EPILOGUE

It might be thought that, at the end of this long book, the long-suffering reader was entitled to a concluding summary. For many matters have been treated in isolation; others have been handled in a series of disparate contexts; still others have been partly developed but left unfinished.

Yet if the justice of the claim is not to be disputed, the difficulty of meeting it is not to be overlooked. As was stated in the Introduction, this work has been written from a moving viewpoint. Successive contexts have been formed only to provide the base and the need for forming a further, fuller context; and, as is clear from our final chapter, even several hundred pages have not brought us to the end of the process. If I have written as a humanist, as one dominated by the desire not only to understand but also, through understanding understanding, to reach a grasp of the main lines of all there is to be understood, still the very shape of things as they are has compelled me to end with a question at once too basic and too detailed to admit a brief answer. The self-appropriation of one's own intellectual and rational self-consciousness begins as cognitional theory, expands into a metaphysics and an ethics, mounts to a conception and an affirmation of God, only to be confronted with a problem of evil that demands the transformation of self-reliant intelligence into an

intellectus quaerens fidem. Only at the term of that search for faith, for the new and higher collaboration of minds that has God as its author and its guide, could the desired summary and completion be undertaken: and then, I believe, it would prove to be, not some brief appendage to the present work, but the inception of a far larger one.

So it is that I am forced to be content with the inner logic of the plan with which I began. From a succession of lower contexts there was gradually to emerge an upper context. The lower contexts were to be subject to further additions and to indefinite revision. The upper context was to be constituted 1) by the invariant structures of experiencing, inquiring, and reflecting, 2) by the consequent, isomorphic structures of all there is to be known of the universe of proportionate being, 3) by the fuller invariant structure that adds reasonable choice and action to intelligent and reasonable knowing, 4) by the profounder structure of knowing and known to be reached by acknowledging the full significance of the detached, disinterested, unrestricted desire to know, and 5) by the structure of the process in which the existential situation sets human intelligence the problem of rising above its native resources and seeking the divine solution to man's incapacity for sustained development.

Still, if the inner logic of this work is a process that admits no concluding summary, it is possible to view that process, not in itself, but in its ulterior

significance, and to ask whether it has any contributions to offer to the higher collaboration which it has envisaged and to which it leads. To this question the remaining paragraphs of this Epilogue will be devoted and, as the reader already has surmised, they will be written, not from the moving viewpoint whose exigences, I trust, I have been observing honestly and sincerely, but from the terminal viewpoint of a believer, a Catholic, and, it happens, a professor of dogmatic theology.

First, then, there is a contribution to the Introduction to Theology or, as more commonly it is named, to Apologetics. The Catholic admits neither the exclusive rationalism of the Enlightenment nor, on the other hand, the various irrationalist tendencies that can be traced from the medieval period through the Reformation to their sharp manifestation in Kierkegaard's reaction to Hegelianism and in contemporary dialectical and existentialist trends. But this twofold negation involves a positive commitment. If one is not to affirm reason at the expense of faith or faith at the expense of reason, one is called upon both to produce a synthesis that unites two orders of truth and to give evidence of a successful symbiosis of two principles of knowledge. Clearly, this positive commitment goes beyond the assertion that irreligious rationalism and irrationalist religiosity are not the contradictories that exclude a third possibility. For

there is a broad jump from a logical possibility to a concrete achievement, and there would be an unpleasant ambiguity to an assertion of principle that was not coupled with the evidence of fact.

But if Catholics have endeavored to establish the synthesis of the objects and the symbiosis of the principles of reason and faith, it also is true that their effort has been embarrassed continually by the instability of the pronouncements of scientific reason. From the nature of the case the initiative seemed permanently in the hands of those that invoked science against religion and, if it mattered little to them that at any given moment the issue had shifted from physics to Semitic literature, from Semitic literature to biology, from biology to economics, or from economics to depth psychology, the defenders were left in the unenviable position of always arriving on the scene a little breathlessly and a little late.

