St Augustine Papers

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To Dr Augustine Shutte (1938–2016),
a distinguished philosopher and a friend of St Augustine College

EDITOR'S NOTE

The three articles included in this volume (by M Schepers, A Shutte and P Giddy) are based on the papers that were originally presented at the "Twentieth Century Thomisms and Contemporary Philosophy" Workshop held on November 3rd, 2012, at St Augustine College in Johannesburg. They were subsequently revised by their authors and submitted to *St Augustine Papers* for peer review. The article by G Whelan has been submitted independently.

In the second half of 2016, we plan to publish a volume dedicated to the issues surrounding natural environment and ecological justice in general and Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical *Laudato Si': On Care for our Common Home* in particular. The call for papers is open until the end of August 2016. Guidelines for the authors can be found at the end of this volume as well as on our Journal's website: www.staugustine.ac.za/sap.

Promotion of Intellectual Conversion: The Basic Project in Tertiary Education

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MAURICE SCHEPERS

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INTELLECTUAL SELF-APPROPRIATION: BASIC CHALLENGE AND FUNDAMENTAL COMPETENCE

In a work that addresses comprehensively the topic of intellectual conversion, besides accomplishing much more, Bernard Lonergan says something provocative about such an event, or perhaps better, *process*, when he affirms that the person who finds the way toward intellectual self-appropriation "will possess a fixed base, an invariant pattern opening upon all further developments of understanding" (1992:22).[1] Moreover, this arresting statement immediately suggests a connection with the topic of the conference *cum* workshop where this paper was presented. For on the one hand understanding the question of the relation between the humanities, reputedly on the wane, and the waxing social sciences, invites understanding. And having a dependable tool in such a foundational enquiry will come in handy. One might even be tempted to cite the gospel in this regard: this should have been done without neglecting the other! On the other hand, making a connection between intellectual conversion and Thomism may very well help in discerning where Thomism has come from and where it is going; for surely such a clarification of mind will have something to do with wonder, and even wondering about wonder.

For several years running I have worked with groups of first-year students in the Institute of Social Communication [ISC] of Tangaza College [TC], a constituent institution of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa [CUEA]. These students, mostly young people, are just crossing the threshold into tertiary education. In another culture they would be named

Freshmen, and I must say that the initial encounter with them *is* by and large refreshing! The discovery that I want to articulate in this paper is the indirect result of what we are doing in a course entitled *Religion and Responsibility*.

Telling the story is possibly the best introduction. The course was conceived as a kind of experiment within the curriculum of the ISC. This three-year long programme of studies leads to a Bachelor of Arts degree, granted by CUEA, and it is designed to lay the ground for entry into the world of social communications – journalism and mass media. Several of the first year courses are "introductions" to various human sciences, ranging from psychology to global studies, a procedure which aims at broadening the students' horizons in the realm of human affairs. *Religion and Responsibility* (the course named above) is included in this roster, and the idea is again *introductory*, but in this case with philosophy and religion in mind. Moreover, the philosophical option is to begin with a turn to the [human] subject, in a manner that is concrete and somewhat existential, including as it does the question of religion, and specifically what religious commitment has to do with the individual project of being responsible for oneself, and the common project of building a better world.

Some five or six years ago, when the course was first conceived, we started out with a two-week long exercise having to do with human interiority, and concretely with the question, "What are we doing when we are knowing?" I had convinced myself that this would be the way to begin, notwithstanding the innocence (and consequent bewilderment) of the students in the face of such a challenge. In fact the time allotted to this exercise turned out to be altogether inadequate. Not a surprise, of course, since what is involved -- intellectual conversion -- can well be thought of as a life-long project. But one must start somewhere, sometime! In any case, most of these young people were fresh from a Kenyan system of secondary education that aims at preparing students for national exams, in disciplines that put a premium on memory and pay little attention to enquiry and understanding. Thus for them the exercise constituted an invitation to cross over into a foreign land! Still it was thought that such an enquiry could be worthwhile. And in view of monitoring their progress,

and even of promoting the project itself, the students were asked to keep a journal at least for a couple of weeks (!), this in order to encourage their discovering and recording for themselves some instances of the operations which are characteristic of human consciousness.

This assignment was made against the background of a real but typically unnoticed distinction between the **content of our knowledge** on the one hand, and, on the other, the **knowing process**, i.e., the conscious operations which bear the data of experience through understanding to possible affirmation. In other words, we were calling attention to the difference between knowledge as an objective acquisition and knowing *knowing*![2] And the journal was designed to promote the students' becoming increasingly aware of their own consciousness, in its complexity, but also in its dynamic structure. And once they had been invited, and even coaxed and cajoled, to pass into the world of subjectivity or interiority, it was hoped that they might be at least remotely disposed on their own to abide there and to continue the experiment. It is, after all, our native environment, where under appropriate conditions we can even find the meaning of our being made in the image of God. But this is to go way beyond the initial and tentative step intended in SCC 111.

For those already familiar with this terrain, it is quite obvious that the objective of the experiment in question is simply *intellectual conversion*, conceived as acquiring ownership (appropriation) of the dynamic structure which is human knowing, i.e., making my knowing *mine*, by a personal "turn to the subject."[3] Ordinarily this term is used in reference to a way of doing philosophy that denotes a shift from the classical to the modern. The ancients took their stand *vis a vis* the outer world that is delivered to us in the data of sense, and their discourse was about the cosmos (the physical universe) and its principles, where the latter is concerned with what is *beyond* or *underlying* the physical, and then of course to bring things to a semblance of completion, through arguments about human activity in the cosmos (ethical and political theory). It was in these latter disciplines that philosophy found itself delving into and dealing with the human subject at all, enquiring about the *good life*, sc., how do we manage to find our place in the cosmos and to build the city *cosmopolis*?

In modern times this classical way of doing philosophy has been found wanting, because of its failure in neglecting to certify the validity of human knowledge; and on this account the turn to the subject is *critical*, connoting the question about the worth of the human knowing. And to tell the truth, this modern philosophical landscape has proved to be a minefield where many a thinker of note has floundered in the attempt to "make the turn."

In fact the problem is rather straightforward, for there are two kinds of data: one kind that is available to the senses, and another that is present in the inner world of consciousness, *sense data*, therefore, and *data of consciousness*. No matter that these latter are typically out of view, so to speak, because of our immediate concern with what is objectively intended, they can readily be brought forward by a special technique of enquiry about what are we doing when we are knowing. Through such a turn to the subject our concern becomes not what is known *intentio intenta*, but rather the process of knowing *intentio intendens*, and the effort is to identify and relate the crucial operations in human knowing. This might not appear too difficult, but a certain subtlety is involved, because one is called upon to use one's own consciousness to *heighten consciousness*.[4]

First, wake up and be attentive, not to what is to be seen and heard, but rather to the seeing and the hearing (not to speak of the remembering and the imagining). That sort of endeavour could (even should) result in a discerning of simple attentiveness from perceiving, and the latter from imaging. Attendant upon this discernment, of course, there are very complex neurological questions, but the novice is exempt from taking them into immediate account. It suffices to be aware that they are there, and not to discount their complexity, or indeed their eventual relevance.

Do questions occur? Definitely! And this in itself is enough to make one wonder: whence the enquiry? The experience will be patterned, of course,[5] and so the type of questions that are asked will be somewhat predetermined, but again our concern will not be *what* the experience means, but rather the intending itself *intentio intendens*, i.e., the enquiring,

the occasional grasping (here we are at the heart of things!), and then the inevitable conceiving, opening out in some cases upon a long process of reaching a satisfactory definition, or, in scientific circles, hypothesis.

Are we satisfied with hypotheses? Definitely not! Another enquiry imposes itself, while we hold at bay the question about the very source of enquiry. It is what the scientists name experimental verification, and what in the world of common sense description consists in making sure that we have it right. This "making sure" can go from a very ordinary process of checking for possible errors, to an extremely sophisticated procedure, the components of which are determined by a carefully worked out scientific method (with everything that lies in the middle); but the common result will be the reflective insight that grasps the virtually unconditioned, the sign of which is the mind's coming to rest in a yes [or a no], generated by the fact that no more relevant questions occur. Knowledge has come to term in a conclusion that can be added to or integrated with what one already knows.

INTELLECTUAL CONVERSION: A MORE PRECISE ANALYSIS AND THE CONDITIONS OF ITS OCCURRENCE

Questions arise regarding this very human effort to bring the process of knowing under conscious control. First, there is a caveat about the meaning of the term, *intellectual conversion*, which could suggest that it is simply the cognitive component of a more or less radical religious or moral change of heart. Suppose that religious conversion were to stand for a person's choice to become Christian or Muslim; or again that moral conversion were to be understood as a person's resolve to give an authentic scale of values a place of honour in her life. In consequence, intellectual conversion might be thought of simply as the expression of what it means to be Christian, or to put value before self-satisfaction in one's life. But this is not what Lonergan means by intellectual conversion, which stands together with the other conversions as a self-standing "change of direction and, indeed, a change for the better" (1972:52).[6]

Again, the very name might be deceptive in another way, for it could suggest that such a change of direction is restricted to so-called "intellectuals," that it is a kind of elitist category, to be applied exclusively to those individuals who are specially equipped, by native intelligence or by special training, for scientific enquiry. That this is not the case at least for Lonergan can be seen from the broad manner in which intellectual conversion is promoted. In fact this is closely related to the thesis that is proposed herewith, for if intellectual conversion is really foundational for tertiary education, it must be a target accessible to the ordinary person, and even have some relevance for the enormous population of young people who flock each year to universities around the world.

Once these conditions are grasped, we can move to the question of how intellectual conversion is *related* to the other conversions, even conditioned by them. It could be helpful to invoke here a distinction that Lonergan recognised and employed in his later years. In the complexity of human affairs, development occurs in two directions, from below upward and from above downward, where the *below* and the *above* refer to levels of consciousness. There is the repetitive cycle of experience, understanding, judgement, and decision/action that brings about fresh situations. Here the ancient adage, *nihil amatum nisi praecognitum* (nothing is loved or chosen without prior knowledge) is relevant. Typically we make progress by applying through decision and action what we have discovered and judged to be true. There is another cycle, however, which begins in the upper level of consciousness, where love prevails and is even prior. In fact the "ancient adage" admits of exceptions, and notable among them is the not unfamiliar event of *falling* in love (the manner of speaking tells the story!), and most notable is that this event is verifiable within the sphere of religious experience. In this context it is the case that the God who is the source of this experience (Rom. 5:5; cf. I Jn. 4:10) remains unknown, without prejudice to the change of human hearts that occurs, sometimes without warning, but in any case without adequate intellectual preparation, if human judgement is be the criterion. In other words, religious conversion is a matter of the human heart's being overwhelmed by what our medieval Ancestors called sanctifying grace, and what Lonergan will name the "dynamic state of being-in-love in an unrestricted

manner" (1972:105). And in this sequence knowledge is the consequence rather than the condition, for there is the eye of love. Nor can anyone deny that this process, however hid in mystery, is the source of human development.

And such is the basis of the description he provides for the causal sequence of the three conversions, as he conceived them.

> Though religious conversion sublates moral, and moral conversion sublates intellectual, one is not to infer that intellectual comes first and then moral and finally religious. On the contrary, from a causal viewpoint, one would say that first there is God's gift of … love. Next, the eye of this love reveals values in their splendour, while the strength of this love brings about their realization, and that is moral conversion. Finally, among the values discerned by the eye of love is the value of believing the truths taught by the tradition, and in such tradition and belief are the seeds of intellectual conversion. For the word, spoken and heard, proceeds from and penetrates to all four levels of intentional consciousness. Its content is not just a content of experience, but a content of experience and understanding and judging and deciding. The analogy of sight yields the cognitional myth. But fidelity to the word engages the whole [person] (1972:243).

I propose to make the content of this paragraph thematic, by asking what are we to make of it in the context of the world of young people who are moving into the third phase of their basic education.

To affirm that the gift of God's love is *first* means simply that it is not extraordinary for God to transform the human heart from within, without our knowing who is at work within us, and that this sort of divine intervention is absolute speaking foundational, i.e., the normal source from which all other kinds of authentic human development are mounted. It is the paradigm for development from above downward. Moreover, such transformation apparently occurs regularly in human history, for God is good and desires the salvation of all. On this account, the invitation to be in love with God in an unrestricted manner (sufficient grace) is thought to be accorded to all. Here, however, statistical law may be invoked, for the

realisation of religious conversion is conflated with another kind of intervention in history on God's part, often named "public revelation." In other words, the development of the Judeo-Christian tradition, beginning with the promise made to Abraham, our Ancestor in faith, to be fulfilled in Jesus Christ, functions in history to increase the frequency of religious conversion, even though no human heart is invulnerable to the prompting of God's love. Other religious traditions may function in a similar way, but the point is that God's presence within us as one who is known and loved, takes precedence in human development of any kind whatsoever. The experience of being in love with God in this way, i.e., without limits, is called religious conversion.

Now being in love in an unrestricted manner both brings about an inner clarity and produces a new strength in our lives. Let us call the clarity, faith, and the strength, hope. One who is in love is able to see more clearly what others find difficult to see or do not see at all, and at the same time is given to taking on initiatives that others would not even dream of putting into practice. The cognitional component of this endowment, which we are calling faith, is the power to discern and to sort out genuine values, and the affective component (hope) strengthens one in the doing of what is seen to be right. These two components together are the soul of moral conversion. And this constellation provides the rationale for Augustine's dictum, "Love and do what you want!"

The next move is critical. It is stated that among the values discerned by the eye of love is belief in the truths of the religious tradition.[7] In other words, authentic religious experience resonates with authentic religious tradition. Now from the Judeo-Christian viewpoint such tradition involves, in the first place, the prophetic gift, for the prophets are the seers, the ones who provide the tradition with its substance. And the creeds of the Christian religion are the residue of what the Spirit has spoken through the prophets. But the prophetic word is received by the believing community, and this reception closes the circuit, so to speak. There are the prophets who hear and listen to the word of God, while proclaiming it to God's People and the believing community who hear and attend to the prophetic word.

All this opens out upon the affirmation that both the prophetic experience and the engagement of the believing community in the word of the prophets is the seedbed of intellectual conversion. "For the word, spoken and heard *proceeds from* and *penetrates into* all four levels of intentional consciousness" (emphases added). The idea is that prophetic transmission of the religious tradition (which would include all kinds of communication -- preaching, teaching, dialogue, etc.), and belief in the tradition, are the good ground in which intellectual conversion is more liable to occur, because in such transmission and belief the entire dynamic of cognitional/ deliberative structure is engaged, and lies open to view, so to speak.

Now what is required is that the prophet at least implicitly asks the question, "What am I doing in playing the prophetic role?" Likewise, members of the believing community must ask, "What are we doing, i.e., what is happening with us, when we respond to the prophetic word?" Intellectual conversion is set in motion when such enquiry is activated. Of course, the radical potential for such activation is present in us all. It is simply wonder, the notion of being. But it is more probable that prophets and believers will actually raise the relevant questions, because in their lives the wonder which is the source of all enquiry is already actualised in a peculiar way. The gifts of prophecy and of belief in the tradition grounded in the prophetic word, respectively, lie at the surface of human consciousness, so to speak, in such a way as to require explanation.

 "The word spoken and heard proceeds from and penetrates to all four levels of intentional consciousness." For the prophet who speaks, therefore, it is a matter of becoming aware of the "procession" - how it is that the burden he delivers in obedience to the divine command is coordinate with an inner conviction mysteriously certified by God, and that fidelity to this certainty demands that it be communicated to others in a way that is intelligible. In other words, while the gift of prophecy, as a *gratia gratis data*, is provided for the edification of the believing community at large, it is at the same time an invitation to the prophet to come to a better understanding of the inner working of his own mind and heart. Thus does s/he get to acknowledge that the dynamic presence of the Spirit of God

within her/him is not a divine "power point presentation," but rather the bringing to life of the inner structure of the human mind and heart.

This implicit enquiry is not about what God is saying, i.e., the content or the intention of the prophecy, but about what is happening within the prophet's consciousness. Understanding God's word is, in these circumstances, given; understanding the dynamic structure by which the divine message is grasped, articulated, and communicated, requires another kind of engagement. So in virtue of the divine message itself, the prophet is invited to be attentive to that dynamic structure, to understand how it unfolds, and to move through insight to articulation and judgment, and eventual decision. And, whereas both religious and moral conversion, as well as the gift of prophecy are energised by divine love, the sort of conversion in question here is a work to be accomplished by a carefully monitored process of **attentiveness** to the experience of operations that typically occur, **intelligent enquiry and understanding** of these operations as experienced, and **reasonable reflection and affirmation** of these same operations as experienced and understood.

Now it is not likely that many of the students in SCC 111 will be endowed with the prophetic gift, but it *is* probable that they will be believers. I have found this to be the case, in confirmation of John Mbiti's dictum regarding the African religious soul. And on this account a parallel set of questions comes into view. It is not, perhaps, a set that comes spontaneously to mind for everyone, because at the outset the believer is invited to be attentive, not to his/her operations, but simply to the Word of God. Yet it is true that this Word does penetrate into every level of consciousness and engage the whole person. It is not simply heard, but it calls for the response on the part of the one who hears. And that response must be somehow intelligent, reasonable, and free. Not that the believer will grasp the full meaning of the mystery to which s/he gives assent, but the word that is heard cannot be alien to human understanding. The free assent of faith must, on the contrary, be meaningful. Moreover, not only is there a cognitive dimension to the Christian message, but there are also constitutive and effective dimensions. We are challenged to become something beyond what we are, and to perform tasks that are quite beyond our native capacity.

In summary, the word of God, not only as spoken but also as heard, engages human consciousness at all levels and in every dimension, to the effect that the believer becomes a living laboratory, where the sort of enquiry that leads to intellectual conversion can more readily occur. Believing, after all, and deciding what to become and what to do in virtue of religious belief, occurs *within* human consciousness, and brings that consciousness to life in a peculiar way. For believing is a kind of knowing, and deciding what to do about religious belief falls within that set of operations wherein human consciousness becomes conscience.

Now to continue these reflections in story form, as things worked out in the course, the distinction between knowledge and knowing, between the objective and subjective poles, respectively, began to play a dominant role in the course; because I began to see that without some effort to appropriate the latter (the subjective pole), the presentation of Catholic belief and morality (the objective pole) was liable to leave the impression that what is to be believed and what is to be done in virtue of our believing is "something out there already now," waiting to be seen, even looked at. It would be as if Catholic doctrine and ethical principles were satellites in orbit or megabytes in cyberspace. The bad fruit of such a presentation, in my estimation, would be a kind of spiritual sterility, for it does not take into account the fact that knowledge (even belief) and decision are enrichments of the human subject by an object to which we are assimilated.

The Christian message is "something" to believe, "something" to become, "something" to be done (Lonergan *Method in Theology* [*MT*]: 362). And in each case we distinguish an objective and a subjective pole: *what* is to be believed (cognitive objective) and the believing; *what* we are to become (constitutive objective) and the becoming; *what* we are to decide to do (effective objective) and the deciding (even the doing!). To this we all say, "Of course!" but typically, without our noticing, our entire attention is focused on the objective (the *what*), while the conscious operations (believing, becoming, and deciding/doing) literally go *un*noticed. There's nothing particularly abnormal about this, for after all human operations of this kind are generally *intentional*, i.e., they have an objective, and that's

where our attention naturally goes. What we are liable to miss, however, is the *intending*, and that's what *intentional analysis* is all about.

