only become a logos through something which makes them a one. Taken from what the logos says, from what is said, this means that each one of the things expressed by the words is only real when there is some link submerging it in that unitary total, and when it is an emergence from it. And this link is the "is" referring everything to its contrary. Therefore Heraclitus conceives the logos as the power of unity of Nature, whose structure of contrarily is subject to a plan and measure.

Man has a part in this logos and in this mind; they are revealed to him as a type of interior voice or internal guide, reflecting and expressing from the depths of our being what things are, that to [156] which we must attend when we wish to speak truly about them. Our mind and our logos are, therefore, the principle of Wisdom. however different the conception of wisdom reached by Parmenides and Heraclitus may be, they both agree that from this moment, Wisdom will forever be ascribed to the vision of what things are. The Wise man directs himself to the discovery of being. Only that which is can be known. That which is not cannot be known.

To fully understand what this conception means, let us recall once again that the primitive physiologist employed the idea of

physis and phyein, nature and birth, in their most active and concrete acceptation. Therein two dimensions are included. On the one side, there is the fact that things "are born from" or "die into." On the other, the end of this

process is that things come to be or cease to be. We believe that from the same root from which the word genesis

is derived comes the verbal form expressing happening. The Ionians used the verb gignomai, "to engender" or "happen", in a form which does not refer exclusively to either of the two foregoing senses, and which by the same token means both at the same time, while they continue to be united in their common root. But this common root, which is the only one the Ionians fully thought out, points to a choice between these two possibilities.

So, when Nature is considered in its first dimension, we come to the vision of a whole from which things are born and {179}

whence they are nourished. Each thing is, thus, a "fetus" of this whole. This is the path along which the Vedas and the earliest Upanishads have trod, both starting from the whole, as Brahman.

But Greek thought preferred to follow the second possible dimension of birth, of gignomai. Nature then appears rather as a power of being." The dynamic aspect of the power is conserved, but totally immersed in "being."

The primitive philosophical literature of India is not based on the verb as-, to be, but on the verb bhu-, which is equivalent to the Greek phyein, with the meaning of birth and engendering. All of the exhuberant intellectual richness of things is expressed by the innumerable forms and derivatives to which the second verb has given rise. Things are bhuta-,

engendered; entity is bhu-, born, etc. The verb as-,

on the other hand, does not have any other mission than that of a simple copula with no consequences whatever. Indeed, it is so bereft of consequences that Indian thought never arrived at the idea of essence. It is not the case that [157]

the Vedanta completely lacks something equivalent to our notion of essence. But it is nothing but a remote equivalence. For the Greeks essence is a purely logical and ontological characteristic; it is what in things corresponds to their definition and what gives them their own nature. In contrast, the Indian always subordinates these notions to others more elemental and of a different character. For him, essence is before all else the most pure extract of the activity of things; in the same sense in which we today still employ the word when we speak of a perfume's essence, even to the point where one of the most primitive denominations of what we call essence is rasa-, which properly speaking means "sap," "juice," generating and vital principle. This difference transcends even the idea of being. Whereas for Parmenides, and even for the Greeks in general (in sketchy terms) the characteristic of being is 'being now, persisting," and therefore being immutable, not changing. (akineton), for the Vedanta being (sat-) is rather what a thing possesses in itself, in perfect tranquility, in unalterable peace (shanti-).

This contraposition between Eleatic quiet and Vedantic

calm or peace cannot be {180} forgotten for the sake of external analogies, and it will serve to prevent a precipitous confounding of on and sat- . Indian thought is the reality that would have been Greece, and a fortiori

all of Europe, but for Parmenides and Heraclitus; in Aristotelian terms, a speculation about things as a whole, without ever making the "they are" intervene; something which only very remotely recalls the gnosis.

This minor variation in the object of thought sufficed to give rise to Parmenides and Heraclitus.

Interpreting the Brahman as universal soul (identity of Atman and Brahman) the Indian arrived at a type of ontogony. Taking Nature as a power of being, we shall arrive at an ontology .

But first it is necessary to take one more step, which will be the work Of the generations immediately after the Persian Wars. And from now on, Wisdom will no longer be a simple vision of Nature, but a vision of what things are, of the principle and substance which makes them to be, of their being.

3. Wisdom as rational knowledge of things. The generations following the Persian Wars realized the fruit of this gigantic conquest.

The new life created in Greece enormously enriched what had been the normal world of the Greeks up until then. Above all we should point out the gradual development of a certain number of [158]

branches of knowledge, apparently quite modest, whose increasing importance will become a decisive factor of Hellenic intellectual life. These branches of knowledge were given the name tekhnai;

we would translate it as techniques. But the Greeks understood the word in a completely different sense. For us, technique is a making, a doing; for the Greek, it is a knowing how to make or do. The concept of tekhne pertains to the order of being, even to the point that Aristotle sometimes applies this name to Wisdom itself. The aforementioned branches of knowledge refer principally to knowing how to cure, how to count, how to measure, how to build, how to conduct battles, etc. For many years this state of affairs had been developing; but now finally these branches of knowledge take on a life of their own. And the men of this epoch find themselves with these new types of knowledge alongside the pieces {181} of old and exemplary Wisdom; and they see the new knowledge applied not to the huge and divine mass of Nature, but to the objects necessary for life, which Sophia had disenfranchised, tossing them outside the realm of being.

The profound modifications which primitive Sophia had suffered at the hands of the Ionians penetrated the public conscience to some extent. The creation of classical drama clearly illustrates this new situation. Regardless of its origins, and aside from the various interpretations to which its elements can give rise, there is not the slightest doubt that in Aeschylus and Sophocles tragedy constitutes-among other things-a means of transmitting to the public Wisdom about gods and about man. But tragedy is a message whose particular character once again brings to light differences affecting the very structure of Sophia. While the new thinkers sought a type of wisdom which refers to Nature, tragedy directed itself preferentially to the primitive religious base of Wisdom. And the differences between these two became quite pronounced in the method which they utilized to transmit their content. The new thinkers based themselves on exercise of the

mind; the tragedians, on impression, pathos, It could be said that while the work of the philosophers was the noetic form of Wisdom, tragedy represents the pathetic form of Sophia. Later the noetic wisdom will so invade the soul of the Athenians that their religious base will wind up, even in tragedy itself, relegated to a simple, virtually inoperative survival; this was the work of Euripides.

But there is more. Not, only is the new Wisdom set over against religious W isdom; but within the former, within the noetic [159]

Wisdom, the tekknai, the techniques, the realms of knowledge of which man is discoverer and practitioner in daily life, a new situation will be created with respect to philosophy. The sheer volume of knowledge they encompass make it difficult to sustain the old.

The collision between nous and tekne ,

technique, was felt quite keenly. Up to this point the gods had delivered to man everything but nous, the organ which discovers the destiny and course of events. To be sure the nous had no pretension of supplanting the gods in respect of this latter function; but within a more limited and circumscribed arena, every Athenian-not just the wise man-felt himself endowed with that divine faculty,

{182} even if just for the creation of the modest everyday branches of knowledge constituting the techniques. Nevertheless, the Greeks suddenly felt a type of deification; a dominion up to now priviledged to the gods passed into the hands of man. The matter was more complicated than at first glance it might seem to be. In this regard, compare Aeschylus' Prometheus Bound with Sophocles' Antigone , and it will immediately become clear what sort of new route the emerging technical knowledge will oblige the Greek to embark upon. In Aeschylus technique is presented as a theft from the gods, and therefore as something ultimately coming from them. But for the following generation, in Sophocles, technical knowledge is a creation of man, an invention for which his own nature gives him the capability. And this forces a change in the panorama of Wisdom itself. Not only is there a split between religious Sophia and noetic Sophia, but moreover this latter will travel along new paths. Together with the creations of the great Sophoi, we have the wisdom which consists in discovering and using the physis of

things.

Perhaps the contrast is nowhere more apparent than in the tekhne latrike, or medicine which holds the place of honor due to the quantity of medical knowledge accumulated as well as its development. It is not that traditional knowledge does not occupy a central place in the Corpus Hippocraticum. Quite the contrary. The pseudo-hippocratic treatise About the Number Seven is in fact the exponent of a cosmic interpretation of human nature. In it a rigorous parallelism is established between the structure of the cosmos and that of the human body. For the first time the idea and the expression for microcosmos appears as applied to man, at least in a literal and not purely metaphorical sense. Macrocosmos and [160] microcosmos possess

isonomy, whence the idea of sympathy which will constitute the firm base of medicine and practically all of Greek Wisdom, especially during the epoch of Hellenism. We may note in passing that the historical problem raised by this small point is of quite unsuspected breadth. There is a paralellism, often literal, with Iranian texts in which fragments of the lost Damdat-Nask

are preserved. A thoroughgoing philological examination demonstrates

{183} that the Iranian text predates the Greek. The Greek notion of isonomy owes something, then to the influence of Iran on Greece, probably through Miletus. This is the only fact and convincing document we have dealing with the celebrated problem of the relations between Greece and Asia.

Together with this basic conception, and founded in large measure upon it, several Hippocratic authors reveal the new idea of the mechanism of health and sickness. Thus, for example, there is the treatise About Sacred Epilepsy. Here is where the full thrust of the new problem facing the Greek thinkers reveals itself, and shows as well the ever-increasing distance separating the Greeks from other civilizations, such as the Indian. For Hippocrates epilepsy is not an infirmity any more or less divine than the rest. But this has no bearing on our problem. The decisive point is the general attitude which Hippocrates thus takes toward sickness. He does not doubt that Nature is the work of the gods, but he deems that trying to obtain natural effects by offering sacrifices to them is not devotion but impiety, because it amounts to asking the gods to amend their great work, Nature. Only the study of Nature enables man to create his medical technique. Let us recall how different will be the route upon which the Brahman Indians are about to embark, at about the same time. Not only will sacrifice continue to occupy a central place in their conception of the world, but moreover its force becomes decisive. Sacrifice is something to which the very gods themselves are subject. Whence the substantization and divinization of the force inherent in sacrifice, even to the point of converting it into radical divinity and ultimate structure of the universe. The cosmos is nothing but an enormous sacrifice, and the sacrifices which men offer to their gods are at one and the same time a compendium of and communion with the [161]

physical universe. But while India will reach its metaphysics through the ever richer and more complicated paths of operative knowledge, Greece will dedicate its purely theoretic knowledge to the internal structure of things, {184}

first of Nature and then the common things of everyday life, to which the technical nous will enthusiastically be consecrated.

This everyday world, so rich and fertile, cannot remain outside of philosophy. "Things," in their primary meaning, are not just nature, natural things (physei onta); things are also that with which man occupies himself in life and of which he makes use to satisfy his necessities or to enjoy himself. In this sense, the Greek termed them pragmata and khremata.

And it is these things which pose an urgent problem for philosophy.

But in the work of Parmenides and Heraclitus themselves there is something which is going to permit the new reality to be saved. Wisdom, let us recall, is a knowledge about things which are. The organ by which we reach them, the thinking mind, in turn consists of making us see that things are, in fact, in one or another way. But even when the first difficulties upon which the philosophy of Ephesus and Elea stumbles are resolved, "is" and "being" remain drifting about as a result of this speculation.

I have already observed that for Parmenides and Heraclitus "is" still carries an active meaning stemming from phyein and

gignomai, to be born. Nevertheless, now, thanks to the work of these two titans of thought, the "is" acquires a substantivity of its own, becoming independent of "being born" and taking on a meaning more and more removed from this latter verb. The intellectual process in which this occurs characterizes the labor of the three generations following Empedocles, and it takes place in two perfectly convergent senses.

On the one hand, when speculating about the Ionians' Nature, both Parmenides and Heraclitus understood it, as we saw, as "that which is being," that which is the very force of being. Let us leave aside, for the moment, the negative aspect of the question, i.e. that world disqualified by the Wise man as something which, ultimately, "is" not in the fullest sense. If we direct our attention to the positive aspect, above all to what Parmenides tells us "about that which is," we shall find that this "is," which in Eleatic philosophy still has an active meaning, begins to attract the attention of its successors in a form which will lose its active meaning so as to signify only the conjunction of characteristics [162]

constitutive of "that which" is: something solid, compact, continuous, {185} one, whole, etc. The "is" then refers only to the result and not to the active force conducing to it. Thus "denaturalized," i.e. completely independent of Nature and birth, the "is" leads to the idea of thing. It is known that already in the Indo-European languages, the primary process leading to the formulation of abstract nouns was not an "abstraction" of properties, but rather the substantiation of certain actions of human nature or the human body and psyche. "Scent" is primitively the substantiated act of "to be scenting" (let us not go into greater detail). And with this substantivation, the world turns out to be divided between "things," on one hand, and "events" which happen to things, or actions which they execute. At this point things lose-even semantically-the active sense of the action which they began to substantivate and whose name served to designate them; scent is then a thing. And so I believe that from a merely semantic point of view, this process culminates in the idea of being which Parmenides and Heraclitus introduce. Things are born and die; in between they "are being." The substantivation of this act is the first vague intuition of the idea of being; to eon is the impersonal form of "to be being." But upon being substantivated, this action produces a serious division. On one hand, the "to be being" is converted into "that which is," the entity; on the other, there is the ontological vicissitude of "to come to last in, or to cease" to be, with respect to that which is.

Being loses its active character; it is then the idea of a thing. And physical processes are simple vicissitudes adventitious to things.

But then we have a minor inconvenience, viz. that there are many things. The common things of life leave aside their common character so as to be converted into single, isolated "things"; the khremata will immediately become ta onta ,

entitites. And hence the world in which we all live, and which initially was left as disqualified, again enters into philosophy in a new form, that of the "many things." The idea of thing was born, then (and this is the essential point on which I wish to insist) at the moment {186} in which the "is" completely left aside its active dimension stemming from "to be born," so as to direct itself exclusively to one of several incipient possibilities implied in that verb, which [163] refer to the condition of the object "born" or "engendered."

But on the other hand there is something more. Knowing, we said, was for Parmenides and Heraclitus just knowing what is. This meant that, since nature is "that which is being," so too the mens is a "sense of being" which affirms itself in reality. This "is" was thus, in a certain way, the very substance of the mind and the logos. So, when the "is" became independent of "to be born, " it became independent also of this human reality. Thus "life-less" and "mind-less" it acquires an autonomous rank, the "is" as a copula. Up to now it had not borne any function in philosophy. But now it is going to enter by means of the door opened to it by Parmenides and Heraclitus. Thought, besides being impression and vision, will be affirmation or negation. The support of the "is" will then preferentially be the logos, the logos of everyday life; that which tells what man thinks about life and which served to define it now will in its turn enter into philosophy as "affirmation and "negation."

And the two developments which the "is" undergoes, when it loses the active meaning it had by virtue of its primitive roots in "to be born" and in the thinking mind, converge in a unique way. The "is" of the copula will be understood, first and foremost, as the "is" of things, and conversely. Hence a completely new situation comes about, namely affirmation or negation with respect to things.

Clearly-we hasten to say so-as of this moment there is speculation neither about the idea of a thing nor about affirmations regarding things. But speculation recoils upon "things" and continues to be oriented toward them, inasmuch as they are expressed in an affirmation or negation. This is the genial product of the new spirit.

More concretely, we may first consider the question from the side of things. For a long time philosophers, following Empedocles and Anaxagoras, had maintained-at least in principle-the idea of Nature conceived as the root of things. Properly speaking, only Nature would deserve the title of "being" in the fullest and truest sense. And to be sure none of the things of our everyday world is, {187} ultimately, "thing" in its fullest sense; and precisely on account of not being so, its birth and death cannot be interpreted as a true generation, but rather as a simple composition and decomposition.

[164] And this in turn implies the existence of many other true things. Nature contains "many things," this time in a strict sense, whose combination yields everyday things. Each one of them will be a true thing in the sense of Parmenides. When the Greek applied the idea of thing to the normal world, he saw himself inexorably compelled to keep on disqualifying it, but this time dissolving it into a multiplicity of true things, whose tightly packed conjunction constitutes Nature. Empedocles will call these "true things" the "roots of all," and he supposed them to be four in number. Anaxagoras termed them "seeds," and believed that they were infinite, but without separation, so that in any piece of reality, however small, there is something of everything. A generation later, Democritus will continue regarding them as infinite in number, but he separates them by the void, whose reality is then proclaimed for the first time; this is the idea of the atom. The following generation, with Archytas, will revert more to a type of point-force, which is inextensive but extensible. Plato will label all these things with the

generic name "elements" (stoikheia). Understanding things will be knowing how they are composed of these elements. So we may say that Empedocles and Anaxagoras speak of everyday things as the domination of some roots or seeds over others; Democritus, of combinations of atoms; Archytas, of geometric configurations. In each case, everyday things are characterized by what, since Democritus, has been called 'schema' or 'figure' (skhema, eidos) .

The organ which realizes this interpretation of the universe is the logos, which affirms or denies one thing of another. Provisionally we should assume that each one of the terms of the affirmation is, in turn, a "thing;" being and not being will be being united and separated. Affirming or denying will be no more than uniting or separating with the logos. Thus Empedocles, for example, will say that the birds are mostly fire. The "fire-thing" is, on one hand, the being of the bird; but on the other, it gives us to understand what the bird is. The logos, which primarily {188} meant to say or understand, has thus come to mean what is understood; and therefore fire is, at one and the same time, the being of the bird and its explanation. The Greek will continue calling this explanation "logos." And it is a logos which is of the thing, prior to being of the individual who expresses it. It is, as a Greek would say, the logos of the on, of the entity, and hence something pertaining to the structure of this latter. Thus the world of the [165] logos is born. The idea of a plurality of things leads to the idea of being as explanation,

to the idea of the rationality of things. The way for this idea had already been prepared by the "measure" of Heraclitus, but only now does it fully develop.

Indeed, after reaching this new state, the natural place of true reality will be reason and explanation. And that marvelous combination of explanations, of logoi, which we call "reasoning," will now begin to function. This was first and foremost the work of Zeno; but also to some extent of Parmenides, as is commonly said, though in rudimentary form. For this first archaic form of logic, affirming and denying will be uniting or separating things, from which arise Zeno's celebrated paradoxes. Regardless of their ultimate meaning, it is from this point that any interpretation of them must start. And in this logic we can already recognize the staggering leap which Aristotle will later have to make in order to discover things together with their "affections or accidents," by which he will turn the logos inside out and create the edifice of classical logic.

In the following generations, that of Democritus and that of Archytas, this instrument will yield the first splendid products of the Athenian spirit: mathematics, the theory of music, and astronomy; also, the theory of the temperaments will begin to be codified. Only twice will a symptomatic shuddering pass through the world of the logos, namely when Plato asks if the elements of reason are, in turn, rational, and when Theatetus rationally discovers, in the square root of two, the reality of the irrational. But this matters little.

In the course of these three generations, which closely followed upon one another, there was an enormous outpouring of mental creation.

Things acquired rational structure: being is explanation. The mind was converted into understanding and immersed in the logos; "is" no longer is the object of vision, but of intellection and speech. {189}

Wisdom has ceased to be a vision of being in order to become science; the Wise man will progressively turn his eyes away from Nature so as to fix them on individual things; Nature, with a capital N, will yield to nature, with a small n. Each thing has its own nature. The mission of the Wise man is to describe it. The wise man will henceforth be the scientist. Aristotle, in fact, points [166] out to us that "wise man" is applied to him who has a strict and rigorous knowledge of things (Met. 982al3).

And all of this is the work of that miniscule factor which has slipped into the European mind so as to torture it without respite: the "is."

4. Wisdom as Rhetoric and Culture. As a result of the Persian Wars, more happened than the development of the new branches of knowledge which gave rise to science. Primarily, indeed, the position of the citizen in public life changed, and along with this change a new tekhne was born, a new technical knowledge, politics.

The logos of man is not just the faculty of understanding things; it is also, as we have indicated, that which makes living in society possible. People live in society, in fact, when there are common affairs. And no affair becomes common without giving a certain publicity to the thought of each person. We said in the previous paragraph how each individual thing found its way into philosophy via the logos which enunciated it. Likewise, the logos of each citizen will find its way into philosophy. And via this second dimension of the logos philosophy will journey to unsuspected regions. Such will be the work-in part, at least-of the Sophists, headed by Protagoras. It is not that the work of the Sophists is exclusively or even primarily philosophy; but indisputably it involves a philosophy which is sometimes explicit, and other times implicit.

Of course the Sophists' work, in respect of its philosophical content, is only possible thanks to Parmenides and Heraclitus, however paradoxical that may seem. Let us recall once again how the "is" set itself free from its active meaning, with regard to things as well as to thought. Let us now consider this thought, not insofar as it describes things, but in its public function, in speech. Of what does one speak? Of things. But things making up public life are "affairs." Science as we saw immediately interpreted these pragmata and khremata

as onta ; instruments, {190} utensils, and measures of life were, above all, "things." Now, on the other hand, that which science called "things" pass to a second plane. The first is things in the sense that we occupy ourselves with and make use of them. In this second, wider sense, there are many "things" which are not entitites, e.g. business affairs, and science itself. It is about things thus understood that men speak among themselves. In the citizen's life the hours of the skhole, of idleness or rest from business, will play a key role. And there in the agora ,

[167] in the public square, the citizen, free from his business affairs, dedicates himself to "treating" of his affairs concerning things. And this is the public or political life.

Now, the "is" of conversation is going to be the "is" of things such as they appear in daily life. The logos of conversation is not a simple description, but expresses an affirmation in the face of those of the other participants. The "is' then reflects what makes conversation possible, that to which every affirmation tends and before which every affirmation will bend. When the "is" acquired its own rank in the process of intellection, then there was affirmation and denial of things. When the "is" was thematically introduced into dialogues, it meant rather "what is," i.e. truth. Every affirmation pretends to be true, pretends to feed on the "is" and base itself there. The "is" is common to all, the "society" of living in society. Thanks to it, simple elocution becomes dialogue. One must not forget this connection when interpreting the meaning of what is going to happen; logic, as a theory of truth, was essentially born from dialogue. Reasoning was, above all, discussing.

The "is," as truth, primarily affects speech and thought themselves. Together with the works of his contemporaries Empedocles and Anaxagoras, entitled About Nature, one of the works of Protagoras was called About Truth. To be sure, Parmenides had already spoken of the way of truth. But then it was the name of the road leading to things; here it has become the name of things insofar as they are investigated by man. And this leads by new routes to the problem of the "is," because as long as man does nothing but contemplate things and enuntiate them, {191} he has nothing but things before his eyes. But when he engages in dialogue, that which things are becomes apparent through what another says. That which I immediately have before my eyes, then, is not things, but the thoughts of another. The problems of being are automatically converted into the problems of speech. The explanation of things gives way to my personal explanation, to the point where the primary intuition that something is true comes from something on which all are in agreement.

Now if everyone said the same thing, there would be no problem. But in fact there are problems when men, seeking to live from things, find themselves in disagreement. In principle, conversation will serve to put them into agreement. And here we have the basic fact from which Protagoras will begin. The "is" [168]

only makes living in society possible by conserving what each person says. From this two consequences ensue.

First, discord manifests that the "is," as principle of dialogue and foundation of societal living, means the "way of viewing things." Being means "seeing." To each person-this is the meaning of dialogue-things appear in a certain way. But this is not any sort of subjectivism; on the contrary, it means that one cannot speak of what things are or are not, except insofar as men are referred to them. This reference is essential to the everyday things of life and what they constitute as such. What happens is simply that things "appear" before man. For these men, the being of the everyday things of life means "appearing." Something which did not appear before anything or anybody would not be an object of life. The criterion of being and not-being of things as khremata, as common things, is an appearing before men. This is the celebrated phrase of Protagoras. In it he proclaims something trivial and unobjectionable: man's life is the touchstone of the being of things we deal with in life.

The "is" of things thus understood will immediately come up against the being of things in the other sense, as existing entitites in Nature. Then, Protagoras is going to try to act like a Wise man of antiquity. He will want to "scientifically" ground the things of life. Taken as things existing in {192}

Nature, the affirmation of Protagoras leads to making a relation of the "is," a pros ti, as Sextus Empiricus would say when explaining the doctrine of the Sophist from Abdera. The "physical" reality of things is no more than a relation. Nothing is anything in itself; only by virtue of its relations with other things. And in this system of relations there is one which is decisive for men, that of "appearing." Things appear before man, they seem to man to be in a certain way. Being as a relation becomes patent in knowledge as opinion, as

doxa . This is not subjectivism or relativism, but a relationism.

And there is another consequence as serious as the first. Opinions are not taken as verbal declarations, but as affirmations which pretend to be true, and which emerge, therefore, from the being of things. At this point it comes to mind that if there are diverse opinions, it is because there is a diversity in each thing. More concretely, to each opinion-in principle, at least-there corresponds another diametrically opposite, which also thrives on explanations drawn from things, because things appear oppositely to my neighbor. The legein, the speech of the political animal, is [169]

subject to an antilegein, to a contra-speech or contradiction. And as both are drawn from the same thing, the only possible conclusion is that the relation constituting the thing's being is, in itself, anti-logical or self-contradictory. Whence the inexorable necessity to discuss. The discussion is essentially contradictory, because being is constitutively anti-logical. Such is the philosophy of Protagoras. We are now far removed from the rationality of being which the science of this contemporaries discovered. Everything is disputable, because nothing has a firm consistency; being is inconsistent. Here we have the inconsistency of being face to face with its consistency. And, by a strange paradox, this mode of existing in the polis, in the city, will try to find scientific foundations. The influence of medicine, on this point, has been decisive. One can affirm, virtually without fear of erring, that while physics and mathematics bore the Greeks to the world of reason, medicine was the great argument for the world of the sophists. True, as we saw Anaxagoras affirmed that there is something of everything in each thing. Archytas and the mathematicians, though admitting the reationality of things, also considered them to be in perpetual {193} geometric movement. But the decisive science for the Sophists' point of view was medicine. The importance of health and sickness, not just for perceiving things, but even for thinking about them, is such that thought once again tended to become a mode of perception. Appearing and seeming took on more and more the

acceptation of "sensing". And "being" will end up meaning "being sensed." The inconsistency of being will terminate in a theory of knowledge as sensible impression. And the sophists will try to translate the thesis of Parmenides and Heraclitus into the new philosophy.

But let us return to situate "opinion" in the general framework of public life, only in the function of which does the entire development have meaning. Provisionally every opinion has a certain character of firmness; otherwise it would be a fleeting impression without interest. But it does not receive that firmness from things, which indeed lack it. The firmness of an opinion stems only from him who professes it. Whence, if life requires firm [170] opinions, it will be necessary to educate man. Wisdom is not yet a science, it is simply something placed at the service of the education (paideia)

of his physis . And as a result, it goes beyond the sphere of the purely intellectual; it does not exclude knowledge, but puts it at the service of the formation of man. Of which man? Not of man in the abstract, but the citizen. What formation? Political. Feigning ignorance of truth, the sophists believed they had formed the new men of Greece. How?

When the citizens speak about their affairs, it is to acquire convictions. Everything else is directed to this point. Thus, just as reasoning is what leads to the scientific logos, antilogy leads directly to the technique of persuasion, which is something like the logic of opinion. Just as being is appearing, persuading will be causing one opinion to appear stronger than another. And the desired goal will be reached when the adversary begins to vacillate {194} or is convinced. Discourse will be substituted for reasoning; we now have Rhetoric.

From this moment Wisdom, as civic education, crystallizes on the intellectual side into rhetoric.

But rhetoric requires materials, what we would call ideas. Ideas, through their social dimension, acquire the character of everyday things, something destined to be manipulated rather than understood, in the double form in which ideas can be manipulated, viz. apprehended and taught, converted into mathema . Wisdom as rhetoric leads to Wisdom as instruction. Education consists in cultivating man and the ideas in him through instruction. With this, the sophist forms cultured men, full of ideas and capable of utilizing them to create opinions endowed with public consistency. The same Greek word designating opinion serves also to designate fame. Rhetoric and Culture: here we have the Wisdom of Athenian public life.

* * *

Let us summarize: Wisdom, which in its origins was a knowledge of the ultimate things of life and the world-very close, therefore, to religion-became on the coasts of Asia Minor a discovery or possession of the truth about Nature. With Parmenides and Heraclitus, this truth became a vision of what [171]

things are. The vision of being became concrete, on one hand, in rational science; on the other, in the rhetoric and culture of Athenian civic life. Such was the situation in which Socrates found the world, a situation whose dynamic ingredients are essential to him and which are going to constitute the point of departure of his activity.

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IV

SOCRATES:

THE TESTIMONY OF XENOPHON AND ARISTOTLE

In the opening lines of his Memorabilia, Xenophon tells us the following:

He did not even discuss that topic so favoured by other talkers, "the Nature of the Universe": and avoided speculation on the so-called "Cosmos" of the Professors, how it works, and on the laws that govern the phenomena of the heavens: indeed he would argue that to trouble one's mind with such problems is sheer folly. In the first place, he would inquire, did these thinkers suppose that their knowledge of human affairs was so complete that they must seek these new fields for the exercise of their brains; or that it was their duty to neglect human affairs and consider only things divine? Moreover, he marveled at their blindness in not seeing that man cannot solve these riddles; since even the most conceited talkers on these problems did not agree in their theories, but behaved to one another like madmen. As some madmen have no fear of danger and others are afraid where there is nothing to be afraid of, as some will do or say anything in a crowd with no sense of shame, while others shrink even from going abroad among men, some respect neither temple nor altar nor any other sacred thing, others worship stocks and stones and beasts, so is it, he held, with those who worry with "Universal Nature." Some hold that What is is one, others that it is infinite in number: some that all things are in perpetual motion, others that nothing can ever be moved at any time: {196}

some that all life is birth and decay, others that nothing can ever be born or ever die. Nor were those the only questions he asked about such theorists. Students of human nature, he said, think that they will apply their knowledge in due course for the good of themselves and any others they choose. Do those who pry into heavenly phenomena imagine that, once they have discovered the laws by which these are produced, they will create at their will winds, waters, seasons and such things to their need? Or have they no such expectation, and are they satisfied with knowing the causes of these various phenomena?

Such, then, was his criticism of those who meddle with these matters. His own conversation was ever of human things. The problems he discussed were, What is godly, what is ungodly; what is beautiful, what is ugly; what is just, what is unjust; what is prudence, what is madness; what is courage, what is cowardice; what is a state, [173] what is a statesman; what is government, and what is a governor; these and others like them, of which the knowledge made a "gentleman," in his estimation, while ignorance should involve the reproach of "slavishness." [From the translation of E.C. Marchant, Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965. Reprinted by permission.]

This is, of course, not the only text passage; but it is, certainly, one of the most important, because in the compass of a few lines we see grouped together the majority of the terms which have been appearing in our exposition. Hence the passage is suitable, as are few others, for placing the work of Socrates in perspective.

Let us also add the testimony of Aristotle according to whom "Socrates ... was busying himself about ethical matters and neglecting the world of nature as a whole but seeking the universal in these ethical matters, and fixed thought for the first time on definitions." (Met . 987bl).

The image of Socrates described for us in Plato's Apology is all too well known: the just man who prefers to accept the law, even though it requires his life.

One thing is thus clear: Socrates assumes a certain attitude toward the Wisdom of his time, and on this basis begins his own work.

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V

SOCRATES:

HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD THE WISDOM OF HIS TIME

Let us first consider the attitude of Socrates toward the Wisdom of his time.

The world in which Socrates lived had witnessed a fundamental experience of man that, insofar as it touches upon our question, may be summarized in three points: (1) the constitution of the city-state providing each person, with his own opinions, access to public life, (2) the crisis of traditional knowledge; and (3) the development of new branches of knowledge. The participation of the citizen in public life gives rise to the flowering of rhetoric and the ideal of the cultivated man. In this culture recourse was also made to the great exemplars of traditional knowledge: Anaximander, Parmenides, Heraclitus, etc., not for the truth they could impart, but rather for their public renown. Hence knowledge ceased to be Wisdom and became something manipulable, in topos,

topics, utilized for some appropriate benefit or for the creation of one's personal renown via polemic. Zeal and insolence have an identical root: the topic. On the other hand, the new branches of knowledge complacently opposed themselves to classical forms of wisdom. For while the latter were something divine, the tekhnai

were born, according tp the myth of Promethius, on the occasion of a theft from the gods. With these teknai men acquired the wisdom of life. They are knowledge obtained in the course of life and are available to all through instruction; they are

mathemata.

This experience is found inscribed in a special situation, that of public life. And the experience thus receives its special character, which is much more essential to Socrates than its content. All of it {198} is an experience of subjects and things dealing with life, and above all public affairs. Therein is where it acquires its proper scope and meaning.

In fact, not only that which was known, "ideas," was public property, but knowledge itself became so too. Knowledge degenerated into conversation, dialogue into disputation. In disputation, things appear subject to antinomy, and it is therein where the antilogical character of the "is" of things stands [175]

revealed, i.e. where they lose all their transcendence and gravity. From the "is" the great forms of wisdom were born, which became converted into topics at the very moment of losing their point of support in the consistency of the " is. " And if the " is " is antilogical, everything is true in its own way, in the mode of each individual thing. And in this evaporation of the "is," man himself disappears. Man's being is converted into a simple posture. Let us say this same thing differently: nothing has importance for the sophist, and therefore nothing matters to him except his own opinions; and this not because they are important, but because other people

give them importance; not because he takes them seriously, but because others do so. Consequently Aristotle said that sophistry was not Wisdom, but the appearance of Wisdom. In other words, it was intellectual frivolity. Hence, if indeed sophistry ended up disqualified by virtue of its content, it nevertheless posed a problem for philosophy, the problem of the existence of the sophist. Sophistry, like philosophy, did not attract Socrates' attention, nor that of Plato, nor that of Aristotle, except for the sensualist interpretation of being and science, to which Protagoras at some moments alluded. But the sophist, yes. Plato's Sophist

and Aristotle's polemic are in fact nothing other than the metaphysics of frivolity.

To this situation of Sophistry corresponds that of Socrates. Socrates is situated in a certain way before this type of existence, and on that in turn the content of his own existence will depend.

Socrates has not taken the content of the intellectual experience of his contemporaries and isolated it from the situation out of which it emerged. Quite the contrary; and it is necessary to emphasize this in order to understand the full scope of Socrates' attitude toward the content of the understanding.

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Faced with the miasma of publicity, Socrates' first action was to withdraw from public life. he realized that he was living in a time when the best in man could only be saved by retiring to a private life. And this attitude was anything but an elegant or aloof posture. Protagoras had a modicum of intellectual substance, but the two generations of sophists following him did nothing-in terms of the understanding-but converse and pronounce discourses of addle beauty, quite distinct from true dialogue and discussion. For this, indeed, one needs things. The seriousness of dialogue and the arduousness of discussion are only possible through the substance of things. When being is dissolved [176]

in pure antilogic, and converted totally into pure insubstantiality, man sees himself abandoned to the caprices of frivolity. And what is it that caused the reality and gravity of the "is" to be lost to these men? Quite simply, the loss of that very thing which made it patent before the eyes of the great thinkers: the thinking mind. When speech makes itself independent of thinking, and this latter ceases to gravitate wholly around the center of things, the logos is left free and unfettered. Logos has, in fact, two dimensions, private and public. Thought, on the other hand, only has one, private. The only thing we can do is express thought in the logos. And this is the constitutive risk involved with all expression, viz. ceasing to express thoughts, only to be a pure talking as if one were thinking. When this situation arrives, man can do no more than be silent and return to thought. The retreat of Socrates is not a simply posture like the posture of the sophists; it is the meaning of his life itself, determined, in turn, by the meaning of his being. Consequently it is an essentially philosophical attitude.

Socrates' attitude toward traditional Wisdom is going to be conditioned by this position in which he has situated himself. Provisionally we may say that Socrates judges it from the point of view of its efficacy in life, such as it pretends to be expressed in the men with whom he lives. That appeal to the one or the many, to the finite or the infinite, to rest or movement, is absolutely insufficient to lay the foundations for daily life. This is his point of departure, none other. And for proof, in the passage {200}

from Xenophon previously quoted, Socrates presents as a decisive argument the fact that after knowing the structure of the cosmos, we cannot manipulate it to suit our needs anyway. Socrates, then, completely prescinds for the moment from what there may be of truth or falsity in these speculations; what interests him is to underline their futility as means for life. It is true that previously he had called those who occupied themselves with Nature "demented. " But this is another aspect of the question, intimately linked with the former, to which we shall return later. That Wisdom which leads to antilogic-which is what is most essential for Socrates-clearly reveals that the wise men are in this respect de-mented; they lack mens, nous. Their Wisdom has completely abandoned the noein so as to hurl itself into talking alone, into the legein.

And this which obliges him to withdraw is likewise what determines his attitude. Wisdom was born from the thinking mind. [177]

But when this mind was lost, Wisdom ceased to be. Knowledge is now no longer the product of an intellectual life, but a simple recipe of ideas. For this reason Socrates disposes of it. But clearly that which leads him to dispose of it is, at the same time, the only way of saving it. Socratic irony is the expression of the noetic structure which is going to save Wisdom.

And we have the proof that this is his attitude in that we are told nothing about the physical discussions of Democritus, nor about the incipient Athenian mathematics. Naturally. For us, who have reaped the magnificent legacy of Greek mechanics, astronomy, medicine, and mathematics, it seems that this is what Hellenic science was. But let us recall that all this science began to expand and acquire its enormous volume precisely in the generation immediately following Socrates. In Plato's Academy we are told that people were so impressed by the

quantity of new knowledge they reckoned more than a lifetime would be required to master it all. And Democritus, a contemporary of Socrates, had the reputation of being the last true encyclopedist of knowledge. It is evident, then, that those branches of knowledge-the only ones which for we Europeans are important-were very rudimentary and miniscule in {201} Socrates' time, and were completely overshadowed by the great monuments of traditional knowledge: Parmenides, Heraclitus, even Empedocles and Anaxagoras. When one speaks of Socrates' negative attitude toward science, it will be necessary to avoid the mistake of including therein what we are accustomed to call Greek science. This is especially true when we consider that many of these sciences were cultivated, and at times greatly advanced, by persons who belonged to schools of Socratic inspiration. For the rest, to pretend that Socrates only had to dedicate himself to the sciences in order to not deprecate them is simply not a reasonable position.

The only thing which might be added, with regard to these new branches of knowledge, is what we have already seen with regard to classical wisdom. Could it be that these new scientists were also losing their minds? This is the great risk of science, and most likely these apprehensions were not foreign to Socrates' soul.

To summarize, Socrates' attitude before the intellectual world of his epoch is, above all, the negation of its posture, viz. public life. Socrates retires to his house, and in that withdrawal recovers his nous and leaves traditional Wisdom in abeyance. The "is" returns to recover its importance and seriousness. Things, then, [178] regain consistency; they again offer resistance and pose authentic problems. Together with this, man himself acquires gravity. What he does and doesn't do and how he does it are always linked to something prior to himself: what he and things "are." The reapparition of the "is" constitutes the restoration of real Wisdom.

But, of what Wisdom? For nothing returns to be exactly like it was. This is the second question: Socrates' positive action.

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VI

SOCRATES: WISDOM AS ETHICS

Whatever may have been Socrates' positive contribution in the realm of philosophy, it was already predetermined by the form in which he was situated. Was he or was he not an intellectual? A unique answer cannot be given to this question. For us, i.e. for the generations who followed him, yes. For his epoch, and probably for himself too-we all, more or less, judge ourselves based on our own world-no.

For this epoch, no, because Socrates did not dedicate himself to any task then deemed intellectual. He did not occupy himself with cosmology, nor did he debate the traditional problems of philosophy. He was not, to be sure, the inventor of the concept and the definition. The Aristotelian expressions need not be taken in rigorously technical sense they since have had. In reality, Aristotle limited himself to saying that Socrates sought what things are in themselves, not in virtue of their circumstances, and that he tried to pay close attention to the meanings of words so as not to let himself be swept away by the brilliance of the discourses. Neither is it very probable that he arrived at great ethical discoveries; at least, it is not clear to us that he occupied himself with anything more than personal and public virtue in their various dimensions. How could he have been taken for an intellectual? How could he have taken himself for one? The intellectual of his epoch was an Anaxagoras, an Empedocles, a Zeno, a Protagoras, perhaps. Socrates was none of this, nor did he wish to be part of it. He wanted rather not to be part of it.

Was he then simply a just man, a man of perfect moral character? We do not know with scientific certainty what moral theory he professed, nor even {204} the details of his life. On the other hand, politics has contributed at times, with its errors, to creating great historical figures in the imagination of citizens. But in any case his indisputable moral elevation alone would not have justified his philosophical influence. And this has been decisive. All the critical history of the world would be incapable of erasing this fact, whose physiognomy might be confused but whose [180] content is gravitating there imperturbably.

Let us say it again. Socrates has not created science; he has created a new type of intellectual life, of Wisdom. His disciples have reaped the fruit of that new life. And as happened to Parmenides and Heraclitus in their time, so it happens to Socrates: he awakens to a new life, and that life is understood, at the beginning, in the light of the old. Therefore to some, Socrates was another sophist; to others, a good man. To his offspring he was an intellectual. In reality, he simply inaugurated a new type of Sophia, nothing more, but nothing less.

Up to now we have not seen this Wisdom except in a negative way, viz. Socrates' withdrawal before the intellectuality of the day, his forceful rejection of it. Socrates remains aloof from public life, withdrawn to his private existence. He abandons rhetoric so as to take being and thought seriously. But it would be an error to suppose that this represented a complete state of isolation. Socrates was not a solitary thinker. The fact that one's life has private aspects does not mean that it is isolated. There is, on the contrary, the danger that the recluse will find, in his isolated solitude, a kind of notoriety, and therefore of publicity. That some of his disciples thus misunderstood his attitude is well known. We are not speaking of that, nor about what solitude was for Descartes, for example. The solus

recedo

of Descartes, that remaining alone with oneself and one's thought, is quite far removed from Socrates, for the simple reason that there has never been any Greek who has taken this mental attitude. Where Socrates retires is to his house, to a life similar to that of anyone else, without involving himself in the novelties of any progressive conception of life, such as was done by the Athenian elite. But neither does he permit himself to be impressed {205}

by the mere power of the past. He has his friends, and talks with them. For any good Greek, talking was as closely united with thinking as praying with reciting for a Semite. The praying (oratio) of a Semite is just that, praying, something in which one's os, one's mouth, participates. For a Greek, there is no speaking isolated from thinking; the logos is one and the other at the same time. He always understood thought as a silent dialogue of the soul with itself, and dialogue with others as a sonorous thinking. Socrates is a good Hellene; he thinks while talking and talks while thinking. Indeed, from him has come dialogue as a mode of thought.

But, how does Socrates live? At least, how does he understand

[181] that he should live? This is the most important question.

Provisionally, as we have already seen, it is with nous, with mind. Aristotle tells us that he exercised his thought, his dianoia.

Nevertheless, there is something confused here. Traditional philosophy had arisen from the thinking mind, and nourished itself therein, both in the soul of the philosopher as well as in his expression by means of the logos. Nevertheless, as we have already noted, at what was perhaps the most decisive moment of pre-Socratic philosophy, that mind applies itself to nature, to what was called "the divine," leaving aside the everyday world, its things, men, and its most important changes; indeed, leaving it aside not just in any way, or by a simple preterition, but in a much more serious way, viz. disqualifying it as doxa, casting it out of the world of being, as

something which pretends to be, but in reality is not. And therefore Socrates called these philosophers "demented." There was a vigorous reaction on the part of the generations immediately following the Persian wars, as we saw; but what triumphs in the order of the understanding is what will later lead to the rational science of natural things. Its first elaborators, Empedocles and Anaxagoras, seem too much like Parmenides and Heraclitus. On the other hand, those in whom science will fully take root had scarcely been born in the time of Socrates. He could not, therefore, preoccupy himself excessively with Empedocles, Anaxagoras, and the others, as scientists, because they were little more than germinal. In respect to their affinity with classical wisdom, they were incapable, as it was, of satisfactorily

{206} arriving at the things of everyday life. Only Protagoras had tried to start from things, not as natural things, as onta, but as everyday things, khremata. But we have already seen where he wound up.

Now on this point, Socrates is a typical representative of his generation, which explains why he will be taken for a sophist. He tried to think and speak about things such as they are immediately present in daily life, but not as they are present in public life, in full doxa, but on the contrary, taking them in themselves, i.e. in what they truly are, independently of circumstances. Socrates has situated himself, temporarily, in private life. Public life will come later. Only a good citizen can be a good politician. Socrates' mind will apply itself, then, to the everyday things of life, without rhetoric, but with mind. Up until Socrates, the mind only applied itself to "the divine," to Nature, to the Cosmos or to the rational [182]

investigation of the nature of things. Now it is going to concentrate, by a singular paradox, on the modest things of everyday life. And here we come upon Socrates' radical innovation. The serious defect of traditional philosophy, for Socrates, was its disdain of daily life, the disqualification of it as an object of wisdom, only to later pretend to control it with considerations drawn from the clouds and the stars. Socrates meditates on these everyday things and on what man does with them in his life. He also

meditates on the tekhnai. But these tekhnai on which he meditates are not just those constituting scientific knowledge, but every "savior faire" of life: occupations, such as that of the carpenter, physician, etc.; in short, the conjunction of abilities which man acquires in his dealings with things. This is the Greek concept of arete, virtue, whose primary meaning has not the least moral overtone. The "is" once again enters philosophy; not the "is" of nature, but the "is" of these things which are within the grasp of man and on which his life depends. I believe that Xenophon's text is sufficiently explicit on this point.

Where one most clearly perceives Socrates' intent is in his employment of the famous "know thyself." This {207}

phrase of the Delphic oracle meant that man should not attribute divine prerogatives to himself, but rather must learn to live modestly in his purely human condition. Socrates brings to this apothegm a new meaning. It no longer refers to not being God, but to each individual with his nous scrutinizing the voice which tells what virtue "is."

Let us immediately dispose of a false interpretation. That Socrates meditates on the things of everyday life does not mean that he meditates only on man and his actions. Aristotle's testimony has commonly been taken in this sense. But the Greek word ethos

has an infinitely broader meaning than that which today we give to the word "ethics." Ethics encompasses above all the dispositions of man in life, his character, customs, and naturally, his morals. In fact, it could be translated as "mode" or "form" of life, in the deepest sense of the word in contrast to a simple "manner." So Socrates adopts a new mode of life, meditation on what the things of life are. And with this, the "ethical" is not primarily centered in that about which one meditates, but in the very fact of living and meditating. The things of life are not man, but they are the things which are given in life [183]

and upon which it depends. To cause the life of man to depend upon a meditation on them is not to meditate on the moral as opposed to the natural; it is, simply, to make meditation the supreme

ethos. In other words, Socratic wisdom does not recoil

upon the ethical, but rather is, in itself, ethics. That he preferentially applied his meditation to civic virtues is of secondary importance. The essential point is that the intellectual ceased to be a vagabond living among the stars, so as to become a wise man. Wisdom as ethics is the work of Socrates. At bottom, it is a new intellectual life.

This ethics of meditation on things of everyday life inexorably led to a specific intellection of them. In traditional philosophy, as we have already seen, nature is that from which everything emerges; and when Wisdom adopted the form of rational science, things presented themselves to the mind with their own proper

physis. "Nature" gave way to "the nature"

{208} of each thing. For the time being Socrates is far removed from this. By centering his mind and meditation on things such as they are present in life, with the objective of making life depend on what they are in themselves, the "are," the einai, acquires a new meaning. It is therefore nothing which alludes to their nature. This does not mean that Socrates had discovered the concept. That must wait until Plato and Aristotle. But the Aristotelian "concept" is no more than the theory of the quid, of the nature of each thing, of its ti.

That which Socrates' mind achieves, when concentrating on everyday things, is the vision of the "what" of things in everyday life. Wisdom as ethics has thus led to something decisive in the order of the understanding of things; so decisive, that it will be the root of all new philosophy and what will permit it to again find the themes of traditional Wisdom, momentarily in abeyance, albeit by other routes.

But let us not get ahead of ourselves.

First, a few words about how the Socratic meditation concerning the "what" of things developed. In the first place, it was through thinking and speaking with friends. But now the conversation is no longer disputation. Socrates does not seek to defend opinions already formed, because there are none to defend. Therefore he cannot even expound them. Socrates seeks to speak of things and from things. Conversation ceases to be disputation so as to become dialogue, serenely and peacefully revolving around things in order to know them completely. This is rather a speech in [184] which man makes things talk; it is almost that things themselves will speak in us. Socrates surely recalled that for Parmenides and Heraclitus, this unfailing knowledge about things sprouts from something which man carries in himself and which seemed part divine to them, viz, nous

and logos . Socrates wishes to erase any inordinate allusion to a superhuman knowledge. His Wisdom will not be divine at all, theion; he will content himself with referring to it modestly as daimonion.

And in order to reach this goal, Socrates will place in abeyance the security with which man bases himself on the everyday things of life. He makes it clear that in daily life man does not know what he has in his hands; what makes life be everyday life is just that ignorance. {209} To recognize it is already to situate oneself in the life of Wisdom. Hence things, and with them life itself, end up converted into problems. This is the knowledge of not knowing, of "not knowing about what one treats." Only at this price does man conquer a new type of security. When we speak with a sick man, we consider his suffering, and indeed sympathize with his misfortune. But if we prescind from this human relation with him, i.e. if we ignore this man-to-man relation, which acquires its fullness in the integrity of the circumstances and the situations in which it occurs, then the sick man disappears from our sight and we are left face to face with his sickness. And the sickness is no longer an object of compassion or suffering; it is simply a conjunction of properties that the sick man has, a "what." And this transfer of our gaze from the sick man to his sickness, which momentarily leaves the former aside, paradoxically becomes a new,

firmer, and surer way of "dealing with the sick man." From here the universality of Aristotelian definition will arise, along with that singular turning from the "what" to the "why." Socrates himself did not even dimly perceive it; but this result could only be achieved based on Socratic reflection.

By this route, by this "irony," holding traditional Wisdom in abeyance and basing it on something firmer and more accessible, on the things of everyday life, Socrates saved, in principle, the truth of that Wisdom. And we say "in principle," because the full development of Sophia, as a mode of knowing, will be the work of Plato and Aristotle.

Was Socrates a philosopher? If by "philosopher" we understand someone who has a philosophy, no. But he was something more. He was, in fact, a philosophic existence, an [185]

existence installed in a philosophic ethos which, in a world asphyxiated by public life, opens up an intellectual and philosophical life before a group of friends, basing it on new foundations and setting it in motion in a new direction, perhaps without knowing too much about where it was going. Socratic reflection was the constitution of a philosophy. There were a limited number of possibilities which Athenian life offered to Socrates, viz. throwing oneself into public life as {210}

a virtuoso of work and thought à la Protagoras and his disciples; occupying oneself with new branches of knowledge, from which later the sciences will spring; submerging oneself in the amorphous mass of citizenry absorbed by the routine and urgent matters of day-to-day life; or returning to ordinary life, not so as to let oneself be dragged along by it, but so as to direct it by a meditation founded upon what the things of life "are." Socrates resolutely chose the last. That decision made the existence of philosophy possible.

A less important matter is what Socrates occupied himself with, and still less important is the personal manner in which he lived. The majority of his disciples took his attitude, his ethos,

as a tropos, as a simple style. They sought, with more or less intellectual baggage-and nothing more than baggage- to

imitate Socrates. For him, that was surely the keenest irony of his life. The minor Socratic schools were born from this imitation.

A few wanted something more; they sought to adopt his own ethos,

to Socratically bring themselves closer to things and Socratically live the problems thereby posed to the understanding. The things repaid them, delivering a new Sophia. It was the philo-sophia of the Academy and the Lyceum.

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VII

CONCLUSION:

PLATO AND ARISTOTLE, DISCIPLES OF SOCRATES

In what sense do Plato and Aristotle continue Socrates' work? We here return to the beginning of these notes.

At bottom, it is wholly secondary to investigate the chain of problems and concepts which Plato received from Socrates and Aristotle from Plato. Moreover, it is even nonsense to focus on their intellectual discipleship this way. When at the death of Plato Speusippus was placed at the head of the Academy on account of links of blood

and scholarly orthodoxy, Aristotle retired to Asia Minor because he understood that intellectual discipleship is not the property of a sect or a family.

Plato was Socratic in a much deeper sense, in the same sense that Aristotle was. Both started from the same root, from a reflection on everyday things, with the object of knowing what man has in his hands and what he should be in his life. This makes Plato and Aristotle the great Socratics. But, moreover, the development of that original reflection led them to reconquer rational knowledge and politics, basing them for the first time firmly on reflection about the logos of life. Finally, both ended by molding their

ethos into a new interpretation of the ultimate problems of the universe, following the thread of this experience of man and encountering once again the great problems of classical wisdom; here we arrive at philo-sophia. These three stages-the initial experience of things, rational knowledge of them, and philosophy-are the three states into which a simple Socratic reflection matures. It is true that in this process Plato and Aristotle follow diverging paths, {212} as we shall see. But it is much more important to see that they are two vectors which start from the same Socratic center, and to inscribe these divergences in the common process of maturation of a single Socratic reflection.

1. Point of departure: the initial experience of things. Plato and Aristotle both start from a reflection about things and subjects pertaining to life.

It furnishes them with the initial idea of what a thing is, and

[187] hence with a vision of nature. The Socratic reflection has carried them along a quite different-and firmer-route to the discovery of nature, to the problem of the Ionians.

