

SAINT JOSEPH REVIEW

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Essays:

Pete Coppola: Prospero’s Exercise of Mercy in Shakespeare’s <i>The Tempest</i>	1
Jacob Daniell: Papal Silence: Was Doing Nothing the Best Thing To Do?	5
Thomas L. Gwozdz, Ph.D.: Young and Restless: Jacques Maritain and Henri Bergson (Originally published in <i>American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly</i> , Vol. 84, No. 3)	14
Jace Gyles: Evil Answers: A Study of How Reversals Reveal a Theological Message or Not.....	32
Dennis Hodapp: Discovering the Standard for Sacred Music.....	36
David Mannino: Boarding the Boat of Providence	45
Matthew Prosperie: Faith, Science and Wonder	48
Paolo Taffaro: The Lifestyle of the Living Dead in “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock”	51
Cuong Tran: The Divine Madness of Yahweh.....	57

Short Story:

Alex Odom: Perfect Changes.....	61
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Poetry:

Robert Calmes: For Paul: <i>Via Negativa</i>	65
Caleb Krischke: The Mystery of Fraternity	66
Joseph Marcantel: Scourging	68
Fire and Rain	69
Coated White	70

Contemplative Poetry:

John Dugas: Dismas.....	72
Joe Seiter: Procession	74

Pete Coppola

**Prospero's Exercise of Mercy in Shakespeare's
*The Tempest***

The Tempest is generally considered to be a tragicomedy. Although this description is accurate, Shakespeare's play does more than simply incorporate both the tragic and the comedic into its dramatic presentation. Rather than placing itself into both genres, *The Tempest* oscillates from one to the other, refusing to plant itself firmly in either one. The humorous scenes of Stephano, Trinculo, and Caliban drunkenly attempting to take over the island are placed on equal thematic standing with Antonio and Sebastian's plot to murder Alonso. Like the enigmatic Prospero, *The Tempest* does not reveal its true intention until the final act. Had the play ended with Prospero successfully executing some revenge on his brother who usurped him, there would be no mistaking the work as a straightforward tragedy – albeit one with some jokes. But Prospero does not do this. Instead, he shows mercy to those who have wronged him, resolving the plot which up to this point could have easily ended with straightforward retribution. This decision, and the way it is portrayed in *The Tempest*, not only demonstrates the admirable nature of showing mercy, but also highlights the radical change it can bring about in people's lives.

After having brought his captives to his island and manipulated them for the entirety of the play, at the end, Prospero makes the decision to let them all go free. The most important aspect of his decision to do so is the fact that this is freely chosen. In the final act, he reveals to everyone stranded on the island that he has been the one behind the incidents which led them there. It is never made clear, however, that this was his intent from the beginning. Up to this point, the audience has been given no indication that his aim was anything other than revenge against his brother. Prospero going through with his revenge would have cemented *The Tempest* as a tragedy, even for him – he would have remained stranded on the island himself. Had it been revealed that it was his intention to forgive everyone from the start, the play would have been a comedy about a sly wizard using manipulation to teach a lesson about lust for power. But Prospero never does reveal his initial intentions, and the audience is left as much in the dark as the other characters. The play ends up as an uncertain tragedy/comedy hybrid because of the uncertainty of Prospero himself. The audience is given no indication of Prospero's ultimate plan for his captives because Prospero himself does not know. This is the context within which

his choice to show mercy takes place. He begs the audience to grant him mercy and pardon in his farewell, indicating that, although his intent was not necessarily benevolent from the beginning, his choice constitutes a complete and genuine reorientation of his disposition. In choosing between vengeance and mercy, Prospero exercises his free will to determine the genre of his own story.