In fact what I want to affirm here is that I was discovering the possibility (and the possible importance) of doing some of this type of analysis in SCC 111, by capitalising on the very material object of enquiry. And as the semester unfolded I even began to suspect that this might be the most important aspect of the course. Finally, upon even further reflection, I have come to suspect strongly that such analysis could be the fundamental task that opens the door to fruitful education on the tertiary level. The students come for the most part outfitted with some sort of religious commitment or at least familiarity with a belief system. They are generally conversant with what it means to be *Christian* or at least *religious*. And that fact can be the opening (not exactly an open door, but at least a slight aperture) through which an invitation to intellectual conversion can be inserted. It is perhaps the moment in the development of the life of the mind when such a conversion is normally to be encouraged, for in any case it seems rare that this project comes to mind without some external influence being brought to bear.

The thesis, then, is that intellectual conversion is altogether basic in the project of tertiary education, where "the project" is conceived of as an intellectual, moral, and even religious, development of the subject who is the student. This means, of course, that education on this level is not something that is "dished out," but is rather a process of enquiry, where the enquiring subject is the student, encouraged and sometimes goaded by the teacher.

FRUITS OF INTELLECTUAL CONVERSION

Now I want very briefly to list what might be termed fruits of this exercise. As will be anticipated, they will not be so visible, but in the long run they are very nourishing to the human spirit.

First, there is the recognition of what it means for something to be real. We are told by Augustine of Hippo that he was well into his thirties before he

came to acknowledge that there are things that cannot be touched that are real. Where intellectual conversion occurs, however, such recognition is implied. Anyone whose mind is clarified by cognitional theory and who proceeds to the affirmation of himself as knower that is implied therein, will recognise that the term of the cognitional process is judgement, that judgement is about what is true; and that truth is about what is real. Now at least some of our valid judgements surely have to do with what can neither be seen nor touched. And this is the case especially with objects of religious belief. Thus indirectly the exercise that has been described here puts religious belief and religion itself perhaps, on a firmer basis.

Second fruit: the conviction that "getting to the bottom of things," i.e., reaching the truth, is really possible. Let us call this "intellectual self-confidence," which in a way is a corollary of the process of intellectual self-appropriation. If I can own the territory of my own consciousness, i.e., the world in which the operations which actualise human cognitional structure occur, surely worlds which are less recondite, of easier access through data of sense, can also be conquered. At the same time it becomes clearer, perhaps, that the much vaunted physical sciences that are the basis of modern technologies and techniques, are specific applications of the transcendental method that is discovered and verified in intellectual conversion. This latter clarification will intensify, rather than diminish, our respect for the methods of these sciences, which methods are after all *everything* to the scientists. In intellectual conversion we have found a method (*the* method?) that is the foundation of them all, going to the heart, so to speak, of all scientific method. And in so doing have discovered and established a framework for all methodological revisions, that is itself invulnerable to revision.

Third fruit: reverence for oneself as knower, and eventually appreciation for the image of God present in human beings, as the creature in whom knowledge of love of God is to be realised. To have even a schematic grasp of the dynamic cognitional structure, complemented and completed as it is by deliberative enquiry, value judgments, and existential choices, sets the stage for a reconstruction in modern terms of the Augustinian / Thomist version of the image of God in us.[8]

In theological shorthand (even baby-talk) we might say that the Word of God is the expression of God's affirmation, identical with himself, of his infinite Goodness; and the Spirit is the appreciation, shared equally and eternally by the One-Who-Speaks and the One-Who-is-Spoken, for that same infinite Goodness. Human affirmation of God's Goodness, both in the order of nature and the order of grace, also issues in an expression thereof, not, of course, a person, but surely the noblest of all possible human judgements, and, moreover, the font of a love that images the Spirit who proceeds from Father and/through the Son. Again, in these two orders of nature and grace, the appropriate response to such a recognition, is the hymn of the angels, "Holy, Holy, Holy!"

SUMMARY

Intellectual conversion is an exercise appropriate to the initial phase of tertiary education. The course, "Religion and Responsibility" (SCC 111, in the Institute of Social Communication, Tangaza College), provides a convenient context for promoting this exercise. In this course, both religious and moral conversion, as conceived by Bernard Lonergan, are brought forward as explicit themes, which set the stage for promoting this third kind of conversion. In fact the seeds of such self-appropriation are planted through religious engagement and moral purpose. Finally, when these seeds are cultivated, certain fruits will normally be harvested in due course: the recognition of what it means for something to be real; the conviction that reaching the truth is a possible goal; and the eventual discovery and identification in oneself of the image of God.

NOTES

[1] The statement in full goes as follows: "Thoroughly understand what it is to understand, and not only will you understand the broad lines of all there is to be understood but you will possess," etc. This claim is made on the last page of the Introduction, and it is repeated in full on the last page of the Epilogue (789). In fact *a thorough understanding of what it is to understand* is equivalent to the term used here, *intellectual conversion*.

[2] The inspiration for this very modest project is the cognitional theory of Bernard Lonergan, which, as it appears to me, bears the mark of success in a field which is notable for its lack of success, even for great minds, who have tried unsuccessfully to describe and legitimatize human knowing. Moreover, the term, *cognitional theory*, has the precise meaning of a grasp of the relations that link the operations to be discovered in human consciousness that together

constitute the knowing process. Beyond this theory there lie the further questions of verifying **why these terms together constitute knowing**, and again ***what is known*** in the process. Lonergan's fundamental and comprehensive work on these matters has already been cited. Here we may add to shorter, perhaps more accessible pieces, both written some years later: "Cognitional Structure" (first published in 1964, as a component of *Spirit as Inquiry, Studies in Honor of Bernard Lonergan*), reprinted in *Collection* (*Collected Works 4*, edited by F.E. Crowe and R.M. Doran, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 205-221; and "Dimensions of Meaning" (first given as lecture at Marquette University in 1965, and then included in this same volume), 232-245. These latter two pieces are what I have recommended to students of SCC 111 as background reading.

[3] The term, *intellectual conversion*, is used consistently by Lonergan at least from the time of the publication of *Method in Theology* (NY, 1972): "Conversion may be intellectual or moral or religious" (238). Moreover, from the very beginning of his career as a philosopher/theologian the reality that is signified by the term was on his horizon. This can be seen, for example, from his insistence in *Insight,* on the distinction between the two kinds of knowledge; for the transition from supposing that human knowing is merely looking (or something like it) to a clear grasp of the dynamism of human cognitional structure *is* intellectual conversion. And it is a transition appropriate not merely to philosophers, but to "the many." A good place to get a toe-hold on this theme might be chapter 8 of *Insight*, "Things," and especially §2, "Bodies" (*Collected Works* 3, 275-280), where the effort is to show how the ability to declare this or that object to be a *thing*, and to know what one is doing thereby, is a significant achievement.

[4] Lonergan describes it as an *objectification*: "…a matter of heightening one's consciousness by objectifying it" (1972:14).

[5] On *patterns of experience* see Lonergan 1992:204-212; cf. also Lonergan 1972:29 (an abbreviated synthesis).

[6] The context is a follows: "As orientation is, so to speak, the direction of development, so conversion is, etc. One frees oneself from the unauthentic. One grows in authenticity. Harmful, dangerous, misleading satisfactions are dropped. Fears of discomfort, pain, privation, have less power to deflect one from one's course. Values are apprehended where before they were overlooked. Scales of preference shift. Errors, rationalizations, ideologies fall and shatter to leave one open to things as they are and to man (sic) as he should be." The phrase that resonates here, of course, is "things as they are," where the *things* are precisely the components of cognitional structure, as objectives to be discovered, identified, related, etc.

[7] Elsewhere Lonergan provides the rationale for distinguishing between faith and belief, which he characterises as a departure "not from an older doctrine, but from an older manner of speech" (1972:123).

[8] Lonegarn himself worked this out in the second of his two historical studies of the thought of St Thomas (1997), first published between 1946 and 1949 in a series of articles in *Theological Studies*. See especially the concluding chapter, "*Imago Dei,*" 191-227.

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Evolution and Emergence: A Paradigm Shift for Theology

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AUGUSTINE SHUTTE
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INTRODUCTION

Since the time of Darwin the conception of evolution has developed beyond the boundaries of science to include philosophy and now theology in its scope. After noting the positive reception of the evolutionary idea by theologians even in Darwin's time, the article traces its philosophical development form Hegel to the work of Karl Rahner. It then uses the philosophical anthropology developed by Rahner to reformulate the essentials of Christian faith ("Christology within an evolutionary view of the world") in a way that is consonant with a scientific and secular world view. It is the author's view that secularity - understood as in the recent work of Charles Taylor - is the result of an evolution in the sphere of culture and provides both a standard for truth in religion and a basis for dialogue between the religions of the world.

It is an extraordinary thing that an idea that in Darwin's time (and to Darwin himself) appeared so alien to and indeed destructive of Christianity should now prove so fruitful for the purpose of finding an expression of Christian faith appropriate for a scientific and secular age. The idea of evolution and the emergence of new forms of being – not simply in the biological sphere but in the cosmos as a whole and in human history itself – has in fact provided Christian theology with a new paradigm within which to conceptualise such basic elements of faith as the notion of creation, the doctrine of God's incarnation in Jesus, the indwelling in us of the Holy Spirit, and the function of the Church in the world. My aim in this article is to outline the steps taken that have made this possible, and to provide a sketch of the theology that results. In my recent work I have relied on many thinkers in this project, especially on the work of Karl

Rahner and his "Christology within an evolutionary view of the world", but also visionaries such as Teilhard de Chardin and, in more recent times, Brian Swimme.

CONTEMPORARY REPONSES TO DARWIN

The opposition to Darwin's ideas when they first appeared, particularly that of public figures such as the Bishop of Oxford, has become so notorious that any sympathy with them from those who felt them to be compatible with Christian faith has been largely overlooked. Yet from the very first this was forthcoming, in spite of public opinion. One must remember that at the time Christian orthodoxy was almost universally held to imply what is now seen to be a seriously mistaken view of biblical inerrancy, as well as being bound up with the soundness of the design argument as advanced by Paley and others. Hence any acceptance of evolutionary ideas had somehow to be fitted in to the notion of design as well as a revision of one's attitude to scripture. One even finds Darwin himself writing, in a letter to Asa Gray the Harvard botanist,

> With respect to Design, I feel more inclined to show a white flag than to fire my usual long-range shot… If anything is designed, certainly man (sic) must be (Clark 1984:121).

And in the *Origin* itself:

> There is a grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed into a few forms or into one.

To which, in the second edition, he added:

> by the Creator (Clark 1984:150).

Very soon after the publication of Darwin's "dangerous idea" attempts began to be made to see in evolution God's *method* of creation, or at least as God-directed, whether by intervention or not. And some thinkers, such as Alfred Wallace in particular, made a distinction between the evolutionary origin of the human body and the immediate creation by God of the human

soul. A letter from Sir Charles Lyell, the famous geologist, to Darwin is very revealing in both these respects:

> I reminded him (*Alfred Wallace*) that as to the origin of man's intellectual and moral nature I had allowed in my first edition that its introduction was a real innovation, interrupting the uniform course of the causation previously at work on the earth. I was therefore not opposed to his idea that the Supreme Intelligence might possibly direct variation in a way analogous to that in which even the limited powers of man (sic) might guide it in selection, as in the case of the breeder and horticulturalist. In other words I feel that progressive development or evolution cannot be entirely explained by natural selection. I rather hail Wallace's suggestion that there may be a Supreme Will and Power which may not abdicate its function of interference, but may guide the forces and laws of Nature (Clark 1984:134).

It would be some time before Christian theology was able to detach itself from the argument from design, and even longer before it felt able to abandon the idea of an intervention in world process by God in the case of the creation of the human soul, let alone the Incarnation. But the compatibility of the evolution of new species and Christian faith was an idea that only strengthened with the passage of time. This is exemplified by the following passage from a sermon given to the University by Charles Gore, later Bishop of Oxford, in 1894.

> Objection to the idea of evolution on the grounds of the argument from design, has been, in the main, removed. In part it has been through the theologians abandoning false claims and learning, if somewhat unwillingly, that they have no 'Bible revelation' in matters of science; in part it has been through its becoming continually more apparent that the limits of scientific explanation of nature are soon reached; that the ultimate causes, forces, conditions of nature are as unexplained as ever, or rather postulate as ever for their explanation a Divine mind. Thus if one 'argument from design' was destroyed another was only brought into prominence. No account which science can give, by discovery or conjecture of the method of creation, can ever weaken the argument which lies from the universality of law, order and beauty in the universe to the universality of mind. The mind of man (sic) looks forth into nature and finds nowhere unintelligible chance, but everywhere an order, a

system, a law, a beauty, which corresponds, as greater to less, to his own rational and spiritual intuitions, methods and expectations. Universal order, intelligibility and beauty, mean that something akin to the human spirit, something of which the human spirit is an offshoot and a reflection, is in the universe before it is in man (sic) (Clark 1984:235).

In this passage we find already a clear appreciation of the limits of science and the biblical writings, as well as of the original forms of the argument from design. And, more importantly, we also find a somewhat tentative appreciation of two ideas that have since become quite central to the theological annexure of the evolutionary idea. The first is that of the unity and solidarity of a world-process in which humanity (and hence our distinctive mental capacities) is by no means an exception but an integral part. And secondly, it is this mental or spiritual aspect of evolution – rather than a mechanistic regularity or order – that is the clearest indication of a world-transcendent source. These ideas are so important to the story I am telling that I want briefly to indicate their origins in nineteenth century European thought, not indeed scientific or theological thought but philosophy. Of course the argument from design was itself philosophical rather than scientific. And its popularity in a scientific culture had an immediate theological effect. It gave rise to the idea of a 'natural religion' as opposed to a 'revealed' one like Christianity, a religion that was supported by, in fact based on, the discoveries of science. The fact that the scientific world view at that time was a thoroughly materialistic and deterministic one tended to be overlooked.

But not by Kant! He saw his whole philosophical endeavour as an attempt to justify our faith in human freedom, the immortality of the soul and, ultimately, the existence of God, all of which beliefs seemed threatened by the mechanistic Newtonian world-view. He did this by what he himself called his 'Copernican revolution'. For just as Copernicus had shown that the Sun and not Earth was the centre of our cosmic system, so Kant argued that the order science discovered in the world was the order of our minds rather than that of things in nature. Science itself was the creation of the knowing, choosing human subjectivity of the scientist and not something impressed by an objective nature on a passive human mind. Not that the

truths of science were illusory, but they were partial, aspectual, provisional insights into the much richer and still not completely understood reality of the world.

The importance for our purposes of this 'subjective turn' of Kant's is not so much its improved understanding of science as its focus on the scientist, and in general on the human person, as the knowing, choosing subject who creates and judges science, and who therefore transcends scientific study because always presupposed by it. In doing so Kant revealed both the inherent limitation of any actual or possible science, and at the same time a transcendent aspect of human nature that was the source of science, as well as morality and art – and religion. It was thus humanity itself, or at least this aspect of human nature, that came to provide grounds for a rational faith in human freedom, the immortality of the soul, and the existence of God.

Unfortunately so strong was the hold that the deterministic, mechanistic Newtonian world-view had on the eighteenth century mind that Kant was only able to carry through his 'Copernican revolution' by virtue of a thoroughgoing dualism of body and mind. By virtue of our rational powers of intellect and will we transcend the determinisms of nature, of which as bodily beings we are an inextricable part.

Philosophy in the modern period developed in two mutually interacting traditions, an empiricist cast of thought that was born from the influence of the natural, and especially the physical sciences, and a rationalist that emanated from the complex phenomenon of secularisation. The empiricist tradition was materialist, stressing the causal links discovered by the different sciences that bound humanity to the determinisms of both nature and society. Rationalist thinkers such as Descartes and Kant, to name only the most influential, influenced by secularisation's focus on humanity's capacity for self-determination as the central fact about human nature and the most important value for human life, stressed our transcendence of all such dependencies. It was only in the early nineteenth century, at about the time that Darwin's own ideas were beginning to take their epoch-making

shape that a philosopher overcame this sterile opposition of two half-truths in a synthetic vision in which the post-modern age was born.

It was Hegel who managed to combine the other-dependence of empiricist materialism with the self-determination of rationalistic dualism in a comprehensive view of humanity, both as individuals and as a species, as being essentially in a state of becoming through a process of transformation and transcendence. Hegel's conception of humanity as Spirit (the capital is necessary to denote its difference from the common idea of spirit that opposes it to matter) was a genuine novelty in European philosophy, and perhaps the philosophical expression of what could be called the 'spirit' of the age.

It is so easy to read back into it many things that science – in its discoveries of emergence in world-process – and theology – in recent theories of *creation continua* – have since developed, that one must be careful to identify the novelty precisely. I think it consists in the idea of reality, whether human or cosmic, as a process of self-realisation through transformation and transcendence. Whether this happens in a single cell or in a person, or in a transition from inorganic to organic being or from consciousness to human self-consciousness, the structure of the dynamism is the same: there is a finality involved, a finality of self-realisation through self-transcendence. Although it is most manifest in human life, where it takes many paradoxical forms, it is present in the simplest form of physical being. At all events it presents a world-view that is evolutionary in a very deep and comprehensive sense, going well beyond both what the special sciences could authorise and Christian orthodoxy would allow.

Perhaps the most important aspect of Hegel's thought as far as theology is concerned is the fact that he applied his evolutionary conception to *humanity*, to the lives of human individuals and also to human history itself, and did so with great thoroughness and in great detail. Here, in the human sphere, he is concerned with the evolution of culture and consciousness and forms of human community. His account culminates in a description of the evolution of art, religion and philosophy, as the most

developed forms of Spirit in which humanity progressively attempts to realise its capacity for self-consciousness and self-determination. Although Hegel is concerned with describing accurately the history, he is not afraid to judge the forms that human culture takes, negatively as well as positively. But like many nineteenth century thinkers he is convinced of the fact of progress. And for him Christianity is the highest, because it is the most human religion. Its only lack is the fact that it still holds its truth in mythological form, believing stories of God's interventions in history, in revelations and miracles and sacred writings fixed for all time. As a consequence, in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion,* he undertakes a radical project of demythologisation, translating all the central doctrines of Christianity into the language of his philosophy of Spirit. In this he was following Kant's pioneering work of demythologisation, in his *Religion Within the limits of Reason Alone*.

Hegel thus applied the evolutionary idea not only to the history of religion, tracing a development through all the forms of religion then known to him, but also to the history of a particular religion, namely Christianity, giving it a formulation he felt was more adequate to the age in which he lived. This was at a time when scholars in many different fields were studying the past, using the methods of science on humanity itself. And there was no human product that received more critical attention than the Christian scriptures.

I think I have said enough to identify what amounted to a revolution in thinking, a revolution that brought the 'modern' period of European history to an end. Darwin's thinking was simply part of it. John Dewey, speaking at the celebration of the centenary of Darwin's birth at Columbia University in 1909, summed up his influence as follows:

> In laying hands upon the sacred ark of absolute permanency, in treating the forms that had been regarded as types of fixity and perfection as originating and passing away, the "Origin of Species" introduced a mode of thinking that in the end was bound to transform the logic of knowledge, and hence the treatment of morals, politics and religion (Clark 1984:254).

This is a judgement with which Teilhard de Chardin would have whole-heartedly agreed:

> Is evolution a theory, a system or an hypothesis? It is much more: it is a general condition to which all theories, all hypotheses, all systems must bow and which they must satisfy henceforward if they are to be thinkable and true (1959:219).

