

# FELLOWSHIP OF CATHOLIC SCHOLARS QUARTERLY

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## Fellowship of Catholic Scholars

Scholarship Inspired by the Holy Spirit,  
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**Reminder:** Membership dues will be mailed out the first of the year and are based on a calendar (not academic) year.

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

# Elizabeth Fox-Genovese *Rest in Peace*

It is with great sorrow that I share the news of Elizabeth Fox-Genovese's death on Tuesday, January 2, 2007. As many of you know, Professor Elizabeth Fox-Genovese was actively involved in the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars for many years, including distinguished service as a board member. In addition, she was the recipient of the Fellowship's Cardinal Wright Award in 2003.

Among her numerous scholarly accomplishments was delivering the 2003 Charles E. Test Lectures at Princeton University's James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions. Those lectures on the historical and moral foundations of marriage will soon be published in book form as "Marriage on Trial."

Please join us in prayers for her husband and family at this most difficult loss. I also invite you to read the moving tribute to her written by FCS member Robert George, the McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence and director of the James Madison Program at Princeton University, as it appeared in National Review Online, entitled "The Story of a Well-Lived Life." All of us in the Fellowship benefited from Betsey's wise counsel through the years, and she will be greatly missed. *Requiescat in pace.* ☩

# The Origin of Atheism according to Milton, Dryden, and Swift

by Anne Barbeau Gardiner  
Professor Emerita, John Jay College, C.U.N.Y.

**M**ilton, Dryden and Swift agree that atheism is a turn from the supernatural to the material as the source of ultimate reality. But where Milton sees atheism as arising from false doctrine, Dryden and Swift see it as arising from politics. In *Paradise Lost*, Milton depicts atheism as rooted in a denial of the Creation, a denial which results in a false belief in self-creation. On the other hand, Dryden—even while still a Protestant—shows atheism as the result of parliament meddling with Christian belief and making a central doctrine of the faith a matter decided by votes. Swift also locates the origin of atheism in England in the secular government’s meddling with religion, but he accuses an English monarch of having virtually established atheism. All three deplore the rise of atheism, but from different perspectives.

## Milton: Atheism as Denial of the Creation

**I**n *Paradise Lost*, the angel Raphael says he will recount the war in heaven by “lik’ning spiritual to corporal forms,” for “what if Earth/ Be but the shadow of Heav’n” and the two be “Each to other like, more than on Earth is thought?” (5:572–6). Milton’s angels are not pure spirits, but creatures made of ethereal matter, hence similar to humans. We find that the fall of the angels into atheism is the exact prototype of the fall of Eve.

The rebel angels are lured into atheism by Satan persuading them that sensory experience is the only way to knowledge. Since they were not observers of their own Creation and have no recollection of the event, he urges, they can not *know* it: “who saw / When this creation was? Remember’st thou / Thy

making, while the Maker gave thee being?” One cannot make inferences from what is seen to what is unseen, he suggests, and call the result *knowledge*. He proceeds to offer, instead of the Creation by God’s Word in which Milton believes, another ultimate origin of angels: they were “self-begot, self-rai’d” by their “own quick’ning power” at a time appointed by Fate, using the substratum of their “native Heav’n” to build up angelic bodies. Thus he gives them, instead of the Creation, a purely materialistic account of their origin. In the key passage he repeats the word *know* twice:

We know no time when we were not as now;  
Know none before us, self-begot, self-rai’d  
By our own quick’ning power, when fatal course  
Had circl’d his full Orb, the birth mature  
Of this our native Heav’n, Ethereal Sons. (5:856–63)

For all his emphasis on *knowing*, Satan’s myth of self-creation under Fate requires even more *faith* than belief in the Creation, for the rebel angels do not recall this self-begetting either.

Satan receives wild applause when he argues that since sensory experience is the only way to knowledge, his followers will not know that God is superior to them in power until they challenge him, “by proof to try / Who is our equal” (5:865–6). When he calls his angels “Sons of Heav’n possest before / By none,” Satan also implies that they do not even know if God was in heaven before them. Throughout the temptation, his epistemology is consistent: knowing requires remembered sensory experience.

The loyal angel Abdiel retorts that Satan does in fact know that “by his Word the mighty Father made / All things, ev’n thee, and all the Spirits of Heav’n” (6:836–8). Here he echoes St. Paul, who says that the Creator is “clearly perceived” in what he made, so that those who reject him are inexcusable: “Ever since the creation of the world his invisible nature, namely, his eternal power and deity has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse; for although they *knew* God, they

did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking and their senseless minds were darkened” (Rm1:20-1; italics mine). Further, Abdiel warns that when Satan and his angels are punished, they will then “know” who “created” them and who “can uncreate” them (5:894-5). Milton alludes here to Moses’s warning to Pharaoh before each plague that he will “know” who is Lord by experiencing the punishment foretold.

Although Satan deceives his followers, he himself knows and admits to himself that he was created. On his way to Eden, he reflects that God “deserv’d no such return / From me, whom he created what I was” (4:42-3). Thus his epistemology is a cover for his envy of the Son, whom he refuses to accept as the new King of the angels. In vain does Abdiel argue that all angels, including those of highest rank like Satan, are exalted by their nearness to God in the person of their new King. Satan seduces his angels into preferring the hierarchy of the ancien regime and into accepting him, a fellow-angel, as their ruler instead of the Son of God. This is why Milton calls the fallen angels “Atheist crew” and “faithless” (6:370, 897), and the Son himself calls them “Godless” (6:811).

In the seduction of Eve, Satan offers the same path to atheism which he had offered the rebel angels. At first, Eve refers twice in one sentence to the Creation, in her amazement at hearing the serpent speak: is he not, she asks, one of the “Beasts, whom God on thir Creation-Day / Created mute”? He replies that he acquired speech by his own act and thus was self-raised to a higher level “than Fate / Meant” him (9:687-90). Then, to persuade her that sensory perception is the only way to knowledge, he informs Eve that she has never actually seen anything being created in Eden. What she has seen is the earth bringing forth everything, and the “Gods” producing “nothing.” She should therefore trust her senses and conclude that everything around her, including the “Gods,” arose from the earth:

And what are Gods that Man may not become  
As they, participating God-like food?  
The Gods are first, and that advantage use  
On our belief, that all from them proceeds;  
I question it, for this fair earth I see,  
Warm’d by the Sun, producing every kind,  
Them nothing... (9: 716-22)

Just as he persuaded his angels that they were begotten from heaven’s substratum at the fated time, so he persuades Eve that she is a product of earth and can raise herself to higher rank by claiming autonomy and eating divinity-producing food.

After eating the Fruit and seeing no change in herself, Eve resolves with blind faith to come back and eat from the Tree each day so as to “grow mature / In knowledge, as the Gods who all things know” (9:803-9). This, of course, is an attack on the Mass, with allusions to the eucharistic hymns of Fortunatus, who praises the Tree of Calvary for producing divine fruit of the altar. As a radical Protestant, Milton depicts the Catholic Sacrament as an attempt at self-divinization parallel to the angels’ rebellion.

Thus, at the dawn of the Enlightenment, Milton warns that to make sensory perception the only way to knowledge will lead to the growth of atheism, which for him is next door to idolatry and Catholicism. The epistemology which ensnared the rebel angels and Eve will also bring the English, he fears, into the toils of unbelief.

## Dryden: Atheism and the Test Acts

Like Milton, Dryden sees atheism as a turn from the supernatural to the material for the source of ultimate reality. But he thinks that the atheism of his times originates in politics, especially in parliamentary votes about a crucial Christian belief. For fourteen years, from 1673 to 1687, Dryden complains about parliament having meddled with the Christian Eucharist by enacting a sacramental Test for public office. Although the Test (with its oath against Transubstantiation) was mainly anti-Catholic, Dryden consistently deplored it for more than a decade while he was still a Protestant.

In the 1673 prologue to *Amboyna*, a satirical play about Holland written during the third Anglo-Dutch War, he writes: “monarchies may own religion’s name, / But states are atheists in their very frame.” That states, or republics, are atheistic is a barb aimed not just at Holland, but also at the pro-Dutch party in England, later to be named Whig, that was try-

ing to weaken the monarchy and bring in a republic. This party was responsible for the Test Acts of 1673 and 1678, and it was the party that both Dryden and Swift saw as filled with atheists.

Dryden dedicates *Amboyna* to the Catholic Lord Clifford, and for good reason. The new Test Act was passed on March 20, 1673, and soon after, Clifford had to resign as Lord Treasurer. In his dedication written in the few short weeks between the Treasurer's resignation and his tragic death on August 18, Dryden refers scathingly to the Test, lamenting that "by the iniquity of the times," public servants like Clifford "must either quit their virtue or their fortune." In saying this, the poet also glances at James Duke of York, who had given up his public offices too, in preference to abandoning his religion.

Besides being enacted by the pro-Dutch party in England, the Test also derived from Holland, where it had been used as an economic form of discrimination since the Synod of Dort in 1619. Dryden explicitly attacks the sacramental Test as Dutch in Act 1 of *Amboyna*, when he shows the Hollander Harman saying to the Englishman, "O my sworn brother... to whom I have received the sacrament, never to be false-hearted." Even though he had taken the sacramental Test as security for his alliance with the English, this Hollander would later torture and kill them for the sake of a trade-monopoly. Here Dryden shows that an atheist can easily pass a sacramental Test and make it an instrument of deception.

Nearly a decade later, Dryden attacked the Test again in *The Medall* (1682), a satire written during the panic of the Titus Oates Plot, a plot devised and fomented by the Whigs to exclude the Catholic Duke of York from the crown. Again, Dryden linked the Test to atheism:

The common Cry is ev'n Religion's Test;  
The Turk's is, at Constantinople, best;  
Idols in India, Popery at Rome;  
And our own Worship onely true at home:  
And true, but for the time; 'tis hard to know  
How long we please it shall continue so.

*The Common Cry is ev'n Religion's Test* refers to the clamor of the House of Commons in 1678 to bring in the second Test Act. Dryden shows that such political meddling with the Christian religion reduces it

to a local fashion. Again, the second Test was pushed through by Whigs. It required a declaration against the Mass as idolatry as the prerequisite to taking one's seat in the House of Lords, where many Catholics had remained since the Reformation. This was the penultimate step before a final Test excluding Catholics from the crown, which would be part of the Act of Settlement of 1689. While the Tests of 1673 and 1678 were repealed in 1827, the Test of 1689 still stands. Dryden thinks that by enacting such Tests, parliament has usurped authority over the Christian religion and might someday vote to exclude it altogether from England: it's hard "to know" how long it will vote to "continue" our "own Worship" here "at home."

Not only is the Test atheistical, Dryden claims, but the man who pushed through both Test Acts was himself an atheist and a man of "open lewdness." In an apostrophe to the earl of Shaftesbury, leader of the Whigs, Dryden exclaims, "Religion thou hast none." Yet Shaftesbury has brought in a new doctrine of infallibility into England—the infallibility of parliamentary votes on Christian doctrine. He has maintained that "the Multitude can never err" and set "the People in the Papal Chair" (86-87). And so, parliament is now speaking for almighty God: "Almighty Crowd, thou shorten'st all dispute; / Pow'r is thy Essence; Wit thy Attribute! (91-2) This, for Dryden, amounts to the virtual establishment of atheism.

More subtly in *Religio Laici* (1682), Dryden again attacks the Test by declaring that difficult points in Christian doctrine are not to be meddled with by profane men who are ignorant of Church history. They must be left to the learned few who strive to maintain continuity with the Church of former ages: "For 'tis not likely *we* shou'd higher Soar / In Search of Heav'n than *all the Church before*" (437-8).

Finally, after his conversion to Catholicism, Dryden devotes over half the lines of *The Hind and the Panther* (1687) to attacks on the Test. Here, especially in Part III, he incorporates all the arguments against those statutes that had been raised by Anglicans, Dissenters, and Catholics before and during the reign of James II (1685-1688). Through the *Hind*, he excoriates the sacramental Test as a touchstone that lets atheists pass easily into public office:

Your answer is, they [Catholics] were not dispossess'd,

They need but rub their mettle on the *Test*  
 To prove their ore: 'twere well if gold alone  
 Were touch'd and try'd on your discerning stone;  
 But that unfaithfull *Test*, unfound will pass  
 The dross of Atheists, and sectarian brass:  
 As if th' experiment were made to hold  
 For base productions, and reject the gold:  
 Thus men ungodded may to places rise,  
 And sects may be preferr'd without disguise...  
 (3:734-43).

As in *Amboyna*, the Test is “unfaithful” in that it allows men known to be “ungodded” to receive the Anglican sacrament kneeling and take the oath against Transubstantiation. Such men have no scruples about abusing the Sacrament as a step to political power.

Dryden returns to the Dutch association with the Test in 1687. Twice in the span of fourteen years, he portrays the Dutch East-India merchants as atheists who can pass religious tests in pagan lands to secure a trade-monopoly. In his play *Amboyna*, an Englishman rebukes a Dutch merchant for having offered public “sacrifice” to the “idols” of Pegu for the sake of trade. In reply, the Dutchman calls the English “fools” for refusing to take this Test for their profit. Dryden makes the same point in 1687 when he writes that the Dutch apostatize in Japan:

They run full sail to their *Japponian* Mart:  
 Prevention fear, and prodigal of fame  
 Sell all of Christian to the very name;  
 Nor leave enough of that, to hide their naked shame.  
 (2:572-5)

By the phrase, selling “all of Christian to the very name,” the poet alludes to the Fumie Test in Japan, the trampling of the crucifix once a year for the right to trade. This act of trampling was interpreted by the Japanese (who knew nothing of iconoclasm) as a denial of the Christian name.

Also in *The Hind and the Panther*, Dryden through the Hind accuses the Church of England of having been corrupted by accepting the Test and relying on it for her security. She was a long time silent about the mystery of the Real Presence, but parliament finally forced her to speak when she accepted the Test and denied the ancient doctrine:

The *Test* it seems at last has loos'd your tongue.  
 And, to explain what your forefathers meant,

By real presence in the sacrament,  
 (After long fencing push'd, against a wall,)  
 Your *salvo* comes, that he's not there at all:  
 There chang'd your faith, and what may change  
 may fall. (2:30-5)

To deny a central doctrine under political pressure rather than suffer martyrdom, he says, is tantamount to the end of a church, for “what may change may fall.”

This end is heralded, too, by the atheists who are coming out of brothels in 1687 to join the Church of England in her fight to uphold the Test against King James:

Ev'n Atheists out of envy own a God:  
 And reeking from the Stews, Adult'ers come,  
 Like *Goths* and *Vandals* to demolish *Rome*.  
 That Conscience which to all their Crimes was mute,  
 Now calls aloud, and cries to Persecute.” (3:1212-16.)

Here Dryden explicitly calls the Test Acts a persecution in which atheists are happy to join with Anglicans. Thus, for a decade and a half, Dryden consistently sees the Test as arising first from a pro-Dutch atheistic party and then being defended by atheists who infiltrate the Church of England to join her in overthrowing the king. The rise and growth of atheism in England in the 1670s and 1680s is, in Dryden's view, rooted in parliament's meddling with the Christian faith.

## Swift: Atheism and Erastianism

Swift agrees with Dryden that modern atheism comes from political meddling with the Christian religion. However, he blames a king, not parliament, for having made disastrous changes, and he is a strong defender of the Test as the last bulwark against the establishment of atheism in England.

In Lilliput (i.e., the little Whore), we learn that belief in Divine Providence was once the Test for public office, but a certain King decided arbitrarily to make rope-dancing the new Test. This is connected to the ruin of the Church in Lilliput, symbolized by the desecrated Temple in which Gulliver is lodged. We learn later that rope-dancing was introduced by the very same king who imposed Little-Endianism and made Big-Endianism illegal. The minister

Reldresal informs Gulliver that everyone admits that Big-Endianism, which is still practiced in Blefuscu (Gallican France), is the “primitive” way of worship. And so, a single Lilliputian King by edict made the “primitive” Church’s worship irrelevant—and Swift sees the “primitive Church” as the true form of Christianity. By the time Gulliver arrives in Lilliput in 1699, the Big-Endians are “incapable by Law of holding Employments,” alluding to the Test Acts of 1673 and 1678 which excluded Catholics from public employment for their belief in a Real Presence at Communion. As a high-church Laudian, Swift is appalled by this renouncing of the “primitive” view of Communion.

Swift wants the Church of England to be independent in religious matters, while being supported in other respects by the state. He explains that a secular state can go ahead and enact “canon and ecclesiastical laws, and oblige all men to observe them under pain of high treason,” but none of these laws are *real*. For in the same way he himself can “take a turnip, then tie a string to it, and call it a watch, and turn away all my servants, if they refuse to call it so too” (*Remarks* 85–93). He draws a clear line between the political and the ontological, urging that political establishment does not bring the Church of England into “being.”

In the third voyage, Swift again shows how atheism arises from politics. He depicts Laputa (i.e. the Whore) as a flying island detached from the ground and provides a map of the ground below dotted with church spires. This is an allusion to St. Paul, who calls the Church the “ground of truth.” We learn that the spires below are the greatest danger to the “under surface” of Laputa—*under surface* because it has no foundation—if that state should decide to crush its citizens below. The rulers of Laputa are so immersed in mathematics and astronomy that religion is never on their mental horizon, and they also infect the learned men of Balnibarbi below with their materialism, so that the Academy of Lagado is filled with those who are trying to reduce arts and sciences to matter operated on by chance.