Through Prospero's act of mercy, Shakespeare has resolved the genre to which the *The Tempest* belongs and secured for his characters a happy ending. But there is more to Prospero's choice than merely the positive redefinition of his own life – it also has a profound effect on the other characters. The obvious one for everybody is that they are all now free to leave the island. They have been liberated not only from the magical illusions native to it, but also the illusions of power which they (Prospero included) had brought with them. However, the individual and personal effects of mercy are also demonstrated by the play and are evident by examining three of the people forgiven by Prospero directly: Ariel, Caliban, and Antonio. Ariel is perhaps the most straightforward to analyze. His master has forgiven him of his debt and released him from servitude. The liberation of another is only made possible by Prospero's choice to relinquish his power over him. This demonstrates the freeing power of mercy. Prospero also forgives Caliban for his indiscretions. Although the audience is given no indication that Caliban reforms as a result of this, at the very least, he is able to recognize the foolishness of his previous actions (5.1.294–97) – the first time in the play he demonstrates any sort of self-reflection. In this, mercy is shown as being capable of granting others the opportunity to better themselves, even if this opportunity can ultimately be rejected. Finally, there is the reaction – or more accurately, non-reaction – of Antonio. Antonio is perhaps the closest person in the play to an antagonist. It is his actions which lead to Prospero's desire for revenge. And yet, when Prospero forgives him for his offenses, Antonio simply remains quiet, speaking only one line for the entire remainder of the play. Although the audience is never made privy to his final disposition, this reaction to Prospero's forgiveness nevertheless also provides an insight into the nature of mercy: it is possible to refuse it, although this does not eliminate its transformative power for those who choose to accept it.

So far, mercy in *The Tempest* has been shown to be key to understanding both its uncertain genre and the character evolution of its cast – Prospero's choice not only frees the play from any one archetype of storytelling, but also gives its characters the ability to free themselves from an influence which has been present over them in almost every scene: the lust for power. Power is one of the central themes running through *The Tempest*. The story is set in motion by Prospero's search for power through

his books and Antonio's successful usurpation of his noble title as a result. On the island, far separated from civilization, the characters remain focused on their power over each other: Antonio urges Sebastian to murder the king, Stephano and Trinculo try to establish themselves as lords over the island, and Prospero exercises control over the entire sequence of events from afar. But notable about this obsession is the pointlessness of power in this situation. On the island, there is no governmental structure – becoming the next king is meaningless. Stephano and Trinculo are well on their way to becoming the noble class of a patch of sand and a coconut tree. Even Prospero, who seems to have true power, does not: all he possesses is the power of illusion. It must be noted, however, that power itself is not Shakespeare's focus. Rather, his focus is how the *lust* for power is what drives the characters to violence. It is only by choosing forgiveness over vengeance that Prospero is able to successfully break the cycle.

The only characters in the play who are free from this desire for power are Ferdinand and Miranda. It is significant that they are unaffected by the violence which permeates the rest of the island. Ferdinand and Miranda serve as a counterpoint to the self-interest demonstrated by the rest of the characters – in fact, as is characteristic of *The Tempest*, their willingness to serve each other is taken to a comical extreme: Prospero even makes fun of it through aside comments (3.1). But just like Sebastian's failed attempt to murder Alonso or Caliban's efforts to overthrow Prospero, there is a serious element to the comedy. At this point in the play, Prospero is manipulating both of them – exercising his power to bring about his own desired ends. In this way, Prospero is doing the very thing he accuses his brother of having done: taking advantage of the unawareness of others to grow in power. But this is also the point in the play where Prospero is shown there is another course of action. Miranda is the person Prospero cares the most for, and while manipulating her and the prince into a relationship is done with a self-serving intent, it results in a direct presentation to Prospero of what a relationship looks like which is not based on power and not focused on self-gain. It is in the relationship between Ferdinand and Miranda that Prospero is given a glimpse of a life outside of the pursuit of power and revenge. Is this the reason he ultimately makes the choice to not only forgive his wrongdoers, but also to relinquish his books and his striving for the power which they represent? Not necessarily. However, it is clear that Ferdinand and Miranda represent the life that can be attained by doing so – a life which, when brought about by Prospero's mercy, results in the happy couple being able to rejoin the rest of the cast at last.

The Tempest successfully straddles the line between tragedy and comedy because reality itself falls into neither. The play remains relevant today because the facets of human nature it presents to the audience are timeless. The audience lives in the same sort of world as the characters, one which defies genre and is filled with illusions of both our own making and the making of others. We, like Prospero, can recognize our own self-centeredness and make the choice to rise above it through the relinquishing of self-destructive grudges which only perpetuate cycles of violence. Prospero's exercise of mercy is not simply a clever twist meant to surprise a theater expecting a traditional conclusion – like the Epilogue, it is a plea that the audience be willing to set others free in order that all may avoid an ending of despair.

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Jacob Daniell

Papal Silence: Was Doing Nothing the Best Thing to Do?