If man lived abandoned to the present instant of time, life would be radically inconsistent; each action would start from scratch; everything would be temporary; life would have a bland structure. But in the higher animals there is something more: memory furnishes them with a first schema or framework, thanks to which they not only produce actions, but also have a behavior, an elemental bios. However in man there is still more. His behavior is determined in turn by a knowing what he does (tekhne) .

This gives human life its peculiar consistency and makes it a bios in the strict sense.

For Plato, the proper part of savior faire is knowing in "what" that which one does consists. The first experience which Plato encounters, in dealing with ordinary things, is their "what," their ti . Possessing it, man knows what he has in his hands, and can then make things good (kalos) .

Thus the "what" is intimately linked with and oriented toward doing good, to agathon. What is this "what"? It is no longer what traditional science used to inquire about, for example the diverse proportions in which the four elements entered into each things. It is sometimes more modest and within the reach of all, acquired through Socratic reflection. From afar I see a shape, and I believe it is a man. I approach, and see that it is a small tree. What was believed in the first case and seen in the second is the conjunction of characteristics or traits typical of each thing and what distinguish it from all the rest. Thus, the Athenian is distinguished from the Persian by his "type"; the man who governs from the man of business by the "type" of activities to which each is dedicated. {213}

To this outline of characteristics the word eidos, figure, was given, in its broadest sense. Plato realized that the eyes are not sufficient to see it. Therefore animals do not know what things are, just as the layman in a factory does not see the machine, only wheels and iron. Only one who understands it sees the machine, i.e. he who knows how to operate it. Figure is, in this sense, something [188] which is seen in an intelligent mental vision; therefore Plato called it "Idea." The "what" of things is Idea. The power of being is the power of consisting; being is

consisting, and that in which things consist is the Idea.

Therefore Plato's thought shifts from things toward that in which they consist, toward the Idea. Things have consistency in it, but the Idea is consistent. Whence it is taken as a second thing together with the first, with the result that the things about which we think are not, strictly speaking, the same as those with which we live.

Aristotle was, perhaps, more radically Socratic. In savior faire Plato comprehended "what" things are, and the "what" was for him an experience of their consistency.

On the other hand, doing itself carried Aristotle to an experience of things themselves. And this is so because even though having to make them is a simple human condition, how to make them no longer depends only on making itself, but on the true nature of the things made. Therefore it is an experience of what things are by themselves. If knowing were independent of making, we would never have left Plato: being would be consistency.

But, for Aristotle, knowing and making are two dimensions of a unique phenomenon: tekhne . Therefore in it being as reality is manifest. And this bears Aristotle along a different course.

What, in fact, is reality? If we are making something, for example a chair, it will be real when completed, when {214}

it is at the point of leaving the workshop. Having reality is, then, in the first place, having substantivity ,

sistere extra causas, existing. And what is this substantive reality? The wood with which I make the chair is not a chair except when it completely serves the function, e.g. for sitting. Reality is, in this sense, to be acting as such, actuality .

But actuality of what? Of all the characteristics of a chair, of its figure, its eidos. And when this figure is actual in the wood, the wood acquires the substantivity of the chair. The actuality of the figure or form is the foundation of substantivity. This implication between the two meanings of reality, between

actuality and substantivity, obvious to Aristotle and so serious in its repercussions, encloses the first moment of his experience of things. And this is what has imperturbably fixed the meaning of being for the entire history of European thought.

Figure is not then primarily consistency. Plato forgot that that

[189] in which things consist is, above all, that which they are. In what sense? In a certain way, the reality of the chair is the wood. But, strictly speaking, wood is only material for its fabrication, something "destined to be," something "of which" the chair is going to be made. It has neither substantivity nor actuality; i.e. has no reality other than that "to" and "of" to which it is destined. In itself it is nothing but a pure disposability, possibility. Its reality proceeds from the other term. Material and form are not two things, either united or separated; they are not two elements, but two principles, arkhai, of one single thing. Reality will then be substantization and actualization of possibilities; form is configuration; and real things, emergences from its internal principles, ousiai, substances. The things about which we think are the same as those with which we live. The stability of life is based on the substance of things. The rest is pure plausibility. For the first time the everyday things of life have completely entered into philosophy. In a word, for Aristotle being is not consisting , but subsisting.

Both experiences of things have been acquired through a reflection on the usual treatment of them; the eidos of hammer, what the hammer is, is perceived in nailing; that of the chair, in sitting. {215} The internal nature of reality becomes transparent by meditating on its use. It is then that the pragmata, things, in the sense of things of everyday life, acquire the rank of natural things, onta . Because if what we make is artificial, the making itself is

natural; it is Nature discovered in us.

According to how savoir faire is understood, just so will things and Nature be understood, too.

In savoir faire , Plato sees only "what," and therefore the craftsman who shapes his material with his eyes fixed on the idea which he wishes to realize. This leads him to an interpretation of Nature which is more obvious, yet more complete than that of the Ionians, thanks to a discovery which can only be compared to that of Parmenides and Heraclitus. In the birth of a thing, not only does a being come to life, but moreover this being is of the same type as its progenitors: man, lion, bird, etc. The generative impulse gathers its power in the life of the progenitors, but with "eyes on" a determinate species. In the power for being there is a sort of presence of the species. Therefore coming to life is not just birth, phyein , but

generation, gignesthai, in the strict sense of the word, something in virtue of which the thing born has genealogy. The [190]

idea not only is consistent, but is genus, genos, of things. Nature bears in its power an Idea, and always has its sight fixed there. The power of the genus is of a kind completely different from that of the simple birth impulse, but no less real. Both are dimensions of a single force which, for this reason, Plato called eros, love, something which goes outside itself to produce a determinate species. In place of the Ionian physiology,

we will have a genealogy. Once produced, each thing consists in a series of operations realized "with a view" to the idea type, which is over all.

For Aristotle, on the other hand, tekhne is a making in which the craftsman takes the ideas from himself. Nature carries an idea, but not like something external on which it has placed its "sights," but rather as an internal principle. Generation is autoconformation, something which leads, not outside of oneself, but to a realization of oneself, morphogenesis. Instead of physiology, we have not genealogy but morphology. Once produced, the nature of each thing consists in that principle internal to it from which its own actions emerge; {216}

form is not only the principle of being, but also principle of operation, nature.

Albeit in different directions, the eidos, the figure of everyday life in Plato and Aristotle, is what primarily makes things to be khremata, everyday things, and later natural things, onta. With this we come full circle, to the ancient Ionian philosophy, but now it is set upon the firm and controllable bases of Socratic reflection.

2. The expression of this experience: rational knowledge and politcs. Man, besides making things, talks about them. And just as he must know what he makes, he must likewise know what he says. The firmness of the logos does not stem from the power of what he says, but from the things about which he speaks. Therefore instead of firm or vacillating opinions, like Protagoras, we should have reasons, logoi, be they true or false. The experience.of Socrates speaking had inexorably led Plato and Aristotle to pin down the structure of things, not just as objects which are used,

khremata, or which are here in the universe, onta; but also as objects which are expressed, as legomena. How must things be so that they may be expressible? What is there in them which requires that they be explained? The reply to these questions will not be Rhetoric, but Logic; and the knowledge will not be culture, but science.

Logos does nothing but express what things are. And it is quite

[191] obvious that about one simple thing we can say many things, and at the same time can apply the same expressions to various things. As object of the logos, things will have to be one and multiple. This permits expressing them; indeed, calls forth an explaining of them. The entire problem will rest on the interpretation of this complex.

Plato was the first to insist that these many predicates are not arbitrarily heaped on things. Man, for example, is a living thing, but not vegetable; he is animal, and not irrational animal, but rational. The unity of the "what" is obtained by cutting out, so to speak, a more limited figure within a supreme "what," and within that, another, until arriving at one which corresponds only to what we are treating of, to its eidos, or proper figure. As long as this does not occur, the diverse elements of the "what" are extended identically over the many things.

{217} The "what" proper to each thing will be, then, the final result of the trimming down of a vaster reality, within which the diverse characteristics are maintained united and separated in a perfectly defined system. As the being of things is their "what," their consistency, it follows that the union and separation of judgement will be,

eo ipso, when true, the being and non-being of things themselves. In this identity, stemming from a conception of being as consistency, resides the entire Platonic interpretation of things as objects of the logos. And this implies that in reality there exists not just a power of being, but also a no less real power of non-being. This is the first time in philosophy that the problem of non-being appears as more than something simply discarded, as in Parmenides, but as something positively grouped under the form of negation. Plato was aware of the great importance of his innovation. He did not hesitate to characterize it as parricide, referring to Parmenides. The "what" of things thus constitutes an intelligible world, a kosmos noetos, with dialectic structure. Therefore the mind cannot rest in any of its characteristics without seeing itself home along to the rest through the power of being and non-being; it must reflect to discuss. On account of this rational knowledge of things is possible and necessary, and on account of it dialogue is possible.

For Aristotle, on the other hand, being is not consisting, but subsisting. The "what" is not all of reality, but only the "what" of it. Logos, therefore, does not simply contain all of reality, but is referred to it, unfolding reality in the thing which is and what the thing is. Aristotle will have to base himself on this unfolding and [192]

on the subsequent articulation of its members in order to interpret things as objects of the logos.

The many characteristics of the eidos, of the figure, are not just something which a thing has, period. Rather, it has them because it already is what it is. Man is not man because he is a rational animal; rather he is a rational animal because he is man. The eidos, the form of things, is an internal unity, a type of central focus of each thing, which shapes its own material in a series of properties whose external outline is the figure of the thing. It is an original unity, which is unfolded in the thing's many properties. Therefore the eidos is not just the form of things, {218} but also their essence. The logos takes apart each of these characteristics so as to unite them with the copula in a derived unity which we call "definition." This is the structure of things inasmuch as they are the object of the logos; and with the distinction between the "is" of judgment and the "is" of things, Aristotle-as opposed to Plato-opens up the autonomous realm of logic. This triple dimension of the form as conformity with things, constitutive of their properties, and principles of their operations permits the thing with which we live, the thing about which we think, and the thing which is and functions in the world to be one and the same. For Aristotle, being is not just subsisting, but subsisting essentially.

For Plato, the sophist is the man who is not moved by any other power than that of non-being; and therefore he lacks content, his mind is dispersed in the amorphous flux of words and opinions. For Aristotle, the sophist is the man for whom there is nothing essential, for whom nothing has a proper content, and therefore whatever he says about things is pure accident, a fleeting coincidence. Societal living and dialogue among men are only possible when the mind is based on essential structures. The rest is radical insubstantiality. And only based on the substance of affairs (pragmata)

is a firm and stable polis possible, or a just public life.

Aristotle and Plato once again encounter the necessity of the rational science and the politics of their time, momentarily placed in abeyance by the Socratic reflection. And we now clearly understand the meaning of this abeyance: it was necessary to return to base reasoning and dialogue on the substance of things, which was about to disappear in Athens. Socratic irony thus saved science and politics. [193]

3. The root of this experience: philo-sophia. But this very thing which brought about the salvation of science and politics led the Greek to go beyond them as well. Up until then, Greece had had Wise men who, passing through the universe with their thinking mind, obtained that splendid vision called Sophia.

This vision was molded into rational science and into Rhetoric. And both, as we saw, were at the point of perishing precisely because they were breaking free of the bounds of the thinking mind. By returning to that mind and putting it into action, the possibility {219} of science and objective dialogue was reborn, But at the same time the idea of the mind changed in some ways, and consequently so did the idea of wisdom. Wisdom will no longer be a simple "vision" of the universe, but rational understanding, episteme. And not just any intellection. Whereas natural science and politics start from

some supposition by which they understand things, Wisdom rivits its sight on the very root of these suppositions and principles, and on the basis of them is present at their constitution and expansion into things. And this is true because it is not concerned just with principles of knowledge, but above all with the very principles of reality. Wisdom is not only episteme,

or simply nous, but the one and the other, or as Aristotle says, understanding, with science, episteme kai nous. The mind is no longer a simple vision, but the understanding of principles, and Wisdom, radical intellection. Without this, the Wise man would have been a type of mystic or lyric poet of the understanding; he would never have reached knowledge in the strict sense. For his part, the scientist would never have been more than an explainer, and the politician an orator. With both things, that divine part of man will no longer be de facto Wisdom, but an effort to conquer it, philo-sophia, preoccupation with Wisdom. Therefore the philosopher is not a god, but a man (Sym., 203 e), and philosophy a human effort or virtue," the intellectual virtue as such.

The mind, then, from now on will go dashing off, not in quest of the elements, but the principles of things. Which principles? The supreme principles of things, ultimate for us, first for them;

ta prota, said Aristotle. And precisely on account of this that intellection of supreme principles encompasses everything there is, not by a pedantic encyclopedic collection in the manner of the sophist, but rather in its radical unity. In the supreme principles all things are principally; for just this reason they are supreme. Aristotle therefore says the, Wisdom is, in this sense, the [194] knowledge of the most universal. This habit, hexis, of principles is what makes a true science and a good life possible. Science and Politics are "virtue."

When they go to pin down this ultimate, Plato and Aristotle begin to diverge. The road leading to the {220}

supreme principles is crossed by that in which everything comes together. What is this in which everything comes together? In what does this which we call "everything" consist? It seems that we then recoil upon ancient Wisdom: the Everything or All was Nature. But Plato had already demonstrated that in birth there is a genealogy. Being, as consistency, is genitive, but not a generator. For Plato, this confusion causes all ancient knowledge to deserve to be called mythology. The common principles of things would then be their ultimate genera, among them being and non-being. But, is this the ultimate of things? For Plato, no. Precisely because being is generative, because it makes things consist in this or that, its "making"-let us call it that-has to have its sights fixed not just on what it makes, but on making it "well." If that which makes is beneath being, the "good," agathon, of its making is beyond being. The ultimate of things is not being; being is not sufficient: there is something beyond being, the supreme root of the universe, on account of which the universe is an All.

For Aristotle, being is not consisting, but subsisting. Hence that which Plato termed "being" is not genus, but, in each case, has no more content than that which each thing grants it. Being is sufficient unto itself. Nevertheless, when we contemplate everything there is, this everything

is such precisely because each thing "is." The "is," which is the most intimate part of each thing, turns out to be what I find in common among all of them when I understand them with my mind. The ultimate is, then, for Aristotle, being. And principles will be supreme when they are principles of "being." What is this "being"? What are these principles? The totality of the world leaves this "is" as a problem floating before the eyes of the philosopher, the same "is" discovered by Parmenides and Heraclitus, but enormously substantiated by them, just as by Plato himself.

For both, Wisdom is something which is sought after, the same thing Socrates was seeking, perhaps without knowing too well what he was looking for. It is not something which things deposit in man without his doing anything but using them in daily life; nor is it something understood in science; it is something conquered

[195] by an impluse which carries man from day-to-day and scientific life to the ultimate principles. To this impulse Plato and Aristotle gave the name "desire" (orexis),

{221} desire to know the ultimate of everything (eidenai, Met. 983a25). Whence, after Plato and Aristotle, this theoretic life in which Sophia is realized becomes an intellectual form of religious life. At first, to be sure, it was limited to the intellectuals. But later it invaded public life and constituted the base of the sycretism between theological speculation and the mystery religions, and still later participated in some forms of the gnosis. Born from religious knowledge, and maintained in constant contact therewith-or at least in close association-Greek Sophia finally ended up by absorbing religion itself.

But Plato and Aristotle did not understand the creative impetus of Sophia in the same way.

For Plato, that desire is an eros, a rapture which draws us out of ourselves and transports us beyond being. Philosophy has its principle of truth in this rapture, and it carries us to the unfathomable abyss of a truth which is beyond being. In a certain sense, Wisdom is not loved for itself.

In reality, a tremendous shudder crossed the Socratic world: is the ultimate part of things their being? The root of what we call "thing," is it a "yearning," or better, "fullness," is it eros, or better, energeia? If one wishes to continue speaking of love or desire, is the love a "rapture" (mania),

or better, "effusion" (agape)? Here we can glimpse the entire later drama of European philosophy. In these questions, indeed, t he radical question of philosophy is bound up. And as such, it is something which is only seen at its end. The different paths along which Wisdom has journeyed are so many forms it has adopted when it wished to penetrate, always deeper, into the ultimate of things. Therefore, perhaps, it makes no sense to ask what philosophy is, in the abstract, or to ask what its definition is, because philosophy is the problem of the intellectual form of Wisdom. Philosophy is, therefore, always and only that which has come to be. No other definition fits. Philosophy is not primarily characterized {222}

by the knowledge it gains, but by the principles which animate it, in which it exists, and in whose intellectual movement it unfolds and consists. Philosophy, as knowledge, is simply the content of the intellectual life, of a bios theoretikos, of an effort to understand the ultimate of things. The Socratic ethos

had led to the bios of the understanding. And therein the acquisition of truth and the [196]

realization of good are based. That was Socrates' work. By putting it into action and seating the understanding on the firm base of things which are within its grasp, he was able to newly discover the great themes of traditional

Wisdom. Only then did that speculation have true meaning for man; it did not succeed in having meaning when it pretended to follow the reverse road. In their turn, Plato and Aristotle have given us the first master lesson of the History of Philosophy, a lesson which is really Socratic. The History of Philosophy is not culture or philosophic erudition. It is finding oneself with other philosophers in the things about which one philosophizes.

Escorial, Madrid, 1940.

Hegel and the Metaphysical Problem

https://www.zubiri.org/works/englishworks/nhg/NHG2Hegel.htm

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HEGEL AND THE METAPHYSICAL PROBLEM

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I

SITUATION OF THE HEGELIAN PROBLEM

Philosophy is not just another occupation of man, not even the most sublime; it is rather a fundamental mode of man's intellectual existence. For this reason it is not born from an arbitrary play of thoughts, but from the unsettled, problematic situation in which time, his time, has placed a man.

Our situation, today perceived as a problem, is the situation in which Europe has lived and developed during the course of many centuries. As Europe continued to create itself, man was able to feel himself comfortably lodged there; yet now that it has reached its maturity man indeed feels-as Hegel said-refuted here in his own proper existence.

The intellectual maturity of Europe is Hegel. And this, not just by virtue of his Philosophy, but his History and Legal theory as well. In a certain sense, Europe is the state, and perhaps only in Hegel has an ontology of the state been produced. The truth of Europe is in Hegel. I am well aware that this assertion sounds a bit exaggerated. That matters little. Once Ortega y Gasset told me that history is undone by dint of justice. If we exaggerate, the important thing is to know that we are exaggerating. What confers upon Hegel his rank and historical magnitude in Philosophy is just that character of maturity and intellectual plenitude which in him grasps the whole evolution of metaphysics, from Parmenides to Schelling. Consequently, every authentic philosophy today begins by being a conversation with Hegel, a conversation, in the first place, about us, from our situation; a conversation, moreover, with Hegel, not about Hegel, i.e. by making a problem-and not just a topic of conversation-for us out of what for him was likewise a problem. Philosophy is eternal repetition.

In today's fast-paced world one experiences a special pleasure in seeking to calmly re-explore the Hegelian problem in some of its most important dimensions. "As strange," said Hegel at the beginning of his Logic, "as a people for whom

{226} their political rights, inclinations, and habits have been abrogated, is the spectacle of a people who have lost their metaphysics, a people in [200]

whom the spirit, occupied with its own essence, does not have therein any real existence whatever."

In order to again find it we must retire, as Hegel later says, "to the tranquil anterooms of thought which has turned in upon itself and remained there, where the cares and problems which animate the lives of peoples and individuals are silent."

What is Hegel's problem? What is the road which opens before him? What is our situation?

Hegel's position in the history of philosophy is, as I said, the situation determined by the fact that in him philosophy acquires its complete maturity.

What is it, in fact, that Greek philosophy said about the universe? When a Greek confronts the universe, asking what is Nature?,

he understands by "Nature" the conjunction of everything which exists: a conjunction, not just in the sense of a summation of the infinite number of things there are in the universe, but above all, in the sense that all these infinite things naturally

spring from Nature, each with its own personal and individual destiny. Therefore this conjunction is natura, physis, Nature.

To this physis, as totality of the universe, the Greek man directs himself in order to concretely formulate the question: what is "that which is"?

Now, this question turns out to be motivated by something. It is not a question which Greek man formulates arbitrarily or by chance about the universe. The universe, Nature, that which is out there, is subject to perpetual change. Hence, faced with this change, man asks: what, definitively, in its ultimate, internal, and true root, is Nature, that which always remains ?

Nature is the arkhe, the principio of its modifications, and the telos, the end where they all lead. In this way change offers to the Greek something essentially required for beginning and {227} end, for arkhe

and telos . Consequently the Greek concept of nature leads to the point where the mobility of that nature recoils upon itself, so to speak, and acquires a final point of support in the Theos, in God. God, the divinity, is not, for Aristotle, anything but the absolute which calls forth proper variations

in the universe. As cause of being, the Aristotelian God does not produce things, but causes Nature to produce them, by setting it in motion.

Only insofar as they are emerging from that physis, only insofar as they spring forth and form part of Nature, is it that things, properly speaking, are for a Greek. They are;

or as [201] Aristotle will say they possess in themselves ousia, a there being, so to speak, which constitutes the permanent source from which emerge all the manifestations and all the possibilities which integrate what constitutes that which we commonly refer to as "thing." For this reason Aristotle said that the problem of what that which is, is ultimately reduces to the problem of what that which constitutes the permanent source of a thing is, to wit, what Aristotle called "substance," ousia. That is, things are what they are in virtue of being the support from whence emerge all the properties they offer me. If I say of this house that it has fixed dimensions, then the house is, in a certain sense, that which supports the qualifier or predicate of its dimensions. The properties of a

thing are thus manifestations of its substance. Now, on account of being the substance, i.e. the support or root out of which the properties of a thing are born, this thing is not fully what it is except where and when its substance actually and formally is actuating. This is what Aristotle understood when he said that the supreme form of being is energeia, actuality, action. In the actuality of a thing (with the double meaning

which, even in English, this word has: on one hand, that which is acting; on the other, that which now has actuality, in the present), in the actuality of a being is where one definitively encounters its ultimate, radical truth. Truth is the manifestation of a thing. For this reason Aristotle says that "being true" is the highest form of reality. To the vision of the manifest actuality of a thing, which permits us to distinguish its nature from {228} that of all others, the Greeks gave the name noein , vision of true and radical being of things. Being, truth, and vision appear in essential unity. From Parmenides' phrase "Being and the vision of what is are the same" all of Greek thought may be extracted. For this reason the absolute moment of the universe, the God which Aristotle sought in order to give the universe a substantial and definitive character, involved in himself the noein

in the form of pure actuality; he is a thought who thinks himself. This absolute of the universe moves without being moved, in the same way as the object of love and desire; and he suffers no change whatever.

This is the moment at which the course of all Occidental metaphysics will be decided, the moment at which Greece will [202]

determine once and for all the ultimate meaning of the word truth.

Given that a thing is truly offered to us as subject and support of its manifestations, it is fitting that man direct himself to it and make it explicit, i.e. the subject of discourse. Then, not only do I see what a thing is today, but moreover I

know what it is. I say of things that they are such and such. I say of this house that it is large, of this table that it is dark, etc. To this phenomenon of saying Greece gave the name logos. Hence, all Greek philosophy is certainly a question about being; but a question about being inasmuch as its truth stands revealed and explained in a saying, in a knowing what a thing is. Through the logos we submerge ourselves explicitly in the vision of what the universe truly is. To live in the midst of that vision, to participate in it is, said Aristotle, the supreme form of human existence.

For Aristotle, theory, explanation, is nothing other than immersing oneself in the universal reason of the universe.

Within this enormous metaphysical construction, seen in the light of the subsequent evolution of human thought, there is perhaps only one reality and one concept which has escaped the Greek mind. And that is the concept and reality with which the European part of the Occident {229} begins its metaphysical speculations: the concept of spirit.

It would be a considerable task to chronicle the moments which integrate this concept. Motivated by religious considerations it acquires conceptual maturity for the first time in Origen and St. Augustine. Spiritus sive animus is that entity which can turn in upon itself, and which, upon doing so, exists separated from the rest of the universe. This moment is going to be decisive for the entire structure of philosophy. Because in fact, upon feeling itself cut off from the rest of the universe, the human spirit does not remain simply in itself: it turns in upon itself so as to discover thee the manifestation of the infinite spirit of the divinity. Philosophy, after Greece, thus begins by being essentially theology. That is, it has separated the human spirit from the universe in order to project it eccentrically onto the divinity, onto that divinity about Whom the Fourth Evangelist told us that He is essentially logos , verbo ,

word. Hence, when the intellectual, at the beginning of our Era, sought to become aware of and think intellectually about his belief, he showered all the Hellenic speculation onto the logos of St. John and interpreted the Word of God as the reason or explanation of the universe. Since man is [203]

created in the image and likeness of God, he surely possesses the reason, the logos, which Greece attributed to him, but he does so through participation in the universal reason, which, in contrast to what the Greek believed, is now found in the divine spirit.

From here metaphysical speculation launches itself, so to speak, along a vertiginous path in which the logos ,

that began by being the essence of God, ends up being simply the essence of man. This is the moment, in the 14th century, when Ockham says that the essence of the divinity is free will, omnipotence; and hence rational necessity is a property pertaining exclusively to human concepts. It is at this moment that Descartes appears in the intellectual arena. {230}

Descartes finds himself, for the first time in the history of human thought, in the tragic and paradoxical situation not only of being separated from the universe-that Christianity had already realized at the beginning of our Era-but also separated from God. The moment nominalism reduced reason to being a thing of doors within man, a determination of his, purely human, and not the essence of the Divinity, at this instant the human spirit became separated from the Divinity. Alone, then, without a world and without God, the human spirit began to feel insecure in the universe. And what Descartes asks of philosophy, when he beings to philosophize, is just this: to once again find a point of support, something secure. When Descartes says that all things can be doubted, he only wishes to say, in the final analysis, that none of them offers a guarantee of solidity upon which to rest the human spirit-at least not the way they have up to now been presented to it. The ultimate secure redoubt is that in which rational necessity still subsists. In this way the I, the human subject, becomes the center of philosophy, but in a particular way. Ultimately the I, the ego of Descartes, functions in philosophy because what it asks of philosophy is a secure truth. Thus its certainty and not its reality is what decides the central character of the I in philosophical thought.

In the second place, the Cartesian subject does not find itself [204] situated in just any way in the universe, but rather insofar as the rest of the universe is known by it: everything Greece said about the universe, about the absolute being of nature, remains in a certain way enveloped by the subject, but enveloped in a particular form, viz. insofar as it is known securely by him. In the security of knowing, of the I, man discovers what the consistent part of nature itself is.

In this way, from Descartes to Kant, and especially from Kant to Schelling, the contraposition is produced between the {231}

nature about which Greece speaks to us and that of the other order, of that other world, the world of the spirit.

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II

THE METAPHYSICS OF HEGEL

If we wish to capture in a formula just what distinguishes Nature from Spirit, we would find, as did Hegel, a quite simple one. Nature is that which is out there. And Spirit is this which I myself am. Nature is, therefore, being there, or as Hegel would say, being in itself; Spirit, being for me, being for itself, selfness. This is the moment at which Hegel's thought will blossom.

As Hegel said, it is true that for many centuries-and especially from Descartes to Kant-philosophy has moved in this element of the spirituality of the spirit. It is likewise certain that in Kant, and more concretely in Fichte, the spirit is not just a second world juxtaposed with the primary one of nature, but rather that here the spirit claims a rank superior to that of nature in that nature is known by it. But up to now, says Hegel, no one has understood in what radical sense one can speak of nature

and spirit.

Giving the word "universe" a meaning broader than did Greece, we can say that, in contrast to the Greek, our universe is found to be composed of nature and spirit. The unity of the universe depends, then, on the meaning which this and has. And what does it involve?

Schelling repeatedly insisted that the and was nothing other than of type of fundamental identity, in which Nature ceases to be Nature and Spirit ceases to be spirit: an identity, and therefore, a simple indifference; and by being simple indifference, it is-says Hegel-something like the night wherein all cats are grey. This does not mean that said point of contact is

neither nature nor spirit ,

and consequently, simple indifference; but that now it is nature and also spirit. That "and" is positively what there is in nature and in spirit. Nor does any of this mean, on one hand, that nature is already made, and on the other, that spirit is already made too, and that they are then going to be joined by some type of addition. Their nexus is something more than a simple copulation.

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The important point about that and is not that it forms the nexus linking

nature to spirit, but that it expresses the common foundation which nature and spirit have in it. For Hegel the [206] identity of nature and spirit is not a simple formal identity, something empty, as it was for Schelling, but rather signifies just this: that through nature and spirit pertaining essentially to each Other, there is something which is a postively common foundation of this pertaining. To understand nature and spirit is to see how that foundation underlies both; how this foundation inexorably becomes Nature and Spirit.

Now, how are we going to classify this common foundation? In it Nature and Spirit, i.e. everything there is, moves or is based. Insofar, then, as this foundation encompasses in itself everything there is-on one hand the Greek nature, that which is out there; on the other, the spirit, which is securely known through itself, with Descartes and modern philosophy-that foundation, from which everything emerges, is in an eminent and fundamental way the authentic and true All. It is the foundation of everything else; as Hegel would say, it is the absolute in itself and for itself.

To this absolute Hegel, with some impropriety, gave the name "spirit." He called it "spirit" because in it one finds just the decisive element of that spirit about which Descartes and Schelling spoke to us, viz. immediate presence to oneself. But it turns out that this spirit is not properly spirit, because we are not dealing with a spiritual reality in the usual sense of the word, but only the concrete fact that this absolute is the foundation, the root, of the spirit, and therefore root and foundation of the entities which are present to themselves, of the spirits. Nonetheless, recalling that the Hellenic and medieval tradition characterized spirit by that immediate turning, in upon itself, Hegel continues to call this absolute spirit just that, absolute spirit.

But at this point not only has Hegel not created his philosophy, he has not even begun to develop it. The greatness of Hegel's thought rests, in large measure, on his not having permitted himself to launch philosophical programs

without having first realized them in himself. {233}

To say that the All is absolute spirit, that it is the absolute, means that nothing has being, or therefore is truly known (since knowing is knowing what a thing is), if it is not understood in its ultimate root in that absolute spirit, i.e. if it is not understood as a moment of it. For this reason Hegel says that truth is never found in things, nor in the result. The result is the cadaver which the force originally engendering the thing has left behind.

Truth is not the result ,

says Hegel, but the all ,

that which links the result to its [207]

principle. The definitive truth is a thing; the ultimate truth of its being, for Hegel, is found therefore in that articulation which each concrete thing has with the absolute spirit, with the fundamental reality of the universe. To this internal articulation Hegel gives the name "system." Thus Hegel says that the true figure under which philosophical truth appears is the system. "System" does not mean a conjunction of ordered propositions, but that internal articulation which each thing, in its being, has with the absolute being of the universe. To say that a thing is based in the absolute spirit is the same as saying that it remains therein as one of its moments. This is the point of departure of Hegel's philosophy: the absolute as subject. But, let it be understood that I have in mind not an absolute in the sense of absolute thing, but absolute as absolute foundation of all things, the all-inclusive principle, therefore, of what used to be called "thoughts. " Consequently it is completely erroneous from an historical or metaphysical point of view to say that Hegel begins with thinking. Indeed, it is true neither that nature is in thinking nor that the possessing of the absolute occurs in thinking, but just the reverse. The fact that the absolute is transparent to itself is what constitutes thought. Thought is not explanation of the immediate, but the immediate explanation of thought.

The problem of Hegel is born at this instant, when one tries to see, in an efficacious and actual manner, how the absolute is, in fact, the absolute foundation of everything there is, i.e. how the absolute must sprout forth out of itself {234}

in order to engender the totality of infinite things which we then call "nature" and .spirit." Hegel does not begin, then, with either nature or spirit, but with the absolute,

nothing more than the absolute. Hence this beginning is likewise absolute. What does this mean?

To be sure, one must shun the natural temptation impelling us to think too much about the absolute. The difficult thing, in order to capture Hegel's absolute, is not to think of much, but just the opposite, to think of nothing.

If I say of the absolute that it is, for example, human spirit, or that it is substance, in the Greek sense, I say something about the absolute, but something distinct from it, because otherwise I could not say of it that it is that other thing. Whence it follows that any attempt to say something concrete about the absolute is simply to go away from it. Hence the radical beginning of philosophy in the force of the absolute cannot be, for Hegel, anything but that installation [208]

of himself in it, that finding himself immediately there. To this finding himself in the absolute Hegel gave the name "pure being." Pure being is, then, immediate, absolute emptiness. Because at the moment I wish to think, up to its ultimate consequences, what this pure being is, I find myself with the notion that pure being is everything just by dint of not being anything, of not being any one of the many individual things. If I wish, then, to apprehend up to its ultimate extreme what I think when thinking about being, I find myself having converted it into an emptiness, so that I am now thinking about nothing. This is an insostenible situation; I must, then, retreat

to the point of departure, to being, so as to avoid the conclusion that this being is nothing. This attempt to avoid the nothing, which the absolute must realize in order to maintain itself being ,

is just becoming. In this way the absolute spirit goes outside of itself, because it finds itself absolutely contradictory. And, when seeking to avoid this contradiction, it immediately turns back on itself. The absolute can only exist by becoming.

In this way, when the absolute spirit goes outside of itself, it engenders its becoming, and in this its becoming

it becomes something. Thus Hegel shows how the absolute spirit, through its own proper internal constitution, is the foundation of what Greece had called being in itself. Now, when we have

something, this something is presented {235}

as being just that-something, and consequently as something sufficient unto itself, And the truth is that nothing is sufficient unto itself, but that being something is becoming something.

Hence, the fact that there is something is owing to the fact that there has been a beginning of it. The truth of something is, then, being in itself what it already was in its absolute principle. And this is what has traditionally been called essence. Thus, the absolute not only engenders a thing, but, referring the latter to the former, shows us or manifests to us actually tie absolute principle from which it emerges. Upon doing so, the absolute is not only principle of the thing, but moreover its being is to be principle-ing ;

i.e. returning again to the absolute, we understand it not only in respect to what it produces, but in the producing, in the principle-ing itself. Hence the distinction between the principle and what is principled disappears. The absolute fully possesses itself in its grounding activity, and this possession is conceiving or concept, i.e. absolute knowledge. To the adequate concept of this absolute Hegel gave the name idea.

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Therefore the idea is freedom.

In this way Hegel gradually describes the genesis of the entire universe. Consequently the fundamental motives of the whole history of philosophical thought are concentrated in Hegelian philosophy and there reach maturity. Being-said Greece-is actually found in truth; but truth-says Descartes-is actually found only in a true certainty; and a true certainty-Hegel will finally say-is that certainty which recoils upon the true being of the subject.

Thus, when the subject returns on itself, it finds itself not with another thing, but with its very self. It follows, then, that all generation of the universe, the entire history of the universe, is not, in its ultimate and definitive thrust, anything but the turning of the spirit in upon itself, the realization of the Idea. In each of the steps the absolute spirit has taken, not only has it not left itself, but in reality what it has done has been to find itself with itself. This permanent finding oneself with oneself is what has traditionally been called 'eternity'. For this reason history, in the Hegelian sense of the word, is not metaphysically speaking a succession of things which occur in time, but the essence of that succession, {236}

historicity. The essence of history, historicity, is eternity. History is the concretized reality of the Idea.

For Hegel, to capture the absolute spirit in its eternity is to know the absolute in an absolute way; in this, and nothing else,

does philosophy consist. Philosophy is the absolute consciousness

the System of the absolute. Therefore Philosophy is, as Plato said, dialectic, articulation, system of the Idea. Philosophy is not a thinking about the absolute, but is the explicit form of the absolute itself. Whence its history pertains essentially

to Philosophy.

By the same token, it would be juvenile to seek to attack the theses of Hegel's philosophy one at a time. Precisely because philosophy reaches its full maturity in Hegel, it is useless to take the moments of his brilliant thought one by one. The only way to dispute with Hegel is to take his thought at its point of departure, i.e. in its totality. What is the point of departure for Hegel? In what strange manner do thought or spirit and nature of things come to be unified? [210]

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III

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

In reality, Hegel is a man who has invented very few philosophical concepts; perhaps none. On the other hand, he possessed an incredible facility for assimilating them. And the concept which determines the entire development of Hegelian thought is nothing but the concept of knowing, of certainty. Why, when I cannot think of being as something concrete, does Hegel say that being becomes nothing?

We earlier observed that when Descartes situates man in the center of the universe and of philosophical knowledge, he is not moved to do so by any interest in what is especially human; what motivates Descartes is exclusively the necessity of finding himself secure, the necessity of discovering an absolute certainty. When he says of the I that it is a thinking being, that ego sum res cogitans,

he is not bothered about what this ego is in itself. He does not ask himself, as a Greek would ask himself, what is it that a res, a thing, must have in order to be an ego ?

That which occupies Descartes' mind is exclusively what this "I" does; and what this "I" does is nothing other than know. Whence, for Descartes-or at least, after Descartes-knowing does not constitute an activity among n activities which man has, {237} but constitutes his proper being. It is not true, then, that man is, and besides, knows; but that man's being is his knowing. And as knowing contains what a thing is, it follows that at the moment I know of being, I am being. From here all Hegelian philosophy starts. And this is the question: up to what point should one affirm that knowing is, plain and simple, the being of the man and the being of things?

Hegel's position is not, to be sure, arbitrary. If, on one hand, he encompasses the Cartesian tradition, on the other he encompasses the entire Hellenic tradition. The question about being was not born in Greece by chance; it was born through the concrete way in which, for the first time in history, Greek man perceived himself existing on the earth, through the way the Greek stumbled upon the universe. And what constitutes the uniqueness of Greek existence is just this: man, in Greece, for the first time [211]

begins to exist in the universe seeing it and talking about it. Seeing and talking (in this sense) are the two great discoveries of Greece. Therefore it is not by chance that the two great products of Greek culture are the plastic arts and rhetoric: to see things, to see them as they are, in themselves, in their Idea-as Plato would say-; but in addition to say something about them. And this is the very heart of the matter.

To see things is to see what is there. Now, what characterizes man and differentiates him from animals is not simply his finding himself with things that are there, but that these things are

before him. In other words, what distinguishes man from animals is not that things are put with man, but that they are put before him. For this reason, because things are put before me, I can propose to myself to say something about them. This telling myself about them is what the Greeks primarily called logos, saying. And only insofar as I tell myself

something about things can I say that same things to others, can I talk with them. Talking is based upon the saying, in the sense of saying to myself

But talking, may, by itself, be expressed in infinitely many ways. Only when talking or saying is based on seeing, on that which is there, is it manifest what things are. Owing to the fact that talking or saying refers to a seeing, in talking that moment of the present which characterizes {238} the "logos" of an indicative proposition is endangered. If nothing more than the simple vision of the world had ever existed, all of philosophy could easily have degenerated into a mystical orgy, a mental frenesi. With just Parmenides' expression that the vision of what is and being are the same, philosophy would not have passed beyond the level of an intellectual intuition, such as we find repeated in Schelling. This was one of the most brilliant contributions to philosophy made by Plato.

Language imparts a dash of rationality to the vision: the logos,

upon becoming logos of a vision, requires that the vision adopt a logical structure. For this reason Greek philosophy was essentially rationalistic.

But it did not occur to any Greek to say that being a man meant no more than seeing and saying. It is true that Aristotle defined man by saying "an animal who has logos, who has reason. " But he is very careful to say that man is ousia , thing, and this is what constitutes the decisive character of Greek thought. The logos is not the being of man, but an essential property of his. [212]

It has sufficed to link the idea of the logos with the Cartesian conception of the thinking spirit in order to obtain all of Hegel's metaphysics.

But it is just this, I repeat, which is the problem.

In a marvelous essay my teacher Ortega said that Philosophy has nourished itself on two metaphors: the first is just this Greek metaphor that man is a fragment of the universe, a thing which is there. And on this his character of being there is his other character of knowing founded and based. Knowing is the footprint things leave in human consciousness; knowing is impression. Now, Descartes severs the link which joins knowing to what man is and converts knowing into the being itself of man;

mens sive animus, he said. The "animus" or "spiritus" has become "mens," in knowing.

At this moment the second metaphor appears, in which man is not a fragment of the universe, but something in whose knowledge there is contained everything that the universe is.

Is this philosophical situation viable? Up to what point does true knowledge constitute man's authentic being? In {239}

other words, upon what does the unity among being, spirit, and truth depend? This is the central question which must be posed to Hegel.

In reality, Hegel overlooks an elemental facet of thought, and that is that every thought thinks something. This facet, through which thought thinks of something, has recently been baptized with the name "intentionality" (Husserl). Every thought is a thought of something. Now, this which momentarily has managed to seem like a solution to the problem, not only isn't its solution, but is indeed a dislocation of it.

It is not enough for me to say, in fact, that every thought thinks of something, because I must determine why every thought thinks of something. Thought, we may say for now, is an activity among the various ones man which man has, and it could happen that this

of is found in thought because it characterizes in a prior sense the entire substance of thought. Perhaps because man cannot be the center of the universe he consists only in projecting this universe in front of him, and not inside, as Hegel maintained. Consequently, thought is also thought of something. In this moment of constitutive eccentricity of the human being his existential character would be concretely founded. Ex-sistere means having a subsistence without need of causes. Things are not what would exist outside of thought, but thought what would exist [213]

outside of things (Heidegger).

In this way, perhaps the time has come in which a third metaphor, likewise ancient, is imposing its felicitous tyranny, though for how long no one knows. This metaphor does not mean considering human existence either as a fragment of the universe or even as a virtual enveloping of it. Rather, human existence has no other intellectual mission than that of illuminating the being of the universe; man will not consist in being a fragment of the universe, nor its envelopment, but simply in being the authentic, true light of things. Therefore what things are they are only by dint of the light of this human existence. What (according to this third metaphor) is "constituted" in the light is not things, {240} but their being; not what is, but that which is. Yet at the same time this light illuminates, founds, the being of things, but not from any doing of mine; I do not make them my pieces. It is only necessary that they "be"; en photi, in the light, is where things actually acquire their true being, said Aristotle and Plato.

But the heart of the matter is that every light requires a luminous source, and the being of light, in the last analysis, consists in nothing but the presence of the luminous source in the thing illuminated. Whence arises, in what does the ultimate reason of human existence as light of things consist? I do not wish to answer this question, but simply leave it posed, and thereby indicate that the first problem of philosophy-the last, rather-is not the Greek question What is being?, but as Plato says, something which is beyond being.

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IV

CONCLUSION

In a brilliant vision, Aristotle said somewhat obscurely that philosophy arises from melancholy; but from a melancholy which is the exuberance of health: kata physin, and not from the melancholy of sickness, kata noson. Philosophy is born from melancholy, i.e. at the moment when, in a way radically different from the Cartesian, man feels himself alone in the universe. Whereas for Descartes that solitude meant retreating into oneself, and for Hegel consists in not being able to go outside of oneself, Aristotelian melancholy is just the opposite: he who has felt radically alone is he who has the capacity to be radically "accompanied." When I feel alone, the totality of what there is appears to me, in as much as I lack it. In true solitude others are

more present than ever.

The solitude of human existence does not signify a breaking of ties with the rest of the universe and converting oneself into an intellectual or metaphysical hermit; the solitude of human existence consists in feeling alone, and therefore confronting and finding oneself with the entire rest of the universe.

Let us hope that Spain, land of light and melancholy, will decide at some time to elevate herself to metaphysical concepts.

Lecture given in Madrid, 1931, and published in Cruz Y Raya , Madrid, 1933.

The Idea of Nature: the New Physics

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THE IDEA OF NATURE: THE NEW PHYSICS

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INTRODUCTION

1. THE PROBLEM OF ATOMIC PHYSICS

2. THE MECHANICS OF THE ATOM

3. THE FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS OF PHYSICS IN THE NEW THEORY

4. THE REAL BASE OF THE NEW PHYSICS

5. UNSOLVED PROBLEMS

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7. THE FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEM

NOTE: I beg the reader to consider, first, the date of publication of these lines (1934), and second, the type of persons to whom they are directed.

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INTRODUCTION

The Nobel Prizes of 1932 and 1933 have been awarded to three European physicists: Heisenberg, Schrödinger, and Dirac, who created the new mechanics of the atom. An inkling that this honorific mention signifies the consecration of a new epoch in the history of physical knowledge, rather than merely being a prize given to the labor of specialists, has attracted broad public attention to these men. And though on a smaller scale, the same thing happened to Einstein, and in the same way, when as a youth he discovered his principle of relativity. And youth is a characteristic in no way accidental to the new physics.

A few years ago, a young man was presented at a Leipzig society party. The wave of astonishment following upon the young man's entrance was quite out of proportion to his age-he was only twenty-some years old-and caused impertinent surprise in some: "But why is this student here?" It was the young Werner Heisenberg, recently named Full Professor of Physics at the University of Leipzig. Anyone who knows what this signifies in Germany can judge without further commentary the unheard-of magnitude of the case. While yet a student, or almost so, in Gottingen, he had given a first solution to one of the most recalcitrant problems of physics and thereby opened a new era for this science. A little later, in 1927, he formulated his celebrated uncertainty principle, which, if not the most radical, is certainly the most unsuspected novelty of contemporary physics.

Schrödinger, although more advanced in years, is a youthful man, younger in spirit than in body. It was not in vain {246}

that he was born in Vienna, for he bears the unmistakable stamp of those who lived the Youth Movement (the Jugendbewegung)

together around the motto: " Comradship: down with conventions!", full of faith and enthusiasm. When I met him, in 1930, it had been three years since he came to the University of Berlin from the Polytechnic University of Zurich to succeed Max Plank in the chair of theoretical physics. He began his lectures with a phrase of St. Augustine: "There is an old and a new theory of the quanta. And one can say of them what St. Augustine does of the Bible: Novum Testamentum in Vetere latet; Vetus in Novo patet. (The New [220] Testament is implied in the Old, the Old is patent in the New)"-a rather disconcerting beginning for that audience, accustomed to the positivism of the past century, which has served us, until recently, as science without spirit and consequently without scientific spirit. In 1926, while still teaching in Zurich, he had the idea of giving a more precise mathematical formulation to the hypothesis of the young French physicist, Louis de Broglie, also a recipient of the Nobel Prize. Since then, Schrödinger's equation has become our most powerful mathematical instrument for penetrating the secrets of the atom.

Finally Dirac, a young professor from Cambridge, has attempted a generalization of the ideas of Schrödinger, based on the Theory of Relativity, which has permitted him to obtain a more complete vision of the electron.

These lines have no other pretension than that of expounding a series of philosophical reflections to which the new physics gives rise. The new physics is, to a greater or lesser degree, just that: a novelty, and, consequently, a problem. Now, this characteristic does not so much affect the questions of which physics treats, but rather physics as such. That which is a problem in the new physics is physics itself. It has therefore touched upon a point which reverberates through the entire corpus of philosophy. So let this serve by way of justification for someone who, not being a physicist by profession, sees himself compelled to talk about subjects from physics. And bear in mind that the character {247}

of the potential readers to whom this essay is directed obliges him to use expressions technically vague, though not improper; and indeed the infrequent mathematical terms occasionally employed or alluded to are but evocations and consequently can without loss of sense be passed over by readers not familiar with them.

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1. THE PROBLEM OF ATOMIC PHYSICS

In order to understand the significance of the work of Heisenberg, Schrödinger, and Dirac, we should recall the problem with which they were wrestling,. A few years earlier, Rutherford had the idea that atoms are composed of a nucleus, whose net electrical charge is positive, around which orbit other particles of negative charge, called "electrons," as the planets orbit around the sun. The nucleus contains, besides electrons, particles of positive charge, the protons. These particles mutually attract, according to Coulomb's law, and are separated only on account of the orbital motion of the electrons. This movement provokes a disturbance in the surrounding aether, which propagating in undulatory form, is the cause of all electromagnetic phenomena explained by Maxwell's equations. Moreover, each chemical element is characterized by a system of these special waves which appear in its spectrum. Hence the problem of the structure of the atom is linked to that of the interpretation of its spectrum. The model of Rutherford is a first attempt to explain these phenomena. So there is, then, an essential unity between the phenomena which occur in the world we perceive and those that occur in the interior of the atom; a single physics is that of the macrocosm and of the microcosm.

Nevertheless, there is a serious difficulty with this conception. If the energy of electromagnetic perturbations were due to kinetic energy, i.e. to the energy associated with the planetary movement of the electrons, it is evident that in virtue of the principle of conservation of energy, the emission of energy in {250}

the form of electromagnetic waves would have to be accompanied by the loss of a corresponding quantity of kinetic energy, so that the electron would lose velocity, and consequently, on account of electrical attraction, begin approaching ever closer to the nucleus, until finally crashing into it. The orbit of the electron would not be circular, but spiral. At the time of collision it would cease to move and therewith to produce electromagnetic waves. Matter would quickly reach a state of total equilibrium in which there would occur neither electrical nor optical phenomena. The presumed unity of physics stumbled here upon a difficulty which menac ed it [222] at it very roots.

Something similar had occurred in the study of the distribution of temperature in the interior of a closed body which is completely isolated from the outside world; this is the so-called black body radiation problem. In order to reach agreement with experience, Max Planck was ingenuous enough to renounce the idea that radiation is a phenomenon produced in the form of continuous and insensible transitions. He thought, instead, that energy is absorbed and emitted discontinuously, in distinct jumps. For a rather absurd comparison, we might suppose that temperatures only changed in intervals of 10 degrees. If a body found itself with 12, for example, it would emit only 10 and save the remaining 2 (as if they did not exist) until it had 8 more, so as then to emit a block of 10 more degrees, and so forth. The absorption and emission of energy takes place, according to Planck, in integral multiples of a certain elementary constant, the quantum of action. The numerical determination of this constant was the great work of Planck. It carries, therefore, his name: Planck's constant

(h) . Energy is transmitted, then, as if it were composed of granules or corpuscles. This idea accords, in all respects, with experimental data; but it was incompatible with all physics existing up to that time, which was based essentially on the idea of the continuity of physical processes. In reality, then, the solution proposed by Planck to explain black body radiation sharply aggravated the contradiction between experience and physics

as a whole.

In 1913 a collaborator of Rutherford, Niels Bohr, applied Planck's idea to the atomic model of his teacher, and his agreement with experiment {251} opened the doors of science to the absolute abyss separating it from everyday experience.

Let us, in fact, return to the atom of Rutherford. One of the reasons making it unacceptable, I said, is the possibility that the electron could collapse into the nucleus. So, let us maintain the model, postulating the impossibility of this collapse. Then, the electron would not find itself at just any distance from the nucleus, but only at those previously defined. That is to say, if we again use absurd numbers, Bohr postulates that the electron can be found at [223] a distance of 1 mm, 2 mm, or 3 mm from the nucleus, but not at 1.5, etc. Not all orbits are possible for the electron, only certain ones. Whence the possibility of collapse is eliminated. This elimination is based, as we see, on a simple postulation. But there is still more: whereas for Rutherford the atom emits or absorbs energy while moving in its orbit, for Bohr the orbits of the electrons are stationary, i.e. there is no radiation while the electron moves in them, only when it jumps from one orbit to another. The frequency of the energy emitted then is a quantity which depends on Planck's constant and has nothing to do with the frequency of rotation of the electron in its orbit. In this way the problem is aggravated still more; there is now no relation between the frequency of radiated energy and that which is derived mechanically from the stationary state of the atom. And so with this hypothesis the mechanics of electron movement no longer has anything to do with classical mechanics, which was adequate for the solar system; nor with the physics of Maxwell and Coulomb, which assumes the continuous structure of energy and admits all possible distances between the electron and the

nucleus. The macrocosm obeys a physics of continuity, and the microcosm a physics of discontinuity. And the difficulty comes to a head as soon as we realize that these two worlds are not separate, but the one operates on the other. What then could be the structure of that interaction?

Such is the crucible in which physics found itself when De Broglie at first, and later Heisenberg, Schrödinger, and Dirac came to deal with it. In order to understand the magnitude of the problem, recall that {252} we are not considering the difficulties of explaining this or that phenomenon, but the difficulties of conceiving of physical happenings in general. There cannot be two physics, because there is only one nature, which either has quantum jumps, or doesn't have them. The contrast between continuity and discontinuity plays a role in this question which as we shall see later becomes more complicated when other more essential dimensions of the problem are considered. Recall a similar situation in the 19th century, with regard to the nature of light. For Newton, it was a series of corpuscles which propagated in a straight line. For Huygens, it was on the other hand the deformation of a medium which engulfs everything; and that which we call a ray of light is nothing but the line of maximum intensity of this deformation. The discovery of interference [224]

phenomena seemed to give more plausibility to Huygens' theory, and in conformity with the idea of continuity it was possible to construct all the theories of optics and electromagnetism. We shall see how this allusion to optics will assume an important role in the new physics.

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2. THE MECHANICS OF THE ATOM

1. In 1925, Heisenberg tackled this thorny problem via a critical consideration. The difficulty to which Bohr has led us perhaps may stem from our desire to give too detailed a picture of the atom, a picture which, for Heisenberg, is unnecessary because it contains superfluous elements and does not limit itself to the essentials.

In the first place, Bohr's model has superfluous elements. It supposes, on the one hand, that the mechanical "state" of the atom depends on the position and velocity of its electrons. But when it comes time to explain the spectrum, this stationary movement of the electrons plays no part whatever. What happens to the electron while in its stationary orbits is completely transparent to physics. The only thing that matters is the jump from one to another. And in fact Bohr postulated a jump energy which has nothing to do with the kinetic energy that from the mechanical point of view the electron must possess in any stationary state. Why should we complicate matters with this mechanical image?