In his view of atheism, Swift sometimes resembles Milton, and sometimes Dryden. Like Milton, Swift shows that it requires even more faith to be the disciple of an atheist than to follow the Son of God:

“the faith of Christians is not as a grain of mustard seed in comparison of theirs [that of atheists], which can remove such mountains of absurdities, and submit with so entire a resignation to such apostles.” Like Dryden, he makes Holland the paradigm of the atheist state, declaring that “they have no religion, and are the worst constituted government in the world to last.” (*Remarks*). He depicts the Dutch merchants in Gulliver’s third voyage as willing to deny their Christianity for a monopoly of Japanese trade and as even more eager than the Japanese to persecute Christians by imposing the Fumie Test. Swift joins Dryden, too, in associating atheism with the Whigs, as when he says: “I do affirm, that of every hundred professed atheists, deists, and socinians in the kingdom, ninety-nine at least are staunch thorough-paced Whigs.” And he charges Bishop Gilbert Burnet with treating “atheists, deists, freethinkers, and the like enemies to Christianity” as his friends only because they are all of “Whig principles in church and state” (*Preface to the Bishop of Sarum*).

Swift sees the Whig bishops of his day as putting politics above religion and letting the government decide Church doctrine. This is Dryden’s view, too, but the difference between Dryden and Swift is that the former believes the Test is a persecution, while Swift sees it as a last bulwark against the establishment of atheism. In his sermon “On the Trinity,” where he attacks Pierre Bayle’s claim that atheists are more virtuous than Christians, Swift warns, “God forbid we should ever see the times so bad, when dangerous Opinions in Religion will be a means to get Favour and Preferment.” This is the nightmare scenario he presents in Gulliver’s fourth voyage.

In this final voyage the atheists are the rulers, and they have only one topic of discussion in parliament: how to exterminate the Yahoos on the island. The atheists are depicted as horses because of the tradition dating back to St. Augustine of interpreting the biblical verse, “Be ye not as the horse, which hath no understanding,” as a warning against atheism. John Donne has an entire sermon on this verse as applying to atheists. In Houyhnhnmland, the horses came to power generations earlier by a violent revolution, a great “hunting” of the Yahoos, who turn out, after all, to have been European Christians. And so, by the help of tyrant kings, governments detached from

the ground of truth, or a coming violent revolution, Swift fears that atheists will triumph in England in the end and abolish Christianity. His works show him as almost obsessed with fear of this eventuality.

At the dawn of the Enlightenment, then, Milton, Dryden and Swift wrote with passionate conviction

about the origin and rise of atheism. But while Milton associated atheism with a denial of Creation and a counter-revolutionary turn to hierarchy, sacraments, and Popery, Dryden and Swift associated it with Whigs, low-church Protestantism, and governments meddling in matters of Church doctrine. ❧

## Hermeneutics Revisited

by Leo J. Elders S.V.D.

*Professor, Rolduc Seminary, Kerkrade, the Netherlands*

**H**ermeneutics is the art of explaining and interpreting juridical, philosophical and religious texts and rulings. But nowadays the word is often given a broader signification, namely, the actualization or re-creation of events or ideas of bygone times. To do so one has to place oneself in the situation of people who lived in another period of history or belong to a different culture, and this requires a psychological adaptation. In another sense of the term hermeneutics is a universal method which allows us to understand man in his historicity. It is presented as a prolongation of Heidegger's existentialist phenomenology.

Hermeneutics as the art of interpreting texts originated in Greece. The desire to review critically the myths of their religious universe led the Greeks to elaborate allegorical explanations. The Sophists drew attention to the importance of one's subjective point of view in any attempt at understanding others. The different discourses of Gorgias on Helena were meant to show that personalities and events can be considered from different points of view. The term hermeneutics first appears as the title of a treatise of Aristotle, which however does not examine modes of interpretation of texts, but aims only at elaborating the rules for the formal and scientific use of language. The Stoics resorted to allegorical explanations of traditional myths and of religious rites: the one deity, the Logos, deploys its power in different forms, which came to be venerated as divinities.

Among Christians the various senses of Holy Scripture were studied in biblical hermeneutics. The Protestant Reformation contributed to the need for hermeneutics insofar as in its view the Tradition and the Magisterium of the Church were no longer acceptable criteria for understanding the Word of God. However, it is only in the nineteenth century that the problem of how to really understand texts (*Verstehen*) was examined under its different aspects. Our knowledge would be marked by our individuality. So, in order to understand others, and other texts, we must be aware of our own limits. According to Schleiermacher we must resort to the comparison of a text with analogous texts (called the grammatical method), and, secondly, to the use of conjectures, which rely on psychological analysis. Schleiermacher considered religious *feeling* central for understanding texts. He meant a sort of vague awareness of the universe in its monistic unity.

According to Gadamer, Schleiermacher attached so much importance to hermeneutics, because in his time people became aware of living at a certain distance from past periods of history. This trend was expressed in philosophical terms by Hegel who taught that the prevalent ideas of a historical period are manifestations of what he called the *spirit* of such a period.

A new chapter in the history of hermeneutics was written by W. Dilthey, who in his historicism asserted that it is essential to consider the ideas, trends, historical facts and persons in the context of their culture. Each historical period has its own center and its significance lies in itself. If so, it seems impossible for a person in his subjectivity to get to know others.



As is obvious, this theory easily leads to relativism. One has to acquire a sympathetic knowledge of the different aspects and go from these partial apprehensions to a provisional grasp of the whole, which, in its turn, will shed more light on the parts. According to Dilthey life itself has a hermeneutical character. He looked for the manifestation of an historical and personal life. One may object to this theory that the sciences and philosophy study *things* and, as such have no immediate relationship with texts, whereas in Dilthey's view everything is subject to an historical and more subjective approach. The universal is sacrificed to a great number of perceptions of individual beings.

Turning now to contemporary views of the art of interpreting and understanding ancient texts as well as people living in different cultures, the influence of the phenomenology of Husserl must be mentioned. Things are relative to our consciousness in the sense that our personal situation and pre-history affect our observations. In this way the objective world of the sciences is in reality nothing better than an expression of the subjectivity of the scientists. Pure objectivity is no longer possible. In his existential phenomenology Heidegger went beyond this view. Initially he stressed the role of the historicity of our being and our manner of thinking, but later he argued that language has a central role: to understand is a dialogue which takes place in the context of a language. Being unveils its secrets in language. However, Heidegger's problem is that in reality thought is prior to language: although after our initial acquisition of the first concepts and principles language becomes a great help to further develop our understanding, it is nevertheless the reflection, expression and instrument of thought.

H.G. Gadamer chose as his starting point the second form of Heidegger's hermeneutics. He raises the question of how understanding is possible and tries to discover what is common to the different ways of understanding. To understand is never a subjective action in respect of a given object, but is the exercised actuality of the object in our understanding (*Wirkungsgeschichte*); in other words, it is the consciousness of the meaning and value for ourselves of the object and its influence on us. This means that all forms of understanding have a common denomina-

tor. But it has been objected against his view that forms of understanding are intrinsically different, such as understanding art, history, science. As a matter of fact Gadamer does not want to depend on the sciences, and defends an historical type of knowledge at the level of the *Geisteswissenschaften*. He follows Hegel insofar as his view is that of a re-incarnation of the past on the basis of a congeniality of minds. We must attempt to understand our own position, being and contingency and so interpret the world.

The hermeneutics of Gadamer raises the question of how to understand our finitude and how to interpret our experience of the world. It demands from us that we analyze ourselves and that we have some vague understanding of the other, a pre-comprehension, which later on is deepened and enriched. This hermeneutics is based on a dialogue with oneself in the context of one's language: it is an activity of the practical intellect, and total certitude cannot be reached. It is, however, possible to enlarge our horizon, to wait and let things exercise their influence on us: time brings us truth, and truth "becomes" in the temporal becoming and development of things. As is obvious this theory is closer to the thought of Hegel than to that of Aristotle. According to Gadamer we are all marked by prejudices, from which we cannot free ourselves: we belong to a certain tradition and live in a certain environment and time. He believes that his hermeneutics is universally valid, since everything can be expressed in the spoken language, which conveys a general understanding of reality.

Gadamer's theory presents some positive aspects and may help destroy false certitudes. However, its starting point must be rejected, as Habermas says: for above this compassionate sympathy for things, critical reason can and must transcend and judge historical becoming. In fact we have universal concepts which allow us to leave behind the predominantly subjective and to grasp the universal hidden under the subjectivity of our partner in dialogue with us. The questions raised by Gadamer's hermeneutics are particularly important for our understanding of the Bible and Catholic doctrine.

Another point must be stressed: philosophical concepts and theories are underpinning his theory of the art of interpretation. As a matter of fact each method of interpreting the Bible uses some philo-

sophical views. Spinoza is considered by some the founder of modern exegesis. He holds that all problems must be resolved by our human efforts. In the Age of Reason the leading minds saw an unbridgeable gap between simple historic texts and the field where reason is active. Human thought is limited to what it can grasp. However, in historicism history is identified with reality, and its protagonists are no longer aware of a trans-historical dimension, while in the words of Mircea Eliade the originality of Christianity is precisely that history is transformed into a theophany.

In fact authentic exegesis must look for the deeper truth hidden under the literal expression of the text. But our interpretation must also take into account that the doctrine contained in the text is a point of departure of the development of Christianity. As St. Gregory writes, the divine writer grows with inspiration of the same Spirit, who leads the Church on her pilgrimage through the ages.

Although divine revelation took place in history, it cannot be reduced to an historical process. The Church believes that revelation, which was given at precise moments of history, whether by mental or oral revelation, in visions or in historic events and persons, contains a message, a doctrine. This message consists of determined logical truths, grasped by the prophets and apostles, and later expressed in the creeds of the Church. Although there has been progress in the understanding of this divine revelation, the Church of the twenty-first century has not yet become aware of all that is contained in it, although in the course of time the Magisterium has defined many dogmas as definite truths. During its pilgrimage on earth the Church, guided by the Holy Spirit, may stress in a novel way certain aspects of the treasury of the faith, without ever abandoning what she acknowledged as having been revealed. The First Vatican Council declared that the dogmas of the faith must be understood in the same sense the Church defined and accepted them. But in the course of time the Church may discern more than it had initially been aware of. There is a homogeneous development in the Church's understanding of the contents of revelation, an understanding which may be promoted and helped by its contact with changing times and people. As St. Gregory the Great writes, the divine

writ grows with the one who reads it. The sacred text was written under the inspiration of the same Spirit, who leads the Church on her pilgrimage through the ages.

But it has defined many dogmas as definite truths. However, during its pilgrimage on earth the Church, guided by the Holy Spirit, may stress in a novel way certain aspects of the treasury of the faith, without ever abandoning what she acknowledged as having been revealed. The First Vatican Council declared that the dogmas of the faith must be understood in the same way as the Church defined and accepted them. But over the course of time the Church may discern more than it had initially been aware of. There is a homogeneous development in the Church's understanding of the contents of revelation, an understanding which may be promoted and helped by its contact with changing times and people. In this sense a certain hermeneutics may be useful, insofar as it makes Christians understand better the conditions under which divine revelation came to us.

Hermeneutics is also important when we try to communicate the doctrine of the faith to our contemporaries. A difficulty sometimes put forward is whether formulas of the past can still give answers to our questions and present solutions to our needs. Revelation should be interpreted in such a way as to become meaningful for modern man, and be adapted to the understanding of people in different cultures.

In the twentieth century the hermeneutical method and its claim that it can overcome the distance between the doctrine of the faith as taught by the Church of all times and the changing ways of thinking of the people gained some actuality, but the problem was not unknown to Christians of the first ages. Some of the Fathers at Constantinople objected to the introduction of the *homoousios* in the text of the creed, since they considered it a novelty. But the majority of the Bishops felt that what the term said, expressed the true sense and implications of biblical revelation about the Son of God.

The statement of Vatican II on man's freedom of religion provides another interesting example: in the nineteenth century Pope Pius IX declared that people are not free to choose just any religion, but that it is their duty to profess the Christian faith. However,

Vatican II issued a declaration stating that man is free to choose and to profess his religious views. What at first sight looks like a blaring contradiction can be shown to be in harmony when one considers closely what the Magisterium of the Church intended to declare. A political or human authority may neither forbid people to have their own ideas nor can it oblige them to embrace a certain religion. But on the other hand, it is an imperative duty of people to seek the truth about themselves, the world and its Maker and to be open to the good message of the Church, of which the mission is confirmed by amazing signs. It is clear, then, that the art of hermeneutics is helpful in understanding statements which at first sight may seem to be contradictory. As our last example has made clear in this particular case, hermeneutics consists in examining a statement or a doctrine in its historical context and in verifying what its author intended to say, and, if needed, comparing the texts with what is considered the accepted doctrine of the Church and approved theology. Knowing the circumstances under which a certain doctrine was formulated, can be quite helpful.

Hermeneutics may also play a role in jurisprudence: certain laws or rules must be interpreted, especially when their original formulation is ambiguous. Well-known are the amendments to the American Constitution. One tries to stay close to the original intention of the Founding Fathers.

But most important is the role of interpretation in our dealings with Holy Scripture. The time of the redaction of its various books stretches over a period of some 1100 years and the original languages in which the texts were written were Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. Its different books were composed in widely differing social and political situations. Moreover different literary genera are used, with which one must be acquainted for a correct understanding of their message.

It is not surprising that already at the very beginning of the Church biblical hermeneutics developed. Questions arose concerning the observance of the ritual laws of Judaism, the salvation by faith in Christ, the meaning of the history of Israel for Christians. The Old Testament is interpreted allegorically by St. Paul, in the Letter to the Hebrews and later very extensively by Origen in Alexandria. Besides this

allegorical understanding of the history of Israel and its cult prescriptions, a problem facing the Christians was that of a certain ambiguity of what is taught in the New Testament, such as Jesus' position on the Law of the Old Testament. He was criticized for not always observing it, while he himself said that he had not come to change one iota of it. The New Testament writings show a certain pluralism: Paul and James coexist, as do Matthew and John. There is a certain pluralism as to how to regard civil society as well as the relation of Christians to Israel.

Contrary to the Gnostics, Christians accepted the Old Testament in its entirety, as Jesus and the Apostles had done. The God, whom they adored, was its author and so Christians could look for the presence of the person and teachings of Jesus in the Hebrew Bible, as Justinus did in his *Dialogue with Tryphon*, trying to explain the prophecies of the Old Testament. But the precise relationship between the literal, historical sense and its christological interpretation was not yet explained very well. The *Letter of Barnabas* proposes a simple allegorical interpretation of the precepts of the Law.

Against the Gnostics, St. Irenaeus insists on the literal sense of the Bible which, he writes, is the sense taught and guaranteed by the bishops of the universal church, the successors of the apostles, and in particular by the church of Rome. The canon of inspired books was established. The apostolicity of the texts, their use in the liturgy and catechesis, their acceptance by the various churches and universal use, were the criteria for insertion in the canon. Around this time a theory of the different senses of Holy Scripture began to take shape, a theory which would receive its definite form from St. Thomas Aquinas: the allegorical meaning of a text is the relation it has with Christ and central dogmas of the faith; the moral sense of a text is its significance for our Christian life; finally there are texts which may be understood as referring to our life in heaven; their sense is analogical.

Many Fathers of the Church insisted on the spiritual sense of the Old Testament. St. Jerome notes that we must understand its text spiritually. Having mentioned the truth of the historical events we must understand what is written in a spiritual way. According to St. Augustine the Old Testament is revealed

in the New, while the New Testament is hidden in the Old, covered by a veil. He even writes that the spiritual understanding of the Bible is our Christian freedom. According to Gregory the Great everything in the Bible must be understood allegorically and applied to our moral life. While the Christian authors and masters in Alexandria favored allegorical exegesis, the exegetes of Antioch insisted on the literal sense of the texts. The opinion of Theodore of Mopsuestia that in the Old Testament nothing is said clearly about Christ, was condemned by the Fifth General Council.

Everyone in the Middle Ages agreed that the Old Testament has a spiritual sense. For Christians what God revealed to us includes also indications for our personal life and the literal sense of the text is not the only reason why Scripture has been given to us. St. Augustine expresses this conviction with the words: "We have heard the fact, let us now seek the mystery." As the Creator of the world God can order things and events in such a way that they refer to the realities of the faith and of grace. This means that the history of Israel as described in the Bible now stands in a new light: it refers to Christ, carries indications for our moral life and refers to the fulfilment in heaven. We bow our heads in deep reverence before the Sacred Text, of which the wisdom far surpasses our understanding.

However, the development of modern philology, of text criticism and better knowledge of past historical circumstances, brought about a revolution in the hermeneutics of the Bible: the so-called historical critical method of analyzing texts considered itself as the true method for understanding the sense of the texts. The new method yielded many results, but also numerous dead ends, adventurous hypotheses, and carried with it a certain secularization of the text. Moreover, the new interpretations became so hyper-technical that non-specialists felt lost, not knowing what the purpose of all of it was. In the historical critical method the study of the Bible is carried on apart from the tradition of the Church, from dogmatic theology and liturgy. To give an example, the artful and "scientific dissection" of the prophecies of Isaiah leaves little space for meditation on the overall message of the author(s).