The Catholic Church sees the Pope as the leader of faith and morality. But during World War II, the leader of the Catholic Church was seemingly silent about the atrocities committed by Nazi Germany, such as to the Slavs and Jews from all nations. In the years after the war, some saw Pius XII as a hero, guiding Europe through arguably its most perilous time. There are also those who saw him as a weak, spineless puppet, bending to Hitler's will and even being an anti-Semite and a Nazi sympathizer. Eugenio Pacelli, later known as Pope Pius XII, has been under scrutiny for many decades: did he do enough, or anything at all, to save the Jewish people who were being slaughtered by the millions like animals? Pope Pius XII was in a very difficult situation, being surrounded by a government that was an ally of Nazi Germany and knowing how capable of destruction Nazi Germany was with their *Blitzkrieg* campaigns. Pope Pius XII's "silence" was more effective at saving the Jewish people and the Catholic Church than if he was as outspoken against Nazi Germany and her racism as his predecessor, Pope Pius XI. He was not a Nazi sympathizer as he knew how dangerous the Nazis were during his tenure as nuncio to Germany during the 1920s. His failure to clearly identify perpetrators and victims saved himself and the Vatican from German bombs and artillery, along with any of the Jewish people hiding in Catholic churches, convents, and abbeys.

During the Spanish Civil War, there was another conflict between fascism and communism, between the Republican faction, which was the left-leaning, anti-clerical party that had support from the Soviet Union, and the Nationalists, who had support from Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. The Vatican, especially Pacelli and the Spanish bishops, took interest in the Civil War because they wanted the same protection by the Catholic Church that they had before the government became liberal, but they had concerns about the Nationalists' allies, mainly Nazi Germany. As secretary of state for Pope Pius XI, Pacelli was not convinced that the Spanish government wanted to follow Nazi ideology as Franco and the Spanish press continually insisted that they did not have any desire to do so. According to Santiago Martínez Sánchez, "Pacelli wanted Antoniutti to remind Franco that the Nazi ideology was essentially anti-Christian and that its leader was a fierce persecutor of the Church who would [. . .] sink

her into ignominy and shame.”¹ He knew that the Nazis, when given a chance, would do all they could to keep the German people from attending Mass and would persecute the faithful as harshly as they did the Jewish people.²

An argument can be made that the Catholic Church was supporting Nazism during the Spanish Civil War when the Spanish bishops were supporting the Nationalists, led by Fascist Franco, who had much-needed support from Fascist Italy and predominantly Nazi Germany. But one needs to take into account who the Catholic-backed Franco was fighting against. The Republicans were left-leaning, very anticlerical, and were backed by the Soviet Union, a communist country with a track record for being atheistic and killing priests. The anticlerical socialists were the perpetrators of “burnings and other attacks on churches, and assassinations.”³ The Spanish bishops were more concerned about fighting communism in Spain than about Nazism, since “they had seen the incompatibility between communism and Catholicism”⁴ with the passing of multiple laws which made the Church in Spain lose the protection it had in the past. They chose the Fascists because they knew that they would still have rights with them in control instead of the more liberal Republicans.

While he was secretary of state for Pius XI, Pacelli worked hard to keep the Concordat with Nazi Germany in effect, much to the disliking of Pope Pius XI. Pope Pius XI knew the racism the Nazis were perpetrating against the Jewish people and wanted the Concordat with Nazi Germany to be revoked. Pacelli, along with the German bishops and the rest of the curia, saw this desire of Pope Pius XI to be brash and unwise. They knew that the concordat was the last thing protecting the laity from anti-Catholic laws preventing them to receive the sacraments: “His secretary of state and his followers in the curia, who feared the adverse impact upon millions of German Catholics, restrained him. Pacelli, Cesare Orsenigo, [...] and the German bishops all concurred [...] that the concordat served as a shield for

¹ Santiago Martínez Sánchez, "The Spanish Bishops And Nazism During The Spanish Civil War. *Catholic Historical Review* 99.3 (2013): 499-530. Academic Search Complete. Web. 10 Mar. 2016. 515

² 101.3 (2015): 488-529. *Religion and Philosophy Collection*. Web. 10 Mar. 2016 507

³ Martinez, Spanish Bishops and Nazism 503

⁴ Ibid. 507

the Catholic Church in Germany.”⁵ Catholic persecution by the Nazi party was somewhat rare, but the majority felt like the Concordat was the only thing keeping the persecution at bay. This conciliatory streak in Pacelli is what led the other cardinals to elect him Pope. He maintained this conciliatory policy with Nazi Germany in order to keep the persecutions of Catholics at bay. This coincidentally also helped the Jewish people by allowing them to look towards the Church for help. The Nazis did not search the churches for the Jews, so Pope Pius XII saved more lives than if he had been more vocal.