Now inasmuch as the difficulty has arisen from an insufficiently supple and detailed cognitional theory, a remedy may be not too far distant. For if we have begun with a complete deference to the positive element in rationalism, we have had no difficulty in ending with a reversal of its opposition between the exigences of intelligence and the claims of religion. Again, while we have stressed the de facto limitations of purely human development, we have been so far from making any concession to irrationalism that the self-transcendence of man in the final chapter

has the same type of structure as empirical science and, indeed, a structure that reveals how one may cut short the investigations that, in his Concluding Unscientific Postscript, Kierkegaard argued to be interminably long. Finally, something has been done to redress the balance of the initiative in the alleged conflicts between science and religion. For our sketch of metaphysics makes it the invariant form for which the sciences provide the variable matter, and our dialectical analysis provides a technique that systematically discriminates between the genuine discoveries that science ever brings forth and the counter-positions in which they may happen to be formulated.

In the second place, there is a contribution to the method of theology itself, and though this contribution is remote, it may prove to be none the less fruitful.

For the opposition that has been worked out between positions and counter-positions possesses a threefold theological significance. It lays bare the roots of the revolt of pietists and modernists against dogma, for as the philosophic counter-positions appeal to experience generally against the "Yes" of rational consciousness, so they appeal to religious experience against the "Yes" of articulate faith. Secondly, the same dialectical technique that cuts short the disputed questions of meta-

physicians will contribute at least indirectly to the systematic demise of not a few disputed questions of theologians. Finally, the clarification we have effected of the role of understanding in knowledge recalls to mind the impressive statements of the Vatican Council on the role of understanding in faith; and a firm grasp of what it is to understand can hardly fail to promote the limited but most fruitful understanding of the Christian mysteries that results both from the analogy of nature and from the inner coherence of the mysteries themselves.

To move to more technical matters, there has been worked out what seems to me a very relevant distinction between the more detailed metaphysics of proportionate being and the generalities that alone are available a priori on other possible worlds and on supernatural elements in this world. For, on the one hand, this distinction allows the theologian to elaborate his understanding of this world without undertaking to offer an explanatory account of other worlds. On the other hand, it reveals that the theologian is under no necessity of reducing to the metaphysical elements, which suffice for an account of this world, such supernatural realities as the Incarnation, the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and the Beatific Vision.

Again, a reasoned answer is provided for the question whether there can be more than one true metaphysics.

In its contemporary presentation the question arises from the analogy of mathematics. To cite but one of a number of examples that kept multiplying until mathematicians grew tired of the novelty, the pattern of relations constitutive of the theoretical content of Euclidean geometry was formulated with complete logical rigor, first, by Hilbert in terms of "points", "line", and "between", and then by Huntington in terms of "sphere" and "inclusion". Hence, it is argued that, since the same geometry admits different yet equivalent conceptualizations and expressions, there is no reason to expect the conceptualization of the true metaphysics to be unique. Further, in confirmation, it is pointed out that a metaphysics in terms of potency, form, and act is indigenous to Mediterranean and Western thought; but is it not to be expected that, once we overcome the parochialism of our outlook and come to understand the mentality of the East, then we shall have to acknowledge a plurality of different yet true and so equivalent metaphysics? Finally, it may be contended that in an ontologically structured metaphysics the ultimate causa essendi, in terms of which all else is explained, is God; but according to Aquinas we know that God is and what he is not; we do not know positively what God is;

and so we do not know how many different positive aspects of the ultimate causa essendi can provide a complete account of whatever else is.

I do not believe that this question can be answered by appealing to the principle of contradiction. Those that envisage the possibility of a plurality of metaphysics and not envisage the possibility of contradictory propositions being both true. On the contrary, their point that each of the several metaphysics would have its own distinct set of basic terms so that contradiction would be impossible.

Again, I do not believe that an answer to the question is independent of the precise manner in which metaphysics happens to be conceived. But I would contend that the conception of metaphysics that has been implemented in the present work yields unique results. For potency, form, and act have been defined, not solely by their relations to one another, but also by their relations to human knowing. The argument is that 1) if a man is in the intellectual pattern of experience and 2) if he is knowing an object within the domain of proportionate being, then his knowing will consist in experiencing, understanding, and judging, and the known will be a compound of potency, form, and act, where potency, form, and act are related as the experienced, the understood, and the affirmed, and where they possess no meaning other than what has to be presupposed if there is inquiry, what is known inasmuch as there is understanding, and what is known inasmuch as judgment results from a grasp of the virtually unconditioned. The only manner, in which this basic theorem could be modified, would be to modify its

factual supposition that knowing consists in experiencing, understanding, and judging; and it has been argued that that fact is not open to revision in any concrete meaning of the term, revision. For any human reviser would appeal to experience, understanding, and judgment; and there is no use arguing that men might be other than they are, because it is equally true that the universe might be other than it is and the issue lies, not in the possibility of a different metaphysics in a different universe, but in the possibility of a different metaphysics in this universe.