Teilhard's work was originally viewed with suspicion by Church authorities; it is now no longer. And it is time for us to turn to consider how theology has shaped itself to the new evolutionary paradigm, and how it might with profit continue to do so.

THE RELEVANCE OF EVOLUTION TO CHRISTIAN FAITH

In the intellectual development whereby the notion of evolution has become central to the expression of Christian faith in a scientific and secular culture there are a number of salient themes.

First is that of the position of humanity in the universe, both as regards the nature of human persons and the direction of human history. Various traditional dualisms had to be overcome: that of humanity and the rest of nature, and the dualism of matter and spirit that is bound up with that. Then there is the dualism of body and mind or body and soul in human individuals.

Secondly there is the question of God and God's relationship to the universe, the idea of creation as *creation continua*, the creation of really new forms of being, especially that of life from matter, human consciousness from life, and what is traditionally called grace in human hearts and minds.

Finally there is the sphere of history, a history seen by theology as a dialogue between humanity and its god. As far as humanity is concerned, history is seen as involving an evolution of culture and consciousness, and therefore of religion too, an evolution that for theology culminates in the person and teaching of Jesus. With regard to God there are new ways of

understanding God's 'special action' within the universe in human history, what is traditionally called 'the history of salvation'. These attempt to avoid the notion of 'intervention' by God in the course of history, as well as any appeal to the 'supernatural', whether in the form of miracle or authoritative inspiration or revelation.

These themes characterise especially the now well-developed dialogue between theology and the natural sciences, where the evolutionary world-view and its satellite themes occupy centre-stage. A particularly impressive example of this dialogue is the nearly twenty year-long series of seminars organised by the Vatican Observatory and the Centre for Theology and the Natural Sciences at Berkeley, which has just culminated in the publication of its sixth and final 'capstone' volume of papers by participants. The writers were drawn from the ranks of highly respected scientists, philosophers and theologians, and met regularly to discuss and revise their contributions at Castelgandolfo and in California. The series as a whole bore the general title "Scientific Perspectives on Divine Action". As can be imagined the scholars involved were from many different backgrounds and with very different outlooks. Yet in the course of the meetings, and due to the method of discussion and revision employed, a remarkable consensus emerged. Keith Ward, in his article in the capstone volume that ended the series, describes this as follows:

> there is a sort of metaphysical view that has arisen out of this series of discussions between scientists and theologians. It puts in place a background world-view for a restatement of religious doctrines that is probably as important as Aristotle was for the Christian church in the thirteenth century.

> The scientific understanding of a universe of intelligible law and emergent creativity changes the perspective within which one sees divine action. God will not be seen as an interfering designer correcting a partly incomplete mechanism. God will be more like a universe-environing field of Spirit, setting the parameters of nature, guiding its emergent development, and ensuring the eventual fulfilment of the divine intention for its existence (Russell *et al.* 2008:298).

In this, the final volume, the acronym NIODA is used to identify this consensus. It stands for "Non-interventionist Objective Divine Action" in world process and applies both to God's creative causality in nature and also to God's 'special' activity in human and 'salvation' history. This way of understanding God's action in the world is so important for the way we express Christian faith in a scientific and secular culture that I will quote William Stoeger's account of it at some length. Stoeger, incidentally, is not only a scientist (an astronomer), but a philosopher and theologian as well, and has been one of the editors – and a moving spirit – of this project from the beginning.

> Certain events or sequences of events initiated by secondary causal agents *(Stoeger is employing the traditional distinction between the primary causality of God as creator whereby God is the ultimate cause of all that happens in the universe, and the secondary causality of things in the universe whereby the integrity of nature is maintained.)* (either those which are freely and consciously chosen, or those which are not) are turning points within creation, or within history, and thus are specially revelatory of God's immanent creative presence. As such, these are in deeper harmony with God's intended purposes and with the essential structures and relationships already established with creation itself. These events or sequences of events would indeed be "God's special salvific acts," even though they were not direct acts of God (i.e., not without the intermediary of a secondary cause). Nor would they lack a sufficient cause within the manifold of dynamisms and potentialities of creation or of history, presupposing the universal primary creative action of God. They would nonetheless, be special, salvific and revelatory, precisely because they are clear expressions of what God intends, and/or fulfil God's purposes and intentions in a particularly unambiguous or exemplary fashion (2008:245).

This way of conceiving God's special salvific acts in terms of God's overall creative action has definite advantages, Stoeger believes, both from the point of view of science and of theology.

> It connects directly with the richly differentiated, transcendently immanent presence and action of the creator God within creation and with God's radically kenotic, deeply effective but hidden availability within nature. Furthermore, it emphasizes that what is fundamental is not so

much God's action, or actions, but rather God's ongoing relationship with creation. Again, the divine creative relationship is highly differentiated with respect to each entity and system within the universe – and God's action flows from the character of that relationship (2008:245).

As far as science is concerned, and the world-view that is the result of science, this is to my mind an essential way of conceiving God's action in the world. It is also a new way, and a new way that the development of science has itself suggested. Stoeger himself is in no doubt about this

> Thus, we can also say, in a way we could not have before the advent of the natural sciences, that God's universal creative action, though unique, is also realized in a highly differentiated and evolving way throughout nature. This evolutionary, emergent and unfinished character of creation revealed by the sciences serves to emphasize the continuing character of God's action through the regularities, processes and relationships God sustains (2008:230).

THE PHILOSOPHICAL ENGAGEMENT WITH EVOLUTION

The evolutionary character of the scientific world-view is perhaps not sufficiently stressed in the rather general picture I have been painting. I now propose to deal with that directly, and first philosophically in its implications and fruitfulness for 'natural theology' and then, in some detail, with its place in theology as such. The classical treatment of the evolutionary origin of humanity as a theological issue is Karl Rahner's 1958 monograph *Hominisation*. Rahner's early work, *Spirit in the World* and *Hearers of the Word* in particular, had provided a new philosophical foundation, derived from the history I have recapitulated above, for the traditional Christian view of humanity and its place in the world.

For Rahner, as for Kant and Hegel, human beings have a dimension that transcends anything the sciences can know since it is what produces and judges the sciences. It is what makes us self-aware, self-determining subjects of thought and action, and is the source not only of science, but of morality, art, religion and, in general, culture. It is what makes us persons in the technical sense, spiritual as well as material beings. To say that we are spiritual is to draw attention to the peculiar internal relation human

beings have to themselves (self-awareness and self-determination) that is not merely some part of us related to another part, but of ourselves as a whole in relation to the whole of ourselves. This is contrasted with our materiality which refers to the equally constitutive relationship in which we stand to all that is other than ourselves, the whole universe in fact, personal and impersonal. As spiritual beings we transcend the whole of the impersonal universe in the sense that it does not explain our existence and cannot fulfill those desires that we have precisely as spiritual beings. It must however be pointed out that we are unable to exercise, develop or fulfill our spiritual capacities except through our relationship to the rest of the universe, both personal and impersonal, and in dependence on it.

This insight into our human nature does not, in Rahner's view, depend on faith but on philosophical reflection on experience. But unless one recognises this character of our human nature it is not possible to understand adequately the essentials of Christian faith. And what is more, it makes possible the integration of our understanding of humanity into an evolutionary view of the world. The well-founded theories of contemporary science have enabled us to understand that the universe is an evolutionary process in which, over time, progressively more complex forms of being come into being through a real transformation of what preceded them. Humanity is the most complex (in its materiality) and the most simple (in its spirituality) being known to us. As such we contain in a transformed unity all the preceding forms of being discovered by the sciences. Though these are part of us we cannot be reduced to them, but transcend them in the way Rahner makes clear. In addition we are able to contain the universe as such in our minds and endow it with meaning and value in our decisions and our acts. Thus the universe as a whole is most properly understood as a plurality of human persons. It is the object of our thought and choice, and its impersonal aspects constitute the milieu in which a plurality of persons can exist and a medium in which interpersonal transactions can bring about our development and fulfillment. Put simply, there is more of reality in a person than a fundamental particle or physical force.

Again it must be stressed that such a conception of humanity and the world is a purely philosophical one and owes nothing to Christian faith. Nevertheless it provides a way of understanding the Christian conception of our God as our creator that is consonant with our contemporary scientific and secular culture. We experience our transcendent subjectivity in all our cognitive and volitional activity. And at the same time, according to Rahner, we experience our openness to and inclination towards something absolutely transcendent that is immanent in our activity. I say 'something' because it is not any specific object of knowledge or desire; nor is it simply we ourselves as the knowing, acting subjects. It is however inherent in our conscious free activity as the condition that makes it possible, not merely as a 'logical' condition but as a reality that is essentially mysterious.

There is an unlimitedness to human consciousness and desire that indicates an unlimited reality and value as its source, an absolutely transcendent reality and value that is nevertheless immanent in our experience of ourselves as knowing, choosing subjects. There is thus philosophical space that a Christian God can come to occupy.

A reflection on our capacity for free choice will make this clearer. When we deliberately affirm something as true or choose something as good our act transcends all the causal networks the universe contains and the sciences are able to discover. Not that the laws of nature break down in us, or the social influences that have formed us cease to operate. Indeed they are absolutely necessary if we are to act at all. But they are not sufficient. If they were, we would not be free. And what holds for the free action must also hold for the capacity to act freely that is part of normal human nature as outlined above. It follows that causal networks of the universe (such as are necessary to produce human beings from pre-human nature), though necessary, are themselves insufficient to produce beings like us with the capacity for free action. There must therefore be another kind of causality at work, within the evolutionary process, though beyond the reach of science, that is absolutely transcendent of the universe though immanent in its processes to bring us into being.

The production of beings with the capacity for free acts such as ourselves is only the clearest case of a feature that is universal in the evolutionary process uncovered by modern science. This is a process in which really new forms of being are continually coming into existence through a transformation of what preceded them. The most dramatic examples, apart from the emergence of humanity, are those of consciousness from preconscious being, of living from non-living, and of the universe itself from an initial singularity. In general, cosmic evolution is from the simple and dispersed to the complex and centered. And at every stage the new form of being is not simply the product of what previously existed. Though necessary, physical things and forces are insufficient to produce biological organisms. Something more is required, a causality that transcends the cosmic process our science can investigate, though immanent in it.

Rahner's philosophical anthropology thus not only provides one with a conception of humanity that is thoroughly at home in an evolutionary world-view. It also brings to light a more general feature of a world-view such as this. Emergence of new kinds of being through a transformation of the kinds of being that preceded them is only possible by virtue of the operation of a different kind of causality altogether, one that is incommensurable with the causes science can deal with. Rahner's anthropology amounts to a new form of an argument for the existence and action in the world of a cause that would satisfy the classical Christian definition of a creator, namely one that is transcendent of the universe but is immanent in all that it is and does. The evolutionary world-view is a perfect exemplification of this. And Rahner's account also satisfies the legitimate requirements of the traditional doctrine of God's 'immediate creation of the human soul' without lapsing into any dualism of body and mind.

There is a final part of Rahner's philosophical anthropology which is of the utmost importance for understanding Christian faith in terms of an evolutionary world-view and that is his treatment of the personal development of individuals. If evolution continues in humanity it is

because it is borne by human individuals themselves, in whom there is either development or decline. Because, human beings, though transcending impersonal reality, are nevertheless dependent on it for all we are and do. There is no thought without images, no images without sensations, no sensations without sense organs sensitive to a spatio-temporal environment in which we alone can exist, express ourselves and communicate with others. This is what is known as our historicity. As transcendent beings we are able to develop an inner life, to live by meanings and values. But we can only do this in a process that unfolds in time and in a milieu that identifies us in space. We develop ourselves only in dependence on what is other than us. And, most importantly, through our relations with other persons, in a social and cultural milieu that humanity itself has constructed. Historicity is a feature of the life of individuals and of humanity as a whole.

For beings such as we are, our relations with other persons are crucial for the exercise, development and fulfilment of our distinctively personal capacities of self-consciousness and self-determination. And a philosophical phenomenology of inter-subjectivity shows that certain definite kinds of relationship with others are necessary for this. It reveals the startling fact that the more we are influenced by other persons in whom these capacities are already developed, the more self-determining we are enabled to be. Apart from such influence, we are unable to grow as persons. This can appear to contradict the fact that the capacity in question is that for self-determination, for action that is free. But careful analysis of experience proves the contrary: the more I am influenced by the other in a certain way, the more the act is my own.

This is in fact what our philosophical anthropology should lead us to expect. For we saw there that the existence of beings with a capacity for self-determination was only possible as the effect of an absolutely transcendent cause immanent in the evolutionary process. And in our experience of ourselves as knowing, choosing subjects, we are conscious of an apprehension of reality that is absolute and of a desire for something of absolute value. This experience is however not objective; the

transcendent source of our knowing and valuing is only implicit in our experience of ourselves. Here however, in the relationships with others in which we exercise develop and fulfill our capacities for self-knowledge and self-affirmation, we actually experience in an objective way the power and presence of an absolutely transcendent personal reality immanent in the very relationships themselves. It is precisely this that explains the paradoxical 'interpersonal causality' whereby the more we are subject to the influence of the other, the more self-determining we become. If the influence exercised on us was simply that of a finite cause other than us, the more it caused us to act, the less the act would be our own. But the opposite is the case. We are thus bound to recognise that within the relationships in which our capacity for self-determination is developed there is a truly transcendent personal cause at work, whose influence is incommensurable with that of finite causes, personal or impersonal.

This understanding of the necessary conditions for the exercise, development and fulfilment of human persons thus provides the basis for a 'natural theology', a new natural theology moreover that is consonant with a scientific and secular world-view and closer to the reality of religious faith than traditional arguments for the existence of God. It also provides, in my view, a fruitful approach to the problem of death.

In the sketch of the history of religion that I will presently be providing I make the point that however differently different religious traditions conceive the nature of the predicament from which their gods are understood to be able to save us, it is always characterised by two elements: conflict between human beings and death. The account just given of the interpersonal relationships required for personal growth provides a theoretical solution to the first of these, a solution that can only be realised through power from a fully transcendent source. And it is only power of this kind that can provide an answer to the problem of death. If my account of the necessary conditions for personal growth is accurate, and these conditions exist, then they also are able to answer the problem posed by death.

If it is true that human persons are transcendent in the sense that the causes science is able to identify are insufficient to bring us into being, then it follows that those same causes are insufficient to make us cease to be. But, more positively, the dynamism of personal growth through the influence of the other, is one of self-gift from and so to the other. Within the circumstances of ordinary life it is always possible to fool one-self as to whether this has been achieved; a habitual fear and self-centeredness can always provide an impediment. Death however confronts one with an unavoidable choice. For human beings death means the limit of human power to control. But the experience of personal growth through the gift of the other can help us to recognise the same feature in death. Self-assertion is futile; self-surrender to a power we have learnt to trust robs death of its threat. Instead it becomes the climax of a life in which we only have ourselves by giving ourselves away.

EVOLUTION AND THEOLOGY

Seeing creation in terms of emergence, rather than as the act of starting the universe or even as the activity of conservation that keeps it going, though a purely philosophical development, thus provides a firmer foundation for theology proper to build on. On this basis I now want to summarise the aspects of the theory of evolution and emergence which have direct relevance for Christian theology as such.

The first of these is the idea of the unity and integrity of world process such that any metaphysical dualism is avoided. And so is materialism, since the unitary process culminates in the mind and will of human beings. Each individual recapitulates in the womb the whole evolutionary process that has led to humanity, and then continues it in a specifically human way in their own life. Humanity thus appears as a microcosm of the universe as a whole, containing all other levels of reality within itself; it is a paradigm of reality and not just one species amongst others. At the same time the universe itself appears as our true home, the only place, in spite of its imperfections and incompleteness, in which we can be real. Whatever the theological notion of 'salvation' means, it cannot mean our being saved 'out of' the world. There is no other place! The evolutionary world-view

suggests a better alternative in a further transformation of the human world (and thus the universe), in the line of those transformations that have brought humanity into being and still continue, as we shall see, in human history to this day. In a perspective such as this, the struggle to 'make the world a better place', to overcome de-humanising poverty and injustice and to take good care of the natural environment, can make better theological sense.

The second aspect of evolutionary theory of direct relevance to theology is the notion of energy it embodies, and in particular the idea that the basic energy of the universe is a 'form-producing' energy (to borrow Brian Swimme's felicitous expression) whereby every kind of being manifests over time a capacity for self-transcendence, and always in the direction of greater complexity with the increasing 'centeredness' that that entails. The notion that evolution has a direction (in spite of, or perhaps even because of, the annihilations and extinctions that have occurred at regular intervals during its 14 billion year history), a direction defined by the production of truly new kinds of being through a transformation and transcendence of what has gone before, is perhaps the single most important feature of the theory as far as theology is concerned. Not only does it offer a new model for the idea of creation, as we have already noted; it also helps one to see the Incarnation in a new way, as well as the ideas of salvation and grace and the notion of the Church – as I presently hope to show.

Extending the notion of evolution to humanity itself, to human history, is a third aspect one must take into account. This must not be confused with a facile idea of progress; even if the newest science is usually the best, the same cannot be said of morality. But evolution, at every level of reality, is never simply progress. It involves experiment, trial and error, though always in the end, new being through transformation and transcendence. In human history evolution takes the form of transformations of culture and consciousness and the communities in which individuals develop. The direction taken by these transformations in the human sphere is similar to that in the evolution of living beings, and indeed to that of the cosmos as a whole. It is an evolution from simplicity and homogeneity towards

diversity and complexity. In human culture Eric Voegelin calls this the movement from compactness to differentiation. In primal societies politics and religion, philosophy and theology, economics and spirituality are not distinguished but form an integrated largely unconscious whole. Then technology supersedes magic, philosophy replaces myth, theology is distinguished from philosophy, eventually religion is seen as a distinct sphere of human life and contrasted with secularity. Finally the history of each of these spheres of life comes to be written. This evolution of culture, consciousness and community takes place within the sphere of religion itself, as in all the other spheres of human life. We will examine this in more detail presently. And then within Christianity there is an evolution in the development of doctrine, spirituality and liturgy.

A final, but possibly the most important, aspect of an evolutionary world-view is the idea of the necessity of a causal factor in world-process that is incommensurable with any cause discoverable by the sciences. This notion of incommensurability is of the utmost importance for dealing in a theological way with Christian faith. It arises, as we have seen, through an insight into our experience of our capacity for self-determination, and is given a more comprehensive and concrete character on our actual experience of personal growth in relationships with other persons. The fact that this experience is something universal, available to humanity and not exceptional, should not blind us to its essentially mysterious character. If my account is accurate then it is indeed the case that we have real experience of something absolutely transcendent, and therefore incommensurable with human persons, in our ordinary interpersonal relations.

Rahner corroborates this insight and its importance in a theological way in his treatment of the notion of creatureliness and our experience of this. Being a creature in this context entails a unique relationship to our transcendent creator, a relationship that is traditionally expressed by the notion of incommensurability. The notion of the incommensurability of creature and creator is central to classical theism and taken for granted by Aquinas. One cannot add God and the universe and make two. This is not

because either is unreal, or that God and the universe are identical, but because there is no common measure in terms of which they could be added to or subtracted from one another. The reality of each is too different. An analogy would be that of a poet composing a poem about himself. One cannot say there are two poets, the one composing and the one in the poem. But to say there is only one is misleading because the poem already exists in the poet's mind. Rahner makes use of this idea in his discussion of our creatureliness. The following quotation serves the purpose of making the connection with the idea of 'interpersonal causality' outlined above.