In the line of this scientific approach several ways

of reading are sometimes proposed. Some scholars insist on the need to apply the distinction between an historical approach to Jesus and a theological study. They seem to reduce exegesis simply to an historical study, but this is wholly insufficient, since to understand the Bible we need an interpretation in faith: what the sacred authors wanted to say goes always beyond mere historical facts. The historical critical approach examines the genesis, composition, and authorship of the text, e.g. Moses's authorship of several books of the OT, the genesis and composition of texts, the question whether events recounted are historic, the reality of miracles etc. In particular the reality of miracles is rejected: what is described cannot be verified. Next the scholars try to determine what made the evangelists or authors of the text resort to the description of such miraculous events—apparently since they did not experience any need for a critical observation of things. Some apply the linguistic method to the analysis of biblical texts. Furthermore there is a materialistic way of reading the Bible and a psychoanalytic approach.

In our Christian exegesis and hermeneutics we must proceed within the context of the doctrine of the faith and be guided by the Tradition of the Church. The central and profound sense of the Bible is indicated by the doctrine of the faith. The Bible proposes at the same time a history at the level of human life and unveils also truth about God and his designs. For this reason the historical-critical method cannot penetrate to the full sense of the text. Hermeneutics can be helpful for the interpretation of the biblical text in its historical environment and so can be of help, but the more profound understanding will be obtained by a meditative reflection on the exegesis of the Church Fathers and the saints as well as by the knowledge of the doctrine of the faith. ✠

"Rhetorik, Hermeneutik und Theologiekritik," in *Kleine Schriften*, Bd 1, Tübingen 1967, 113-130.

The so-called hermeneutic circle. Cf. *Gesammelte Werke V* (1924), 317 - 334; p.331.

His book *Wahrheit und Methode*, 1961, is the most important study on the question after Heidegger.

*Wahrheit und Methode*<sup>3</sup>, XIX; XXIV; 161.

"Der Universalitätsanspruch der Hermeneutik," in *Hermeneutik and Dialektik. Festschrift Gadamer*, Tübingen 1970, 73-103.

In *Execheiel* 1, 7, 8: "...divina eloquia cum legente crescunt."

See *Quaestiones quodlibetales VII*, q. 6, a. 1, 2 & 3.

In *Isaiam prophetam*, prol.: PL 24, 20 B.

*Enarr. in Psalmum 105*, n. 36.

In *Ezechieel*. II, 2, 15.

In *Ioann. Evangelium*, tr. 50, n. 6.

See *Concilium* 1980, October 1980.

# Rationality and Will as the Path to God: *The Lecture of Benedict XVI at the University of Regensburg*

by Fr. Joseph M. de Torre, Ph. D.

## Introduction

*"I believe that here we can see the profound harmony between what is Greek in the best sense of the word and the biblical understanding of faith in God. Modifying the first verse of the Book of Genesis, John began the prologue of his Gospel with the words:" "In the beginning was the 'logos.'"*

**T**he core of the famous lecture of Benedict XVI on September 12, 2006, from which the above quotation is taken, was the meaning of rationality as the right use of reason in the universe of human consciousness and experience, as it took place in the encounter of Greece and the Bible.

In the course of the lecture, he traced the historical process of the rise of the obscuring of reason by the rivalry of the will marked by voluntarism.

In this context, the pope made a reference to a recent book, recounting the dialogue of a Byzantine Orthodox Emperor with a Persian Muslim theologian, about the use of reason (*logos*) in discussing religion or faith. This dialogue took place in Constantinople in 1393, when the city was under siege by the Ottoman Muslim Turks, who in fact captured Constantinople fifty years later. The Emperor was trying to show the need to employ reason alone in favor of religion and peace rather than violence and war. He then quoted, out of context, some passages of the Koran, to apparently justify violence.

This passage of the pope's lecture provoked angry reactions from some Muslims, which the pope swiftly went on to pacify by once again manifesting the friendliness and respect of the Church for Islam, quoting Vatican II Declaration *Nostra Aetate*, which still maintains the same stand of the Church, as John Paul II made always abundantly clear, too. On October 20 last, Cardinal Paul Poupard, prefect of the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue sent a long message on behalf of Pope Benedict XVI to all Muslims on the occasion of the end of Ramadan.

The cardinal said: "I wish you [Muslims] peace, tranquility and joy in your hearts, your homes and your countries. These good wishes echo those which His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI expressed personally at the beginning of Ramadan to the diplomats accredited to the Holy See from countries with Muslim majorities, to those from other countries that are members and observers of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, and to representatives of Muslim communities in Italy." At the end of the message the cardinal summed it up by stating that "(T)he world has need, and so do we, of Christians and Muslims who respect and value each other and bear witness to their mutual love and cooperation to the glory of God and the good of all humanity." Two days later in his Sunday Angelus message, the pope said: "I am delighted to send cordial greetings to Muslims throughout the world, who during these days are celebrating the end of the month of the Ramadan fast. I wish all serenity and peace!"

In view of the fact that the Regensburg lecture relates the eclipse of rationality by *voluntarism*, the author wishes to present the following remarks on these issues taken from his book, *Generation and Degeneration: A Survey of Ideologies*, published in 1995 by Southeast Asian Foundation, Inc.

This is a sequel to my article, "Historical Perspective on the Phenomenon of Religion: A Phenomenological Enquiry into Fideism, Traditionalism and Rationalism, in the Context of Secularism" in the September 2006 issue of UNITAS.

## The Rise of Rationalism or Enlightenment and the Backlash of Romanticism

**W**hen the "Goddess Reason" was enthroned at Notre Dame at the height of the French Revolution, the Enlightenment, or alleged triumph of the "light" of reason over the "darkness" of faith, reached its apotheosis. But it

was almost immediately drowned in the blood-bath of the *Terreur*, and swept away by the onrushing Romanticism of the new faith in the “human spirit” ushered in by absolute idealism.

It was a revived Lutheran rebellion against all “sophistry” or “reason,” against all “rules” and authorities other than personal and subjective faith, once again asserting itself, first with Rousseau, and then with Herder, Goethe, Hegel, Schelling, Coleridge and all the Romantic poets, musicians, novelists, painters and political revolutionaries. It was an age of intense and explosive feeling of freedom, and a counterrevolution against all the “conservative” stabilities of reason. It spawned the first modern ideologues of anarchism, such as Stimer, Proudhon, Bakunin, and Herzen.

## China and Greece

Ever since the ancient Greeks discovered the power of *logos* to understand *physis* (nature), and the ancient Chinese discovered the power of discursive reason to bring the *yin* and *yang* into harmony, reason has been fighting a constant battle to assert itself over and against all other powers whether below it (like “nature,” senses and emotions), or above it (like “supernature,” “spirit,” aesthetics and mysticism).

The first two dramatic confrontations took place about the same time in the 6<sup>th</sup> century B. C., one in China and the other in Greece. In the former, the naturalism of *Lao Tzu*, the founder of Taoism (*wu wei* = “do nothing,” i. e. bend before nature like the bamboo branch, and do not try to manipulate it with your mind, or it will break you), was opposed by the rationalism of his disciple *Kung Fu Tzu* (Confucius), for whom the cultivation of reason (propriety) through education was the way for man’s happiness by civilizing him.

Meanwhile in distant Greece, *Parmenides* and *Heraclitus* entered into an epoch-making contest which would lead to a crisis of “truth” and its replacement with convenience, utility or success, by the *Sophists*. *Parmenides* stood for a radical rationalism that denied all value to the senses while *Heraclitus* countered with a radical empiricism denying all value to reason. This dilemma prompted the *Sophists* to despair of the “truth” and turn to the more “practical” pursuit of happiness.

## The Socratic Revolution

**S**ocrates then rose to rebellion against the *Sophists*, and his disciples *Plato* and *Aristotle* found, each in his own way, the solution to the deadlock of the Pre-Socratics. For *Plato* the role of reason was to rise to the “ideas” from their reflection or participation in sensible things, while for *Aristotle* the ideas were the result of “abstracting the essence of sensible things.” Knowledge, therefore, begins in the senses and ends in reason. At the same time, however, both Greek thinkers acknowledged a Reality beyond and above reason, confronted with which human reason was like an owl facing the sun.

*Greece, Israel and Islam*

The next dramatic confrontation, took place in Hellenic Alexandria, where the cultural encounter between Jerusalem and Athens occurred and the Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek. Here the Jewish scholar *Philo of Alexandria* first tried a synthesis of natural reason (*Plato’s Timaeus*) and supernatural biblical revelation (Creation and the Word or *Logos*). Thus *Neo-Platonism* began (all things emanate from the One and return to It), and developed through *Plotinus*, *Proclus* and *Porphyry*, from Byzantium to Syria.

The *Mutazilite* Muslim theologians from the 6<sup>th</sup> century inherited it, together with all Greek science, and tried again a synthesis of reason (Neo-Platonist Aristotelianism this time) and faith (the Koran this time). They were vehemently opposed by the fundamentalist *Mutakallimoun* or Ashorites. The controversy raged on for centuries, with the fundamentalists prevailing in the end, when the rationalism of *Averroes* with his double-truth doctrine (one “truth” for reason and another for faith) provoked their backlash.

## The Rise of Christianity

**T**his intra-Muslim conflict, which mingled with, and eventually crystallized into the split between *Shi’ites* and *Sunnites*, (the latter led up to now by *Al-Ahzar* University in Cairo) flared up as well concurrently among Christian theologians from around the 9<sup>th</sup> century onwards, when the rationalism of *Scotus Erigena* and later *Berengarius of Tours* led to conflicts with the faith. By the 11<sup>th</sup> century, *Peter Damian* was leading the party of the “anti-

dialecticians” who maintained that philosophy may lead to rationalism, and rationalism to heresy. According to them, Christ did not choose his Apostles from among philosophers, but from among simple uneducated men. So, no need for reason, but only for faith. They also cited in their favor the devastating effects of the two great rationalistic heresies of the first centuries of Christianity, namely *Gnosticism* and *Arianism* and revived the famous saying of Tertullian: “*credo quia absurdum*,” in other words, fundamentalism and fideism again.

## The Christian Gnosis

The vigorous reaction of the “dialecticians” came up in full force during the same 11<sup>th</sup> century, with the monumental work of *Anselm of Canterbury*, who opposed the “*credo quia absurdum*” with the Augustinian “*credo ut intelligam*” and “*fides quaerens intellectum*.” Once he had established the absolute primacy of faith over reason, removing any trace of pagan gnosticism (reason above faith) he revived the *Christian Gnosis* of Justin, Irenaeus, Origen, and Clement of Alexandria, as well as of Augustine, namely a reason humbly receiving the divine revelation by faith, but then trying as much as possible to understand it rationally. He wrote his three masterpieces (*Monologium*, *Proslogion* and *Cur Deus Homo?*) as a practical demonstration of how much human reason can understand divinely-revealed mysteries not in order to show that they are understandable enough to be believable and to be a real “revelation” to our reason. In this way also, reason would be able to refute the criticisms of non-believers by exposing their errors, as contrary not just to faith but to reason as well.

This approach won the noble and powerful mind of *Thomas Aquinas*, two centuries later. One of the reasons that moved him to join the recently founded *Dominican Order of Preachers* was their astonishing success in converting the *Albigensians* back to the Church by employing the method of friendliness and reason. Deep piety and abundance of doctrine pleasantly communicated, in contrast with the previously used counterproductive method of coercion and repression. Man is by nature rational and free, and he must be handled accordingly, just as God himself does.

## The Struggle with Islam through Reason and Love

By that time, the sporadic wars between Christians and Muslims had been going on for centuries, culminating with the Crusades. Just as Francis of Assisi and Raymond Lull, Aquinas understood that the only real way to solve this problem was again through reason and love namely by the full employment of metaphysics (the “first philosophy”) in the service of divine revelation in order to show to be presented (**This is unclear**) to non-believers first as a *Summa Contra Gentiles*, subtitling it “On the Truth of the Catholic Faith Against the Errors of the Infidels.”

What he intended was to demonstrate by painstaking logical argument that the objections of non-believers to the Catholic Faith could be refuted philosophically (i.e. with and by reason, not by faith), thus clearing the way for the positive presentation of the faith as more in continuity with reason. It is in this sense that reason would be “before” faith, not in the sense that reason could “prove” the faith. This is how the Magisterium of the Church explained this point when rejecting the errors of fideism and traditionalism (in the 19<sup>th</sup> century), and stating that the method of Aquinas and Bonaventure did not *per se* lead to rationalism, as was mentioned in chapter 3 of *Generation and Degeneration: A Survey of Ideologies*.

## The Rise of the Enlightenment

Nevertheless, a Gnostic rationalism that puts reason absolutely above faith is always a very real temptation. The term itself began to be used after the advent of the Cartesian confinement of “faith” to the will, after having, so to speak, expelled it from “reason.” Thus the harmonious continuity of faith and reason of Augustine, Anselm and Aquinas was shattered, just as the concept of a secular *pax philosophica* began to replace religious faith as the cohesive force for peace in national and international life and diplomacy. Thus began the gradual secularist relegation of faith to the private conscience and its removal from public life, all in the name of “reason,” as the light to dispel the alleged “darkness” of “superstition and fanaticism.” The Enlightenment and

the French Revolution were the cultural and political consequences of this rationalism. It also affected the interpretation of the Bible, subjecting it to rationalistic criticism, leading to a “liberal” Christianity widespread among Protestant theologians, which provoked the fundamentalist backlash, and it began the trend among Catholic theologians to attempt “recasts” of Catholic theology in terms of modern philosophical systems without sufficient discrimination and due consideration for the primacy of faith. This was the case of, for example, Hermes, Günther, Lamennais, Frohschammer and, more recently *Modernism*, Teilhard de Chardin and the “theology of liberation.”

In objecting to these rationalistic positions, the Church was, of course, not rejecting modern philosophy *en bloc*, but one again asserting the primacy of faith, and the need for human reason not to erect itself as supreme arbiter of truth. It is in fact more reasonable to believe what God has revealed, and then try to understand it as much as it is possible, than to equate the use of reason with radical skepticism and systematic incredulity.

## The Rise of Voluntarism

This is how Benedict XVI summarized this issue in the Regensburg lecture:

Today we know that the Greek translation of the Old Testament produced at Alexandria—the Septuagint—is more than a simple (and in that sense perhaps less than satisfactory) translation of the Hebrew text: It is an independent textual witness and a distinct and important step in the history of Revelation, one which brought about this encounter in a way that was decisive for the birth and spread of Christianity. A profound encounter of faith and reason is taking place here, an encounter between genuine enlightenment and religion. From the very heart of Christian faith and, at the same time, the heart of Greek thought now joined to faith, Manuel II was able to say: Not to act “with logos” is contrary to God’s nature.

In all honesty, one must observe that in the late Middle Ages we find trends in theology which would sunder this synthesis between the Greek spirit and the Christian spirit. In contrast with the so-called intellectualism of Augustine and Thomas, there arose with Duns Scotus a voluntarism which ultimately led to the claim that we can only know God’s “*voluntas ordinata*.”

Beyond this is the realm of God’s freedom, in virtue of which he could have done the opposite of everything he has actually done.

This gives rise to positions which clearly approach those of Ibn Hazn and might even lead to the image of a capricious God, who is not even bound to truth and goodness. God’s transcendence and otherness are so exalted that our reason, our sense of the true and good, are no longer an authentic mirror of God, whose deepest possibilities remain eternally unattainable and hidden behind his actual decisions.

As opposed to this, the faith of the Church has always insisted that between God and us, between his eternal Creator Spirit and our created reason there exists a real analogy, in which unlikeness remains infinitely greater than likeness, yet not to the point of abolishing analogy and its language (cf. Lateran IV).

God does not become more divine when we push him away from us in a sheer, impenetrable voluntarism; rather, the truly divine God is the God who has revealed himself as logos and, as logos, has acted and continues to act lovingly on our behalf. Certainly, love “transcends” knowledge and is thereby capable of perceiving more than thought alone (cf. Ephesians 3:19); nonetheless it continues to be love of the God who is logos. Consequently, Christian worship is “*logos latréia*”—worship in harmony with the eternal Word and with our reason (cf. Romans 12:1).

This inner rapprochement between biblical faith and Greek philosophical inquiry was an event of decisive importance not only from the standpoint of the history of religions, but also from that of world history—it is an event which concerns us even today. Given this convergence, it is not surprising that Christianity, despite its origins and some significant developments in the East, finally took on its historically decisive character in Europe. We can also express this the other way around: This convergence, with the subsequent addition of the Roman heritage, created Europe and remains the foundation of what can rightly be called Europe.

We have discussed the God-like power of the human person which the Greeks called *logos* and the Romans *ratio*, namely that rationality which enables its possessor to open up to infinite reality. We also saw how the Aristotelian *orthos logos* (*recta ratio*) was expanded by Aquinas to include the openness to a supernatural revelation from God. And we also saw the “unreasonableness” of a rationalism dogmatically



closed to that possibility.

But it was Aquinas himself who called the human will the queen of all human faculties, not absolutely speaking but in relation to activity or operation. While reason is the light of man, the will is his motor. The will is guided by reason as its control tower, but it is the will itself that has to do the landing. And the will is also open to infinity in its capacity to choose. Man is never satisfied with what he has or is. He always wants more.

This sovereign power of the will can lead and has actually led to the degeneration of *voluntarism* in ethics and its co-relative *legalism* or legal positivism in the philosophy of law, namely the placing of the will above reason and even beyond reason, to the point of obliterating it.