Hence, I do not find the mathematical analogy compelling. What that analogy establishes is that the same field of abstract relations can be deduced from different initial sets of definitions and postulates. But the totality of fields of explanatory relations is included under our single term, form. Moreover, the triad, potency, form, and act, is not an arbitrary triad; it has the intrinsic unity of 1) what inquiring intelligence must presuppose, 2) what it grasps, and 3) what it demands of what it grasps. Finally, the basic theorem of potency, form, and act, is not a starting-point to be expanded deductively but a nucleus to be enriched by recurrences of the same basic procedure; so one advances from potency, form, and act, to the distinction between central and conjugate forms, to the relations between successive levels of conjugates, and to the theory of development.

Again, the argument from the cultural differences of East and West does not seem to touch our position. For while those differences are profound and manifest, they are

not differences that lie within the intellectual pattern of experience. A man can unfold his detached, disinterested, unrestricted desire to know by asking and answering questions, and then he operates in the intellectual pattern of experience; again, he can reflect that asking questions can never lead to more than mere answers, that his intellectual desire demands more than mere answers, and then he will endeavor to enter into the mystical pattern of experience. Both procedures have the same origin and both have the same ultimate goal. Both yield their different and basically equivalent accounts of ultimate reality. But both do not yield a metaphysics in the sense in which metaphysics has been conceived in this work; for metaphysics, as it has been conceived, arises in the intellectual pattern of experience, and, when an Easterner inquires and understands, reflects and judges, he performs the same operations as a Westerner.

Finally, it is true that the human mind cannot plumb the reality of God, and so it cannot exclude the possibility of a plurality of aspects of God grounding a plurality of different but equivalent metaphysics. But it is not true that any man ever intelligently conceived and reasonably affirmed a metaphysics that assigned the causa essendi and excluded the causa cognoscendi. And it is not true that advertence to the causa cognoscendi permits a plurality of equivalent metaphysics. The reasons for the last assertion have been given above. The reasons for the second last assertion can be appreciated better now than when they first were indicated in the Introduction. For an ontologically structured metaphysics is known; our knowing con-

sists in experiencing, understanding, and judging; and judging emerges in rational consciousness inasmuch as a necessary and sufficient reason for making the judgment, i.e., a causa cognoscendi, is grasped; finally, while God is logically and ontologically first in an ontologically structured metaphysics, God is not logically first in our knowledge of that metaphysics.

Closely related to the question of the unicity of metaphysics, is the question of changeless concepts. It is an enormous issue but, perhaps, we may claim to have provided a basis from which a solution, proportionate to the complexity of the problem, may be developed. In any case, the following points may be noted towards the formulation of a first approximation.

Inasmuch as there is change in the things that are conceived, there is necessitated a change from earlier to later concepts 1) if the concepts are correct and 2) if they are completely accurate. But it is not to be thought that all concepts aim at complete accuracy. Thus, the motorcars of 1953 differ greatly from those of 1913, but the differences lie in the manner in which the same function of transportation is fulfilled. Attention to the manner leads to an affirmation of conceptual variation; but attention to the function leads to an affirmation of conceptual constancy.

Again, things may not change, but man's understanding of them may develop. Now a change of understanding involves a change in explanatory conception, for the explanatory concept may be defined as an expression of the content of the understanding. Yet here there is an important

distinction between heuristic and explanatory concepts. Fire was conceived by Aristotle as an element, by Lavoisier's predecessors as a manifestation of phlogiston, and by later chemists as a type of oxydization. But though the explanations differed, the object to be explained was conceived uniformly as the "nature of" a familiar phenomenon and without this uniformity it would be incorrect to say that Aristotle had an incorrect explanation of what he meant and we mean by fire.