It is more convenient, in the second place, to elaborate the theory of the atom using only quantities that are really measurable. And such directly measurable quantities are (among others) energy and impulse (i.e. the integrals of movement of the system), but not position and velocity of electrons.

In order to clarify the question, let us recall a problem of acoustics which it will be convenient to bear in mind during the course of this essay. We assume that we know the laws of composition of sound, {254} i.e. its structure. In order to analyze this situation we may employ the following method. It is known that sound is produced by vibrations of a medium, for example, of a cord. The problem of acoustics which has been proposed to us thus becomes a dynamical problem; if we remove a molecule of this cord from its state of equilibrium and if we know the amplitude of this deformation and the initial velocity, which with a certain force we are going to provide, we can deduce inexorably the further course of movement of the cord. A mathematical calculation will show us that this auditory vibration is composed of fundamental tones and their harmonics, and we shall thus obtain all the [226] relations of the musical scale. But there is another way of attacking the problem. Each sound

is characterized by the frequency, intensity, and amplitude of its waves. There is an apparatus, called a "resonator," which serves to register sounds. It is characterized by the fact that it only emits a single frequency, and that if around it that particular sound is produced, the resonator itself will emit sound, i.e. will "resonate." If the exciting sound is not of the resonator's frequency, it will emit no sound at all in response. Let us suppose, then, that we have any sound pattern whatever. If in its proximity we arrange an ideally complete system of resonators, each one of them will extract all of the sound in its own frequency range. In this way, we will obtain a type of acoustical spectrum. Recombination of these elemental sounds will give us the structure of the whole (original) sound. The entire problem would be reduced to one of arithmetic: to determine the laws of composition of these sounds, i.e. the proportion, if I may be permitted the expression, in which each elemental sound enters into the structure of the total sound pattern. We would obtain by this route the same results obtained by the previous method: the sounds are composed, among themselves, in proportions such as one to eight, one to four, etc.

The fact that in acoustics both methods are practical, and the first is linked to the general problem of mechanics, could lead to error if one supposes that the same thing occurs in the case of light waves, and that the frequencies and amplitudes of oscillation of an electron in the spectrum must be explainable by the mechanical state of the system. This is pure fiction. In reality, the second method {255} is independent of the first and leads to the same results, but with an advantage: that of operating on quantities always directly accessible via experimental measurement, just as are tones and frequencies of sounds. It does not operate on quantities that are at times uncontrolable, such as the position and velocity of molecules in a string.

If indeed the atomic model of Bohr was incapable of yielding the intensities of spectral lines (an inherent defect), its positive merit consisted in explaining their qualitative distribution. All of the rest-the mechanical picture of the atom-was perfectly dispensable. So abandoning all this useless mechanical complication of rotating electrons, orbits, etc., Heisenberg sought a type of [227] arithmetic for the spectral rays analogous in many respects to that which exists for acoustics. Evidently, this arithmetic has to be enormously more complicated than that of the sound waves. The luminous or electromagnetic spectrum is a system of infinitely many possible frequencies and amplitudes. Since each spectral line of an atom is composed of vibrations of fixed amplitude and frequency, and is produced by the transition from one atomic state to another, then of necessity the arithmetic will have to handle a doubly infinite conjunction of elemental vibrations in order to determine all the frequencies of the spectrum. These elemental vibrations form an ordered conjunction, called an "infinite matrix." The problem then consists in establishing the laws of combination of these "numbers," i.e. of the conjunctions of elemental vibrations. All arithmetic, including that which serves for everyday use, consists of certain rules or conventions for calculating, i.e. for deducing from given numbers other new numbers. From 3 and 5, by the convention termed "adding," we deduce 8; by another convention we get 15. In the present case, matrices assume the function of numbers, and it becomes necessary to introduce {256}

rules such that from them the spectral combinations shown in experience can be deduced. That is, Heisenberg proceeds in such a way that the frequencies and amplitudes are the same as they are among the corresponding quantities in Bohr's model. The quantum structure, which in Bohr's model appears as an arbitrary postulate, now appears in Heisenberg's theory as a necessary consequence of the rules of composition of the spectral quantities. But the arithmetic of Heisenberg is profoundly different from the usual: in it, the order of factors affects the product. But when we pass from the mechanics of the atom to everyday (Newtonian) mechanics, this non-commutability becomes insensible, because we are no longer dealing with quantities of the order of magnitude of Planck's constant. In the development of this theory Bohr and Jordan have actively collaborated with Heisenberg.

Heisenberg takes as his point of departure the discontinuities of atomic processes to obtain, as a first approximation, the relations of continuity of mechanics and classical physics. To do [228]

this he reduces the problem of discontinuity to another more general one: the non-commutative arithmetic of infinite matrices. The fact that our everyday arithmetic, which is used in calculating forces and velocities, happens to be a particular case of this arithmetic of Heisenberg confers a radical unity on the entire edifice of physics.

2. The point of view of Schrödinger is completely different. On the surface, it seems more intuitive and less abstract than that of Heisenberg. It does not require introduction of new calculation methods and techniques, but rather makes use of the usual tools of classical physics, viz. continuous functions and differential or partial differential equations. In contrast to Heisenberg, who starts from discontinuity to obtain an explanation of continuous phenomena, Schrödinger starts from the hypothesis of continuity, and his problem is thus one of giving a complete explanation of the discontinuous phenomena of the atom.

Earlier De Broglie, studying the theory of the photoelectric effect proposed by Einstein-according to which light seems to behave as if it were composed of particles {257}

called "photons"-had the idea of supposing that there was associated with every electron a wave of very small dimension, which accompanied it everywhere. That is to say, he supposed that the photon was a quantified wave, whose energy is equal to the frequency (v) multiplied by Planck's constant (h), and which fell under the laws governing electromagnetic waves. Starting from this idea, Schrödinger conceives the electron as a system of these waves which DeBroglie had associated with particles.

Let us imagine now that we have a vibrating cord. Suppose that it is fixed on only one end. If we shake it at the fixed end, a vibration will be produced which propagates along the cord, until it disappears. Now suppose the cord is fixed at both ends, and we propose to produce a sound. This sound wave will not be like the vibration in the previous case, which propagates and disappears; rather, it remains in a certain sense, i.e. is stationary, and is found to be composed of a whole number of nodes and anti-nodes related [229]

in a fixed way. It we wish, then, to make a sound with a cord of fixed length, it is clear at the outset that the ends of the cord must coincide with two nodes. And consequently, the number and form of the anti-nodes along the cord is restricted. Given a cord of fixed length, the number and nature of stationary waves or elemental sounds which can be produced by it is limited. Each cord has, then, a system of vibrations-its own sounds. The physics of the macrocosmos exhibits, therefore, phenomena such as stationary waves which without diminishing its continuity offer definite discontinuities measurable in whole numbers; for example the number and distribution of nodes and anti-nodes. In less precise terminology: the general equation which permits study of all types of waves gives rise under certain restrictive conditions (the so-called "boundary values") to a definite group of stationary waves proper to each cord.

Now, Schrödinger had the idea of applying this method to the study of the atom. If it were possible to obtain the stationary states of the atom as the only permissible stationary waves {258}

of a cord are obtained, the problem of the structure of the atom would be resolved without appealing to arbitrary quantum postulates or renouncing the efficacious methods which have served classical physics. Let us recall that an atom is something which, when put into a spectroscope, produces a series of spectral lines of fixed amplitude and frequency. The entire problem then reduces to that of uncovering the restrictive conditions which compel the system to produce lines unique to each atom, just as the determination of the length of the cord fixes the group of sounds it is capable of producing. Utilizing the general hypothesis that energy is equal to frequency multiplied by Planck's constant, Schrödinger succeeded in writing a wave equation which, given certain restrictive conditions

(or boundary values) leads necessarily to the system of amplitudes and frequencies proper to each atom, i.e. to the quantum conditions of Bohr. This celebrated equation of Schrödinger is our most powerful instrument for studying the structure of the atom. With it, the problem of atomic structure is reduced to that of investigating the proper values and functional solutions of the wave equation. The first success of the theory was its interpretation of the spectrum of hydrogen.

But it is important not to exaggerate the similarity between the material waves" of Schrödinger and the ordinary waves we can [230] all perceive or imagine. The correspondence with vibrating strings is a tenuous one.

In the first place, ordinary waves, including those imagined in DeBroglie's hypothesis, are waves which propagate. Material waves, on the other hand, are stationary; they do not propagate.

In the second place, ordinary waves are such that at every point in space there is a certain "movement" or vibration, which is a function of position. On the other hand, speaking of an atom with various cortical electrons, the waves proper to it are functions simultaneously of as many degrees of freedom as these electrons possess. If one wishes to continue speaking of waves as functions of position, it is necessary to have recourse to a space of 3 n dimensions, where n is the number of electrons in question. This is the so-called "configuration space," {259} which has nothing to do with what we understand intuitively by "space"; rather, it is part of another concept of space that is very much more abstract: the functional space of Hilbert.

But, in the third place, and above all, even when we consider an atom containing only one electron, as in the case of hydrogen, material waves still do not have the same sense as ordinary waves. Let us take an example used by Schrödinger. Suppose that we have a cork floating on the surface of the water in a pond. A rock is thrown into the pond, and a wave motion is set up which slowly propagates across the surface until it reaches the cork. It is clear that the cork will suffer a jolt of greater or lesser degree, according to the intensity which the wave possesses

when it reaches the

position where it encounters the cork. What we call the configuration of the wave" is nothing but the result or collective expression of what has been happening at each point of the water's surface. And what happens at each point depends on nothing but the intensity of the force acting there. This is not at all what occurs in the case of material waves. Suppose that a ray of light impinges on an electron. If this light wave acted just as the water on the cork, the jolt received by the electron would depend on the intensity possessed by the wave when it reached the electron. Now, experience shows that the electron will or will not begin vibrating according to the total configuration of the wave, totally independent of its

intensity, and depending only on its color (i.e. its frequency). The electron behaves more like a resonator than a cork. The efficacy of the wave depends on its configuration

prior to reaching the electron. (This is the photoelectric effect, to which I [231] alluded when discussing the hypothesis of De Broglie.) Whence it follows that the configuration of the wave proper to the electron is not the

collective expression or result of what happens at each point of space; rather, on the contrary, its possible action at each point of space is conditioned by its previous wave configuration.

This is the primacy of the whole over each of its parts. In acoustics, both points of view coincide. I can think of a vibration as the sum of what happens to each {260}

molecule which is vibrating; but I can also characterize the vibration in terms of amplitude, phase, and frequency, through which beforehand the entire course of the wave is determined. In the case of the atom these two points of view do not coincide; rather, the only possible one is the second. We are not dealing with collective expressions,

but rather expressions about: the configuration of certain stationary waves. Nothing in this recalls waves in fluid media.

When we deal, then, with an order of magnitude below Planck's constant, the problems of particle mechanics reduce to problems of wave mechanics; and reciprocally, for orders of magnitude above it, certain problems of wave mechanics can be treated as corpuscular, just as is the case with light: for orders of magnitude greater than that of a wavelength, there is an equivalence between particle and wave interpretations of light.

This equivalence is something more than a simple comparison. It was devised by Hamilton as a simple mathematical artifice for treating certain problems of mechanics. In Newtonian mechanics one begins by posing a problem in the following terms: given the velocity and initial position of a point, find the trajectory of its movement. If instead of one there are many points, the final state of the system will be the result of the trajectory of each one (bearing in mind the particular initial conditions of the system). Hamilton, though, started from another consideration. Let us take many points at some initial time. Together they determine a surface. We give to each of them an initial velocity in a definite direction. After a certain time these points will be in different places. They will also determine a surface which, in general, will not have the same shape as the first. The problem of mechanics [232] can then be interpreted as a displacement of the first surface, with or without deformation, as if it were the propagation of a wave. What happens to each point depends on what happens to the surface which drags it along, and its trajectory will be the line along which it is dragged by the surface during the {261} latter's propagation. The undulatory method of Hamilton leads to the same results as the point method of Newton: it is immaterial whether one interprets the surface in question as a geometric arrangement of points obeying Newtonian mechanics, or the movement of each point as the trajectory along which the points making up the surface are displaced. This, which Hamilton intended as nothing more than a mathematical artifice, in Schrödinger's theory acquired a definite physical meaning: the equivalence between particle and wave mechanics, and thereby conferred a unity on physics.

Heisenberg, starting from discontinuity, reduces the question to a problem of non-commutative arithmetic. Schrödinger, starting from continuity, reduces the problem of quantification to that of the investigation of waves proper to each atom. Nevertheless-and this is essential-the contraposition is more apparent than real. Schrödinger demonstrated that from his equation the arithmetic relations of Heisenberg can be obtained; and conversely with the arithmetic of Heisenberg one can obtain Schrödinger's equation. In reality, the two together constitute one single mechanics: the mechanics of the atom. And this poses a special problem, to which I shall direct my attention shortly.

3. There remain, nevertheless, profound lacunae in the construction of the new mechanics. Among others, there is the inability to explain the experiment of Stern and Gerlach, which requires that account be taken of magnetic moment. And to explain this, it is necessary to suppose that electrons, besides having translational movement around the nucleus, also possess a rotational movement about an axis. This rotational movement defines a quantified magnetic and kinetic moment, the so-called "spin." Pauli attempted a mathematical explanation of this phenomenon, but it was unsatisfactory. Moreover, in spite of an essay by Schrödinger, it has proved impossible thus far to adequately take into account the relativistic conditions imposed on electromagnetic phenomena.

Dirac addresses his efforts to this group of problems. It is difficult to give an accurate discussion of the question without

[233] entering into {262}

mathematical considerations, so I will restrict myself to a few allusions. Let us consider a light wave. We are already familiar with its undulatory propagation, that is, we treat the phenomenon by means of the wave equation.

This was done all throughout the 19th century. But Maxwell sought to discover the forces which produce these waves. This is a completely different mathematical problem: it is not the problem of the course of movement, but rather that of the structure of a field. Fresnel had surmised that waves were due to elastic forces. Maxwell assumed that these forces were none other than the electrical and magnetic ones already known. There is an electromagnetic field. The structure of the field is such that one can deduce that any deformation introduced in it will necessarily propagate in the form of transverse waves. Light waves are nothing but a particular case of electromagnetic waves. The wireless and the radio-telephone are experimental applications of Maxwell's conception. His great creation was the discovery of the structure of the electromagnetic field. Now, it is fitting to ask what might be the structure of the field whose deformations constitute "material waves." To resolve this problem it is necessary to bear in mind relativistic considerations. The field must respect the invariance of the velocity of light and possess the same structure regardless of the observer looking at it, so long as he is moving in a rectilinear fashion. Dirac has succeeded in describing this field by means of a system of four equations, which are, with respect to the wave equation, what the equations of the electromagnetic field are with respect to light waves. The study of the movement of the electron in this field leads to Schrödinger's equation as a first approximation, if among other things we precind from the influence of magnetic fields and the variability of mass called for by relativity. But if we take the magnetic field into account, then we obtain as a second approximation an equation from which we deduce inexorably the existence of spin: the magnetic electron. {263}

But here it is necessary to return to what was said with regard to Schrödinger. In reality, this field is not comparable to the electromagnetic field of Maxwell, because in Dirac's field the waves do not propagate. And similarly, the "spin" is not a true rotation; it is a type of special orientation in space which the axis of the electron can have, but without introducing the intermediate stage of rotation-a type of rotation without rotation, a structure of configuration, but not a succession which propagates or which is [234] obtained by continuous movement whose course can be followed. It is something like-if I may be permitted a remote analogy, false in many respects-the difference between the right and left hands. It should be added, moreover, that Dirac's equations have no physical sense when applied to particles other than electrons; composite particles, such as alpha rays, do not exhibit the phenomenon of spin.

Developing these ideas in a formal and mathematical way, one arrives at a general theory, in which it is possible to obtain certain relations corresponding to those obtained in Maxwell's theory (Hartrees). But, here as there, it is impossible to deduce from field considerations the existence of particles with a unique charge. In order to achieve this, recourse was made to introducing quantum conditions, just as Bohr introduced them in Rutherford's model. But later, Dirac and others transformed the theory, introducing into the structure of the field itself relations similar to those employed by Heisenberg, with which they obtained, as a natural consequence, the quantum conditions. In this way, a general quantum theory of fields has been elaborated in which, as Klein and Jordan have demonstrated, there is absolute equivalence between the particle and wave points of view. {264}

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3. FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS OF PHYSICS IN THE NEW THEORY

We have seen, in broad outline, the complex of ideas within which the new mechanics of the atom operates. But after detailed studies and when all the mathematics has been worked out, we return to Bohr's clear atomic model and ask ourselves anxiously, "What

are the states of the atom in the new mechanics? What are the electrons? What are these

waves?"

All the intuitive meaning which these terms used to have has disappeared in the new physics, whether one considers Heisenberg's or Schrödinger's version.

The state of the atom is not a state in which one encounters the electrons situated in determinant points of space and instants of time. The quantities on which the state of the atom depends are not the velocity and distance from the nucleus of the electrons, as was the case in Bohr's atom; rather, each state' is determined by the simultaneous participation of the atom in all the possible states of the classical system, in the same way that a sound is determined, at each instant and at each point of the musical instrument, by its simultaneous participation in all the elementary sounds making it up. The atom is, at one and the same time, in all possible states. Thus, the state of the atom is not a function of time and of spatial coordinates, but rather is a function of functions; or if I may be permitted the expression, a state of states. Each coordinate {266}

of each spectral line measures not a spatiotemporal

point, but rather the participation of the atom in the corresponding functions or proper waves. Whence it follows that the point at which an electron is located has no intuitive meaning either. The material point of quantum physics can be in various places at the same time, if the atom consists of various electrons-an essential phenomenon for the new statistical mechanics. [236]

What then is an electron? From the beginning Heisenberg maintained a generally corpuscular position, but with essential modifications, as we have seen. Schrödinger believed on the other hand (for a while) that the electron could be considered as a wave packet which propagated in space with a group velocity capable of being treated corpuscularly, but when studied microscopically it had an undulatory structure. It has not been possible to maintain this position, because the wave packet does not possess the requisite stability to constitute matter. Just as from the structure of the electromagnetic field the electron cannot be obtained as one of its singularities, neither can matter be obtained in this way from the wave theory. And there is no doubt that cathode ray experiments, for example, reveal the existence of true electrons (Jordan). But it is necessary to add that in regard to what this electron is, the meaning of "is" is nothing more than that of being the subject of a system of amplitudes and frequencies.

Finally, what are these waves ? De Broglie, and at the beginning Schrödinger, thought that they were dealing with real waves. The fact of electron diffraction, experimentally demonstrated by Davisson and Germer in 1927, seemed to amount to a proof of it. This famous experiment consisted of bombarding a crystal with electrons, and inspecting the patterns on the observation surface. They were not points, which they would have been if the electrons behaved like particles, but rather patterns such as appear if the experiment is done with X-rays. But it is necessary to {267} bear in mind that this experiment is not done with one single electron, but many. On that account Schrödinger supposed that the wave function measured the density of the electrical charge. But neither is this always possible. Bohr devised another interpretation of the same experiment. In order to ascertain the place in which the electron is found, I must repeat the experiment several times. Each time I encounter the electron in a place somewhat different than the last. But if I take the mean value of the measurements, I will know the probability that the electron is found in a particular place. To each particle, then, there is associated a certain probability. This probability acquires physical meaning if we suppose that its value at each point depends on the forces acting on the particle (among other things). Thus we would have a continuous function, which leads to Schrödinger's equation, and which determines the law in conformity with which this probability propagates through space. Material waves thus would be [237]

probability waves. The picture of these waves does not correspond to anything real, in the everyday sense, but rather is simply an illustration of some statistic. Seen from another point of view, a stationary state of the atom is a probabilistic cloud

surrounding the nucleus, and the old orbits correspond to condensations of this probability. That is, if I want to find out where the electron is, I discover that this probability intensifies, during some states, in a certain region of space, and during others, in other regions. The same can be said of the structure of light: the amplitude of the wave represents either its intensity or the probability that at a certain point a photon will be found. Nevertheless, Schrödinger does not admit the theory of light quanta. He often used to say, "When someone begins talking to me about light quanta, I begin to understand nothing."

This statistical theory could not have been elaborated without amplification of classical concepts of probability. Fermi-Dirac and Bose-Einstein statistics were newly created for quantum theory.

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And with this statistical theory the equivalence between wave and particle points of view acquires greater precision. This equivalence Bohr enuntiated as an explicit postulate, and Dirac and Jordan have developed it mathematically in the so-called "theory of transformations."

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THE REAL BASE OF THE NEW PHYSICS

The equivalence between these two points of view is something more than a happy coincidence. It is based in reality. This is the great discovery of Heisenberg: the uncertainty principle. Let us again recall Bohr's atomic model. In order for this model to make sense it was necessary for the measurement of position and velocity of an electron at a specified moment of time to make sense too. But such measurement is impossible, not because practically

it cannot be done, but because the phenomenon itself implies the radical impossibility of such a measurement. In any measurement, in fact, the measuring device should not significantly affect what it measures. But, for any measurement, it is necessary to see the object and, therefore, to illuminate it. When we deal with objects an order of magnitude or more greater than that of Planck's constant, the action of light on the object is insensible. But when we deal with electrons, the object measured is of the same order of magnitude as the light wavelength which illuminates it, and consequently is sensibly affected by it. In what sense? Compton demonstrated experimentally that when a beam of monochromatic light is directed on an electron, the velocity imparted to the electron increases as the wavelength of the incident light is decreased. Let us suppose, then, that knowing the place occupied by the electron, we desire to know its velocity. We should have to employ light of long wavelength. The way, the velocity of the electron will suffer the smallest possible change; but on the other hand, the place it occupies is now less precisely delineated. Let us then use light of short wavelength. We now precisely fix the position of the electron, but its {270}

velocity will have changed considerably. it is not possible to simultaneously determine the position and velocity of the electron. Any attempt to do so will result in a total error of at least the order of magnitude of Planck's constant. Outside the atom, this measurement error can be totally disregarded; but inside it is unavoidable. It makes the concepts of wave and particle lose their meaning when we deal with quantities of the order of magnitude of Planck's constant. The equivalence between particle and wave mechanics thus turns out to be founded [239]

in physical reality itself. Consequently it makes no sense to ask what the real relation is between particles and waves. DeBroglie thought at one point that this relation is such that the particle called an "electron" moves along carried by an associated wave, docilely following its laws of motion. This is the so-called "wave-pilot" theory. But De Broglie himself saw the difficulties facing such a conception, even if the wave is interpreted as a wave of

probability. With the uncertainty principle, the problem of the real relation between particles and waves loses its meaning. Particles and waves are nothing more than two languages, two systems of operations for describing one single physical reality. "Waves and particles," says Dirac, "ought to be considered as two conceptual formulations which have been shown to be adequate for describing one single physical reality. We should not try to form a single 'common' image in which both play a part; and it is important not to attempt to sketch out a mechanism obeying classical laws, and with it describe the connection between waves and particles and thus determine their movements. Any such attempt goes squarely against the axioms in accordance with which the most recent physics has been developed. Quantum mechanics has no pretension other than establishing the laws which govern phenomena, in such a form that by means of them we can determine univocally what will happen under well-defined experimental conditions. Any attempt to plumb the relation between particles and waves for meanings or information beyond that necessary for the foregoing goal would be useless and senseless." {271}

Such is the general outline of the brilliant work of Heisenberg, Schrödinger, and Dirac: the formulation of a new symbolic mechanics of the quantum which, as Bohr says, should be considered as a generalization of classical mechanics. It does no violence to classical mechanics and in fact can be compared to it in beauty and internal coherence. From this standpoint, relativistic mechanics is the crowing glory of classical mechanics. The proportion and nature of the contributions of each of the three creators of the new theory has, without doubt, influenced the decision of the Jury in awarding the 1932 prize solely to Heisenberg, and dividing the 1933 prize between Schrödinger and Dirac. {272}

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5. UNRESOLVED PROBLEMS

This mechanics has been accompanied by a growing list of successes. It has succeeded in treating atoms with several electrons (the n -body problem), and through application of special mathematical theories (such as that of groups) it has been able to tackle more generally the problems of molecular structure, etc. But, even with all this, important problems recently uncovered are as yet not resolved.

In the first place, it has not been possible to take into account in a satisfactory way all the conditions required by the theory of relativity. The first efforts of Schrödinger and Dirac were limited to special relativity, but in certain respects applied also to general relativity. Recently Schrödinger, continuing the work of various physicists and mathematicians-above all that of Tetrode-has attempted to study, from the point of view of general relativity, the movement of an electron as defined by Dirac's theory in a gravitational field. And Van der Waerden has reached the same results by simpler methods. Einstein, for his part, has just dedicated an important study to this subject, which he presented to the Academy of Amsterdam a few weeks ago. But the problem remains unresolved. Without doubt the new atomic physics could reproach the theory of relativity because it does not take into account quantum conditions. But this would serve no purpose other than to underline the current lack of communication between these two worlds of physics. {274}

In the second place, Dirac's theory leads to the so-called "negative energy solutions," i.e. to electrons with negative rest mass, whose existence is inevitable if the theory is going to explain the fact of diffusion of light by electrons. But such solutions pose serious difficulties. When these new electrons enter into relation with ordinary electrons, i.e. with the only ones observed up to now, the former will experience an attraction due to the latter, which will in turn exercise a repulsive force. Whence it will result that the two will follow each other in a swift race. And besides the [241] existence of these negative energy states, a collision (according to De Broglie) with those of positive energy would produce a type of trepidation about the center of gravity of the probability (according to Schrödinger). Finally, the probability that an electron of positive mass may spontaneously become one of negative mass, or vice versa, is very great (Klein's paradox). In principle, Dirac accepted the existence of

those electrons, in spite of everything, supposing that they were unobservable. When they jump to positive mass, they will become observable, i.e. normal electrons, and the hole that disappeared will be a proton. The inverse transformation would lead to the simultaneous disappearance of an electron and a proton, manifested in the form of radiation. It was difficult to admit this. But the most recent experiments have revealed the existence of positive particles of the mas s of an electron, the so-called positive electron, or positron.

In a study about to be published, Dirac places the positron in relation to the negative energy solutions, and the theory acquires a plausibility which at the beginning could not have been suspected. But the matter is still full of thorny difficulties.

Finally, some new atomic phenomena fall outside the scope of quantum mechanics. The atom, in fact, is not made up solely of orbital electrons, but also contains a central nucleus, where there are particles of positive charge, such as protons, and neutrons, which are very heavy. Our nascent understanding of {275}

the nucleus escapes, at present, all of quantum physics.

It seems probable that quantum mechanics can be readily applied to these heavy particles of the nucleus, prescinding from relativistic considerations. But let us not forget, as Heisenberg observes in an unpublished study devoted to this problem, that with heavy particles alone one does not obtain the whole nucleus; there are, perhaps, electrons in it as well. And their presence calls for relativisitc considerations. It seems, then, that Dirac's equations are the only adequate instrument for this study. But this [242]

presents enormous difficulties. We have already seen some of the problems to which it gives rise. From Klein's paradox-which is its consequence-it would follow that there can be no electrons in the nucleus. Other difficulties are piled on top of this, which makes it seem that something more than a simple modification of wave mechanics is needed. And in fact Schrödinger has attempted such a modification. It is necessary for us to possess, besides, a complete quantum electrodynamics, something which we do not as yet have. Heisenberg notes that we are so far away from being able to interpret the physics of nuclear electrons that neither classical nor quantum physics nor the two together offer so much as a point of reference for us to orient ourselves to the problem. Let us simply bear in mind that the relations which are established between orbital electrons on the basis of their charge must be established for nuclear electrons on the basis of their mass.

Moreover, we are ignorant of the forces holding the nucleus together. Heisenberg recognizes that they are totally different from the attractive and repulsive forces of Coulomb, which maintain the connection between orbital electrons and the nucleus. The alpha particles (composed of four protons and two electrons) should be considered as independent. The neutrons ,

also recently discovered (masses without electrical charge), play an essential part in the structure of the nucleus. Finally, it is necessary to study the disintegration of the nucleus. And the existence of beta radiation makes Bohr proclaim, perhaps too soon, the demise of the {276} concept of energy and the principles of conservation, with regard to nuclear stability.

There are many new horizons to the remarkable work of these last ten years, to be sure. Consequently, bear in mind that the delineation of its character is, if not provisional, then at least fragmentary.

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6. THE NATURE OF PHYSICAL KNOWLEDGE

In view of the foregoing, it is definitely premature to seek to philosophize too publicly on these problems, since physics finds itself almost daily in some dramatically new situation. One difficulty is no sooner resolved than new

unsuspected difficulties appear on the horizon, often affecting the very roots of the science. The dizzy pace of discoveries could cause any new philosophy of science to quickly become a heap of childish relics. No more than ten years ago Bohr's model implied a curious situation: the radiation produced in a jump from one orbit to another depended not only on the initial state, but the final one as well, so that there was a type of efficacy of this latter before it was in fact realized. One could then believe in a resurgence of the concept of teleology (in the worst sense of the word) in physics. Who today would argue that way? So all of this, while not an obstacle to a philosophy of nature (which is something very different from a simple critical reflection on the conceptual pictures emerging from science), is something to beware of. Let us, therefore, do no more than sketch out a series of preoccupations and anxieties which, inevitably, the new physics awakens.

And in the first place, there is the very idea of physical knowledge. It is not merely that the so-called "crisis of intuition" (which would better be termed "crisis of imagination") has taken us quite far from what physics seemed to be prior to 1919. Apart from a few isolated and totally ignored thinkers (Duhem, above all, but also Mach and Poincaré), the physicists believed with complete unanimity that physical knowledge was this: represent {278} the things of the world to us, and therefore, imagine models whose mathematical structure leads to results coinciding with experience:

waves and atomic and molecular structures. But already the Maxwell electromagnetic theory had been a rude shock to the imagination. Maxwell's waves could not be vibrations of an elastic medium. The aether ceased to signify what it used to, even for Fresnel, viz. a medium characterized by maximum elasticity; instead it became a word designating lines of forces utilized by Faraday as simply a cognitive symbol. In fact, by 1919 Einstein could say that the aether possessed no other mechanical property

[244] than its immobility, nor had any mission other than that of supplying a subject for the verb "to oscillate." And the theory of relativity had just definitively taken leave of physical theories based in imagination. Correctly understood, imagination is the organ which represents, and in this sense knows, what the world is. It was apparent then that in physical theories, there were two essential and distinct elements: the image of the world, and its mathematical structure or formulation; and of these two the first is dispensable and circumstantial, only the second expresses physical truth. This much, then, appeared sufficiently clear before the new physics was systematized.

But the reform in physics introduced by the new developments goes a step farther: it affects the very sense of mathematics as organon

of physical knowledge. And to this delicate point I would now like to direct my attention.

What is the logical framework of the new physics?

Above all, it is necessary to recall that, as Dirac says, "the intent of quantum mechanics is no thing more than an amplification

of the dominion of those questions to which an answer can be given, but not in such a way as to give answers more precise

than those which can be confirmed by experience." There is, then, an attempt even more radical than that of the theory of relativity to achieve agreement with experimental truth, to create experimental concepts for

actual experiences. Whence follow the distinctive internal characteristics of the

facts from which it starts, of the problems based on the facts, and the meaning of the solution which it finds. {279}

Modern physics was born from the measurement of observations.

This is what classical physics understood by facts. But these expressions give rise to a fundamental error in contemporary thought. What do we understand by "observation"? Whatever its structure may be in the long run, an observation is, provisionally, something which the observer contemplates. The observer does nothing, or if we desire to continue speaking of "doing," does nothing but contemplate, i.e. record. Therefore, he is disconnected-that, at least, is the idea-from the contents of what he observes. Whence it follows that, to make an observation, it suffices to realize one by one various efforts to measure the same object, excluding of course systematic or accidental errors which de facto happen to be [245] made. Nothing like this takes place in the new physics. Besides the foregoing errors, in every observation the observer by the mere fact of observing essentially modifies the nature of what is observed, because as we saw earlier it is necessary to illuminate the object. Whence it follows first, that a concrete indication of the instant in which the observation was realized is essential; and second, that to repeat an observation, a special act is necessary to recall the system to its initial state, before the first observation; i.e. the second observation is really of an object different that the first, and so forth with other observations. This is what Dirac calls observable. (It is not necessary to add that we deal here only with physical observables; hence, with magnitudes that can be measured in any observation; so that, at least at the beginning, this physics respects all the demands of the theory of relativity). This is something completely different from the fact of classical physics. And if I take the

mean value of the measurements made on the same observable, I can consider this as its value. Measure has here, then, a completely different meaning too. In classical physics, "measure" signifies the really existing relation between the measuring instrument and what is measured. The measurement was a good or {280}

bad approximation to the real measure, the only one which counted. But now "measure" signifies "I measure," i.e. I realize or can effectively realize a measurement This measurement is not an approximation to some true measure, but rather the measure is, in itself, the mean value of the measurements. We would, for example, call the velocity of an electron the mean value of the velocities resulting from many consecutive measurements on the same electron. If I now designate the observable by a symbol and put forth rules for combining these symbols, I will have an algebra of observables, and therewith physical happenings become dynamical variables which pose a mathematical problem.

What is the problem ?

The problem of classical physics was the following: Given any system, I can measure it at two distinct times, t l

and t 2 . Usually [246] I will find it in two different states. It is, then, clear that the system will have changed. I

can then propose to investigate the real course of this variation, given the initial state. The symbols designating this initial state are the, expression of the real measure existing between the real quantities. And a mathematical law expresses the course of variation leading to the final state. That is to say, the mathematical equations, stripped of any imaginative allusion, are the formal expression of what really goes on in the system, without reference to any observer. The structure of the equations is the structure of reality. Let us take a simple example, the movement of a particle. At instant t 1 the particle occupies a place

x 1 and has an initial velocity v 1 . Newton's equations express the amount of variation which x

and v

really undergo, from the initial time t 1

to when the particle finds itself at point x 2 with the final time t 2 velocity v 2 . Newton's equations describe, then, the trajectory leading from

x 1 to x 2,

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and the velocity possessed by the particle at each intermediate instant. The new physics takes things from another point of view. At time t 1 I make a measurement (in the sense previously indicated) of the position and velocity of the particle. Let x 1 and v 1 be the result of the measurement, i.e. the observables. After a certain time, at t 2 I again make these measurements and generally find results different from the first; i.e. at t 2

the particle is at x 2 with velocity v 2 , where x 2 and v 2 signify once again the mean value of the respective measurements. I can now propose to find out what operations I have to go through with the measurements x 1 and v 1

to obtain x 2 and v 2 . The conjunction of these operations is Newton's equations. In this case, the equations do not have, by themselves, any real sense: only the observations to which they lead; therefore they do not refer to what happens in the system between two observations. The sense of the equations is just this: given certain measurements at a specified time, predict future measurements made on the same object at any other time, i.e. anticipate observables. Independent of these, the equations have no meaning. Therefore, they do not express, in our example, the trajectory or the continuous variation of velocity. Neither of these concepts has the classical meaning here. So what does trajectory, [247]

in fact, mean now? It is the conjunction of points at which I will encounter the particle, if I make measurements at the intermediate positions between that of departure and that of arrival. As these positions form a discontinuous succession, since they are chosen by one, two, three or more arbitrary acts of mine, it turns out that the graphical concept of trajectory lacks real meaning, through in classical physics it was a continuous line. The same can be said of velocity, as Schrödinger observes. We call "velocity" the distance separating two places which are occupied by the same body in two extremes of unit time. Therefore it is always a finite difference. But in the same way that it constructed a trajectory,

classical physics constructs velocity at a point, by making the unit time infinitely small. In reality, this is something having no immediate physical meaning, i.e. measurable or operational meaning. {282}

The new physics does not pose or consider as physical problems other than those which refer to experimentally measurable quantities. This has permitted it to present itself as a natural extension of classical physics. If we Want to do all the operations necessary to reach the final state of a system given the initial state, the operations which Newton did are not sufficient; it is necessary to do others besides them, namely those of quantum mechanics, " Only when the equations of motion, along with quantum conditions, are given , " says Dirac, " only then will we

know as much about the variables as classical theory, and only then can we consider that the system has been adequately characterized from the mathematical point of view. "

And this is an essential innovation. Mathematics and mathematical physics are operations to be realized. Mathematical symbols are only operators: they lack any meaning other than that of being symbols of operations to realize on other symbols which designate observables. Mathematics is simply a theory of operations,

it is not a theory of mathematical entities.

Of course this is no easy task, because the operators have to be defined with sufficient generality and uniqueness. Nor is fidelity to this requirement always easy. All too often anomalous cases turn up in which operators defined only for a priviledged system of coordinates are employed, though they cannot be applied to other [248] systems. It is as if, for instance, a distance were measured in meters, but could not be in kilometers. In Dirac, and also in Schrödinger, these cases are not infrequent, but are overlooked on account of their immediate success. And we do not mention Dirac's function, which has no mathematical meaning. It is true that von Neumann has managed to reach the same results as Dirac employing correct

methods. But everyone recognizes that a strict foundation for all the methods and techniques employed today in the new physics would be impossible, at least right now. Of course this renunciation of truth gives rise from time to time to uneasiness, though it does let us predict experimental results There is more emphasis on the manipulation than on the understanding of reality. But, prescinding from these impurities, it would be reasonable to examine with some rigor in {283} what sense that which is called knowledge of the atom is, in reality,

just that. It will be necessary then to examine the possibility that physics has renounced its status as knowledge, though I doubt-but I don't know how long I will persist in my doubt-that a theory of physical knowledge as purely operational could be viable. Mathematics has gone in such a direction. Brouwer says, "Mathematics is not a knowing, but a doing." However, the discussion of this point would carry us too far afield.

So with the problem of physics posed in the foregoing terms, what type of solution does the new physics offer? With the concept of quantity in classical physics it is clear that mathematical formulae lead from an initial quantity to a final quantity or quantities which are real; i.e. if we carry out measurements on the final state, the results will approximate more or less the true value of the quantity measured. A formula will be adequate when, among other conditions, it is such that the error of approximation is less than a predetermined limit: limit in Cauchy's sense. Only

a small part of classical physics offered a different point of view, namely thermodynamics and the theory of gases. There is no [249]

reason why two bodies of water with different temperatures, after being mixed for a certain time, equalize at some intermediate temperature. But the probability that this does not occur is infinitely small. The mean velocity of molecules in a gas enabled Boltzmann to explain its pressure. But always it was believed that this technique was justified only by the impossibility, in which de

facto we find ourselves, of operating on individual molecules; and even if this were not the reason, on account of the enormous number of molecules with which we would have to deal. But Boltzmann did not doubt that the state of a gas was nothing more than the result of the actions of each and every one of its molecules. Very different is the situation in which the new physics of the atom finds itself. Be as it may the real activity of each molecule, from the moment it is unobservable, it lacks physical meaning. Physical laws are nothing but anticipations of experience, i.e. effective measured values, realized or realizable within the bounds of observation. Therefore, nothing has physical meaning other than that approximation which is really accessible to observation. {284}

Hence, the order of magnitude of Planck's constant is a frontier, not merely de facto, but essential. Due to it physical laws, precisely because they deal with mean values of observations, have no other meaning than that of determining the distribution of these values; i.e. they are statistical laws.

This does not mean that they lose their ideal character. Just as the classical laws, the laws of the new physics are ideal, limiting laws. But the reality measured by the value of practical approximations is not something independent of our observations, but rather the statistical limit of them: limit in the sense of Bernoulli. They are statistical limits. And for them, the order of magnitude of Planck's constant is a natural frontier. In classical

physics the electron is at a place which perhaps I do not see, but which I believe has to exist. For the new physics the electron is where it can be found.

But this gives rise to a difficult situation. All physics attempts, in one form or another, to foretell the causal course of events, i.e. what happens independently of the observer. But the spatiotemporal scheme in which physics describes reality is itself founded on observations in whose content the observer intervenes. Whence there results an internal opposition-complementarity or [250]

reciprocity Bohr called it-between causality and the spatiotemporal scheme that physics employs. Consequently, the very concept of observation is affected by an internal indetermination, on account of which it remains to be decided what things can be considered as observables or as media of observation. Whence the liberty of expounding with two different methods (waves and particles) the same reality. There is no way of escaping these difficulties, except by retaining the usual meaning of these two concepts, taken from everyday experience, and defining a

posteriori

the limits of their application. This is the work realized by the school of Bohr, and which led to Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle. The problem rests, then, upon giving a unified theory of this complementarity: " Only if one attempts to create a system of concepts adequate for this complementarity between the spatio-temporal and the causal {285}

descriptions, can we judge of the non-contradiction of quantum methods. " (Heisenberg.)

The new physics has taken seriously this concept of probability and of observation. In contrast to the old physics, it has the virtue of audaciously accepting probability and moving therein without dissimulation. This is a task which has cost humanity centuries; more, perhaps, than that of acclimating itself to necessity. It has not been a whim or conceptual game-that is its great significance-but a requirement of the evolution of science, which began with Einstein and here has reached its maximum degree: the subordination of theory to experience. Probably the union of theoretician and experimenter in the very same person of the physicist has wider significance than the purely methodical one of erasing the isolation in which theoretical and experimental physics used to live. That union has a constructive sense for physics as such: the creation of experimental concepts, translatable into conceptual

experiences. Both of them pertain essentially to the new physics. And by "experimental concepts" we do not mean concepts with which experience is in agreement, as if experience were something external to them and limited to "suggesting," proving, or rejecting them; rather in the experimental concept experience is an essential part of the concept itself. In classical physics almost all concepts are substitutions for experience. In the new physics the concepts are experience itself made into a concept. The meaning of

a physical concept is to be in itself a virtual experience. Reciprocally, experience has a conceptual structure. Experience is the actuality of the concept. But this is no [251] longer a question of logic; rather, it is one of ontology. And this is the definitive point. Heisenberg touched on this problem when he spoke of complementarity. It is the problem of what should be understood by physical reality, i.e. what is nature in the physical sense. At the bottom of the evolution of contemporary physics there is taking place the elaboration of a new idea of physical reality, of nature. For this reason, and in this precise sense, I call the new physics "a problem of philosophy." {286}

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7. THE FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEM

This problem of complementarity is what impelled Heisenberg to formulate the Uncertainty Principle: any simultaneous determination of position and velocity of an electron results in an essential error of an order of magnitude no smaller than Planck's constant ( ). As we have said, for any measurement I must illuminate the object measured, and in the case of electrons, the light modifies their position and velocity. The concepts of wave and particle lose their meaning when we deal with atomic magnitudes, so that the Uncertainty Principle supplies the real foundation of this new concept of the physical universe. And "real foundation" is precisely what must be clarified, because it could well happen that this expression is ambiguous.

Uncertainty or indetermination seems to be what is most opposed to the character of all scientific thinking. Planck, therefore, indignantly rejects this concept; to renounce determinism would be to renounce causality, and with it, everything that has constituted the meaning of science from Galileo up to the present day. If our measurements on the atom are indeterminate, it would seem to say that our manner of investigating it is likewise indeterminate. Indeterminism, if it exists, would be for Planck a characteristic of the present state of our science, but in no way a characteristic of things themselves.

But regardless of the ultimate fate reserved for physics, Planck's attitude' categorically denies the anomaly to which Heisenberg's principle grants a place. {288}

Above all, it is unnecessary to interpret the said principle as a negation of determinism. It is possible that things are interrelated

by determinate links, i.e. that the state of the electron in an instant of time univocally determines its later course. But what Heisenberg's principle affirms is that such a determinism has no physical meaning, on account of the impossibility of knowing exactl y the initial state. If this impossibility were accidental, i.e. if [253] it depended on the subtlety of our means of observation, Planck would be right. But if it is an absolute impossibility for physics, i.e if it is founded in the very nature of measurement as such, the presumed real determinism escapes physics. It no longer has physical meaning. In such case, the Uncertainty Principle would not necessarily be a renunciation of the idea of a cause, but rather of the idea that classical physics formed of causality. This, and nothing more, is the scope of the Uncertainty Principle. It is not a statement about things in general, but rather about things as objects of physics. And precisely for this reason, because the new physics is pure physics, it renounces everything earlier which is a mixture of what is physics and what is not.

And secondly, in response to Planck, it is not true that the idea of nature, in the physical sense, is the idea of the nature

of things simpliciter. In fact, Galileo's great work consisted in distinguishing these two ideas and attempting to give physical sense to physics. This task had been fully prepared in the ontology of Duns Scotus and Ockham, but was only realized explicitly and in mature form in the work of the Pisan thinker. For Galileo there is a radical distinction between nature in the sense of nature of things and nature in the sense of physics;

and analogously, a distinction between causality as an ontological relation, and physical causality. The latter seeks to measure variations; the former, to discern the origin of the being of things. This distinction has sufficed to the point that an uncontrollable variation, i.e. something which does not vary at all in our experience, has no physical meaning; such, for instance, is the supposition that the universe is characterized by uniform rectilinear motion. Physics cannot occupy itself with {289} the origin of things, but only with the measurement of their variation; it is not an etiology, but a dynamics. Force is not the cause of being, but the reason for changes in state. In this sense, inertial movement does not require any force. So, not only is it untrue that the idea of cause gave rise to modern science, but in fact modern science had its origin in the exquisite care with which it restricted this

idea. That renunciation was for the representatives of the old physics the great scandal of the epoch. How is it possible for physics to renounce explanation of the origin of all movement? This heroic renunciation, nevertheless, engendered modern physics. Hence it is not permissible to whisper of scandals in the face of Heisenberg's principle; it is rather necessary to faithfully examine the situation and see if it [254]

does not give to physics its ultimate stroke of purity.

Summarizing:

1. Like every science, physics utilizes certain methods to discover truths about things. Such, for example, is the use of differential equations or various practical methods of measurement. The methods, thus understood, are an aspect of the cognitive activity of man, and every affirmation about them is an affirmation of logical character. But the methods, in plural, are diverse with a certain unity: they attempt to move us closer, in the most efficacious manner, to the things present to us. Therefore they presuppose that these things are in fact present to us. If one desires to continue using the word "method" for this primary presence, it will be necessary to understand by "method" something different than what is understood when we speak of the "diverse methods" of physical science. "Method" here will be the primary discovery of the physical world, as opposed to the other methods, which discover to us some of the things that there are in this world. All methods, then, are possible thanks to a primary method, the method whose result is not knowledge of what things are, but rather to put things before our eyes. Only in this sense can it be said that science is defined by the world of objects to which it refers. This operation is by no means insignificant. After Aristotle we had to wait for Galileo to put {290} before our eyes a world different than that which Aristotle discovered to us: the world of our physics. Galileo has instructed us to see what we call "world" with a different vision, viz. the mathematical one. All the other methods presuppose that "the great book of nature is written with mathematical characters." A mathematical vision of the world is the work of Galileo. Affirmations dealing with method thus understood are no longer affirmations about human knowledge and therefore, not logical affirmations-but affirmations about the world, real affirmations.

2. These real affirmations do not constitute affirmations about what things are, simpliciter. I

can, for example, say that things have always existed, or that they have been created by God; that none has in itself the principle of movement, or that some move themselves; that their essence is extensio (Descartes) or vis (Leibniz), etc. Correctly viewed, none of these affirmations is a physical truth. They are, it is true, affirmations which refer back to bodies'. But it is not quite true to proclaim without further qualification that physics is the science of bodies. Physics does not [255] consider bodies insofar as they are. It is not to them that the methods I alluded to above are applied.

3. Physics is directed to natural things. (Let us leave aside the complications that biology would oblige us to introduce into this problem if we wanted to be completely rigorous). Physics begins not when we deal simply with things, though they be corporeal; but rather when the meaning of the adjective "natural" is made precise. What do we understand by "natural"? What is "nature"? An answer to these questions has to be an affirmation that will mark off, within the world of what there is, those entities which fall within the region of the

natural. Hence, it will have a double dimension. On the one hand, it will look at the whole world of things that are; on the other, it will look at the interior of a region of it. In its primary aspect such an affirmation will be a methodical negation of everything which is not this new region; consequently, within its negativity, it will pose for ontology the problem of discerning the regions of being. But with respect to {291}

the second aspect, it will be an affirmation giving primary meaning to what there is in this new region. It will be, then, what permits establishing or placing things in the region; it will be the principle of their positum ,

of positivity, a positive principle; i.e. it will permit giving univocal meaning to the verb "to exist" within the region; it will have given rise to a positive science. To these principles Kant gave the name "Original metaphysical principles of natural science." And science has always had the impression that such principles are, in fact, philosophical. It suffices to recall the title of the mechanics of Newton: Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy.

Now, the Uncertainty Principle is not primarily a logical one. It is not an affirmation about the scope of our means of observation, but rather about observable things. It has nothing to do with the subjectivity or objectivity of human understanding. The relation found between light and matter is perfectly real, just as the vision of a cane submerged in water is not less real or more illusory than that which we have of it when it is out of the water. In both cases we are far removed from any subjectivity. The relation between a photon and an electron is just as real as the law of gravity or the principle of inertia.

But neither is the Uncertainty Principle a principle of ontology in general, as if it pretended to deny the existence of causality. Whatever may be the verdict on that, it does not affect the [256]

Uncertainty Principle at all. Causality is not synonymous with determinism; rather, determinism is a type of causality.

The Uncertainty Principle is one of those principles of regional ontology which seeks to define the primary sense of the expressions "natural" and "nature." Or in other words, to define the meaning of the verb "to exist" in physics. And this is the question which must be analyzed with some precision.

1. Since Aristotle, the conjunction of items grouped under the name of physics has been understood as referring to things which change, or, as he said, {292} which move. (Aristotle's Physics is not a physics in our present-day sense, but the difference only comes to mind when we recall the double ontological and positive dimension of the work.) The word "nature" signifies movement, actual or virtual, which emerges from the very depths of the being which moves. To emerge from the depths this way is essential to the movement. For this reason the physis is properly the arkhe, the principle of kinesis. But to describe the meaning that nature has for Aristotle in its entirety, we must see how he views movement. Without the necessity to enter into commentary on his definition, or even to quote it, it suffices to say that for Aristotle movement always involves a coming to be ; he considers movement from the point of view of being. It is also true to say that he looks at being from the point of view of movement. And Aristotelian physics rests squarely on the internal unity of both of these viewpoints. Now, what a thing is becomes patent to me when I consider it as something determinate among all the rest; hence, when I regard it from the point of view of metron ,

measure. "Measure" does not here signify anything primarily quantitative, but rather the internal unity of being as such, the hen, the one. Measure, in a quantitative sense, is based on this more general concept of measure as

ontological determination. When I regard things from the point of view of

measure, they appear in their proper figure, in their eidos ,

their idea. In it, then, is contained what the thing truly is. The idea is therefore its form, where form has as little to do with geometry as measure with arithmetic. What a thing is, its idea, is thus what is seen in a certain special vision, in the noein, which gives us its measure and

its form . In what a thing is, therefore, its being and the being of man are linked in a radical unity. Treating movement from the point of view being is treating it from the point of view of measure. And the principles which give ontological reality and precision to movement are consequently principles of [257] being, i.e. causes. This then is the meaning of Aristotelian physics. Nature is

taxis, order, measure of causes. {293}

For Aristotle, this point of view is common to every class of movement, including local movement. Suffice it to recall that

place, for Aristotle, is an ontological category, and that therefore change of place is change of mode of being. But he realized that it is precisely in local movement where this dimension most easily escapes us. Whence his opposition to mechanical

explanations, not because he considers them necessarily false, but because they do not affect the being of things. On this point, Aristotle has almost always been misunderstood, because it can be said that he goes against common sense, which is not very flexible with respect to ontology. And, if the truth be told, it must be recalled that Aristotle is the first in the history of human thought (Plato is very confused) and the last to have conceived movement ontologically.

2. In fact, the natural propensity of the mind is just the opposite. Man inexorably seeks to elude non-being. Hence he eludes all true becoming, because all becoming is coming to be from what was not. We tend, then, to disguise the real significance of this non-being, thinking that movement is simply an appearing of what already was, but was obscure; or a disappearing, i.e. continuing to be in a hidden way what before was patent. Since Democritus, for example, atoms have served to skirt the abyss of not-being. The atoms are invariable, indestructible, eternal; things are, for Democritus, aggregates of atoms; hence their generation is a simple combination of what already exists, but not a true generation, i.e. a becoming. Aristotle emphasized on various occasions the difficulties encountered by the atomistic concept of generation. Consequently, the movement preferred by all atomists is local movement, not only because it is clearer and more distinct, as Descartes said, but because it is, as Aristotle realized, that in which it is easiest to elude the problem of the origin of being. Indeed, local movement is the clearest because it makes least reference to non-being. There is no coming to be of what was not, but a mere variation of what already is. {294}

When regarding movement from the point of view of being in general was renounced, quantity and movement thus became the interpretive principles of reality. The distinction between movement as becoming and movement as simple variation is essential not only to physics, but to ontology as well. It implies a [258]

radical reform of the Aristotelian meaning of nature. But only a reform, because the conceptual scheme in which we move derives squarely from Aristotle. In this sense, modern physics could not have been born without Aristotelian ontology, even though the latter had to be reformed in some of its points.

What things are, said Aristotle, is in effect present when I look at them from the point of view of their measure. But while for him measure was ontological unity, it now has been converted into quantitative determination. Hence, the nous, the

mens, sees the being of all things from the quantitative point of view. It is in measurement now that man and the world are linked. Measure is now the meaning of mens and the meaning of things. For this reason Nicholas of Cusa said, repeating a phrase of St. Thomas, that every mensura is the work of a mens. This is the consecration of the mathematical method. And, reciprocally, the thing seen by the mens is a measurable determination: Aristotelian form is turned into material configuration.