> The radical dependence and the genuine reality of the existent coming from God vary in direct and not in inverse proportion. In our human experience it is the case that the more something is dependent on us, the less it is different from us, and the less it possesses its own reality and autonomy. The radical dependence of the effect on the cause and the independence and autonomy of the effect vary in inverse proportion.

> But when we reflect upon the real transcendental relationship between God and a creature, then it is clear that here genuine reality and radical dependence are simply just two sides of one and the same reality, and therefore they vary in direct and not inverse proportion. We and the existents of our world really and truly are and are different from God not in spite of, but because we are established in being by God and not by anyone else (1978: 79).

The best example of this apparently contradictory, but in reality paradoxical, relation is that of the human capacity for self-determination. In our discussion of Rahner's philosophical anthropology it was pointed out that only an infinite cause could be sufficient to bring beings with the capacity for freedom into existence, albeit through the causal mechanisms of evolution. It follows that even the exercise, development and fulfillment of our capacity for self-determination is the effect of the creative causality of God. Human freedom means freedom from total determination by worldly causes, not freedom from God. It is precisely this paradoxical truth that my analysis of interpersonal causality is intended to substantiate.

Christian theology grows from the reflection of his first followers on their experience of Jesus. The fruits of this reflection are documented in the writings of the New Testament. We are now in a position to appreciate these against the background of an evolutionary view of the world and the evolution of religious thought, in the history of Israel in particular.

CHRISTIANITY IN THE HISTORY OF RELIGION

Religion is as old as humanity and is the expression of a deep desire natural to humanity for a comprehensive and enduring fulfilment to all our most basic capacities and needs, especially those beyond our own powers. The gods of all religions are seen as sources of power transcending our own, that can do this. Thus all religions see life as a predicament, the general form of which is that we are conscious of deep desires that only power transcending our own is able to fulfill. The history of religion offers many different accounts of this predicament and correspondingly different conceptions of the gods that are able to overcome it. Two elements however stand out as present in all traditions: the desire to overcome sickness and death, and the desire to overcome human conflict of every kind.

Although the gods of the different religions are always seen as having powers that transcend human power, the way these powers are understood depends on the view held of human nature and its capacities, its needs and powers. There is always an intrinsic connection between the conception of 'our god' and the conception of humanity itself. This connection is illustrated in the case of Israel by the idea that humanity is the 'image' of Yahweh. For the historian of ideas it is also true that Yahweh is the 'image' of humanity. And as human culture evolves and conceptions of human nature change, so too do conceptions of our gods. There seems to be a measure of agreement among historians that during what came to be called the Axial period (roughly 800 to 300BC) in all the major centres of civilisation, a similar development in outlook took place, a development that one can call (following Voegelin) 'the discovery of transcendence'. All cultures of the time were religious so one could call this a development in religion. However it occurred in Greece as well where it took the form of a rejection of the Greek gods in the name of an absolutely transcendent

element in humanity itself as well as an absolutely transcendent sphere that was its source. Plato, for instance, saw the human soul as possessed of a transcendence of anything material, and identified what he called the Form of the Good as the transcendent source of all reality, the gods included.

Be that as it may, in the history of Israel, especially in the time of the later prophets such as Second Isaiah and Ezekiel, it was a development in religion. Yahweh, originally a tribal god among other tribal gods, came to be seen as *the God* above all gods, and eventually as *the only God*, transcending not only human powers but all powers absolutely, of whatever spiritual beings the universe contained. The final step was to see that Yahweh was not part of the universe at all but its creator. This absolute transcendence of a god was a novelty in the history of religion. And, as the history of religion would lead one to expect, it was connected in the thinking of Israel's prophets and sages to a similar, though derived, transcendence in humanity itself as Yahweh's image. The universe, though necessary for human existence and fulfilment, was neither sufficient to produce or fulfill beings like us who had capacities, and thus needs and desires that only an absolutely transcendent being could fulfill. Hence the endless hostility of the authors of the Old Testament writings towards the 'gods of the nations' who were not to be treated as gods at all since they were powerless to fulfill the transcendent needs of beings such as we.

This conception of humanity and its God gave a special character to the understanding of the human predicament in the later thought of Israel's prophets and sages, an understanding that is spelled out in mythical form in the first eleven chapters of the book of Genesis. These stories, especially those of Adam and Eve in the garden and the Tower of Babel, are stories of idolatry. The human predicament is depicted as a state of conflict within the human family, the consequence of which is death. The cause of conflict is sin. And sin is simply idolatry. Idolatry is self-worship, the desire to be like a transcendent god without depending on this god. And this is almost inevitable for us since we have a god-like capacity for transcendence and creativity, but one that can only be developed and fulfilled by our transcendent creator. The solution developed in the history

of Israel to this predicament lay in Yahweh himself taking control of human history, overcoming human disunity by transforming the hearts and minds of the chosen people so that they would accept and engage with God as their Saviour and their King. Then they would be a community of love and peace, a universal community that would last forever.

This then is the background of the historic event documented by the writings of the New Testament. In summary: the disciples' experience of Jesus and His effect in their lives, culminating in the mysterious experience of meeting with Him after His death and of His continuing presence amongst them, led them to believe that God himself was present in Jesus and in them in such a way that they shared in His own sin-and death-transcending life. This vision and spirit had come to them from Jesus and so they called him 'Saviour'. This interpersonal interaction with Jesus is the event from which all Christian theology derives. It is this which, in our scientific and secular culture, we need to understand in terms of the evolutionary view of the world.

THEOLOGY IN A SCIENTIFIC AND SECULAR CULTURE

Traditionally this foundational event is called, in the case of Jesus, the Incarnation and, in the case of his disciples, Salvation or Redemption. And traditionally it is understood as an intervention by God in human history for the purpose of our salvation from a situation more or less like what I have just sketched above. "*Cur Deus homo?*" theologians from Anselm to Aquinas have asked. And the answer given to this question was invariably "To save us from sin and the effects of sin." No sin, no Incarnation, no need! In an evolutionary perspective however everything looks different. We have learnt to see creation as a continuing process, a process that produces humanity and continues in human history as an evolution of consciousness, culture and community. From the standpoint of Jesus and His first followers this can now be seen in the history of Israel culminating in them. God is creating a new consciousness in humanity, a new insight into human nature and into God himself that is to permeate our culture and its institutions with a new spirit so that a new community of humanity will result. In this perspective human history is essentially a history of

revelation and a history of salvation. And what is more, the mysterious secret finally revealed and realised in His followers' relationship with Jesus, is that this will be a community with God's own self - God present in our minds and hearts and in our lives. As Karl Rahner would put it, the whole of human history is a history of God's self-communication to us. And it reaches an unsurpassable climax in the life of Jesus and His effect on his disciples. Subsequent history is to be the spelling out of the implications of this vision and the implementation of this spirit universally. Evolution has now a new direction, the construction on this foundation of a hospitable home for humanity where they can live as a loving family with God.

I now want to show how this basic outlook affects the way we understand the central doctrines that have developed in the history of the Church to explain the nature of Christian faith. I will use the work of Karl Rahner to do this since he has explicitly situated his theology within an evolutionary framework. In particular he sees human evolution as recapitulating that of the cosmos: it is the universe itself that continues to evolve in us, in our thoughts and actions.

> The history of nature and of spirit form an intrinsic and stratified unity in which the history of nature develops towards man, continues on in him as *his* history, is preserved and surpassed in him, and therefore reaches its own goal with and in the history of man's spirit (Rahner 1978:187).

Rahner sees this evolution as God's creative achievement and as a moment within that self-communication of God that culminates in the Incarnation and its effects in us:

> Now according to Christian teaching, this self-transcendence of the cosmos in man (sic) towards its own totality and towards its ground does not really and fully reach its ultimate fulfilment until the cosmos is not only something established in existence by its ground, is not only something created, but also receives the immediate self-communication of its own ground in the spiritual creatures which are its goal and its high point. This immediate self-communication of God to spiritual creatures takes place in what we call "grace" while this self-communication is still

in its historical process, and glory and "glory" when it reaches fulfilment. Not only does God create something different from himself, but he also gives himself to this other. The world receives God, the infinite and the ineffable mystery, in such a way that he himself becomes its innermost life. The always unique self-possession of the cosmos, which is concentrated in each individual spiritual person in its transcendence towards the absolute ground of its reality, takes place by the fact that the absolute ground itself becomes immediately interior to what is grounded by it (1978:190).

In this evolutionary understanding of Christianity, God (as the one Jesus called Abba) has a quite distinctive character and relationship to us. In the first place it is God who is now recognised as the source of our existence and the one whom we experience in our experience of ourselves as knowing, choosing subjects involved with other persons in a milieu of culture and of nature. And it is God whom we experience especially in those relationships with others in which we exercise, develop and fulfill those capacities that make us subjects, and, in particular, our desire for the fullness of personal community and death-transcending life. For Rahner, nobody is without this experience, and it is in this sense that he uses the term 'anonymous Christian'. Of course experience is not knowledge, and primal cultures had only inadequate ideas of God, as are expressed in their religion. But for Rahner the whole of human history can be seen as an evolution towards the true understanding of the power that moves history towards its goal through the insights and freedom of humanity. And this is because he believes that human history is the history of *God's self-communication* to humanity. The notion of God's self-communication to humanity is the fundamental conception in Rahner's theology. It is this idea that defines both salvation and revelation for him.

The salvation of humanity consists in the creation of 'the unity of humanity in union with God', to paraphrase the expression used by the Second Vatican Council. For Rahner the way to this is God's self-communication to us throughout human history, but finally and fully in the life of Jesus. For a union between God and humanity to exist it must be achieved in our human world, the world God created for this purpose. It cannot take place anywhere else, for human beings cannot be real

anywhere else. We are 'evolution become conscious of itself'. However transformed, it is this universe that is our eternal home. And it has been created by God with the purpose of making it a home in which God can be with us. We don't go to God; God comes to us. This is the import of Rahner's idea of God's self-communication. And so the Incarnation (the complete and therefore unsurpassable form of God's self-communication) is seen as the purpose of creation, and salvation as the purpose of the Incarnation. One must of course add that the notion of salvation is only appropriate because of sin; it is God's continuing creation and self-communication in the process of overcoming sin and the effects of sin in us. Finally, salvation can only be achieved if God's self-communication is accepted. For Christian faith it is, and completely, by Jesus. The acceptance of God's self-communication, by Jesus or by us, is also always the result of God's freedom-creating power in human acts, 'grace' in Rahner's terminology.

Revelation, as Rahner understands it, is not primarily the revelation of truths but the revelation of God himself. It is an aspect of God's self-communication, that which imparts the personal knowledge of God. This knowledge is personal knowledge, the knowledge of acquaintance, not knowledge of truths about God, not something that can be written down. It is thus not to be identified with scripture, whether Jewish or Christian. It is that which is possessed by the persons - prophets, apostles, Jesus himself – who write or are written about in the scriptures. Rahner, as I have already indicated, sees the history of God's revelation of God as coinciding with the whole of human history. And, as with salvation, revelation proceeds by fits and starts, developing in different ways and to different degrees in every culture and religion. It reaches an unsurpassable completeness only in Jesus.

Because Christian faith in God is faith in the one revealed in the person and life of Jesus, it depends on a knowledge of that person and that life. This is as true for those who were intimate with him before his death as it is for us. But for us this knowledge is mediated to us by that original community as it has expanded through two thousand years. And it is

complicated by the fact that the original community (and its extension through time and space) was formed by a faith in Jesus' resurrection. So there is no way of getting to know anything (or anything of importance) about Jesus apart from those who believed in His resurrection. Certainly all the writings of the New Testament are written from the point of view of this faith. Modern scientific study of these has helped a great deal to form an objective picture of what Jesus said and did and of the effect this had on his followers. But the project of building up a detailed biography of Jesus is doomed to failure. That does not matter however from the point of view of Christian theology. As theologians we want an accurate picture of the *faith* of Jesus' followers and, if possible, the faith of Jesus Himself. Since the authors of the New Testament writings believed that their faith in God was the same as that of Jesus – since they had acquired it through their intimacy with Him – they are providing us with first-hand information about the nature of that faith. And that is what we really want. Rahner (though not himself a biblical scholar in the strict sense, had studied more works of biblical scholarship than most who are) certainly believed that we are in possession of sufficient knowledge of what the first followers of Jesus believed, and of what Jesus Himself believed, to be able to share their faith. He is supported in this conviction both by the philosophical insights into the capacities and deep desires of our human nature that I have outlined, as well as by the history of religion I have sketched above. And he certainly believed that if a person was not in touch with his own humanity, but had a mind full of contemporary illusions or ancient myths, then authentic Christian faith would be virtually impossible.

Rahner felt that one can say something about Jesus' own self-understanding. Jesus certainly saw himself as standing in the historic line of Jewish prophets, but with this difference: he was bringing this line to an end. All other prophets saw themselves as bearers of God's word to Israel, but that word was not seen as God's final word. The prophets saw their words as God's words ("The Lord your God says this" and "Thus says the Lord"), but still expected God to say more. Jesus, on the other hand, had a message whose very content implied that it was the final one, final because complete and unsurpassable. Rahner sees Jesus' gospel of the kingdom of

God as implying God's *self*-communication to the world, not just a message. And not even God could do more than that.

So the first stage of human history was coming to an end; the final stage was beginning. 'Was beginning…?' Rahner believes that Jesus did not know, perhaps even was mistaken, about the 'times and seasons' of God's full and irrevocable entry into human history, his 'kingdom'. But he also believes that Jesus saw himself as in some way or other responsible for its inauguration. And that Jesus felt this responsibility because of his experience of God's extraordinary closeness to him. Here is how he puts it:

> Jesus experienced a relationship to God which he experienced as new and unique in comparison with other men, but which he nevertheless considered to be exemplary for other men (sic) in their relationship to God…Jesus experienced in himself that radical and victorious offer of God to him which did not exist before in this way among 'sinners', and he knows that it is significant, valid and irrevocable for *all* men. According to his own self-understanding he is already before the resurrection the one sent, the one who inaugurates the kingdom of God through what he says and what he does in a way that did not exist before, but now does exist *through* him and *in* him. At least in this sense the pre-resurrection Jesus already knew himself to be the absolute and unsurpassable Saviour (1978:253-254).

Certainly his followers saw Him in that light, and even before the Resurrection experience of His being with them although He had died. Unless they had, His death would not have been the catastrophic disaster it clearly was. And nor would their experience of the Resurrection have had the meaning that it did.

What the followers of Jesus came to see, and what later theology has tried ever since to find appropriate words for, was that the immanence of the transcendent God of Israel in historical events, and especially in the words and acts of the prophets, had reached an unsurpassable climax in Jesus and His relationship with them. In this experience they saw God as uniting Jesus to himself by taking his human nature into himself in such a way that the incommensurability of creator and creature found full expression in

Jesus' character and life, and in the influence He had on his disciples. As they came to put it, they experienced Jesus as being 'without sin', in virtue of the unity between God's Word and Spirit and His own. God's self-communication had always provided the ultimate environment of humanity; never before had it been fully accepted.

An evolutionary world-view is a scientific and secular one. It is therefore important that Christianity avoids the appearance of mythical thinking. Too often the figure of Jesus has been presented in this way, as a kind of 'superman' *ubermensch* or a mere 'humanoid' apparition of God. There were indeed monophysitist tendencies in Christianity from the start. In view of the universal human tendency towards idolatry outlined above, this should not surprise us. The defense of Jesus' genuine humanity is still necessary. And this is one of the main aims of Rahner's "Christology within an evolutionary view of the world". He stresses that the

> hypostatic union may not be seen so much as something which distinguishes Jesus from us, but as something which must occur once and only once when the world begins to enter upon its final phase (1978: 181).

And this because

> the intrinsic effect of the hypostatic union for the assumed humanity of the Logos consists precisely and in real sense *only* in the very thing which is ascribed to all men (sic) as their goal and their fulfilment, namely the immediate vision of God (1978:200).

In Trinitarian terms, it is the same presence of the Father's Word and Spirit in Jesus and in His followers that enables them to participate in God's sin- and death-transcendent life.

CHRISTIAN FAITH IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

It remains true that for Christian faith God's presence in Jesus has a completeness that cannot be surpassed, since it is in fact there that it is fully revealed – to Jesus in the first place, but also to His disciples. But according to the same faith, God has always been present in human history

though not fully experienced as such. Nor can it be thought that human history, and the evolution of culture and community that implies, is now at an end. Too often religions and Christianity in particular, attempt to fix their faith on some past event and the earliest expression of its meaning. This is the idolatry of fundamentalism. Instead, in order to do justice to the evolutionary understanding of reality, an authentic faith can only exist in changing forms of culture and community. Such changing forms are always created and carried by a small minority of believers. And it is only in the nineteenth century that the idea of 'the development of doctrine' becomes fully conscious. It is a genuine fruit of human evolution nonetheless, as Newman saw when he observed that "to live is to change and to live perfectly is to have changed often". In this light it is not fanciful to see the phenomenon of secularisation, in spite of all its imperfections, as a fruit of that unity of humanity and God identified in the Incarnation. Charles Taylor does in fact see it in this way when he describes it in *A Secular Age* as the completion of the Axial discovery of transcendence (2007:774).

So human evolution is not over with the Incarnation. For Christian faith it is at a new beginning. If the Incarnation is the ultimate revelation of God's saving presence in human history, it is not something that is now over and done with. To believe in the Resurrection of Jesus is to believe in His continuing 'real presence' in the world. And that means that God's Incarnation continues, though now in the sacramental mode we call the Church, which is a communion of Jesus with His followers.

Christian faith is personal knowledge of a person, given and received in a relationship between persons. For this reason it cannot be exhaustively or finally expressed in any form of words. For the same saving relationship to be achieved in different times and places, different words must of necessity be used for its expression. This of course is the ongoing work of theology as *fides quaerens intellectum*. And if we are to take the notion of an evolution in human history seriously we are bound to look for a development in theology as well. If there is an increase in our knowledge

of the world and of ourselves, surely there can be an increase in our understanding of our faith as well.

A word of caution: the newest science is the truest; the same is not true of philosophy, or of any of the other forms of knowledge that constitute wisdom. This more comprehensive, deeper understanding is always the achievement of particular individuals. And it cannot be communicated to others in the way that the knowledge of the sciences can. Nevertheless I think that the achievements of science as well as philosophy enable a deeper, fuller understanding - in our post-modern setting, beyond pre-modern superstition and modern materialism - of the event on which Christian faith is based.

The account given above of the necessary conditions for the exercise, growth and fulfilment of our capacity for self-determination, an account that provides evidence for the presence and influence within the intersubjective relations of human persons of a strictly transcendent yet personal power, does to my mind help one to understand better the relationship between Jesus and His disciples that constituted both their salvation and a revelation of God. There in an extreme form we have the 'interpersonal causality' that reveals the presence of the transcendent in our experience of personal growth: the gift of self from and so to the other. In this connection it is worth remarking that the consonance we pointed out between the self-offering dynamism involved in personal growth and the living of our death as the final gift of self to God, is exhibited perfectly in the disciples' experience of Jesus' Resurrection. This is at one and the same time an experience of union with Him and an insight into the meaning of His life and death.

It can be reasonably asked of Christians who accept the evolutionary view what form an evolution of Christianity might be expected to take. There is no simple answer to this question. The traditional answer: missionary activity and conversion, no longer seems appropriate. We have to look for an answer to the new social and cultural environment in which any such evolution must take place.