The classical Socratic tradition, with its centrality on *logos*, was singularly free from voluntarism. It was even criticized for its almost complete reduction of morality to moral *knowledge*, rather than practice. On the other hand, we can observe the opposite tendency in Israel, with its view of the sacredness of the Law (both moral and ritual) as a manifestation of the omnipotent *will* of God. This was one of the most profound differences between Athens and Jerusalem.

We also mentioned the attempt of Philo of Alexandria to bridge the gap between those two great cultures and subsequent recurring conflict between rationalism and fideism in Jewish, Christian and Muslim settings. It is easy to see the connection of voluntarism. The repudiation of reason leads logically to a breakdown in communications, and a usually violent struggle for power, and a stronger will, and thus the bolstering of political absolutism (see chapter 18), and the suppression of individual freedoms and rights.

## The Rise of Legalism

As explained in *The Roots of Society*, without a juridical order no justice is possible, and therefore no freedom, because then “*might is right*.” the individual will of the most powerful (material strength) tends to replace the “ordinance of reason for the common good, made by him who has care of the community, and promulgated,” which is how St. Thomas Aquinas defines law.

The concept of law (NOMOS) as reflecting the

immutable order of justice (DIKE) was highly developed by the Greeks, particularly Plato and Aristotle, perhaps due to the fact that they were constantly afflicted by tyrannies, and were searching for a perfect constitution (set of laws) which would enshrine that perpetual and transcendent arbitrary will of an individual man, group or class, and which would guarantee the freedom of the citizens.

The Romans also had a very advanced juridical order with their motto: *Servi legum sumus ut liberi esse possimus*, “*We are slaves of the law so that we can be free.*”

The term *lex* (law) comes from the verb *ligare*, to bind. This binding of the law whereby acts are directed to their own end or goal is the order to end or to the common good, made by reason, which conditions the attainment of freedom of movement, just as the observance of the set of rules governing car driving and traffic movement enables the driver (i.e. makes him free) to reach his chosen destination.

## Law and Happiness

Law is opposed neither to freedom nor to love, if love is understood as the natural tendency to the good. In fact, law makes both freedom and love possible, because no freedom is possible without the movement toward possession and enjoyment of the good (love). But no love is possible without justice (there is no charity without order: charity is not sentimentality), and no justice is possible without law. Law is thus the vehicle of love, and love secures the freedom of the individual and thereby his happiness (rules and discipline are the condition for liberation), precisely to the extent that it is geared to the attainment of the common good.

Law is and will always be the condition for love and happiness, while anarchy (literally: no government, i. e. no direction to the end) i. e. the negation of law, is the substitution of egoism for love. When law is ignored or disregarded, personal preference and favoritism, with consequent injustice, become the dominant forces of a disintegrating society.

While *general ethics* studies human acts as ordained to their end, which is the happiness and good of the agent, *social ethics* studies the same human acts ordained to their end through their ordination to other men. A right always has a social projection. Individual rights cannot be isolated from their social projection.

The object of social ethics is justice, which is the ruling principle of the relations among men, and the means to liberate man from his egoism, by making him think of others (what is due to others from us: our duties) rather than of himself.

#### Legal Positivism

*Juridical or legal positivism* is the absorption of morality into legality as a result of rejecting the natural law. While it had its forerunners in the ancient Sophists (Protagoras, in the 5<sup>th</sup> century B. C., absolutized man with his famous statement “Man is the measure of all things”), whom Socrates challenged for their inconsistent relativism and skepticism (they stated that “we cannot be sure of anything” without the slightest (*insecurity!*), the voluntarism of Ockham and the political Averroes of Marsilius of Padua in the 14<sup>th</sup> century paved the way for the full-blown legal positivism of Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), who in his famous *Leviathan*, absolutized the state, whose laws would determine what is morally right and wrong. Subsequently, Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) paved the way for Georg Hegel’s (1770-1831) even more radical absolutizing of the state, by grounding “theory” (pure reason) in “practice” (practical reason), thereby separating the juridical order from the moral order. According to Kant, with the exception of the natural right of men to freedom, there is no other right but positive or civil right. So the ultimate foundation of right is the positive law, based on customs of people (or on history, as Savigny and Stahl would later say): right has nothing in common with morality, for morality is natural but purely “formal” (without any “material” content), while right is always spelled out with a “material” content—the right to *something*.

This deification of the state has led to the most appalling crimes witnessed by humanity in the notorious 20<sup>th</sup> century dictatorships, while the parallel deification of society at the expense of other men,

has produced also in the 20<sup>th</sup> century a terrifying amount of innocent victims of abortion and infanticide.

Finally, I have discussed at length in *The Humanism of Modern Philosophy* the radical modern version of voluntarism in Arthur Schopenhauer, and its subsequent influence in revived totalitarian versions of “might is right.”

## Conclusion

As noted in the Introduction above, the core of the Regensburg lecture was the meaning of rationality as the right use of reason (logos) in the universe of human consciousness and experiences, as it actually occurred in the encounter of Greece and the Bible.

This essay has tried to show also, following the pope, how religion is necessarily opposed to violence, and linked to the pursuit of peace, namely the Jewish Shalom, the Greek Irene, the Roman Pax, and the Muslim Salam, in chronological order.

This peace, however, is linked to the transcendent God and the communion of man to Him through the rationality of man’s communion of mutual love in freedom, seeing God as the Infinite Being, undivided unity and plurality, the fullness of truth or adjustment to reality, the boundless good and sublimest beauty and harmony.

The essay has tried to show the deviations of rationalism, voluntarism and legalism. The combination of these three deviations from the right logos open to infinity, as explained by Benedict XVI, has contributed to foster a sort of blind secularism, unable to see the transcendent God. Science as such, is not opposed to God, but a scientism enclosed in quantity without perceiving quality. To overcome this scientism is the task of all religions and the basis for interreligious dialogue and mutual friendliness. ❧

# Leo Tolstoy and the Catholic Church

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by James Likoudis

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In the present Catholic/Orthodox theological dialogues taking place as part of the contemporary ecumenical scene, the Primacy of supreme authority and universal jurisdiction possessed by the Bishop of Rome as Successor of Peter is regarded on both sides as indisputably the greatest dogmatic obstacle to the long-hoped for Reunion of the Churches. Among the Russians and other Slav Orthodox the “Sobornost” ecclesiology of the philosopher and theologian Alexei Stepanovich Khomiakov (1804–1860) has been looked upon as a powerful weapon for the refutation of Catholic doctrine concerning the infallibility of the Pope and the role of the Papacy as the Church’s center of visible unity. In Khomiakov’s classic Essay “The Church is One” (probably written before 1850 but first published in 1864, four years after his death) he treated the question of the Church’s infallibility in an original manner, and his own provocative view would soon become influential in the leading Russian theological academies. The great Russian philosopher Vladimir Soloviev would expose serious defects in Khomiakov’s ecclesiology in his “Russia and the Universal Church,” but he was not the only literary giant to do so. Another critic was the unbeliever Leo Tolstoy.

Few will question that the world’s greatest novelist is Leo Tolstoy (1828–1910) noted for such classic masterpieces as *War and Peace*, *Anna Karenina*, and *Resurrection*. The great Russian composer Tchaikovsky had no hesitation to state, “Tolstoy, in my opinion is the greatest of all the writers the world has ever known.” As a moral philosopher Tolstoy is famous for his ideas on pacifism, anarchism, and non-violent resistance which were especially expressed in his work *The Kingdom of God is Within You* (1893)—ideas which would influence such 20<sup>th</sup> century leaders as the famous Indian lawyer Mahatma Gandhi, the American minister Martin Luther King, and the Catholic Dorothy Day who read Tolstoy in her youth

and was attracted by “the idealism of non-violent anarchism.” (See *The Catholic Worker Movement: Intellectual and Spiritual Origins* by Mark and Louise Zwick (Paulist Press, 2005). Interestingly, a sad feature of Tolstoy’s life (he had written so much on marriage and family life including a work on “Family Happiness”) was his own marriage. The English writer A.N. Wilson would declare Tolstoy’s married life (he had married Sonya Behrs who bore him 13 children, six of whom died young) as one of the unhappiest in the history of great literary figures. It was inevitable that his radical religious and social views as well as mundane conflicts over his will, property and book rights would cause dissension with his wife and children.

His apostasy from historical traditional Christianity may be traced in a series of works: *My Confession* (1879); *Critique of Dogmatic Theology* (1880); his own 1881 translation of the Gospels wherein he (like the American Thomas Jefferson) eliminated all Christ’s miracles); *What I Believe* (1883–1884); and *The Kingdom of God is Within You* (1894). When he was excommunicated by the Russian Orthodox Church in 1901, he replied with his 1902 *Appeal to the Clergy*, excoriating them. Already in 1855 he had written in his diary: “A conversation about divinity has suggested to me a great idea...the founding of a new religion...the religion of Christianity but purged of dogmatics and mysticism; a practical religion not promising future bliss, but giving bliss on earth.”

Tolstoy’s adogmatism (rejection of all Christian dogmas to be replaced by naturalistic humanism) led to a religious nihilism which was to influence a large number of Russian poets, critics, novelists and philosophers constituting a new “intelligentsia” who in their condemnation of the entire Russian political and socioeconomic system prepared the way for the radical Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. Writing at the beginning of the Revolution the Italian Catholic theologian Aurelio Palmieri who was well versed in Russian theological literature and Tolstoyism wrote:

“Count Leo Tolstoy became the legislator, the torchbearer, or rather of the irreligion of adogmatism. He devoted the last years of his life to a

ruthless war against Christianity. By terms he strove to deform the content and the teaching of the Gospels, to sneer at and repudiate the fundamental theses of Christian dogmatics; to launch the most violent invective against the clergy; to nullify or deny the supernatural and moral influence of the Sacraments of Christian life. The religion of Tolstoy effaces all the characteristic features of Christian revelation. Under the pen of Tolstoy and his disciples Christianity was stripped of its supernatural brilliancy. [Giving expression to] the anarchical and mystical tendencies of the Russian soul, ... the sacrilegious work of Tolstoy was continued by a small legion of brilliant men who believed that their facile pens gave them the right of passing judgment, as censors and critics, on the divine wisdom of the Crucified Lord... Tolstoy and his school promoted a radical socialism with mystical anarchistic tendencies and imbued with a hatred against historical Christianity." (*The Church and the Russian Revolution*, "The Catholic World, August 1917; p. 580).

It was his literary rival Dostoyevsky who rightly saw that Tolstoy was promoting, in effect, a Christianity without Christ. Tolstoy's religious thought, moreover, is not without significance in our post-modern world which is deeply infected with the view of non-resistance to evil.

Needless to say, the Catholic Church was condemned equally with the churches of Byzantine Greek and Russian Orthodoxy for their superstitions and "idolatry." Excepting papal authority and infallibility, he observed, "Does Catholicism preach anything different from the Russian Church?" He regarded both as "institutions not only alien to, but directly hostile towards Christ's teaching" For Tolstoy, as for many Protestants and neo-Modernists today, Christ

"could certainly not have established the Church, that is, the institution we now call by that name, for nothing resembling our present conception of the Church- with its sacraments, its hierarchy, and especially the claim to infallibility- is to be found either in Christ's words or in the conceptions of the men of his time... The Trinity, the Mother of God, the Sacraments, Grace, and so forth ... have no meaning for men of our day... The Sermon on the Mount, or the Creeds. It is impossible to

believe them both." (in his "*The Kingdom of God Is Within You*").

However, in his rationalistic polemics against the divinity of Christ and in his denial that Christ had founded an "institutional Church" there can also be found a remarkable testimony by Tolstoy which would actually favor the Catholic view of Church Authority against the "new theologians" who were followers of the famed Russian lay-theologian Alexei Khomiakov. These Slavophiles (the party of fervent Russian nationalists who were anti-Western and anti-Latin) were adamant in maintaining what Vladimir Soloviev would call their "anti-Catholic Orthodoxy." With their fierce rejection of the supreme and universal authority of the Pope, they followed Khomiakov in vainly attempting to safeguard the infallibility of the Church by diffusing it in the "totality of the Church." Khomiakov's "definition of the Church" was grounded in his "Sobornost" ecclesiology emphasizing the Church as a communion of love based on the conciliarity (or collegiality) of all its members. Tolstoy perceived this ecclesiology to be novel, vague, obscure, and frankly incoherent, and scored Khomiakov and his school for their sharp deviation from the traditional understanding of the Church's infallibility that had been held by both Catholics and the Greek and Russian Orthodox.

"Astonishing are the attempts of the new theologians... In order to find some new supports for the doctrine of the Church, Khomiakov and his disciples ground the definition of the Church not on the hierarchy but on the union of all believers, on the flock... The Catholic Church acknowledges as the chief of the hierarchy the Pope and its development involved necessarily the infallibility of the Pope. The Greek Church was able not to recognize the infallibility of the Pope, but she had to recognize the infallibility of the hierarchy itself. All these Churches maintain themselves only by the avowal of the infallibility of their hierarchy... It is the only impregnable foundation. And behold these new theologians who wish to destroy this unique foundation, thinking to replace it by a better.

The new theologians say that the divine truth is not in the infallibility of the hierarchy, but in the union of all believers, united by love; that divine truth is accessible only to men united by love, and

that such a Church is defined only by faith and union in love, and the accord of its members. This reasoning is excellent in itself. Unfortunately, one can not deduce any of the dogmas which theology professes. These theologians forget that in order to accept any dogma whatever, it is necessary to recognize holy tradition which is clearly explained in the decrees of an infallible hierarchy. If one renounces the infallibility of the hierarchy, one can no longer affirm any dogma and there is not left a single proposition which can unite all believers. The affirmation of these theologians who pretend to recognize decrees which express the faith of all non-divided Christians but deny the decrees of dissident Christians-- is quite inexact, for there has never been the complete union of all Christians... The union of believers in love is a general conception on which no belief or dogma common to all Christians can be based. The result is that the work of the "new theologians," if they are truly logical, results in destroying the unique and fundamental foundation of the Church, the infallibility of the hierarchy. And in its place is left only a mystical conception from which can spring no belief, much less a religion." (*Critique of Dogmatic Theology*, French edition, 1909).

Tolstoy perceived that the revision of the doctrine of Church infallibility by Russian Slavophiles who in their polemics against Catholics sought to diffuse the teaching authority (and therefore the infallibility) of the Church among all believers only made a mockery of Church authority itself. He had the insight to observe that every Christian dogma ultimately depended on the infallibility of the Church, and that the undivided unity of the Episcopate acclaimed by the Fathers of the Church was unintelligible without the Papacy. In addition, if Christ had indeed founded an infallible Church, that Church must bear external signs identifying the one historical Church which possessed the infallibility of its Divine Founder. In Tolstoy's words:

"Khomiakov's definition of the Church, which has had some vogue among Russians, does not improve matters, if we recognize with Khomiakov that the Orthodox is the one true Church... If we admit the idea of a Church in Khomiakov's sense- that is, as an assembly of people united in love and truth-

then all that any man can say of this assembly is that it is very desirable to be a member of it if it exists, that is, to dwell in love and in truth; but that there are no external signs by which one could account oneself or anyone else, a member of, or excluded from this holy assembly, since no external institution can correspond to that conception.." (in his *The Kingdom of God Is Within You*)

Tolstoy rejected the very concept of an infallible visible Church but those Orthodox seeking to preserve the infallibility of the Church's episcopate were astute enough to appreciate the organic coherence and logical consistency of the Catholic position that it was the Church's possession of the Petrine ministry of the Pope which provided an external sign or visible mark serving to identify clearly the unique hierarchy of bishops which transmitted unerringly across the centuries the orthodox Faith by the power of the Holy Spirit [the Spirit's gift of infallibility].

It is ironic that Leo Tolstoy, a rationalist unbeliever, noted the Achilles' heel of Khomiakov's protestantizing and democratist Sobornost theology which rendered null the infallibility of the teaching Church. In doing so, he echoed the thought of those Russians (like Vladimir Soloviev and Princess Elizabeth Volkonskaya) and other Orthodox seeking union with Rome who quickly realized that the positive elements of "Sobornost" (conciliarity/ collegiality) were not only reconcilable with Papacy but indeed demanded the supreme authority of the Pope for its effectiveness in the life of the Church. As the Second Vatican Council would teach so clearly, there is no such thing as the collegiality of bishops without the latter's hierarchical union with the Roman Pontiff, the visible head of the Church as established by Christ. (See *Lumen Gentium*, #21-23; and its Explanatory Note, #3). ✠

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*Also see his website [www.credobuffalo.com](http://www.credobuffalo.com)).*

# Not Everybody Loves Raymond (or Regensburg)

by Edmund J. Mazza, PhD  
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Alarmed Muslims were not the only ones to express outrage over a misunderstanding of Pope Benedict XVI's recent address at the University of Regensburg, predictably, so did the editors of the *New York Times*. Citing, "There is more than enough religious anger in the world," the *Times* in its September 16<sup>th</sup> editorial accused the Pope of "fomenting discord between Christians and Muslims" because he recounted the "brusque" words of medieval Byzantine Emperor Manuel II Paleologous' dialogue over faith and reason with a Persian Muslim. (The Holy Father has since repeatedly stated that the emperor's choice of words was not his own.) Ultimately, the *Times* branded Pope Benedict a "doctrinal conservative" whose "greatest fear appears to be the loss of a uniform Catholic identity, not exactly the best jumping-off point for tolerance or interfaith dialogue." If we understand the *Times* correctly, one is left to conclude that anyone promoting "a uniform Catholic identity"—medieval or modern—is *de facto* "intolerant."