Again, while the identity of the heuristic concept forms the unifying principle in a series of successive explanations, still there can be a development in heuristic concepts themselves. Thus, the discovery of the significance of measurement led to a shift from the vague "nature of...." to the precise "indeterminate function to be determined". Further, classical method has been complemented by statistical, and both may be complemented by genetic and by dialectical methods. Still these changes are not radical. As the very name, method, suggests, they are not determinations of a new goal but determinations of a new procedure or technique for reaching the goal that already was envisaged, though hardly attained, when men referred to what was to be known by understanding as the "nature of.....".

Again, as there is a development in heuristic structures, so also there is a development in explicit metaphysics. Thus, if I agree with Aristotle that potency, form, and act are related as eye, sight, and seeing, I also agree with Aquinas who added to Aristotle's metaphysical elements the substantial act of <u>esse</u> or existence. Further, agreement with Aquinas on the basic elements does not preclude a development

of his thought to provide a metaphysical analysis of explanatory genera and species and of development itself. But besides explicit metaphysics, there is the latent metaphysics that is immanent and operative in all human minds and that yields uniform conceptions not only when the process of conceiving is not explained but even when it is explained mistakenly. Thus, I believe that Parmenides and Plato, Aristotle and Avicenna, Scotus and Hegel, were mistaken in their formulations of the notion of being; but I do not believe that such mistaken formulations have the power of changing the structure of one's mind; nor do I suppose it would be difficult to show how the writings of these thinkers reveal an awareness of the objective of the detached, disinterested, unrestricted desire to know. Again, I have based the notion of the thing upon a grasp of unity and identity in data as individual; but though I am not aware that anyone else has expressed the matter in precisely this fashion, I would be prepared to contend that their spontaneous use of the notion of thing satisfied my account.

Finally, though there is a latent metaphysics common to all minds, there also is common a variable interference with the proper functioning of the pure desire to know and, consequently, there also is common a distortion of the latent metaphysics. So it is that the philosophia perennis is flanked by no less perennial counter-philosophies. But as the detached, disinterested, unrestricted desire to know is constant, so too are the principles that interfere with its unfolding. However much at variance with one another positions and counter-positions may be, a dialectical analysis, based

upon a sufficiently accurate cognitional theory, can proceed to a universal viewpoint that embraces at once 1) the positions in the contemporary stage of their development, 2) the positions at each prior stage of their development, 3) and the successive counter-positions of the past and present with their essential incoherence with the claim that they are grasped intelligently and affirmed reasonably.

In brief, concepts change inasmuch as things change, inasmuch as human understanding develops, and inasmuch as that development is formulated coherently or incoherently. But behind every change there is an underlying unity, and that unity may be formulated explicitly on the level of heuristic anticipation or of consciously adopted method or of a dialectical metaphysics. Hence it follows that changes in conceptualization do not imply any ultimate multiplicity and that behind any conceptual variation there is a conceptual constant that can be formulated from a universal viewpoint. Finally, while the notion of the universal viewpoint was worked out on the level of a dialectical metaphysics of proportionate being, it is to be borne in mind that it receives further determinations from our final chapters on transcendent knowledge. For general transcendent knowledge is concerned with the ultimate condition of the possibility of the positions, and special transcendent knowledge is concerned with the de facto condition of the possibility of man's fidelity to the positions.

There is still another manner in which the present work may be construed as a remote contribution to the method of theology. For in successive statements the Vatican Council

insisted 1) that divine revelation was to be regarded, not as a human invention to be perfected by human ingenuity, but as a permanent deposit confided to the Church and by the Church to be preserved and defended, and 2) that every group and every period should advance in the understanding, knowledge, and wisdom, by which the same doctrine with the same meaning was to be apprehended ever more fully. Now this affirmation of identity not only in difference but also in development confers a relevance both on our analysis of development and on our discussion of the truth of interpretation.