And from antiquity the idea has been gaining strength that in the metron as quantity (materia signata quantitate)

is contained the explanation of individual things. Reality is quantitative measure. Thanks to Aristotelian ontology, mathematics now acquires the rank of an ontological character of reality. With it the meaning of the verb "to exist" is circumscribed: only the measurable has physical existence. Movement, as pure variation, is seen from

the mathematical point of view as a function of time. Therefore all movement is, at bottom, just like local movement: a function; it is stripped of connotation of generation and destruction. The "always" of nature is its mathematical structure. Nature is no longer order of causes, but norm of variations, lex , law. And every law is the work of a legislator. Nature is thus a law imposed by God on the course of things. Our concept of natural law has this double ontological and theological origin. The course of things is such that {295} the state they possess at each instant determines univocally any later state. Nature is, in this sense, a habit of God. That is, the formal character of law is the determinatio , the determination. Thus it can be captured with security and certainty by man in a mathematical function. It is essential to record here these too often forgotten connections. With them it is easy to understand the sense of the expression "phenomenon:" as aspect of nature; hence, not a thing, as for a Greek, but a happening, an event. This happening will be understood when we know its place in the course of nature. [259]

This is obtained by measurement. And here we have the origin of modern physics: measuring the variations of phenomena. Modern physics is anything but the invention of a new special method; it is the enthroning of the ontological and constituent character which mathematics has acquired as the interpretation of reality. In this physics, there is no question of the origin of either things or movement, but only of the variations of initial states. Every body tends to remain in its state of rest or uniform rectilinear motion as long as there is no force acting on it. Such is the principle of inertia and its double ontological and positive significance.

But this does not mean that the Aristotelian concept has been abandoned, only that it answers another problem, viz. the problem of being in general. It is possible to interpret determinism as causality, admitting that causes act determinately. But even so, it would not do us any good, not because causes are not real, but because they have no physical meaning.

Analogously, the objects of physics arc not seen from the point of view of being: they are not entia , things, but simple phenomena, that is, manifestations of what already is, just as movement is simple variation of what is. The phenomena of nature are not the things of the world. Hence, concepts of mass, material, etc. which up to now have been assimilated to the idea of thing, henceforth signify something different. They correspond to different problems. Mass, for example, is nothing more than the quotient of force by acceleration, and so forth. But just as variation neither excludes nor includes causality,

{296} phenomenon neither includes nor excludes entity in the sense of thing. It should be pointed out that this concept of phenomenon has nothing to do with the phenomenalism currently under discussion in the theory of knowledge.) The problem of nature is not, for Galileo, a problem of entity and causality sensu stricto. The cardinal difference which makes a being, besides existing, to be natural, is not that its movement is caused in a certain way, but that it is determined as

phenomenon, i.e. measured in the course of nature: nature = measure of a course = phenomenonal law.

The development of this idea is the history of physics from Galileo up until our time. It is a history which is nothing but the labor of refining this concept of "nature." It explains why the formation of natural concepts is in no way similar to a simple abstraction, but is, on the contrary, a construction,

and more concretely, the construction called passing to the limit. And by this [260] I do not only refer to the infinitesimal method, but to every application

of mathematics to physics; a simple measurement is already, in this sense, a passing to the limit.

Now, this pass to the limit and all other mathematical operations, independently of their utilization in physics, have a meaning proper to mathematics by itself. And the result is that physics has had a propensity to define

physical existence as a simple case of mathematical existence. A physical reality is existent when it is determined as a mathematical function. Whence it follows that measure is a relation between mathematical magnitudes. What has happened then to the phenomena? The true reality is the mathematical relations; a phenomenon is something which remains outside of them and only acquires physical meaning, i.e. only is properly a phenomenon when it is submitted to mathematical laws. Nature in the sense of physics, and experience have grown farther apart until now they are almost completely separated. In fact the latter acquires physical meaning, physical usefulness, only insofar as it is submitted to this other world which is nature properly so-called: mathematical laws. Consequently, the only physical meaning of experience is to be an approximation.

That is, understanding experience {297}

is nothing more than determining which systems of mathematical relations we have to substitute for it.

As long as mechanics dominated all of physics in despotic fashion, the success of such a conception could not be doubted. But physics has to give explanations of things which apparently are not movements: temperature, colors, sounds, etc. And it is easy to understand that physics would devise a subterfuge so as to avoid speaking about the origin of colors as if we were dealing with a generation

ex nihilo: such was ;he establishment of a bijective correspondence between the facts of color perception and certain quantities submitted to mathematical laws. With it, the coming to be of colors turns into a simple modification of what already is: particles or elastic media. Once again, the sensible happenings or facts corresponding to these quantities have been relegated to the border of physics; they are, in the last analysis, approximations which suggest, corroborate, or contradict the truth of mathematical laws. But in and of themselves they are nothing, they do not form part of nature.

But the time came when these sensible happenings began to force a change not in this or that law, but in the very concept of [261]

law. At that moment science, just as in Galileo's time, had to ask itself about its proper world and inquire, "What is the physical world"? This is where it finds itself today. Let us look at it.

3. This uneasiness began with the study of electrical phenomena. Since Maxwell, electricity has not been governed by mechanical laws. It has its own laws. An abyss separated these two regions of the physical world, the world of motion and the world of electromagnetism. There was only one possible point of contact: Hamilton's principle. But this principle is not purely and exclusively mechanical in the usual sense of the word; it is a variational principle of much greater scope. Hence, within mechanics itself a breach was opened for a possible radical reform. To obtain the equations of mechanics starting from the invariant integral of Hamilton is to concede the subordination of mechanics to more general principles. Physics was no longer mechanical, {297} but mathematical. Not every function of time was necessarily local movement.

But things did not stop here. Electromagnetic laws are not only

distinct from, but in a certain way, opposed to the mechanical laws. The velocity of light is constant, not only

in vacuo (i.e. measured with relation to the aether), but also referred to any observer in an inertial system (that is, characterized by uniform rectilinear motion). Now, no one dared put his hands on Maxwell's laws, which are such an admirable theoretical and experimental work, about which Helmholtz used to ask if "some god had written them." It was Einstein who had the genial audacity to reform mechanics, setting himself the question of the meaning of measurement, and with it, of physical nature.

The measurement to which physics prior to Einstein referred was a relation between mathematical quantities in space and time. Consequently, physical existence had the same meaning as mathematical existence. After Einstein, this is not true. Physical existence is mentally distinct from mathematical existence. Or, as seen from the mathematical point of view, mathematics as the meaning of nature, physics, must not be confused with pure mathematics, To physics belongs light, i.e. the entire electromagnetic field and all matter. Hence the quantities from which physics, including mechanics, starts are cosmic quantities, i.e. the indivisible complex space-time-matter (including fields). Measurement is not a relation among mathematical quantities, but among cosmic quantities. The world of the so-called sensible things and [262]

the physical world are not two distinct worlds; the former is part of the latter. To this the name "geometrization of physics" has been given. Also, and perhaps with more propriety, it could have been called "physicalization of geometry." And at this point the interpretation of movement as pure variation reached its perfection; so much so, that Weyl believed it possible to eliminate any reference to real movement of bodies, in order to speak instead of a simple variation of the field in which they are located. It is impossible to go farther away from the idea that movement, in the sense of our physics, has anything to do with becoming. {299}

That is to say, the so-called geometrical structure of the universe depends-this is essential-on what used to be called reality. And, reciprocally, nothing has physical meaning unless it is a cosmically measurable quantity. Now, the physics of Galileo-Newton-Lagrange has quantities which are not measurable in this sense, e.g. absolute space, absolute time, bodies independent of space and time, etc. Whence the physics of Einstein is in many respects the culmination of classical physics: physical nature is real measurability.

But this word 'real' involves an ambiguity which must be clarified. One could think that this expression alludes to observations of an observer. Then, the meaning of Einstein's work would be to give a description of the universe valid for every observer from whatever point of view. That is, Einstein's physics would be, not a physics without an observer, but a physics with any observer whatever. This is true. But it is not the whole truth, nor even the essential or primary truth. The condition of invariance of physical laws does not refer primarily or fundamentally to the picture which an observer acquires of the universe, but rather to the structure of the universe, relative to any system of coordinates. But to this it is necessary to reply first, that the reciprocal is not true, and second, that then the system of coordinates is not to be interpreted as a point of observation, but on the contrary the point of observation as a system of coordinates. That is, the "human" mediation of physical quantities does not enter at all into the concept of measurement. The measurement is a relation which exists, i.e. is defined, among "cosmic" unities, but just as independently of the existence of the physicist as mathematical proportions exist independently of the mathematician. Mathematics is still, therefore, in Einstein's physics the formal structure of nature. Mathematics and matter have been fused [263]

together in a world, but man is left out of it.

But quantum physics takes the decisive step. In it, too, nature is real measurability. Here 'real' does not mean simply cosmic, as for Einstein, but effectively observable. {300}

Measure does not mean only existence of a relation ,

but I can "make" a measurement. Nature = real measurability = measurement of observables. Here we have what Heisenberg had to clarify for us when he enutiated the Uncertainty Principle, or in other words, when he inaugurated a new epoch in the history of physics.

Provisionally, 'observable' signifies for him visible, in a concrete sense; positions and velocities cannot be effectively measured without being seen. Visibility does not refer then, to subjective conditions, but to the presence of things in light. But one then speaks of light in two radically different senses. In the first place, it is

something which acts on things. In this sense, it is apart of what nature is. But if this action is supposed to give rise to an Uncertainty Principle, then I am considering light from the second point of view, not as something which acts on things, but as something which permits them to be seen, which makes them visible , i.e. makes them patent. These are two completely different meanings. In the first, light is a part of nature; in the second, it totally envelopes it: it is what constitutes the very meaning of what should be understood by nature, what separates it from everything which is not nature. In the first acceptation, light is a fragment of nature, an electromagnetic and photon phenomenon which occurs in it. In the second, light is simply

clarity, and therefore is not so much a phenomenon as what constitutes phenomenality as such. Dislodged from physics at the end of the Middle Ages, light as clarity reenters it. And if the first function of light is independent of man, the second makes essential reference to him. From the coincidence of both points of view the Uncertainty Principle is born, and this coincidence is purely human. The indeterminancy between position and velocity on account of the action of light does not arise unless there is a being who desires or needs to make use of light to determine the position occupied by bodies and the velocity with which they are animated. This does not occur in the theory of relativity. In it the existence of the physicist is necessary for there to be physics; but in the meaning of physics the nature of the physicist plays no part; what he does, does not pertain to physics, or at least, {301} does not pertain to it in the same sense as in quantum theory. In relativity theory, the physicist is limited to [264]

putting some things in relation to others; but in the content of this relation man does not intervene. In quantum theory not only does man put some things in relation to others, but nothing beyond that which is visible in such a relation has any meaning. Only then does it make sense to speak of indeterminancy. And this indeterminancy arises because light has both functions: it is, at the same time, a part of nature and that which envelopes it. Every being which physics deals with has to be referred, ultimately, to sight; if I handle temperatures, it is necessary to see the height of the mercury column in the thermometer, etc.

In other words, classical physics occupied itself only with the relative localization of some bodies with respect to others in the course of time, as measured by a periodic movement. Whence follows that the supposition-the condition, Kant called it-of every physical phenomenon, i.e. the formal structure of what is called 'nature,' is the spatio-temporal scheme, regardless of whether one considers it something a priori, as Newton and Kant maintained, or something a posteriori, as Leibniz and Einstein believed.

But the new quantum physics realizes that this is not sufficient: something is not a phenomenon, primarily, through its localization in a simple spatio-temporal structure, but through "visibility," if I may be permitted the expression. So it turns out that the supposition or condition of all phenomenality, the formal structure of nature, is light in the sense of clarity.

Hence, while for classical physics a law enuntiates the character of the articulation of a phenomenon with spatio-temporal structure, in the new physics a law enuntiates, in a certain way, the articulation of a phenomenon in the field of clarity, in which it is visible, and thanks to which it is "observable."

But this second point of view clearly involves the first: what is seen' is the spatio-temporal 'localization' of the material (in the broadest sense, including energy). Through this implication Heisenberg's indeterminancy is inexorably produced, {302}

and what the Uncertainty Principle effectively expresses is this new idea of nature.

In fact, if this attempt is successful-it is not yet time for a decision, nor do I feel myself qualified to make it-we should say that not only mathematics and matter, but the mathematical, the material, and the visible enter into the concept of nature, in a compact unity. That is to say, 'Space-Time-Matter-Light' (in the [265] sense of clarity), the observable: this is Nature (this sense of observable' does not exactly coincide with Dirac's usual meaning).

Physics, even more than in the case of Einstein, has nothing more than a human meaning. Strictly speaking, for God not only is there no physics, there is no Nature in this sense, either.

Thus, phenomena are not approximations to ideal objects of physics; rather they are the very objects themselves. The phenomena of Galileo become observables. Therefore the atoms, electrons, etc. rapidly lose their old meaning and become words designating a system of phenomenological relations. Let us recall, once again, that since Galileo the object of physics is not things, but phenomena. Consequently, when contemporary physics speaks of the equivalence between waves and particles, it does not imply that material things soften and become diluted in some vague and formless reality, but that this equivalence is, in fact, a purely phenomenal equivalence. The concepts of particle and

wave are interpretations of observables. For this physics does not have to take leave of observables and substitute objects of thought for them. The new physics does not substitute some beings for others. It must certainly pass to the limit; this is a pass to the limit within the phenomena, the limit of Bernoulli. The mathematical expression, considered as a law , has no meaning other than that of being a conjunction of virtual observations; consequently (given its concept of measure) it is the probability of an observation, not the real determination of a state. Or in other words, for physics the real state of something is only that in which I see it. Whence mathematics, which since Galileo has served to define the metron of what things are, now becomes a purely symbolic operation. It is not a geometrization or an arithmetization, but {303}

a symbolization of

physics. Movenient not only is not a coming to be, or even a variation of things, but an alteration of observables.

Summarizing, for Aristotle nature is a system of things (material substances) which come to be though causes; for Galileo nature is mathematical determination of phenomena (happenings) which change; for the new physics nature is distribution of observables. For Aristotle physics is etiology of nature; for Galileo it is mathematical measurement of phenomena; for the new physics it is probability calculation of measurements of observables. In the crisis faced by the new physics, whatever its resolution [266]

may be, we are not dealing with a problem internal to physics or with a problem of logic or theory of physical knowledge; we deal, ultimately, with the problem of the ontology of nature. The intent of this brief essay is to show that that is so.

It is scarcely necessary to say that with respect to a complete system of physics, we have not yet left a more or less purely pragmatic phase. Nor is this program, in the opinion of everyone, even realizable. I cannot forget what Einstein told me on one occasion: " There are among the physicists those who believe that science is only weighing and measuring in a laboratory, and regard everything else (relativity, unification of fields etc.) as extra-scientific labor. They are the Realpolitiker of science. But with only numbers there is no science. A certain religiosity is required Without a type of religious enthusiasm for scientific concepts there is no science .... Others abandon themselves to statistics. An electrical phenomenon has associated with it a value of probability. Very well, but a probability that something will be present obeying Coulomb's law. And this law? Also a

probability. I

do not understand it. It is conceivable that God could have created a different world. But to think that at each instant God is playing dice with all the electrons in the universe, this, frankly, is 'too atheistic'. "

In this problem, positive science is nothing other than the obverse of ontology. That is to say, we have an ontological and scientific problem at the same time. Science will only be able to ask for a new concept of {304} nature, and later discard it; but, by itself, cannot create it. Without Aristotle there would have been no physics.

Without medieval ontology and

theology Galileo would have been impossible. " The adaptation of our thought and our language, "

says Heisenberg, " to the experience of atomic physics, is indubitably accompanied, just as in relativity, with the greatest difficulties. In the theory of relativity earlier philosophical discussions about space and time were very useful for this adaptation. Analogously benefits can be reaped for atomic physics from the fundamental discussions of the theory of knowledge about difficulties inherent in a split of the world into subject and object. Many abstractions characteristic of modern theoretical physics have been dealt with already in the philosophy of past centuries. And while these abstractions were discarded then as though games by scientists, attuned only to realities, the refined experimental art

of modern physics compels us

to discuss them

in [267] depth.

The fact that this physics is provisional is not a reproach, but a eulogy. A science which finds itself in the situation of being unable to advance without going back and revamping its principles is a science which lives at every moment. It is living science, and not simply an office, That is, it is science with spirit. And when a science lives, i.e. has spirit, the scientist and the philosopher meet in it, as we have seen, because philosophy is nothing but intellectual spirit and life.

" The physicists ,"

wrote Heisenberg in 1929, and his words are even more apropos today, " will not see themselves, in the decades to come, compelled to stay within the bounds of a

domain which has already been completely explored, rather, they will

have to leave it behind and seek adventures in unknown territories. "

We hope that in this adventure, in which the entire human intellect emotionally accompanies them, the physicists will not lose themselves, but that they will find themselves there where spirits always find themselves: in the truth.

Cruz y Raya , 1934

The Phenomenon of Humanity: Greece and the Living on of the Philosophical Past

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THE PHENOMENON OF HUMANITY:

GREECE AND THE LIVING ON OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL PAST

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INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

Given the refined and decisive philosophical situation in which we undoubtedly find ourselves placed, at the very pinnacle of time, it scarcely seems justifiable to be concerned with pre-Socratic thought unless there is some very urgent reason for doing so. If we were moved only by an inclination to take pleasure in rehashing the past on account of the fact that it once was , the matter-though perhaps problematic-would have no great importance. But this is not the reason for our interest. Rather, it is that we are caught up in this occupation as a result of a preoccupation

with philosophical truth. And therefore the situation changes completely. In order for this occupation to be justified it will only be necessary to see in it an intellectual obligation imposed by the problem which philosophy today sets before us. There is no other justification than the method itself of approaching the pre-Socratic thinkers. And the image they project before our mind depends in turn on this method.

Thus we see the three questions to which we must successively respond;

1. What is our attitude toward the Greek world in general, and especially toward pre-Socratic thought?

2. What meaning does our occupation with human history have?

3. What kind of internal intellectual obligation brings us to fastidiously detain our attention on and cause a good part of our thought to gravitate to this extremely remote philosophical past? {308}

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1. OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE GREEKS

Nietzsche defined his attitude toward the pre-Socratics in these words:

For what they invented was the archtypes of philosophical thought. All posterity has not made an essential contribution to them since. All other cultures are put to shame by the marvelously idealized philosophical company represented by the ancient Greek masters Thales, Anaximander, Heraclitus, Parmenides, Anaxagoras, Empedocles, Democritus and Socrates. These men are monolithic. Their thinking and their character stand in a relationship characterized by strictest necessity.... Thus all of them together form what Schopenhauer in contrast to the republic of scholars has called the republic of creative minds: each giant calling to his brother through the desolate intervals of time. And undisturbed by the wanton noises of the dwarfs that creep past beneath them, their high spirit-converse continues....Only a culture such as the Greeks possessed can...justify philosophy at all, because it alone knows and can demonstrate why and how the philosopher is not a chance random wanderer, exiled to this place or that. There is a steely necessity which binds a philosopher to a genuine culture .

Leaving aside the antipathetic problem of culture which is alluded to by Nietzche who, when all is said and done, was a man of his time, we see his attitude toward pre-Socratic philosophy is quite clear: admiration in the face of the definitive.

At times a different attitude has prevailed. Thus, Holderlein savs:

We dream of culture and yet totally lack it; {310} we dream of originality and independence, we think we are saying something completely new, and yet all of it is no more than a reaction, a type of sweet revenge upon the enslavement of our conduct with respect to antiquity. It really seems as if there were no other option than that of being crushed beneath the weight of the received and the positive, or rebelling violently against everything learned, against everything given and everything which is positive in the sense of a vital force. And the most perplexing aspect of all this is that antiquity seems [273]

radically opposed to our natural impulse.... And what has been the general cause of the decadence of every nation, viz. asphyxiation of its originality and natural vitality through accumulation of positive forms and through the affluence bequeathed to us by our forefathers seems to be our destiny too, and even to a greater extent, because an earlier world weighs down on and oppresses us, a world which is almost unlimited, and which infuses itself into us through education or experience.

Whatever may have been Holderlein's final attitude toward the Greeks, in these lines he expresses an attitude quite different from that of Nietzsche: rebellion against slavery.

We have all to a greater or lesser degree felt our spirit oscillate from one attitude to the other. Likewise to some degree we all reveal a measure of both of these ingredients deep inside. And the fact is that however opposite they may seem, both reactions to the Greek world nourish themselves on the same fundamental idea: the idea of the classical. Greece, Greek philosophy, is the sphere of the classical.

But the truth is that today we are not ready to be classical. Apart from other reasons-seemingly much deeper-it is because we have neither the disposition nor the time for it. Understand me well. It is one thing-a very significant thing-to occupy oneself with what are called the classics. It is something quite different to take them as classics. The tendency to see in Greece philosophical classicism proceeds from a most serious attitude toward the intellectual past. Because prior to being defined and canonized as a classic, indeed, precisely in order for this to happen, it is necessary to take from a thinker and a world the figure which they present and the form they have created. The idea of the {311} classical nourishes itself on cultural and living forms, and converts them into types. And in the face of a type only two attitudes are possible: admiration or rebellion.

And this is the decisive question, because considered in this way, it is clear that apart from their chronological order and possible mutual dependence, the various philosophies are nothing but so many systems or ways of thinking which the understanding has adopted, once it has thrown itself into the arduous task of philosophizing.

From this point of view, the philosophies have a form and, above all, a date; and the internal articulation of both dimensions of the problem can no doubt provoke a great deal of curiosity and stimulate a keen interest. In the case of pre-Socratic

[274] philosophy we are dealing with a series of thoughts which sprouted in the minds of several brilliant Hellenes in the brief span of time extending approximately from the end of the seventh century BC to the end of the fifth. Our sources of information are meager. But our curiosity is whetted, to a large degree, by the fact that they constitute man's first sketches in the realm of philosophy.

In spite of everything-and aside from a legitimate archeological curiosity-it cannot be denied that we are dealing with archaic forms of thought. The articulation between pre-Socratic philosophy, considered in its actual form, and its date, permits no other vision of that philosophy than archaic, from arkhe,

which in this case means beginning. As archaic it can scarcely interest us today, if what we seek in it is philosophical truth.

But the question immediately becomes more serious if one approaches the matter from another dimension. Let us relinquish the preoccupation with form, i.e. dismiss, at least for the time being, the idea of the classical, and consider in philosophy the effort of philosophizing.

Let us take from it not its form and its figure, but its internal effort. Then pre-Socratic philosophy is not simply the first in a chronological series of philosophies, but the first philosophical effort in history. And then this adjective "first" takes on a meaning which differs from the merely chronological. It expresses an articulation, not just external, but also internal,

between the {312} pre-Socratic philosophy and its time. This has nothing to do with its being the first datable philosophy, but rather that this is the moment in which philosophical effort came into existence on the Earth. It is the ascension of the human spirit to philosophizing. And with this, the word "first" means not so much beginning as fundamental. If the previous vision of pre-Socratic philosophy was archaic, the second vision is fundamental.

In it we are present at the very birth of philosophy in the spirit, and not just at the first form of philosophy.

This is the way in which we should like to approach the Greek world.

Leaving aside explanation of the fact of philosophy's birth, we shall try to become present at its realization. For us, Greece does not represent a museum of classical philosophical types. It represents, first, the concrete way in which man's spirit entered into philosophy. At the moment of their maturity, the Greeks themselves were acutely aware of this stupendous fact. It is true [275]

that when in the first book of his Metaphysics Aristotle summarized the various pre-Socratic systems, he did so from a systematic point of view. But on the other hand, given only the fragments themselves, a genetic vision of philosophy emerges. And likewise with Plato: when in the sixth book of the Republic

he wishes to explain to his readers the fundamental origin of philosophy, he relates a myth, "the myth of the cave," which in Plato's own words expresses a happening of our physis,

of our mode of being, and is not just a chronological relating of events.

In the second place, Greece-as a consequence of the foregoing-also represents the first and most primary conjunction of possibilities which man had at his disposal for philosophizing. We must promptly renounce the idea of the classical in order to bring ourselves close to Greek philosophy so as to see therein the first possibilities of philosophy which man assembled in this his first ascent to philosophizing, the possibilities which have decided

the course and destiny of philosophy throughout history, and which constitute, be it known or not, the primary base upon which our own philosophical possibilities rest and are available. It is not that the Greeks are our "classics"; it is, rather that in a certain way we are ourselves the Greeks. {313}

But this requires more explanation, because I do nor refer to something which affects Greek philosophy uniquely, nor even Greece as a whole, but rather our attitude toward the past in general. We are, in a certain respect, all of our past. How? {314}

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II. OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE PAST

What the "past" is, we may say, is something which can only be understood based on a "present." The past, just in virtue of being so, has no other reality than that of its effect on the present. Whence our attitude toward the past depends purely and simply on the reply which is given to the question: How does it affect the present?

According to the variety of replies given to this question, so likewise diverse will be the manner in which the men of today justify their occupation with the past.

As a first consideration, and one which in a certain way is quite natural, the past "already happened," and therefore "no longer is." Human reality, is, according to this conception, its pure present, that which it in fact is and does. And history is just this: a succession of realities which are present. The past has no form of real existence; in place of it we have fragmentary memory of it. This purely mnemonic form of the living on of the past has a great utility. In order to resolve his present problems man is not indifferent to how they were dealt with in previous analogous situations. Whence the pragmatic

would then be the true justification of our occupation with the past: historia magistra vitae, the ancients used to say.

But the 18th and above all the 19th century made us see in the past, qua past, something which is in a certain way diametrically opposed to what we have just said. If in the foregoing conception

the past vanishes, in this other the past is conserved. In fact, the way in which time gnaws away at things is {316}

quite varied, depending on whether one deals with matter or spirit. For matter, time is pure succession, and therefore reality is reduced to its present. If an intelligence could realize the Leibnizian fiction of an infinite analysis of the material reality of today, it would not find therein anything other than a system of masses and forces; nothing which would reveal to it what this material was thousands of years ago. In other words, such an understanding would relate to us the differing condition, distribution, and activity of these various masses and forces. But with respect of the spirit, the situation changes radically. If we feign this same infinite analysis, executed [277]

on the spirit of today, we would find ourselves surprised to discover that in what today is, in the present, what the past was is in fact included. Nothing of what once was is completely lost. Time is not pure succession, but an ingredient of the very constitution of the spirit. History is not a simple succession of real states, but a formal part of reality itself. Man not only has had and does have history; man is, in part, his own history. This justifies occupation with the past; occupying oneself with the past is, in such case, occupying oneself with the present. The past does not live on in the present under some form of remembrance, but under the form of reality.

Everything then depends on how one understands this real living on of the past in the present.

The 19th century seized on two ideas: biological evolution and dialectical development.

In the first, whether in its most elemental forms of organic biology, or in the brilliant interpretation of Dilthey's bios, the spirit is shown to us as a living being which continues to grow during the course of time. The past is disclosed in the present under the guise of age. When this concept is elevated to the rank of an historical category, it leads us to the idea of historical ages." In the second of the two notions, the spirit turns in upon itself by means of rational comparisons. The past lives on in the present and functions under the guise of rational instability or uneasiness. On account of being in a certain way internally contradictory, the past is what urges on the present. But in both cases-biological evolution or dialectical truth-(though in different ways) the past is conserved in the present, as each building stone supports the one above it. {317} For underlying what we are today there would be sustaining us what we were yesterday. The outcome of history would be something like an organic stratification of the various layers which are produced during the course of it, in the same way as in the trunk of a tree the layers or rings of its incremental life live on.

This manner of understanding the living-on of the past in the present is more clearly revealed when we try to understand the pre-existence of the present in the past; this is the problem of the future. In both conceptions, the biological and the logical, the present is virtually precontained in the past, and the future in the present, in the same way as the tree is precontained in the seed, or a scientific truth in the premisses of a logical deduction. [278]

It is easy then to understand the image of the course of history which is sketched out for us. Whereas for the old manner of seeing, history is a simple succession of present realities, in this interpretation from the 19th century history is a progressive actualization of what the spirit already was from its inception. For this reason nothing is lost or, if it is lost, such a loss is felt as an amputation or retraction of the human spirit. Employing other terminology, we may say that each one of the multiple facets of the present is found "complicated" with the others; all are found "implicated" in the past, and the course of history is only its temporal "explication." This triple dimension of complication, implication, and explication constitutes at bottom the whole structure of the happening of history for the 19th century.

The partisan of pure succession has, nonetheless, an easy reply: where and how is the past conserved except in memory or the simple fact that the present follows from the past? What can conservation mean as presumed stratification of the past except as a geological metaphor? Today's man no longer believes in the subsoil of the soul, in the divinity of fire, nor is he feudal under the political forms of the modern world. As reality, strictly speaking, the past "isn't" in any way; it only "was."

Independently of its greater or lesser polemical value, this allegation has a singular power, viz. that of revealing to us {318}

the hypothesis which identically underlies these conceptions of history which on the surface seem so opposite yet which are manifested in the identical consequence that follows from both of them.

Identical consequence. Whether one understands history as a succession or an actualization, the truth is that in both interpretations there is a strenuous and determined effort to avoid the most radically historical part of history. As a succession, history "isn't". What is, is man today, and history is only what was. As actualization, history is nothing but a revealor of what man already was forever. Ultimately not even Dilthey himself escapes this consequence. "The nature of man, we are told, is always the same; but as for the possibilities of existence contained therein, they are brought to light by history." In both cases, then, history "isn't" or if one wishes, the "is" of man is not affected by history otherwise than extrinsically at the most; history [279] is purely and simply what happens to man, but not something affecting his being. The 19th century did not succeed in perceiving, in the passing itself, one of the radical dimensions of man's being.

And then, suddenly, the generic supposition upon which all these conceptions are nourished appears before our eyes; history must be an articulation and production of realities. Given that supposition, there are two possible cases: either reality passed away an d hence is no longer real, or it is indeed real, and hence did not pass away. Either everything is lost, or everything is conserved. Viewed from another angle, either the future still is not, and hence is not real, or it is indeed real, and hence is already virtually contained in the present.

And so this is the great question: is it true that history in its ultimate root is a production of realities? And this compels us to ask once again: in what does the human present consist?

Let us direct our attention only to history, and deliberately leave aside the question of the being of man. In order to find the thread leading us to a first reply to the question {319}

thus posed-which is sufficient for the purposes of this study-let as start from the fact that history is woven by the things and deeds man does or does not do, and the manner in which he does them. What is the internal structure of this doing? That is the problem.

1. In the first place we have in each "doing" that which is done and the act which is executed. From this point of view, the past, present, and future are not three different systems of "doings." Of them, only the so-called "present," in the chronological sense of the word, has reality. And each point of time constitutes a reality, precisely because it incorporates the effects of the previous point; and this reality is not just quantitatively but qualitatively different. Thanks to our system of technology, the legacy of a great physics, today we cross the skies in splendid airplanes, while our grandparents traveled by stagecoach or ox cart. The Athenian of the fifth century BC produced a splendid philosophy, while the Altamiran man carried on a life which was anything but intellectual. History, from this point of view, is a progressive substitution of human deeds one for another. Whence arises the interpretation of history as pure succession.

There is no doubt whatever: things are this way. The error is in believing that this is the whole story. Because the truth is that today too I can travel by stagecoach. Would I therefore be a man of [280] the 18th century? Clearly not. We then understand that the difference does not lie only in what man does, but also in the meaning of what he does not do. Nothing, and certainly not man, can be understood only on the basis of what it is not. In man, this problem acquires a special urgency, as we shall shortly see. Voltaire is a man of the 18th century, not so much because he traveled by coach as because he was unable to fly. On the other hand, the man of the 20th century, though he may travel by coach, and not fly, may nevertheless fly. In both cases he does not fly. But in the second, this "not" refers only to the act of flying; in the first, to the act and to its possibility. Suddenly, the problem of history leads us beyond the simple reality of human acts {320}

to their internal possibility. This has been the great merit of the 19th century, viz. history is not restricted to substituting one reality for another, because reality, be it what it may, is always "emerging"; it emerges from a prior capacity. In the happening of history there is not simply the act which happens, but also the capacity through which it is brought about. The problem of history affects, above all, these capacities or powers which man possesses. The present is not simply what man does, but what he can do.

2. Being able to do something is, before all else, having the faculty to realize it. In every faculty there is then a double dimension. On one hand, it is a type of "force" implanted in whomever possesses it and, by virtue thereof, is an element of reality like any other. From this point of view, an acorn is a reality under the same name as an oak. But then I do not consider the acorn as the "germ" of the oak. For this it is necessary to attend to the second dimension of any faculty. In order for something to be a faculty, it is necessary to see in the "force," more than a reality on its own, the other reality to whose production it is destined. In this case what makes a force or power into a faculty is that type of virtual presence of the second reality (oak) in the first (acorn). This is what we

express in the preposition "for," when we say every faculty is for something. If to reality, in the first sense, we give the name "act" without further qualification, the power or faculty for realizing it will be "potentiality." Reality, in such case, will not simply be a conjunction of acts or actualities, but of actions or actualizations of the potentiality from which it emerges. In the [281] human present, together with what man does, there are also his potentialities for doing.

From here arises, ultimately, the whole of the 19th century's historical conception. As the human possibilities or virtualities are not always actualized in the same way, we find ourselves faced with the fact that history is not just the conjunction of what man does, but the progressive actualization of his powers. {321}

We see, then, that if the faculties pertain to human nature, their acts will belong to the domain of history. And as it is the case that since Aristotle the actuality of a potentiality as such, i.e. the actualization, is movement it follows that the fundamental category which dominates this conception of history is that of movement. The course of history is a "movement" of that reality called "human spirit." Droyssen and Hegel are the exponents of this conception.

There is no doubt that this interpretation of reality, which can be traced back to Aristotle, is more accurate and complete than the previous one. In that first one, reality is the effective actuality; in the second, actualization or actuation. Nevertheless, although much more difficult to perceive, its insufficiency when applied to human history is well known. According to Aristotle's conception, actualization, at the same time it confers actual reality on the act, in a certain way gives its complete or full being to the potentiality. In this way actualization is a revealer of everything, and it only exists virtually in potentiality. Now, if this were true, history would be a simple revealing of human nature; and in such case, in each man, indeed in the first of men, all of the reality of future history would already have been given virtually. The mere fact of arriving at this statement makes us stop and think. Really, was it possible to fly in the 18th century?

Yes and no, we are told. From the moment the man of today first flew there was in his nature the potentiality for flight and, consequently, the man of the 18th century possessed it too, through the mere fact of possessing human nature in its integrity. What happens is-so we are told-that the faculties are not always immediately capacitated for their actions: they are susceptible to perfection and preparation. And without that perfection, the potentiality for flight was not "available," it was not "ready" in the 18th century. In this sense, one could not then fly. Now one can, not because we have potentialities that yesterday were lacking, but because this potentiality today has an aptitude or

[282] disposition that yesterday it did not possess. History would be no more than the progress or regression in the disposition of the {322}

potentialities of man. History would be a movement of perfection or "defection."

But even so we still cannot rest. Because if one looks closely, the only thing which remains assigned to history in this conception is to be "exerciser" of the potentialities that nature has bestowed upon us. In order to carry out its acts, to be exercised, every potentiality requires circumstantial conditions whose complexity may vary. But all of them affect the way the proper object of each faculty acts on it. Let this formulation suffice for understanding that these concepts, despite being imprescindable, are radically insufficient for interpreting history. Animals too have some potentialities whose exercise depends upon the most varied conditions. Nevertheless, this animal life is not historical. Natural history is not the same as human history. If at the end of its days we could ask an animal to recount its life, it would no doubt respond by pointing out the raison d'etre of its "acts." But if we ask a man the same question, the answer given by the animal would not satisfy us. Independently of the explanation of the

exercise of his capabilities or potentialities, he would have to justify the use which he made of them, the life which he led with them. We would not be content with a raison d'etre ;

we must have a "reason for happening." Man's life is not just a simple exercise or execution of acts, but a use of his potentialities. And we only have what is specifically historical when we explain that this is what, provisionally, we call use of potentialities, as opposed to simple carrying out of actions. Here, "use" does not simply mean "handling," but a worked-out plan. The potentialities of all men are exercised, in each epoch, in a way which is perceptibly the same. But the life which is built up from them, the use which we make of them, is quite variable. And these changes are in fact history. The irreducibility of use to a simple exercise is what makes up the whole of the subtle dimension which leads us to history as such. It is what changes the mere "fact" into "event" or "happening." History is not woven from facts, but from events and happenings. Not having realized this is the cardinal blindness of the philosophy of history in the 19th century. For this reason it was unable to comprehend the specifics of the course of {323} history. The idea of movement is not sufficient. We are not dealing with facts and movements, but events and happenings. This is the [283]

central question. It is not as if man in the 18th century did not have potentialities as perfect as today. The matter is much simpler: airplanes had not been invented. For this reason, and for just this reason, he could not fly. This is a triviality, but one pregnant with metaphysical implications, because it means that the very structure of human potentialities is much more complicated than what was described in the foregoing scheme. Besides acts and potentialities, man possesses something which, in a certain way, is prior to the acts and the potentialities; or if one wishes, his acts and potentialities have a more complicated structure than that derived from the simple consideration of their exercise.

3. In order to see this-and so as not to become too involved in the question-let us return to the idea of potentiality and exercise in an animal. In it, objects affect its organs, and these impressions eventually lead to their respective actions. The animal's entire life depends upon the articulation between its impulses and impressions. And this articulation is expressed by the two words stimulus" and "response." For an animal, things are stimuli. And, in turn, his potentialities are immediately and effectively prepared to perceive them. Therefore, the acts of the animal are responses. This is sufficient for us to come to realize that in every potentiality and in the nature of the exercise of its actions there is implied a particular manner of being situated with respect to its proper object. The potentialities of the animal situate it in this intimate relation of immersion in or articulation with things.

Is this the situation with human potentialities? Clearly not. The most elemental of the specifically human acts interposes a "plan" between things and our actions. And this radically alters our situation with respect to that of the animal. The primary situation of man, with respect to things, is just being "faced" with them. Consequently, his acts are not responses, but "plans," i.e. something which man casts onto things. If the situation of the animal is an immersion in things, the situation of man is being at a distance from them. At a distance, but among them, not without them. {324} Man possesses a function thanks to which he remains, on one hand, referred to things, but repels them, carrying with himself something which is not identified with the physical reality of them. And this is thought. In it the situation of distance and contact with things is constituted. Contact: thinking shows "what there is" in things. Distance: it tells us "what they are." The entire ontological function of thought consists in this subtle

[284] unfolding of the difference between "what there is" and "what is." Aristotle called this function of thought "potentiality" too; but he also says in the ninth book of his Metaphysics that the logos is a singular potentiality among all others. Here one surmises-as at many other points-the insufficiency of some Greek ideas. Thanks to thinking, man possesses an irreducible ontological condition; he does not form part of nature, but is at a distance from it, both with respect to physical nature and his own psychophysical nature. This ontological condition of his being is what we call freedom. Freedom is the ontological situation of him who exists from "being." This does not mean that all of man's acts

are free, but that man is free. And only he who is thus radically free can go on to see himself deprived of freedom, in many-perhaps most-of his acts.

Whence the singular condition in which man finds himself where he must realize his life. He does not respond directly to things except by preserving the distance which separates him from them, going from the "being" to the "things" which are. This reply is no longer a reaction; it is a march, the realization of a plan. In it man decides what must be done and how to do it. The potentialities produce their acts always in the same way, but mediating between the latter and the former is "what one wishes to do." This is what we vaguely refer to as "use of potentialities." While in the case of the animal we were dealing only with the conditions of his exercise, here we deal with something prior and more radical, the meaning of what is going to be done. With it, human acts are, rigorously speaking, "events": realization or failure of plans.

About what does man conceive his plans? Naturally, about things and the capability of his own potentialities. But thanks to the singular distance which intervenes between man {325}

and what surrounds him, the articulation between things and potentialities is not that of stimulus and response. Both things and potentialities are means which man has at his disposal; they are neither "given" to him nor "put" before him, as Idealism said, but "offered" for existing.

What is it that we are offered?

In the first place, things. The primary way they are offered to us is not the patency of their "physical entity." What we call things are, above all, "instances" which pose "problems." Naturally, then, they are the problem of life at each "instant"; in turn, they are the problem of what things are in themselves. But [285]

things are offered to us also as "means" for resolving those instances. Aristotle himself arrived at the idea of ousia , of

substance, starting from the idea of a "means." We see that our plans are based on what things "are"; instances and means constitute, on the other hand, the sphere of "what there is."

Instances and means, on one side, and offering on the other, make up the two dimensions of one single situation. Because things are not given, but "offered," that which in them is offered to us is either the necessity of actuating (instance), or that which permits actuating (means). As means, things and human nature itself are not simple potentialities which enable, but possibilities which permit functioning. We still say, in everyday speech, that a rich man has "many possibilities." Every human potentiality executes its acts relying upon certain possibilities.

Reality, we said, is something emergent. But that from which emerges the reality of human acts is not just the potentialities of human nature, but the possibilities at its disposal. In the idea of

dynamis the Greeks confused these two quite different dimensions of the problem, and, at bottom, studied only the first.

But it is necessary to emphasize that these two dimensions are only this: two dimensions of the same reality, and not two distinct realities. The human potentialities have, in their own nature, a structure such that their actuation demands and implies recourse to possibilities. The same reality which is {326}

Nature is likewise History. But that through which it is Nature is not the same thing as that through which it is History. Man is beyond nature and history. He is a person who makes his life with his nature, and with his life also makes his history. But if man is beyond history, nature is on this side of history. Between his nature and his personal existence man traces the line of his life and his history.

These possibilities are not constituted in the pure act of thought. Thinking itself does not function save in real contact with things and it adopts the form of a comparison or probing among them. It discovers possibilities, encounters resistances which compel it to modify its ideas about what things are and hence its plans. Dealing with things circumscribes and modifies the realm of possibilities which man discovers in them. This is the objective content of what we call "situation."

So as to avoid confusion, it should be pointed out that these possibilities are not just of human production or creation. Several pages ago I indicated, in fact, that the "means" at man's disposal [286] are not found only in him, but also in things. Things themselves, then, in varying degrees and independently of human vicissitudes, offer some possibilities which can vary from one moment to the next. Matter itself, in virtue of its own physical structure, can offer or take away possibilities from man. For example, good weather is not the same as bad weather for combat activities. But the essential thing is to distinguish, even in this case, two completely different aspects of cosmic reality. On one side, it has diverse states, in accordance with which it does or does not possess a capacity or aptitude for being utilized, and this in varying degrees. This is what since ancient times has been called passive potentiality, in the broadest sense of the word (for the effects of its utilization, the same active potentialities of nature are, in a certain way, passive). But from time immemorial matter may have possessed these potentialities and yet they have not functioned as a "means" for human actuation. For this reason it is necessary that the situation of man permit him to discover in these cosmic possibilities means for his acts. {327} This new formality, the only one which can rigorously be called possibility, that situation of being "at man's disposal" which things offer, is only constituted in the situation of man's existence itself. Therefore the idea of situation is not something which primarily and exclusively affects man in his proper reality, but involves things themselves with which he makes his life. Moreover, man could not even "stumble upon" things and the potentialities except in a concrete situation. The situation is not something added to man and things, but the radical condition of there being things for man, and for them to reveal to man their potentialities and offer their possibilities. Analogous considerations could be made with respect to social reality, even up to the very individual reality of man.

In virtue of this, what man does in a situation is certainly the exercise and actualization of a potentiality; but it is also the use and realization of several possibilities. In the first place, human action is movement; in the second, it is event or happening. Acts are "historical facts" only insofar as they are realizations of possibilities. The course of history is not simple "movement," but "happening." Consequently, historical ratio is not purely raison d'etre ,

or if one wishes, every integral raison d'etre must involve the idea of a specific ratio for happening.

In order to understand this, let us see the internal connection of the present with the past and the future. [287]

The present is not constituted solely by what man does, nor by the potentialities which he has, but also by the possibilities which he has. From this last dimension the nature of the historical past takes shape. The possibilities, in fact, are always the means which things and human potentialities offer to man. They are constituted, then, as we said, through dealings with things and the exercise of the potentialities. Whence every act, once realized, not only perfects the potentiality, but also modifies its scope of possibilities. The reality of the act disappears, but the situation in which it has left us and the possibility it has bequeathed remain. We can now give a more precise answer to the question {328}

concerning the living on of the past. The past does not live on under the guise of an underlying reality. In respect to reality, the past is inexorably lost. But it is not reduced to nothing. The past is "disrealized," and the sediment from this phenomenon is the possibility which is conferred upon us. "Passing" does not mean ceasing to be, but ceasing to be reality, so as to allow the possibilities whose conjunction defines the new real situation to live one. In the 16th century feudalism no longer existed; but the men of that time were different thanks to the possibilities

which were bequeathed to them by having been feudal earlier. In the 18th century man indubitably had the naked faculty of fabricating airplanes; but he lacked the possibilities. What we are in our present time is the conjunction of possibilities which we possess on account of what we were yesterday. The past lives on under the guise of making the present possible, under the guise of possibility. The past, then, is conserved and is lost.

But we see then that the great error of the philosophy of history in the 19th century was entirely due to supposing that an historical happening is a production or destruction of realities. To this it is necessary to energetically affirm that what there is in human actions which is not natural but historical is on the contrary the actualization, illumination, or obturation of pure possibilities. If one wishes to speak of historical dialectic, bear in mind that it is a dialectic of possibilities. And this may be seen still more clearly [288] by considering the problem of the future.

What is future being? If I am asked what I am going to do at 7 o'clock this evening, the question makes perfect sense. I am struck certainly by doubt about whether I will be alive at that hour or whether circumstances will permit me to do what I plan. But there is {329} no doubt that I can plan and, consequently, that I can univocally reply to the question. If, on the other hand, I am asked what I am going to do at 7 o'clock on the evening of the 29th of August, 1953, I cannot reply. But my perplexity is much deeper than in theprevious case. It is not a question of being sure that I can do what I want; it is rather that it makes no sense to plan for that date. I can feign a plan; but it will be only a desire or whim. I cannot take the question seriously; it is not a matter of willing. Why? The answer is clear. Doing at any moment requires relying on certain possibilities. So, I now have, more or less, the possibilities on which I am going to act within the next two hours. But I do not have in my hands the possibilities with which I will act eleven years hence. Possibilities, in fact, are continually illuminated or obscured in the real execution of our acts. With the possibilities I now have I will act within two hours; then, as a result of my action, the realm of possibilities at my disposal will be different. I shall have to choose among them, and this choice will likewise determine the realm of possibilities of later hours. As this system of selective actions is not predetermined, neither is that of the possibilities I can act on eleven years hence. In order to be able to talk seriously about the future, it is not enough to call upon everything which still is not, even though there may be physical potentiality for realizing it. That alone is future which still is not, but for whose reality all the necessary possibilities are already given in the present. That which does not now exist, and for which its concrete possibilities do not exist either, is not properly speaking future. The future is something on which, in my own way, I can rely. Rehabilitating an old expression that is a brilliant invention of Suarez, we should not say "future," but "futurable, when referring to that for which we possess the naked potentiality, but whose possibilities are not as yet in existence. At least, this is the sense in which we shall employ Suarez' expression, independently of the meaning which he himself gave to it.

We can now comprehend the ontological novelty which historical happenings represent. Every finite reality is emergent, is the act of some virtualities. If in them we see no more than the [289]

potentialities of human nature, history would be {330}

nothing but the mere unfolding of what man already was. This in fact was the idea of the 19th century. But in history not only acts are produced, but also-and prior-the possibilities themselves which condition the acts are produced. Whence the great proximity of history to the creative act. History is diametrically opposed to mere unfolding. In the first man all human potentialities were already given, but not all the possibilities of the history of humanity. Therefore the structure of the spirit, as producer of history, is not explication of what was implied, but a "quasi-creation."

Creation, because it affects the very root of the reality of its acts, viz. their individual possibilities; but no more than quasi-creation, because, naturally, we are not dealing with a rigorous creation ex nihilo. The 19th century

sought out the properly historical part of history, viz. this radical and original production of reality, which antecedently produces the ground of its own possibility. This is what is most properly historical. History is not a simple doing, nor is it a mere "being able to do"; it is, strictly, "doing something which is possible." The explanation of events submerges us in the ontological abyss of a reality, the human one, in fact, which is the source not only of its own acts, but of its own possibilities as well. This is what makes man, in Leibniz' phrase, un petit Dieu . {331}

Returning now to the question which motivated these considerations, we can say that we are our past. But not in the form of a living on of the archaic. This idea of the 19th century [290]

always leads to a nostalgia for heroic times and the idea of classicism, to cultures which never grow old, which are perennial and drift outside of time. It cannot be. We are the past, because now we are really no longer the reality which the past was in its time. We are the past, because we are the conjunction of possibilities for being which was conferred upon us when reality passed into non-reality. Therefore, to study the present is to study the past, not because the latter prolongs its existence into the former, but because the present is the conjunction of possibilities to which the past was reduced upon being "dis-realized." Classicism nourishes itself on the idea of the real living-on of the past. For this reason it is always archaizing. This makes no sense. One must see in the past, in a certain way, the opposite, that which no longer is real and, as it ceases to be so, compels us to return to be ourselves, with the possibilities it bequeathed to us. The Greeks are not our classics, I said; rather, we ourselves are the Greeks. That is, Greece constitutes a formal element of the possibilities of what we are today.

What is there in our contemporary philosophical situation which leads us to possibilities of such remote origin? {332}

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III. OUR PHILOSOPHICAL SITUATION AND GREEK THOUGHT

For the moment, I said, Greece constitutes our most remote and formal possibility of philosophizing. In what sense?

The reality of the present is not limited to carrying us to a subsequent situation having no more relation with the present than that of cause and effect. Speaking of human reality, the situation, as we saw, is not defined only by the things which surround man, but also by the possibilities at his disposal for dealing with them. In this way, what one instant bequeaths to the next is a unique mode of drawing near to things, born and put into action in the past. With the securities which the past confers upon him, man throws himself into the task of capturing new things. Reality, nevertheless, with its particular resistances, compels man-with greater or lesser intensity-to modify his possibilities, and therewith his ideas about things. But this resistance could not be manifested if in the first place there was no possibility to resist. If the past had not bequeathed to us its insufficient possibilities, there would be no way that things could demonstrate their particularities. Whence it follows that the past not only leaves us a state," but also a "situation"; or if one wishes, a situation is not a state, but something which essentially leads us to pass on from the present to the future. The past, if one wishes to employ a physical metaphor, not only leaves us the outlines of a state, but sketches out for us a route, a way of access to things, a methodos as Parmenides would say. The vision which we have of things at any moment is found to be based, at one and the same time {334}

both positively and negatively on the possibility given us by the past. The past, then, is in the present; the past not only produced the present, but furthermore is making us as we presently are. The possibilities we have at our disposal, in respect to what they lack of reality, are pure non-existent past. In regard to their making possible what we are, in a positive sense, they are what there is of the present in us. In this way, the present is also inexorably

past.

In this sense, Greece has traced out the path of European philosophy. For this reason we are Greek, and not by virtue of a romantic classicism. In Greece the understanding accomplished the first phase of its full maturity. And everything that has come since

[292] is founded, in one or another way, on Greek thought. But because to history the moment at which things take place is not a matter of indifference, the same thing occurring in two different orders of possibilities can mean totally different things. At a certain moment of time, men in Greece and India discovered science. In Greece this yielded fruits and later a series of attempts to create a "theoretic life." The result was our rational knowledge and the very structure of philosophy as science. In India this discovery happened within the constitution of the thesophy of the Vedanta. Science now did not produce the same effects, and India as a whole was never able to ascend to a purely theoretical consideration of things. When Christianity entered the Hellenic world it brought-independently of its specifically religious content-some fundamental ideas; among others, that of a spiritual and transcendent world. The mature understanding did not limit itself to receiving them and believing in them, nor to granting them its full intellectual assent. Precisely on account of the maturity it had acquired in Greece, the understanding could not but indulge in the intellection of the new reality. Its own state of maturity compelled it to do so. This is Greece, trying to understand Christian Revelation, because it is Christian Revelation which is directing itself to mature Greeks. Despite what has all too often been rather superficially affirmed, we are not dealing with an external syncretism, nor a type of symbolic transformation of sentiment into ideas, but the inevitable {335}

movement which a mature understanding carries out in order to try to intelligibly assimilate the new reality offered to it. Greece thematically struggles with this reality. This reality thematically struggles with Greece. Whence the first theology is a veritable intellectual monster which sought to understand Christianity utilizing the concepts which had served the Greeks. But Christianity, as we Attic world. And therefore we are witness, in the first centuries, to a reelaboration of the metaphysical ideas received from Greece. It is superfluous to continue relating what happened in the Middle Ages and in modern times. The only thing which is essential for us to emphasize is that Greece finds itself formally inscribed in the philosophical maturity of Europe.

But the importance and scope of pre-Socratic philosophy is much greater still. Every point of the historical trajectory defines in its way the general course of the future. And if we are Greek, we are also medieval or 17th century men. But the pre-Socratics era [293] represents a singular point in this trajectory. It is the origin of the trajectory, the discovery and very constitution of philosophizing. Whereas afterwards men

continued philosophizing, in Miletus, Ephesus, Elea, Sicily, and Athens men created philosophizing. We are Greek or medieval because we have in our philosophy Hellenic or medieval ingredients; we are pre-Socratics, not just by virtue of that part of their philosophy which has come down to us, but moreover, and above all, because we are philosophizing. Whence the singular importance of pre-Socratic philosophy in our time. The pre-Socratics sketched the first outlines of the philosophic sphere; they undertook the first voyage in the ocean of philosophy.