One encounters this same misunderstanding of Catholic overtures to dialogue in current scholarship of the Middle Ages. It has become commonplace in medieval studies to speak of the "the development of a dangerous exclusionist tendency" or "formation of a persecuting society" in Catholic Europe of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Robert Chazan, for example, author of *Daggers of Faith* sees a connection between the anti-Jewish violence surrounding the First Crusade and the efforts of Dominicans and Franciscans to make Jewish converts a century-and-a-half later; he claims that although the Church officially repudiated mob violence and forced conversion, yet the same "desire to provide a more homogeneous Christian environment by removing the

Jews—manifested itself in more legitimate fashion in an increasingly serious drive to convert the Jews of western Christendom by the force of reasonable argumentation." Again, one is left to conclude that anyone promoting a homogenous Catholic Europe is automatically guilty of "attacking" Jews, even if his approach involves an appeal to reason, rather than the sword.

Chazan is not alone in his criticism of medieval Dominican and Franciscan missionary efforts towards non-Christians. Jeremy Cohen, in his work, *The Friars and the Jews*, takes matters a step further by posing a new mendicant *theology* against the Jews: "The prime concern of this book is with the hitherto unappreciated substance of the friars' attack upon the Jews, the basic ideas and theological considerations that underlay their anti-Jewish activities and polemics. I shall argue that the Dominicans and Franciscans developed, refined, and sought to implement a new Christian ideology with regard to the Jews, one that allotted the Jews no legitimate right to exist in European society."

The main force of Cohen's case lies in his analysis of the famous "Barcelona Confrontation," a debate between Dominican Friar Paul Christian and Rabbi Moses Nahmanides in 1263, and in Cohen's critique of the *Pugio Fidei* (*Dagger of Faith*), a missionizing manual for friars preparing to engage Jews written by the Dominican Friar Raymond Martin. Based on his analyses, Cohen comes to the conclusion that the mendicant orders believed that thirteenth-century Jews following rabbinic tradition had broken from the classical Judaism of the Old Testament, thereby making themselves "heretics," and losing their right to be "tolerated" in contemporary medieval society.

While Chazan disagrees with "Cohen's assertion of a new theological view regarding Judaism and the Jews implicit in the missionizing campaign," he does agree "with his sense of deteriorating Jewish circumstances and of an ecclesiastical—or more narrowly mendicant—role in this deterioration." Actually, Co-

hen and Chazan narrow their focus even further and single-out one mendicant in particular, the Dominican friar (and Catholic saint) Raymond of Peñafort: “Raymond and his school developed that approach into an organized and aggressive Christian mission to the Jews very much a novelty in medieval Europe. Raymond of Peñafort was not satisfied with simply ridding Europe of contemporary Judaism; he committed himself to making contemporary Jews believing Christians,” or, as Chazan writes: “Almost certainly the financial and personnel support reflected in the Pugio Fidei flows from the missionizing circle at the hub of which sat the active and influential Raymond of Penyafort.”

So it would seem *not everybody loves Raymond*. Why not? Because he (almost single-handedly) launched an unprecedented campaign of preaching to the *unconverted*, one that utilized the force of argument—and the sacred books of Jews and Muslims themselves—instead of arms. In this, Raymond was very much like the present pontiff, Pope Benedict, who in his address at Regensburg cited both the *Qur’an* (Surah 2, 256) and Greek philosophy: “Not to act reasonably (with *logos*) is contrary to the nature of God’...It is to this great *logos*, to this breadth of reason, that we invite our partners in the dialogue of cultures.” It was in this same vein that Raymond pressed his brother Dominican, St. Thomas Aquinas, to compose his celebrated *Summa Contra Gentiles*, in an effort to invite educated Muslims into religious dialogue by means of rational arguments.

Raymond was himself the author of a summa, the *Summa de casibus*, a manual for confessors to use in administering the sacrament of God’s mercy. In it, he outlines the Church’s theology of sin and repentance, and although he composed it to assist repentant Christian sinners, significantly, he *includes* Jews and Muslims in the same category of fallen *humanitas* in need of pardon and redemption. Far from branding them “heretics” for following Talmudic Judaism, as Cohen alleges, Raymond in his summa is at pains to point out that “heretics” comprise a different category of sinner altogether: “We have spoken above of Jews and Muslims, who by their infidelity dishonor God: now we are treating of heretics, who by their deviation from our faith in God sin *more greatly*” (Emphasis mine). Of course, the Second Vatican

Council clarified the Church’s position on this point by stating that only those who *know* that the Catholic Church is necessary for salvation and still refuse to enter it, are guilty of the infidelity of which Raymond speaks.

Neither did Raymond mount his missionary effort to the Jews and Muslims because he saw “no place for them in Christendom.” In his summa he goes out of his way to condemn the use of violence in the service of Christian religion: “We ought, moreover, as with Jews, so with Muslims, use rational arguments and sweet words, rather than severities...” Raymond continues by warning that Jews and Muslims are not to be “compelled” to become Christians and those Christians who do so are “not pleasing God.”

This is essentially the same argument which the Pope cites, the medieval Christian argument of Manuel II: “God is not pleased by blood, and not acting reasonably is contrary to God’s nature. Faith is born of the soul, not the body. Whoever would lead someone to faith needs the ability to speak well and to reason properly, without violence and threats...” It was thus that Raymond, after resigning his master generalship of the Dominican order, went about establishing schools for equipping friars for dialogue in Arabic and Hebrew throughout Spain and North Africa, in such cities as Tunis, Jativa, Murcia, Valencia city, and Barcelona.

And yet, whether it is the modern pontiff, or the medieval Peñafort, contemporary intellectual elites still view any representative of an organization with exclusive claims to absolute truth as incapable of tolerance or dialogue. As István Bejczy writes:

The enlightened philosophers, who laid the foundations of liberalism and democracy, are often hailed as the men who introduced the notion of tolerance as a means of guaranteeing maximum freedom to the individual members of society... The Middle Ages, on the other hand, have no reputation for tolerance, the lack of which is usually attributed to the influence of a powerful Church that was able and willing to suppress all major deviations from the exclusive truth it was convinced it possessed.

Yet, as Bejczy goes on to cite, it was none other

than Raymond of Peñafort, Cohen's "evil genius behind mendicant intolerance" who set forth in his revision of the Church's canon law, a clear definition of "tolerance":

Permission is taken in three different ways. First, when something is allowed that is not forbidden by any law... Second, when something is indulged that runs counter to human rules... The third type of permission occurs when lesser evils are permitted so as to prevent greater ones. This is called the *permissio comparativa*, and it does not excuse from sin. It should, however, be called *tolerantia* rather than permission.

This medieval notion of tolerance explains why in the same passage from his *summa* on sin cited above, Raymond can maintain that Jewish and Muslim forms of worship have already been rendered either fulfilled or erroneous by the coming of Christ and his Church, and yet in the same breath condemn as sinful their forced conversion or molestation. Such a definition of tolerance balances both the Church's recognition of absolute truths and the individual's right not to be coerced in the practice of his or her non-Christian religion. The subject of medieval Christian heretics is a separate discussion for which we lack space in this article, but even in this instance, it suffices to quote John Kemp's observation, that it was again, none other than "Raymund of Penafort, advisor to the Pope [Gregory IX], [who] insisted that there be no death penalty for heresy. But his advice was not heeded..."

We may conclude, therefore, with Pope Benedict, that the modern world has much to gain from a reappraisal of the Christian philosophy of the Middle Ages and its practical application to modern moral dilemmas and dialogue. As the Holy Father expressed it: "The West has long been endangered by this aversion to the questions which underlie its rationality, and can only suffer great harm thereby. The cour-

age to engage the whole breadth of reason, and not the denial of its grandeur—this is the program with which a theology grounded in Biblical faith enters into the debates of our time." Bejczy explains the danger inherent in the West's Enlightenment view of rationality: "Admitting the relativity of our truths, we should be reluctant to condemn the acts of our fellow human beings that differ from our own—that is the basic idea of our so-called tolerance. An idea that makes us morally defenseless if outright evil shows up." One thinks of C. S. Lewis' remark concerning Britain's battle against Hitler's Germany: "What was the sense in saying the enemy were in the wrong unless Right is a real thing which the Nazis at bottom knew as well as we did and ought to have practiced?"

Ironically, by condemning Pope Benedict's use of a medieval author and his "Catholic" notion of reason and dialogue, the *Times* is throwing away the only true remedy to the escalating sectarian violence it so fears. Bejczy sums it up well:

Medieval authors never doubted that they possessed the absolute truth, but they developed the concept of *tolerantia* as a way of getting along with the untrue. Medieval authors were never morally defenseless against outright evil and condemned it wherever they believed to find it, but still they advocated not to interfere with it if this seemed to be opportune. Obviously we do not have the same enemies as medieval people. Still, with regard to the question of how to handle the enemies we do have without going to the extremes of tyranny and inertia, the medieval doctrine of tolerance contains a lesson for our age as well.

What a different world it would be if the US and its allies had adopted a "medieval" stance of tolerance toward the "evil axis" regime of Iraq and if Muslim zealots had adopted the same posture toward the US and Israel? ✠



*The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief*, Francis S. Collins, M.D., Ph.D., Free Press; 294 pages, Hardcover, \$26.00  
 Reviewed by Robert E. Hurley, M.D.

This book is not only an excellent human genome primer from someone who knows the territory, but a concise, thoughtful and thought-provoking integration of scientific and theological-philosophical approaches to the what and why of human existence. The author is a physician, chemist and one of the country's leading geneticists. He was the head of the Human Genome Project when the 3.1 billion pairs of letters of the human genome code were finally deciphered after years of painstaking research by more than two thousand scientists in six countries. He makes the case that belief in God is an entirely rational decision and that the synthesis of spiritual and scientific world views is not only eminently reasonable, but, in fact, necessary, since science is without the right tools and therefore powerless to answer profound questions about why we and the universe exist.

An interesting introduction includes the silly assertion by a prominent evolutionist to the effect that belief in evolution demands atheism when the fact is precisely the reverse, and it outlines the counterproductive conflict between shallow spirituality and equally shallow materialist positions. The first four chapters consider, among other topics, Dr. Collins's brief autobiographical account of his transition from "childish atheism," the problem of pain, the origins of the universe, the advances of science in the modern age, the origins of life on earth, mounting evidence for evolutionary theory, Gregor Mendel's work pointing to the existence of genes,

and the elucidation of DNA. A fascinating account of the discovery of the DNA code glitch responsible for cystic fibrosis comes next, followed by the even more astonishing illumination of the DNA sequence of the entire human genome and the support the latter data provides, not only for evolutionary theory, but for meaningful research on a variety of human diseases.

The second half of the book (Part Three) opens with the author questioning why, with evolution theory so overwhelmingly supported by scientific evidence, general public support for its conclusions is lacking. First, evolution is counterintuitive because the complexity and diversity of life forms appear to require a supernatural designer. Second, the incredibly long periods of time involved are difficult to grasp. Third, evolution appears to contradict certain scriptural texts, e.g. the creation narrative in Genesis. But the overwhelming complexity of evolutionary processes may even be an ally of faith since this very intricacy can add to our limited insight into the incomprehensible power and capability of the omnipotent and omniscient designer. Omnipotent Designer and evolution are definitely *not* mutually exclusive concepts. As for scriptural text difficulties, literal interpretation problems have been addressed by others currently and in the past, including, as Dr. Collins notes, St. Augustine. I think Dr. Collins's remark on page 158 that the evolution controversy reaches into the very heart of both faith and science is a bit overstated in view of the fact that, though it may reach into the heart of science, it certainly does not reach into the heart of faith in any meaningful way. After all, a Being unlimited in any way, who, of course, must necessarily be a spirit, is not going to be limited in His

methods of creation, whether or not we understand those methods,

Concise, very readable chapters deal with atheism, agnosticism, creationism and intelligent design worldviews, dismissing atheism and agnosticism as untenable, particularly for a scientist purportedly willing to examine *all* the evidence. Atheism must be considered a form of blind faith, adopting as it does a belief system that cannot be defended on the basis of pure reason. Most agnostics have not considered all the evidence for and against the existence of God and those who have taken the time to do so have found themselves unexpectedly converted. Creationism and intelligent design positions in the modern era have fallen victim to confusion often generated by failure to define terms accurately so that both tend to be used in a restricted sense, making them vulnerable to attack.

The penultimate chapter is a brief explication of "theistic evolution" which the author espouses and which he considers elegant evidence for the master plan of the same Almighty who caused the universe to come into being and set its physical parameters just precisely right to allow creation of stars, planets, heavy elements, and life itself. This theistic evolution position, espoused by a variety of scientists and thinkers, including Pope John Paul II, provides for an intellectually rigorous and satisfying synthesis between the spiritual and scientific realms in which we find ourselves in the twenty-first century. Dr. Collins considers such a synthesis important because both shallow science, denying the spiritual realm, and shallow spirituality, denying the God-given tools of science, deny elements of the truth.

"Making personal sense of the evidence," and deciding which, if

any, religious faith is true occupy the last chapter and seem to introduce some incongruity with earlier asseverations about the importance of a rational approach to the truth. However, crisp insights are also to be found here, for example, evidence for and significance of the resurrection. Dr. Collins closes with appeals to believers and scientists to repair to the common ground of the truth.

Bioethical questions generated by advances in DNA and cell replication research are dealt with in a 37 page appendix, but some of Dr. Collins's formulations in this area are superficial as might be anticipated from—as he acknowledges—a layman in that field. His conclusions regarding in vitro fertilization, preimplantation genetic diagnosis, somatic cell nuclear transfer, artificial contraception and altered nuclear transfer–oocyte assisted reprogramming (ANT-OAR) are highly influenced by an “end justifies the means” approach. These opinions do not comport with Catholic principles, though ANT-OAR continues to be debated in Catholic theological circles.

With aforementioned caveats, “The Language of God” is a conversationally written work directed to a broad audience with little technical background. Dr. Collins has provided a valuable service for anyone wishing to apprehend the intelligence supporting rational integration between spiritual and modern scientific pursuits.

***Behind the Scenes at Galileo's Trial.***

Richard J. Blackwell, Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006. pp. xiii+ 245.

*Reviewed by Jude P. Dougherty*

*Dean Emeritus*

*The Catholic University of America*

Without doubt “l'affaire Galileo,” as Descartes called it, is one of the

most studied events in the history of Western culture. The past four centuries have produced vast amounts of commentaries as well as countless interpretations and evaluations by physicists, astronomers, theologians, philosophers, churchmen, historians, and even playwrights. Almost 60 books were written about the trial from 1633–1651 alone, and one has yet to learn how many have been published since. Given the vast amount of literature produced just within the past 50 years, Richard Blackwell is almost apologetic for bringing out yet another volume. He is the author of numerous books and articles, including *Galileo, Bellarmine and the Bible* (1991), and is the translator of *A Defense of Galileo the Mathematician from Florence* (1994). This adds to his already impressive stature as a chronicler of the famous event.

*Behind the Scenes* is divided into two parts. The first part provides an informative overview of the elements that led to the trial of 1632. The second part consists of three appendices, i.e., Blackwell's translations of three behind-the-scenes documents that shed some light on the episode. It is difficult to say precisely when l'affaire Galileo actually began. Copernicus promulgated his heliocentric view of the universe as early as 1510 although publication of his complete work, *On the Revolution of the Celestial Spheres*, had to await 1543, the year of his death. For the greater part of a century ecclesiastical authorities made no official condemnation of a doctrine that seemingly contradicted Sacred Scripture. From Patristic times it was acknowledged that Sacred Scripture had to be interpreted at several levels, the literal meaning being only one. In fact, Antonio Fosearini, a Carmelite priest, in 1615 argued that the Copernican doctrine is both in

agreement with the truth and not contrary to Sacred Scripture. Yet in 1616, shortly before Galileo published his *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems*, the Copernican teaching was condemned. It is to be remembered that the heliocentric theory not only challenged a literal interpretation of the Bible but also the Ptolemaic/Aristotelian conception of the universe that supported the traditional Biblical interpretation. On February 26, 1616, in the presence of Cardinal Bellarmine, Galileo was served an injunction issued by the Holy Office demanding that he abandon his defense of Copernicanism, “nor henceforth to hold, teach or defend in any way, either verbally or in writing” the heliocentric view of the universe. Given Aristotelian standards regarding the nature of demonstration, Galileo could not prove that the earth revolved around the sun. Bellarmine clearly understood the difference between a hypothetical explanation and a demonstration and evidently had no trouble with Galileo's defense of the heliocentric view as an hypothesis. Apparently a *modus vivendi* was worked out to that effect. In fact, proof awaited the first part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when astronomers for the first time were able to measure the parallax of the stars. Galileo was aware of the proscription and in an effort to garner support for his theory without directly promulgating a prohibited view produced his *Dialogue*. The discussion takes place among three parties, with Salviati defending the heliocentric view, Simplicio the Ptolemaic view and Sagredo open-mindedly commenting on each point made by Salviati. The literary device was a transparent defense of Galileo's own view and was seen as a violation of the injunction prohibiting the espousal of the Copernican view.