For the discussion of interpretation envisaged 1) initial statements addressed to particular audiences, 2) their successive recasting for sequences of other particular audiences, 3) the ascent to a universal viewpoint to express the initial statements in a form accessible to any sufficiently cultured audience, and 4) the explanatory unification from the universal viewpoint of the initial statements and all their subsequent re-expressions. But isomorphic with this interpretative process, there is the Catholic fact of 1) an initial divine revelation, 2) the work of teachers and preachers communicating and applying the initial message to a succession of different audiences, 3) the work of the speculative theologian seeking a universal formulation of the truths of faith, and 4) the work of the historical theologian revealing the doctrinal identity in the verbal and conceptual differences of 1), 2), and 3).

While this parallel is not to be pushed in any a priori manner, it does serve to bring together within a single frame of reference a large number of otherwise unrelated

aspects of the Catholic position. As true interpretations, so also Catholic teaching presents the same doctrine and the same meaning through a diversity of conceptualizations and expressions. As true interpretation has to mount to a universal viewpoint, so the Church takes advantage of the philosophia perennis and its expansion into a speculative theology. As there is a difference between interpretations adapted to particular audiences or particular times and the interpretation from the universal viewpoint, so also the Church distinguishes between authoritative pronouncements that call for dutiful submission and definitive pronouncements that the Church itself cannot contradict. As historical interpretation may be based simply on a historical sense or may operate in the light of the universal viewpoint, so too the non-theological interpreter may recapture the mentality for which the books of the Old and New Testament were written or the spirit of the age in which a heresy arose and was condemned, but the theological interpreter has to operate from the firmer and broader base that includes the theologically transformed universal viewpoint; and so it is that in a pre-eminent and unique manner the dogmatic decision is, and the technical thesis of the dogmatic theologian can be, the true interpretation of Scriptural texts, patristic teaching, and traditional utterances.

If the parallel with the interpretative process emphasizes identity and continuity, there also is development though its complexity can be no more than sketched in an epilogue.

In general, development occurs inasmuch as higher

conjugate forms not only integrate their underlying manifold but also through conjugate acts so transform it as to call forth the next higher forms of the process.

In man, there are three levels of development, namely, the biological, the psychic, and the intellectual. So one may consider 1) any level in itself, 2) any level in its relations to other levels, 3) the harmonious or conflicting process of development on all three levels in any individual, and 4) the cumulative, historical process of development in a multiplicity and succession of individuals. Clearly, the only complete consideration is the fourth.

The advent of the absolutely supernatural solution to man's problem of evil adds to man's biological, psychic, and intellectual levels of development a fourth level that includes the higher conjugate forms of faith, hope, and charity. It follows that now the four considerations regard not three but four levels of development.

Considered in themselves, faith, hope, and charity constitute an absolutely supernatural living that advances towards an absolutely supernatural goal under the action of divine grace.

Considered in their relation to other human intellectual and volitional activities, 1) they are anticipated inasmuch as rational self-consciousness adverts to its need for the divine solution of its problem of evil, 2) they constitute a dialectical higher integration inasmuch as they make possible the sustained development of rational self-consciousness by reversing counter-positions through faith and by overcoming evil through the firmness of hope and

through the generosity of charity, and, 3) they call forth their own development inasmuch as they give rise to an advance of the understanding, knowledge, and wisdom, by which man apprehends, appreciates, and applies the divine solution to human living in all its aspects.

Considered in their relation to man's sensitivity and inter-subjectivity, 1) they are announced through the signs that communicate the Gospel, 2) they constitute a new psychic integration through affective contemplation of the mystery of Christ and his Church, and 3) they call forth their own development inasmuch as they intensify man's inter-subjective awareness of the sufferings and the needs of mankind.

It is to be noted that this transformation of sensitivity and inter-subjectivity penetrates to the physiological level though the clear instances appear only in the intensity of mystical experience.

To these considerations, there is to be added the alternative of harmony or conflict in a development that proceeds on four levels of successive higher integration.

Finally, to the foregoing considerations that regard any individual that has embraced God's solution, there is to be added the consideration of the cumulative, historical development, first, of the chosen people and, then, of the Catholic Church, both in themselves and in their role in the unfolding of all human history and in the order of the universe.