So our time is present not only at the unfolding of new philosophical problems, but also at a unique manner in which the very idea of philosophy has been converted into a problem. In a certain respect, our problem is the very problem of philosophizing. Whence the possibilities which today's reality puts into action are just these ultimate and definitive possibilities of philosophizing as such, which the pre-Socratic bequeathed to us. {336}

But we are not dealing with a trivial occurrence. If problems are supposed to have the character of true intellectual questions, they must arise, as if unwillingly, from concrete interaction with things. When we draw close to things with the possibilities which the past bequeathed to us, we collide with reality. There is nothing

which is absolutely transparent and docile to the glance and action of the human intellect. And, when he collides with things, man feels, in a certain way, strange and estranged before them; he recoils from them, and in this entrance there stands revealed, before his eyes, the clear outline of the possibilities with which he drew near the world. The resistance which things offer makes possible and indeed compels man to understand himself, to realize "where he is." Thus it is that, upon entering into his presence, things leave man debating with his past. And in this process, according to the nature of the collision, there are varying types of possibilities which for the man who is present are converted into a problem. Not every collision represents a moment of identical gravity. Fresnel undertook the study of optics, of the vibrations of the aether, employing the theory of elasticity. That could not be; and Maxwell abandoned elastic forces and discovered the electromagnetic field. But Lorentz studied the optics of bodies in motion with the electromagnetic aether. Reality resisted him; the encounter is now much more profound; it disrupts the idea of [294] aether, and Einstein saw himself compelled to abandon it.

The 17th century discovered in thought a reality which was difficult to comprehend adequately with just the Greek concepts; even the Middle Ages had sensed, in varying degrees, a similar difficulty. The result was the modification, fortunate or unfortunate-it matters little-of the idea of substance, when dealing with thinking substances. But today we have come upon other realities, among them history. The insufficiency of our concepts is manifested more seriously. The encounter has disrupted the very idea of being ,

and for this reason, this very reason, the problem of philosophizing

has been converted into a problem for us.

For almost two centuries man has been hammering away at this theme. But, in fact, during this time he has thought more about its content than about history itself; he {337} has meditated more about what occurs than about the occuring itself. In the 19th century this new dimension of the problem began to be seen. The first reaction to it was to see in history a passing from non-being to being; and man has tried to resolve the difficulty by seeking a way to avoid this circumvention of non-being.

Something similar happened in pre-Socratic philosophy from Parmenides to Democritus. Nothing was seen in movement except the passage from non-being to being. And to avoid this circumvention, Empedocles, Anaxagoras, and Democritus turned movement into pure appearance or disappearance of eternal elements. At bottom, this is the negation of movement, or at least, its exclusion from the realm of being properly speaking. Only the elements "are".

But Aristotle had the brilliant idea of making movement a form of being. It seems as though he would have had to then attribute a type of reality to non-being. That was Plato's idea. But no, Aristotle followed a different path. Movement is not the passage from non-being to being, but the passage from one manner of being to another. Heating is not the passage from non-being to heat, but from cold to heat. What up to then had been called reality had to undergo a profound modification: there are realities which are affected formally and positively by a dimension of non-being. This is the idea of dynamis, of potentiality. Movement thus 'definitively entered into ontology, as a form of being.

Now, the parallel between this and what happened in the problem of history is striking. The reduction of historical [295]

happening to movement is mutatis mutandis similar to the reduction of movement to a combination of elements in Athenian physics of the 5th century BC. In order to avoid the circumvention of non-being men pretended to reduce history to the actualization of germinal possibilities. This is a great swindling of history: Hegel sought to realize this titanic enterprise. Dilthey had some brilliant intuitions leading to a new vision of the problem, but nothing more than intuitions. One must resolve to introduce the idea of movement into it. Our first impulse would

lead us to substantize non-being. {338} But, history would thereby become a romantic non-being. But, history would thereby become a romantic inspiration based on nothing, or rather, a radical inconsistency. But just as Aristotle transcended the pure mobilism of the Sophists, the ontological interpretation of history must avoid falling into radical historicism. Neither is it sufficient to juxtapose-pardon the expression-historical being with natural being, nor even countenance an absorption of the latter by the former. Heidegger's brilliant vision-at least insofar as it comes out in his book-leaves one with serious misgivings on this point.

The idea of being, precisely on account of its somewhat ethereal character, seems to lack presuppositions. Having called attention to them is one of the inalienable merits of Heidigger. But it is necessary to formally emphasize what has occurred in order for man to have reached this idea of being. There is no doubt that matters would have been quite different if philosophizing had arisen somewhere else, in the globe and in a situation different from that of Ionia in the 7th century BC. Let us leave aside the question of whether or not that was possible. The fact of the matter is that it happened in Ionia, and only in Ionia. The lonians did not exactly discover the idea of nature, as is often said; they discovered something which flourishes in the understanding of their successors, the problem of a nature, of a physis . The

Ionians-it is difficult to explain on account of various subtleties-have discovered to us that things not only are endowed with heat, moisture, force, etc. but moreover possesses all this, or at least some of it, as "their own", as "constitutively proper to them". This is a new way of drawing near to things which bequeathed to immediate posterity the particular problem which it [296] involved: the possession of something "as its own" is the basic intuition which presents the problem of what something has and transmits "as its own." This is the problem of nature, generation, and

physis. To my way of thinking, it is essential to point out that the Ionians did not start from the idea or the problem of

physis, but from a new concrete intuition, which much later engendered that problem and that idea. A century later, what things "naturally" possess and present triggers in the mind of the philosopher a new problem. In reality, things do not have

nature, but are nature; what we call a thing is, first of all, a {339} singular nature. Being a thing consists precisely of possessing by oneself the conjunction of characteristics which make up the nature of the thing. But, then, possessing has two sources: one, that which stems from the outside, the actions of a thing on others; second, that which originates from within, what makes up the internal scope of the thing itself. If by virtue of the former this possession is called "nature", by the second it receives the name "reality", "being". This is the idea of ousia, of Aristotelian substance, in which Aristotle's idea of being culminates. There is no doubt that in Aristotle, being is not thematically limited to nature. But it is always found to be somewhat molded in the image and likeness of it. Aristotelian substance is the apex of the trajectory of Greek thought. From nature to being: here we have the route followed by Greece.

The encounter with the historical is a disturbance along this path. It is a question neither of curiosity nor of choice. The mere fact of understanding ourselves, of clarifying the difficulties with which we wrestle before history and before other realities (which need not be enumerated) while following this Greek route is already, velis nolis ,

an intellection of and discussion with pre-Socratic philosophy.

And what the intellection of the past secures for us is not a simple explanation of the present. The retrogression has no legitimate meaning except when it makes possible a more efficacious leap toward the future. Every decision of the present, in fact, elects some possibilities and casts aside others, not on account of any frivolous

preterition, but because these other possibilities are not those which must come into play given the reality which spurs us on. Even limiting ourselves to the possibilities which a present allows, many times the present does not actualize more than a fragmentary aspect of them. The past is [297]

pregnant with what might have been and wasn't, sometimes on account of elimination, other times a retraction which has left some of its most fertile dimensions unexhausted. Thus, when Christianity set the Greek minds in motion, it did not manage to arouse in them, for the effects of a philosophy of the created world, any other reactions than those which are grouped around the substantial reality discovered by Greece. Here and there suddenly brilliant intuitions came to light with respect to the historicity of the human spirit. But {340} they were left, finally, crushed and buried under the weight of what was handed down. It is not by chance that the supreme ontological error, from the point of view of Christianity, has been Pantheism, a deification of nature. it originated under the pseudomystical guise of the gnosis and Manicheism; and at the other pole of time, in the ontological pantheism of Hegel. In the 19th century, when history disrupted our idea of being, it at the same time posed new problems for us; it made us turn our eyes to the fundamental intuitions contained ab initio in Christianity, but for whose conceptual fecundity the time had not seemed to have arrived. The reaction, within the Christian sphere, was very much like that produced in the early times with regard to nature. There was some essential probing in order to cautiously and slowly approach the new reality, and a fundamental change of direction, very similar to the gnosis, of which we today possess no more than that first initial mythical and pseudo-mystical moment, viz. what was called "modernism," a type of germinal yet enormous gnosticism and pantheism of history, squarely based on the idea of evolution and development.

When we thus take ourselves back to the past we do not lose any of what was. Quite the contrary. It is then when we reconquer it and most truly make it ours. Mostly truly ,

I say this conscious of its limitations and therefore, with the amplification of our possibilities. We must go from nature and from history to being.

To occupy ourselves with the pre-Socratics is to occupy ourselves with ourselves, with our possibilities of philosophizing, all of which are consistent with and dependent upon the possibility of reaching one idea of being which includes history. Not archeology, and not classicism.

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Introduction to the Problem of God

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INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM OF GOD

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The supreme gravity of the problem of God is apparent to everyone. Man's position in the universe, the meaning of his life, his anxieties, and his history are internally affected by his attitude toward this problem. Before it he can assume positive as well as negative attitudes; but in either case he is intimately affected by them. It is indeed true that today an enormous number of persons abstain from taking any position whatsoever before this problem because they consider it irresoluble: "Why do you ask about that? It isn't my problem, and I don't worry about it. If God exists, that pertains to nature, but not to me." But at the root of this abstention, if one regards it closely, there lies an unarticulated attitude, which is deeper the less articulated it is. No one could say honestly that the abstention expressed in the above formula has the same meaning as if we were dealing with a complicated problem of differential geometry or biochemistry. That "Why do you ask about that?" expresses an attitude, a positive abstention with respect to knowledge without which life taken in its integral totality appears to lack any meaning. Making this apparent will be a task with which anyone who treats of the problem of God must come to grips. In the midst of the agitation of our times one can affirm, without fear of erring, that by affirmations, negations, or positive abstentions our epoch, whether desiring so or not, or even desiring the contrary, is perhaps one of the epochs which most substantially lives the problem of God.

Together with this impression of manifest gravity, indeed of unusual gravity, which the problem of God has for man, it is necessary

{344} to emphasize another impression which is in sharp contrast: the muddle and confusion surrounding this problem in contemporary life; and not only the problem and its solutions, but even the expression and concept of God. On one hand there are political antagonisms and associated bitterness which hover over our planet everywhere and make "God" the exponent of various attitudes of people. On the other, there is an overabundance of certain literature having a psychological or psychoanalytic character as well as a plethora of similarities between a somewhat vague and confused idea of God and certain momentary concepts of positive science; finally, there are essays of pseudo-mystical character....all of which seem to come together so that the name "God" ends up being one of those words which designate not a precise reality, but rather something nebulous, indefinite, muddled, and confused on the periphery of our life.

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It is necessary to leave this situation, and having done so then confront the problem of God. This can be accomplished in innumerable ways. But first it is necessary to do it in the most innocuous and innocent of all: the intellectual way, and more concretely, the philosophical way. This is, in reality, the most vexing of all, because it is destined not to satisfy anyone completely: not those who profess a religious faith, because they suppose, with certain justification, that by this route they are not going to find everything that man searches for in God; nor the non-believers, because regardless of how many arguments may be adduced, it is difficult to bring them to the conviction that we are simply trying to deal with a positive belief, prior to all reasoning, which has roots anterior to intellection and foreign to it.

And at the bottom of these two attitudes lies a basic supposition which must be explained. This is the supposition that when one speaks of the problem of God, he deals before anything else with a problem concerning religious faith, or some religious confession. But this is not correct. That the intellectual position taken before the problem of God affects various beliefs is one thing; that it is in itself a question of pure belief is quite another. Whatever can philosophically be said about God enters into many religions and even into the beliefs of those who profess no positive religion at all. This is because one is not attempting {345}

to give intellectual form to convictions, but rather to arrive at a convincing intellection. And thus it is apparent that not everything man searches for in God can be found by this route; but indeed without it all positive religion is lost in a vaporous religiosity, perhaps beautiful, but ultimately lacking meaning and foundation.

As an intellectual question, the problem of God is in a sense a question preeminently extemporaneous or outside of time. God is not one of those realities, such as rocks or trees, which man comes across in his daily life. Nor is he one of those realities which, without constituting an immediate datum of experience, man finds himself compelled to acknowledge as a result or an ingredient of his positive science. It would be chimerical to think that the progress of a positive science is going to carry the human intellect to a point where it definitely touches the reality of God while still maintaining itself strictly in the line of positive science. The methods of science prohibit it a limine. All the essays written to try to accomplish this are just so many sad souvenirs of an outdated and completely indefensible attitude; recall the so-called scientific [302] proofs of the existence of God. For science, when viewed from inside, everything happens and ought to happen as if there were no God, in the sense that to call upon divine being would be to go outside of science itself. And it is the case that with regard to God Himself, the reality of God is in a certain rigorous and authentic sense the most unreachable of all realities.

This question is extemporaneous, perhaps, as no other can be. But it is at the same time, by a singular paradox, the most contemporary of all questions. Because if it is true that in science everything happens as if there were no God, it is no less certain that if there were no God nothing at all would happen. And thus the reality of God, though on one hand the most distant and unreachable of all realities, is also on the other the closest of them all.

And this singular paradox is what makes us delve into the intellectual problem of God, the problem most extemporaneous and most contemporaneous of all; because as I indicated above, it is a question which affects the very roots of human existence. Today's man is prompted to set himself this question with a keenness comparable to that of only two or three periods of history {346}

by the fact that he feels himself touched in his ultimate roots. As in other epochs, the man of today feels himself drawn from the passing of his life into the radical part of his reality. And in this movement of reversion occurs what St. Paul, in a splendid expression, called metanoia :

reversion, transformation; in our case, the transformation by which the understanding goes from material things and from the passing of life toward the ultimate nature of the universe and itself.

In this regard our situation has a specific sign of epoch. It suffices to compare our situation with, for example, that of the Middle Ages. Medieval man found himself installed generally not only in a faith, but also in a theology: Judaic, Islamic, or Christian. In the first place he saw the Divinity. Then there was a serious problem (for the resolution of which several centuries were necessary), namely to create the intellectual field within which material things, though dependent upon God, nevertheless possessed a true reality and their own functions. The result was the idea of secondary causality, which permitted constitution of a true philosophy of nature that was more than a vague theological metaphor. Today, on the contrary, man finds himself already in full possession of the natural realities. His science and his [303]

technology are his legitimate pride. But even so it is undeniable that modem man feels himself crushed and oppressed by the weight of his conquests over the things with which he works. Thus, in contrast to what happened in the Middle Ages, the contemporary intellect finds that it must make a reversion to the problems and ultimate explanations of the universe and of itself.

And while this reversion toward the ultimate by way of intellect is a difficult operation, it is undeniably necessary. By means of his understanding, in effect, man confronts material things as realities. An animal always responds to things as systems of stimuli. Now in the problem of God man's own reality comes to him, and therefore that reality necessarily has a bearing on the problem, appearing in the form of an intellectual reflection. How? A superficial reflection on what has happened with regard to the intellectual problem {347} of God can serve to clarify the question of the way to penetrate the problem itself.

At first glance, nothing is more obvious than this matter of the intellectual problem of God. Man puts his understanding into play of learn what things are in their reality. For this he passes from some things to others and describes the internal connections among them; he sees in some the origin of others. The intellect, then, besides confronting things as realities, and indeed precisely on account of that, looks for and tries to give explanations of this reality. So, since God is not something given, it becomes necessary for the intellect, having provided explanations of material things, to arrive at God, which it does. The intellectual problem of God then takes the form of a demonstration. The problem of God as an intellectual problem is reduced to a problem of speculative reason. In two places on the earth, very different and very distant, the problem of God as a problem of speculative reason has budded and matured: India and Greece. At the very least these two countries were the most advanced with regard to it. And from them the problem of God follows the path it will take throughout the history of philosophy. This may be rather commonplace, but it is fitting to repeat it.

In India, starting from the Vedic gods, the sacerdotal casts, i.e. the Brahmans, elaborated the first speculations. These were primarily of a ritual character, in respect to the relations of the Vedic gods with the omnimodal and absolute power of sacrifice. From here would later come the first speculations of the Upanishads, to give rise finally to the elaborate speculation which [304]

the systems of the Vedanta represent: Wisdom, the Veda, is salvation and human deification through knowing. Knowing is operative and that which operates is the identification (without insisting here too much on the propriety of the word) with God.

In Greece it is with Aristotle that speculative reason for the first time pierces the philosophical problem of God. In his work the speculation becomes fully mature. Until Aristotle philosophy scarcely occupied itself with gods in a rigorous and strictly intellectual sense. I say "rigorous and strictly" so as not to become involved in nuances of this difficult historical problem. The gods {348} had not entered in an expressive, formal, and elaborated way into the philosophical architecture of the pre-Socratics or of Plato. But, for the first time in the West, the inclusion of the theme of God in a system of speculation is realized with Aristotle. And after this Aristotelian ideas are carried on in the poorer but not altogether disdainful philosophical speculations of the Epicureans and Stoics.

During this last phase of thought a second phenomenon appears in Greece: not only the Greek gods, but oriental gods as well enter the Greek mind. It is the epoch of Hellenism. From Alexandria and from Asia Minor, etc., and through this channel from Iran, Syria, Phoenicia, and Palestine, these new gods come into the Greek world. In them the Greek is going to look for something new: he aspires not only to know and venerate the gods, but moreover to possess them, to enter into communion with them and thus achieve salvation. This is the idea of the mystery religions; whence the conversion of speculative knowledge into ecstatic knowledge as the end and supreme form of intellection. Prescinding from intricate historical questions, we can say that ecstatic knowledge culminates in Neoplatonism.

Contemporary with the mystery religions, and in some respects (e.g. what refers to Plotinus) earlier than they, a third type of problem about God is injected into Greece, motivated by the appearance of the God of Christianity. Following the classical Greek gods and together with the oriental gods is the God of Israel and the New Testament. The Greek power of reasoning sets itself to thinking about this situation conceptually with the mental organs of the metaphysics of Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, and above all the Neoplatonists. Whence the creation of Greek theology, the theology of the first Fathers of the Church; and above all, the creation of the first speculative and systematic theology, that of [305] Origen. This theology, which at times is more Neoplatonic, at times more Aristotelian, spreads throughout the world following two distinct routes. The one, from the Hellenistic world including Rome will diffuse throughout the rest of Europe; this is the work of the Greek and Latin Fathers. The other route is from the Hellenistic world to the Orient, and especially Syria, by means of {349} the Greek and Oriental Fathers. In the midst of this intellectual ferment the first clash between Greek philosophy and New Testament theology will take place, a clash which acquires status and resolution in the councils of Nicea, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon. And at that time the first excisions are produced. Apart from Arianism (which spread extensively in Europe, but which does not affect our problem) Monophysites and Nestorians (of Aristotelian inspiration usually) fled from Syria to enclose themselves in the school of Edessa, and to take refuge in Persia. Persia, the only country which Rome did not succeed in dominating and which was not Romanized, maintained with Greece an intellectual exchange difficult to pin down, but quite undeniable; and at this moment was converted into the refuge of Greek philosophy and especially of Neoplatonism, Stoicism, and above all, Aristotelianism, which was regarded suspiciously by the theology of the councils.

Following along these two routes, speculative reason will disembark in medieval Europe. Through the Latin Fathers it constitutes the tradition, albeit somewhat poor intellectually, of Christian Europe prior to the 10th century. By the other route, from Persia, Islamicized Iranians and Mussulmen will give the great creative impulse to Islamic philosophy, which transmits Greek philosophy and creates the overall picture of the systematization of the problem of God. Through the Arabs, and in Arabic form, this speculation reaches Europe via Spain; in Spain the speculation develops not only in Christianity, but in Judaism as well. Both movements, the Occidental and the Oriental, meet in Paris around the 11th and 12th centuries. The result was, on one side, a medieval form of Augustinism, inspired mainly by the metaphysics of Plotinus and Avicenna; on the other was Thomism, inspired mainly by the doctrine of Aristotle and Averroes. Thus the relatively unitary channel was created through which speculative thought about God would flow during the course of European history, passing through Henry the Ghent, Scotus, and Ockham up to Suarez. [306]

In the rise of the modern world there are noticeable differences. Man feels that he is submerged in himself, far from the world and from God. Whence a new attitude before the problem of God arises, {350} the pure belief that by the route of sentiment the abyss separating man from God can be bridged. But there is also a new attitude before the problem of the world: creation of the "purely mental" method of arriving at the world, viz. mathematics. Nonetheless despite pure fideism speculation about God is not completely shipwrecked, and the proof is the philosophy of Kant. But, incapable of elevating itself from the world to God, speculative reason instead absorbs the world in God; this is the work of German Idealism. Its bankruptcy submerges modern man in material things such as they are given to him in scientific facts. Positive science with its methods, precisely delineated, is converted into the canonical type of knowledge; this is positivism. In it an agnostic attitude before the problem of God is established. On the strength of positive realities and positive science, contemporary man challenges speculative reason in its pretention of arriving at God by means of demonstration. God is, in the majority of cases, the Unknowable.

So here we have in broad outline the routes along which, more or less, speculative reason has traveled with regard to the problem of God.

I said earlier that superficially there is nothing more obvious than this march of speculative reason. But only superficially, Because prior to this journey, regardless of whether it reaches God or remains in pure "agnosis," there occur certain reflections affecting its structure and its very point of departure.

In the first place, consider the structure of the journey. Observe that insofar as history has advanced, it has created a type of great metaphysical avalanche. The problem of God is involved in such an accumulation of metaphysical problems that sooner or later the question must arise whether all of them pertain sensu strictu to it. Is it that this problem which so intimately and directly affects man has to be intellectually united with one or various metaphysical systems? It is true that every metaphysical system has to occupy itself with God. But is the converse true in the same way? Is it true that in order to occupy oneself intellectually with God it is necessary to use a determinate metaphysical system?

{351} The problems encountered by a metaphysical system when it faces the reality of God are one thing; quite another are the problems God [307]

poses for man as a reality endowed with finite intelligence.

But there is something even more serious, something that affects the initial point of the speculation in question. In virtue of all the speculative reasoning about God through the course of history one gains the impression that the speculation is not simply a speculation about God, but rather that speculation is "the" path to reach God: two completely different things. Now, if one directs his attention briefly to this point, it can be described without great difficulty, but probably with a certain surprise for speculative reason, because in fact speculation has never been the primary way of intellectual access to God. When speculative reason sets itself to speculate and theorize about God, men are with intellectual anticipation already turned toward God.

This is clear in India. It is easy to take the Vedantic systems and try to see what they say about God. But where has the speculation of the Vedanta come from? The metaphysics of the Vedanta has come from the Brahman intellectual elaboration, which did not even remotely have the metaphysical character of Vedantic speculation. The Brahmans theorized about the power of sacrifice, in the sense that even the Vedic gods found themselves bound to its inexorable efficacy. The god to whom one sacrifices is thus the first supposition of all metaphysics. It is useless to insist that the same did not happen in Iran or even in Islam.

Moreover, this same thing is what occurred everywhere in the West. And it could not have happened otherwise. Let us take an example. That speculative reason must squarely face the important question of the reality of the external world does not mean that such speculation is the primary way of intellectual access to external reality. The same thing is true in our problem. Aristotle, however many modifications one may wish to make to his philosophy, did lodge the Greek gods in his metaphysics (though depriving them of religious character); but he did not discover them via metaphysical paths. A similar thing {352} occurred in Helenistic metaphysics with respect to the Oriental dieties.

Not even scholastic speculation is an exception to this, a fact which it is necessary to stress. St. Thomas, for example, had before him a well-defined public, with a monotheistic (Islamic, Judaic, or Christian) intellectual conception of God. And this public confronted God by means of an organ which was called "reason," but a reason precisely delimited: the Greek metaphysical reasoning transmitted and represented at that time by [308]

Avicenna and Averroes. Naturally, it was then legitimate and obligatory for St. Thomas to put this speculative reason into play with regard to the problem of God. Does that mean St. Thomas thought the primary intellectual path by which man approaches God was Aristotelian metaphysics?

It is curious that St. Thomas, before answering the question of whether God exists, justifies the question itself. Such is the sense of the question St. Thomas examines first, i.e. if the existence of God is something known through itself. St. Thomas aims rightly at the demonstrative foundation. What he justifies is the fact that a demonstration is necessary. For this the first thing he does is confront those who say that the proposition "God exists" is evident in the sense that the predicate is already contained in the subject. From this point of view, St. Thomas affirms the non-evident nature of said proposition and thus justifies the necessity of demonstration. But the necessity of demonstration, for what? The question is not idle, because the first question St. Thomas comes upon is not that of St. Anselm, for whom in the idea of the greatest or most perfect being existence is already included; but rather a distinctly different problem which suprisingly we see is the first which is presented. It is a passage of St. John Damascene in which he tells us that we call truths known through themselves those knowledge of which is naturally implanted in our mind. And one of those truths is the intellection of the ultimate Good, which is precisely God. Thus God would be a truth known through itself. The reply of St. Thomas, however well known it may be, deserves to be repeated here. {353}

St. Thomas affirms that "knowing God in a certain confused and general way is something naturally implanted...but this is not to know simpliciter that God exists; just as knowing that someone is coming is not knowing Peter, although it may be Peter who comes." Now, if we peruse this text we encounter at least three distinct points. First, St. Thomas needs reason not so much to discover God intellectually, but rather to learn who this God is. St. Thomas needs to find out who it is that comes, not that someone is coming. Second, "a being known through itself" has for St. Thomas two different senses: there is that of being an evident judgment such that the predicate is contained in the subject; but there is also the sense according to which something is known through itself when it is naturally present in the mind. Third, since there was no question for the men of his epoch and environs that someone was coming, it was

[309] natural that St. Thomas should pass over this point limiting himself to a statement of evidence, in order to delve into the question of who it is that comes. But regardless of how briefly St. Thomas directs his attention to knowing that someone comes, it is well to point out the evidence for the priority of this knowledge with respect to all demonstration. But for us, in our moment of history, this prior question has gained sufficiently in importance to deserve treatment by itself as the primary way of intellectually discovering God; to the man of today it is not obvious that someone is coming. We are no longer dealing with a merely incidental question, but rather one which is primary in the order of foundation.

And the truth is that in almost every period of the history of philosophy there has existed together with "demonstration" another idea of God, be it complementary, in the nature of a consequence, or even as a support or prop. And this idea is that God is an object not only of intellect, but of other dimensions of the human being as well; not to be sure excluding intellect, but involving it in a form distinct from speculation. It suffices to record some of the most salient points. In the late Middle Ages Scotus insisted that theological science is formally a science which does not pertain to speculative reason, {354}

but rather to practical reason; i.e. it is unquestionably a science, but belongs to the realm of speculation about the good rather than about being. In an ambivalent sense Nominalism accentuated this difference. On the one hand it affirmed, with reason, that what man understands by "God" cannot be reduced to what dialectical reason achieves. But on the other, it tended to reduce this reality of God, as object of religion, to a mere belief. One step more and God would be the object of pure extra-intellectual belief.

With this statement of the problem, all of the conditions were given so that positivism could confront the ideas about God, as speculative reason had done. God is unknowable, we are told, but ideas about God and religious beliefs are an undeniable "fact." Whence the structure of a positive science of the divine. The ideas about God, as facts, offer three aspects: historical, psychological, and sociological. Thus were created the three customary

disciplines: a (positive) comparative history of religion, a sociology of religion more muddled than the history, and a psychology of the divine which is infinitely more vague than the sociology. Properly understood, as positive sciences, the three are absolutely [310]

legitimate and do not presume any agnostic position with respect to the problem of God; in them ideas about God are treated simply as facts about human life. For this reason it would be unjust to deny any scope to such a point of view, especially since the orgy of theoretical speculation of the first half of the 19th century compelled abandonment of the abstract terrain of the dialectic in order to approach the problem of God such as it is presented in each of the viable religions. But having said this we can scarcely do otherwise than question that which is so innocently called a I religious fact." Because the truth is that we are not told where the religious character of this fact is. Recalling the pages of William James' celebrated Varieties of Religious Experience, the ingenuous reader finds himself a bit astonished to see such a disparate assortment of facts and deeds which the author parades before our eyes grouped under the same heading. The same can be said of {355} Durkheim's

Elemental Forms of Religious Life. At the bottom of these religious "facts" lie four interpretations: for some they are a fact of morality; for others, they deal with sentiment; for others, an experimental way of life; and for still others, a social phenomenon.

Now, these four interpretations are based on a generic supposition that in the idea of God, God is primarily an object of belief and not of intellection. But where is it ever said that because the primary thrust of man toward God is not speculation, it does not involve a pre-speculative, but still rigorous intellection? And what is more, the fact that this belief is interpreted under one of the four forms cited, i.e. the fact that the thrust toward divinity is assigned a moral, sentimental, experimental, or social origin, reveals very clearly that behind the apparently simple rubric of "thrust toward divinity as a fact" lies a serious and important question: what is the character of these ideas about God, what is the character of this thrust of man toward divinity which we call "the problem of God?" In what does its intimate and radical structure consist? From what dimensions of man does it spring: from one or more of his particular activities or rather from the radical unity of human reality as a reality? If it were the latter, the thrust toward the divine would not simply be a fact, but rather something different. A demonstration that "someone is coming" [311]

would then be in order, but along different lines than those of which St. John Damascene speaks.

I said at the beginning of this essay that it was necessary to confront the problem of God via an intellectual and philosophical path. Now we see that this path is not as simple as it might have seemed. The preceeding pages have revealed to us that in its journey toward God the human intellection is rather complicated. The different aspects of this intellection are not only distinct, but each is built on the previous one, so that the intellection of God is only achieved at the end of the path. Nevertheless, we are always dealing with intellection.

"Intellection" signifies here "intellectual justification." It implies, then, not turning to God in just any way with the intellect, but rather in a way intellectually justified. Man not only has an idea of God, but also needs to justify {356}

the affirmation of God's reality. This justification unfolds in three successive stages.

1) It is necessary to start with an analysis of human existence. Man to be sure carries out his acts always and only on determinate things (exterior things, those things that are other men, and the very reality of himself). But what is essential is how he carries out his acts. And these acts are not exhausted so to speak in being what they are, for even in the most modest and inconsequential of them man takes a position with respect to something which uncompromisingly we call ultimateness. And this is because man is not a thing like the rest, but rather a strictly personal reality. As a consequence of being so he is constituted as something

de suyo and therefore confronts the world in a form so to speak "absolute." Whence his acts are velis nolis

the actualization of this absolute character of human reality. What we call "ultimateness" is nothing else. Now, this ultimateness is not merely something in which man "is," but rather something in which man has to be in order to be able to be what he is in each of his acts. Thus the ultimateness has a grounding character. But it is an ultimateness which is grasped by the intellect (through his understanding, in fact, man is a personal reality). And as such it is present to man as something which affects reality itself. The ultimateness in virtue of [312]

its grounding character is something real. Because of it, in his acts man finds himself grounded in this character as in something through which and from which alone he is in his acts that which he is able to be, which he has to be, and which he in fact is. This grounding character entails that man in his acts be not only a reality acting in one form or another, but moreover a reality

relegated to the ultimate. This is the phenomenon of religation. Religation is nothing but the absolute personal character of human reality actualized in the acts which it carries out. Man is relegated to the ultimateness because in his own character he is absolute reality in the sense of being something of "of his own." And inasmuch as it relegates, the ultimateness is just that border of ultimate reality which we call "deity." This is not to speak of God as a reality in and through Himself. That we do not yet know. But it is to speak of a "character" according to which man {357} is shown everything real. In religation we are "coming" religatedly from an ultimate, from the deity. Here we have "the something which comes." This opening toward the deity is not the product of the moral conscience, nor is it a sentiment, or a psychological experience, or a social structure; on the contrary these four aspects are what they are in and through religation. They are in fact something brought about by religation. Religation is not, then, just another act of man; nor is it the character of certain privileged acts of his; but rather the character which every act has by virtue of being the act of a personal reality. The discovery of the deity is not the result of a determinate experience of man, be it historical, social, or psychological; but rather is the very principle of all this possible experience. Religation does not have an "origin, " but rather a "grounding" or a "foundation." To show it thus is the work of the understanding. But it is not a reasoning process in the sense of illative or inferential demonstration; rather it is a discursive analysis, but merely an analysis. The examination of conscience is discursive intellection, but is not a "demonstration;" rather, it is an exhibition or showing.

Now this has told us nothing yet about what the deity is as the ultimate character of reality. We know nothing at present except that it is a character. We are ignorant even of whether it is a simple character or something which is a reality in and for itself. The only [313] thing that we know is that, seen in the deity, things appear to us to reflect that character and they in turn are reflected in it. It is exactly what constitutes an enigma (aŠnigma) And by being so, the deity compels the intellect to a further state: to knowing what the deity is.

2) Since it is a character of what is real, the understanding sees itself compelled by material things themselves to resolve that "enigma." And this second stage is thus strictly demonstrative. it consists in making clear that the character of "deity" is inexorably grounded in something which is reality, but essentially existent and distinct from the world, distinct in the sense that it is the real foundation of the world. Deity thus refers us to the "deity-reality, " as it were, to the "divine reality. "This is the deity as a character of ultimate reality: the deity-reality as first cause. And this {358} primality is what we call "divinity." As such, that reality is the first cause not only of material reality, but also of human realities inasmuch as they are characterized by understanding and free will. In a preeminent sense it is, therefore, an intelligent and free reality. Its primality is of the intellectual and willing order. And in respect of being primary, this reality is beyond the world precisely in order to be able to ground it as reality. Hence the discovery of the abstract transcendent reality. Deity is nothing but the specular reflection of this divine transcendence.

Still, this is not sufficient for reaching God, because a very important question remains unanswered. Is the first cause that which men call God, that to which man directs himself not only with demonstration, but with all his acts of submission, prayer, etc.? Or stated somewhat externally, who is the first cause? Is it Zeus, Djaus, Yahweh, etc.? The fact is that the first cause is nothing but the "what" of divine reality in the order of being the foundation of the world. But insofar as it transcends the world, the question of "who" remains to be answered. This is the third stage of the problem.

3) This transcendent reality of the primary cause is an intelligent and free reality. As such it is the absolutely absolute reality. It belongs to nothing but itself In a word, it is a personal reality. Moreover, because it is absolute it depends on nothing, not even that on which every human person depends, to wit, his nature. Its character of grounding the world is not the result of any internal necessity, but is rather a free act. The first cause as a personal and free reality: here we at last have God. The foundation [314] of the world is not something required by internal necessity; it could not be other than a purely free gift. All causality is formally ex-static; it consists in going towards what is outside of oneself, toward the effect. But the causality of all volition (including human) is simple determination. Except that in the case of man it is not a determination of pure volition, because all of his determinations are motivated by a desire, that is, by something prior to the volition itself. Only a pure will would be pure {359}

ex-stasy. This act of ex-stasy of pure volition is precisely what constitutes love in all orders; agape as oppose to

eros. Love is the supreme form of causality. Whence God, as the foundation of the world, is the primary cause as pure donation of love. Only having grasped this will we have ultimate justification for affirming God. To God thus understood must all the characteristics refer which the various religions attribute to Him.

Deity, primary reality, personal and free reality, i.e. deity, divine reality, God: these are the three stages in any intellectual discovery of God. Each of them depends on the previous one and leads by internal necessity to the following. The first of them is not demonstrative, but simply seeks to show or exhibit. And it is therein that the demonstrations of the final two stages are inscribed. This is the reason that demonstration is not the primary way of intellectual access to God.

In this intellectual journey toward God, man does not obtain nor can he obtain adequate notions about God, because he must acquire his notions from material things only. But it would be an error to think that these material things give us nothing but concepts or notions of themselves; rather, the concepts which these things give us serve not only to "represent them," but also "go toward" other things as well. Even in the most ordinary experience, the intellect with its concepts has two distinct dimensions: that of being "before" some things and that of being "directed toward" others. If in the first dimension man acquires "representative" concepts of things, in the second he acquires "directional" concepts leading toward other things-i.e. he finds conceptual pathways in the concepts. In our problem material things do not give us representative concepts of God, but enable us to select diverse paths with which to position ourselves in a direction toward Him. The labor of the intellect consists in discerning the possible ways from the impossible. What is meant by this is that there are some paths such that if we manage to [315]

follow them to their end, we would encounter therein the reality of God, infinitely overflowing any representative concept, but a reality which would eminently justify what the intellect had only conceived in a directional way. On the other hand, {360}

some paths are dead ends, simply because at the end of the direction indicated by them we would never reach the reality of God. It is a question simply of the difference between embarking upon a good road or embarking upon a bad one.

To be sure, after having understood the personal and free reality of God in this form, we have not run out of questions. Only the conceptions of God which do not meet this condition of intelligibility are eliminated; and now we have reached the point where the meaningful ones can be discussed. But there are many possibilities, or at least several. The diversity of religions is inscribed within these possibilities, discounting those that are impossible. And a decision on them is no longer a purely intellectual question, but rather of faith. But faith would be impossible if it did not carry within itself at least the possibility of rational justification which we have just indicated. Among those possibilities there is one in which the nature of the personal and free gift of reality to the world and everything in it enclosed another gift, one in which God gave Himself personally to the world; such was the origin of Christianity. But that exceeds the limits of pure understanding. On the other hand, Christianity is not possible except within the structure indicated.

Philosophically the intellect, taking leave of man and the things of the world, justifiably undertakes a journey in which it follows the three stages indicated: deity, divine reality,. God. Only in this journey is the reality of God intellectually justified. Neither simple deity nor divine reality is by itself God. We only reach God having understood the deity as a character of divine reality, and divine reality as a character of the free personality of God. Each one of these three stages must be intellectually given in all its complexity and precision. Here we have not proposed to do more than point them out as a brief introduction to the problem of God, the most distant and, nonetheless, closest of all realities.

In Regard to the Problem of God

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IN REGARD TO THE PROBLEM OF GOD

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INTRODUCTION

The expression “problem of God” is ambiguous. It can refer to any kind of problem which divinity poses for man. But it can also mean something prior and more radical: Is there a problem of God for philosophy? I am going to treat of this latter question; accordingly not of God as He is in Himself, but rather of the philosophical possibility of the problem of God.[1]

The question dates from very early times. Philosophy, in fact, in every important period of its history has had to wrestle with proofs for the existence of God: the ontological argument, the celebrated Five Ways of St. Thomas, the argument a simultaneo of Duns Scotus, etc. But in the face of these attempts {364} to rationally prove the necessity of the existence of God, there have always been those who held such rational proofs to be insufficient, either because they regard the actual proofs offered as inconclusive, or because they reject a priori the possibility of any rational demonstration of matters concerning divinity. And so, either they have adopted an atheistic attitude, or they have judged that man possesses a sentiment of the Divine which varies from a beautiful religiosity to the so-called “vital exigencies,” which will carry man to a belief in God despite an incapacity to know Him rationally.

But this question concerning the possibility of rationally proving the existence of God does not coincide formally with what I have termed “the problem of God.” Rather, this latter problem [320] arises when one exposes the presupposition behind every “demonstration,” which is the same as that behind every “negation,” and even every “sentiment” of the existence of God.

On this point, the situation has an intimate analogy with that which came about in regard to the celebrated question of the existence of an “external” world. Idealism denies the existence of real things, that is, things external to the subject and independent of him. Man would be an entity enclosed within himself, who would have

no need for an external reality; if such a reality were to exist, it would be unknowable. Realism, on the other hand, admits the existence of an external world, but in virtue of an argument founded on an evident "fact:" the interiority of the subject himself, and one or more rational principles, likewise evident, such as the principle of causality or another similar one. Nor have there been wanting those who consider this "critical" realism not only insufficient, but in fact useless, because they do not find adequate motivation for doubting "external" perception, which ostensibly manifests to us with immediate certainty the "fact" that there is something "external" to man. This is the so-called "ingenuous realism."

Now, these three attitudes all involve a common presupposition: that the existence or non-existence of an external world is a "fact," either demonstrated, or immediate, or undemonstrated, or undemonstrable. Whatever may be the attitude one adopts, it always relates to a "fact." Idealism and critical realism {365} have in addition another supposition: that the existence of an "exterior" world is something "added" to the existence of the subject; "besides" the subject there exist things. The subject is what he is, in and for himself, and then—such is the opinion of critical realism—he needs to lay hold of an exterior world in order to be able to explain his own interior vicissitudes. Thus, the following are assumed:

1. That the existence of the exterior world is a "fact."

2. That it is a fact "added" to the facts of conscience.

These two suppositions are debatable to say the least. Is it true that the existence of the exterior world is something "added"? Is it true that it is a simple fact, including whatever one may wish, but when all is said and done, still a fact, nothing more? This removes the question to a higher plane: to the analysis of the very subjectivity of the subject. We have already seen how the being of the subject consists formally, in one of its dimensions, in lying [321] "open" to things. Accordingly, it is not that the subject exists and, "besides" him, there are things; but rather that being a subject "consists" in being open to things. The exteriority of the world is not a simple factum, but rather the formal ontological structure of the human subject, in virtue of which there could be things without men, but not men without things. And this state of affairs comes about not on account of any kind of necessity founded on the principle of causality, or even on account of any logical contradiction, implied in the concept of man; but rather on account of something more: because it would be a type of contra-being, or human contra-existence. The existence of an exterior world is not something which presents itself to man from the outside; on the contrary, it comes from within him. Idealism said something similar; but when it began to speak of "he himself," it meant that the exterior things are just a position of the subject. This is beside the mark; the "he himself" is not a being "enclosed" in oneself, but rather lying "open" to things; what the subject posits with this its "openness" is precisely the openness, and, therefore, the "exteriority" through which it is possible for there to be things "external" to the subject and "enter" (sit venia verbo) into him. This position is the very being of man. Without things, then, man would be nothing. In this his constitutive ontological nihility, there is implied the reality of things. Only then is there sense in asking in an individual case if each thing is or is not real. {366}

Contemporary philosophy has succeeded, at least, in posing the problem of the reality of things in these terms. These things of the world are neither "facts," nor simply add-ons, but rather a constitutivum formale and, accordingly, a necessarium of the human being qua human being.

Now, as for what touches upon God, it does not seem that the situation has improved significantly. Typically one takes as his point of departure the supposition that man and things are, provisionally, subsisting and substantive; so that if there is a God, He would be "besides" these subsisting things. Some then appeal to a rational demonstration; others to a blind sentiment. There are also those who regard the dispute as useless and pretend that it is an evident "fact," as is every fact (e.g. the ontologism of Rosmini and Hegelian idealism); and since this fact,

which would be God, cannot be “juxtaposed” with anything, such an attitude conduces, in the final analysis, to pantheism. And all these attitudes presuppose: [322]

I. That the substantivity of things calls for a demonstration that “besides” them there exists a God.

2. That this existence is a factum (for the non-atheists), at least quoad nos, from out human point of view.

I said quoad nos. Demonstrations of the existence of God carefully distinguish between His existence quoad se, that is, in regard to what affects God Himself, and quoad nos. The limitation of human reason carries this necessary distinction along with it as a consequence, in virtue of which all knowledge of God is perforce “indirect.” But in what this limitation consists, and above all, how this limitation (which is therefore something negative) acquires a positive meaning in order to make the knowledge of God possible and necessary is something which has scarcely been elucidated with sufficient precision. Those who do not admit any knowledge of God see in this limitation an open door to sentiment, to the irrational. So it seems as if the previous question were: which is the primary faculty for reaching God, knowledge or sentiment?

And this is precisely that which, as in the case of the reality of the external world, gives rise to the suspicion that these two suppositions are not well thought out: Is the existence of God quoad nos merely a factum? Is access to it {367} necessarily consequent upon the mode of being of human reason? Might not, perhaps, quoad nos be something constitutive of human reason? Is knowledge, sentiment, or any other “faculty” the organon for entering into “relation” with God? Might it not be that this latter is not the task of any “organon, “ because the very being of man is contitutively a being in God? If so, what might this “in” signify? And in such case, what meaning does a demonstration of the existence of God have? Has it rendered such a demonstration superfluous or, on the contrary, might it not then and only then have shown, in a rigorous way, the conditions of the possibility and of the character of this demonstration.

The question about God is thus transformed back into one about man. And the philosophical possibility of the problem of God will consist in discovering the human dimension within which that question must be posed, or better, is already posed.

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II. EXISTENCE AND RELIGATION: THE PROBLEM OF GOD

Human existence, we are told today, is a reality which consists in finding itself among things and creating itself, taking care about them and indeed being dragged along by them. In this realizing of itself, human existence acquires its identity and its being; that is to say, in this self- realization human existence is what it is and how it is. Human existence is thrown among things, and in this being thrown it acquires the boldness of existing.[2] The constitutive indigence of man, the fact that he is nothing without things and only exists for and with them, is a consequence of his being “thrown,” of his radical ontological nihility.

But with this we have only scratched the surface; what is the relation of man with the totality of his existence? What is the character of his being “thrown” among things? Is it nothing but “finding oneself” existing? Is it only a “simple” finding oneself or is it something more? Might not his constitutive ontological nihility be something deeper and more radical yet?

I wish to make clear, before proceeding, the nature of these explications. In regard to the phenomenon of “being thrown,” as well as the others to which I will make reference, it should be noted that these cannot be understood except in the analysis of existence itself. The entire meaning of what is going to follow consists in trying to make clear that human existence is not described with sufficient precision unless it is said that man finds himself

existing. And in all of this bear in mind constantly the example (and it is nothing more than an example) of the reality of the exterior world, to which I alluded earlier.

For the time being, I would prefer to say that man finds himself, in some way, implanted in existence. And if we wish to avoid all complications, superfluous for the moment, let us say that {369} man finds himself implanted in being. Hence the word "existence" is, in fact, somewhat ambiguous. What do we mean by it? The manner in which man is? Then "existence" signified as [324] much the mode as the man existing; sistit extra causas, he is outside of the causes, which here are things. In this sense it would not be too inaccurate to say that to exist is to transcend, and in consequence, to live. Very well. But is man his existence? Here we come across the other possible sense of existing, which perhaps makes this question ambiguous, since "to exist" may designate, in addition, the being that man has conquered by transcending and living. Then we would have to say that man is not his life, but rather that he lives in order to be. But, his being is in some way beyond his existence in the sense of "life." Even the Scholastic theologians said that "nature" is not the same thing as "underlying," and this is especially true in the case of "nature" and "person," even understanding by "nature" individual nature. Boethius defined that which underlies as: naturae completae individua substantia; a person would be the rational underlying thing. And the Scholastics added that both of these are found together in the relation of "that by which it is" (natura ut quo) and "that which is" (suppositum ut quod). Thus says St. Augustine:

Verum haec quando in una sunt persona, sicut est homo, potest nobis quispiam dicere: tria ista, memoria, intellectus et amor, mea sunt, non sua; nec sibi sed mihi agunt quod agunt, immo ego per illa. Ego enim memini per memoriam, intelligo per intelligetiam, amo per amorem.... Ego per omnia illa tria memini, ego intelligo, ego diligo, qui nec memoria sum, nec intelligential nec dilectio sed haec habeo. (De Trinitate, lib. XV, c. 22)[3]

Personality is the very being of man: actiones sunt suppositorum, because the underlying thing (suppositum) is who properly speaking "is." This question, admittedly transcendental, was considered to be a Byzantinism. And philosophy, from Descartes to Kant, rebuilt the lost road painfully and erroneously. Man appears in Descartes as a substance: res (without entering, for the rest, in the classical question, purely analogical, of the category of [325] substance); in the Critique of Pure Reason there is a distinction drawn between the res, as subject, and the pure ego, the "I." In the Critique of Practical Reason, the person is discovered beyond the "I"; for the Cartesian division between {370} thinking things and extended things Kant substituted the separation between persons and things. During the course of its history modern philosophy has traversed successively these three states: subject, I, person.[4] But Kant leaves the question of what a person is rather obscure. To be sure, it is not just conscience of identity, as Locke claimed. It is something more. In the first place, it is to be sui juris, and this "being sui juris" is for Kant to be a categorical imperative. But not even with this did he arrive at the radical question about the person. One must fall back and proceed in a new way to the dimension, strictly ontological, in which Scholasticism moved during its last epoch in virtue of fecund theological necessities, which were unfortunately sterilized through pure polemic. But that would carry us too far afield. In what follows, the context will make clear the sense in which I employ the expression "existence."

It suffices, for the moment, to say that the person is the being of the man. The person finds himself implanted in being "in order to realize himself." This unity, radical and incommunicable, which is the person, is realized through the complexity of living. And living is living with things, with others and with ourselves, insofar as we are living things. Moreover this "with" is not a simple juxtaposition of person and life: the "with" is one of the formal ontological characters of the human person as such, and in virtue of this the life of every human being is, constitutively, "personal. " Every life, in virtue of being the life of a person, is constitutively a life, be it "impersonal," or "more or less personal," or "depersonalized"; which is to say that by which a man realizes himself as a person can, and in certain respects has to, obscure his personal being.

Granting this, perhaps it were superfluous to say that man finds himself implanted in being. In order not to lose myself in excessively prolonged explanations, I will take the liberty of making a concise enumeration of some propositions which I esteem fundamental. Nothing other than conciseness should be seen in their laconism. [326] {371}

1) Man already exists as a person, in the sense of being an entity whose entity consists in having to realize himself as a person, having to elaborate his personality in life.

2) Man finds himself sent to existence, or, better, existence is sent to him. This missive character, if I may be permitted the expression, is not just interior to life. Life, supposing it is lived, has an evident mission and destiny. But this is not the question: the question affects the underlying thing itself. It is not that life has a mission; but rather that it is a mission. Life, in its totality, is not a simple factum; the presumed facticity of existence is only a provisional denomination. Nor is existence merely a splendid possibility. It is something more. Man receives existence as something imposed upon him. Man is tied to life. But, as we shall see later, tied to life does not mean tied by life.

3) That which imposes existence upon him is what impels him to live. Man must, effectively, make himself among and with the things of the world, but he does not receive from these the impulse for life. He receives, at most, stimuli and possibilities for living.

4) That which impels him to live is not the natural tendency or inclination to life. It is something anterior. It is something on which man depends to exist, to make himself. Man not only has to make his being with things, but, for this, he finds himself dependent a tergo on something, from which life itself comes to him.

5) This dependence is not purely physical. It is a dependence in the sense that it is what supports us in existence; it is what makes us to be. Man not only is nothing without things, but, through himself, “isn’t.” It is not sufficient for him to be able to and to have to make himself. He needs the strength to be making himself. He needs what will make him create himself. His ontological nihility is radical; not only is he nothing without things and without creating something with them, but moreover by himself he does not have the strength for the ongoing creation of himself, for arriving at being. {372}

6) It cannot be said that we ourselves are this force or strength. Although we are tied to life, nevertheless, it is not life which binds us. Being what is most ours, since it makes us to be, nevertheless it is in a certain respect the most other, since it makes us to be.

7) This is to say that man, upon existing, does not merely find himself with things which “are” and with which he has to create himself; but rather he finds himself with the “necessity” to make [327] himself and the necessity to be making himself always. Besides things, there “is” also that which makes man to be.

8) This making-there-to-be-existence is not revealed to us in a simple obligation to be. The presumed obligation is a consequence of something more radical: we are obliged to exist because previously we are relegated to what makes us exist. That ontological chain of the human being is “religation.” In the obligation we are simply submitted to something which is either imposed upon us extrinsically, or which inclines us intrinsically, as the constitutive tendency of what we are. In religation we are more than subjected because we find ourselves linked to something which is not extrinsic, but which antecedently makes us to be. In cases of obligation, we go to something which will fulfill us in its accomplishment, or at least will be terminated or brought to perfection. In the case of religation, on the contrary, we do not “go to,” but rather antecendently we “come from.” It is, if one wishes, a “going,” but a going which consists not in a “fulfilling,” but rather in a doing homage to that from which we come, be it what it may. We “go” just insofar as we recognize that we “have come.” In religation, more than the obligation to make or the respect of being (in the sense of dependency), there is a yielding of recognition

in the face of that which “makes there to be. “

9) In virtue of this, religation is what makes real and evident to us what we may term, summarizing the previous discussion, the fundamentality of human existence. A fundament is, primarily, that which is root and support at the same time. Hence, “fundamentality” does not here have a meaning exclusively or primarily conceptual, but rather something much more radical. Nor is it simply {373} the mere cause of our being in one way or another, but rather of our being in being, if I may be pardoned the expression.

10) Now, to exist is to exist “with”—with things, with others, with ourselves. This “with” pertains to the very being of man; it is not something added to him. In existence everything else is enfolded with this peculiar form of “with.” What relegates existence relegates along with it the entire world. Religation is not something which affects man exclusively, as opposed to everything else; but rather it affects everything the same way. Only in man is religation actualized formally; but in this formal actuality of human existence which is religation, everything, [328] including the material universe, appears as a field illuminated by light of the relegating fundamentality. It must be understood that the foregoing only means this field appears “illuminated.” It means only that things appear organized in the perspective of the ultimate fundamentality. In no way does it imply anything other than that a contemplation of the world in light of this problem has been achieved.

Human existence, then, is not only thrown among things, but also relegated through its roots.
Religtion—religatum esse, religio, religion, in its primary sense[5]—is a dimension formally constitutive of existence. Therefore religation or religion is not something which one simply has or does not have. Man does not have religion, but rather, velis nolis, consists in religation or religion. Hence man can have, or equally not have, a religion, in the sense of positive religions. And, from the {373} Christian point of view, it is evident that only man is capable of Revelation, because only he consists in religation; religation is the ontological presupposition of all revelation.