In the years after his trial and

condemnation, Galileo remained convinced that his downfall had been caused by a plot against him by his enemies. Evidence of a plot may be lacking, but he certainly had enemies. His sharpest opponent was Christopher Schneiner, an astronomer, who fell out with Galileo 20 years before his trial over the issues of priority of observation and interpretation in regard to sun spots. Schneiner wrote personal attacks before and during the trial. Blackwell provides a translation of Schneiner's "Prodromus pro sole mobile" as an appendix to the present volume. Galileo's foremost critic was Melchior Inchofer, S.J, a theologian with no background in astronomy or science, who was in a position to do him harm as advisor to the Holy Office. Blackwell devotes forty percent of the volume to Inchofer's, *A Summary Treatise Concerning the Motion or Rest of the Earth and the Sun, in which it is briefly shown what is and what is not to be held as certain according to the teachings of Sacred Scriptures and the Holy Fathers*. If the evidence does not support a plot in Galileo's sense, Blackwell's account provides a scenario for a spellbinding novel. English-speaking readers can be grateful for the author's translation of Inchofer's behind-the-scenes document. The story leaves enough latitude for the reader to draw his own conclusions. Although scholars both acquit and condemn the Church, the underlying issue remains: what constitutes a demonstration?

***The Future of Europe: Reform or Decline***, Alberto Alesina and Francesco Giavazzi, Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2006. pp. x+ 186. \$24.95 cloth.

*Reviewed by Jude P. Dougherty*

*Dean Emeritus*

*The Catholic University of America*

This is primarily an economic treatise, but lurking beneath the economic are unmistakable philosophical and cultural factors. The decline addressed is the relative economic decline of Europe compared with the economies of China and the United States. Europe is rich and will not become poor in the near future, but the authors, Alesina and Giavazzi, predict an economic decline relative to other countries, a decline they take to be the consequence of flawed social and economic policies. They ask the blunt question: Should Europeans care? "Should a middle class Frenchman be bothered if a middle class tourist from Korea in Paris will soon be able to afford items out of reach for the French themselves?"

The jointly authored volume addresses what its authors call a "culture of stagnation," wherein job stability and security are valued above all. In their view, Europe of the 1960s looked like a model to be imitated. With its rapid growth and cohesive societies, Europeans were among the most successful people in the world. But economic success carried a downside, inordinate demands placed on weak governments. We are reminded that the late 1960s was a period of political turmoil. "From universities to factories, Europeans demanded less work with equal pay, labor regulations against firings, free education and free health care for every one, and generous pensions to be enjoyed

earlier in life. In the end, governments delivered what the people asked." The result: protectionism and regulation in every sector.

Chapter headings suggest the scope of the volume: "Europe and the United States; Two Different Social Models," "Handling a Multiethnic Society," "Americans at Work: Europeans on Holiday," "Job Security, Job Regulation, and 14 Million Unemployed," "Technology, Research and Universities," and "The Judicial System and the Cost of Doing Business."

Immigration is recognized as a major problem. The tiny strait of Gibraltar that could easily be bridged separates Europe from 210 million North Africans whose average per capital income is approximately eight percent of that of their neighbors in Europe. The magnetic appeal is obvious as many risk their lives to make the crossing from North Africa and beyond to seek a better life in Europe. Many who seek to immigrate come not only from Africa but from the Middle East. Most are Muslims who share a way of life that is increasingly difficult to integrate within Western culture. Alesina and Giavazzi do not deny the need for immigration, given a European birth rate below replacement levels, but they advocate selective immigration in the interest of social cohesion.

The authors are particularly severe when they compare working hours put in by Europeans with those of their American counterparts. They also see a wide gap when it comes to technology research and give the United States the edge in high tech firms, including aircraft, pharmaceuticals, computers, TCL equipment, and medical and optical instruments. They speak to the brain drain as Europe exports many of its brightest students to the United States and colorfully point out that

“the brightest students from India and from Central Europe fly over Paris on their way to Boston, Chicago, and California.”

Attractively written, the book is the result of serious research undertaken by the authors over many years. Alberto Alesina is the Ropes Professor of Political Economics at Harvard University; Francesco Giavazzi is Professor of Economics at Bacconi University. Although they write as economists, they are not oblivious to the political cleavage between European citizens and their leaders. The multiculturalism favored by the ruling elites, given the propensity of Brussels to edge into more and more areas that affect daily life, has driven home the perception that something has gone awry in Europe. The former prime minister of Spain, Jose Maria Aznar, whom the authors quote, may have it right when he said the Europeans should rediscover their “Christian roots and cultural values, and set aside the enormous error of multiculturalism, a failed experiment.”

*La Constitución de los Estados Unidos y su Dinámica Actual*, Robert S. Barker. Lima, Peru: Asociación Peruana de Derecho Constitucional, 2005. pp. 221.

Reviewed by D. Q. McNerny

Robert S. Barker is a lawyer and historian who is a Professor of Constitutional Law at Duquesnes University. He has spent a good deal of time in a number of Latin American countries over the course of his career, beginning in his student days when he was a Peace Corps volunteer in Panama from 1967 to 1969. Since completing his own professional studies, he has been a visiting professor at universities in Argentina, Guatemala, and Mexico. He has made several

visits to Peru, and in September, 2002, he conducted a much-lauded conference on the Mastery of Constitutional Law, at the Catholic University of Lima. From 1984 to 1996 Professor Barker served as the President of the Committee on Constitutional Law of the International Federation of Lawyers.

*La Constitución de los Estados Unidos y su Dinámica Actual* (The United States Constitution and Its Present Day Dynamics) is, as described by the author, a collection of conference papers and published articles which he has written over the past fifteen years. The various items, composing the eleven chapters of the book, are well selected and arranged, and the volume displays a unity and coherence which is not always found in collections of pieces which have been composed separately. The result is a book which provides us with a nicely focused, informative, and stimulating account of the U. S. Constitution. The author’s own background as an historian gives added weight to the short but pointed history of the genesis of the Constitution that he provides. The greater part of the book is dedicated to recounting the development in the interpretations which have been given to the document since it legally went into effect in 1789.

Each of the eleven chapters of the book is deserving of a close reading, but I think four of them are worthy of special attention: Chapter VIII, “The Constitution and the Protection of Human Rights”; Chapter IX, “Freedom of Expression: Basic Principles and Current Questions”; Chapter X, “The Teaching of Constitutional Law.” The book’s final chapter, “Human Rights: 200 Years of Constitutional Experience,” represents an insightful overview of the developments that have

taken place in constitutional law thinking in this country over the past two centuries, and it is replete with instructive and thought-provoking commentary.

There are three prominent features of the U. S. Constitution. First, it is not merely a declaration of principles, a set of theories as to how best to run a country, but rather a real juridical document, laying down definite legal norms. It is a working body of law. Second, the Constitution is a vehicle for judicial review. Beginning with the landmark case of *Marbury vs. Madison* (1803), handed down by a Court presided over by Chief Justice John Marshall, the Constitution was established as a means by which the judicial branch of the government, through its interpretation of the Constitution, determined which enactments of the legislative branch were, and were not, to be allowed to stand as law. It was in the *Marbury vs. Madison* decision, Professor Barker writes, that “for the first time the Supreme Court explicitly declared that it was the final and definitive interpreter of the Constitution.” The third prominent feature of the Constitution is that it establishes the principle of the separation of powers—executive, legislative, and judicial—which proved to be a stroke of political genius on the part of the framers, and accounts, perhaps more than anything else, for the general stability the nation has enjoyed since its founding.

It is to the Constitution that we owe the principle of federalism, the principle which stipulates that authority is not to rest exclusively either with the central government, nor with the individual states, but is to be shared by both spheres. This principle of shared authority would seem to have been maintained in practice with fair consistency over

the years, but an observer such as Robert Nisbet, who once wrote of “the Leviathan-like presence of the national government,” would not be alone in claiming that the government in Washington has over the years managed to garner for itself a degree of power and influence which the framers neither envisioned nor desired. The initial commission given to the delegates who convened in Philadelphia in the summer of 1787 was to revise the Articles of Confederation, for it had quickly become evident that, as they stood, they were no longer adequate to meet the needs of the new political entity called the United States of America. But what actually came out of that meeting was an entirely new document, the Constitution as we now know it—surely one of the most impressive pieces of political literature ever composed. But, once it had been completed, its ratification by a majority of the individual states was anything but a foregone conclusion. In the end, it was the promise to add to the document a delineation of specific rights belonging to citizens that turned the tide in favor of ratification. It was not for any lack of concern for human rights on the part of the framers that had decided them against making any explicit statement about them. They thought such a statement unnecessary because, first, basic rights were already being honored, and, second, they were explicitly guaranteed by the individual states. In any event, what we now know as the Bill of Rights was drawn up, and ratified in 1791.

The history of the U. S. Supreme Court is particularly interesting for the fact that in its early years it was not a particularly dynamic institution, and over the greater part of its history it made relatively few decisions. But things have changed dramatically in that respect over the

past four decades or so, and we now live in an era of an activist Supreme Court. Professor Barker describes the current situation: “Things have so devolved that there has been a steady increase in the number of constitutional decisions. This phenomenon is perhaps the most significant constitutional development of our era, because it both reflects and promotes the idea that the most important political questions are, in the final analysis, judicial questions.” As the result of the activism of the Court, we now have a situation where, “Just about every article and section of the Constitution has been defined, redefined, or amplified over the years.”

One item that has received a large amount of attention by the Court is the First Amendment clause that prohibits the establishment of an official state religion. What is peculiar about the interpretations that the Court has put upon the “religion clause” is that they at times show something like complete obliviousness to the stipulation that follows hard upon the no-establishment prohibition, which mandates that no laws shall be established that prohibit the free exercise of religion. The fact of the matter is that many of the interpretations of that clause contained in recent decisions have to them a distinctly anti-religious stamp. The irony here should not go unnoticed. We have a Court that is supposedly concerned with guaranteeing that all citizens should be treated equally, but that concern does not seem to extend to citizens who want freely to exercise their religion.

Not a little creative imagination has been shown by our activist justices in the definitions, redefinitions, and amplifications to which they have subjected the Constitution. Perhaps the most signal instance of this was the discovery within the Constitution, announced in *Gris-*

*wold vs. Connecticut* (1965), of a “right to privacy.” Interestingly, that “right” was not discovered in any of the actual words to be found in the document, but rather in a kind of ethereal suggestiveness emanating from some of its words, as carefully selected and perspicaciously interpreted by the discerning judges. And thus a new constitutional guarantee is brought to light. Professor Barker offers the comment that, though a doctrine of privacy might be properly made use of as a commendable means of protecting “those rights traditionally honored by civilized societies, there exists the danger that a right to privacy can be used, as in *Roe vs. Wade*, to justify, in the name of the human rights of the powerful, the radical negation of the most basic human rights of the powerless.” When that “right to privacy” was appealed to in the 1973 decision, by way of justifying the legalization of abortion on demand, the Court, in its decision, offered to the world a spectacular display of illogic for, after declaring that it was not possible to say when human life began, it then effectively ruled that life cannot be said to begin with conception.

Professor Barker offers his readers some telling commentary on that fateful case. “The *Roe vs. Wade* decision,” he writes, “demonstrated that the ‘right to privacy,’ having no juridical foundation in the text, nor in the historical context, of the Constitution, is a juridical invention, and both its substance and application depend necessarily on the subjective preferences of the judges.” In that decision, he argues, the Court “‘constitutionalized’ an action (abortion) which at that time had been uniformly condemned throughout the course of civilized history.” The Supreme Court, “under the pretext of protecting

fundamental rights, authorized the systematic negation of the most fundamental right of the most vulnerable of persons—the unborn.”

What we see in that, and in so many other, of the Court’s recent decisions (i.e., those handed down since 1960) is, according to Professor Barker, a consistent penchant for not simply declaring a law to be unconstitutional, but for engaging in activity that does not properly belong to the Court, but rather to the legislative branch of the government. It is an altogether remarkable thing, when you stop to think about it, what the Supreme Court did in the year 1973: with the stroke of a pen, it obliterated anti-abortion laws that were in effect in all fifty of the United States, laws which had been established, after due deliberation, by the elected representatives of the people. So much for democracy as *vox populi*! Professor Barker recalls the words of Justice Byron White, of happy memory, one of the two dissenting judges in *Roe vs. Wade*. Having described the decision as an instance of “raw judicial power,” Justice White wrote that the Court, in acting as it did, was “arrogating to itself the authority to govern the country without any established authorization to do so.” Could we perhaps say that in this decision the Court itself was acting unconstitutionally?

Taking them all in all, the decisions delivered by the Supreme Court over the past four decades are at best non-traditional, and at worse positively anti-traditional, in character. This is most clearly seen in the interpretation that the Court has been giving to the “due process” clause of the Fifth Amendment. Earlier courts had interpreted this clause in ways which were very much consonant with traditional views. Professor Barker cites two

interesting examples of this in *Myer vs. Nebraska* (1923), and *Pierce vs. Society of Sisters* (1925). In the first case German-speaking litigants challenged a Nebraska state law that prohibited public instruction be done in any language but English. The Court ruled in their favor, declaring the Nebraska law to be unconstitutional. This decision could be said to have been guided by reasoning which is entirely in accord with the traditional Catholic view which holds that the primary responsibility for the education of children is invested in parents, not in the government. The decision is memorable for its ringing pronouncement, “The child is not a mere creature of the state.” In the second case, *Pierce vs. Society of Sisters*, the Court declared unconstitutional a law enacted in the state of Oregon that mandated that all children from the ages 8 to 16 must be educated in the public schools. The unambiguous purpose of the law was to eliminate Catholic schools in that state. Today Oregon enjoys the dubious status of being the one state in the Union that has given its citizens the opportunity to avail themselves of the wonderfully oxymoronic opportunity of doctor-assisted suicide.

There are today two schools of thought regarding the interpretation of the U. S. Constitution, the conservative school and the liberal school. The conservative school advocates an interpretation which attempts faithfully to embody the “original intent” of the framers; the liberal school, for its part, fosters interpretation which is meant to reflect contemporary attitudes. The liberal approach, which is now in the ascendancy, can be said to represent an essentially historicist mode of thinking, and reveals as well, so it seems to me, the definite influence of the de-constructionist manner of approaching and interpreting a written text. Professor Barker’s

description of how constitutional law is now being taught in our law schools can be summarily characterized as the politicization of law. We have a situation where a majority of the law professors are promoting an ideological agenda that is very much in tune with the mind-set that fosters an activist judiciary. Given the very large number of cases that have been decided in recent decades by the Supreme Court, it would be impossible to deal with all of them within the scope of what is typically a two-semester course in constitutional law, so a process of strict selectivity has to take place. This is understandable, but a problem arises as a result of the criteria according to which the selections are made; the cases chosen for study tend to deal with a narrow range of issues, issues which reflect the political interests of the selectors. The upshot is that many of the textbooks used in constitutional law courses provide students with a decidedly imbalanced understanding of the Constitution. Another problem relating to law school education is the abandonment of the time-honored Socratic method in dealing with cases, a manner of teaching, Professor Barker argues, that is best suited to the development of those “qualities of analysis, synthesis and critical acumen which are demanded by our juridical tradition.” The Socratic method has been replaced by the lecture, where the professor is free to expound his personal political theories uninterrupted.

The spirit of judicial activism which now prevails, Professor Barker contends, has created a new and profoundly anti-judicial attitude in the Supreme Court. The Constitution is no longer being regarded as a code of juridical norms—which is precisely what its framers intended it to be—but as an instrument for engineering political and social change.

Specifically with respect to the decisions the Court has made apropos of the “religion clause,” we witness not only a pronounced lack of desire on its part to settle difference between secular and religious interests, and, more significantly, a lack of desire to assume a stance of governmental neutrality with regard to religious questions, but an out-and-out juridical hostility toward religion. And with respect to the Court’s intense concern for human rights—certainly commendable in itself—Professor Barker makes the apposite observation that “the complete realization of human rights cannot be achieved solely through the action of government; it requires a morally responsible society—of which the government is only a part.”

The book contains three appendices. The first is an article written by an Argentinian lawyer, Rosana Moretti de Troglia, which provides an interpretation of the U. S. Constitution in which, among several other interesting observations, the author notes that the concept of natural law, which very much guided the work of the framers, is scarcely referred to today. She cites the confirmation hearings of Justice Clarence Thomas as a case in point of how the mere public advocacy of the natural law is considered sufficient reason for keeping a man off the Supreme Court. The second appendix is an article written by José F. Palomino Manchego, Professor of Constitutional Law at the University of San Marco in Lima, in which he provides a particularized account of the influence of American constitutional thought in Peru. The third appendix is the U. S. Constitution, in Spanish.

In sum, this is a very valuable book. The average American, who tends not to be overly burdened with a knowledge of his country’s history, much less of the contents of

his country’s constitution, could not help but benefit much by reading it. And with that in mind, one hopes that an English translation of this book might soon be made available.