While Pope Pius XII’s hands were tied with trying to be vocal about saving the Jewish people from Nazi persecution, the clergy and those in religious orders were able to save thousands of the Jewish people. In his memoirs, Harold H. Tittmann, Jr., the U.S. representative to the Pope, recalls one such priest who helped save many Jews and who was very outspoken against the Nazis in general: “My father [Harold H. Tittmann, Jr.] was also involved in helping Jewish refugees in Italy. [...] The ‘leg man’ between them and the Jewish organization was a French Canon of St. Peter’s, Monsignor Herisse.”⁶ Priests were also helping the Allied prisoners of war who were being held in inhumane conditions to the knowledge of both the Vatican and the Germans. Tittman adds, “My father’s chief ‘leg man,’ when he was looking after the American escapees, was [...] Father Joseph McGeogh. [...] U.S. Government funds were disbursed through McGeogh and [Monsignor] O’Flaherty to aid the American prisoners of war.”⁷ The Vatican did not punish these priests even though their actions were violating the Vatican’s neutral position. If the Vatican was unwilling to punish those who were breaking the neutral position, then the Vatican was most definitely not going to punish those who were sheltering and saving the Jewish refugees who were hiding from the Nazis.

Pope Pius XII had a desire to help the Jewish people who were suffering but knew that he could do very little about it. He knew that if he spoke out against Hitler, he would be subject to persecution since he was hemmed in by Hitler’s friend, Mussolini. When his confidant asked him to

⁵ Frank J. Coppa, "Between Morality and Diplomacy: The Vatican's 'Silence' During the Holocaust." *Journal of Church and State* 50.3 (2008): 541-68. JSTOR. Web. 09 Mar. 2016. 550

⁶ Harold H. Tittman and Harold H. Tittman, Jr. 2004. *Inside the Vatican of Pius XII: The Memoir of an American Diplomat during World War II*. 1st ed. New York: Image Books/Doubleday. 190

⁷ Ibid.

take a stronger stance against the Nazi atrocities, he responded, “The Holy See must aid the Jewish people to the best of our ability, [...] But everything we do must be done with caution. Otherwise the Church and the Jews themselves will suffer great retaliation.”⁸ He understood that Hitler would not take kindly to the Pope announcing the Nazi atrocities to the world and would likely be very rash and brutal in his retaliation against the Holy See and the Jewish people. Pope Pius XII understood this better than most and knew that the best way to help those who were suffering around him was quietly and through other people, even if it meant coming under scrutiny during or after the war.

During the Second World War, it was not only religious in Italy saving the Jewish people from the Holocaust, but also religious throughout Europe, especially Poland, where the concentration camps were located. The Polish people took it upon themselves to help their Polish brethren, even though they were Jewish, and many died trying to help the Jewish people escape almost certain death: “Thousands of Poles were executed, such as the priest Maximilian Kolbe, or died in concentration camps for trying to help Jews. More Poles by far have been honored as Righteous Gentiles by the Yad Vashem memorial in Israel than any other nationality.”⁹ The Polish people felt like they had an obligation to help their fellow Poles regardless of what religion they were. If Pope Pius XII had spoken out against the Holocaust and all the other atrocities that Nazi Germany was committing, would those religious who were helping the Jewish people, whether they were priests, religious brothers and sisters, or faithful laity, have been able to help all the Jewish people that they physically could, or would the Nazis have cracked down on them even harder, making it impossible to help the Jewish people?

Even the Vatican itself made attempts to save the Jewish people of Rome. In order to keep the Pope’s silence intact, the under-secretaries of state met with the German ambassador Weizsacker in order to keep Church property from being searched by those who were hunting the Jewish people. They knew that this manhunt would be coming soon, and the German ambassador sent hundreds of letters of protection. This is where Pope Pius XII’s silence was critical. If he had been outspoken towards the roundup and killing of the Jewish people, there would have been another one. Phayer adds, “If the Vatican protested the October 16th *razzia*, the Jews yet in hiding might be jeopardized, Weizsacker warned, and the

⁸ Coppa, *Morality and Diplomacy*. 560

⁹ Michael Phayer, *The Catholic Church and the Holocaust: 1930-1965*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2000. Print. 113