The Scholastics were already speaking of a certain “natural religion”. Religio naturalis, but they did not pay sufficient attention to the sense of the ‘natural’. Here the word ‘natural’ does not signify a natural inclination, but rather a formal dimension of the very being of man; something constitutive of him and not simply adventitious. Religation is not a dimension which pertains to the nature of man, but rather to his existence as a person, or if one wishes his personalized nature. We are relegated primarily, not insofar as we are endowed naturally with certain characteristics, but rather insofar as we are personal subsistent entities. Hence rather than speak of a natural religion, we might better speak of a personal religion. The fundamental character of our personality involves religation in a formal way. St. Bonaventure in fact made each person, even though finite, consist [329] in a relation; and he characterized that relation as a principium originate. For St. Bonaventure, a person carries within himself a relation of origin. Religation is not the principium originate, but it is the primary phenomenom in which this principium is actualized in our existence. Religion is not a property or a necessity; it is something distinct and superior: a formal dimension of the personal human being. Religion, as such, is not a simple sentiment, or a naked piece of knowledge, or an act of obedience, or a push to action; but rather actualization of the relegated being of man. In religion we do not antecedently feel any boost for working, but a fundament or ground for being. Therefore its “ultimation” or supreme expression is the “cult,” in the widest and most integral sense of the word, not as a conjunction of rules, but as actualization of that “recognizing” or reverencing to which I alluded before.

11) And thus just as being open to things discovers to us, in this very being open, that “there are” things, similarly being relegated discovers to us that “there is” that which relegates, that which constitutes the {375} fundamental root of existence. Without further compromise, we can say provisionally that this is what we all designate by the word “God,” that to which we are relegated in our entire being. However, God is not patent to us, but rather the deity. “Deity” is the name of broad area which reason must fix with more precision because we do not know by simple intuition what it is, or if it has effective existence as an entity. Through his religation, man sees himself

forced to put into play his reason in order to clarify and justify the nature of God as reality. But reason could not do this if previously the ontological structure of the person, i.e. religation, had not placed the understanding, by the mere fact of existing personally and religatedly, in the realm of the deity. We shall return to this. Sight as such does not guarantee the reality of the determined object. But it opens before man the realm of the visible. Religation does not place us before the precise reality of a God, but it opens before us the realm of the deity, and places us constitutively in it. The deity is manifested to us as a simple correlate of religation; in religation we are "founded" and the deity is "that which founds," as such. Even the intent to deny all reality to that which founds (atheism) is metaphysically impossible without the realm of the deity: Atheism is a negative position before the deity.

Rather than "infinite ", " necessary" , " perfect," etc., which [330] just yet are excessively complicated ontological attributes, I believe I can dare to call God, as He is patent to man in his constitutive religation, ens fundamentale or fundamentante (with the reservation to explain myself below in regard to the expression 'lens"). That which relegates us does so under this special form which consists in grounding us through making us to be. Hence, our existence has a fundament, in all of the many senses of this word. The primary attribute quoad nos of divinity is the fundamentality. However much we say of God, including His very negation (in atheism), supposes our having discovered this attribute in our relegated dimension.

In a certain way, then, just as the exteriority of things pertains to the very being of man, in the sense indicated above, i.e. without forming part of him, similarly the fundamentality of God "pertains" to the being of {376} man, not because God fundamentally forms part of our being, but because "being founded," being relegated, constitutes a formal part of our being. God is not at all subjective, and neither are external things. To exist is, in one of its dimensions, to be having already discovered God in our religation.

But, note, nevertheless, that exteriority and religation are, in a certain respect, of contrary sign. Man is open to things; he finds himself among them and with them. Therefore he goes toward them, sketching a world of possibilities of making something with these things. But man does not find himself thus with God. God is not a thing in this sense. Upon being relegated, man is not with God; he is rather in God. Neither does he go toward God, as it were sketching out something to do with Him; rather he is coming from God, "having to" make and make himself. For this reason every ulterior going toward God is a being carried by Him. In his openness before things, man encounters himself with things and is placed before them. In the openness which is religation, man is put in existence, implanted in being, as I said at the beginning, and put there as a coming "from." As an ontological dimension, religation makes patent the condition of a being, man, who is not and cannot be understood in himself, but only from outside himself.

"We move, live, and are in Him." And this "in" signifies: 1: Being relegated, and 2. Being so constitutively. As a problem, the problem of God is the problem of religation.

This is not a demonstration or anything resembling it, but an attempt to sketch the ontological analysis of one of our dimensions. [331] The problem of God is not a question which man sets himself as he can set himself a scientific question or one about life; that is to say, as something which in the final analysis can be or not be asked, according to the exigencies of life and the keeness of the understanding. Rather, this is a problem already planted in a man, by the mere fact of finding himself implanted in existence. Whence it is nothing other than a question about this mode of implantation.

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III. EQUIVOCATIONS

Since God is, then something which affects the very being of man, all discussions of the faculties which primarily carry us to Him are obviated. God is patent in the very being of man.[6] Man need not come to God. Man consists in being in the process of coming from God, and, therefore, being in Him. The aspirations of the heart are by themselves a romantic inconstancy which will do us little good. Those sudden attacks or raptures directed toward the infinite, that religious sentimentality, are in the final analysis an index and an effect of something much deeper, namely the being of man in God.

In order to avoid all misunderstandings, I should add that the point of view which I here maintain has nothing to do with what was called in its time "philosophy of action." Action is something practical. Here I treat not of theory, nor of practice, nor of thought, nor of life, but rather of the being of man. That splendid and redoubtable book of Blondel, L'Action, would not achieve its marvelous intellectual efficacy otherwise than by translating the problem to the sphere of ontology. And I am inclined to believe that God is not primarily an "increment" necessary for action, but rather the "fundament" of existence, discovered as a problem in our very being, in its constitutive religation.

Nor in this regard is pure knowledge as such any more favorable, because there are two distinct dimensions of knowledge: the first is what is known effectively in the act of knowing; the second, {378} that which brings us to know. Man is brought to know through his own being. And precisely because his being is open and relegated, his existence is necessarily an intent to know things and God. This requires some special consideration.

But first an observation. I am not considering an experience of God. In reality there is no experience of God, for very basic reasons, namely those on account of which one cannot speak properly of an experience of reality. There is an experience of real [333] things; but the reality itself is not an object of one or many experiences. It is indeed something more: reality, in a certain sense, is being, insofar as being is being open to things. Neither is there properly an experience of God, as if He were a thing, a fact, or something similar. It too is something more. Human existence is a relegated and fundamental existence. The possession of existence is not an experience in any sense, and, therefore, is not an expression of God, either.[7]

The presumed controversy between a so-called method of immanence and a method of transcendence has no meaning, because it makes no sense to need a method for arriving at God. God is not something which is in man as a part of him, nor is He something which is added to him, from outside; nor is He a state of conscience; nor is He an object. What of God there may be in many is only the religation through which we are open to Him, and in this religation God becomes patent to us. Hence one cannot, strictly speaking, talk of a relation with God. Or, if one wishes, every relation with God supposes that man consists in making things patent and in making God patent, although granting that the potencies are in different senses. There is, as I have indicated before and as we shall shortly see, an intellectual problem about God; but this does not mean either that the primary mode of making God patent is an act of knowledge or of any other faculty, or that the knowledge is a final reflection or a chimerical religious experience. We are not dealing with an act, but rather with the being of man.

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IV. "IS"AND "THERE IS": GOD AND THE PROBLEM OF BEING

Man has among other things a capacity for knowing. The understanding knows if something is or is not; if it is in a certain manner or in another; why it is as it is and not another way. Understanding always moves in the "is." This has made it possible to think that the "is" is the primary form in which man enters into contact with things. But that goes too far. Upon knowing, man understands what there is, and he knows it as being.[8] Things are then converted into entities. But being supposes always a "there is" (haber). It is possible then that they may coincide; thus, for example, for Parmenides, there is (haber) only what is (ser). But one cannot do what Parmenides himself

did, viz. convert this coincidence into an identity between “is” (ser) and “there is” (haber), as if “thing” and “being” were synonymous.

And in fact Plato, following Democritus, foresaw that “there is” something which “is not, “ in the sense of entity, that is, in the sense of the “thing which is,” discovered to us by Parmenides. And Aristotle tried to show us something which “there is” and which is affected by the “is not,” either because it supervenes on what properly “is,” or because it “still is not,” etc. If the Greek language had not possessed only one verb, the verb “to be,” to express the two ideas of “is” (ser) and “there is” (haber)—and the same is true in Latin—the great paradoxes of ontology would have been notably clarified and simplified. The constraint of making use only of the “is” obliged Plato to affirm that what “is” also “is not.” Perhaps one of the great discoveries of post-Eleatic philosophy could be described by saying that it tried to capture {380} from the point of view of being something which indisputably there is, but which is “of that which is not.” [335]

Man understands, then, what there is, and he understands it as being. Being is always being of what there is. And this “there is” (haber) is constituted in the radical openness in which man is open to things and finds himself among them. And just as this finding of himself pertains to his being, likewise the intellection of things pertains to him, which is to say, understanding that they “are” (ser).

Within the orbit of being and, therefore, of understanding, in its broadest sense, we say that things are or are not. But we employ the term “to be” in many acceptations: this is a man, this is red, it is true that two and two are four, etc. Accordingly, since the time of Aristotle the question has been asked whether all such branches of knowledge about the being of things constitute a single science, a single branch of knowledge. And since Aristotle the response has been affirmative, that all these senses of the word “to be” have an analogical unity, which is based on the diverse manner in which all of them imply a single fundamental sense: being in the sense of a subsistent thing. The thing is, then, what properly “is,” the entity properly so-called. Hence we have: 1. the entity simpliciter, the thing or substance; 2. Everything else which, in its diversity, likewise offers a diverse ratio entis, according as it may be in one or another way with respect to substance. In virtue of this the branches of knowledge about the being of things are a single science: the science of being as such, first philosophy or metaphysics. Philosophy is not, for Aristotle, a science of being, because he probably had not arrived at a concept of being.[9] Philosophy is only a science of entities in their entitiness: to wit, in what measure they possess ratio entis.

As man is open “toward” things, the “being” which understanding understands primarily is the being of things. Aristotle limited himself to pointing this out. Nevertheless, philosophy should interpret this “fact.”

Since antiquity it has been said that the primary suitable objects of understanding are external things. And it is necessary {381} to add that this suitability is based on the fact that human existence “consists,” in one of its dimensions, in being open and hence constitutively directed toward things. Therefore all knowledge of itself is constitutively a return from things to itself. The greatest [336] difficulty connected with this knowledge stems from the necessary inadequation of the “is” of things, applied to that which is not a thing, viz. human existence. Hence, the “it itself” does not enter into that “is.”

This makes it easy to see the point that ontological dialectic is not merely application of “a” concept already founded, the concept of being, to new objects. It is not clear that there is an “is” pure and abstract which is “one.” For this reason, the dialectic of being is not a simple application or amplification of an idea of being to diverse regions of entitites, but rather a progression constitutive of the realm of being, made possible, at the same time, by the progressive discovery of new objects or regions, which oblige us to remake ab initio the very meaning of being, conserving it, but absorbing it into a superior unity.

If the idea of an analogy is to be maintained, it will be necessary to say that the analogy is not a simple formal correlation, but rather involves a determined direction: one leaves from the "is" of things to proceed in casu to the "is" of human existence, passing through the "is" of life, etc. As this "is" cannot be simply transferred to human existence from the material universe, the ontology of the former thus becomes absolutely problematic. But let us suppose the problem is now resolved. For this it will be necessary to return to the "is" of things in order to modify the problem, avoiding its circumscription of the physical world. Not only is the direction toward a new goal essential to the ontological dialectic, but so is this reversion to its first origin. And upon making the reversion, we see ourselves forced to operate freshly upon the "is" of things. That is to say, we are in the third moment, a moment of radicalization. The analogy is maintained in what is understood in the point of departure for modifying it. In what does this modification consist? It does not involve simply adding or deleting annotations, but rather of giving to the "is" a new meaning and a new variety of horizons which allow the new object to dwell in it. But then we will not merely have succeeded in discovering a new entity in its fullness of being, {382}but also a new ratio entis.[10] And this we will do while still remaining in the [337] previous entity, but viewing it from a new perspective, in such a way that the last entity, which is what in the beginning presented itself to us as problematic, has now converted the first entity into a problem. The solution of the problem has consisted in maintaining the content of the concept, subsuming it under a new and fuller ratio. I believe this distinction between concept and ratio entis is essential. Amplifying the saying of Aristotle, one may affirm not only that being, in the conceptual sense, is spoken of in many ways; but that, before all else, the knowledge or explanation (ratio) of entity is spoken of in many ways. And this in such a radical way that it encompasses forms of the "is" no less true than that of the entity as such; mythology, technology, etc. also operate with objects that present, within these operations, their own ratio entis. Ontological dialectic is, before anything else, the dialectic of these rationes.

In our case, since things are seen from the point of view of human existence, we find ourselves compelled by this circumstance to conserve the "is" of them, eliminating nonetheless what is peculiar to "thingness" as such.

Now, understanding finds itself not only with the fact that "there are" things, but also with that other thing which "there is," that which relegates and founds existence: God. But it is a "there is" whose content is a problem. Through religation it is, then, possible and necessary at the same time to pose the intellectual problem of God. Not only has our analysis not eliminated the intellection of God or made it superfluous, but on the contrary has conduced inexorably to it, with all of its radical problematicism: it forces us, without remission, to pose for ourselves the problem of God.

But if, indeed, the return which carried us from things to an understanding of ourselves was radical, still more radical is that return in which, without stopping, we are carried to an understanding not of what "there is," but of what "makes that {383} there be." Every possibility of understanding God depends, then, on the possibility of quartering or lodging God in the "is." And here I do not mean simply an amplification of the "is" in order to have God dwell therein. The difficulty is much more fundamental. We do not know, in the first place, if this quartering is possible. And this is in a much more radical form than that having to do with human existence, because one always reads "is" in what "there is." And with all of its pecularities, human existence is of "what [338] there is." God, on the other hand, is not for a finite mind "what there is," but rather what "makes something to be." That is to say, there is not on one hand human existence and on the other God, and "then" one bridges the gap so that God turns out to be the one who makes there to be existence. No. The primary mode by which "there is" (if one desires to use the expression) God, for man, is grounding itself; or better, from the human point of view, deity is being in the process of grounding. Whence there arises a serious problem, that of the possibility of finding a sense of the "is" for God. That God has something to do with being is a consequence of the fact that the things that there are, are. But the problem is precisely that of determining in what this making there to be consists. There is no identification of the being of metaphysics with God. In God the "there is" surpasses infinitely with respect to the

"is." God is beyond being. Prima rerum creatorum est esse, being is before created things, the medieval Platonists said. Esse formaliter non est in Deo ... nihil quod est in Deo habet rationem entis, being is not formally in God ... nothing which is in God has the form of being, repeated Master Eckhardt, and with him, all of the Christian mystics.[11] When it has been said of God that He is the ipsum esse {384} subsistens, then perhaps we have said the most we can say and still understand what we are talking about; but even so we have not touched God in His Ultimate Divinity. I do not pretend to insinuate any vague mystical sentiment, but something perfectly understandable and concrete: God is knowable insofar as He can be "quartered" in being; He is [339] unknowable insofar as he cannot be treated as dwelling therein. The possible analogy or ontological unity between God and things has a sense radically different than the unity of being within the extra-divine ontology. At best one could speak of a supraanalogy.[12] We do not know, in the first place, if God is an entity, and if He is, we do not know in what sense. Or better, we know that there is a God, but we are not acquainted with Him; such is the theological problem.

But this does not mean, I repeat, that we are dealing with a mere application or simple amplification of the concept of being. More is involved: the discovery of a new ratio entis, which causes everything to revert to problematic: things themselves, men, and the person himself. Whence the problem which God poses for us does not refer solely to Him, as if He were an entity juxtaposed and grouped with all the others, but rather it has to do with all the others, since in light of Him everything acquires a new meaning, without thereby ceasing to be what it was before.

Let us consider an example. For Aristotle, "substance" is being capable of existing separately. It is opposed, for example, to {385} "accident." What Aristotle understood by this sufficiency and this separation, if one wishes to give these words a positive content, is something which can only be understood when we contemplate how some things come to be from others, how they are subject to movement. The separation and sufficiency come into play integrally when, in the generation of things, they become sufficient unto themselves, with independence from their progenitors. Then we say that things properly begin to exist, they have their own consistency, they are substances. On the other hand, St. Thomas views things as emanating from God. He defines creation this way: emanatio totius esse a Deo. Things are here counterposed, above all, to nothingness, and that which is capable of receiving existence directly from God without the necessity of God producing or realizing it in a prior subject will henceforth be called a "substance." The Aristotelian idea of "sufficiency," even conserved in all its integrity, acquires a new meaning in light of the new ratio entis: it is a sufficiency in the order of inhesion, but [340] purely aptitudinal. (The confusion of these two points of view is manifested in the ontology of Spinoza, and leads him to pantheism.) The "is" of the physical world changes its meaning radically. For Aristotle it acquired a meaning precisely from the coming forth or out of; for St. Thomas, from the creation ex nihilo, i.e. from its God. We prescind in this from the special idea of God, proper to Christianity, and consider it only as an illustration of what we have been saying: viewed from God, the entire world acquires a new ratio entis, a new meaning of "is. " As soon as God becomes a problem, so also does the world.

Religated existence is a "vision" of God in the world and the world in God. Not certainly an intuitive vision, as ontologism pretended, but rather the simple patentization which occurs in the relegating fundamentality, and which illuminates everything with a new ratio entis. When we try to elevate it to a concept and give it ontological justification, then and only then—i.e. given the vision, likewise give the religation—do we see ourselves compelled to produce a discursive demonstration of the existence of God and of the attributes of God. Such a demonstration would never be the "primary" discovery of God. It would signify that, once discovered, God remains {386} linked to the world "by reason of being." The "making that there be" will have been poured and emptied into a concept of divine causality. But this will always be an ontological explication, accomplished within a prior vision of things: the vision conferred upon us by that primary linking through which everything is shown to us as relegated from God. Thus our analysis has not made the progress of the understanding toward God

useless, but on the contrary has elicited it necessarily. Reciprocally, the fact that human understanding possesses the naked faculty of demonstrating the existence of God does in no way signify that discourse is the primary way of arriving intellectually at this conclusion.[13] [341]

We do not prejudge by this what the result of such an inexorable intent to know God may be; we do not prejudge who God may be, where He may be found or what He does. That is, the problem of the nature of Divinity is left untouched, because I did not propose to treat of God, but rather to clarify the dimension in which the problem is found and is already posed: the constitutive religation of human existence. From the moment that understanding is always understanding what there is, it follows that every existence has a theological problem, and that as a result of this a theology is essential to every religion. Theology is not identified with religion, but neither is it a reflexive appendage, fortuitous and eventually merged with the religion: every religion constitutively involves a theology. I intend nothing more.

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V. RELIGATION AND FREEDOM

Now it is necessary to examine the significance of atheism. But first it is appropriate to finish what has been said about religation, together with some considerations about freedom. And freedom can have several meanings.

Freedom can signify, in the first place, the use of freedom in life. We speak thus of an act which is free or not free.

But it can signify something deeper. Man is capable of using or not using his freedom, and indeed he may see himself partially or totally deprived of it, either through external or internal forces. But it would not make sense to say the same about a rock. Man is not distinguished from a rock insofar as he executes free actions of which the rock finds itself disenfranchised; the difference is more radical: human existence itself is freedom; to exist is to liberate oneself from things, and thanks to this liberation we can be turned to them and understand or modify them. Freedom signifies then liberation, liberated existence.

In religation, man does not have freedom in either of these two senses. From this point of view, religation is a limitation. But the use of freedom and liberation both emerge from the radical constitution, freedom is the implantation of man in being as a in being. And this implantation which constitutes him in being constitutes him in being free. Man is being free, in the fullest sense. Religation, through which man exists, confers upon him his freedom. Conversely, man acquires his freedom, he is constituted in being free, by religation. Religation then acquires a {388} positive meaning. As use of freedom, freedom is something interior to life; as liberation, it is the radical happening of life, it is the principle of existence, in the sense of transcendence and of life; as free constitution, freedom is the implanation of man in being as a person, and he is constituted thus where a person is constituted, in religation. Freedom is only possible as freedom “for,” not just as freedom “from”; and in this sense, it is possible only as religation. Freedom does not exist except in an entity in the maximum fundamentality of his being. There is no “freedom” without “fundament.” The ens fundamentale, God, is not an extrinsic limit to freedom, but rather this fundamentality confers upon man [343] his free being: first, in regard to the effective use of his freedom; second, in regard to liberation; third, because He constitutes man in being grounded: man exists, and His existence consists in making us to be freely. This is an essential structure into which it will be necessary to penetrate anew. Without religation and without that which relegates, freedom would be for man his maximum impotency and his radical despair. With religation and with God, his freedom is his maximum potential, so much so, that with it his very person is constituted, his very being, intimate and interior to him, before all else, including his very life.

Actions, in fact, are of subjects and in our case of persons. For this reason, man is not his existence, but rather existence is his. That which a man is does not consist in the course of his life, but in this “being his own.” Speaking of the human subject, this “being his own” is something distinct toto caelo from the manner in which an attribute is the property of a substance. The “being his own” of man is something that, in a certain way, is in his hands, he may make use of it at will. Man is present at the passing of everything, even his own life; and his person “is” beyond the passing and remaining. In virtue of this, man can modify the “being his own” of life. He can, for example, “repent” and rectify his being, even to the extent of “converting it” into something else. He also has the possibility of pardoning his fellow man. Neither of these “phenomena” refers to life as such, but rather to the person. While life goes on and passes, man “is” what {389} remains to himself of “his own,” after all that has happened to him has happened.

Thanks to this transcendence of the being of man with respect to his life, the person can turn against life and against himself. That which makes us to be free, makes us to be free, to be so truly, and hence, to act truly against ourselves. To the being of man the contra-being is essential. But the contra-being is rather a being contra or against; it supposes, then, religation. Man turns against himself insofar as he already exists. Through being religated, man as a person is in a certain respect an absolute subject, set free from his own life, from things, from everything else. Absolute in a certain sense, and also facing God, since he is indeed implanted in existence religatedly, he is as something whose “being here and now”[14] is to be making itself, and therefore, as something [344] constitutively his own. In his primary religation, man acquires his freedom, his “relative absolute being,” Absolute, because it is “his own”; relative, because it is acquired. {390}

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VI. THE PROBLEM OF ATHEISM: THE ARROGANCE OF LIFE

If this is so, if man is constitutively relegated, one should then ask what atheism is and how it is possible.

It is fitting to point out, at the beginning, that a true atheism is something difficult and subtle above all else. That which is usually called “atheism” generally consists of purely practical attitudes, and almost never the negation of a particular idea of God, for example that contained in the Christian creed. But, not believing in Christianity and, in general, not accepting a particular idea of God, is not rigorously atheism simpliciter.

That which must be clarified is what makes true atheism possible. Atheism is thus, in the first place, a problem, and not the primary situation of man. If man is constitutively relegated, the problem will not be in discovering God, but in the possibility of covering Him.

For this it is necessary to recall that man is a person, in a very radical sense; he is, but he cannot be without realizing a personality. This realization is brought to fruition in living. Whence in being a person is given the ontological possibility of “forgetting” religation and hence, of apparently losing the ground of his existence. “Apparently,” because this loss is only the way in which the personality feels that which has been lost in the complexity of life. Personality as such is the maximum simplicity, but a simplicity which is conquered in the course of the complication of life. The tragedy of the personality is that, without living, it is impossible to be a person; one is a person in the measure that {392} he lives. But the more one lives the more difficult it is to be a person. Man has to oppose himself to the complication of his life in order to absorb it energetically in the superior simplicity of the person. Insofar as he is incapable of realizing this, he is likewise incapable of existing as a realized person. And insofar as one is lost in the complication of life, he is close to feeling himself “unbound”[15] and to indentifying his being with his life. The [346] existence which feels itself “unbound” is an atheistic existence, an existence which has not reached the depths of itself. The possibility of atheism is the possibility of feeling “unbound.” And what makes this feeling possible is the “sufficiency” of the person for making himself

through the successful outcome of his efforts at living. The successful outcome of life is the great creator of atheism. The radical confidence, the trusting to one's own abilities for living, and the "unbinding" oneself from everything are one and the same thing. Only a superior spirit can conserve itself relegated in the midst of the complicated efforts for being.

Thus "unbound" the person is implanted in himself in his life, and life acquires a character absolutely absolute. It is what St. John called, in a splendid phrase, the arrogance of life. Through this man finds himself in himself. Christian theology has always seen in pride the capital sin among all others; and the capital form of pride is atheism.

The possibility closest to the person, as such, is pride. In it the successful outcome of life obscures its proper fundament, and man "unbinds" himself from everything, implanting himself in himself. Parodying Heraclitus, one could say that it is pleasing to hide God. And Scripture reminds us that God resists the proud.

From this it follows that the fundamental form of atheism is the rebellion of life. Can this be called a true atheism? It is, in a certain way, in the sense which I just indicated. But in the final analysis, perhaps it isn't. It is rather the divinization or deification of life. In reality, the proud person, rather than denying God, affirms that he is God, and that he is sufficient unto himself. But then, this is not properly denying God, but rather disputing over who it is that is God. Perhaps it may be said that there is someone who renounces {393} God this way, yet who does not admit the deification of life. But, whence does such an attitude receive its force and possibility except from this total power of denying, as a result of which the omnipotence itself of the negator and the negation are obscured. In atheism, to deny the deification of life is to expel life from itself and to remain alone, without one's very life. Life has not been deified, but rather the person. The atheist, in one form or another, makes of himself a God. Atheism is not possible without a God; it is possible only in the compass of the deity opened up by religation. The human person, implanting himself in existence, chooses to do so by the capacity which he has, and which he believes in his being. He inscribes his being in the arena of the [347] deity—a much more eloquent testimony of what religatedly makes him to be. In his being "unbound" man is still made possible by God; he is in Him, under this paradoxical form, which consists in letting us be without making us question ourselves about Him, or as we say in English, being "God forsaken." Man cannot feet other than relegated, or better, "unbound." Hence man is radically relegated. His feeling himself "unbound" is already "being relegated."

For this reason there is no better way to come to realize the vanity or disfundamentation of pride than to witness the debacle of an existence which is relegated by its pure factum. I do not refer to those calamities which a man may suffer in his life, but to that calamity which, although not acquainted with "calamities," is a "calamity": the radical calamity of a life and of a person who have tried to substantiate themselves. In time, the life founded on itself appears internally disfounded and therefore referred to a fundament of which it sees itself deprived.

Cosmic anguish is not the deepest way to stumble upon nothingness and awake to being. There is another happening (let us call it that) even more radical: that which invades us when, face to face with the sudden death of a loved one, we say, "We are nothing." On the other hand, we feel the reality, the fundament of life, in those cases in which the one who dies does so making even death his very own, accepting it, as a just crown to his being, with the strength which comes to him from that to which he is relegated.

For this reason, true atheism can only cease to be not by ceasing to be true, but by obliging itself to be true to its {394} ultimate consequences. Without further ceremony, atheism will discover itself being atheist in and with God. The calamity which constitutively follows us assures us always of the possibility of a rediscovery of God.

This pride of life has clothed itself in various forms. Man possesses a life, and there is in human life, as such, the possibility of contenting oneself exhaustively in oneself. In one form or another, this will lead us to an atheism

deriving from a pecatum originale.[16] But man, besides having life, is a person and has, [348] therefore, the greatest possibility of implanting himself in himself. This will carry us to a personal atheism, to a pecatum personale. But, in addition, man has history, an objective spirit, as Hegel called it. Along with original sin and personal sin, it will be necessary to thematically introduce into theology the sin of the time, historical sin.[17] It is the "power of sin," as a theological factor of history, and I believe it is essential to suggest that this power receives concrete forms according to the times. The world in each epoch will be characterized by particular graces and sins. It is not necessary that a person have the sin of the times; nor if he has it, that it be imputed to him personally. So then, I believe sincerely that there is an atheism of history. The present time is a time of atheism; it is an epoch proud of its accomplishments. Atheism today affects, primo et per se, our time and our world. Those who are not atheists, are {395} what they are despite our time, as the atheists of other epochs were so despite theirs.[18] Our epoch is rich in this type of lives, exemplary models under all points of view, but before which always arises an ultimate reply: "Well, and so what?"; magnificent existences, of splendid figure, liberated from everything, errant and wandering.... As an epoch, our is one of "unbinding" and disfundamentation. For this reason, the religious problem of today is not a problem of differing faiths, but the problem religion- irreligion. And, naturally, we cannot forget that we live in the epoch of the crisis of intimacy.

But since this cannot be a terminal position, man has called upon all types of supports. Today it seems as though it is philosophy's turn. For more than two centuries the philosophy of the atheist has been converted into a religion of his life. And today we are half convinced that philosophy is this. But still I am unable to share such an opinion. It is possible that man lays hold of philosophy in order to be able to live; it is possible that philosophy [349] may be even a hexis of intelligence; but it is a very different thing to believe that philosophy consists in being a mode of life. At the bottom of a great part of contemporary philosophy lies a surreptitious deification of existence.[19]

Probably it is necessary to investigate experience even more carefully. Surely the hour will come when man, in his intimate and radical downfall, will awake as if from a dream finding himself in God and failing into the realization that in his atheism he has done nothing but be in God. Then he will encounter himself relegated to Him, not so as to flee from the world, and others, and himself; {396} but the other way around, in order to sustain and maintain himself in being. God does not manifest Himself primarily as negation, but as fundamentation, as what makes it possible to exist. Religation is the possibilitation of existence as such.

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VII. FINAL OBSERVATION

I wish to conclude this brief essay.

In it I have not given a rational demonstration of the existence of God. I have not even presented a concept of God. I have done nothing but try to discover the point at which the problem of God arises and the dimension in which we find it: the constitutive and ontological religation of existence. Now questions galore should begin to arise. If so, that would demonstrate the utility of this short essay.

Is there a problem for philosophy? Evidently. But it remains to be said in what sense it is, and furthermore not everything said up to now pertains equally to philosophy. The problem of God might, in the last analysis, overflow pure philosophy. This could only be elucidated with an adequate concept of philosophy. But that is a task much more complicated than the one which I have here set myself.

Madrid, December 1935, and Rome, March 1936

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[2] [There is a continuity of expression here in the Spanish which cannot be reproduced in English with the words "thrown" and "boldness", which in Spanish both derive from the verb "arrojar." - trans.]

[3] "Someone can say to us, when these things are in a person, that is to say in a man, it is true that they are three: memory, intellect, and love; they are mine, not their own; not for themselves, but for me do they what they do. Indeed, I am through them. For I remember through memory, understand through intellect, love through (the faculty of) love.... Through all of three I remember, understand, esteem, I who am not memory nor intelligence nor loving; but rather I have these things." - trans.]

[4] In reality, these three terms have not yet been distinguished as if they were three strata of human existence; the problem of their radical unity has not yet been dealt with, but I cannot here enter into it.

[5] The etymology of this word has been disputed since ancient times. Cicero, Lactantius and St. Augustine wavered between the verbs 'religere' and 'relegere', to be scrupulous in affairs with God. Modern linguistics has not succeeded in resolving the question. For a moment it seemed to opt for the second explanation. But in the end it has realized that 'religio' was more probably derived from 'religare'. One may see, on this point, Meillet, Ernout, and Bienveniste. in any case, no etymology resolves theological problems. And it is sufficient that the matter be scientifically uncertain for one, without frivolity, to have recourse to theological rather than linguistic considerations.

[6] It is clear that He is not patent "as He is in Himself" (this would be a singular ontologism), but rather as "grounding" or as "fundament." The mode of his potency is "to be grounding" or "to be fundamenting.

[7] Naturally, it must not be forgotten that I speak not of the "reality" itself of God, but rather of its "potency" in man.

[8] [Here and throughout this section, Zubiri is drawing a distinction between the Spanish verbs ser and haber. Ser is our "to be," but haber is defective in English and has no infinitive form; in the third person it is translated "there is" or "there are." In order to make the distinction clear in this translation, ser will be rendered "is" and haber "there is," with the Spanish verbs put in brackets wherever necessary. - trans.]

[9] It interests me to point out that this affirmation about Aristotle not having arrived at a concept of being is dated 1935.

[10] I understand here by "ratio" something antecedent to the concept: it is what lays the basis for forming the concept in question. In a certain way one could, for the moment, take it as equivalent to "sense." I would prefer, nonetheless, call it "idea," provided that the concept be distinguished from it. "Concept" is the notion that we should elaborate upon considering things beneath a certain ratio, sense, or idea.

[11] I refer, naturally, only to the speculative mystics, and only in the generic sense of declaring God to be beyond being, leaving aside the words of Eckhardt. Although the affirmation of Eckhardt would elicit a violent reaction from some Franciscan theologians, without doubt because of its drastic form, it nevertheless has deep roots in the history of theology. Thus Marius Victorinus, in the fourth century: “God is not ‘being’, on, but rather ‘pre-being’, pro-on. “ (P.L. CXXII, col. 680D). It is certain that Eriugena had pantheistic tendencies, but it is not necessary to interpret this statement in a pejorative sense. St. Thomas himself, speaking of the Pseudo-Dionysius, tells us, “Since God is the cause of all existing things, it follows that He is a nothing (nihil) of what is existent, not because He lacks being, but because He is preeminently segregated from all things.” (Comm. on the Divine Names, I. L. 3). See also the text of Cajetan which is in the following note. It is not my intention to delve into this question, but only to drive home the point that these ideas manifest very clearly the problem to which I allude: the difficulty of applying the concept of being to God, unless it is modified radically; and in this very difficulty resides the whole problem of speculatve theology. Nothing more. Whatever else may be inferred from this is left to the charge of the reader. I do not deal with it.

[12] Thus Cajetan tells us, “Res divina prior est ente et omnibus differentiis eius:est enim super ens et super unum, etc.” (Q 39, a. 1, VII). “Divine reality is prior to the entity and all of its differences, since it is above the entity and above the unity, etc.

[13] One Thomist theologian, Lepidi, has come to affirm, “The movement of our intelligence, whenever it understands and reasons, begins with an implicit understanding of God and ends in an explicit understanding of Him.” St. Thomas himself touches once on this dimension of the problem. “Secundum quod intelligere nihil aliud dicit quam intuitum, qui nihil aliud est quam praesentia intelligibilis ad intellcctum quocumque modo, sic anima semper intelligit se et Deum, et consequitur quidam amor indeterminatus.” (The italic is mine.) In the amor indeterminatus, and in the understanding, inasmuch as it is simple intuition, man finds himself turned toward God quocumque modo.

[14] [“being here and now” is used here to translate the Spanish estar, which is one of two forms of the verb “to be” and which refer to what is temporary and/or what is happening at the moment. - trans.]

[15] [The Spanish word is desligado and is here translated as “unbound” at Zubiri’s suggestion. The meaning is very close to “liberated” as that term is often employed in contemporary parlance - trans.]

[16] At present I would be inclined to treat the “natural” consequences of original sin in another way, Distinguishing, as I do in another work, the natural capabilities of man and the possibilities which he counts in each instant, it is clear that, if the former remain intact, the latter change fundamentally with original sin. St. Paul, who insists that man, naturally, can always know God, when in the Athenian Areopagus did not hesitate to teach that on account of original sin man was left in the situation of having to look for God uncertainly, by trial and error. This is not all, but it is essential. The subject is left for another occasion.

[17] I do not now wish to ask the question of whether in atheism, and generally i n human acts, there can or cannot be sin sensu stricto. What is important to me is triple qualification of personal, historical, and original.

[18] This idea of historical sin has been suggested to me by Ortega Y Gasset, who insists frequently that the vices of an epoch and a society are not necessarily imputable to the individual.

[19] I am not suspicious of the lack of enthusiasm for contemporary philosophy. These very lines are the most eloquent testimony of that; some of the suppositions which they imply pertain to the former: anyone familiar with the philosophy of our time will be able to identify them at first glance. But I believe sincerely that there is a lamentable oversight in contemporary philosophy, one which is very symptomatic: the overlooking of religation.

Supernatual Being: God and Deification in Pauline Theology

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SUPERNATURAL BEING:

GOD AND DEIFICATION IN PAULINE THEOLOGY

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Following are the fragmentary and almost telegraphic notes of a course on Hellenism and Christianity given at the University of Madrid (1934-35) and of meetings which I had the pleasure of conducting in the Circle of Studies of the Foyer International des Etudiants Catholiques at the Cité Université, Paris, during the years 1937-1939. They are simply an exposition of some New Testament texts, as seen by the Greek tradition. They are, therefore, simple historical pages, nothing more. I must emphasize this.

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I

NOTE TO THE READER

This study comprises some reflections with respect to certain passages of Romans. But only “with respect to,” for two reasons. In the first place, we take the “With respect to” as referring to the entire New Testament. Whether or not they expressly form part of the Pauline thought contained in Romans, we shall freely recur to many passages of other Epistles or other writings of the New Testament. Secondly, we place the Epistle in the perspective of Greek theology. Hence we are not dealing with an historical exegesis of Romans, but some historical considerations of theological character. But on this point I should like to add a few words.

When one begins to deal with theological interpretations, the Church’s only concern is respect of dogma and tradition. For this reason theology in the Church has not one but many sources. Now, the logical perfection which some systems of theology have attained in the West has been responsible in large measure for the sad neglect into which this simple fact has fallen. In the Latin West to be sure the diversity of theologies is indisputable, not only

with regard to isolated points and problems, but even concerning basic conceptions. Let is suffice to recall in passing the difference between St. Bonaventure and Alexander of Hales, on the one side, and St. Thomas on the other (not to speak of Duns Scotus). But this is not the only thing, nor perhaps the most important. Alongside the Latin tradition there is the enormous and splendid Greek tradition, so different in spirit and intellectual attitude from the Latin. Identity of dogma has not been an obstacle to the development of these two quite distinct courses of theology. The {402} Latins were well aware of it. Thus St. Thomas himself, speaking of the Divine Processions, pointed out the existence of diverse paths of interpretation, all perfectly legitimate, among which he would masterfully trace his own.

From the perspective of our Latin theology, many Greek concepts seem to us almost exclusively mystical or metaphorical (in the purely religious and devotional sense of the word). Such [354] occurs, as we shall see, with the concepts of goodness, love, grace, etc. But if we earnestly try to immerse ourselves in the work of the Greek Fathers, we shall quickly discover an attitude different from the Latin—but still rigorously intellectual—within which these concepts have strict metaphysical character.

Latin theology begins, in the work of St. Augustine, with the interior man and his aspirations and moral vicissitudes, especially his desire for happiness; it was in large measure his own personal life. In contrast, Greek theology considers man rather as a fragment—central, if one wishes—of creation as a whole, of the cosmos. Human concepts then take on a different nuance. Thus sin, for a Latin, is above all a maliciousness associated with the will; for a Greek, it is first and foremost a blot on creation. For the Latin, love is an aspiration of the soul, ascribed preferentially to the will; for the Greek it is, in contrast, the metaphysical basis of every activity, because essentially all being tends to perfection. For a Latin the problem of grace is subordinated to the beatific vision in glory; for a Greek happiness is the consequence of grace understood as deification. The difference, as we shall see, extends even to the very idea of God which we form for ourselves from our finite, human point of view.

Of course, these two theologies are not divorced; that would be intrinsically impossible. Moreover, historically large portions of Latin theology have been possessed of deep Hellenic inspiration; among the foremost exponents of Greek thought is Richard of St. Victor, who with reason has often been called the most original thinker of the Middle Ages. Furthermore, we are perhaps witness to the interesting paradox that certain concepts, often classified as Neoplatonic, constitute the most faithful interpretation and deposit of Aristotelian thought; while in works consecrated {403} to Aristotelianism, Platonic concepts at times seem to be substituted, either consciously or unconsciously.

Greek theology contains intellectual treasures, not just for theology, but for philosophy itself. The present state of many philosophical preoccupations reveals intuitions and concepts in Greek theology of unsuspected fecundity, which up until now have remained almost inoperative and dormant probably because their time had not yet come. It is necessary to renew them. Above all, this revival is urgent with respect to New Testament theology. Greek theology perfectly matches the progression of Biblical expressions. This is not its least value, either. A careful but [355] explicit reaction against Latin exclusivism can now be glimpsed; among contemporary writers Schmaus, Keller, and Stolz, for example, represent a brilliant advance.

Personally I shall not hide my affection for Greek theology. Without any exclusivism whatsoever, I have yielded in the following pages to this propensity. We are dealing, of course, with a mere exposition—having not the least pretense of originality—of some points of New Testament doctrine, especially that of St. Paul, such as it was viewed by the Greek tradition. Nothing more. Let the foregoing considerations serve as my excuse and as orientation for the reader.

I need not caution that the sparse and almost telegraphic character of these notes is due to their origin and initial purpose. For this same reason, textual references to the New Testament are rather sporadic, and in general left to

the sagacity of the reader. Likewise, since this is merely an expository summary, I have not thought it necessary to include bibliographic citations. Any interested reader will be able to locate them immediately. {404}

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II

ST. PAUL AND PAULINE THEOLOGY

Let us begin by fixing our attention on the place where we are going to be situated. The activity of St. Paul is neither that of a founder of a group of initiates nor that of a simple, systematic theological speculator, It is rather something encompassing both terms, absorbing them in a higher unity.

St. Paul's work is, in the first place, a living catechesis destined for the constitution of Christian communities, grouped around Christ. which gloriously and mysteriously live not only in the heavens, but also on the earth, after His Resurrection. For St. Paul, the foundation of these groupings, of these "churches" in the bosom of the "Church," does not consist only in participation in certain rites nor in a certain regimen of practical life (both of which are nothing but consequences of that foundation), but first and foremost in a radical transformation of our entire existence, the consequence, in turn, of a transformation of our entire being, of a deification through union with Christ. This union comes about through Baptism and is scaled in the Eucharist. As ritual acts they are the symbols of Christ's life, death, and resurrection; but insofar as they are at the same time acts of Christ himself, they produce in man that which they signify. And they produce it, of course, morally, causing the faithful to have "the same attitude which Jesus Christ had" (Phlm 2:5),[1] but in addition to have it physically and in reality.[2] And this real union with Chris, glorified is, {406} in turn, a union with God Himself, by means of grace To every supernatural action of God in the world, to every ordering of the plan of our eternal salvation brought to fulfillment in the world, St. Paul gives the name mystery (mysterion). This word. then, does not primarily designate inscrutable truths, but rather [357] those divine actions and decisions which are inscrutable by virtue of being freely decided by God and being oriented toward the participation of the world and especially of man in the life and even the being of the Divine. Intellectual incomprehensibility is a necessary consequence, but a consequence only of that radical character of the mystery as Divine action, as a secret of His will. The signitive and efficacious internal unity between the mystery of Christ and the liturgical rites is what in a special and strict way St. Paul still called "mystery." The Latins translated this expression with the word sacramentum. In an epoch in which mystery religions inundated the Roman Empire, the primary goal of St. Paul's activity was "to disseminate the mysteries of God and Christ," i.e. to co- operate at the transformation of the being of man through his union with Christ.

But St. Paul, in addition, writes and teaches. He writes and teaches, keeping before his eyes that special "vision", "notice", "attitude" (gnosis kai phronesis) of this effective supernaturalization of man and of the world, whose proximate root is the sacramental mystery in the sense indicated. And he expresses the content of this vision in a logos, which is the logos of the Theos; it is what the Holy Fathers preferentially called "Theologia" (Theology). It is a speaking about God, but a speaking about God from God., It is about God, ultimately, such as we are given to know directly or indirectly in Christ. And it is from God, i.e. from where God is given to us, directly or indirectly, from the internal unity between Christ and the liturgical rites, from the sacramental reality. Vis-à-vis Hellenic speculation, Pauline theology is not a simple intellectual meditation; it expresses the teachings of something which is happening, and has as its goal to immerse us ever more deeply in that which happens, by means of an {407} understanding of it, which likewise grows deeper. In St. Paul, the inspired Apostle and transmitter of a revelation, theology itself pertains to the integral reality of the supernatural order, to the depositum fidei. Since revelation ended with the death of the last Apostle, theology will be an investigation of that order.

This viewpoint of the Deifying mystery is that which we choose to orient our exposition. {408}

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III

THE BEING OF GOD

For St. Paul, the whole problem of supernatural being ultimately hinges on the position of Christ in the universe. He expresses it in one word: Christ is the conjunction and sum of everything, but in a radical and precise sense, as fullness (pleroma, Eph 1:23) of each divine and created being. It is important, then, to examine the question step by step.

The being of God, in its intimate reality, is an effusive love, and its effusion shows up in three forms, which are metaphysically distinct. It overflows in His own proper life; it is projected outwardly in creating things, and it gives of itself to creation so as to associate creation with its own personal life in deification. Trinitarian procession, creation, and deification are nothing but the three metaphysically distinct modes of the effusion of divine being understood as love. Such was the mind of the Greek Fathers.

We shall examine each of these aspects of the problem separately.

In the first place, there is the being of God. The idea that God is love, agape, runs throughout the New Testament. The insistence with which this affirmation recurs in St. John (e.g. John 3:31; 10:17; 15:9; 17:23-26; l Jn 4:8) as well as in St. Paul (2 Cor 13:11; Eph 1:6; Col 1:13; etc.), and the special energy with which the verb menein, to abide, is employed ("Abide in my love"), are a good indication that we are not dealing with some vague metaphor, nor a moral attribute of God, but a metaphysical characterization of the divine being. The Greeks understood it that way unanimously, as did the Latin tradition of {410} Greek inspiration. For the New Testament and the Greek tradition agape is not a virtue of a special faculty, the will; but a metaphysical dimension of reality, which affects being by itself, prior to any specification in faculties. It only relates to the will insofar as the latter is a piece of reality. True, it does relate to the will in a preeminent sense, just as the mode of being of man is preeminent. But the tradition we are considering always tries to take agape in its primary ontological and real dimension. Hence, that to which it most closely approximates is [359] the eros of classicism. Of course—as we shall shortly see—there is a profound difference, indeed almost an opposition, between agape and eros. But this opposition always occurs within a common root; it is an opposition of direction within the same general line, viz. the structure of reality. For this reason it is preferable in translation to employ the generic term love. The Latins almost always rendered agape by charity (caritas). But this runs the risk of alluding to a simple moral virtue. The Greek Fathers unanimously employed the expression eros; so we shall use love.

Before entering into this metaphysical dimension of love, a few words about the difference between eros and agape. Eros takes the lover out of himself so as to desire something which he lacks. Upon obtaining it, he acquires the ultimate perfection of himself. Rigorously speaking, in eros the lover seeks himself. In agape, on the other hand, the lover also goes outside of himself, but is not taken out; rather he freely gives, he makes a donation of himself. This is the effusion consequent upon the plenitude of being which already is. If the lover goes outside of himself, it is not to look for something, but by the effusion of his own superabundance. Whereas in eros the lover seeks himself, in agape he goes to the loved one as such. Naturally, through this common dimension in which eros and agape involve an "outside of oneself," they are not mutually exclusive, at least in finite beings. Their dramatic unity is in fact nothing other than human love. The Latins of Hellenic inspiration distinguished the two cases with a precise vocabulary. Eros is natural love; it is the tendency which, by virtue of its own nature, inclines all being towards the acts and objects for which it is capacitated. Agape is personal love in which the lover seeks

nothing; rather, upon confirming himself {411} in his proper substantive reality, the person is not inclined by nature, but rather grants through liberality (Richard of St. Victor and Alexander of Hales). Insofar as nature and person are two metaphysical dimensions of reality, love, natural as well as personal, is also something ontological and metaphysical. Therefore the verb menein, to abide, indicates that agape is something prior to the movement of the will. Charity, as a moral virtue, moves us because we are already placed in the metaphysical situation of love.

When the New Testament tells us, then, that God is love, agape, the Greeks unanimously understood the affirmation in a strictly and rigorously metaphysical sense. It supposes a certain [360] idea of being and of reality, without understanding which one might have the impression that in Patristic speculation there is nothing but mystical elevations toward an ethereal piety. Nothing could be further from the truth. If one wishes, the piety and prayer of the Greek Fathers have a strictly metaphysical meaning. This is the mistake to which I alluded in the introductory note.

In order to understand the viewpoint of the Greek Fathers, let us center our attention briefly on their idea of being. In contrast to what one might suppose, Greek philosophy itself (including Aristotle) lacks a unitary concept of being. In fact, not only is their concept of being not unitary (at bottom they did not even reach the point of formally posing the problem), neither is their idea of what reality is by virtue of its being. These are two completely different problems, but essential to every system of metaphysics. Vis-à-vis neither of them did Greek thought adopt a unitary attitude. Not with respect to the concept of being, because in spite of "analogy," even for Aristotle the idea of being remains ultimately diluted in a multiplicity of meanings; nor with respect to the idea of reality insofar as it is, because the "idea and the form" do not acquire the fullness of their meaning or of their conceptual determination. It is necessary to point this out clearly. And that lack of internal unity, both insofar as it affects the concept of being and as it touches the idea of reality as such, is essential for judging Greek metaphysics. Here only the second point interests us. What did the Greeks understand by reality? The {412} two models upon which the Greek mind was constantly fixed when treating this problem were material things and living things. For the Greeks, they were two examples, nothing more. But the examples took their revenge, the one upon the other.

A good portion of the Greeks' ontological ideas were inspired by the mode of being of material things. Their being consists in "being there." In the first place, this is true in the sense of "being here," being truly encountered. Whence "stability" will be the salient characteristic of being, where "stability" means the abstract character of what "is." But besides being, things become, they "change." Since being is what is stable, change cannot occur except in its (being's) properties, not in its ultimate reality (we leave aside substantial change, which is not an exception to this idea either). All movement is thus pure and simple mutation. and hence imperfection; it proceeds only from an "initial" state of the subject which "is" underneath it, and which [361] carries it to the other "final" state. "Being" is synonymous with "stability," and "stability" synonymous with "immobility."

But in Plato as well as in Aristotle there is another concept of being, inspired more by living things. In them movement is not just a simple mutation; that which there is in it of mutation is nothing but the external expansion of a more intimate movement, which consists in living. Living is not simply "being there" or changing. It is a type of movement more subtle and profound. Since Aristotle there has been the expression vita in motu. This peculiar character of a living being as movement, and not mutation, was designated by the adjective "immanent." Stability—manere—is not a simple absence of movement, but the quiescent and plenary expression of vital internal movement; moreover what there is of movement in life not only is not primarily mutation, but the very realization of manere. This is what the prefix "im" of the word "immanent" expresses. If we sever from living movement what it has of mutation, and keep the simple internal operation of living, we shall understand what Aristotle told us in respect to living things, that their being is their life, understood as an immanent operation.

Aristotle therefore calls being energeia, the substantive operation in which being consists. In this {413} sense, being will be more perfect the more mobile it is, the more operative it is.

Whence the serious equivocation involved in the Aristotelian expression energeia, which was rendered as "act" by the Latins. Depending upon whether one attends to the first or second conception, the meaning of the act changes radically. In the first, "act" signifies "actuality," "is," that which is effectively is here-and-now. In the second, "act" signifies "activity", that which is effectively being. In such case being is operation. And the more perfect something is, the deeper and more fertile is its operative activity. Being, said the Pseudo-Dionysius, is ecstatic; the more it "is," the more it diffuses itself, in one sense or another. Employing a metaphor of St. Bonaventure, if we consider a vessel full of water, in the first conception being signifies the volume of water contained in it. In the second, it is the overflowing through which the source, located in the bottom of the vessel, simultaneously keeps it full and causes it to overflow. In the first case, being is an end, an act of a potentiality; in the second, a principle, the activity itself. Such is the conception of the Pseudo-Dionysius; his commentators have noted it, and I do nothing but transcribe [362] almost literally his own words. Being is, then, a type of primary and radical active operation through which things are more than realities; they are something which realizes itself.

We can specify more precisely the type of operant activity in which being consists. Living things have many properties. But each of them emerges from the "living being," and is nothing but an aspect or mode of life itself, and ultimately an effect of it. The living being does nothing but live, i.e. be through its many manifestations, properties, and acts. And each one of these properties is quite "proper" to the living thing; but in a sense radically different than that by which its physical properties are proper to a mineral. The way in which a quality is "proper" to a living being, the way in which it is the "property" of the living being, consists in this: that from it the living being withdraws into itself, and realizes itself in the property. Life is a unity, but one which is radical and originating; it is a fountain or principle of all its many facets and acts, each one of which only "is" inasmuch as it is an expression or real and complete affirmation of life's primitive unity. {414} Being is "one," not as simple negation of division, but as an originating, unifying activity. Whence the special function of unity as an ontological character. From another point of view, being consists in unity with itself, which is greater in proportion to the perfection of the entity in question.