*Aristotle and the Rediscovery of Citizenship.* Susan D. Collins, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. pp. 193. Cloth, \$70.00  
*Reviewed by L.J. Elders, Rolduc Seminary, Kerkrade, the Netherlands*

The book owes its title to the author’s conviction that within the contemporary Western world we have lost sight of the principles that support the social and political order we take for granted, the foundational principles necessary to secure our individual liberty. Collins argues that Aristotelian moral and political theory was eclipsed by the success of modern liberalism and the resulting attachment to Hobbes, among others. Aristotle’s view that man is a social and political agent who freely elects his mode of governance is contrasted to the liberal concept of the state, one conceived as an association of rights-bearing free agents. Aristotle’s polity requires virtue in the citizenry. In her discussion of contemporary liberal theory, Collins challenges John Rawls’s reduction of “justice” to “fairness.” She doubts that his doctrine of fairness will work as long as one does not accept a higher notion of the good, a higher criterion, i.e., one normally associated with religious faith. Given that religion has traditionally played a role in shaping moral and political life, it is questionable that in its absence modern liberal philosophy can supply the principles needed to support the political order that has secured our liberties. Hence, Collins’s recommendation that we return to Aristotle for the neglected

anthropology and teleology needed for their defense. She finds the beginnings of such a return in the work of Alasdair MacIntyre, Amy Gutmann, Michael Sandel, and William Galston, among others.

She believes that many contemporary authors who are positively disposed to Aristotle, no matter how different their interpretations, remain unified by a number of unexamined liberal presuppositions. Collins acknowledges that it has been the achievement of the liberal state to create a framework in which diverse pursuits of the good are accommodated, but regrettably the liberal state fails to be an inspiring force in the cultivation of civic virtue. Collins provides an excellent survey of the moral and social virtues as described by Aristotle in the *Nicomachean Ethics* and in Book III of the *Politics*. Throughout her account she reminds the reader that man is a social and political animal, a view that stands in disagreement with contemporary individualism. Aristotle may be taken as an antidote to contemporary treatments of individualism vs. the common good, insofar as he discusses acts in which a person deliberately and unjustly chooses his own good over that of another. Collins’s summary of the virtues as found in Aristotle ends with some valuable pages on education.

The book is well written and presents a solid and largely complete treatment of Aristotle on the virtues, but it does not examine the anthropology underlying Aristotle’s understanding of virtue and its requirement for human perfection. The author displays an admirable acquaintance with the relevant literature, both with respect to liberal doctrine and the teachings of Aristotle. The text is superbly edited, and the index facilitates discussion.

*James Madison and the Struggle for the Bill of Rights.* R. Labunski, R. (2006). NY: Oxford University Press. pp. 264 BP \$28.00.

Reviewed by (Rev.) Michael P. Orsi,

**J**ames Madison and the Struggle for the Bill of Rights is the latest in the “Pivotal Moments in American History,” a series published by Oxford University Press. Its author Richard Labunski, a political scientist and lawyer, chronicles the events that led to the adoption of the first 10 amendments to the Constitution (The Bill of Rights) in 1791. The book concentrates on two key figures—James Madison, representing the federalists (pro-Constitution party) and Patrick Henry, representing the anti-federalists (anti-Constitution party). Henry, the Governor of Virginia, feared that the newly created federal government, designed at the Philadelphia Convention in 1787 and ratified in 1789 would encroach on the sovereignty of the states and the individual liberties of the people. With the abusive monarchies of Europe fresh in their minds, the anti-federalists especially wanted to prohibit the new government from directly taxing the citizenry and from forming a standing army. To this end they pressed for a second convention which would clarify any ambiguity as to the extent of federal power. In truth, they were trying to derail the ratification of the Constitution. On the other hand, the federalists held that any powers not specifically given to the federal government were retained by the states. Madison, at first failed to see a threat to the states. He feared that a second convention would upset the fragile agreement that had been struck among the delegates in Philadelphia. He believed that the document approved by the delegates there, if not perfect, at least achieved the effect

of binding the thirteen colonies for internal matters and commerce with foreign nations. To aid in the passage of the Constitution, Madison proposed that the concerns of the anti-federalists, especially in Virginia and New York, be addressed through the process of amendment provided for in Article V of the Constitution. He believed that this would placate the dubious and expedite the ratification of the new government. The remainder of the book, for the most part, deals with the maneuvers of Henry to thwart ratification of the Constitution and later the Bill of Rights, which he held to be inadequate protections against tyranny, and Madison’s counter-moves for their passage.

There are two deeper issues that the book touches on but unfortunately does not develop. The first has to do with Madison. Labunski portrays him as one of the foremost proponents of federalism during this crucial era of nation building. Yet, after his dual ratification victories he became a staunch anti-federalist. For instance, Madison abhorred the aggrandizement of the federal government through Hamilton’s banking policies and the development of a strong executive branch under Washington and Adams. Was there a latent power in the Constitution to do this? Hamilton, after all, found the loophole by which he broadly constructed the Constitution based on the words that Congress had the right to make all laws “necessary and proper” to carry out its delegated powers. Secondly, the Bill of Rights, as Madison understood it, was designed to curtail the possible hegemony of the federal government over the states. After the Civil War, the Fourteenth Amendment’s “Due Process Clause” all but reversed the Bill’s original intent. The states are now held responsible for the protections guar-

anteed by the amendments and the federal government is their overseer for enforcement. Is it possible that his great antagonist Patrick Henry was more prescient in his fears and objections to the new order the Constitution created? Also, Labunski treats only lightly Madison’s understanding of republican government in Federalist Paper 10. This omission really diminishes any insight into Madison’s political philosophy since Madison’s concern for minority rights and the tempering of greed for the common good are essential to understanding his hopes for how the new government would operate.

Gordon Wood, in *Revolutionary Characters What Made the Founders Different* (2006), tries to deal with the issue of the two Madisons—the federalist and the states’ rights champion. He accurately describes Madison as an idealist who saw the new government basically as a disinterested referee among the states that would protect against mere self-interest and promote the common good of all the states and their citizens. Wood maintains that Madison believed that peace and growth could best be achieved if the federal government facilitated commerce among the states and dealt collectively with foreign powers. In his mind, the federal government would act as a super-judiciary which could impose economic sanctions on recalcitrant states. He also believed that the Constitution would insure state sovereignty and avoid the replication of the fiscal-military super-nation states that were developing in 18<sup>th</sup> century Europe.

The issue regarding the application of the Bill of Rights to the states, as noted earlier, was quite a secondary development. As early as 1833, Chief Justice John Marshall confirmed that only the federal government was bound by it.



Labunski, in his epilogue, briefly sketches how Supreme Court decisions applied the First Amendment freedoms of speech (1925), press (1931) and religion (1947), as well as the Fourth Amendment's search and seizure (1962), and the Eighth Amendment's cruel and unusual punishment (1962) provisions to the states. Certainly the Supreme Court's arrogation of power was well beyond the ken of any of the founders and certainly contrary to Madison's intent. Madison's idea of the states' prerogatives over the federal government is clearly seen in the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions, which rejected the Alien and Sedition Acts (1798). These acts gave the federal government power to limit personal freedoms, especially of speech and press during a time of national crisis. The Adams administration enacted these laws fearing an invasion by France. Madison (Virginia) and Jefferson (Kentucky) vigorously set forth the principles that a state could reject a federal law. They held that the Constitution was only an arrangement between the central government and the states. Therefore it was the right of each state to decide which laws were constitutional and which laws it would obey. Interestingly enough, when George Washington saw the damage this theory posed to the union he asked Patrick Henry to refute the proposition, which he did. Tellingly in the end, the tables were turned with Henry defending the Constitution and Madison seemingly subverting it. This book's failure lies in not revealing Madison's political philosophy. Labunski's emphasis on the mechanics of the passage of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights is really only part of the story. We have, in effect, only half the book the title promises. Without the

context of Madison's insight into government, the book's importance is diminished. It does an injustice to Madison.

***Salvation is from the Jews: The Role of Judaism in Salvation History from Abraham to the Second Coming***, Roy H. Schoeman, San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2003, Pp. 392. Paper edition \$17.95. Index.

*Reviewed by Reverend Brian Van Hove, S.J.*

Those of us who are older remember Monsignor John M. Oesterreicher's 1952 book *Walls are Crumbling: Seven Jewish Philosophers Discover Christ*. The seven European philosophers are Henri Bergson, Edmund Husserl, Adolph Reinach, Max Scheler (whose ethics was the subject of Karol Józef Wojtyła's doctoral dissertation), Paul Landsberg, Max Picard, and Edith Stein. Jacques Maritain wrote the foreword to *Walls are Crumbling*. Himself a disciple of Bergson, Maritain's wife Raïssa and her mother were also Catholics of Jewish heritage. This explains why the Maritains spent the war years at Princeton. Jean-Marie Lustiger, the former Archbishop of Paris, seems to be the last of the great European converts.

In North America, distinguished Catholics of Jewish background included Karl Stern, Herbert Ratner, Ronda Chervin, Michele Murray, Elias Friedman, Arthur Klyber, and Hannah Klaus. The Dominican Third Order (Lay) Community of Saint Martin de Porres in New Hope, Kentucky represented the younger generation as the "California Jewish hippies who found Christ in the Catholic Church." Their press reprinted the works of Israel Eugenio Zolli (1881-1956). Bob Fishman, Joni Seith, Michael Ross, David and Ro-

salind Moss, Paul Schenk, and Roy H. Schoeman all appeared on the Eternal Word Television Network. Robert Novak is a well-known journalist in his own right.

*Salvation is from the Jews* derives from this newer wave to strengthen the ranks of Hebrew-Catholics who celebrate orthodox Roman Catholicism and faith in Jesus Christ. Schoeman gives us a stimulating account of the relationship between Catholicism and Judaism and shows how they are not separable. He also tells of his dramatic conversion in the firm tradition of "surprised by joy." Happily he places this account at the end of the book; otherwise, the reader would sob and be unable to go on reading.

This is a speculative work, which bypasses both "supersessionism" and "separate but equal" or "dual-covenant" theories of Old and New Covenants. Schoeman asks, "Do the Jews continue to have a role to play in salvation history following Christ, that is, between the first and the Second Coming?" (p. 67). He locates the answer to this question in eschatology. Surveying the post-Holocaust abandonment of the traditional notion of God by some Jewish thinkers (Elie Wiesel, Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg, Richard Rubenstein) and by liberal Christian thinkers (John Shea, Paul van Buren), he goes on to affirm the ancient God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He says, "We know that the Jews had a unique and central role to play in salvation in bringing about the first coming; is it possible, as St. Paul intimates in Romans, that they also have a central role to play in the Second Coming? And if so, and if suffering is the coin that brings heaven to earth, could the special, particular, and extreme suffering that was imposed on them in the Holocaust be part of that role?"

(pp. 166-167).

The alternative to the supersessionism and covenantal duality he proposes is “that as the Old Covenant was brought to fruition by the New at the first coming, so will the New Covenant be brought to fruition by the Old, by the return of the Jews at the Second Coming” (p. 353). Schoeman does not propose a timetable for the Second Coming, but he brings forth sources which suggest it is near.

Schoeman has his critics. However, no competent ecclesiastical authority ever ruled against his speculation, and he remains free to think and write on the subject as he sees fit.

Other topics explored include the difference between the terms “Holocaust” and “Shoah.” Elie Wiesel claimed to be the first to have chosen “Holocaust,” but Ernst Ludwig Ehrlich, the European director of B’nai Brith, led a movement to change the terminology away from “disaster as expiation” to “disaster as disaster.”

Again, the Nazi ideology against the Jews was not “applied Christianity” but “applied Darwinism,” according to Schoeman. He says the roots of the Nazi genocide do not lie in Christianity, though this by no means excuses any form of traditional anti-Semitism in Christian countries. Rather, the Nazi genocide of the Jews lies in the science of eugenics, fashionable from the 19<sup>th</sup> century and well before the Hitler era. The American Birth Control League, predecessor to Planned Parenthood, promoted eugenics and euthanasia and American eugenicists were admired by German National Socialism. Margaret Sanger once wrote, “Our only real enemy is the [Catholic] church” (p. 190).

The occult roots of the Nazi ideology are well known, but

Schoeman surveys them and shows how these anti-Christian strains eventually fed into the Shoah. Some of the personalities who fostered theosophy, spiritualism and gnostic ideas were among the most popular writers in Germany in the early twentieth century. In the end, insane pseudo-scientific theories may have cost Germany the war.

As to Hitler, this is the spiritual status of that man: “There are many indications that Hitler’s relationship to the satanic was intentional, explicit, and extensive. No less an authority than the current chief exorcist of Rome, Father Gabriele Amorth, stated that ‘certainly Hitler was consecrated to Satan.’ A book that extensively details Hitler’s explicit involvement in Satanism, written by a respected academic historian, was praised by Rev. Lawrence Gesy of the Vatican Commission on Cults as ‘a masterpiece of historical research.’ A final, macabre confirmation was given by Hitler’s choice of one of the most significant dates of the year in Satanism to commit suicide—April 30, the pagan Feast of Walpurgis Night” (pp. 232-233).

Schoeman quotes Cardinal Lustiger that “the fundamental root of anti-Semitism on a spiritual level is hatred of Christ” (p. 248). It was not lost on the Nazis that each Sunday the Christian got up early to worship “The Dead Jew.” Lustiger believes that Hitler’s anti-Semitism had its roots in the Enlightenment, not in Christianity (p. 250). Post-Shoah anti-Semitism periodically surfaces with special virulence in the Islamic world where Hitler is strongly admired and emulated today by a number of Islamists.

Nowhere does the author try to prove the Second Coming is close. He suggests elements drawn from history and theology are coalesc-

ing to indicate a favorable time for it. Nor does he take up the Dispensational Theology of the Evangelicals who believe the rapture will not be possible until Israel is restored fully.

The final chapter speculates that the historical rejection of the Gospel by the Jews was the means whereby God made that same Gospel available to the Gentiles. When the full number of Gentiles has come into the church, then “all Israel will be saved” (p. 322). The phenomenon of so many Jews entering the church today leads him to see not a rejection of Judaism but its fulfillment in Christ. He refers to St. Paul who “intimated” that the last days will see a widespread conversion of the Jews. Today the number of Jewish converts is increasing, and “Messianic Jews” (who are Protestant Christians) are appearing in the towns and cities of Israel. (p. 352-353). Schoeman concludes by saying, “Thus, the current wave of Jewish entry into the Church may be among the most important things going on today, or indeed, in the history of the world” (p. 353).

*The Virtue Driven Life*, by Benedict J. Groeschel, C.F.R., Huntington: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 2006, Pp. 156. Paperback \$12.95.  
Reviewed by Reverend Brian Van Hove, S.J. White House Retreat, Saint Louis

Don’t let the title of Father Benedict Groeschel’s newest book mislead you. Catholics might think that he is sparring with the Baptist minister Rick Warren. Warren, founding pastor of the Saddleback Valley Community Church in southern California, wrote a best-seller, *The Purpose-Driven Life: What On Earth Am I Here For?* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002). It sold twenty-five million copies. Written in a devotional style of forty chap-

ters, perhaps Warren's theology is to Evangelicals what St. Ignatius's "First Principle and Foundation" theology is to Catholics.

Wrong. Groeschel is not responding to Warren. Rather, he is casting into semi-popular language a serious point that Pope Benedict XVI made at Regensburg University in September 2006. He could not have done this intentionally because the book was finished before the pope arrived in Bavaria.

Reason (or Logos) and our Greek philosophical inheritance may not be shed without peril to the Faith itself. Jews and Catholics understand this because of their two-source theory of Revelation (Scripture and Tradition), whereas Evangelicals and Muslims do not. The Reformation doctrine of Sola Scriptura, and the absence in Islam of any principle of secondary causality, does not equip Evangelicals or Muslims to appreciate the importance of tradition. That is what the pope reemphasized at Regensburg. The Catholic genius addresses and transforms the best of Greek wisdom (including newer secular learning and technology, for that matter). The original concept of "virtue" derives from Athens, not Jerusalem.

Father Groeschel writes a lot. His books often contain anecdotes, but his choice of them is rich and sometimes very moving (e.g. pp. 125-126). The story of the beginning of his vocation is told as an anecdote (pp. 141-143. His professional background in psychology emerges, but he never presents psychology as an ersatz religion. He keeps it in its place as a helping tool for life (p. 118). In fact, the author hides neither the failure of psychology during the last century nor the collapse in our country of hope in psychoanalysis. The author demonstrates that psychology is lately edging

closer to values and the affirmation of character and virtue. (pp. 14-16) Christopher Peterson and Martin Seligman espouse a positive psychology of human strengths, almost a contemporary reorientation toward the Greek virtues. We can deduce from this that psychology finally left behind B.F. Skinner and his behavioristic model. Paul Vitz wrote about the happy event in his "Psychology in Recovery" (*First Things*, March 2005). Groeschel is very much cheered that this newer trend in psychology reverses the negativity of the past, when people were told they were merely victims. This trend replaces that with something so good and positive (p. 148).

*The Virtue Driven Life* owes much to Cardinal Newman. Besides personal anecdotes, we get an abundance of quotations from John Henry Newman. After Newman, the author quotes most often Pope John Paul II, especially from *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*. Groeschel frequently cites *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* and sprinkles biblical references throughout the text. The questions for meditation and little boxed quotations may not be helpful for the reader. Along with the prayers in the appendices, their inclusion signifies that the author intends this to be a meditation book. Especially to young readers, the Afterword is an admonition to get going and develop tough personal virtue.