It may be asked in what department of theology the historical aspect of development might be treated, and

I would like to suggest that it may possess peculiar relevance to a treatise on the Mystical Body of Christ. For in any theological treatise a distinction may be drawn between a material and a formal element: the material element is supplied by Scriptural and patristic texts and by dogmatic pronouncements; the formal element, that makes a treatise a treatise, consists in the pattern of terms and relations through which the materials may be embraced in a single, coherent view. Thus, the formal element in the treatise on grace consists in theorems on the supernatural, and the formal element in the treatise on the Blessed Trinity consists in theorems on the notions of procession, relation, and person. Now while the Scriptural, patristic, and dogmatic materials for a treatise on the Mystical Body have been assembled, I would incline to the opinion that its formal element remains incomplete as long as it fails to draw upon a theory of history. It was at the fulness of time that there came into the world the Light of the world. It was the advent not only of the light that directs but also of the grace that gives good will and good performance. It was the advent of a light and a grace to be propagated, not only through the inner mystery of individual conversion, but also through the outer channels of human communication. If its principal function was to carry the seeds of eternal life, still it could not bear its fruits without effecting a transfiguration of human living and, in turn, that transfiguration contains the solution not only to man's individual but also to his social problem of evil. So it is that the Pauline

thesis of the moral impotence of Jew and Gentile alike was due to be complemented by the Augustinian analysis of history in terms of the city of God and the city of this world. So it is that the profound and penetrating influence of liberal, Hegelian, Marxist, and romantic theories of history have been met by a firmer affirmation of the organic structure and functions of the Church, by a long series of social encyclicals, by calls to Catholic action, by a fuller advertence to collective responsibility, and by a deep and widespread interest in the doctrine of the Mystical Body. So too it may be that the contemporary crisis of human living and human values demands of the theologian, in addition to treatises on the unique and to treatises on the universal common to many instances, a treatise on the concrete universal that is mankind in the concrete and cumulative consequences of the acceptance or rejection of the message of the Gospel. And as the remote possibility of thought on the concrete universal lies in the insight that grasps the intelligible in the sensible, so its proximate possibility resides in a theory of development that can envisage not only natural and intelligent progress but also sinful decline, and not only progress and decline but also supernatural recovery.

We have been asking whether our essay in aid of personal appropriation of one's own rational self-consciousness may possess any significance for theology, and we have been listing a number of potential, though remote, contributions to apologetic and to the method of theology. But

there remains a third topic, for theology is accounted traditionally regina scientiarum, and the relation of theology to other sciences is a matter of more than apologetic interest.

Commonly it is recognized that St. Thomas Aquinas took over the Aristotelian synthesis of philosophy and science to construct the larger Christian view that includes theology. But it is, perhaps, less commonly appreciated that the development of empirical, human sciences has created a fundamentally new problem. For these sciences consider man in his concrete performance, and that performance is a manifestation not only of human nature but also of human sin, not only of nature and sin but also of a de facto need of divine grace, not only of a need of grace but also of its reception and of its acceptance or rejection. It follows that an empirical human science cannot analyze successfully the elements in its object without an appeal to theology. Inversely, it follows that if theology is to be queen of the sciences, not only by right but also in fact, then theologians have to take a professional interest in the human sciences and make a positive contribution to their methodology. Finally, in so far as philosophy itself becomes existentialist, it stands in the same relation to theology as the empirical human sciences.

Now it is this problem that in a large measure has dictated the structure of the present work. For the Catholic thinker has to meet a twofold exigence. On the one hand, he believes Christ to be the sign of contradiction and he accepts Christ's statement that he that is not with

me is against me and he that gathereth not scattereth; and from this belief and acceptance it follows that theology has a universal relevance. Yet on the other hand, he must also acknowledge that by the natural light of human reason man can know with certitude the existence of God; and from this acknowledgement it follows that there can and do exist independent inquiries that can reach valid conclusions out of their own resources.

It was to give concrete expression to the sincerity of Catholic thought in affirming the essential independence of other fields that our first eighteen chapters were written solely in the light of human intelligence and reasonableness and without any presupposition of God's existence, without any appeal to the authority of the Church, and without any explicit deference to the genius of St. Thomas Aquinas. At the same time, our first eighteen chapters were followed by a nineteenth and twentieth that revealed the inevitability with which the affirmation of God and the search of intellect for faith arise out of a sincere acceptance of scientific presuppositions and precepts.