Keith Ward, in his courageous and perceptive work *A Vision to Pursue* argues for a critical engagement on the part of Christians with their own tradition, the purpose of which is to renew it. Renewal, as Ward understands it, is something radical in which a real transformation takes place, so that what emerges is something really new though comprising all the essential ingredients of the old. Nor is it only Christians who must engage in this creative criticism; it is a necessity for all religious traditions, a necessity produced by the evolution of consciousness, culture and community of which I have spoken. As always, renewal of a tradition is the work of a small minority of the faithful. Ward however believes that "within each tradition there are many who stand within the tradition, but think that they can, and should, revise some of its central ideas to take account of advances in scientific knowledge, scriptural and historical scholarship, or changes in moral and philosophical outlook." (1991:194)

In our post-modern context we are confronted with a plurality of cultural and religious traditions, and new ones are beginning all the time. Insight into evolution should lead us to expect this. And we should also recognise that not all traditions of this kind are equally true or good, not all constitute an evolutionary advance. At the moment this global plurality of cultures and religions is a theatre of conflict if not a war-zone. This is often depicted by religious traditions as at root a conflict between the old and good and the new and bad:

> They see the basic modern religious conflict as one between an ancient and irreformable truth, embodied in one cultural framework, and destructive forces of secularism and materialism, which must be resisted by a return to the old absolute value (199:206).

This is a mistake:

> The true conflict is between a form of Enlightenment thinking which has become, self-defeatingly, trapped in a dogmatic system of materialism and a form of religious faith which is open to new insights and repentant of old mistakes. It is not the opposition of one dogmatism to another, as the fundamentalists suppose. It is the endeavor to open up the Enlightenment

to its spiritual basis and goal, in the relation of free finite spirits to the unconditioned freedom of the supreme creative Spirit underlying all things. This does necessitate a criticism of all traditions; but only in order that they may move to a wider and deeper grasp of what is implicit within them. It does necessitate a conversation of traditions with one another; but only in order that each may learn its limitations by learning the differing visions found elsewhere (1991:207).

This suggests that the way forward, the direction to be chosen, involves developing a conversation between religious traditions and perhaps particularly between those traditions that have lasted, the biblical religions of the Middle East and the Eastern religions of India and China. But a condition of health of such a conversation will be its ability to recognise and express itself in terms of the scientific and secular culture that is here to stay. Indeed I would go so far as to say that it is only a 'natural theology' based on the insights into our human nature provided by this culture that can provide both a standard for judging the truth and value of any religion and also a basis for genuine dialogue between them. I hope I have done enough in this paper to show that a Christian faith expressed in terms of an evolutionary world-view has nothing to fear from such a conversation.

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Recapturing the Unlimited Term of Human Willing*

PATRICK GIDDY

INTRODUCTION

I am concerned to recover, at the heart of any adequate account of human agency, that is to say the will, a dimension of value, and, secondly, one of religious commitment. To put it simply, we are here on earth to build community, and to grow in the love of God. I intend to draw out this sermon-like conclusion (a religious platitude one might even say) from an analysis of the nature of human agency or the will. It is the openness of the will to unrestricted value that points it beyond itself to the universal, the communal. Secondly, this natural human potential is actualised intersubjectively and only through the initiative of an already actualised transcendent personal power.

These two statements sum up the argument of this paper. The first point I make through the help of Hebert McCabe's version of Thomism, in his argument against the idea that sensuous animal life could be made fully intelligible by the kind of cause and effect explanation characteristic of brain research. The second point I make with the help of Augustine Shutte's *critique* of McCabe's linguistic-type Thomism, emphasising the self-enacting nature of human agency – what he terms its "spiritual" nature – and the necessary intersubjective conditions for the realisation of this nature.

In this paper I argue for a concept of the human will that by its nature intends a universality that transcends the system of material causes and is

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arguably brought to fulfilment through an orientation to God. Contemporary reductionist accounts of the will are fuelled by the supposition that this is the only alternative to a supernaturalistic concept of the mind or will cohabitating with the body. But Herbert McCabe shows, in a non-dualist way, that for animals, perception is a matter of receiving *intentionally*, allowing for a degree of voluntariness, and that by virtue of the human capacity for language, humans can direct themselves by means of a grasp of good reasons for action. Partially disagreeing, Augustine Shutte clarifies the *non-material* nature of the capacity for willing, explained as self-enactment, which finds expression in language. Understanding the will, we can now see, is also a moment of growth in the appreciation of value, and can be seen to ground the achievement of true community. Furthermore the logic of growth in the breadth of one's willingness is unpacked by Shutte by means of the Guru-novice model of interpersonal transaction. And this connects to the hope, expressed in religion, in the power in our lives of a transcendent God.

MCCABE'S LINGUISTIC THOMISM AS REFUTATION OF REDUCTIONIST ACCOUNTS OF THE WILL

The contemporary burgeoning research into the mechanisms of the human brain has sometimes been accompanied by the idea that scientific accounts will, eventually, provide a fully adequate account of human decision-making, of the will. For Ainslie, for example, reasons-for-action, or what he terms "the internal market place" can quite adequately be accounted for by an observer (2001:38-39). This leaves out of the picture our moral experience, the experience of knowing ourselves to be responsible for our own deliberate actions. The difficulties of growing in responsibility are systematically neglected.

While the way I am going to argue in this paper is typical of the Thomist tradition, it is not suggested that reasons and will determine behavior as the application of heat determines the agitation of the water molecules. But this model of causality pervades arguments supporting the reductionist approach to human willing. Wittgenstein, in particular, targets any idea of "willing" as a non-physical event preceding and putting into motion the

"action," a physical event, "the idea of willing as the original executive act, a prior event whose occurrence makes its consequences into an action" (Candlish 2001:171). In the *Philosophical Investigations* (par. 621) Wittgenstein postulates two events, "my arm goes up" (a physical event), and "I raise my arm" (a willing event) and asks rhetorically what is left over if from the latter I subtract the former. Nothing at all, he would suppose. In his own discussion of human agency McCabe has a parallel example. Compare, he suggests, "she waved her arms about" (physical event) with "she greeted her friend across the street." The second is not at all some event preceding the first, but neither can one suppose that the first is all there is to be said about the event. No, the second is the *meaning* of the first description, it is the relevance of the action for the agent, or as McCabe would put it, in the life of the organism as a whole.

In animal perception, he goes on to argue, we have to see in what way this differs from an explanatory story suited to non-animate phenomena. There is the impact of the light on the cow's retina, to be sure. But that in itself does not amount to seeing. He calls upon Aquinas' distinction between the light from the green grass being received "naturally" (as it is on the cow's white hide, turning it slightly green) and being received "intentionally" by the cow itself. In the latter case it becomes "a factor in the cow's interpretation of and behavior towards its world" (2005:65). "What makes the impact of light on, say, the cow's retina count as *seeing* is the organic coordination of the bits of the cow's body. So the cow's eye does not see. Nor does its brain see. The cow sees." (2005:105) Similarly, the causality of the dog's behavior should not be assimilated to any kind of physical cause and effect. The dog runs, argues McCabe, *because* it sees the rabbit. (2005:105) Voluntariness is a proper interpretative category in its case.

So here we have a non-physicalist account of behaviour which is also not dualist. It does not suppose that some mysterious "willing" event happens prior to the physical event. Instead, we have simply the fact of the particular kind of "organised structure" of the animal calling for a particular account of its behavior in terms of voluntariness and non-voluntariness. This does not however furnish a foundation for the kind of

purposive behavior that we approach through ethical discussion. We are talking about justifying as meaningful and appropriate, a discussion of the quality of anyone's reasons-for-action for one's deliberately chosen acts, of one's deliberate aims, typically in categories of 'good' and 'bad' – an approach Wittgenstein, for example, could not quite make sense of.

McCabe does make sense of it. He says that in the case of the human animal the crucial factor is that of language. Concepts, as medieval philosophy argued at length, are universal; it is our senses that restrict us to the particulars (2005:109). If I mention the ANC Youth League, a variety of *different* images might occur to members of my audience (Julius Malema; or toyi-toying; and so on); in each case however the *concept* of the ANC Youth League is identical. (Unless there has been a misconception – but that is easily cleared up.) So we participate, through language, in a *universal* community of meaning. Furthermore, our living by linguistic symbols means we have the capacity for free decision: we can present ourselves with what is, but might not be, and is not, but might be. We *move ourselves* more radically than is the case with non-human animals. So in this kind of social life we need to be able to *move ourselves by good reasons*, and this means we needs education in the virtues. He writes:

> Our kind of social living demands the deliberate cultivation of certain dispositions which will sustain social friendship (2005:113).

Thus temperance, for example, has a *political* significance (it makes for good living together), it is a *public* matter. This of course goes against the liberal framing of society and its careful protection of your private space where ethics has no role to play. And it reveals the underlying dualist concept of human agency – willing might be oriented towards universal or life in common, but equally it might not – on which the liberal understanding of ethics is based. It does not by its nature lift you up to the plane of the universal.

SHUTTE'S OBJECTION: SELF-ENACTMENT OR "SPIRIT" AS EXPLANATORY

But has McCabe given an adequate foundation for the human capacity to act for good reasons? Shutte thinks not. McCabe moves from the

"organised structure" of the non-human animal to that of the human. What is the difference? To talk of "animal *rights*," McCabe thinks, is misleading because the non-human animal does not share the space of meanings in which self-conscious claims on the other members makes sense. The animal's world is pre-defined by a set of responses – meanings – that are biological in origin, genetically provided. But the human world is self-defined. "Having a mind" is just the capacity to live in structures we call language. And this is self-made, invented, not simply found.

This reframing of our understanding of human agency is all to the good. Without recourse to the notion of the immateriality of the human power of agency, McCabe has reached the point of the centrality of the virtues, and of character, in ethics – of self-knowledge and self-development.

Shutte is not convinced.[1] Or only partially convinced. To be an animal is to part of a particular kind of life in common, and to be a human is to be part of a somewhat different kind, characterised by what we can, along with McCabe, term freedom. It is open to an unlimited creativity. So far so good. But what needs to be clarified if one is to right the wrongs of a default scientistic and reductionist intellectual culture, is *the kind of unity* we are talking about when McCabe speaks of "complex structures." This is important because if McCabe's argument *doesn't* go through, then his further remarks about being human is to enter more deeply into community, will be seen simply as a communitarian bias. In other words it won't be clear that this way of viewing agency, the will, has *intrinsically* moral dimensions – again, something Wittgenstein struggled with.

We can begin with sensation. Shutte clarifies McCabe's Thomistic point that sensation is not a physiological occurrence in a physiological thing.

> Insofar as a foot is simply a physical thing it will have limited value as the organ of a sense power. It will for instance have a temperature of its own and thus not be sensitive to precisely that temperature in its objects (1984:55).

It is only insofar as it lacks the properties of the specific object that it is able to sense it at all. The eye, argues Aquinas, since it is sensitive to all colours, is itself without colour. Colour in the eye itself would colour what is seen through it just as much as coloured glass does (*Summa Theologiae*, Ia, Q.75, Art. 2). Shutte clarifies this well: When the animal sees "the change in the organ of sense is physiological (nerve impulses, brain reactions and so on), the change in the sense power is not." The latter change is, in Aquinas' terms, "intentional" or "spiritual."

Here is Shutte's objection. Our language-using does not explain how we are brought into a universal community, raised to the level of the ethical. For Aquinas, the intellect can understand all sensible and bodily things. But just as the organ of sight cannot itself have a colour, so too the intellect must be lacking in any bodily feature. There is, concludes Shutte, no *mental stuff* that our picture of things could be made of – and so thought of as in some place, or as some instrument. Our grasp of the cow cannot *resemble* the cow - it must have everything the cow has and nothing else.

Cows know sensible accidents, not the thing as such, and such knowing is a particular occurrence in a particular animal, and caused by sensible objects. Is this individuality and particularity overcome in the case of language-users? While it may be true that language is communal and so universal, it is only individuals who exist, it is they who are the ultimate cause of language. Apart from their use, linguistic symbols are simply particular material marks, not universal at all. And the act of production of speech-acts is as individual as any other really existing thing – and so too the thing whose act it was. We have to conclude that the immateriality of the organ (and agent) of understanding must consist in the act or meaning not being *caused* by another.

> Linguistic acts are not immaterial because they are universal but because they are uncaused. The universality of their product is in some peculiar way a *sign* of this self-enactment (1984:56).

To understand this we need to consider two kinds of "being an individual thing." In Aquinas individuality, the sheer "thisness" of things is what makes things a possible object of sense-experience. No transcendence of material causality here of the type we are looking for, that is to say, entailing a necessary dimension of value. But we can also experience another sort of individuality, namely that of being an agent, of choosing, of judging, of valuing. This experience is primordial – denying it seems to be a performative self-contradiction (So if you do not admit this agency, who produced this sentence or claim?). It is, crucially, experienced as different to ordinary things. Ordinary things in a sense lack identity, they are liable to change into something else: machines rust and break down, plants flower but the flower turns to seed; material living things die and turn to dust, as we do.

With the origin of action that I cannot but experience myself to be, this is not so.

> In the act of understanding or of choice, I know that the self *of whom* I am aware or whom I choose to be is identically the same as the self that *is aware* or that chooses (1984:57, my italics).

I come to judge some idea or interpretation (say, that influences to do with class identity were more significant than those to do with racial identity in the genesis of the apartheid system) is in fact true to how things actually are (even if I can only judge it is probably true, it is *in fact* probably true). In this act it is myself holding the idea that is judged by myself. It is not one part of me acting on another part. The same is the case when I make a deliberate choice of action. I am self-enacting. This means I am self-moving, immaterial, in a way unlike that of non-human animals.

Shutte's suggests, finally, that this can be reconciled with my materiality in a non-dualist way. My spirituality is my relatedness to myself, while my materiality is my relatedness to other-than-self. If one thinks of my dependence on the world around me, and in particular on other persons, then it can be seen that the first develops only through the second. My spirituality is, paradoxically, enacted in direct proportion (and not indirect)

to my dependence on other-than-me. An explanation of this apparent paradox follows below. It is of course crucial for our understanding of ethics, in particular the exigencies of growth in character, in self-knowledge and self-determination.

UNDERSTANDING THE WILL AS A MOMENT OF VALUE APPRECIATION

Shutte's term for the self-enacting power of human persons is "spirit." McCabe's fear, we can guess, is that talk of "spirit" will lead to an individualism that overlooks our nature as political animals. Your spirit, like your soul, is this mysterious immaterial and ghostly "you" inside your body, and about which you should be ultimately concerned – which might involve a good attitude to others, of course, but only as a derived, secondary sort of obligation. Virtuous dispositions will be cultivated in a kind of self-centered way, hardly an example of the universality McCabe sees implied in the Thomist approach to the will. So, if one does go along with Shutte's main point, more clarification is needed. On the other hand, as already pointed out, if McCabe's argument is *not* in the final analysis a plausible account of our agency, his non-individualism will seem arbitrary. McCabe's notion of agency, of individual free will or decision, is clarified by him by means of a contrast with the limited range of possible aims or goals typical of non-human animals. The unlimited horizon of human ends attaches to our capacity to move ourselves by good reasons. McCabe assumes this must involve participation in the system of symbols that is invented by our culture, there being no predetermined limit to that system, and thus contain a social dimension. But is actually *willing* that society, that culture, or that tradition, built in here? One's actions make rational sense in the context of the story one tells oneself, and this is a story that one has derived largely from one's own tradition; furthermore, McCabe goes on, what Catholics call "grace" is one's insertion into God's telling of the story. But what if the story, whether of one's culture or one's faith, no longer has traction? Aristotle's ethics, after all, was a kind of narrative about being a person (a man) in Athenian culture – and this doesn't work for us today, at least not fully.

So, if the project of rethinking agency as living through values is to work, avoiding any reification of a *particular* culture's set of values (and on the rebound taking refuge in a basic ethics of individualism), a more consequential development of this idea is needed, bringing out the necessary willing of community with others as built into that agency. This can be done if one moves away from McCabe's kind of sociological account of agency, to an interpersonal. Robert Johann, an American Neo-Thomist, wants to distinguish any plausible ethics of agency from a limited conception thereof as tied into and restricted by a particular group identity, a particular cultural ideal. What the distinguishing thing is about typically human action is the intention – we can recall McCabe's example of the woman waving her arms about. But intention only makes sense in the context of communicating with other persons, who "get" my intention: in our example, they know perfectly well the possibility that my arms waving may be intended as a greeting.[2] If I am acting in a cross-cultural context, I will try to make sure that my intention is made even clearer. Johann concludes:

> What calls for and justifies an act as intentional is the achievement of a relation of subjects, of persons. Human subjectivity is by nature a capacity for, and an interest in, life-with-you (1988:72).

It is this community-of-mutual-appreciation that forms the non-arbitrary objective standard for judging the quality of my reasons for action. Johann's point is that the project of trying to act for good reasons, i.e. reasons which I must suppose would be convincing to anyone in similar circumstances, only gets off the ground if there is in fact such an objective standard. And, he shows, this is precisely what is found implicit in our human agency. Deliberating about the objectively worthwhile then becomes a meaningful activity, and makes the ideal of a politics of consensus a realistic one – rather than settling for a politics of majority domination or else of compromise.[3]

What have we learned from this discussion? Just this: it is only through an engaged attitude, and not through scientific observation, that we can discern what is going on here in human willing. To reinforce McCabe's

point, no amount of the study of brain activity will arrive at an adequate understanding of the nature of willing, or of weakness of will for that matter. Understanding human willing, acquiring greater self-knowledge, is at the same time grasping a value, being persuaded of a value. It is or involves a re-orientation. This kind of understanding is a moment of personal growth. And such a moment, engaging one's power of will and one's emotions, is more likely to occur in the serious reading of novels than perhaps in science.[4]

In coming to understand human agency what will dawn upon one will be the hitherto unrealised *objectivity* of values. One becomes aware of being caught up in the project of being an agent, *meaning something* by one's deliberate actions: entering into a *common project* to get to the really good thing to do. It is the assurance that the commonality of the project will not entail any diminution of my agency, my individuality – that I, and you, are in touch with the truly good (potentially, of course) – that allows me to co-affirm this communality of persons along with my proposed course of action. As I am progressively more myself, I perceive by the same token how authentic community of persons is possible, is a realistic rather than simply imagined ideal.

FAILURE IN AGENCY AND THE 'GURU-NOVICE' TRANSACTIONAL PROCESS

I think this is the best way to *frame* Shutte's approach to human agency through various "models" of intersubjective transactions.[5] Human growth, he argues, happens through the intersubjective influence between persons. He uses three abstract models to make his point that growth is initiated, developed, and perfected only through such transactions. It is the model he terms "Guru and Novice" that speaks to our problem of failure of agency, a "paralysing weakness of will" (1985:32). In each case the interpersonal model involves Person A in need of growth, and Person B who is fully developed as a person and through whose influence on Person A, growth in self-knowledge and in the quality of their self-affirmation, is affected. We can look very briefly at how this takes effect, but my point here is simply that we do not have such fully developed persons around us and the question that is left hanging to some extent in Shutte's analysis, is what

exactly is one to make of these what one feels are in some or other way intuitively accurate descriptions, picking out central features of our life with others. It is our previous analyses, struggling to give a real existential understanding of agency, that provide a clue to this question: a certain personal attitude (with no doubt a necessary public and institutional dimension) is called for.

Shutte focuses on the unity of the person. The person can best be understood by means of the three systems of intellect, will, and emotions: our beliefs may be in contradiction with one another, and mostly are; our will can be in disarray, not unified; our feelings also may pull us in different directions. Secondly, there may be disunity *between* our beliefs and our habitual choices, and between both of these and the way we feel about things. We need to grow in self-knowledge if the systems are going to be more unified internally - in other words if our beliefs, for example, are going to be less contradictory. And we need to grow in the quality of our self-affirmation if there is going to be greater unity between our beliefs and our choices and between both of these and our feelings. By the quality of our self-affirmation I refer to the extent to which we are whole-hearted about our choices, our chosen style of life, or else somewhat contradicted about these.