The first part of the book treats the classical cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude. These Greek ideals can be re-expressed in Christian terms. Yet we need more than reason and the natural virtues, so the second half of the book deals with the supernatural virtues—faith, hope and charity. "They are special gifts of God so that the soul may be saved." (p. 130)

Chapter 7, which discusses char-

ity, has an excellent presentation of the four loves we first learned about so long ago from C.S. Lewis. Groeschel explains that the absence of *storge* in our contemporary society has led to a selfism that is destructive. *Storge* was not mentioned by the pope in his first encyclical, probably to avoid confusion. But the decline of loyalty to a greater group (family, country, church, community, troop, cause) explains the difficulty for the newer generation in making any commitment. This insight alone makes *The Virtue Driven Life* worth buying.

The more illuminated our problems become, the more there is hope to solve them with the twin resources of faith and reason.

***A Farewell to Ronald Lawler, O.F.M.  
Cap.: Friend, Founder and  
Freethinker,***

Michael Aquilina and Kenneth Ogorek, ed., Emmaus Road Publishing (2005)

*Reviewed by Glenn Statile  
St. John's University*

To refer to Father Ronald Lawler as a freethinker might seem at first blush to be a contradiction in terms. He was nothing if not faithful to the Church that he so dearly loved. But just as there exists an authentic freedom in the truth, of which the Catholic Church is arguably the duly ordained custodian here on earth, there also exists an authentic type of freethinking in which a wholly unified intelligence and free will combine to engage the bottomless mystery of truth to the full extent of our finite and grace-assisted powers. As just such a freethinker, in full alignment with the truth, it is only fitting then that Father Lawler be honored with a *Festschrift* which allows his many friends

and former colleagues to honor this humble servant and fervent soldier of Christ.

The aptly titled *The Great Life: Essays on Doctrine and Holiness in Honor of Father Ronald Lawler, O.F.M. Cap.* is a collection of essays in honor of the renowned co-founder of the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars. Father Lawler, who died recently in the Fall of 2003, was a man of many talents, not least of which was the legacy of friendship whose favor so many sought to return in the form of a contribution to this book. While I myself never had the pleasure of meeting Father Ronald, I was very pleased to read that it was he who headed the Institute for Advanced Studies in Catholic Doctrine at Saint John's University in New York from 1982-1988, the university where I now teach. Perhaps Father Lawler's greatest achievement can be measured in terms of his creative involvement in what became *The Teaching of Christ*, a catechetical blockbuster whose spiritual capital will continue to be drawn upon by Catholics for generations to come.

The twenty essays which comprise the book are no mere paean to the muse of hagiographical reminiscence. Nevertheless, the reader will find a good deal about the personal and professional life of Ronald Lawler within its pages, both systematically: such as in the beautiful biographical Preface by Mike Aquilina, the moving and highly personal Foreword by Archbishop Donald Wuerl, and the concluding "Lessons From a Great Man" by Robert Lockwood; as well as more sporadically, in anecdotes that are interwoven throughout the various essays. For the most part however these essays are a celebration of Father Lawler in that they continue his lifelong pursuit of disseminating

correct doctrine, *ex corde ecclesiae*, so that all might know the extent to which the Church is one, holy, Catholic, and apostolic. The themes touched upon all deal with issues close to the heart of Father Ronald himself: the sacraments, public life, education, marriage and the family, and catechesis. As in various journals and newsletters dedicated to the likes of G.K. Chesterton and Christopher Dawson, which almost always feature a forgotten literary cameo of the great man's own work, this book also features a wonderful piece from Father Lawler himself, which examines the ecumenical question "Has Christ Only One Church?" My immediate and non-scholarly reaction to this essay was how much more generous in attitude was Father Ronald than myself in regard to alternative expressions of the Church in exile. At the same time he does not mince words, and does not yield an inch in regard to non-negotiable commitments that still stand in the way of full communion.

People with various interests will obviously be drawn to some essays more than others. Three of my favorites are the following.

The essay by Robert P. George entitled "Moral Issues, Political Candidates, and the Vocation of Public Service" is a particularly trenchant piece. I especially enjoyed George's hard-hitting but respectful demolition of Mario Cuomo's feeble attempt to walk the gauntlet between his allegedly Catholic personal commitments and his perversely anti-Catholic public stances on moral issues without getting summarily scalped. As to Cuomo's claim that his efforts to preserve abortion as a legal right do not coincide with his hopes that this right is not exercised, George argues

that Cuomo's actual acts carry the weight of his willing and his hopes. The former governor simply cannot sever will from action upon a whim that would exonerate him from moral culpability while at the same time lobbying to perpetuate the political principle of choice that he claims to personally abhor. As in the case of the murderous Macbeth, the former governor has been reminded of the need to fit the word (or will) to the action and the action to the word. Game, set, and match to George. Unfortunately, we seem to live in a political climate in which a fellowship of Catholic scholars is a necessary antidote to the spiritually pathogenic devotion of many of our leading Catholic politicians.

It might seem to some of his many admirers that everything that Scott Hahn writes is vintage Scott Hahn. His contribution to this book entitled "The Paternal Order of Priests: An Open Letter to the Clergy on their Continuing Education" does not reverse this trend. Both his writing and his bravura public performances always seem to possess the Midas touch by which the golden core at the heart of every conceivable Christian subject is revealed by a master teacher. His essay is presented in the form of an open letter to the clergy. And just as Saint Augustine once addressed his congregation as *coepiscopi mei*, or fellow bishops, Hahn invites those who share the gift of fatherhood with him by means of their metaphysical priesthood to continue to seek the knowledge that authentic fatherhood demands. To those entrusted with a fatherhood that is more universal than that which results from an act of biological begetting, he urges the following. "Roll up your sleeves, open your books, get down on your knees and

pray.” (p. 58) Continuing education is not just for adults, it is also for those who follow in the footsteps of Melchisidech.

Another of the many fine essays in the collection is that offered by Father Kris Stubna on “The Challenge for Catechesis in the New Evangelization.” Those of us who teach or who have taught catechism, or remember once being taught the tenets of the faith in the dimness of our fading memory, may recall that what was and remains of the utmost pedagogical importance for successful catechesis was and is the ecstatic manner by which what is believed by the Catholic community is communicated. The catechism is not a calculus, and the life of faith is not a set of equations in search of an unknown variable. It provides people with an opportunity to enter into a vibrant encounter with the living Christ and a challenge to reorient society so that the hunger for an authentic education in the faith will not be undermined by various forms of cultural obfuscation. The family unit, so aptly described as the domestic Church, should serve as both the starting point and breeding ground for the new springtime whose promise first came to light in those first and long ago days of *aggiornamento*. Michael Novak, a lifetime ago, reminded us in his one and only novel that the silt saturated banks of the Tiber are silvery in hue. Now is the time, despite the tumultuous setbacks of the Enlightenment, to return to a once golden age. While Rome remains the flagship and the cradle of the faith, fam-

ily units provide the fleet without which no victory is possible.

It is most often the case that the fact that a person will be missed is expressed in the most literal of terms. As Catholics we are all keenly aware of the literal dimension which plays a part in any testimonial to the truth. But as the richness of scripture attests, there are other non-literal ways by which the individual soul is engulfed in the mystery which surrounds the invitation to join in the eternal banquet of the Lamb. The life and work of Father Ronald Lauder was a multi-layered attempt to bring the richness and the fullness of truth to the people of God. What comes through in this testimonial to a great man is the debt of love shared by so many who, although not accountants by training, so dearly want to balance the books.

***Flannery O'Connor and Edward Lewis Wallant: Two of a Kind.***

John V. McDermott. University Press of America, Inc. Lanham, MD 2005. 92p. (Paper) \$20.00.

*Reviewed by Dr. Clara Sarrocco, Adjunct Professor, Institute of Religious Studies, St. Joseph Seminary, Yonkers, NY, Editor of Book Digest*

Recognizing their shared concerns with universal humanity, John McDermott titled his new book, *Flannery O'Connor and Edward Lewis Wallant: Two of a Kind*. And two of a kind these two writers truly are. As Dr. McDermott points out: “In

style and in substance, the fiction of Flannery O'Connor and Edward Lewis Wallant leads to a convergence seldom seen in literature.”

The three themes shared by these writers are: 1) man's quest for satisfaction of the soul, 2) the mystery of man's being and reason for his existence and 3) the necessity of suffering. O'Connor's *Wise Blood* and Wallant's *The Tenants of Moonbloom* reiterate the necessity of suffering for redemption. In both O'Connor and Wallant, the Holocaust becomes the “singular, philosophical view. . . on the nature of man in all its complexity - in this case man at his worst.”

Dr. McDermott compares and contrasts the methodology used by both Wallant and O'Connor in presenting their themes. He examines their mutual use of allegory, parables, biblical allusions, symbols, real and romantic imagery and, of course, the use of the grotesque with its exaggeration and violence. However, not to leave the reader on this note of raw realism, Dr. McDermott also examines the writers use of humor and compassion. McDermott writes: “Both O'Connor and Wallant have a dry exquisite sense of humor. . . . [They] tell us we must remember there are others who have pain equal to own own.” In his painstaking study of the works of O'Connor and Wallant, two of a kind who never met, John McDermott leaves the reader with the insatiable desire to read all their books he [McDermott] has scrupulously examined. Nothing better can be said of an author.

## BOOKS RECEIVED

*If you would like to receive a complimentary copy of one of the books below in order to review it for a future issue, please email your request to Alice Osberger at osberger.1@nd.edu*

*If there are books you know of that should be reviewed, let Brian Benestad know at benestadj1@scranton.edu*

*The Image and Likeness of God in Bernard of Clairaux's Free Choice and Grace: Reflections both Philosophical and Theological*, Luke Anderson, O.Cist., Author House: Bloomington, IN (2006), Paper, 241 pp.

*Prayer in Newman*, Giovanni Velocci, C.S.S.R., Newman House Press: Mount Pocono, PA, (2006), Paper, 94pp.

*The John Paul II Life Guide: Words to Live By*, Ed. by Ellen Rice, St. Augustine's Press: South Bend, IN (2006), 106pp.

*Absolute Revelation and Universal Religion*, Joseph Pandiappallil, European University Studies,

Series XXIII Theology, Peter Lang: Frankfurt am Maim, (2006), Paper, 443 pp.

*Jesus the Christ and Religious Pluralism: Rahnerian Christology and Belief Today*, Joseph Pandiappallil, Crossroad Publishing Company: New York, (2001) Paper, 208 pp.

*The Pope, the Council, and the Mass: Answers to Questions the "Traditionalists" Have Asked*, James Likoudis and Kenneth D. Whitehead, Emmaus Road: Steubenville, OH, (2006), Paper, 373 pp.

*Catholicism and Religious Freedom: Contemporary Reflections on Vatican II's Declaration on Religious Liberty*, ed. Kenneth L. Grasso and Robert P. Hunt, Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group: Lanham, MD, (2006), Paper. 224pp.

*Union With God: Letters of Spiritual Direction by Blessed Columba Marmion*, Selected and Annotated by Dom Raymond Thibaut, Zaccheus Press: Bethesda, MD, (2006), Paper. 233pp.

*The Eucharist: 101 Questions & Answers on*, Giles Dimock, O.P., Paulist Press, NY, (2006), Paper. 138pp.

## OF INTEREST

The 2007 University Faculty for Life conference will take place at Villanova University, June 1-3. Among its featured speakers are Helen M. Alvare, Associate Professor of Law at Catholic University's Columbus School of Law and David L. Schindler, Dean of the John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage & Family.

Thanks to generous support from the Our Sunday Visitor Institute and Ave Maria Law School, registration for the conference is only \$60, which includes a wine and cheese reception, continental breakfast, refreshments between sessions, lunch, and the concluding banquet on Saturday evening. Accommodation is available in guest apartments on Villanova's campus. Paper proposals are due April 2nd.

*To propose a paper, contact:*  
Professor Jeanne (Heffernan) Schindler  
Department of Humanities  
Villanova University  
800 Lancaster Avenue  
Villanova, PA 19085  
*or email:*  
jeanne.schindler@villanova.edu.



The Catholic Education Institute, established by Fr. John Piderit, S.J. and Melanie M. Morey, offers a summer program for college and university professors, *Substantially Catholic*, aimed at providing or upgrading Catholic substance for courses. Marist College, Poughkeepsie, N.Y., is hosting the program with lectures designed especially for English Literature and Political Science on June 10-15, 2007. More information is available at [www.marist.edu/sc](http://www.marist.edu/sc) <<http://www.marist.edu/sc>> or 718-823-8565.



In memory of Franciscan Friar Simon Scanlon, longtime editor and publisher, *The Way of St. Francis* has established the annual Simon Scanlon Writing Awards open to all.

- Applicants submit an original essay or feature-length article (1500-2000 words). This entry must not have been previously published or presented in any form. Subject: any theme dealing with the influence and relevance of Franciscan life, spirituality, history, etc. to our world today. Must be oriented to a general reading public, not an academic audience. Profiles, essays, poems, human interest stories, interviews, etc. are acceptable. Published examples in *The Way* can be used for reference.

- Submissions must be typed, double-spaced, with 1" margins. Entries should be submitted electronically, as e-mail attachments. (MS Word is strongly preferred.) As an alternative form of submission, text can be typed directly into the body of the e-mail. If this method is used, it is understood that *The Way* will not be responsible for electronic alterations of format and content. Receipt of your submission will be acknowledged by return e-mail.

- Prizes are as follows - 1<sup>st</sup>: \$1000; 2<sup>nd</sup>: \$500; 3<sup>rd</sup>: \$250 (Prize awarded when winner is informed and submits signed letter of acceptance.)

- Submissions must be postmarked by October 4, 2007. All entries will be submitted to a jury. Decision announced by December 15, 2007.

- Applicants agree that, if chosen, their work will be published in *The Way*, which holds exclusive first-time rights in all media, and that winning entries will be posted on *The Way's* website. Authors are responsible for submitting photos and accompanying materials (photocopies, prints, drawings, etc.).

- Interested applicants may send an SASE (with four first-class stamps) for a sample copy of *The Way*. Please make your request to: *The Way*, 1500 34<sup>th</sup> Ave., Oakland, CA 94601.
- Please send all submissions to: Include telephone number(s) as additional, essential contact information. Tel: (916) 443-5717.  
[www.sbfranciscans.org](http://www.sbfranciscans.org)

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Father John Arthur Orr gave a presentation on "John Paul the Great" at the 9th annual Women's Conference of the Diocese of Knoxville at Saint Jude's Catholic Church, Chattanooga, TN, November 4, 2006.

Our Natural Family Planning Center of Washington, D.C. and Teen STAR Program has received a PEPFAR grant (President's Emergency Program for Aids Relief) which will be used to scale up the Teen STAR Programs in Uganda and Ethiopia. Pray we do it well!

Sister Miriam Paul (Hanna Klaus, M.D.)  
Natural Family Planning Center  
of Washington, D.C. and  
Teen STAR Program  
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301-530-9383(r)

## S A V E   T H E   D A T E



### THE FELLOWSHIP OF CATHOLIC SCHOLARS ANNUAL CONVENTION 2007

will be held in Washington, DC. at the invitation of Archbishop Donald Wuerl who will be the main celebrant and homilist for the Saturday morning Mass.

Friday, September 28 through Sunday, September 30, 2007  
Host Hotel, topics and Speakers will be announced soon at  
[www.CatholicScholars.org](http://www.CatholicScholars.org)

Expressions of Interest to Jack & Marlene Rook, Convention Managers  
E-mail [jrook@ministrydg.com](mailto:jrook@ministrydg.com) or phone 239.595.1813.

## POPE BENEDICT XVI ON HIS FOUR VOYAGES

In his annual Christmas address to the Roma Curia on 22 December 2006, Pope Benedict XVI said that the “correlation of the topic of ‘God’ and the topic of ‘peace’ was the decisive aspect of the four apostolic voyages of this year.” The pope’s point is that unless people give glory to God and become reconciled with him, there cannot be peace on earth. Reconciliation with God depends, of course, on living according to God’s will. Otherwise stated in his World Day of Peace Message, “the transcendent ‘grammar,’ that is to say the body of rules for individual action and the reciprocal relationships of persons in accordance with justice and solidarity, is inscribed on human consciences, in which the wise plan of God is reflected.” Pope Benedict further clarifies his meaning by saying that all peoples of the earth have access to the mystery of God by following the norms of the natural law. “Recognition and respect” for this law facilitates dialogue between believers and unbelievers and among believers, who do not share the same faith.

The pope described the trip to Poland as “a feast of Catholicity,” especially because of the unifying power of faith, and the voyage to Valencia, Spain as a “search of what means to be a man.” The trip to Germany had

as its major theme God, and the voyage to Turkey gave the pope an opportunity to demonstrate his respect for the Islamic religion and to make still another appeal for effective religious liberty in every part of the world.

At Auschwitz-Birkenau in Poland the pope mentioned the Nazi attempt “to wipe out the people of Israel” and “to banish God Himself from history.” In Spain Pope Benedict reflected on why Europeans don’t want to have children and noted widespread ignorance about the right way to use freedom, the denial of differences between the sexes and the suicidal denigration of the body. In Germany the pope reflected on the importance of the dialogue between faith and reason and noted that the fullness of reason must be recovered. He concluded with this ominous statement, “if [secularized reason] remains closed before the question of God, this will end up leading to the clash of cultures.” This thought reveals Pope Benedict’s understanding that the resolution of the highly theoretical question about reason will have profound consequences in the sphere of every day life. ✠

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