In other words, it is the inner dynamism of inquiry that provides the reconciliation, both completely general and completely concrete, of the independence of other fields and of the universal relevance of theology. In principle, other fields alone are competent to answer their proper questions. In fact, men in other fields do not triumph over all the various types of bias, to which polymorphic human consciousness is subject, unless they raise and answer successfully the further questions that belong

to ever further fields. So it is that against the bias of the subject there can be set the expansive dynamism of the object. So it is that we have endeavored to promote the fruitful interaction of subject and object by inviting subjects to a personal appropriation of their own rational self-consciousness. And if we began from the minimal context of the meaning of the name, insight, if we were portentously slow in advancing to a metaphysics even of proportionate being, it is not to be forgotten that we do not live in the medieval period, in which a thinker could presuppose his faith and proceed to the development of theology, nor in the sixteenth century, in which he could presuppose the validity of human reason and proceed to develop a philosophy but, to employ Prof. Sorokin's phrase, we live in the midst of a sensate culture, in which very many men, in so far as they acknowledge any hegemony of truth, give their allegiance not to a divine revelation, nor to a theology, nor to a philosophy, nor even to an intellectualist science, but to science interpreted in a positivistic and pragmatic fashion. Indeed, even were this attitude not so prevalent, even were 99% of English readers not only devout Catholics but also convinced Thomists, the parable of the lost sheep would retain its significance and its relevance.

In this epilogue, however, in which we have shifted from the moving viewpoint that advances towards faith and theology and have adopted the terminal viewpoint of the theologian, perhaps the following suggestions may be made.

First, theology possesses a twofold relevance

to empirical human science. On the one hand, it is relevant to the scientist as a scientist, inasmuch as the untrammeled unfolding of his detached, disinterested, and unrestricted desire to understand his own field correctly is open to a variety of interferences that ultimately can be surmounted only by accepting the ultimate implications of the unrestricted desire. On the other hand, it is relevant to the possibility of a correct interpretation of the results of empirical human science. For let us suppose some such science to be so highly developed that it has ascertained the classical laws that hold at relevant stages of human development, the genetic operators that relate successive stages, the dialectical analysis that envisages different sets of consequences following respectively on reasonable and unreasonable human choices, and the statistical laws that indicate the probable frequencies of both types of choice. Still such human science would offer, not an adequate understanding of its proper aspect of human activity, but only the measure of understanding possible from the scientific viewpoint. For an adequate understanding reveals the manner in which man can remedy the evil in his situation. But the solution to man's problem of evil has been seen to lie, not in a human initiative, but in an acceptance of the solution that God has provided; and while empirical human science can lead on to the further context of the solution, the systematic treatment of the solution itself is theological. In a word, empirical human science can become practical only through theology, and the relentless modern drift to social engineering and totalitarian controls is the fruit of man's effort to make human

science practical though he prescinds from God and from the solution God provides for man's problem.

My second suggestion is the obverse of the first. Grace perfects nature both in the sense that it adds a perfection beyond nature and in the sense that it confers on nature the effective freedom to attain its own perfection. But grace is not a substitute for nature, and theology is not a substitute for empirical human science. It is a fuller viewpoint that both reinforces the scientist's detached, disinterested, unrestricted desire to know and reveals the concrete possibility of intelligent and reasonable solutions to human problems. Still this possibility, revealed by theology, is not intrinsic but extrinsic. It is not the theologian, operating in his own field, that reaches the accumulation of insights to be formulated in the classical laws and genetic operators constitutive of a theoretical science of physiology or psychology, of economics or sociology. Nor again is it the theologian that would add to such theory the enumeration of the dialectical alternatives it offers or the probable frequencies with which different alternatives would in fact be chosen. Nor clearly can the theologian supply the know-how of the technician, the analyst, the economic consultant, or the social worker. Yet if the theologian cannot contribute directly either to the abstract theory or to the concrete relevance or to the awareness of the material circumstances of empirical human science, it does not follow that his influence is not of paramount importance. For inasmuch as he knows that the detached, disinterested, unrestricted desire to know is a key instance