> In order for me to be able to affirm myself wholeheartedly, my beliefs about values must be true and my system of habits of choice and feeling must be in accordance with them... The project of self-knowledge and self-affirmation can thus be seen as a project to unify the personality in the most radical way possible (1985:30-31).

The key to the unification is what Shutte terms the deep desires of our nature. We need, to put it very simply, to listen to our real feelings. He is thinking of, for example, the natural desire to know one-self, and to grow as a person, in the quality of one's responsibility, and the desire for authentic community with other persons.

The paralysing aspect referred to as weakness of will comes about because of the difficulty, the impossibility almost, of growing in self-knowledge

and self-affirmation. Our ignorance of our deepest needs is in a way self-imposed – growth in self-knowledge depends on our consent and thus on the will. But we *resist* the revelations of the true nature of our desires; we cling to our self-image. We like to be committed, but that commitment comes at a cost, the suppression of doubt. But

> our spurious security brings us no real satisfaction but only an ever-growing increase in anxiety. Because we do not accept what we really are we are divided in the very centre of ourselves (1985:35).

Growth in the quality of our self-affirmation depends on greater self-insights; but it those insights that our will, our mode of self-affirmation, resists. A vicious circle.

The Guru, by offering friendship, brings me into a new dimension of personal possibility. Because he lives out, affirms, the natural desires that I also share, I cannot, finally, fail to find him attractive. His self-consent speaks to my possibilities. Liking him, I come to see the coherence of his self-understanding, and appreciate this. My blocks to greater self-knowledge in myself don't apply to my appreciation of him as a person. I come to affirm his style of self-affirmation. After all, I affirm him as affirming me (the best me, which he can appreciate since he knows and affirms his own deep desires wholeheartedly). And he affirms me as affirming him (which I at my best do). In fact he affirms me affirming him affirming me. Through this interpersonal transaction personal growth is effected in the novice.

Understanding weakness of will, the common expression of our inability to be fully consequential in our living, will involve an appreciation of certain concrete or determinate values. There is a value being offered (if we can put it like this) through one's interaction with others that makes sense of and grounds one's agency, one's sense of self. It is the real value of the influence on one's own willing of a fully integrated personal being, fully self-aware, in a way that one can only guess at, and integrally self-affirming.[6] The proper response to this is one of gratitude and, well, acceptance of the gift. Growth as a person necessarily involves growing in one's ability to express love as a response to the gift of love or acceptance.

So this is the meaning we should increasingly come to see as the horizon of our deliberate actions, and live by, the power of the precisely non-finite, fully complete, a reality that we in our project to be persons, are held by. Religious traditions, one can add here, have in all likelihood something like this in mind in talking about the object of their faith, whether in the monotheism of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and also Hinduism, or the brotherhood of persons in the reality of "Tien" or Heaven in Confucianism, or the non-self as the expression of absolute enlightenment in Buddhism, or the unnameable Dao, or the death-transcending reality of "force vitale" in an Ubuntu philosophy.

NOTES

[1] Shutte is reacting to an earlier article of McCabe, namely "The Immortality of the Soul" published in the 1959 collection of essays on Aquinas edited by A. Kenny, as well as to McCabe's 1982 lecture series at the University of Cape Town on philosophical psychology, in which he makes substantially the same points as in the posthumously published works under consideration in this paper.

[2] I can of course intend something in respect of inanimate things – write on the laptop! – but what I mean by my action (here, writing) cannot be something in principle unintelligible to another. There can be no such thing as a private language, is the way Wittgenstein made this point.

[3] It follows that any contemporary version of Thomism or Aristotelianism that would be authentic, at least so far as concerns its understanding of agency, should be expressed so far as is possible in a way that can appeal to thinkers in other frames of reference. Esoteric terminology will be avoided. It is far from evident that this effort is central to practitioners of Neo-Thomism.

[4] I would link this point, learning from Robert Doran, to the shift in Bernard Lonergan's approach to understanding the human will formulated in his later writings by means of the "level" of "existential consciousness," a notion which signals – more than speaking simply of "knowing and willing" – the kind of "engaged thinking" we have mentioned. "Lonergan's differentiation of the existential from the cognitive has thus permitted a more positive account of affective development, the realm of mystery, as a locus of the overcoming by grace of the vicious circle of moral impotence..." (Doran 1990:209).

[5] Familiar to readers of his version of African philosophy (for example, 2001, Ch 4), but in far greater detail in his unpublished PhD and in the 1985 monograph, "Personal Growth," on which I am drawing.

[6] "Because it is the capacity for self-enactment…that has to be developed [by a being other than ourselves] …entails that such a being cannot be finite in any way, since then its influence on us would impair our freedom and the resulting growth would not be, precisely, a growth in self-determination. [This] explains the tendency of the dominant religious traditions to see God as a strictly transcendent being, the creator and sustainer and perfecter of the universe" (Shutte 1986:17).

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Evangelii Gaudium as "Contextual Theology": Helping the Church "Rise to the Level of its Times"

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GERARD WHELAN
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This article suggests that a key to understanding the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* is to recognise it as an exercise in contextual theology. It begins with an outline of the notion of contextual theology as it emerged in Vatican II, and then employs the thought of Steven Bevans to suggest that six models of contextual theology emerged in the decades since the Council. Turning to the history of theology in Latin America, it traces a somewhat complex interaction of three of the models of Bevans, but suggests that two of these came to predominate: a *praxis model* and an *inculturation model*. It points out that, as Cardinal Archbishop of Buenos Aries, Jorge Bergoglio played a key role in helping this consensus to emerge. It then offers a presentation of *Evangelii Gaudium* suggesting that it represents the Pope's own integration of the Latin American approach to Latin American theology that embraces these two models of contextual theology.

WHAT IS CONTEXTUAL THEOLOGY?

In the opening lines of his book, *Six Models of Contextual Theology*, Stephen Bevans states: "The contextualization of theology . . . is part of the very nature of theology today" (Bevans 2002:3). He suggests that the stimulus for this methodological shift comes from the general approach of the documents of Vatican II, which in turn responded to the following exhortation from Pope John XXIII at the opening of the Council:

> The Church . . . must ever look to the present, to the new conditions and new forms of life introduced into the modern world, which have opened new avenues to the Catholic apostolate . . . doctrinal penetration and a formation of consciousness . . . should be studied and expounded *through the methods of research and through the literary forms of modern thought* (Pope John XXIII 1962).[1]

He suggests that Vatican II served as a stimulus to contextual theology in both Catholic and Protestant theology and describes six models of contextual theology evident in the world today. At the same time, he suggests that there tends to be a disjuncture between how theology is moving towards contextual reflection in academic circles and how this is less the case in magisterial statements of the Catholic Church in the years after the Council. Arguably, with the pontificate of Pope Francis, this disjuncture is disappearing.

Before outlining Bevans' six models, it is important to understand the general notion of what is contextual theology, and how it represents what Pope John referred to as "methods of research" and "literary forms of modern thought." In order to explain the shift of method that is represented here, it helps to contrast contextual theology with what went before: Neo-scholasticism, an approach that characterised Catholic theology almost everywhere before Vatican II.[2] This approach to theology based itself on the scholasticism (or "University theology") of the thirteenth-century, especially that of St. Thomas Aquinas.

The theology of Aquinas was an impressive achievement for its time and was deeply rooted in the philosophy of Aristotle. This philosophy seeks to explain the nature of reality by discovering "permanent causes" (material, formal, efficient, and final), and thus regarding change as an imperfection. In works such as the *Summa Theologica*, Aquinas explored the Christian mysteries in terms of (a modified) Aristotelian metaphysic and came up with insights that many believed were of timeless relevance. This scholastic tradition came to speak of the "sources of theology" (*loci theologici*) in terms of Scripture, magisterial tradition, and Aristotelian philosophy.

As the modern era dawned, the validity of an Aristotelian approach to the use of reason came under question. This shift began with the scientific revolution and the philosophical Enlightenment that followed it. Scientists such as Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) and Isaac Newton (1642-1727) did not seek to define observed objects according to their permanent causes but rather were content to identify the laws that governed things as they changed and consequently attempted to predict their behaviour. Thinkers such as the mathematician René Descartes (1596-1650) were quick to see philosophical certainty could no longer be based on recognising the permanent causes of objects, and proposed, instead, that it could be found by turning to the subject *Cogito ergo sum*, "I think therefore I am" and recognising that there is a certain structure to human acts of knowing that is constant and can provide a starting-point for anticipating all else that can be known.[3]

A second wave of the scientific revolution occurred in the nineteenth century, involving the emergence of disciplines such as history and anthropology. As one commentator puts it:

> The critical faculty, once awakened, could not rest satisfied with the successful exploration of the realm of nature, it was bound to go on from there to the critical investigation of the more intractable region of human nature, and, when the idea of development was fully understood, to seek to understand scientifically how, in fact, man (sic) and his institutions, have come to be what they are (Richardson 1964:32-33).

One historian who also demonstrated outstanding philosophical abilities was the German, Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911). Dilthey recognised that when one studies cultures other than one's own one is studying how other people create meaning and value and organise their societies based on a certain worldview. He deepened the turn to the subject begun by Descartes and explored how an "art of interpretation" (hermeneutics) is involved in human studies. He suggests that scholars can only understand the worldview of other cultures by analogy with their own. Consequently, the historian or anthropologist must reflect on how they themselves participate

in the "constructing of meaning and value" that is occurring within their own culture in order to empathise with and explain other cultures.[4]

Philosophers such as Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002) explained this interactive process between culture and the academic interpreter in terms of a "fusion of horizons." [5] One commentator suggests that any good historian must incorporate certain personal virtues that apply to his or her own life and times, adding "if he is not thus involved in his own age, he will not be able to bring a past age to life" (Richardson 1964:65).

As a general rule, Catholic theology found it difficult to engage with this fundamental shift in philosophy in the modern era. Scholastic theology became "neo-scholastic" theology which took a defensive, "apologetic," stance and took on an ever more dogmatic tone in defending Catholic truth-statements. Above all, it continued to employ an Aristotelian and what they understood to be a Thomistic method of reasoning.[6] Indeed, it was quick to point out how often theologians who tried to employ the tools of modern philosophy tended to arrive at unorthodox theological conclusions. It was in this context that Pope John XXIII shocked some of his listeners when he called for theology to update itself (*aggiornamento*) and to employ modern methods to explain Christian doctrine.

Bernard Lonergan (1904-1982) was a Jesuit and philosopher-theologian and would take up this call to employ modern method. He considered that the "historical consciousness" of thinkers such as Dilthey has a great deal to offer to Christian theology. Conversely, he expressed concern that a Christian theology that continued to express itself in terms of Aristotelian metaphysics was attempting to communicate to a "world that no longer exists". In his book, *Method in Theology* (1972), Lonergan proposes that the task of a theologian is to perform a kind of "fusion of horizons" (which he calls a "mutual self-mediation": "A theology mediates between a cultural matrix and the significance and role of a religion within that matrix." (Lonergan 1972:xi). This brings us to the heart of the meaning of contextual theology: it treats the current experience of man and women,

their horizon, or worldview, as one of the sources of theology - a *locus theologicus* and adds that theological reflection should bear fruit in offering direction for a religion on how to act within its culture.

MODELS OF CONTEXTUAL THEOLOGY

Steven Bevans suggests that the opening discourse of Pope John XXIII calls for an updating (*aggiornamento*) of Catholic theology by opening up to what is good in modern contextual methods:

> The Church . . . must ever look to the present, to the new conditions and new forms of life introduced into the modern world, which have opened new avenues to the Catholic apostolate... doctrinal penetration and a formation of consciousness... should be studied and expounded through the methods of research and through the literary forms of modern thought (Bevans 2002:165)

He suggests that Vatican II served as a stimulus to contextual theology in both Catholic and Protestant theology and describes six models of contextual theology evident in the world today.

Bevans calls the first of these models the *translation model* and suggests that the main metaphor for this comes from Catholic efforts to translate liturgical texts into a variety of languages. The manner of proceeding here is to begin with what has already been formulated within the religious tradition as it grew up in Europe, to find parallels in the language and symbols of other regions, and to preach one's message in terms of these words and symbols.

He acknowledges that the strength in this model lies in respecting the wisdom that has accumulated within a religious tradition formulated within one culture, and that it can have a value for other cultures. However, he questions the notion of culture upon which this model operates. He states: "The presupposition is that every culture is roughly similar to every other culture and that what is important in one will be important in another." He also questions the notion of Christian revelation

at work here, suggesting, "the translation model's notion of revelation is propositional." By contrast, he suggests that there is a need for a cross-cultural communication that does is more attentive to what is and what is not parallel between cultures, and also, attentive to how a personalist notion of revelation could be communicated across cultures. He concludes that this model "needs to take more seriously the world and the flesh within which, and not just by means of which, God became incarnate" (Bevans 2002:43-44).

Bevans next describes an *anthropological model* of contextual theology. This model takes seriously a principle that was stated by early Church Fathers as they witnessed strengths in Greek and Roman culture: that each culture already contains "seeds of the Word" that help this culture prepare for the explicit proclamation of the message of Jesus Christ. He notes that this approach has often characterised the work of African theologians of inculturation who are keenly aware of the harm done to indigenous cultures by European colonialism and by Christian missionaries who sometimes did not maintain a sufficient distance from their own cultural baggage. Theologians of inculturation are keen to articulate the meaning of revelation in Jesus Christ in terms of the meanings and values already present in local cultures (Bevans 2002:59-61).

The third model of contextual theology is the *praxis model*, and it is characteristic of the liberation theology that emerged in Latin America in the 1960's and 70's. Liberation theologians of this period pointed out that, unlike the developed countries of the first world, Latin American countries had remained trapped in situations of low economic growth, an unequal distribution of wealth, and often extreme political repression. Liberation theology developed three key proposals, each of which draw on sociological theories inspired by Karl Marx:[7] that theology should be related to a Christian "praxis" for the purpose of social transformation (often emanating from sub-parish level: "Basic Christian Communities"); that such praxis should be motivated by a preferential option for the poor; and that this option should be exercised by an inductive method of

theology based on principles of *See*, *Judge*, and *Act*. This method had its origins in a practice of pastoral decision-making pioneered by Cardinal Joseph Cardjin in the early twentieth century.[8] However, the liberation theologians used this notion by proposing that a version of it should be intrinsic to all contextual theological method.

Bevans' final three models can be summarised more expeditiously. The fourth, the *synthetic model*, is especially identified with Asian theology and is related to the second and third models and emphasises the theme of dialogue. The fifth, the *transcendental model*, is associated with theologians such as Karl Rahner and Bernard Lonergan. These suggest that while cultures differ, there is a fundamental structure to human knowing that does not. Consequently, they propose an act of "self-appropriation" where theologians recognise and affirm the basic structure of their own authentic operating and produce a contextual theology that is analogous to those theologies produced in other cultures, but never identical.[9] The sixth, the *countercultural model*, is in some respects, a reaction against contextual theology. It emphasises that most human cultures are bound up with sinful ideas and values that need to be challenged by the Gospel. It is contextual in the sense that it believes that people in most cultures are capable of becoming open to the Word of God and of changing their ways. However, it tends to propose a kind of preaching that remains close to the literal words of the Gospel, and so does not occupy itself with using language and symbols of local cultures. Bevans notes that this model is especially present in Protestant theology and resembles the first, translation, model in that it works from a naïve notion of culture and does not emphasise the possibility of collaboration with non-Christians (Bevans 2002:124-127).

LIBERATION THEOLOGY AND THE APARECIDA CONFERENCE

When one studies the theological influences on the Argentinian Jesuit, Jorge Mario Bergoglio, one recognises the influence of two models of contextual theology as outlined by Bevans: the praxis model and the inculturation model. Any study of *Evengelii Gaudium* does well to explore

these links. I will do this in two steps. First I study how the history of theology in Latin America can be analysed in terms of a competition for influence between the liberation theology and a different approach being promoted from Rome, with a version of the liberation model eventually winning out. I suggest that the approach of Rome can be understood as a version of the translation model of contextual theology. Secondly, I study how, in fact, liberation theology, from the 1970s onwards, experienced an internal debate where a praxis model of contextual theology was in tension with an inculturation model. I suggest that Jorge Bergoglio, as Archbishop of Buenos Aries, helped a "moderate consensus" to emerge in the early 2000s where these two models are integrated with each other.[10]

At first, liberation theologians experienced considerable support from the bishops of the sub-continent. The national conferences of bishops of this region had a custom of meeting in a regional association, "Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano" or CELAM about every ten years to formulate a joint strategy for the sub-continent. The Second General Assembly of CELAM met in the city Medellín in 1968 and its final document affirmed key principles of liberation theology: the use of an inductive theological method based on *See, Judge, Act*; the importance of a *preferential option for the poor*. The Third General Assembly of CELAM was held in Puebla in 1979. This conference offered a maturing of reflection in comparison with the previous conference, criticising certain tendencies toward exaggeration within liberation theology, but it essentially supported the approach of Medellín.

The conference at Puebla occurred at the beginning of the pontificate of Pope John Paul II, elected in 1978. This pope not only came from a communist country but had also been a professional philosopher who was deeply aware of the dangers of Marxism. His concerns about Marxist tendencies in liberation theology were articulated in 1984 by the then head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, in a letter "Instruction on Certain Aspects of the 'Theology of Liberation'" (CDF 1984). When the time came for the Fourth General

Assembly of CELAM to be held at Santo Domingo in 1993, the Vatican took the remarkable step of instructing CELAM to lay aside the document they had prepared for discussion and to accept instead a document prepared by the Vatican that they had not previously seen. This document made no mention of the method of the *See, Judge,* and adopted the deductive style similar to what Bevans describes as representing the first model of contextual theology, the *translation* model. To many observers the era of liberation theology seemed to have come to a close.

By the time the Fifth General Assembly of CELAM was held at Aparecida, Brazil, in 2007, times had changed. The ideological conflicts of the Cold War were a thing of the past and improved rates of economic growth and political governance were being experienced in many countries. At the same time, massive poverty remained and the need for Christian witness to address this problem had not gone away. In a remarkable series of developments, the vocabulary of liberation theology made a re-appearance—not without controversy—both in discussions on the floor of the conference and in the final document of the assembly.[11] This document offered an emphatic re-statement of the importance of a preferential option for the poor[12] as well as the value of a theological and pastoral method based on *See, Judge,* and *Act.* Demonstrating an amnesia with regard to the document of Santo Domingo, the Aparecida document proclaimed its continuity with Medellín and Puebla and opened with the following statement:

> In continuity with the previous general conferences of Latin American Bishops, this document utilizes the see-judge-act method... this method has been helpful for living our calling and mission in the church with more dedication and intensity. It has enriched theological and pastoral work (CELAM 2007:19).

At the same time, the document acknowledged that there had been a tendency toward ideological over-simplification in the approaches of earlier decades and accepted that CELAM itself had partaken in such mistakes:

> This has taught us to look at reality more humbly, knowing that it is greater and more complex than the simplistic ways in which we used to look at it in the not very distant past which often introduced conflicts into society, leaving many wounds that have still not been able to heal (CELAM 2007:36).