Vatican policy of control would have been jeopardized.”¹⁰ While Pope Pius XII did not know that this was happening, he kept his silence and was able to keep the remaining Jewish people of Rome safe: “Another six thousand Jews survived the war in Rome, however, of whom at least four thousand were sheltered in Catholic Church properties.”¹¹

Anti-Semitism was also advancing in Hungary under the Nazi puppet government, and Catholics in Hungary were both the rescuers and the hunters of the Hungarian Jews. Archbishop Stepinac was the leader in rescuing the Hungarian Jews during the Second World War. He was also a very vocal critic of Nazism. According to Gitman, “During a visit to Rome in May 1943, Stepinac openly criticized the Nazis and the Ustaše. The Germans and Italians demanded that Pope Pius XII remove Stepinac from office. The pope refused to do so, but he warned Stepinac that his life was at risk.”¹² He chose to do what was right despite the fact that he was putting himself in harm's way. Pope Pius XII again showed his solidarity with the Jewish people by refusing Nazi and Italian requests to remove Archbishop Stepinac. Pope Pius XII knew that the best way for him to help the Jewish people was indirectly because, if he were to be openly against the Nazi persecution of the Jewish people, he and the Vatican would have been the Nazis' next target.

Pope Pius XII has been labeled everything from a saint to “Hitler’s Pope,” and his “silence” was seen as anti-Semitic. In truth, he hated the Nazis and all that they stood for. He desired to lash out at the Nazis after what they did in Poland: “Referring to ‘the atrocities taking place in Poland’, Pius XII confessed he wanted to ‘utter words of fire against such action,’ but held his tongue and did not publicly and clearly denounce either Communism or Nazism during the Second World War.”¹³ He knew better than to talk rashly against an enemy as powerful and hateful towards others as Nazi Germany. He knew the power of the Luftwaffe and the German Panzer divisions, and he did not want to see the Vatican brought to ruins, as Hitler claimed to the Italian Minister of State

¹⁰ Michael Phayer, *Pius XII, the Holocaust, and the Cold War*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2008. Print. 85-86

¹¹ William Patch, "The Catholic Church, the Third Reich, and the Origins of the Cold War: On the Utility and Limitations of Historical Evidence." *The Journal of Modern History* 82.2.

¹² Esther Gitman, "Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac Of Zagreb And The Rescue Of Jews, 1941-45." *Catholic Historical Review*

¹³ Coppa, *Morality and Diplomacy*. 542

Roberto Farinacci that he would bring about if the Vatican “spoke out against the ‘battle of the German Volk.’”¹⁴ He and his predecessor shared mutual feelings towards Nazism, “both opposed Nazi anti-Semitism, recognizing Nazi mania for racial purity violated Christian principles and Catholicism’s universal ministry.”¹⁵ Both men knew the dangers Nazism could cause and saw the evil of their racial purity goals. But Pope Pius XII, unlike his predecessor, could foresee what troubles would come if he spoke out as harshly as Pope Pius XI did.

What was Pope Pius XII’s main concern during World War II? While his “silence” was helpful towards the Jewish people in hiding, Pope Pius XII’s “silence” was aimed at keeping the Vatican intact. He was concerned for the safety of the citizens of Rome and the protection of the irreplaceable pieces of art and culture: “Allied bombs devastated the area around the Basilica of St. Lawrence, causing extensive damage to the church structure. Pius wrote President Roosevelt to entreat him to stop the bombardment. ‘Every district,’ Pius wrote Roosevelt, ‘in some districts every street, has its irreplaceable monuments of faith and art and Christian culture.’”¹⁶ Pope Pius XII saw Vatican City as the light that guided Catholics towards Christ. He believed that the physical church - with its monasteries, cathedrals, convents, and abbeys - was just as important as the temporal church, which consists of the Church Militant (the living members of the Church), the Church Suffering (those who are in Purgatory), and the Church Triumphant (those faithfully departed who are in Heaven). Pope Pius XII thought that if the physical church was in ruins, especially the Vatican, then those of the Church Militant would fall away from the faith.