Let us go still deeper into this relation between a living thing and its multiple facets. The unifying activity in which the living thing consists is carried on and manifested in the development of its life. The greater or lesser richness of life leads to a richer or poorer display of perfections. The Greek Fathers here employed the usual terminology. Being, as richer or poorer unity, was called ousia; its richness or perfections were its dynameis. But let us take care to avoid a possible error. The word dynamis, "potentiality," can mean either something which, through emerging from ousia itself, is still imperfect because it requires the complement of vital acts, or it can mean the archtypical expression of the richness of a living thing, the plenitude of its vital potentiality. In the first sense, potentiality means simple virtuality, something still defective; in the second, it signifies virtuosity,[3] a vital plenitude. The Greek Fathers stress rather this last concept, to the point [363] where, together with the Neoplatonists, it seems at times as if they hypostasize the potentialities.[4] And then being as ousia is the unitary treasure of its own proper richness, and the potentialities simply the translation or actual expression of this unitary treasure an expression which is nothing but the external expansion of being. For this reason they called being ousia, pege, fountain, arkhe, principle. In these virtuosities the living being truly lives, and carries out its acts, its energeiai. But here the act is not so much the complement of the potentiality as the ultimate expansion and expression of the activity in which the living thing originally consists. Understood on the model of living beings, as operation, being gives to itself, in a certain way, its act. Naturally, in proportion to the finitude of being, greater will be the necessity of elements to produce its acts; in proportion to how finite a being is, its act has more of {415} complement and terminus than of activity. But conversely, in proportion as we approach the infinitude of being, the more shall we approximate to a pure activity, whose purity consists precisely in being its proper act, or

rather, in subsisting as pure action, as a pure energeia.

Therefore, speaking of finite entities, all these aspects are limited and the activity of the act has a greater character of actuality than of action; virtuousity, a greater character of virtuality, and the primary unity of being, a greater character of tendency, of "pretension". Hence, in its acts, the living being "becomes" in reality that which it already was, and its being consists of an "arriving at" which is not physical or chronological, but metaphysical, and which includes even "having arrived at." But whatever there is of the positively entitative in this becoming is the activity which is self-affirming, rather than the act through which it is actualized. Hence, in the first conception a finite act is always received; in the second, an act, even if finite, is primarily executed. This significant difference arises from the ontological conception of reality. The being of things is, in the first conception, something which is there; in the second, being is always primary and radical action. The deeper we probe into the succession of problems, the more clearly we shall perceive the difference.

Both conceptions are found in Plato as well as in Aristotle. The Aristotelian energeia is action and activity and not just act. In turn, [364] the Platonic Idea is a unifying activity, and not just an outline of characteristics; it is the correlate of a definition. But often the active aspect of Aristotle remains buried beneath the actualistic; and by a singular paradox the richest part of Aristotelian thought survived only as associated with Platonism. Thus one can explain how St. John Damascene, though officially Aristotelian, finds himself identified with thinkers having deep Platonic roots just on account of having tactfully integrated this active purity of energeia into his thought. On the other hand, the so- called Aristotelians absorbed more and more of the Platonic Idea into the Aristotelian "concept." This indicates, let it be said in passing, that the study of Neoplatonism is one of the three or four most urgent tasks of the historian of ancient philosophy. But let us now proceed. {416}

To this manner of understanding being corresponds the manner of understanding causality. It is natural that when one understands being in the primitive manner of physical things, causality unfolds in the four types known since Aristotle: efficient, material, formal, and final. But historically we find that "cause" has been understood almost exclusively as efficient causality, though it may encompass the other three types: a thing produces an effect on another; that other is a substrate (material) which receives the effect as termination or complement (forma) of its capacity; and this termination is that to which it tends, as to its end, the efficiency of the cause. But let us now concentrate on the generation of living things. Then the so-called "formal causality" immediately begins to stand out, and becomes the very center of the idea of causality, so as to absorb within itself both efficient and final causality. The life of the progenitor is a unifying unity which through the plenitude of its life leads it to overflow in its dynameis, and to reproduce itself. Here the effect is, rather than a "production", a " reproduction " of the cause more or less perfect according to the type of entity and causality. If we apply this model to causality in general, we shall see in it the way in which the form of the cause is assimilated and "re-produces," in its own way, in all of its effects. In the generation of living things that which is produced is a new vital unity numerically distinct from the first; there is no monism. But what is produced is a "re-production". In the engendering the being of the progenitor is reflected and manifested. The efficiency of the generation passes to the second level; what is decisive is that type of imitation which there is in the effect relative to its causes. The model of causality in inanimate [365] beings is the collision; in living things, imitation. Efficient causality represents nothing but the mechanism of that projection; the essence of causality is always in formal projection. Therefore the son is the reproduction of the father, and in turn, the father is more or less present in the son as shining in him. This brings us to see in causality simply the presence ad extra of the cause in the effect. There are—let us say so forthwith—diverse modes of this presence and, consequently, different types of {417} causation. The way in which the father is imitated by the son is not the same as the way in which life, within the father, is integrally reflected in each one of its properties and functions. Returning now to the previous idea, let us extend it to all types of causality. The effect is not simply something received in a substratum; but, if I may be permitted the expression, the excitation, on the part of the cause, of the activity of being in that in which the effect will be

produced, so that the activity of the effect will produce (and therefore reproduce) that which in one or another form was precontained in the activity of the cause. In this way the effect is always, in one or another way, the formal imitation of the cause. There are many other modes of imitation and, consequently, of the presence the cause in the effect. Let us clearly bear this in mind for the time when we speak of God and supernatural being. It will always be the case that for the Greek Fathers causality is an expansion or eccentric projection of the originary activity in which being consists. The projective and eccentric character of causality follows the estatic character of being. Whence important consequences derive for a deeper understanding of being itself.

This active internal perfection of life leads it, in fact, to expand itself, precisely on account of what it is in itself. That which we call "finality" is in no way different from the being itself of the cause; it is the cause itself insofar as it "is." This means that the being of the cause is its very entity, the reason why this entity is causal. Entity, from the terminal viewpoint of its expansion, is what we call the good. For this reason the cause is, as cause, good. And the effect is "good" precisely because when it reproduces the cause, the cause's goodness shines forth in it. The essence of causality is goodness, said Alexander of Hales: in the cause, because it is its own internal perfection; in the causal activity because it displays the cause's perfection; in the effect, because it reproduces the cause. Clearly, with regard to finite beings, this unity of perfection has the character of a display, of a type of tension which is [366] realized in "distension", "ex-tension," and "pre-tension." We shall not delve into the problem of this articulation. It will always be the case that the ontological heart of causality is an agathon, a bonum, and that the finite manner of carrying out {418} its activities is a tension. To it the Greeks gave the name eros, love, the tendency of being to its proper and natural perfection. Whence the internal implication between being, unity, and goodness, which is expressed in the more profound unity of the eros. The Pseudo-Dionysius called being, as goodness, an intelligible light and an inexhaustible fountain. Perhaps the idea of irradiation brings together both images. Being is light, but in the sense of active irradiation, of eros. From another point of view, that which constitutes being is its unity, and this unity is an activity directed to realizing itself, to realizing its proper form. The good is the very principle of what things have, of that in which they consist; the being of things consists in the "internal union" with what they have; and this unity is a unitary and originating activity. That which we call the unity of being, seen from outside, is nothing but the expression of this subordination of that which is possessed to the good and to the eros. In this reality of things, the Greek Fathers see rather actuality based upon activity as opposed to activity based on actuality. Whence unity and transcendental goodness are not "passions" of being, i.e. affections consequent upon it, but its proper and positive internal constitution. Being is one and good through itself, not through its separation from another, nor through its being directed to another. Moreover, as being consists in becoming, that which being is manifests its own goodness, that which being is in its intimate and radical entity; and this its "manifestory" character which we call "essence" a being has relative to the being of which it is the essence, and is what is called truth, in an ontological sense. That which we call the essence of beings, insofar as it is the mere correlate of their definition, is always something been, and in this "been" one must see its content based on the action through which it has come to be; the essence, as correlate of the definition, is the precipitate of being itself. Hence the Greek Fathers never referred to essence as the mere {419} correlate of an "essential definition;" rather they understood by essence the activity of being itself insofar as it is the root of all its (being's) notae.[5] If one wishes, the essence of [367] essence is "to essence." It was for them something inscrutable and which cannot be understood except in the dynameis, in the potent perfections of things, whose being (that of the dynameis) consists in manifesting the inscrutable unitary root of the essence. The dynameis are the truth, as we shall forthwith see. Unity, truth, and goodness for this reason pertain to being in itself and not by virtue of its reference to other things.

Lastly, with regard to finite entitites, it is easy to observe that all the offspring of all generations reproduce not only the abstract unity of their species, but, in a certain way, the concrete unity of their common progenitor. Hence, in virtue of being, every living being is triply unified: (1) being is above all unity with itself; being is,

unquestionably, metaphysical intimacy; (2) being is, moreover, unity of the progenitor shining through it, i.e. unity of origin; (3) being is, finally, unity of all the individuals in its species and even in its generation; through its own being each entity is in community. In this articulation between intimacy, origination, and communication lies the ultimate metaphysical structure of being. Being is the being of itself, received being, and being in common. We shall not enter into this problem, which would carry us to a systematic metaphysics. Let us say parenthetically that the celebrated Neoplatonic realism of the universals shows an interesting perspective on this side which I only hint at.

In this immense metaphysical structure let us again turn our attention to the point of departure. Being was ousia, treasure, richness. But this richness thus considered is hidden in itself. The potentialities are nothing but the manifest expression of this hidden treasure, as acts are of the potentialities. Whence the truth of the entity is its potentialities, and the truth of the potentialities, their respective acts. But by saying so let us not lose sight of the foregoing considerations. All this metaphysics is activistic. The potentialities are manifestations of the essence, because they are the active plenitude of its being, and the acts are manifestations of the potentiality for the same reason; acts are nothing but the ratification of the {420} potentialities, the expansion or effusion of that in which being consists. Consequently, in potentiality as well as in acts being is present by virtue of a formal "shining through." And this is true in two ways. In the first place, potentialities and acts give understanding, they manifest what being already was; this is what the Greek called doxa. This manifestation which is patent to the eyes of all is, from the point of view of what is manifested, its [368] truth, a- letheia, revelation. And from the viewpoint of its publicity it is a proclamation of its bonum, its gloria. Whence the internal unity between truth and glory as doxa. In the second place, taking the content of the doxa in itself, being becomes the explicit picture of the perfections of the radical essence. On account of this relation it can be called the likeness of the radical essence; not a likeness in the sense of external relation, but an internal assimilation. By virtue of being an expression of the essence, it is already a likeness; and in virtue of being a likeness of the essence, it is a manifestation of it. To this likeness the Greeks gave the name eikon, image. Since it proceeds from the essence (ektypoma) it is already a likeness (homoioma), and since it allows the essence to shine through, it is a truth; it makes the essence visible (ekphantorike) and shows it to us (deiktike). Truth thus understood is not purely logical, but ontological; it is a structure of being. Eikonal being refers us back to the essence of which it is likeness, and therefore is the ultimate expression of the unity of being with itself. Let us not forget the profound difference between the Greek notion of eikon and the Latin imago. The imago is an image because it looks like what is "imaged," but the eikon looks like what is imaged because it proceeds from it. The properties of things and their effects are in this eikonal sense similitude, imago, ac derivatio, which have nothing to do with Western exemplarism.

In reality, then, being, though finite, is activity, and its acts consist only in returning to itself: episodis eis hauto, movement towards itself, Aristotle termed it.

To complete these prolegomena it will suffice to indicate that not all beings have the same entitative character nor the same ontological perfection. Let us start once again with living things. Their unity is purely natural; it is and derives from what things are in themselves. Next to living things inanimate beings are only {421} a humble degradation—in contrast to what the Latins saw in them, viz. the base onto which life adds a new perfection. But in man there is still more. The whole of my nature and my individual characteristics are not only in me, but are mine. There is in me, then, a special relation between what I am and the one I am, between what and who, between nature and person. Nature is always something one has; person is he who has. But this relation can be understood from two viewpoints, and the meaning of "have" is radically different in the two perspectives. One can see in the person the preeminent manner of realizing nature, the [369] ultimate term which completes individual substance. But one can see just the reverse, i.e. one can see in nature the way in which I realize myself as a person. Then the person is not a complement of nature, but a principle for its subsistence. The person, says St. John Damascene, seeks to have (thelei ekhein) substance with accidents and subsist by himself. Being does

not primarily signify substance, but personal subsistence or lack of it. “The person,” he continues, “signifies the being (to einai).” Hence the way of being constituted in reality is essential to the person, says Richard of St. Victor (inspired by St. Basil the Great). This way is what theologians since antiquity have called a “relation of origin.” I am, myself and my individual humanity, that which has come to me and in which I consist in order to be able to subsist. For the Greeks and the Victorines that which formally constitutes the person is a relation of origin (St. Bonaventure repeats it textually); that which constitutes nature is something which is in a certain sense abstract and rough hewn, however individualized one may care to view it. Richard of St. Victor introduced a terminology which did not fare well, but which is marvellous nonetheless. He called nature sistence; and the person is the way of having nature; its origin, the “ex.” He then employed the word existence as a unitary designation of personal being. Here “existence” does not mean the common fact of being in existence, but is a characteristic of the mode existing: personal being. The person is someone who is something through it in order to be: sistit but ex. This “ex” expresses the supreme degree of unity of being, the unity with itself in {422} personal intimacy. Here personal unity is the principle and the supreme form of unification: the mode of unifying nature and its acts in the intimacy of the person. The word “intimacy” is here taken in an etymological sense; it means what is most interior and deepest, in this case personal subsistence. In virtue of being a person, every personal being finds itself referred to someone from whom it received its nature, and furthermore to someone who can share that nature. The person is essentially, constitutively, and formally referred to God and other men. We now understand that the eros of nature takes on a new character. The effusion and expansion of personal being is not like the natural tension of eros; rather, it expands and diffuses through the personal perfection of what it already is. This is the donation, the agape which leads us to God and to all mankind.

With these preliminaries disposed of, we find ourselves in the [370] position of being able to better understand how the Greek Fathers interpreted the New Testament phrase that God is love. It is a metaphysical definition. God is supreme among beings, and his very supremacy is expressed in love. He is the most ecstatic of entities, because he is in a certain way subsistent ecstasy. But here it is necessary to once again stress what we previously said. In metaphysics, differences which apparently are only verbal can when extended lead to completely different concepts and mentalities. The different ways of conceiving being and causality lead to different conceptions of God.

From Aristotle derives the idea that God is pure act, energeia. “Pure” means that He does not have in His nature anything leading Him to manifest Himself, as occurs in finite beings; but rather He is a subsistent act. No one has an adequate intuition of God; we only have human concepts. With respect to God, our concepts are converted into analogical paths, into routes through which we attempt to reach Him intellectually. Therefore the human result, our concepts of God, will be as diverse as the roads upon which we embark. Let us now recall the two meanings of the word “act” as a designation of being. If one understands by ‘act’ actuality, we shall conceive of God as a pure and perfect actuality, i.e. as {423} an entity in which there is neither potentiality nor virtuality of any sort, whether physical or metaphysical. he is an entity whose being is not metaphysically defective. He lacks nothing in the order of being. But if we understand by “act” activity, then God will be pure and subsistent activity. Let us recall now that if we remove mutation from movement, we are left with the operation, something active. In this sense the Greek Fathers conceived of God not so much as a purely actual entity, but as an entity consisting in pure action, and hence, in perfect life. It is not just that God lacks nothing, but that He is positively the plenitude of being as action. More than existence, what there is in God is the very operation of existing. The Greeks even posed the question of whether the word Theos, God, primarily designates a nature (the Deity) or an operation. They did not hesitate to opt for the latter. That pure action is, eo ipso, a subsistent unity in the highest sense of absolute possession of itself. God is selfness itself. Whence He is a subsistent person (We shall return to this forthwith with respect to the personal Trinity). The theological perspective of the Greeks is quite different from that of the Latins. Theirs is a theology which is essentially personalistic. The first movement of [371] man to God

having a metaphysical priority, and not simply de facto, is a movement of person to person.

If we wish to specify further the nature of this pure and subsistent action in which God consists, the Pseudo-Dionysius will facilitate the reply. In created beings unity is manifested in an eros which tends to realize something, its proper good. But in God that unity is pure, is its proper reality. His eros is a subsistent eros, and personal as it is, is subsistent agape. In God we are present at the pure root of being and hence in Him being cannot be understood except based on goodness. Therefore His being, which is infinite, is infinitely ecstatic; it tends to communicate itself as an infinite fountain (pege), as fontanalis plenitude.[6] The infinity of His selfness is, eo ipso, the infinitude {424} of His personal ecstasy. Only an infinitely intimate being can be infinitely communicable. Man speaks of God by conferring upon Him many names or predicates, so as to understand this communicability better. But the way Dionysius understands these names differs from the way almost all Western thinkers use them. To the West, God, for example, has wisdom, and therefore we say that He is wise. But to the Greeks the relation is just the reverse. Potentialities or properties are nothing but the explicitude of the treasure of essence. Whence the attributes of God are His dynameis, the infinite richness of His being, and therefore the expression of what already is in His essence in a hidden way. The reasoning of Dionysius is, then, the reverse of that of Western thinkers: God is wise, and therefore we say that he has wisdom. The attributes of God are converted into the truth of His infinite essence. They express what God is already. And since one must conceive of God above all as a person, these attributes take on—as we shall see forthwith—a good measure of personal character. In finite beings the primacy of the good over being is imperfect; therefore their eros is always dynamic.

And so this is God for the Greeks: a pure personal action, unfathomable; in the purity of His act the character of His person is already expressed. In God nature is held by radical identity in the person. Seen from outside, it is manifested as infinite ecstasy, as infinite fecundity; and therefore we conceive of God as love. His metaphysical unity is His ecstasy. And in the purity of His act the [372] absolute unification of all His attributes with His being is expressed, in metaphysical intimacy.

And here, then, we have more or less reached our point of departure. God is essentially a pure action, a pure personal love. As such, He is ecstatic and effusive. The structure of this ecstasy is the effusion of love in three different planes: an internal effusion, the life of the Trinity; an external creation; and a deifying gift. This we shall see.

So as to avoid needless repetitions, I beg the reader to try to understand all concepts appearing in this exposition within the scheme above outlined.

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IV

PROCESSION

We only know of the existence of Divine Processions through Revelation. Reason by itself could never have surmised that the internal fecundity of Divine being leads to the production of a series of personal beings that are truly distinct. In a word, the fact that in God there are real personal processions is a revealed datum. It is likewise a datum of revelation and of reason at the same time that there are not three Gods: “For there are three that bear witness in Heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one” (I Jn 5:7).[7] Theology can only seek to reduce revealed assumptions to a minimum so as to discover in them an internal concatenation, and to try to analogically and eminently conceive that matters can be thus, or at least that it is not impossible that they should.

And here is where Greek and Latin though make their divergence more visible. The Latins, following the route traced by St. Augustine, start from the unity of God, from the second member of the above Biblical text. Their problem then centers on conceiving the trinity of persons (first member) without in any way slighting the primary unity. The Greeks, on the other hand, follow the order of the text. They try to understand the nature of each person, and their problem centers on conceiving how these three persons are only one single thing. This difference of attitude is already implicit in their concept of being and of the person. The Latins tended to see in God first and foremost a nature which lacked nothing and which, consequently, has rationality and hence personality. The Greeks see in God, above all, a {426} person who in a certain way realizes Himself in his proper nature. The outcome is clear. The Latins will see in God a single nature which subsists in three persons; and different by virtue of their relation of origin, these persons are above all set apart from each other. The Greeks will see rather how God, upon realizing Himself as a person, "tri-personalizes" Himself, in such a way that the trinity of persons is precisely the metaphysical way of possessing an [374] identical nature; the persons do not begin by opposing themselves, but by implying each other and demanding each other in their distinction relative to each other. Whereas for the Latins each person is in the other in the sense that the three have a nature which is numerically identical, for the Greeks each person is unable to exist except by producing the other, and from the concurrence of this personal production the identical nature of a single God is assured. For the Greeks, the Trinity is the mysterious mode of being of an infinite God, one by nature. For the Latins, the Trinity is the mysterious way in which unity subsists in three persons.

The point of departure of the Greek conception was clearly seen and expressed by Richard of St. Victor. The person is formally constituted by a relation of origin with respect to his own nature. In man, a finite person, nature is something which the person has, but which is given to him. For God, His nature is not obtained; He has it through Himself. Therefore He is an infinite person. And therefore His fecundity is also infinite, because being is agape, love. That this fecundity is productive of persons is the revealed mystery. But given the revelation, reason can make out at least the congruence of the revealed data.

Let us once again recall that in this metaphysical sense love does not refer to the act of a special faculty called "will" as opposed to that of "understanding." The Greeks saw in love the very ecstasy of being, something which in radice encompasses the understanding and the will as distinct faculties; through being active they are already dynameis, the expression of the being of their own expansion. Centuries later Durando, Herveus, Natalis and others will hearken to this idea in the Franciscan school: the principle of the Divine processions is the fecundity of the being of God. That love is the principle of Trinitary life can be seen {427} in various passages of the New Testament (John 3:35; 10:17; 15:19; 17:23-26; Eph 1:6 Col 1:13, etc.). Thus, St. Maximus says, "God the Father, moved (kinetheis) by an eternal love, has proceeded to the distinction of persons." For the Greeks, then, love and movement as pure activity are the principle of Trinitary life. The Greeks start from the fact that God is the Father.

How then can this life be represented? Consider the way in which one of the most illustrious interpreters of Greek theology conceived it. To begin we take as our point of departure God, considered indistinctly, but always as a person. In Him is the [375] infinitude of Divine being, but like a hidden treasure; it is the ousia itself of God, in its metaphysical purity, as pure activity and action. Who is this person God? The unfathomable abyss of the Divinity, of whom St. John says "No man has seen God." This essence is personally subsistent, and its personal subsistence is marked by the fact that it is not received. Now from the subject its perfections are born; in them the hidden richness of the essence is expressed. Since God is pure act, these perfections do not add anything real to the essence, but rather are its proper explicitness. And hence the essence takes on a second mode of personal being. It is the same essence of the first person with respect to truth about its proper being. The first person makes Himself infinitely patent in the Son through the infinite ecstasy of His being. And consequently, He becomes the Father at the moment when the Son is engendered through His expression. We shall see why forthwith. In any case, it is clear that the Father is not the Father save because He engenders the Son (in contrast to the Latins, for

whom He engenders because He is the Father). So it is that St. Bonaventure was able to call the Father generatio inchoata and the Son, generatio completa. He is the personification of the ousia and of the dynameis. And thus it is that the Son proceeds immediately from the Father. But there is more. In every "virtuosity" there are two different states possible in finite beings. I can know many things, and nevertheless not always be thinking about them. When I do think about them, Aristotle tells us that this is not an increase of a potentiality, but a simple ratification or affirmation of it. It is an operation which proceeds not toward the other, but towards itself. So, in God, the person of {428} the Son explicitly contains the richness of the Divine essence. The Son is the personification of the dynamis of the Father. The Son is the Father's perfection "engendered," because the dynamis is, in every living being, the genetic expression of the Father's nature. But these perfections are precisely the whole of the truth and nothing but the truth of the essence; so true, that in respect of essence they are identical with it. If I now express these perfections as acts which identically revert to the essence, making of it the expression of a "pure act," I shall have personified the energeia aspect of Divine being. This is the person of the Holy Spirit.[8] And for this reason the Greek [376] Fathers called the Holy Spirit " Manifestor". Like every energeia, He represents a telos. One can then say that the Holy Spirit is the completio Trinitatis. Let us take any attribute of God whatever, for example Wisdom. God is wise. But this affirmation has two aspects: first, someone who is wise, viz. the Father. The Father engenders His own Wisdom, the Son. The pure actuality of this Wisdom is identical to the essence from which it begins; this is the Holy Spirit, for this reason called energeia and telos, pleroma of the Trinity. God is wise (Father) through His Wisdom (Son), through which He is always in the act of wisdom (Holy Spirit); the Holy Spirit thus proceeds from the Father through the Son. Such is the Greek outlined.[9] Thus, for St. Gregory Nazianzen the Father is: the True (alethinos), the Son is the Truth (aletheia), the Holy Spirit is the spirit of Truth (pneuma tes alethneias). And St. Gregory of Nyssa says, "The fountain of dynamis is the Father, the dynamis of the Father is the Son, the spirit of the dynamis is the Holy Spirit." {429}

Now perhaps we can understand a bit better how these predicates, which in Latin theology are proper to the deity, are in the Greek personal denominations. And we also understand how thanks to the Trinity of persons God is constituted in the pure act of one and the same nature. Each person is distinguished from the others by the way of having the divine nature. In the Father, it is a principle; in the Son, as constituting agency; in the Holy Spirit, as autodonation in act. The nature of God is indivisibly identical in pure act of essence; this is the active sameness of love. God is pure act thanks—if I may be permitted the expression—to the Trinity of persons. Each one of the dimensions of the pure act is realized by a person, in the sense explained. This is what was called the perikhoresis or circumincession of the Divine persons. In a way none of the persons can affirm the infinite fullness of His nature save by producing the others. For Latin theology, on the other hand, the circumincession signifies that each person is truly in the [377] others through the fact of having a nature which is numerically identical with them, as we have indicated.

Within the foregoing scheme the Greeks order their interpretation of each one of the persons.

First, the Father. Greek as well as Latin theology sees His formal character in being unborn; agennetos, says the Syrian St. John Damascene. But the difference lies in the way of understanding this being unborn. For the Latins it is a merely negative characteristic; it consists in not proceeding from anything. For the Greeks it is a positive characteristic; it consists in being the principle or primary metaphysical fountain of His own richness. And this fontal character is the personal property which characterizes the Father. Let us note in passing that this expression does not have the meaning of an efficient causality which would indeed be inimicable to the simplicity of Divine being; the Father is principle and fountain, but not cause.

The differences are accentuated when we deal with the person of the Son. The Latins tried to understand the generation of the Son based on the Divine nature itself. They sought to discover in it something whose end was the transmission of nature, an end which, consequently, would rigorously deserve to be called by the name of

‘Son’, because its raison d’etre would consist {430} in having received a nature identical to that of the Father. The name ‘generation’ would be justified, then, by the final end of the procession. The Greek viewpoint is just the reverse. The Greeks start from the fact of generation, and in consequence, their end must possess a nature identical to that of the Father. The Latins try to understand that in God there is generation, and consequently, that its end is a Son. The Greeks start from the fact that in God there is generation and, consequently, a Son, and they seek to understand in what His personal character consists. The process on which the Latins fixed their attention was intellection; for the Greeks, it was the fertile expansion of the essence of a living being in His own vital perfections. Whence the different way in which the two theologies interpret revealed data. In the prologue of the Fourth Gospel we are told that the Son is the Word of the Father. The Latins saw in the Word the Verbum mentis. Since His essence consists in reproducing intentionally the nature of what is conceptualized, they relied on intellection in order to understand Divine generation; it is generation because its outcome, viz, the identity of received nature, so manifests it. For the Greeks the [378] identity of nature is the expression of generation. The Greeks never understood the Logos as the formal ratio of the Sonship. The Father produces and engenders the Son simply by the internal and ecstatic fecundity of His being. All the other denominations, including that of the Logos, presuppose that the subject is already the Son. The Son is Logos, but is not the Son by virtue of the Logos. The Son’s formal ratio is in being engendered. That which is engendered, by the mere fact of being so, is already the likeness of the nature of the Father. And the formal ratio of the new person rests squarely on the nature of the generation. What is engendered is the hidden perfection in the Father, but in a manifest form. Now we can understand more clearly what those dynameis are which are personified in the Son. They are not at all plural; they are purely and simply the very perfection of the paternal ousia made visible; the dynamis of the Divine being is a unique dynamism St. John Damascene writes, “In the Father there is not Logos, Wisdom, Power, Will, but only the Son, who is the unique dynamis of the Father.” {431}

What meaning does the name “Logos” have for the Greeks? Maldonatus observed that not only is St. John the only Evangelist to call the Son “Logos,” but moreover he only does so in the prologue to his Gospel. He explains this saying that it was Israelite tradition in the final centuries before Christ to call the Son “Word,” and hence the text means only that the Son is the unique true Logos. Maldonatus simply summarizes the Greek tradition. For a Greek, the Logos was never a mental concept as engendered by the understanding, but the word directed to another or to oneself for communicating a truth. The logos is, above all, something which goes from person to person. It is a property more personal than natural. The appelation of this name to the Son expresses the immaterial character of Divine generation, and at the same time the Divinity of the Son. And this is so because the word is the eikon or image of what there is in the mind. Recall now the previously explained meaning of this expression; by proceeding from the ousia something is eikon and not vice versa, as if it proceeded from the ousia because it turned out to look like it. We shall return to this later. But even now it reveals to us that the Son as Logos is compared to the word proffered (logos prophorikos). On the other hand, the Logos as thought is included in the person of the Father, of whom the filial Logos is nothing but the manifestation or expression. And through being so, He (the [379] Logos) explains or expresses what the Father is. The Son is the definition of the Father, his doxa, his aletheia. For this reason St. John said, “He who has seen the Son has seen the Father,” despite the fact that he told us, “No one has seen God.” Seen God, as pure principio, as the Father, no. But the whole of what there is in Him is exhaustively expressed and manifested in the Son. And this is the personal ratio of Him (the Son). For this reason St. Iraneus could say, as we shall later record, that the Son is the Divine definition of God. But we leave aside, for the moment, the eikonal being of the Son.

The third person is the Holy Spirit. A few words about this name: spirit, pneuma, for the Greeks always meant breath, breeze; it is what corresponds to the Logos as proration. It indicates, then, that in the third person there is an immaterial and divine reversion from the second to the first, in the sense of a simple ratification. Holy, hagion, {432} is a moral or religious attribute. “Holy” is nothing but the divine. Applied to the third person, it indicates

that the spirit comes from God and is God. The root of this denomination proceeds from the following: the Holy Spirit has as one of its proper functions that of carrying out the creation. For this reason it is called II spirit," because according to Genesis it is the very breath with which the Divine Word produces things. And one of its works is the deification of man. If the Holy Spirit deifies man it is because He (the Spirit) is God, said the Greeks. They thus interpreted the name "Holy Spirit" as Vivifier. But His personal ratio is that of verifying the manifestation of the Father through the Son. The Son is the truth of the Father, and the Holy Spirit manifests to us that the Son is the truth of the Father. From the viewpoint of vital activity, the Son is the dynamis of the Father, and the Holy Spirit expresses that this dynamis is identical in pure act to the ousia of the Father. For this reason the Greeks called it energeia.

Comparing the second and third persons with the Father, the Greeks called them eikones, "images." We have already seen what that word meant to the Greeks. Everything which proceeds from a principle, by the mere fact of doing so, is a likeness of it in which that principle shines through. For the Latins, on the other hand, what is produced is an image only if it is a likeness of the principle. Thus, for the Latins, the end of Divine generation is truly a Son because He has the same nature as the Father; on the other hand, for the Greeks He has the same nature as the Father [380] because He is the Son, Now, the Son and the Holy Spirit are images of God, but in different senses. The Son is eikon because He proceeds immediately from the Father; the Holy Spirit is so because He proceeds from the Father through the Son, and consists in manifesting the identity of the Father and Son: pneuma ek Patros di'hyiou ekporeuomenon. Such is the Greek scheme.[10] {433}

Let us not forget that this expresses not only the nature of the Divine life, but also the structure of creation and of deification, as we shall soon see. The identity of the Divine nature, as pure act, is like a primary and radical process of autoidentification obtained by personal love at the base of the distinction of the three persons. The three persons, says St. Gregory Nazianzen, move toward the One (pros hen). The three together do but express in a complete way that God is pure act. The three persons are, in the phrase of St. Cyril, "manners of existing" (tropoi tes hyparxeos), where "manners" does not mean modes like subsistent being, but personal states or stages of Divine being, the way in which God lives personally in one nature, viz. the Father, as principle; the Son, as perfection or power; and the Holy Spirit, as actual identification. For this reason Alexander of Hales says that Divine being is not, properly speaking, universal or singular, but has [381] something of both: universal, in respect of its expansibility; individual, in respect of its complete determination. Against all tritheism, the perikhoresis, circumincession, {434} is the mode of producing or maintaining the unity of divine beings as pure act. If we now return to Richard of St. Victor's definition of person we shall quickly understand, in our human way, what the Trinity signifies. The final ratio of the personality is in the "ex," in the relation of origin. The three modes of the "ex" are the three persons whose mutual implication assures their identical natural sistence.

But, I said, the Greek scheme is not limited to God. His personal life is extended through effusion of His being into creation and deification. Let us see how.

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V

CREATION

The mystery of the creation has its roots in love. Throughout the Old and New Testaments the creative act is a "call": "He calls the things which are not as if they were" (Rom 4:17). In this sense the creation is a word, a logos. But this word has been pronounced through the ecstatic character of love. As the root of this word, and therefore of things themselves, love is a principle (arkhe) of everything. But this effusion in turn has no other meaning than that of disseminating itself, of giving itself. In this way, love is not just principle, but also end (telos). And it is so

in an absolutely specific sense: creation is a production of the "other," but as diffusion of "itself." And hence the creation, at the same time it produces things distinct from God, maintains them in ontological unity with Him through effusion. Seen from the viewpoint of God, the effusion of love does not primarily consist in unifying something already produced by creation, but in producing the very ambit of otherness as an unum projected ad extra; so that what is existent only gleans its existence through the primary, originary, and originating unity of love. From the viewpoint of creatures, the effusion of love is an ascensional attraction toward God. Unity thus understood is nothing but the obverse of the creative act itself; they are two faces of a single love-effusion.

Let us took a bit more closely at this structure of creation as seen by the Fathers of the Greek Church.

First, an essential difference springs into view concerning love as principle of the interdivine life. In the foregoing their love communicates His identical nature to each one of the three persons. {436} Now we are dealing with something else; indeed if that were applied here it would be pantheism. The Greek Fathers staunchly fought against Gnosticism and the Neoplatonism of Plotinus. In that love of a personal character which is agape, its salient characteristic is liberality. But whereas when dealing with its proper Divine nature that liberality means simply natural autodonation, here it signifies in addition the freedom with which that Divine nature takes pleasure in producing other things, other natures. [383]

In the second place, that production itself is essentially different, though in a way emerging from the same root in which the interpersonal expansion of Divine being is anchored. Whereas in God Himself these formal processions exist through generation and aspiration, here we deal with a transcendent production; it is the position not only of others, as happens ad intra, but in addition, of other things. Against all possible forms of emanatism, the New Testament and the Greek Fathers thematically insist upon this transcendent character of the creative act as opposed to the immanent processions which produce the Divine persons.

Nevertheless, the Greek Fathers never lose sight of the radical unity of the Divine actions which are reduced (pardon the expression) to His agape, to His love. The difference stems from the fact that ad intra this agape is the divine being itself, whereas ad extra it is the imperative with which it freely seeks to produce other things. Expounding on this problem, an illustrious theologian reduced the difference to a concise formula: Trinitarian processions and creation differ in the same way that living is distinguished from commanding. Finite things proceed from the ecstatic command of love. The origin of finitude is an act of command.

Because this act, though essentially different from the Trinitary processions, is still an act of the same agape, the Greek Fathers see in the structure of the creative act the translation (if I may be permitted the expression) of the Trinitary life to the order of commanding. Latin theology has seen in the creation only the work of the Deity, a work of God's nature, and conceived the relation between creation and the Trinity as a mere extrinsic appropriation. Greek theology is ignorant of appropriations. For it, the matter is the proper personal function of each of the {437} three persons, unknowable to be sure without revelation, but assignable on the basis of it.

The Father is always pege, arkhe, fountain and principle of all being: of the divine, in the form of paternity; and of the created, because the command from which the creation emerges out of nothing is His act. But the Son has the function of paternal logos. Hence this command, this logos, is justly in the Son; in Him the truth of what the Father is, His dynamis, His explicit perfection, is expressed. In Him likewise is the content of His command. Therefore St. Paul tells us that everything has been created through the Son and in the Son. The act of this power is the [384] energeia of the Holy Spirit; ad extra is the effective carrying out of what is expressly contained in the filial Logos through the prolation of the Father. In this way, in the transcendental act of creation, the three persons fulfill the same function in the order of causality as in the life of the Trinity. In the Trinity the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son. In the creation the Holy Spirit carries out what the Father commands through the Son. These are not appropriations, but causal functions of the persons. Thus, St. John Damascene

wrote, oudemia gar horme aneu pneumatos. From this operative mode of the Holy Spirit comes the denomination energia which the Greeks imposed upon it. “All entities,” says St. Basil, “have a single principle, which acts through the Son and is consummated in the Holy Spirit.” “The Father Himself,” St. Athanasius tells us, “produces and gives all things through the Logos in the Spirit.” Creation is the Trinity acting causally ad extra. Such is the Greek idea.

Hence if we consider the transcendent end of the creative act, we shall see in it this same structure as a precipitate. This is the theory of the vestigium Trinitatis. To see it, let us reconsider some ideas expounded earlier. Being is active unity or unitary action, however one wishes. As such, it is only given in God; only He “is” in this sense. Let us also recall that the Greek theologians understood efficient causality from the viewpoint of a formal “re-production.” Seen from the cause, it is the cause’s projection onto the being affected. Seen from the effect, it is the resplendent presence of the cause in the effect. We can then understand that {438} for the Greek the causal act of creation has as content a progressive resplendence of God outside of Himself. For this reason the Pseudo-Dionysius compares creation to an extrinsic illumination, from the font of Divine being. And this is not pantheistic. It is essential to the theory of causality, as we saw, to admit diverse modes of formal causality, i.e. diverse modes of the presence of the cause in the effect. The presence of God in works ad extra is not pantheism. Let us return now to the creative act in itself. God the Father, through the infinite richness of His being, “decides” to be imitated ad extra. And He expresses this decision in His Logos. The decision stems from His being itself. From Him stem likewise all the multitude of perfections in which He seeks to be imitated. The express content of this perfection is in the Son. The Son is, then, in whom things formally are prior to being. They are in the Father only as the “root” of what they are going to be. [385]

In the Son they are “what they are going to be.” This is the first form of exemplarism. The Son, says St. Gregory of Nyssa, is “the the Son they are “what they are going to be.” This is the first form of exemplarism. The Son, says St. Gregory of Nyssa, is “the exemplar of what does not exist, the presence of what does exist, and the prescience of what is going to happen.” The Holy Spirit realizes the command of the Father by making things to be, and making them what they are in the Son. Creation, then, as an absolute act of God, is a voice of God in nothingness. The logos has a subject: nothingness; and a predicate: the Divine ideas. The outcome is clear: nothingness is transformed (if I may be permitted the expression) into “someone” (subject), and the ideas are projected onto this someone making of him a “something” (predicate). In this way the ontological structure of creation is determined; the finite entity is above all a duality between that it is and what it is. But since, nonetheless, all being is one, the entity (Alexander of Aphrodesia called it ontotes) of finite being is the unification of “that it is” and “what it is.” Therein lies the active power of being as operation: the effort to be what it “is.” Being is maintaining oneself in oneself; it is an internal “tension,” the correlate of the upward pulling, of the eros, toward God. Therefore being is action. The Greek Fathers adopted the usual terminology. The subject is the substrate (hypokeimenon); what it is is the form (morphe, eidos); and the being of a thing consists in the originating and original unity of the subject through its form, in {439} which the exemplary idea of the Divine logos shines. Finite being is an action directed toward its own exemplary form. Form thus understood is the agathon, the ontological good in which each thing constitutively consists; in it shines the thing’s ideal and divine good. Its dynameis are the expression of the plentitude of this form, as are its perfections understood as operative fecundity, and acts are expressions of these latter, as actual actions, energeiai. In the dynamis the interior goodness in which the thing consists is manifested through irradiation; the dynamis is its doxa and its aletheia. Such is the structure of finite being.

Thus it is clear how, without blurring the distinction between God and creatures, everything there is in them of positive being is owing to the presence of God in them. If, dealing with finite causality, the action of the agent is received in the patient, then dealing with the creator-actor the patient and its passivity only exist due to their presence in the agent. We are, we move, and we [386] live in Him, St. Paul will say, probably repeating a formula

already current in his day.

Finitude is the tense unity in a duality. A thing is not itself except from and in a constitutive otherness; it is characteristic of finite being to be both “itself” and the “other”; it is sameness in otherness.

From this two important consequences follow.

First is the idea of the ontological hierarchy of beings according to their greater or lesser formal perfection. As this perfection is the expression of a unity, the ontological gradation coincides with the greater or lesser intimate sameness of being.

At the pinnacle is God, subsistent unity and infinite intimacy. Next come forms whose unity is displayed and grouped together in an otherness of internal characteristics; these are the angels. Finally, there is the visible universe whose structure we shall broadly sketch out.

Things possessing matter are one, like every entity, through their formal principle; but here a new dimension is introduced. In these beings form is received in a subject characterized by an internal exteriority; otherness is here exteriority; the distinction, distance. Consequently, form is extended in time and space. Here, time and space are not geometric entities, but something affecting the formal action {440} of being, making it not simply a tension but an ex-tension and a distension in an active sense: spatiality and temporality are that from which being gathers and manifests its internal unity. Time and space are thus the boundary within which the possibilities of the action in which being consists are circumscribed. For this reason there are many different ways of being in time and space; I do not wish to press this point further here. These material things are of three orders.

First, there are bodies (soma). “Soma” does not primarily mean simple matter, passive and inert, but the way in which the formal unity of being has reality in the circumscriptive and definitive limits which its “extension” imposes upon it. That which we call matter is the somatic entity. Strictly speaking one must understand matter based on soma, and not soma based on matter—an essential observation which has to be borne in mind when we treat of deification.

Next come living things whose life is a unity which is present simultaneously in all parts of the body. In contrast to the simple bodies in which their unity is exhausted in the unfolding [387] consequent upon their primary extension, in living things the unity actively presides at the constitution of the body. Life is, therefore, in a way supra-spatial; but not supra-temporal.

Finally there is man, who through his spirit absorbs and therefore transcends space and time in an originary manner, in the quiescent unity of his person. Life is an identical unity in all parts of its vital space. The person is a unity identically present in all moments of its temporal duration; it is not only supra-spatial, but also supra-temporal.

The New Testament designates the being of these categories of things precisely: the being of bodies is light (phos); the being of living things is their life (zoe); personal being is spirit (pneuma).[11] {441} For Gnosticism, Phos, Zoe and Pneuma were emanations from God. For the New Testament, they are the formal projections ad extra of God, in the sense already explained.

God is light, life, and spirit in an eminent and principle way. Things are first and foremost in the world, and what confers upon them their mode of being purely “presential” is light; in it and through it shines Divine being (Eph 5:13). But living things find themselves present in the world not just through merely “being there;” their being is not being there, but living. In this sense life is a projection ad extra of Divine vitality. Finally there are entities which not only are there and living, but whose presentiality consists in being persons. This is what is proper to spirit. God as person is what confers this mode of being upon them through a creative projection called pneuma.

Phos, zoe, and pneuma do not primarily designate three substances, but three modes of being. In fact, these three modes of being are not mutually exclusive; on the contrary, each presupposes the previous one, absorbing it into a higher unity. This is an essential observation for any metaphysical system, but we shall not press the matter further.

In man the three dimensions of visible creation are manifested simultaneously: “May your spirit (pneuma), your soul (psykhe), and your body (soma) be conserved sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Thes 5:23). Man has a body whose mode of vital reality is called flesh (sarx). He has a soul (psykhe) as principle of animation and life, which is in all parts of [388] the body, and which develops along with the body’s natural history. He has a spirit (pneuma) which encompasses the totality of the instants of time, but in an originary sense. Time is nothing but the unfolding of that superior transtemporal unity. For this reason the spirit is in its way eternal. It is what remains in man, and therefore is his unique true being. It is man who, among all creatures, most closely resembles God, and who is God’s favorite creature, eikon, His image. This image is the foundation of human being, its goodness and its principle. From it emerge the faculties of all orders, and with them man traces out his life in intimate unity with himself, in the depths of his person. Let us not forget this structure when speaking of grace. In the personal spirit the originary unifying character of love is manifested in an exemplary way; {442} enfolded in itself, the spirit is in eternity drawn by God. That voice in the void, which is the creative act, that “call” to being, is in the case of the spirit something special; it is not a simple call, but a “vocation.” Here what is called not only “is called,” but “consists in being called,” in such a fashion that its being hinges upon its “divine vocation.” The spirit not only has a destination, and not only has a vocation, but is formally and constitutively a vocational entity. This tending, or rather, this de- pending, is destiny: God, as destiny of the spirit, is not something extrinsic to it, but is found inscribed in the very meaning of its being. So as to preclude any false pantheistic interpretation, let it suffice to record the structure of formal causality which we have already indicated at various times.

Here we have, then, the hierarchy of beings, a hierarchy which might be termed “radical.” It is the first of the two consequences derived from the idea of the finite being which we pointed out above. Creation is an irradiation ad extra of ecstatic being; but things “are” because they are maintaining themselves in their being through the attraction which they undergo on the part of the divine eros. Through it they are one. The work of love as principle of being is henopoiesis, unification.

The second consequence is the cosmic unity of creation. Being, as active unity, unifies things in themselves and is unified with God. But we added that it also unifies each thing with all others of its species.[12] Whence the idea of the plurality of things is cosmic [389] unity. With respect to the plurality of things of the same species, we may say that in material things the internal otherness of the form is given, and also the numerical plurality of the individuals. One single form is projected onto subjects which are numerically distinct. Hence it follows that they are mutually referred to each other. They form an order, a taxis, founded on their own being. As decreed by the creator, the New Testament calls it ktisis, and its formal unity is called kosmos. {443}

Man also forms an order, a cosmos; but it is a microcosmos. The spirit, precisely on account of being the image of God, is also personal love, and as such, diffusion and effusion. But in contrast to the rest of the creatures of the world, the human spirit has the love of agape, personal love. As such, it creates about itself the originary unity of the ambit through which the “other” ends up primarily approximated to me based on me, whence it is converted into my “fellow man.” If the finite spirit does not produce the “other,” it produces the “fellow mankindness” of the other as such. For this reason the primary and radical form of “society” is “personal” society. The social in the commonest sense of the word is something derivative, viz. the “natural” precipitate of the “personal.” Love, rather than a relation consequent upon two persons, is the originary creation of an effusive boundary within which, and only within which, the other as other can be given. This is the sense of every possible community

among men, viz. a relationship not founded in life, nor referring back to it, but only based on personality itself. Living beings have eros; only persons are love in the strict sense. The brotherhood of the Gospel, therefore, is anything but a purely ethical virtue. Very often the New Testament reserves the name “cosmos” for this personal unity of all men. Through this his spiritual being man possesses a metaphysical superiority in creation; he is its lord. Whence the cosmos as a whole signifies not so much the conjunction of the creation, but the theater of human existence. From this point of view, things are presented as difficulties or facilities for the realization of the human person.. This is what quite often the New Testament still more properly calls “cosmos.” It is, if one wishes, the system of possibilities which things offer through the concrete situation in which man finds himself.

But this cosmos had a beginning (arkhe) and will have an end (telos). Yet to the cosmos, as being of creation, there corresponds [390] a proper time, which the New Testament calls aion, eon; if one wishes, “age” (e.g. I Cor 2:6). But this time is not an empty, indefinite span; it is a period of time, proper to the cosmos, and hence internally {444} limited and qualified, the time during which creation is extended, and which can be translated for the duration of the centuries. This character of cosmic time permits us to speak of the “beginning of time,” and as we shall see, of the “consumation of time.” Let us recall, too, the idea of the “fullness of time.” And just like cosmos, eon has here come to mean the conjunction of things themselves, and above all, the conjunction of things as theater of human existence; so that on occasion eon and kosmos turn out to be synonymous (I Cor 3:19, 2:6).

So finally, from the cosmic viewpoint, the mode of being of visible creation, the character of its ontological unity, is that of being at once both world and age, cosmic spatiality and temporality. In contrast to it, the mode of being of God Himself is pure immensity and eternity. He is in everything, but above everything; and He is eternal, but is above time, because what we improperly call His eternal duration is rather His complete possession of Himself, His subsistent action. Between Divine eternity and the temporal limitation of the created there is still something distinct: the other eon, the other age, proper to the other world.

Let us conclude. Once again, for the Greeks creation is a vestage of the Trinity. Things exercise their being through the causal operation of the Holy Spirit, who causes them to realize their exemplary image which is in the Son, and to unite themselves to the font of being which is in the Father, from whom they received, through the Son and in the Holy Spirit, their own reality. The case of things is the same as that of the cosmos; in both instances we are dealing with the eschatalogical idea of the history of the cosmos, about which we shall speak later.

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VI

DEIFICATION

Together with this creative effusion through which God produces things, He has realized a second effusion ad extra. If we wish to find a generic name to designate it, we may use “deification”. Deification is not, properly speaking, creation. In creation things distinct from God are produced; in deification God gives of Himself personally to Himself. It is an effusive giving to creation. From the creatures’ point of view, it is a unification of them with the personal life of God. The cycle of Divine ecstatic love is completed in this way. In the Trinity, God lives; in creation, He produces things; in deification, he elevates them to associate them with His personal life.

Deification thus understood has two perfectly distinct aspects. In the first, God Himself makes created nature, man, the nature of His own personal being, considered metaphysically. This metaphysical unity, suprasubstantial and personal, is the reality of Christ. To this deifying effusion the name Incarnation is given. But secondly, through participation in Christ’s personal life the rest of mankind secures a participation in the personal life of

God; this is sanctification. Sanctification is, consequently, a prolongation of the Incarnation. Theologians call it "accidental deification" because it does not constitute the person of man, but is limited to elevating that person to the personal life of God. De facto it is what most properly is called "deification." But the Greek Fathers themselves very often use this word as a generic expression for the deification of man, including Christ. {446}

Let us say immediately that in the mind of St. Paul no part of material creation is foreign to this process. All is in some way affected by it. And so, then, it is indeed possible to speak in a broad sense of deification as end or complement of the entire cycle of ecstatic love which is the being of God.

1. INCARNATION

The first important state of deification is constituted by the [392] metaphysical gift of the Divine person itself to a human nature. Naturally, the only incarnate person is the Son. But in the Greek conception of the Trinity, the three persons call for each other; whence their personal collaboration in the Incarnation. As we shall see, for the Greeks the fact that it is the person of the Son who formally took human flesh is not something arbitrary.

St. Paul expresses the complex fact of the Incarnation of Christ in many passages. Here are some of them:

...granting us knowledge (gnorisas) of the mystery of His will—according to His own wise judgement, with the end of realizing it in the fullness of the times—so that all things may be recapitulated (anakephalaiosasthai) in Christ, those that are in Heaven and those on Earth. (Eph 1:9-10)

...who [Christ] though existing in the form (morphe) of God, did not consider being equal to God something to be clung to, but emptied Himself, taking on the form of a slave, being made like unto men. And appearing in the form of a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, and death on the cross. Therefore God has exalted Him and has graced Him with a name which is above all other names. (Phil 2:6-9).

...giving thanks to the Father for having made you worthy to share the lot of the saints in light. He rescued us from the power of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of his beloved Son. Through him we have redemption, the forgiveness of our sins. He is the image of the Invisible God, the first-born of all creatures. {447} In him everything in heaven and on earth was created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominations, principalities or powers; all were created through him, and for him. He is before all else that is. In him everything continues in being. It is he who is head of the body, the church; he who is the beginning, the first-born of the dead, so that primacy may be his in everything. It pleased God to make absolute fullness reside in him and, by means of him, to reconcile everything in his person, both on earth and in the heavens, making peace through the blood of his cross. (Col 1: 12-20, New American Bible Version)

From these passages, which I have literally transcribed and have purposely juxtaposed so that their exceptional theological density might better stand out, three central questions are of interest for out object. First, there is the root of the Incarnation. St. Paul responds with a capital idea: the mystery of the will of God. Secondly, in what does Christ consist? The answer is contained in [393] a single word: Christ's plenitude, pleroma of the divine being. Finally, what is the fate of creation consequent upon the existence of Christ? Another word indicates the answer: anakephalaiosasthai, recapitulation of all in Christ.

1. First, there is the root of the Incamation: the mystery of His will. We are not referring to the motive which gave rise to the Incarnation (Adam's sin, or the glorification of creatures), but the very purpose of the Incarnation in the heart of the Divine being. The Greek Fathers, faithful to their personalist conception, without any kind of appropriations whatever, understood this purpose in a Trinitary way—if I may be permitted the expression. The Father decides upon the gift of Divine being to man. This decision, like everything in the Father, is expressed in the person of the Son. Therefore, if God has to become man to manifest Himself to humanity or make it live in

the Divine life, it follows that the person of the Son is the one to be incarnate. In the Son is the expression and definition of Divine being, as we saw. Thus St. Paul tells us that in the Son all treasures of sophia and gnosis are hidden (Col 2:3). {448} But hidden only for men. Christ is the theological truth of the Father. Finally, this which the Father seeks to communicate, and which is the Son, is realized by the Holy Spirit, who manifests to us that Christ is the person of the Son, and therefore the expression of what the being of God is which is hidden in the Father. Whence the proper Divine perikhoresis of the Incarnation becomes clear. The Holy Spirit confers a Divine personality upon a human nature. This is the supernatural conception and personification of Christ. What is made is the divine person of man, the Incarnation of the Son, and the result is the reversion of human nature to the Divine being hidden in the Father, in final and intimate love. This is the glorification of Christ. Inasmuch as this decision is hidden within the Father, the Incarnation is a mystery. The Son is the explicit and living expression of this mystery, its revelation through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Such is the root of the Incarnation to which St. Paul alludes in the passages cited.

2. Revelation of the mystery: the person of Christ. It is important to note that for the Greek Fathers the modes of Christ's being are always interpreted as a function of this conception of [394] God as pure action and of the Trinity as a divine life through which a single nature is realized and affirmed. They always saw nature from the viewpoint of the person, and so all of their Christology is dominated by this idea.