At first glance, the story of the CELAM conferences might seem like a simple story of competition between the praxis model of contextual theology and the translation model. However, this is not quite the case. From the early years after Vatican II some distinct differences emerged within approaches to liberation theology in Latin America. Where the majority of theologians adopted an approach that represented a praxis model, those of Argentina adopted an approach that represented something closer to the *inculturation* model.

The Argentinian approach became known as a "Theology of the People" and had distinctive characteristics. It placed an emphasis on the importance of popular culture and especially on popular religiosity, as a means by which theology should try to express solidarity with the poor and to help guide them to promote a just transformation of social structures. By contrast, some non-Argentinian theologians adopted an approach more influenced by Marxist thought, which held that the culture of the poor was not to be trusted because it represented the "false consciousness of the ruling class." These theologians suggested that the Church should place devote its energy to direct campaigns to change economic and political structures.[13] The documents of the CELAM assemblies record the history of the dialogue between these two approaches. Medellín expresses largely a praxis approach, Puebla exhibits the first entry of Argentinian insights, and Santo Domingo represents what some have called a victory for an Argentinian approach, but is better understood as the emerging of a "moderate consensus" on these issues.

The final document Aparecida, adopted a humble and less ideological study of social reality that had been the case in Medellín and Puebla

included placing less emphasis on difference of economic class and more on cultural distinctions - including issues such as the strengths and weaknesses of the popular piety of the poor, the experience of indigenous peoples, of women, and of urban dwellers. By pursuing such reflection, one can argue that the Aparecida document came to express as much of what Bevans calls the anthropological model of contextual theology as the praxis model. For their part, a number of liberation theologians, such as Gustavo Gutiérrez who previously espoused a praxis model of theology, expressed their admiration for the Aparecida final document and acknowledged that liberation theology itself has gone through a maturing process in recent years (Gutiérrez 2008).

The significance of these developments in Latin America for understanding Pope Francis becomes evident when one notes that the chairman of the drafting committee for the final document of Aparecida was the Cardinal Archbishop of Argentina, Jorge Bergoglio. Similarly, one can note that Bergoglio had frequently stated that the theology professors who had most influenced him in his own seminary training were those who promoted the "theology of the people."[14]

EVANGELII GAUDIUM AS CONTEXTUAL THEOLOGY

When Jorge Bergoglio became Pope in 2013, he gave an indication of how influential the Aparecida experience would be on his papacy when he visited Rio de Janeiro for World Youth Day and addressed the assembled bishops of Brazil. Suggesting that Aparecida had a significance beyond Latin America he stated: "Aparecida offers us a perennial teaching about God and about the Church" (Pope Francis 2013 [II]). Shortly afterwards, he produced his apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, and comparison of the two documents reveal parallels in at least three aspects: it adopts a method of *See, Judge*, and *Act*; it affirms the importance of a preferential option for the poor; it addresses issues of culture as much as those of economic class. This having been said, two striking differences from Aparecida are also notable: first, it constitutes a more consistent and

coherent expression of inductive method, probably because it has single author and is not the work of a committee;[15] second, it offers a detailed critique of structures and attitudes that are internal to the Church and which "can hamper efforts at evangelization." These criticisms include a critique of over-centralisation in the Church; it is easy to speculate that they arise, in part at least, from a reflection on the experience of CELAM in its relations with the Vatican.

Chapter 1: The Churches Missionary Transformation

Chapter 1 constitutes a moment in the step, "See", of an inductive method and focuses on structures and attitudes that are internal to the Church and which "can hamper efforts at evangelization" (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:19). The first section of the chapter is entitled, "A Church Which Goes Forth," and calls for Christians to exhibit joyful confidence in their calling as "a community of missionary disciples" (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:24). The next section, "Pastoral Activity and Conversion," makes a number of criticisms of Church practice, beginning with the fact that governance is too centralised. The Pope first explores this point with respect to parish life and then moves to the level of the diocese:

> Each particular Church, as a portion of the Catholic Church under the leadership of its bishop, is likewise called to missionary conversion. It is the primary subject of evangelization... I encourage each particular Church to undertake a resolute process of discernment, purification and reform (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:30).

Moving to national conferences of bishops he states: "a juridical status of episcopal conferences which would see them as subjects of specific attributions, including genuine doctrinal authority, has not yet been sufficiently elaborated" (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:32). Next, he suggests: "The papacy and the central structures of the universal Church also need to hear the call to pastoral conversion" (2013 [I]: 32).

Subsequent sections address issues of attitude within the Church. Pope Francis calls on preachers to remember what is "the very heart of the

Gospel which gives it meaning, beauty and attractiveness" and invites them to avoid a missionary style that is "obsessed with the disjointed transmission of a multitude of doctrines to be insistently imposed" (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:34-35); he also suggests that pastors need to be attentive to "stages of personal growth as these progressively occur" (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:44-5). Speaking to all Christians, he suggests "often it is better simply to slow down, to put aside our eagerness in order to see and listen to others . . . to remain with someone who has faltered along the way" (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:46). He adds that this attitude should lead the Church to adopt a preferential option for the poor:

> But to whom should she go first?... Today and always, "the poor are the privileged recipients of the Gospel"... We have to state, without mincing words, that there is an inseparable bond between our faith and the poor. May we never abandon them (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:47).

Chapter 2: Amid the Crisis of Communal Commitment

The theme of a preferential option for the poor becomes amplified in Chapter 2, where the moment of "See" is extended to a study of the situation of the broader society in which the Church finds itself. This chapter has two parts. Part 1, "Some Challenges of Today's World" offers an analysis of the social and cultural context in which the Church finds itself. The need to offer a prophetic denunciation of economic inequality is stressed in sections entitled: "No to an economy of Exclusion," "No to the New Idolatry of Money," "No to a Financial System which Rules Rather Than Serves," and "No to the Inequality which Spawns Violence" (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:53-60]. The rest of Part 1 explores questions of culture. A section, "Some Cultural Challenges" identifies cultural problems that make evangelization difficult including secularism, individualism, and family breakdown. The next two sections "Challenges to Inculturating the Faith," and "The Challenge of Urban Cultures" take up themes that were explored in the Aparecida document and constitute an innovation in papal teaching. They treat issues that include the challenge posed by sub-cultures that emerge in rapidly expanding cities and Pope Francis concludes by

insisting: "a uniform and rigid program of evangelization is not suited to this complex reality" (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:75).

Remarkably, Part 2, "Temptations Faced by Pastoral Workers," returns to issues internal to the Church as had already been addressed in Chapter 1.

> Arguably, the critique of "spiritual worldliness" offered here constitutes the most penetrating criticism offered in *Evangelii Gaudium* of current imbalances in the Church (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:93-97).

Chapter 3: The Proclamation of the Gospel

This chapter constitutes the more formally theological moment of "Judge" in the process of contextual theology. Part 1 is entitled "The Entire People of God Proclaims the Gospel" and here the Pope stresses that all the baptised are the agents of evangelization. He suggests that notions of infallibility in matters of faith in Catholic theology should first and foremost be attributed to the whole People of God. Similarly, he speaks of the obligation for the hierarchical Church to be attentive to the fact that in the People of God there is an instinct of faith – *sensus fidei* – which helps them to discern what is truly of God . . . even when they lack the wherewithal to give them precise expression (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:119). He adds: "Expressions of popular piety have much to teach us; for those who are capable of reading them, they are a *locus theologicus* (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:126).

Continuing his exploration of questions of culture, Pope Francis asserts: "The People of God is incarnate in the peoples of the earth, each of which has its own culture" and adds "no single culture can exhaust the mystery of our redemption in Christ". He also acknowledges that evangelizing practices in the past have at times represented "a needless hallowing of our own culture, which, in fact, demonstrated more fanaticism than true evangelizing zeal" (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:115-18).

A final section in Part 1 explores the question of proclaiming the word to "professional, scientific, and academic circles" (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:132-4). Here he criticises a merely "desk-bound theology" but acknowledges that an academic theology that is in dialogue with

> the other sciences and human experiences is most important for our discernment on how best to bring the Gospel message to different cultural contexts and groups (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:133).

Having made it abundantly clear that the priest is not the only agent of evangelization, Pope Francis devotes the remaining three parts of this chapter to issues appertaining to his ministry: Part 2 is entitled, "The Homily"; Part 3, "Preparing to Preach"; Part 4 addresses issues of catechesis. In each of these parts, the Pope stresses the importance for the priest of attending to his pastoral context: he speaks of "the challenge of an inculturated preaching" (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:143), suggests that "a preacher has to contemplate the word, but he also has to contemplate his people" (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:154), and, finally stresses the link between good preaching and a catechetical attentiveness to "the ongoing formation and maturation" of the faithful (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:160-175).

Chapter 4: "The Social Dimension of Evangelization"

This chapter has four main parts, all of which constitute the moment of "Act" in contextual theology, and which express different aspects of Catholic social teaching.

Part 1, is entitled "Communal and societal repercussions of the kerygma," and Part 2, "The inclusion of the poor in society." While these two parts reflect themes addressed in Chapter 2, they have a theological quality that builds on the reflections of Chapter 3. Pope Francis suggests that a concern for the poor is intrinsic to Christian experience from the first proclaiming of the Word of God (hearing the "*kerygma*") to carrying out a Christian vocation. He suggests, "The kerygma has a clear social content: at the very

heart of the Gospel is life in community" (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:177), and he continues:

> This is why I want a Church which is poor and for the poor. They have much to teach us. Not only do they share in the *sensus fidei*, but in their difficulties they know the suffering Christ. We need to let ourselves be evangelized by them (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:198).

Part 3, "The Common Good and Peace in Society," suggests that authentic Christian praxis should contribute to bearing "the fruit of peace" in national and international relations (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:221). In this part, Pope Francis' comments are more philosophical than theological as he exhibits an awareness that Catholic social teaching is not directed only at fellow Christians. In a section entitled "Time is greater than space" he stresses the importance of patience in trying to address the "processes of people-building" (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:224). Under the heading, "unity prevails over conflict" he discusses the appropriate manner of engaging with conflict, insisting, "conflict cannot be ignored or concealed" when it arises. He suggests that we commit ourselves to "face conflict head on, to resolve it and to make it a link in the chain of a new process" (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:227).

In a section entitled, "Realities are more important than ideas" he criticises a tendency to abstract and universalising thinking suggesting: "ideas – conceptual elaborations – are at the service of communication, understanding, and praxis" (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:232). Demonstrating this kind of pragmatic approach to reasoning he suggests "an innate tension also exists between globalisation and localisation" and proposes that we both pay attention to the global "so as to avoid narrowness and banality" and to the local "which keeps our feet on the ground" (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:234).

Part 4, "Social Dialogue as a Contribution to Peace," represents a philosophical statement of themes that, stated more theologically, have

pervaded the papal exhortation. Pope Francis identifies three areas of dialogue that are of particular importance: "dialogue with states, dialogue with society – including dialogue with cultures and the sciences – and dialogue with other believers who are not part of the Catholic Church" (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:238). Addressing leaders and academics he states: "We do not need plans drawn up by a few for the few, or an enlightened or outspoken minority which claims to speak for everyone". Rather, he calls for dialogue that exhibits a "profound social humility" and which grounds itself in broad principles such as "subsidiarity and solidarity" (Pope Francis 2013 [I]:239).

CONCLUSION

In this article I have suggested that a key characteristic of *Evangelii Gaudium* is that it treats context as a source of pastoral reflection, and thus of theology. Recalling, the six models of contextual theology proposed by Steven Bevans, I suggest that the exhortation exhibits characteristics of the second and third models: with the anthropological model it demonstrates a sensitivity to the plurality of cultures and of the need for the Church to be incarnated differently in each of them; with the praxis model it proposes that the all Christians should adopt a preferential option for the poor and should consider as intrinsic to Christian mission efforts to engage in transformative action within one's society.

Elements of such an inductive approach have been present in previous papal teaching, and, perhaps above all, in the Vatican II document *Gaudium et Spes* whose title this exhortation echoes. However, never before has this approach been so intrinsic to a papal document. One commentator on the final document of Aparecida characterised that work in terms of "a return to inductive methodology" (Marins 2008) within the history of the approach of the bishops of Latin American. I suggest that *Evangelii Gaudium* represents something of a similar return to trusting in the inductive approach of *Gaudium et Spes,* while at the same time representing a maturing and deepening of it.

Employing the thought of Bernard Lonergan, we can note the importance of the shift in theological method that is represented by *Evangelii Gaudium*: it helps the Church move beyond speaking "to a world that no longer exists," and rather, "to rise to the level of its times."

NOTES

[1] Italics added. All Papal and Vatican documents quoted in this document can be found on the Vatican website: http://www.vatican.va/.

[2] The following reflection on the history of philosophy follows a framework offered by Bernard Lonergan, in "Questionnaire on Philosophy" (Lonergan 2004).

[3] The Cartesian meditations lead one to the *ego cogito, ergo sum sive existo*; they guide the one meditating to this certainty, and proceed in further reflection until they have produced arguments for three demonstrations of the existence of God (Descarted 1996: *Meditations* III and V; see also Hadot 1995).

[4] See Richardson 1962:162-3. See also Lonergan 1972:210-212.

[5] See Gadamer 1991:373-374: "We cannot take the reconstruction of the question to which a given text is an answer simply as an achievement of historical method. The most important thing is the question that the text puts to us, our being perplexed by the traditionary word, so that understanding it must already include the task of the historical self-mediation between the present and tradition. Thus the relation of question and answer is reversed. The voice that speaks to us from the past – whether text, work, trace – itself poses a question and places our meaning in openness. In order to answer the question put to us, we the interrogated must ourselves begin to ask questions. We must attempt to reconstruct the question to which the traditionary text is the answer. … Reconstructing the question to which the text is presumed to be the answer itself takes place within a process of questioning though which we try to answer the question that the text asks us."

[6] Authors such as Yves Congar suggested that, in fact, Neo-Thomism represented a decadent form of Thomistic reasoning, suggesting that Thomas himself was less dogmatic, more open to speculation and new ideas (Congar 1968:137-143).

[7] An example of the influence of Marx was the way the Basque theologian writing from El Salvador, Jon Sobrino, quoted Marx: "The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it" (Bevans 2002:72).

[8] Joseph Cardijn founded the movement "Young Christian Workers" in Belgium in the early twentieth century (see, Langdale 1955). Pope John XXIII expresses approval of this pastoral method (Pope John XXIII 1961: paragraph 236).

[9] Bevans states, "one must never relinquish one's authenticity as a particular historical or cultural subject," and then offers a metaphor to describe the transcendental model approach to contextual theology: "A person can be inspired to work in his garden because of the example, or lack thereof, from others working in their own gardens" (Bevans 2002:106).

[10] On the intellectual roots of Pope Francis see: Scannone, 2014; Kasper 2015:9-13; Ivereigh 2014; Pelton 2008:25-48.

[11] See Pelton 2008; see also Marins 2008.

[12] An "Evangelical preferential option for the poor" is described as "one of the characteristics which identify the features of the Latin American and Caribbean Church" (CELAM 2007: paragraph 391).

[13] Scannone (Scannone 2014:572-573) describes the sharp criticism of Argentinian theology made during the 1970s by the Uruguayan Juan Louis Segundo, quoting a section "Theology and Popular Religion" in Segundo 1976:196-200.

[14] See Scannone 2014.

[15] Jose Marins suggests that the Aparecida document includes structural and thematic weaknesses that are typical of conference documents that show the hand of many authors. He suggests that, ironically, the document begins with an emphatic statement of support for inductive method and then proceeds to not offer an exemplary model of following it (Marins 2008).

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BOOK REVIEWS

Catholic Women Speak: Bringing Our Gifts to the Table by Catholic Women Speak Network (eds.), New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2015, xxxiv + 186. ISBN 978-0-8091-4974-2.

Some years ago, at a meeting sponsored by Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church (cf. http://www.catholicethics.com), one of the topics for conversation and exchange was the position of women and especially women theologians in the Catholic Church. And although the issue of the recognition of a vocation to the sacramental priesthood had been declared settled and closed by Pope John Paul II in his apostolic letter *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis* – On Reserving Priestly Ordination to Men Alone (May 22, 1994), it became the topic of a profound discussion. After two female theologians pointed out their problems and reservations with the apostolic letter and its effort to short-circuit a real and pressing question for the Church in the contemporary world, a bishop who was part of the group asked: "But, ladies, in what way have you been limited or hampered in the pursuit of your academic career by the impossibility of ordination to the priesthood?" The reply was not a 'case-study', but a counter-question: "Bishop, how has/is the Catholic Church limited and hampered in the preaching of the Gospel of Christ Jesus by not recognising the vocation of females to the priesthood?" This reply turned out to be an *Aha-Erlebnis* for the bishop: it opened up a window of *metanoia* – shells from the eyes – and it enabled a glimmer towards what gifts women can bring to the table.

The history of *Catholic Women Speak* has been documented by Tina Beattie, one of the theologians instrumental in getting the whole project going (cf. https://www.commonwealmagazine.org/place-table). This history confirms an intuition I had when I first heard about this project, namely that the various preparatory stages around the Synods on the Family in 2014 and 2015 shared at least one serious big black hole: how to make sure that the voices of women are heard unfiltered?

It brought back the history of the quasi-absence of female voices at "the biggest event of adult education in the history of the Catholic church" (Archbishop em. Denis Hurley, during a conversation in Durban on Monday, March 22, 1999: Vatican II). Luckily, a kind of documentation on this became available with the book by Carmel McEnroy, *Guests in their Own House: The Women of Vatican II* (Wipf & Stock 2011) and the current volume can be seen as the continuation of 'speaking up'.

"Bringing our gifts to the table" is exactly what this book is doing. Although put together under serious time pressure, the whole is very well organised: a preface to contextualize the anthology, a list of contributors demonstrating the global reach, an introduction by the editorial team accepting the challenge put by Pope Francis to speak with *parrhesia*: "to say all that, in the Lord, one feels the need to say: without polite deference, without hesitation" (:xxvii), four parts each with a most helpful introduction and a brief epilogue reflecting on "the chorus of women's voices from many cultures, contexts, ages, and stages in life" (:183). One might be surprised to find over 40 contributions in a book of just under 200 pages… but one by one, what we are offered are to-the-point vignettes, gems, but surely not soundbites. The book is a treasure trove opening up the contemporary universe of how theology fares in the hands and minds of catholic women, so: *tolle, lege* (take up and read)!

The only 'male voice' in the volume is to be found in the Foreword where Agbonkhianmeghe Orobator, SJ, stresses the need for "Listening Ears and Prophetic Voices" (:xi); I myself read this as a much needed Catholic version of the international movement *HeForShe*, standing together on the path leading towards gender justice (http://www.heforshe.org/en).

To whet the appetite, I will limit myself here to a list of the four parts and the contributing authors; a lot more can be found at http://www.catholicwomenspeak.com. Part One deals with *Traditions and Transformations* and the contributors are Cettina Militello, Ursula King, Janet Martin Soskice, Elisabeth A. Johnson, Anna Arabome, Carolina del Río Mena, Cristina Lledo Gomez, Trish Madigan. Part Two deals with

Marriage, Families and Relationships and here we find the reflections of Julie Clague, Lisa Sowle Cahill, Clare Watkins, Sara Maitland, Tina Beattie, Margaret Watson, Alison Concannon Kennedy, Pippa Bonner, Anna Cannon, Jean Porter, Rachel Espinoza and Tawny Horner, Olive Barnes, Amelia Beck, Giovanna Solari-Masson, Emma Jane Harris, Margaret A. Farley, Sophie Stanes and Deborah Woodman, Ursula Halligan, Eve Tushnet, Katie Grimes, Janette Gray, Patricia Stoat. Part Three carries as title *Poverty, Exclusion and Marginalization* and brings the insights by Ana Lourdes Suárez and Gabriela Zengarini, Astrid Lobo Gajiwala, Nontando Hadebe, Agnes M. Brazal. The final Part Four is on *Institutions and Structures* for which the content is brought by Mary Aquin O'Neill, Lucetta Scaraffia, Christine Schenk, Madeleine Fredell, Rhonda Miska, Catherine Cavanagh.