Was Pope Pius XII truly silent when it came to the Nazi treatment of the Jewish people? Many people wanted him to speak out against the Nazis, and even he wanted to speak out against the Nazis, but he restrained himself due to the “fear of making the plight of the victims even worse.”¹⁷ There is even proof that explicitly speaking out against the Nazis led to an increase of Jewish roundups, with a common example being in the Netherlands: “After Archbishop of Utrecht Johannes de Jong publicly protested against Nazi treatment of Jews in July 1942, the Germans

¹⁴ Phayer, *Catholic Church and the Holocaust*. 26

¹⁵ Ibid. 548

¹⁶ Phayer, *Pius XII*. 82-83

¹⁷ Phayer. *Catholic Church and the Holocaust*. 54

retaliated by seizing Catholics of Jewish descent.”¹⁸ The Nazis made sure to punish the Jewish people every time those in the Catholic Church spoke out against Nazi anti-Semitic policies. Pope Pius XII knew that if he spoke out as explicitly as the Dutch bishops had, many Jews and Catholics would suffer deadly consequences. Pope Pius XII’s Christmas message was the only time during his papacy in which he denounced genocide, “the hundreds of thousands of persons who, without any fault on their part, sometimes only because of their nationality or race, have been consigned to death or to a slow decline.”¹⁹ Pope Pius XII had to be careful. He could not mention who the victims were nor could he mention who was causing the genocide. Pope Pius XII chose to break his silence this one time in order to show that he knew about the Polish Catholics and Jews who were being rounded up and, in the case of the Jewish people, being led to their death.

How Pope Pius XII understood the Nazi issue truly showed why he handled the Second World War the way that he did. He did not see fascism as a major problem and saw Hitler’s strain of fascism as one that would die out when Hitler died: “The threat Hitler posed would wane, whereas the threat of communism would grow because ideologies endure much longer than the human lifespan”²⁰ Pope Pius XII knew that Hitler’s form of fascism was only a short term problem while the idea of communism would last from generation to generation. The one result that Pope Pius XII wanted was one where the Soviet Union would not emerge victorious: “He believed that if communism emerged victorious after the war, the Catholic Church itself would be faced with a life-or-death struggle.”²¹ Pope Pius believed that the Soviet Union would commit just as much genocide in the Catholic territories that they controlled as the Nazis did.

It should also be noted that Pope Pius XII wanted to save his own life during the Second World War. Many of the Nazi leaders, while they grew up in Catholic households, did not like the Catholic Church and even wanted to see it destroyed. To say that Hitler was unhappy after learning of Mussolini’s overthrow would be a gross understatement. Hitler flew into a rage and said he would, “pull every one of the mongrels out of their lair.”²²

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Phayer. *Pius XII*. 53

²⁰ Ibid. 40

²¹ Ibid. 41

²² Ibid. 71

He wanted the Roman curia and Pope Pius XII gone for good but was eventually calmed down by his subordinates. Pope Pius XII knew that if Hitler had the chance, he would invade the Vatican and kidnap, if not outright kill, Pope Pius XII and any of the Catholic hierarchy he could get his hands on. Pope Pius XII was sure that just a small remark against Hitler, the Nazi party, and/or the Nazi atrocities would send Hitler into another rage and give him a reason to do what he pleased with Vatican City. However, kidnapping the Pope would have caused huge and negative repercussions against Nazi Germany: “Greater Germany was predominantly Catholic. If the Nazis were to manhandle the pope, serious dissent and disruption could not be ruled out at a time when Germany’s war fortunes were ebbing.”²³ Any action against Pope Pius XII would have been devastating against Hitler, but Pope Pius XII was not going to risk his life for what he would see as an action that would net little gain. He felt like he would be doing more help to the Catholics and the Jewish people suffering in Nazi-occupied territory actually sitting in the Chair of St. Peter.

While being surrounded by enemies who could have and would have rolled tanks in to destroy all that he loved, Pope Pius XII was able to save more of the Jewish people by doing the one thing that no one else wanted him to do: stay silent. His silence kept the Vatican from being reduced to rubble and kept those Catholic men and women who were helping the Jewish people survive safe by not infuriating Hitler. He was able to keep the Catholic Church afloat during Europe’s most violent time and continued to lead the Church until his death. Many have made claims that he took the easy and cowardly way, but sometimes what looks easy on face value turns out to be the most difficult and heroic moment in a lifetime.

²³ Ibid.

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Thomas L. Gwozdz, Ph .D.