of the universal law that omnia Deum appetunt, he is in a position not only to encourage scientists to complete fidelity in their calling but also to teach non-scientists the high office of the scientific spirit; and in this fashion he can hope not only to promote scientific willingness to undertake fundamental research but also to mitigate the pressures that are exerted by so-called practicality and that ever seek to turn scientists away from their proper tasks and to direct their energies to projects with a significance that, because it is minimal, easily is understood. Again, though the theologian does not carry out the precepts of classical, genetic, dialectical, and statistical method in empirical human science, he can hasten the day when adherence to counter-positions ceases to block scientific apprehension and appreciation of those methods. No less than the physicists, the human scientist has to learn the inadequacy of mechanist determinism. No less than the biologists, he has to formulate a genetic method based on universally valid principles. Above all, he has to make the discovery that the guinea pigs of his theories read his theories and exploit his knowledge to circumvent what they dislike in his conclusions and predictions; and so he needs a dialectical method that will take into account the variable of more or less enlightened and reasonable choice.

Finally, once an empirical human science is developed sufficiently to be relevant to practical applications, there arises the supreme danger that the scientist will despair of human intelligence and reasonableness and will ambition the

role of consultant in the policy-making of the ever more paternalistic state. Then it is that the theologian needs the alliance of fully enlightened scientists. For the drift to totalitarianism can be stopped only in the measure that human scientists work out intelligent and reasonable solutions to human problems and theologians succeed in convincing hard-headed, practical men, on the one hand, that by God's grace intelligent and reasonable solutions can work and, on the other hand, that the desertion of intelligent and reasonable solutions for "realist" policies is the operative principle in the break-down and the disintegration of civilizations.

In conclusion, I would add that I believe this work to contribute to the program, vetera novis augere et perficere, initiated by the encyclical, Aeterni Patris, of His Holiness, Pope Leo XIII.

Some eighty years have elapsed since scholars began to apply the methods of historical research to the products of medieval thought. Their labors have given us texts. They have informed us about sources and chronology. They have supplied a stream of monographs upon doctrinal issues. Above all, they have created a climate of opinion that has made it increasingly difficult to substitute rhetoric for history, fancy for fact, abstract argument for textual evidence.

But however indispensable this work, it is in vain unless it is complemented by a further labor. To penetrate to the mind of a medieval thinker is to go beyond his words and phrases. It is to effect an advance in depth

that is proportionate to the broadening influence of historical research. It is to grasp questions as once they were grasped. It is to take the Opera Omnia of such a writer as St. Thomas Aquinas and to follow through successive works the variations and developments of his views. It is to study the concomitance of such variations and developments and to arrive at a grasp of their motives and causes. It is to discover for oneself that the intellect of Aquinas, more rapidly on some points, more slowly on others, reached a position of dynamic equilibrium without ever ceasing to drive towards fuller and more nuanced synthesis, without ever halting complacently in some finished mental edifice, as though his mind had become dull, or his brain exhausted, or his judgment had lapsed into the error of those that forget man to be potency in the realm of intelligence.

Nor is this labor of penetration enough, for I have tried it. After spending years reaching up to the mind of Aquinas, I came to a twofold conclusion. On the one hand, that reaching had changed me profoundly. On the other hand, that change was the essential benefit. For not only did it make me capable of grasping what, in the light of my conclusions, the vetera really were, but also it opened challenging vistas on what the nova could be.

So it is that my detailed investigations of the thought of Aquinas on Gratia Operans and on ~~the~~ Verbum have been followed by the present essay in aid of a personal appropriation of one's own rational self-consciousness. No doubt, it would be better if I could satisfy in a single

work both those that want abundant quotations from St. Thomas and those that want an independently elaborated system of thought. But perhaps I shall be excused by those that enjoy enough energy to read both my historical studies and the present book for they, I think, will agree that either task by itself is sufficiently difficult and complex.

In the Introduction I stated a program. Thoroughly understand what it is to understand, and not only will you understand the broad lines of all there is to be understood but also you will possess a fixed base, an invariant pattern, opening upon all further developments of understanding. If I may end by adding the present context to that assertion, then I would say that it is only through a personal appropriation of one's own rational self-consciousness that one can hope to reach the mind of Aquinas and, once that mind is reached, then it is difficult not to import his compelling genius to the problems of this later day.

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