From the perspective of this reviewer, the 'list' should also serve the purpose of 'surprise': some names are familiar but many are not (yet) and therefore what is gained by and can be learned from this anthology goes far beyond the number of pages.

The history of this volume and its 'reception' before the 2015 Synod is documented by Tina Beattie in the article mentioned above. What about any influence or impact? Most of the copies presented to the participants of the Synod were taken by them but were these gifts also received? An assessment of this might be researched by scholars in the future.

For now, I will only look at two interesting – conflicting and maybe even incommensurable – statements made by Pope Francis in his post-synodal apostolic exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* (08 April 2016).

In n° 54, Pope Francis speaks in a very positive tone about the importance of the various ways in which the rights of women should be recognised and he rebukes the claim that many problems today are the result of the emancipation of women. He remains hesitant in his appreciation of feminism but claims that "we can see in the women's movement the working of the Spirit for a clearer recognition of the dignity and rights of

women". In n° 173, he claims to value feminism "but one that does not demand uniformity or negate motherhood" (who is he referring to?) but next continues and repeats the machismo stereotype of the "feminine genius". Much worse is his ignorance with respect to 'gender': n°56 simply posits this as "gender ideology" and rejects it out of hand, but the reference given to the *Relatio Finalis 2015* brings no further insight because it also is a claim without any substantiation. Here, the reading and studying of *Catholic Women Speak* would make a difference and would allow us to move beyond the stereotypes and caricatures. One can only hope that the volume is and remains on Pope Francis' reading list.

Finally: on May 12, 2016, the *National Catholic Reporter* (http://ncronline.org/news/vatican/francis-create-commission-study-female-deacons-catholic-church) carried the news that Pope Francis will set up a commission to study the issue of female deacons in the Catholic Church, responding to the questions put to him by members of the *International Union of Superiors General* of women religious. A rumour of Pentecost?

Reviewed by:
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The Preferential Option for the Poor: A Short History and Reading Based on the Thought of Bernard Lonergan by Curnow R., 2012, Milwaukee: Marquette University Press. 200 pages.
ISBN: 9781626007000 1626007004.

The puzzle arrived in the post. I opened the box: no helpful picture on the front; just the title, about the preferential option for the poor and Bernard Lonergan. I assumed no pieces were missing. The chapter headings allowed me to place the corner pieces, and then the border: the preferential option for the poor, liberation theology, Guitterez and Sobrino, Lonergan's idea of intellectual, moral, religious conversion, the dialectic of history through the lens of Robert Doran and his notion of psychic conversion. I was then completely stuck as to how to continue – I know what liberation theology is, more or less, I've studied Lonergan and read Doran. But how are these things fitted together by this particular author? All the information in the world on these topics simply placed side by side doesn't add up to a picture (the blurb on the back says, unhelpfully, the author demonstrates the "congruence" of the two topics. The material is dense and the footnotes add up to an impressive 622.)

I've been adopting this puzzle metaphor because the author fails to make clear to the reader what his angle is on these topics. But as a reader one really does need an angle, a way *into* the picture, a point of reference to begin to see the pattern – and then build from there. I turned to the three-page conclusion at the end of the book and found what this might be: "for the Magisterium it [the preferential option for the poor] is a matter of religious and moral conversion" whereas for Liberation Theology this is extended "into the realms of intellectual and psychic conversion." This thesis could be interesting. The Magisterium doesn't see the deep significance of this "turn to the poor" (my phrase). The reference is to "Chapters 4 and 5", and the author remarks that "this chapter [sic] provided a means of understanding the difference" between these two ways of thinking about the option for the poor (197-198). This discussion, presumably originally one chapter, explains how the notions of religious and moral conversion (Ch. 4) and intellectual and psychic conversion (Ch. 5) can elucidate what is meant by an option for poor. It thus corrects

certain understandings of Liberation Theology which would leave out the dimension of conversion (simply overthrow the current social and particularly economic structures and replace them with more convivial ones) and certain understandings of the preferential option for the poor which would simply take this as a moral add-on to an already essentially complete understanding of Christian faith (certain statements of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church)

I thought my educated guess was as good a starting-point as any. Unfortunately in the Introduction one finds the author disclaiming any such intention: the book is *neither* a critique of Liberation Theology *nor* of the Magisterium's understanding of the option for the poor (17). What the…! (It couldn't be that this is one of those tracts of the True Disciples which is written simply to show that everything anyone ever said on these and related matters is already better said and more thoroughly explained in the Text, if only people would take notice. Joseph Noor, for example, (*Document X*, Cape Town: Feather Communications, 2013) has found already outlined in the Qu'ran, the scientific theories of cosmic expansion, the nature of space-time, Einstein's concept of gravity, DNA, Ryle's critique of mind-body dualism, and much more. But this tendency is not confined to adherents of the Islamic faith).

I decided I would construct a thesis, from the very generous material provided by Curnow. Perhaps what one has here are two books, on the history of the idea in Catholic theology of the option for the poor, and the way that John-Paul II in particular put the brakes on it (did he?). And on a Lonergan-inspired account of how the way the world's structures fail us demands a response from us of despair and cynicism or else of hope based on the possibility of intelligent self-appropriation; and this would be a way of providing the key to unlock the unity of all Christian doctrines. It "promises (in Curnow's words)… the required methodological unity to account for Liberation Theology's insistence that history and liberation are one" (182).

My approach, learning from Curnow, is to the effect that there might be in the committed writings of Liberation theologians something less than a complete appreciation of how human persons transcend through cultural meanings and how it would be short sighted to overlook this in favour of focusing only on a political solution (in Lonerganese, overlooking general bias, 128). And quite possibly there is not a fully historical understanding of the Christian faith – understanding salvation as nothing more than the action of transforming history – in the way this is presented by the current teaching authority of the Catholic Church.

My starting point is something from Doran's *Theology and the Dialectics of History* (University of Toronto Press, 1990), the influence of which is central to Curnow's thesis. Doran points to the global problem warranting an orientation of the kind indicated by the "preferential option for the poor". Insight into this global power imbalance would seem key to an appreciation of liberation theology. And without that appreciation there could only be a pronouncement on the "option for the poor" from above, as it were, defeating the purpose of the exercise, as I read it. We need, in other words, to begin with social analysis. Doran repeatedly refers to the global context as one of "escalating imperialisms of centralised state socialisms and transnational corporational capitalism" (1990, 206), making sure to give a strict definition of "imperialism" (in some circles simply a swearword) in terms of "unlimited forcible expansion" (1990, 116). The upshot is that existentially we are faced

> by the necessity of choosing between, on the one hand, the anticipation of a post-historic homogeneous State incrementally moved toward by terrorist and counter-terrorist violence, and on the other hand the anticipation of a truth above and beyond divergent points of view, a truth that, while preserving the sharpest sense of subjectivity, provides access to a new organic civilization on a transcultural or world-cultural basis (1990:155-156).

Is this also Curnow's starting-point? To answer this I am starting the book not from the first two very interesting chapters on the history of the idea of the option for the poor in Latin America and at the Second Vatican

Council, but from the two chapters (4 and 5) on Lonergan's and Doran's explanation of the dialectic (linked but opposing principles) of our lives, calling for a deliberate act of assent to our intelligence, wholeness, and loving transcendence, amounting to a conversion to truth and value.

Curnow explains the importance of taking the option for the poor as more central to our self-understanding than simply a social or ethical implication of our faith. He cites the words of Doran:

> Because psychic conversion enables us to attend to the dimensions of our own being that have been victimized by the sin of the world, it establishes a point of solidarity with the most victimized peoples of history… As the situation of the victimized elements of our own being is hermeneutically privileged in the interpretation of our own stories, so the situation of the poor is hermeneutically privileged in the interpretation of history (in Curnow 2012:153-154).

Understanding one facilitates understanding the other. We opt for the poor when we are brutally honest about the inhumane structures of the world we find ourselves in.

This is Curnow's approach. We could also say that the social analysis enables one to see that one's feeling of being a victim is not simply a subjective affair, but might reflect an objective truth: the economic and power structures are indeed such that certain groups are marginalized, disempowered. One's desire to work against these structures is vindicated and supported, being part and parcel of the message of the gospel. Some such context reveals the *point* of preferencing the point of view of the poor. At the same time it is clear that the social analysis does not unpack the whole of the situation, nor, fully, the action required from oneself. It would be wrong to apply a social science analysis upon which one then layers the biblical categories – as L. Boff seems to do (181-2). Lonergan's reformulation of the social sciences so as to include what he calls the dimension of "culture" – remotely that refers to the quality of personhood and of religious authenticity needed in order to attain distributive justice. Character is important. To understand what is meant by this one needs to

undergo an intellectual conversion, to find in oneself, and affirm of oneself, the power of transcendence. I don't think Curnow has really guided us through this process but rather has simply restated its elements in an "objective" way. (Wary of being caught by the Lonergan Associated Police Department (LAPD) to have left out some element?)

This is important stuff. Liberation theology argues that the Reign of God is simply what being saved, or salvation, means.

> To work, to transform this world, is to become a man (sic) and to build the human community; it is also to save. Likewise, to struggle against misery and exploitation and to build a just society is already to be part of the saving action…; building the temporal city is to become part of a saving process… (Gutiérrez in Curnow 2012:171).

(But why use the term 'temporal', which seems to assume there is another kind of city, not historical?)

But the important point is to be found in the material of the first half of the book – to which I turned to read after making my sense out of Curnow's hidden thesis. This narrative of the genesis of the idea of the preferential option for the poor, and its fate, is absolutely fascinating, and makes it well worth buying the book. The Council document *Gaudium et Spes* begins to see that the social mission of the church has something to do with its position in society, its prestige; but as Gutiérrez says,

> the majority of the bishops and experts came from important countries, rich countries… poverty remained a distant question (in Curnow 2012:38).

Later, Paul VI's encyclical *Populorum Progressio* saw, as Curnow notes, the moral relevance of social structures – for which he was accused by *The Wall Street Journal* of dishing up "warmed-over Marxism" – something echoed, of course, more recently in Francis' pontificate. In 1968 Medellin went further, with the Bishops' Conference of Latin America (CELAM) speaking of the special vocation of Latin America, to witness to a new

synthesis of the spiritual and temporal: to achieve human rights not on the basis of social ethics but because this is "intimately linked to the history of salvation" (in Curnow 2012:43).

The kind of social analysis indicated above with reference to Doran would count as special "signs of the times" which call for a re-think of Christian identity. Presaging (as noted by Curnow) the papal style of the present pontificate the Latin American bishops CELAM ask for a pastoral orientation from church leaders, giving preference of resources and personnel "to the poorest and most needy sectors and to those segregated for any cause whatsoever" (in Curnow 2012:44). Curnow emphasizes the centrality, in these documents, of the idea of personal conversion, in particular of those in positions of power, in any transformation process that is going to be really effective.

So, here is not a simple history of a social idea in the Church, but rather an exciting reading of it, and I turned with interest to the next chapter in the book, on how this movement was turned back by the powers of the time. Already at the time of Paul VI the forces of reaction are at work – Curnow fingers particular bishops – in combating this understanding of Christian faith. Curnow makes excellent use of the material, which should be better known, the scholarly histories of Ian Linden, Donal Dorr, Gregory Baum and others.

Chapter Two discusses how the option for the poor began to be understood in two radically different ways, as an interpretive key ("hermeneutic") to grasping Christian faith, or alternatively, as an element of the Christian moral response to the gospel. John XXIII quite clearly saw it in the former way: look, judge, act, he advises in *Mater et Magistra* following the approach of the Young Christian Workers – the "bottom-up methodology" that animates Curnow's exposition of the idea of the option for the poor (129-130). A succession of popes after John XXIII took the latter path. Begin with "pre-formulated concepts" and from this deduce the appropriate moral principles. But there is more to the Option for the Poor

than its role in the moral calculus, as Curnow (64-65) in a footnote quotes one commentator saying, something missed by John-Paul II.

This then is Curnow's thesis, I take it, one well worth making and backed by the evidence. In terms of criticism I can first make a point concerning terminology. In the light of John XXIII's remarks (and of course Francis' recent papal tone), it is misleading to dub the Vatican-originated ideas during the reigns of John-Paul and Benedict as "the Magisterium". But my main point has already been made above, about the way the thesis is presented. To repeat, I find it strange that Curnow takes pains to distance himself from either of the two interpretations above (82). If there is some error in the Latin American theologians' approach, why not simply point it out? If not, why not judge it as hitting the mark? If he is neutral between the two, why bother to quote Dom Helder Camara's complaint about being called a communist when he analyses the causes of poverty, an obviously unjust accusation? If the "See-Judge-Act" method is indeed roughly what Lonergan was trying to promote, why not affirm it as such, and make a judgment about what is in fact going on in this historical struggle in the Catholic Church. Curnow sees, but fails to judge, preferring to stay with the pre-formulated concepts gleaned from Lonergan.

If this sounds a bit harsh, it is because one feels that Curnow's research is too valuable to be left unread because of the difficulties in the style in which the book is written. The Lonergan/Doran chapters require a familiarity with the specialised terminology: after a page or two explaining the four "realms of meaning", Curnow thereafter makes his point by simply referring to, for example, "the second realm of meaning"; not every reader would be happy having to page back to remind themselves of what this actually means. Examples like this abound. In spite of this, a careful study of this text is to be recommended. As I have indicated, I struggled to find a way into the two parts of the text. If Curnow's approach is to say that a more comprehensive understanding of the global contemporary situation, of group bias (social analysis needed) and general bias (conversion needed), is given by Lonergan and Doran, then we need to hear what their judgment (Curnow's judgment) is on this situation. Does it

resemble more the Liberation theologians' or else the Vatican approach of the recent past? What does an existentially converted Lonerganian uncover? The reply can't be simply, "Read Lonergan/Doran and you'll find out."

Reviewed by:
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List of Contributors

DR PATRICK GIDDY studied Philosophy at the University of Cape Town (BA PhD) and Stellenbosch (MA), and studied Theology at Blackfriars College in Oxford. He lectured in Philosophy for some years at the University of Lesotho before moving to UKZN, Durban where he is currently a Senior Research Associate. He was also Head of the Philosophy Department at both Lesotho and Durban Universities for some years. At the Durban campus of the University of Kwazulu Natal he introduced a number of new modules including a general introductory module on Philosophy and Ethics, Ancient to Modern and a module on the Philosophy of Religion. He has also taught at St Joseph's Theological Institute and taught modules at St Augustine College of SA. Dr Giddy has given Papers at numerous academic conferences in Philosophy and Ethics in USA, China, Italy, Spain, Bulgaria and Africa and has been a visiting scholar at many universities in the States and Europe. His philosophical bent is towards a very broad Aristotelianism.

REV FR MAURICE SCHEPERS, O.P., was elected as the new Vicar Provincial for Eastern Africa in 2014, for a four year term. Fr Maurice made his first profession in the Order in 1950 and was ordained to the priesthood in 1956. He has been on mission in Kenya for many years. He is a lecturer at the Institute of Social Communication, Tangaza College, Adjunct Lecturer in the School of Theology, Tangaza College and the Director of the Lonergan Research Institute. The Institute of Social Ministry is an institution of Higher Education founded in 1994 at Tangaza College, a constituent college of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA) Nairobi. The Institute currently offers Certificate Programmes; Diplomas in the Sciences of Human Development; BA's in Social Ministry in Mission (Sciences and Praxis of Human Development) and MA's in Social Ministry (with a specialisation in Management or Governance).

DR AUGUSTINE SHUTTE (1938–2016), to whom this volume is dedicated, was one of the most prominent Catholic academics in South Africa of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. He was a member of the Philosophy Department at the University of Cape Town from 1972 to 2003, and an Honorary Research Associate at

that Department since then. He was also Chairman of the Philosophy Society from 1982 until 1986. He had a DPhil and MPhil from Stellenbosch University and he studied for Theology at Oxford. Dr Shutte's main areas of interest were Philosophy of Religion, Philosophical Anthropology, Ethics and Contemporary Thomist Philosophy. He specialised in Philosophy of Religion, Philosophical Anthropology and Ethics. In recent years he published two books *Philosophy for Africa* and *Ubuntu: An Ethic for a New South Africa*, in which he offers a philosophical analysis of some central concepts in traditional African thought concerning the nature of persons and morality. He was previously a member of the Dominican Order, where he trained as a theologian. He published widely in both philosophical and theological journals and was the author of a book of popular theology *The Mystery of Humanity*. From 2002 to 2005 he directed a research project sponsored by the John Templeton Foundation on science and religion in an African context. This resulted in a collection *The Quest for Humanity in Science and Religion: The South African Experience*. Since its inception, Dr Shutte taught Philosophy at St Augustine College at the MPhil level and, more recently, he was a member of the College's Senate.

REV PROF GERARD WHELAN, S.J., is a lecturer in the Department of Fundamental Theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome. He was awarded an MA in Economics from Trinity College in Dublin, and then entered the Society of Jesus. He completed a Bachelors' Degree in Theology at Hekima College, Nairobi, and then proceeded to graduate studies in Boston and Toronto, where he was awarded a PhD in Systematic Theology from St Michael's College, Toronto. While in Nairobi, besides pastoral duties, Fr Whelan worked as a member of the Commission on Ecumenism for the Kenyan Episcopal Conference and as an advisor to the Apostolic Nuncio to Kenya in representing the Holy See to activities of the United Nations centred at Nairobi. He was appointed ecclesiastical assistant to the World Union of Catholic Womens' Organisations by the Pontifical Council for the Laity, and helped to organise an international conference at the Gregorian: "Revisiting Lonergan's Anthropology." He has published a book: *Redeeming History: Social Concern in Bernard Lonergan and Robert Doran* (Rome, G & B Press, 2013) and he is currently working on a variety of publications about Pope Francis.

ABOUT ST AUGUSTINE COLLEGE
OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Original research articles should be between 5000 and 9000 words in length in a particular field within or related to the focus and scope of the journal. Articles may be e-mailed to Dr Jakub Urbaniak at j.urbaniak@staugustine.ac.za using software that is compatible with MS Word. The first page of the manuscript should carry the proposed title and author's name with highest degree. Under the name, an identification line, giving title and position held, the institution and its location, should appear. Personal details and a short biography (maximum 100 words) should also be submitted. A brief abstract (no more than 150 words) should follow the author identification data.

NOTES

Notes should be numbered serially throughout the text by superscript numbers (without parentheses) to the right of any punctuation marks. The notes themselves should appear at the end of the manuscript but before the references, under the caption 'Notes'.

REFERENCES

The Harvard method should be used. All references should be specified in parentheses in the text (and in the text of notes) by surname(s) of the author(s), the year of the publication and page number(s), for example (Dworkin 1986:45-52) or (Solomon & Higgins 1996:157) or (Grant *et al*. 1976:58). 'Et al.' is to be used for three and more authors. The complete citation should appear at the end of the manuscript (after the notes, if any) under the caption 'References'. Such citations should be listed alphabetically by surname of author; for authors cited more than once, by year of publication, with the most recent references first. Please note the use of capital letters, punctuation marks and italics in the following examples:

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