St. Paul tells us that Christ is pleroma, plenitude of all divine being in human being. The same idea appears with different words in Hebrews (1:2-3). If one tries to analyze this fullness, the Pauline text will reveal three modes of existence in Christ.

a) His Divine Preexistence. As Son of God, "He made the ages," according to the expression in Hebrews; i.e., He is above time, He is eternal, He is God. Thus His bein g is conferred upon Him through His eternal generation, which the epistle expresses in three concepts: He is "son" (hyios), "brightness of His glory" (apaugasma), and His "image" (kharakter). In Philipians He is called morphe, form, which expressed the ontological nature {449} of kharakter, viz. the impression of being itself. We shall not press the matter further. Let us point out only that the word morphe in the technical Greek vocabulary means the intrinsic configuration, the nature of a thing, that which gives it its real essence. Hence, the Pauline text simply expresses that in His Divine preexistence the Son is not an effect of God, but identically possesses His nature. But carefully distinguish morphe from eikon. Eikon is a personal property of the Son as such. On the other hand, morphe expresses the Divine nature proper, the form or manner of being which God has by reason of His Deity, or as is immediately said, to einai isa theoi.

b) His Historical Existence. "Lastly He has spoken to us through His Son." In the letter to the Phillipians, St. Paul tells us that Christ took the "form of a slave," appearing in the figure (skhema) of a man. Here morphe has the meaning already explained: the Son of God assumed the mode of being of man; he took on human nature. Nevertheless, the word "figure" more completely specifies the meaning of the Pauline thought. "Figure" (skhema) properly signifies the way of conducting oneself, the way of being individual, in contrast to morphe, which indicates rather nature in the abstract. Thus, for example, Christ transfigured and glorified does not cease to have the same human nature as on the earth; but His figure is different. St. Paul, then, indicates that the Son took human nature, and also became a human individual like the others of His time, means, and condition. This is the expression of the character, at once human [395] and historical, of Christ. The text could be paraphrased thus: the Son took the nature of man, like that of any man. The purpose of this existence was the Incarnation through the work of the Holy Spirit.

c) His Glorious Existence. "Heir of all things." He was exalted above everything. Glory transforms the entire humanity of Christ, including His body; and this humanity receives the resplendence of glory when it returns to the Father, who is God like Him. This is what St. Paul expresses: "Seated at the {450} right hand of the Father"

(Col 3:1). What in fact conferred this mode of being upon Christ was His death and resurrection.

These three dimensions of the being of Christ are nothing but three wellsprings of the being of God as ecstatic love: eternal generation, Incarnation, death and resurrection. Therefore they are not simply juxtaposed in St. Paul as if occurring in time, but are expressed as the unfolding of a unitary action, at least in respect of what refers to the Incarnation and glorification.

Let us leave glorification aside for the moment. Nor should it be necessary to belabor eternal generation, except to stress that in the mind of St. Paul, Christ has Divine nature. The important thing is to note that in the Pauline expression this nature is in a certain way the corollary of the Divine personality of Christ. This is the point most energetically affirmed by the Apostle. For St. Paul, Christ is the very Son of God. Therefore, He cannot not have the Divine nature, because the filiation of the Second Person is not an efficient production, but an immanent generation. On this point, the Greek Fathers have unwaveringly followed their personalistic road in the midst of the din of words and polemic: Christ is the Son of God, therefore he has Divine nature.

Thus the whole problem of Christology centers on His historical existence as man and as God. We are dealing with a revealed mystery; it would be useless to seek for evidence. But granting the revelation, man can try to make its meaning clearer. St. Paul expresses this plastically: “He took” (labon) human nature, “He emptied Himself” (ekenosen). These two expressions must be taken in conjunction, and together they express the character of the Incarnation.

In the first place, “He emptied Himself.” This alludes to the Divine nature. To be sure, it does not mean that He ceased to be God; indeed, the very same text tells us that He did not seek to cling jealously to His “being equal to God.” Rather, this passage [396] refers to Christ Communicating His divinity to a human nature. Nonetheless there is a certain removal or emptying; because in this communication the Divine nature does not intervene formally, which is what the other expression points up: {451} to take on human nature. Since in this taking-on the Divine nature is left aside (if I may be permitted the expression), its outcome cannot signify the conversion of Divine nature into human nature. The only thing which is maintained identical is the subject: the Son is who takes on the human properties and endowments. When He does so, it seems as if His natural, Divine properties are held in abeyance. One single subject, when directing itself to God, leaves human properties in abeyance; when directing itself to these latter properties, leaves in abeyance the Divine properties. Let us add, however, that this is anything but a suspension, because the taking-on and divesting has a meaning which is strictly ontological and not merely attributive. Hence, that suspension does not go beyond being a figure of speech. What the emptying formally expresses is that the Incarnation is not a mixture or emulsion of Divine and human nature, nor the production of a third nature through the confluence of the first two. That was the error of Gnosticism, Manicheism, and Monophysitism. But the taking-on is not just a simple external denomination either. That was the Adoptionist and Nestorian error. It is strictly ontological. It consists in the subject “Son of God,” as son, being truly and identically the young Israelite child of Mary, and furthermore this young Israelite being really and truly the personal Son of God, without the two natures being mixed.

For the Incarnation, then, “taking” is of such a form that its subject truly and ontologically makes “its own” what there is in an individual human nature, so that one may say equally truly that the Son has the nature of God, and that He has an individual human nature. This identity of subject for two natures, which makes the formal truth of the two foregoing propositions possible, is what St. John Damascene called “communication of properties.” Let us now recall a notion which at various times has come to our attention. In every personal entity its nature is that which it has, that which it is. But that which is, is always the “been” of someone, who is that which has the nature. Only in virtue of this does it make sense to speak of my acts, of my life, of {452} my individual nature. Being, we said, is unity with itself, metaphysical intimacy. But it is an active intimacy, where action, we repeat, is not the [397] operation of a faculty, but the very character of being. Now, in personal beings this unity does not consist

only in its faculties, its endowments, springing (physis) from a vital unity; rather, in their "springing," that which "springs" is mine, and is not just given to me. To this being mine we give the name "metaphysical personality." This personal unity is, for the Greeks, primary. Starting from it they see in nature that in and with which a person is realized, the realization of which consists in that "being-mine" of whatever is produced in me. For this reason I am able to say that I am the one who produces my natural acts; but the reason these acts are natural is different than the reason why I am the one who produces them, in the sense of person. The acts are mine because this nature is personal, because I am my "me "; and therefore I can say "I." In the case of the Son of God, the communication of properties describes just this situation. The Son, as divine nature, cannot communicate substantively with nothing. But His personal nota—here is the mystery—is that from whom He is what there is in a singular human nature. From the viewpoint of God, the person of the Son "realizes" His divine personality in a finite and singular nature, in the sense that He remains identically as God in the subject of whom that human nature is His. Richard of St. Victor thus distinguished two dimensions in every personal being: that which it is (quod sistit, sistentia) and a relation of origin (the ex, from whence my nature comes to me). With respect to man, this origin is causal; with respect to God Himself, it is His proper "existence;" He has His nature through Himself. Now, speaking of Christ, the divine person has this individual human nature, because the Son actively "takes" it for Himself. This relation of taking is what has been called assumption. The individual nature of the young Israelite is assumed by the person of the Son, so that this person is principle of subsistence, not just for divine morphe, but also for this human morphe. In Christ, deification signifies {453} assumption. We now understand the meaning of the Pauline text. "Taking" signifies "assuming," but only personally, i.e. leaving the divine nature intact; and this suspension of the divine nature in the act of assuming the human is the "emptying Himself." The person of the Son in a way abandons realizing Himself only in divine form. The result is that whatever this concrete man, Jesus, is and does, is from God; in an ontological sense, is divine. If we introduce the term "intimacy" in the metaphysical sense so often indicated, as the expression of the ultimate subsistent sameness of [398] personal being, we could say that in Christ, His nature and His acts, though of natural human principio, are inscribed in a divine intimacy.

To preclude any misunderstanding, I must once again stress that this active character of being is not identical with the act of a will. It is something prior. Having confused these led Eutyches to consider that the person of Christ is constituted by divine will, and that, as a result, there was nothing in Christ but a single will; this was the error of Monotheletism. Rather, being as action has nothing to do with any operative faculty. For these effects, the will belongs to nature and not to the person. I will, the same as I think or I eat. And in none of the three cases am I my act of eating, or my act of thinking, or my act of willing.

To be sure, this personal assumption is not irrelevant to the two natures which come into play, at least (speaking more precisely) not to human nature. It would be an error to believe that in Christ human nature simply lies juxtaposed with the divine. The two are not fused; that was the error of Monophysitism and Gnosticism in their various forms. But neither are they incommunicado. Human nature, as a consequence of its assumption into the person of the Son, remains as if submerged by immanence in the Divine. It remains in the Divine nature. This is the perikhoresis of the two natures of Christ. Expressed in it is not the principle, but the happening of the intimate life of Christ. This does not refer only to Christ being man and in addition God, or vice versa, but that human nature, transcended and transfused {454} by the Divine, is as if metaphysically placed in it, directed and subordinated to it.

Now we can better understand the meaning of the Incarnation. The Holy Spirit gives the Son an individual human nature, in which consequently the Son realizes and reveals Himself to the Father, and upon doing so, bears this human nature of His to a life metaphysically infused in that of the natural being of the Father, united to Him through an individual agape. Such was the Incarnation as deification of a man by donation of Divine being.

Some Fathers who were oriented toward the fight against Monophysitism, such as St. John Damascene, preferred to start from this individual unity of immanence of human nature in the Divine so as to expound the mystery of the Incarnation. Christ is a man to whose individual nature the Divine nature is immanent, and who in consequence carries on a life of infused intimate and metaphysical union in God, who subsists personally in the person [399] of the Son. There is no doubt that this conception agrees better perhaps in many respects with the Greek mind. But I preferred to reach it starting from the Pauline text itself.

St. Paul makes his thought still more precise. Since the Divine nature of Christ is immanent in the human, Christ must normally present a singular aspect: all of His natural being, body and soul, must present, in a way, an aspect transfigured by the Divinity. Christ gave up the Divinity, and this renunciation was ratified in the messianic temptations described in the Gospels. He took on an historical concretion; he sought not to have just a human nature, but to have it under the normal figure of any ordinary man. Only after His death and resurrection did He take the figure which naturally corresponded to Him. And this figure of a human nature overcome by Divine nature is His glorious being. We shall immediately return to this point.

As an aside, let us emphasize the historical fecundity of this doctrine from the viewpoint of comparative religion. Man's natural propensity to see gods in visible things has been the internal driving force of all naturalist and anthropomorphic religions. Christianity {455} vehemently attacked this idea. No one has seen God, and He is transcendent and one in His "nature." But the Incarnation gratuitously realizes what there is realizable in this natural propensity. The only way that a finite entity has of being God is to be so exclusively through the mode of its subsistence and not its nature. The failure to distinguish between nature and subsistence underlies all naturalism and anthropomorphism. A Divine person can, on the other hand, freely divinize an individual natural entity. This is a transcendent mystery, but for the New Testament was the historical reality of Christ.[13]

3. Consequence of the Incarnation: The place of Christ in creation. According to St. Paul Christ is, relative to the Incarnation, its recapitualation. And this is true in a primary elemental sense, or compendio: in Christ Divine being and every [400] stratum of creation are found. But the recapitulation has a still deeper meaning; the mode of being of all creation in Christ is to have Him as its head. Here "head" is a concept which expresses the priority of rank and the principle of hierarchical subordination: "He is before all things." And St. Paul expresses this priority in three concepts:

a) Christ is a "beginning" of everything: "Everything was created by Him." Now we understand the exemplary meaning of this beginning. Hebrews tells us more plastically, "He created the ages," i.e. the world as such. This is the idea of creation stemming from its external wellspring.

b) He is an "end:" "All things were created for Him."

c) He is a "foundation:" "Everything takes its sustenance from Him," i.e. everything acquires its consistency in Him. {456}

This triple priority authorizes St. Paul to call Christ "the firstborn of creation," in the double sense of superior and prior to it. This priority is not, certainly, chronological, but affects the principle of temporality as such.

But in the idea of "head" St. Paul also thinks of Christ glorified. As a consequence of His death and resurrection, Christ achieves glorification. Let us recall that doxa, resplendence or brilliance, is an intrinsic quality of God. The paucity of New Testament information on this point justifies the prudence with which the problem must be treated. The Greek Fathers dedicated much attention to it, owing to their battles with the Gnostics and Manicheans, for whom the salvation of man had a physical meaning. The Fathers naturally stressed the spiritual aspect of the problem, but insisted that physical nature, in accordance with New Testament doctrine, participated in this deification. This is a revealed datum, both insofar as it touches upon Christ and as it touches upon

humanity; it is the dogma of the resurrection of the body. But the fact that Christ already has a glorified body expresses that, for St. Paul, the recapitulation has an ultimately eschatological meaning. In Christ's glorified body is the root of a glorification which will be communicated to man and to all of natural creation. Perhaps the, distinction between soma and sarx alluded to a few pages back will be of some use. Soma expresses the real and circumscriptive presence of a being distended in space. That which we call "matter" is the entity which has this mode of somatic being. In man this matter is sarx, flesh. But this is not to say that matter cannot have diverse ways of being soma; or [401] in Pauline terms, the same morphe can present various figures, skhemata. If we understand by sarx our actual body, we see that the Greek Fathers, at one with St. Paul, call our body soma sarkikon, body of flesh. But the same soma can have its somatic character determined by a transformation of matter by spirit, pneuma; the body then has another figure, which St. Paul and the Greek Fathers called soma pneumatikon, spiritual body, {457} or if one wishes, glorified body. But the New Testament left the "how" of this state to the imagination and speculation of men. In the New Testament reference is made to the transfiguration of Christ on Mt. Tabor. He is described as resplendent; this is the idea of phos, of light as expression of the glory of God, of His doxa. As we said earlier, it would have been the normal figure of Christ's body if man had not sinned. Through sin this figure was renounced, and the historical figure of man capable of suffering was adopted. With His resurrection and ascension the figure of His glorious being is realized. Through it He is at the head of creation, not just by way of compendium of it, nor only as its supreme perfection, but as typical and exemplary reality: through Christ, and by way of Christ, the whole of creation tends toward a future transfiguration and cries out for it.

Summarizing, then, in Christ the Son of God is made real in a human nature. This is the supreme deification of a creature. God makes a gift of His person so as to assume a finite nature in it. But He does so in order to thereby achieve the deification of all mankind by accidental communication; this is what we call sanctification.

2. SANCTIFICATION

In the Divine effusion constituting the Incarnation, God gives His own personal being to a human nature. By this means He has sought to communicate His life to human persons, and that communication leaves the stamp of Divine nature upon them; this is kharis, grace. Even at the risk of being overly insistent, let us once again recall that the Greek Fathers addressed the problem from an active viewpoint: the Divine life imprints its stamp on man, from which the supernatural life of the Christian emerges, in union with the Trinitary life of God. Whence the celebrated text of St. Paul: [402]

You did not receive a spirit of slavery leading you back into fear, but a spirit of adoption (hyiothesia) {458} through which we cry out, "Abba!" (that is, "Father!"). The Spirit himself gives witness with our spirit that we are children (tekna) of God. But if we are children, we are heirs as well: heirs of God, heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with him so as to be glorified with him. (Rom 8:15- 17, New American Bible Version)

St. Paul presents our deification in essential parallelism with the deification of Christ. We can, then, pose the same three central questions which we posed with respect to Christ. What is the root of our deification? Christ. In what does it consist? In grace. What is the position of deification in creation? The mystical body of the Church. For reasons of method, we shall treat of the second problem first.

1. The structure of deification: grace. St. Paul has expressed it clearly: the deification of man consists in an adoptive sonship. Let Lis leave aside temporarily the word "sonship," which constitutes the very essence of the problem. Instead we shall begin with the adjective, We are dealing with a sonship which is adoptive in character. But this expression is ambiguous. In a juridical sense, it means only the conjunction of rights a person has considered as if he were a real and true son. Nevertheless, in our Divine sonship there is something more: "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God, and

such we are." (1 Jn 3:3). So then in our case the term "adoptive" does not primarily have a meaning except in its negative dimension; we are not sons of God, as is Christ, endowed with natural sonship, But the positive dimension of the problem has little importance because for St. Paul we are, nonetheless, sons of God. This is clearly indicated in his own expressions. For with no twisting of the words, the nuances in the cited text are significant: we have a spirit which places men in the position of sons (hyiothesia); this is the adoptive part of sonship. But men are tekna, children of God.[14] The thought of St. Paul clearly points up {459} the problem. Whereas God has deified Christ by giving Him His own personal Divine being, He has deified all other men by communicating His life to them and imprinting the stamp of the Divine nature; this is what grace has of "being." Since this stamp [403] proceeds from God Himself, by way of impression and formal expression, it is a likeness of the Divine nature, and therefore when we receive a deified nature, we are really sons of God. The deification of man is real, but, if one wishes, accidental; it is something added to the human being, not something at all constitutive of it. This is what justifies the name kharis, grace.

St. Paul employs this term, placing it in the double perspective of the Old Testament and of the Hellenistic koine. In both cases the term "grace" involves at least four fundamental acceptations: that which is given, that which is gratuitous, that which is gracious (in the sense of grace or benevolent favor) and gratitude (in the sense of action of graces). The Old Testament associates the idea of grace with those of fidelity, truth, and life' and introduces the metaphysics of light. St. Paul, with meanings which are a bit more personal, uses the Greek terms which translate those of the Old Testament, but insists especially on the meaning of "gratuitous gift from God," and of "being pleasing to God." For the moment we are only interested in gratuity. It is a gratuitous gift of the personal life of God. Let us add that "gratuitous" does not signify arbitrary or fortuitous, but simply not owing to the structure of created being as such. It certainly does not mean fortuitous; indeed, since grace for St. Paul transforms the whole cosmos and places it in a new eon.

The Greek Fathers understand this communication of life from the viewpoint of the Trinitary perikhoresis. The Father sent the Son, and through Him insulates the Holy Spirit into the human soul. The Holy Spirit produces the presence of the Son, who stamps man with Divine being, through which he lives in love {460} that reverts to the Father. We now understand that the stamp of the Son on the soul is an eikon, an image and a homoiosis, a likeness of God, because the characteristic and personal aspect of the Son is that of being eikon of the Father. The Trinity, then, lives in man reproducing in a participative way its own structure. St. Iraneus expresses the matter in these words: "The Father is revealed in all of this: the Holy Spirit works, the Son collaborates, and the Father approves; thus is man perfected in salvation." (Ad H. 20, 6). "The Father grants us, through His Son, the grace of regeneration in the Holy Spirit. The Son in turn leads to the Father, and the Father makes us partakers of incorruptibility." (Dem. 1,5-7). St. Athanasius repeats, "There is a grace which, coming from the Father through the Son, is fulfilled in the Holy Spirit." Since [404] eternal life consists only in participating in the life of God, it is natural that the Greek Fathers see in grace incipient glory, and in glory grace perfectly actualized. The Pauline text itself expresses this unequivocally: through grace we are already in glory (en doxei), but to this "already" there pertains a "toward," toward glory (eis doxan), (2 Cor 3:18). We shall return to this idea later.

The problem now is to pin down what this kharis, this grace, really is. The meaning of the giving of Divine life depends upon it.

One thing is clear: in some form or other, the Trinity works and hence resides in the soul of the just man. This inhabitation is the first subject of grace. Since it is the life of God, the Latins called it uncreated grace. The result is clear: man finds himself deified; he bears within himself the divine life through a gratuitous gift. Its effect is immediate. Man lives by faith (pistis) and by the personal love (agape) of a Triune God. This is the dynamis theou in us (a term also used in the Hellenistic mystery religions.[15] The Son was the dynamis of the Father, and through {461} this dynamis which was brought to us by the Holy Spirit we immerse ourselves in the abyss of

Paternity. Thus St. Cyril of Alexandria tells us graphically:

Through the participation of this Spirit...we are called gods, not just because we are transported to supernatural glory, but because we now have God who lives in and has been poured into us.

This is but an aspect of grace derived from its gratuity, and the above lines point to the other aspect of the question. This living of the Trinity in man makes him a being which is pleasing to God. It makes him be so—not just seem so; nor is it merely through an act of Divine benignity that God condescends to man. Rather, this inhabitation makes us truly be pleasing and therefore involves an interior transformation, not just in our mode of doing, but in our mode of being. What is this transformation of our being? It is what properly justifies the name of deification.

The habitation of the Trinity in man stamps him with something which transforms his being. St. Paul is explicit on this point. Using terminology which may have been current during his [405] time, he calls the reception of the Trinity "regeneration and renovation" (paligenesia, anakainosis, Tit 3:4-7). In contrast to Christ, who is God personally in the sense explained above, man is so only through "re-generation." St. Irenaeus employs the expression "become God" (Deum fieri). "God," says St. Athanasius, "became man so that man might become God." And St. Cyril of Alexandria expresses this same idea: "...so that Christ might be formed in you." And Christ is formed in us through the Holy Spirit, who clothes us with a type of Divine form (theian tina morphosin). Now we understand the meaning of the expression "form:" the inhabitation of the Trinity grants us a certain Divine conformation in our own nature. Therefore it is theiosis, theopoiesis, divinization, deification; not just because we live, but because we are like God. {462}

A common word in Hellenistic religions enabled Paul to express this idea: grace is a mystical garment (endyo, ependyo constantly appear in Paul's writings, e.g. Gal 3:27; 2 Cor 5:2). St. Irenaeus calls it the gown of sanctity. The term, as I said, was more or less common in the initiations of the Hellenistic mysteries. To "put on the garment" was to convert oneself into something apart from things and reserved for God, something sacred (sacratus). In the New Testament this conversion has a meaning radically different from that of the Hellenistic mysteries. But nonetheless the operant (and not merely symbolic) character of the garment was included in the formal meaning of the word. Its use in the New Testament clearly shows that grace makes us be in a Divine way. This garment, in fact, was explained as light; Christ, the prologue to St. John's Gospel tells us, is "the true light which enlightens all men." Now for the Greeks light was not just clarity. Clarity is the resplendence which radiates from light; but light itself is a special substance (triton ti, a third genus of things, Plato called it). Whence arises the idea of the vestimentum lucis, the vestment of light. And thus St. Paul's admonition to the Ephesians is explained: "Walk like children of the light." So we now understand the theological and ontological meaning of light for the Greek Fathers and the New Testament, which are at one, on this point, with the writings of the last epoch of Judaism. Light has the particular property of making the illuminated body colored. Color, Aristotle already had said, is the luminous presence of light on things. Hence God, as light, when illuminating us stamps us with His luminous character expressed in color, like a garment. [406] This is the morphosis, the conformation about which St. Cyril spoke, and which he extracts from the very words of St. Peter: ,'made participants of the Divine nature." (theias koinonoi physeos, 2 Pt 1:4)

The idea of participation recurs throughout the New Testament. The Greek Fathers adequately expressed this idea with the word hexis, habit, which does not mean custom, but the way of having customs; a second nature, a stable reconformation of our own proper human nature. {463} Doxa, the glory which disseminates Divine being and which is in the Son, touches man and stamps him with its color. Just as color does not exist without light, so neither can this reconformation exist without the actual presence of the Trinitary life in man, or vice versa. Whence the name created grace by which theologians designated this Divine quality acquired by man. The ideas of light and color are more than simple metaphors. Since the time of Plato they have served as sensible intuition

for ontology. That we saw at the beginning of this essay. The presence of light in things does not signify a transmutation of them into something else. It is only the pure presence of the luminous focus in a things, and is not formally identified with it. Recall now that we earlier emphasized how the Greek Fathers' idea of causality is of a purely formal character. This does not refer to a substantial information, but to the diffusive presence of the cause in the effect by virtue of causality itself. The cause is the type, and the effect the copy. And we added that this formal presence can have various modes depending on the case. Here we have one. The presence of God in creatures by reason of creation is not the same as His Trinitary presence by reason of grace. But we are always dealing with a relation of type to copy, or stamp to imprint. This served the Greek Fathers in their polemic against the Gnosis. The deification of Gnosticism is a krasis, a mix of nature. Neither in Christ nor in any being is there such a thing, nor can there be. But the transcendence of God is compatible with His presence through formal causality in the sense described.

If we now consider this habitus, created grace in itself, the Greek Fathers designated it with a forceful expression. St. Athanasius called it sphragis, stamp or imprint of the Trinity, "The stamp of the Son is imprinted in such a way that he who is stamped has the form (morphe) of Christ." The participation of the soul in the Trinity leaves it stamped, which is the consequence of the Trinity's presence. The participation of the soul is a likeness of [407] the Trinity. For the Greek Fathers every effect is—in one way or another—the image of its cause (eikon). But the image can look more or less {464} like the thing "imaged." Hence, through grace the natural eikonal being of man is perfected to the maximum degree of true likeness (homoiosis). The eikonal being of man is complete: he is the image and also the likeness of God. And through receiving this Divine nature we are truly sons of God; the deification is real. Let us now recall that the eikon is a personal property of the Son. Then we shall understand precisely the active meaning of the participation of man in the Trinity. The Holy Spirit forms the Son in the human soul; and in this imprint the likeness of the being of God is deposited, immersing us in the Father. Hence St. Cyril called the infusion of grace "formation of Christ in us." St Augustine described it graphically in his celebrated phrase: "The Christian is the other Christ."

Strictly speaking, then, grace as natural likeness of God is not what attracts the Trinity toward itself, but rather expresses that the Trinity remains in the soul of the just man, conferring upon him a second, deified nature. But, let us reiterate, in the implication between grace and Trinity each person has a proper and well defined role. It is an active and dynamic likeness, as is the being itself of God. This is not simply a question of a type of photograph in which each characteristic is in itself and for itself; rather, the likeness is a living image continually traced in the soul as a precipitate of the Trinitary life therein.

Whence it follows that grace is not a quality which does nothing except be qualifying. It is a quality of living being, and hence lives. For the Greeks, the Trinitary stamp cannot be separated from Trinitary circumincession. Indeed, St. Peter himself calls grace dynamism Now the Son, as we saw, is the dynamis, the power and express perfection of the Father as infinitely vital. And therefore grace is in itself a participated dynamis, which immerses us in the Father. One must see in the Greeks not the Trinitary inhabitation based on grace, but grace based on the Trinitary inhabitation. As in the procession of the Divine persons one reaches—so to speak—the pure act of the unique Divine nature, so also in the just man, according to the Greeks, grace is the precipitate of the Divine life, producing our complete assimilation to God through formal presence. {465} The human nature of Christ, as we saw, is immersed in the Divine nature. For us, such is not the case. But through grace there is an insertion of our entire life in God. This is what St. John [408] expressed with his metaphor of the graft. Strictly speaking, the possession of grace is a supernatural life following upon our deification. Whence grace can be greater or lesser, and the state of grace more or less perfect. The Greeks never separated grace from the supernatural life. Supernatural life consists in faith and in the love of the Father, produced in us by the seal of the Divine nature with which the Son stamped us and through the work of the Holy Spirit. The distinction between grace and virtues was exclusively the work of Latin theology.

In order to understand the position occupied by this deification in what we could term the general ontology of the Greek Fathers, the reader should refer back to the first notions expounded in these pages; he will recall that the ultimate foundation of a thing, for the Greeks, is its primary active unity, its good. From this good emerge its potentialities as explicit expression of its internal richness; and from them proceed the acts by which the unity that the thing at bottom is are affirmed and fully realized. In this unity with itself, in this intimacy, the being of each thing is realized. We saw how this structure is a created image of the being of God. Now, the action of the Trinity converts this image into a likeness from its very roots; it remakes, so to speak, the characteristics of the image from a superior point of view, enriches them, and elevates them so as to make the image a perfect likeness. In this way, through the action of the Holy Spirit, the image of the Son is insulated in intimate and ontological unity with man; this is what Medieval mysticism called the abysmal depths of the soul. Hence the radical bonum of man is converted into something especially pleasing to God. This is the last meaning of grace: the pleasing, which is the good. And, therefore, the personal form of unity which is the love of agape is converted into the unification of our being with God the Father through love. Therefore St. John could say that eternal life is in love. And in that splendid metaphysical and theological hymn {466} to love which St. Paul dedicated to the Corinthians he says, “Love never fails”: it is eternity.

One arrives at the same conclusion by considering the matter from a negative standpoint, viz. sin. Just a few words on this topic must suffice so as not to unduly lengthen the essay. Sin, harmartia, is not a simple moral fault. Sin is something real; it has the reality of a privation of grace which is consequent, if one wishes, upon some malice of the will. And since grace is something entitative, so also is sin as a privation: rather than [409] malice, sin is a blemish. And as in the case of grace, the Greeks—following St. Paul—saw in sin something which in a way affects the entire universe.

In this structure the interpretation of the Greek Fathers, however varied it may be, unanimously affirms the ontological and, in a way, cosmic character of deification. Hence for them, from God’s viewpoint, the ontology which we would call rational is nothing but the ordinary ontology of God in His productions ad extra. Deification is supernatural ontology. And in fact, with no requirement whatever to do so—rather through pure liberality God has made use of it in the Incarnation. Thus it is that for the Greek Fathers there is, de facto, no more than one single ontology: the integral ontology of finite being.

Hence it is fitting to dispel the false image which the word supernatural” can conjure up. It seems to imply a superposition or stratification of two entities. This is false. The word “super,” hyper, only indicates that its principle is transcendent and gratuitous. But it. does not mean that grace is a type of bath. The expression “garment” can also lead to this error. But the idea of light returns to put things in their place. Precisely through being a third type of reality its characteristic is {467} penetrability (I refer, naturally, to the Greeks’ idea). Light does not act on bodies in the same way that one piece of matter acts on another. It acts rather by transforming the body’s entire being. Now, just as in the Incarnation human nature is not simply juxtaposed to the Divine, but rather assumed by the personality of the Son remains immersed in the Divine, so analogously grace absorbs—so to speak—man as a whole in a superior and transcendent unity. Whence the serious error of confusing sanctity with moral perfection. To be sure, it is precisely because grace involves a presence of the Trinitary life and produces a supernatural life in man that its nature is essentially moral, if by “moral” one understands that a perfection is involved for which the cooperation of free will is necessary. This is in contrast to what grace was for the Gnostics, viz. a fragment of Divine substance which acts by itself, independently of any moral disposition. No, without some minimum of moral perfection there is no grace. But conversely, moral perfection could never be nor achieve grace. Grace is something which comes from a transcendent principle. Indeed, by virtue of treating of a supernatural life in agape, in love, natural life finds itself subjected to ethical imperatives which derive [410] specifically from supernatural life. This explains the possible inequality between the possession of grace and the degree of moral perfection of him who possesses it. Without a minimum of moral perfection, I said, there is no

grace; but with this minimum there is, which implies only the substance of moral perfection, not its fullness. At this point the theology of pardon and atonement comes into play, but we cannot here discuss it.

If we seek to reduce this conception of deifying grace to a simple formula, we have at hand the definition of Ripalda: “Grace is a Divine being which makes man a son of God and heir to Heaven.”

2. Root of deification: the sacramental mystery. In the texts cited, and in still other passages, the idea is expressed that the sanctification of man proceeds from {468} Christ. The Incarnation had no other purpose than to deify man. It is, then, a unique process: the mystery of the will of the Father encompasses in Christ all of humanity inasmuch as it is united to Him. Through this union, through this presence of Christ in men, our santification is the ultimate end of the great mysterion of the Father’s will. Hence St. Paul often calls this union simply “mystery.” The Latins rendered the word mysterion by sacramentum, an expression which appears in Tertulian and whose origin is debatable to say the least. The worst aspect of this translation lies in the error to which it can give rise. One might think that it refers to the seven Sacraments of the Church. That this meaning is not excluded we shall see immediately; but the primary meaning of the word does not formally refer to these seven Sacraments. It suffices to recall the expression “Sacrament of the Church” to understand that beyond the seven Sacraments lies a more radical meaning. To begin, then, let us stay with the Greek word mysterion.

The word “sacrament” indicates to us, above all, an action. Now, this is not the primitive meaning of the word “mystery.” Mystery, as such, is not an action on the part of man. On the contrary, it is a type of reality into which he who participates is introduced. Only thus does one understand the common expressions, not exclusively Christian, such as “to be initiated into the mysteries”, “to be enlightened in the mysteries,” etc. If we employ the idea of causality, which is essential to the problem, we must first of all point up formal causality. Mystery is something in which the initiated participates and, by participating in it, undergoes an intrinsic transmutation. The content of the mystery [411] is integrally and intimately present in each one of those initiated into it. With regard to Christianity, the content of the mystery is nothing other than our deification: the mystery is the deification itself. Yet something more must be added: the mystery is the deification itself, but in the real and true mode through which it was obtained. By Himself, God could have deified man in infinitely many different ways; but in fact He did so through the Incarnation, and specifically through that act of Christ to which the Incarnation was {469} directed, and by which He merited the deification of the rest of mankind: His redemptive sacrifice. Whence the word “mystery” signifies the participation of man in the redemptive sacrifice of Christ. This presence of Christ in each of us is just the mystery in its ultimate perfection.

St. Paul called this union soma, body, and he did so for two reasons. First, because in virtue of that presence we are that in which Christ is received as principle of the life of grace; and we have already seen that soma, body, is the name applied to that material ambit in which the vital principle expands and is realized. In this sense the somatic character of the mystery arises, in a certain way, from our own somatic condition. But it is soma in a sense which is yet deeper. Deification was obtained by Christ through His passion and death; through something, therefore, which formally affects His own soma. Just as deification produces, in the Pauline expression, the death of the old man and the birth of the new, so relative to the deifying action of Christ our natural humanity discharges the same mysterious function which was discharged by Christ, viz. a type of analogical passion through which the supernatural principle of grace is born.[16] Through our union with the somatic passion and death of Christ, this union with Him more properly receives the name of soma. As the redemptive sacrifice of Christ was the great mystery about which St. Paul speaks, His sacrificial presence in us also has a character of mystery. And this explains the Pauline expression that our soma is mystical. ‘Mystical’ does not mean metaphorical. It is a mode of reality. Let us recall that formal causality has many modes. In the suffering Christ His redemptive action had a character which we may call “historical.” In the mystery of human deification the content of the redemptive action is integrally present, but in [412] respect of its mystery and likewise in the form

of mystery, not in its purely historical form. For the moment let us not press too hard on the fact that what is formally present of Christ in the {470} deifying mystery is the formal integrity of the mode of His redemptive work; let it suffice that there be some participation therein. In any case this justifies the expression “mystical body” having a real meaning. Then we understand the more concrete meaning of “initiate into a mystery;” it means taking part in the, redemptive sacrifice of Christ. Through this sacrifice, which was the formal act in which the sanctification of humanity was consummated because it was the formal act by which God communicated Himself to man through grace, St. Paul calls Christ hagios, holy. For the effects of deification, holiness resides primarily and formally in the radical act of Christ which was His sacrifice to the Father. In Hebrews, as well as in the rest of the epistles, this sacrifice is presented as the supreme sacerdotal act of Christ, who offers His own life for the redemption of humanity. It was the supreme cult act. The essence of a cult is sacrifice. Therefore Christ was called “holy,” and for the same reason our somatic and mystical reality has a character of cultual realization; our mystical body is holy because it is cultual. In this sense St. Paul also calls the Church a soma. But “Church” does not primarily mean (such at least was the interpretation of the Greek Fathers) a hierarchical organization, but the vital presence of Christ in each man through Christ’s redemptive sacrifice. For this reason the Church is said to be holy, meaning that it consists formally in reproducing in a mystical way Christ’s supreme cultual and sacerdotal act. And consequently that act culminates in the sacrifice of the Mass. The hierarchical aspect of the Church is essential to it, but is derived from this presence of Christ, as vital principle for His sacrifice.

In the sacramental mystery thus understood, we have then the great Pauline mystery in its ultimate manifestation and concretion. Let us now recall the Trinitary life of which our deification is but a formal participation, in the sense indicated. God the Father is, in His design, in His hidden will, the radical mystery. Christ is the manifestation of this mystery, not just in the sense that with His logos He expressed it, but moreover that He realized it through His Incarnation and passion. Whence the presence of Christ in His mystical body {471} has this double dimension. Christ is present in the Church through His word and through His life, as deposit of revelation, and as true source of sacramental deification. In this [413] sense Christ is the radical sacrament, the subsistent sacrament. The Holy Spirit realizes and confirms the action of Christ by carrying out His double presence among men: He guarantees the integrity of the deposit of revelation, and He carries out in each man the redemptive work of Christ, ratifying in action the fecundity of His passion. Thus, the Church in the sense of sacrament, and the Church in the sense of deposit of revelation, are radically and essentially united. Whence arises the Church’s social and hierarchical character. But we leave for another time this second aspect of the question.

Since what we are here asking ourselves is for the proximate root of our deification, we must naturally refer to the Divine mystery in its third sense, the confirmation of the mystery of Christ in each man through the work of the Holy Spirit. How is this ratification of the redemption of each man realized? By the action of the Holy Spirit. And then the word “mystery” acquires its meaning of sacramental action, proper to the seven Sacraments. But still one must carefully distinguish in a sacrament, as action, the two aspects of causality which have appeared at every turn from the very first page of this essay. For the Greeks, the efficient aspect of causality is always subordinated to its formal aspect. The efficient has no other mission than that of serving as a vehicle for the formal irradiation of the cause in the effect. And for the Greeks the proper part of causality is found in this irradiation. Applied to the Sacraments, this signifies that the sacramental actions must be understood from the point of view of the real participation of man in the redemption of Christ, a participation which is produced in those actions. Moreover, these actions are called “Sacraments” precisely because it is in them that the Sacrament is realized; but they are not primarily and radically sacraments on account of whatever they may possess of efficient action. {472}

Let us now consider the structure of the Sacraments thus understood. They are, above all, material actions, which represent the passion and death of Christ, and which, through the work of the Holy Spirit, truly produce in man that which they signify. This is what is meant by saying that the Sacraments contain the grace which they

produce. We then clearly see how it is that whatever a Sacrament possesses of action is only the vehicle for carrying out this formal reproduction. And since what they represent and reproduce is the redemptive work of Christ, it follows that the Sacraments, as the mysterious or sacramental presence of Christ, [414] are real actions of Christ.

Even at the risk of excessive repetition, let us return to the idea of the perikhoresis trinitaria, which finds its ultimate manifestation ad extra in the sacramental mystery. Through the deliberate action of Christ—it is a question of fact—there are some material elements which serve as the base and cause of the sacramental action. The Holy Spirit takes matter, and through the strictly causal (and not merely accidental) efficacy which it stamps upon the matter, infuses us with Christ, and hence leads us to the Father. This Trinitary action involves in itself the three essential elements of every sacrament.

a) The causality of material elements. Water, bread, oil, etc. are the material elements which produce the action of the Holy Spirit. One can scarcely emphasize enough that it is the real and proper causality of these material elements which produces the effect intended by the Holy Spirit. For this reason reference is often made to an analogy between the Sacraments of Christianity and certain actions of Hellenistic religions. But the difference is essential. In the first place, none of these elements has supernatural efficacy by itself, by its natural being, but only through the instrumental character which it possesses in the hands of the superior intention of the Holy Spirit. This slight difference suffices to metaphysically distinguish sacramental causality from all types of magic or theurgy. But at the same time let us stress that in their particular deformation these practices of other religions maintain something which is essential to every true {473} sacrament, viz. the causality of material elements. In the second place, this intention of the Holy Spirit is found linked to the material elements as the symbolized to the symbol. The material actions in the Sacrament symbolically signify that which they seek to produce. But herein lies the second difference with respect to every presumed pagan sacrament: the symbolism of the sacramental elements is not a natural symbol, but a supernatural symbolism expressed in the ritual formula: the mystery of the redemption of Christ. Finally, the sacraments are symbols which signify something. But let us not forget that in this symbolization the real causality of the material elements is essential to the causality. In a word, the Sacraments are efficacious symbols of that which they signify.

b) The presence of Christ. What the Holy Spirit carries out is just the perpetuation of Christ in us. After what has been said, it [415] will be unnecessary to insist that this presence signifies grace. We saw several pages ago the meaning of the implication and the union of these two terms. But here is where it is necessary to return in order to record the special way in which the Greek Fathers confronted the problem of grace. The Latins tended to see in grace an effect which flows from the redemptive work of Christ, and which through its internal quality attracts the fecundity of His sacrifice toward us. The Greek Fathers rather saw the matter from the viewpoint of formal causality. Sacramental grace is the sacramental participation of man in the redemption. Hence, the redemption does not only act like an efficient and meritorious cause which, realized in its time, is perpetuated only in its effects; but rather like something which has reality now, both in its content as well as in its purely mysterious mode. This is what is still expressed in Latin liturgy when it is said that as often as this mystery is performed (the Mass), the work of our salvation is accomplished. This does not mean that for the Sacrament and for the Sacrifice of the Mass what happened at Calvary is of no consequence. The Sacrament is but a participation in that act, and hence only through it receives its value and efficacy. But this does not mean {474} that what the Sacrament produces cannot be, in one form or another, a “re-production” of what happened at Calvary. The efficacious symbol which in the hands of the Holy Spirit produces what it signifies, reproduces, through participation, the redemptive work of Christ. A contemporary theologian has sought to go one step further. From the moment at which, through sacramental action, we participate in the redemptive work of Christ, it is undeniable that He is present in some way in each person who receives the Sacrament. Up to this point, there is nothing which is not a literal transcription of revealed dogma. But in the new conception to which I allude the nature of this way is made

more precise and concrete. That which is present is the redemptive sacrifice completely and integrally. In this conception the essential point centers on distinguishing two modes of the presence of Christ's work on earth. One is the radical and, if one wishes, historical mode, viz. the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Christ. But another which is distinct and essentially founded in the historical mode, yet no less real than it, is the mystical one, by way of formal and exemplary causality. The sacraments symbolize the real life and death of Christ, and will create in their sacramental grace the presence and reproduction of this life and [416] death, under mystical species. Whence a most interesting interpretation of Baptism and the Eucharist as sacramental rites has been derived. We shall not enter deeply into the question. The abundant documentary proof, especially from the Greek Fathers, does not decisively favor this theory. The observation has been made, and justifiably, that the Greek Fathers speak only of a participation in the redemptive work of Christ; the conclusion that this redemptive work is found present by exemplarity, fully manifested in the sacramental effect, is a conclusion which perhaps is logical, but not formally contained in the Patristic tradition of the Greeks. Nevertheless, let us add that the distance separating the two is miniscule; clearly the spirit, concepts, and expressions of the Greek Fathers tend asymptotically to this interpretation.[17] {475}

c) Supernatural life with the Father. Through our participation in Christ's redemptive work we participate in His sacerdotal function. And so we offer to the Father, in the form of a reproduction, the sacrifice of the Son, and united with Him we merit eternal life. The essence of supernatural life is this cultual, sacrificial dialogue of man with God through his union with Christ. This is religion in the essential sense.

Therefore, as I said at the beginning, for St. Paul Sacrament and Church are two congenital dimensions. The sacraments are what form the Church, and the Church is, if one wishes, the sacramental mystery of Christ.

Whence arises the second aspect of the Church as an hierarchical organization. The Church, in this sense, represents the visible form of deification of the universe.

3. Consequence of deification. As we have seen, through the grace sacramentally obtained we are sons of God because we possess His very nature through participation. Let us recall now, as we said at the beginning, that every finite entity, through its own nature, in virtue of its own being, has first of all a unity with [417] itself. Through grace we have a supernatural life which confers upon us a certain mode of superior intimacy, since we are anchored in eternity. In the second place, every finite entity finds itself united, again primarily, to the font of being. Through grace, we have already seen that we possess a supernatural life through faith and through love which immerses us in the Father. Finally, in virtue of its own nature, every finite entity is unified with the others of its species. With regard to inanimate beings, this unity is simply a grouping by classes. In living things we have something {476} more: unity of generation. But men have an even higher type of unification; through his own nature each man is personally directed toward others, in such a way that they are not simply "others," but fellow men. Now let us return to grace. Through being an image of Christ, each man finds himself directed toward others in Christ. This is what strictly speaking is called charitas, charity. But let us be careful to avoid the error of taking this expression in an exclusively ethical sense. For St. Paul, the decisive thing about interpersonal Christian unity is finding oneself founded and based in grace, in Christ. And this is what gives this union a character which is in a certain way metaphysical. Because the root of charity as movement of the will is charity as the metaphysical situation in which we found ourselves placed by Christ. As grace is the seal of Christ in our personal life, which finds itself socially directed towards others, it will follow that the grace of Christ constitutively involves deification of the social dimension of man. In the final analysis it is to the sum total of the faithful thus understood that St. Paul gives the name "Church." But, as we pointed out, for St. Paul himself the Church thus understood grows out of the Church as expression of the union of each believer with Christ. So we are not dealing primarily with a simple organization, but with a true vital unity, which is disseminated and organically structured by the real and mystical presence of Christ as principle and font of grace. In this same sense St. Paul understood

the name kephale, head of the Church, by which he designated Christ. Christ is not just principle of life for each man, nor for all men, but rather for the human genus considered as a unity. In Christ the whole of humanity is vitally unified, just as it is found vitally contained in the first man through generation. To the concept of "head," in Pauline thought, corresponds being, not just as principle of life, but of a life which is organically unified. The vital principle is expanded, and so [418] "shapes" the diversity of its members; it "articulates" them once shaped; and "maintains" them together once articulated (Col 2:19, Eph 4:16). In these three aspects the vital principle is actualized as a unifying force. {477} To be head is thus to be principle of "being-corporeal." The whole Church is likewise in this sense a mystical body where Christ acts vitally as its head. It is, if one wishes, the visible part of the real presence of Christ on earth.

In this way, through deification, the ultimate and integral ontological unity of the human being in community with others comes about: "ut consummti sint in unum;" "Be one as the Father and I are one." This is the ontological unity of the Trinity ad extra. The Holy Spirit is the energeia of God; He therefore realizes and maintains the Church. Through the action of the Holy Spirit the Church receives the presence of Christ in its double form of repository of revelation and dispenser of sacraments; and through it Christ leads me to the Father. I will be with you, said Christ, until the end of the world. This is the social aspect of the Trinitary perikhoresis essential to deification for the New Testament. The Church constitutes the deification of human society through Christ's real and mysterious presence. At this point the historical dimension of the Church must be interjected, just as when treating of the life of Christ. The Trinitary perikhoresis encompasses human society not only in its social structure, but in its historical and temporal development. The mystery of the will of the Father began to be carried out by the Holy Spirit in three successive stages. In the first, by way of preparation, the revelation of the design in the Son was initiated. But precisely because in that state this design was not yet revealed, the Greek Fathers saw in all of the Old Testament, in a manner of speaking, the religion of the Father. With the historical life of Christ the Holy Spirit brought to fulfillment the formal manifestation of the mystery. And after this time, with the constitution of the Church, the Holy Spirit leads me to the Father through the Son. The consummation of this work will therefore be the consummation of the ages. For St. Paul the judgement which history as a whole then merits is easily understood. He reproached the Jews for not having seen in Christ the Son of God, and therefore for not having known the Father. He will reproach the unfaithful of all times to come for not believing in the Church, i.e. in the Holy Spirit, and therefore not having believed either in the Son or the Father. For St. Paul, not believing in the Church {478} has a [419] meaning which parallels that of his doctrine about the Church: not believing in it is a type of negative perikhoresis; it is a negation of the Trinity itself in its deifying work.

This deifying unity of love is already a reality, as we have just seen. Eternal life, and therefore glory, is already a reality too. But just like the principle of this life, it is only germinal. Its confirmation and plenitude in vision, in firm possession of the Trinity, will be eternal life in glory, after death. In it the union of the human being in love with itself, with others, and with God will be sealed. And along with this will go the reversion of all creatures—especially man—to God. As we saw, St. Paul in fact insists that the exemplary causality of Christ glorified is a type and pledge of the glorification of visible creation, and of man as a whole, with his own body. This is the idea of the resurrection of the flesh. The entire cosmos is affected in some way by the Incarnation. When the Son was incarnated, this eon, this era, received its pleroma, the fullness of time. Hence the second eon, eternal life, has already begun in the cosmos. Through the coming of Christ the consummation of time will come about, as well as the exclusive imperium of the other eon, eternal life.

Let us summarize. In God, as effusive love, His ecstasy leads to the production of a personal life in which the pure act of His Nature subsists; this is the Trinity. His effusive being tends to exteriorize itself freely in two forms. First, "naturally," producing things distinct from Him; this is the creation. Later, "supernaturally," deifying His entire creation by means of a personal Incarnation in Christ and a sanctifying communication in man

through grace. Through this deification, which in some way affects the whole of creation, creation returns to associate itself with God's intimate life, but in a different way: in Christ, through a true circumincession of human nature in the Divine; in man, through an extrinsic but real presence of God; in the visible elements, through a glorious transfiguration.

---------- [1] [Unless otherwise indicated, all New Testament passages are translated directly from the Greek. - trans.]

[2] Although this assertion is not of faith, it was the mind of the Greeks and today the almost universal doctrine in theology, with the exception of the Nominalists and a few isolated theologians (Bellarmine).

[3] ['Virtuosity' is a technical Scholastic term signifying a plurality of potentialities - trans.]

[4] In Philo, the potentialities are the intermediaries between God and the world.

[5] [see p. 44 for explanation of this term - trans.]

[6] I refer, naturally, to communicability. The fact of His effective communication, in the creation, is free, but in the Trinity itself it is necessary.

[7] [From the Vulgate - trans.]

[8] It is true that the Greek Fathers understood the term energeia rather in the sense of the transcendent divine operations. But as these latter are the manifestation ad extra of the immanent ones, the expression energeia also has an intradivine meaning, which is the one pointed up by the interpretation to which I refer in the text.

[9] At times, for obvious reasons, the Greek Fathers apply the denominations energeia and dynamis to the Son as well as the Holy Spirit. They are called dynameis because they are the activity of the Father, and energeia because they are His richness in pure act. But the Greek Fathers reserve the expression dynamis more especially for the Son, and energeia for the Holy Spirit.

[10] Latin theology generally employed the formula according to which the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son (Filioque). But when doing so it perceived the identity of this formula with the Greek. Thus St. Thomas says (S.T., 1, q. 36 a. 2): "Ipsi Graeci processionem Spiritus Sancti aliquem ordinem habere ad Filium intelligunt. Concedunt enim, Spiritum Sanctum esse Spiritum Filii; et esse a Patre per Filium." And in the following article he adds: "Quia igitur Filius habet a Patre, quod ab eo procedat Spiritus Sanctus, potest dici, quod Pater per Filium spiret Spiritum Sanctum, vel quod Spiritus Sanctus procedat a Patre per Filium, quod idem est." The identity of the Filioque formula with that of the Greek Fathers was later dogmatically defined in the Council of Florence in these terms: "Diffinimus, ut haec fidei veritas ab omnibus christianis credatur et suscipiatur, sicque omnes profiteantur, quod Spiritus Sanctus ex Patre et Filio aeternaliter est, et essentiam suam suumque esse subsistens habet ex Patre simul et Filio, et ex utroque aeternaliter tanquam ab uno principio, et unica spiratione procedit; declarantes, quod id, quod sancti Doctores et Patres dicunt, ex Patre per Filium procedere Spiritum Sanctum, ad hanc intelligentiam tendit, ut per hoc significetur, Filium quoque esse secundum graecos quidem causam, secundum latinos vero principium subsistentiae Spiritus Sancti, sicut et Patrem. Et quoniam omnia, quae Patris sunt, Pater ipso unigenito Filio suo gignendo dedit, praeter esse Patrem, hoc ipsum quod Spiritus Sanctus procedit ex Filio, ipse Filius a Patre aetemaliter habet, a quo etiam aeternaliter genitus est. Diffinimus insuper explicationem verborum illorum "Filioque" veritatis declarandae gratia et imminente tunc necessitate, licite ac rationabiliter Symbolo fuisse appositam." (Ench. 691).

[11] We leave aside the distinction between nature and person. But every pneuma is personal, either through itself, or through a transcendent assumption (in Christ). The concept of zoe also serves to express human life in

general; thus zoe aionios, eternal life.

[12] While saying this, let us not lose sight of the fact that this modification in its three dimensions (itself, other things, God) is not something added to being, but constitutive of it, in the sense explained several pages ago.

[13] It is essential that comparative religion be developed with theological and not just archeological and philosophical methods. The case of the divinization of natural agents or of men is not unique in this respect. The idea of a Sacrament, as contrasted with the magic or the rites of various religions, is another. But the method has to be employed systematically and extended to all aspects of the religions. The subject remains for another occasion.

[14] In the Greco-Latin world adoption was also expressed as a “regeneration,” a “rebirth,” palingenesia. Hence, according to St. Paul, what we wish to say when speaking of our Divine sonship follows still more clearly.

[15] Recall the use, at times generic, of the term dynamis, applied both to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. In the expression dynamis Theou it can be seen: to receive the strength of God. Now, this latter is the work of the Holy Spirit; but its content, that which is done, is to form the Son in man. Dynamis is then taken here in a broad sense.

[16] Whence the metaphysical and originary meaning of ‘mortification.’

[17] It would be tempting to compare this conception of the causality of the sacraments with the theory of internal causality proposed by Billot. In it, the efficient aspect of causality is always subordinated to the signitive or intentional. Now, the internal relation, especially when it is efficacious, is of a rather more formal type. Perhaps Billot’s theory, when developed in this direction, will reveal an unsuspected fecundity. But I only point this out timidly as a suggestion. A more detailed study of the problem is required. It must be left for professional theologians.