Young and Restless: Jacques Maritain and Henri Bergson

Jacques Maritain's Conversion from Scientific Materialism

Between 1900-1914, there took place a religious awakening among young French intellectuals. It began with a vast movement of religious conversions to Catholicism: "Bruntiere, Joseph Lotte, Jacques Riviere, Paul Claudel, Francis Jammes, Louis Bertrand. Ernest Psichari, Charles Peguy, and the Maritains . . ." ¹ The man who was the inspiration behind the spiritual renaissance and whose ideas came to bear on the Catholic revival was Henri Bergson who lectured at the *Collège de France* across the street from the Sorbonne. Bergson attacked head on the embracing materialism of nineteenth-century French scientific mechanism, and opened the door to the spiritual realm.

Jacques Maritain and Raïssa Oumançoff were among the young and restless French intellectuals who fell under the influence of the scientific spirit - - an influence that drove them to despair. They had despaired of ever discovering the truth that their human spirit naturally desired.² Their intuition told them that there was absolute truth and that the metaphysical was real and not a false mysticism³ as taught by their teachers at the Sorbonne. However, they felt, in the words of Raïssa, "too weak to struggle against all these giants of science and philosophy,"⁴ and they fell into a "metaphysical anguish, going down to the very roots of life."⁵ For two intellectually bright and truth-seeking young people there seemed to be only one way out: Suicide if. . . .

One day in the *Jardin des Plantes* Jacques and Raïssa decided to give life a chance. They faced their situation squarely. They reasoned about reason and were not content to seek only the scientific, namely, that which is visible, measurable, and relative. Their intuitions about the existence of

¹ Robert C. Grogin, "Bergson and the French Catholic Revival: 1900-1914," *Thought*, 49, 313; hereafter referred to as BFC.

² Raïssa Maritain, *We Have Been Friends Together*, trans. Julie Kernan (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1942), 42; 80; hereafter referred to as WHB

³ *Ibid.*, 43

⁴ *Ibid.* 63.

⁵ *Ibid.* 74.

something absolute were too strong, and they did not want their teachers at the Sorbonne to have the last word on the truth.⁶ Their yearning for the spiritual was too real. Raïssa writes:

... we decided for some time longer to have confidence in the unknown; we would extend credit to existence, look upon it as an experiment to be made, in the hope that to our ardent plea, the meaning of life would reveal itself, that new values would stand forth so clearly that they would enlist our total allegiance, and deliver us from the nightmare of a sinister and useless world.⁷

But if the unknown "spiritual" did not make itself known, if existence remained absurd, the solution would be suicide. They said that they "wanted to die by a free act if it was impossible to live according to the truth."⁸ These two intellectuals were starving for the truth, but if not found, then suicide was their choice.

Suicide never became an option again, however, because life brought them a wonderful gift in the person of Henri Bergson,⁹ who taught across the street from the Sorbonne, and who recognized a spiritual faculty that could know the truth and grasp reality. He called that spiritual faculty "intuition."¹⁰ Raïssa writes that "by means of a wonderfully penetrating critique Bergson dispelled the anti-metaphysical prejudices of pseudo-scientific positivism and recalled to the spirit its real functions and essential liberty."¹¹ In short, by opening up the depths of the spiritual life and revealing the treasure of metaphysics, Bergson became a savior for Jacques and Raïssa. He saved them from carrying out their suicide pact by showing them that by means of intuition, the human spirit could know life and reality. Human knowledge was simply not reduced to scientific knowledge of phenomena as measurable quantity.¹²

In this article I will argue, first, that Jacques Maritain was indebted to Bergson for opening for him the realm of spiritual reality and for making metaphysics possible; second, that under the influence of

⁶ Ibid. 77.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.78.

⁹ Ibid. 120.

¹⁰ Ibid. 85.

¹¹ Ibid. 84.

¹² Ibid. 88.

Thomism and a rampant "cheap Bergsonism," he launched a harsh and partially misled criticism of Bergson's philosophy; and, third, that in spite of the harsh criticism, Maritain was indebted to Bergson and refashioned certain Bergsonian tenets by means of Thomistic insights, thus fashioning his own brand of Thomism.

Henri Bergson on Intelligence and Intuition

Bergson's spiritual appeal and his criticism of scientific concepts attracted Jacques Maritain. Bergson argued that human intelligence evolved with invention, with the making of tools and weapons.¹³ Hence, intelligence is essentially wedded to the manufacturing of things that will serve human life.¹⁴ To this end, the intellect looks primarily to solids in order to measure the relations between things juxtaposed in space. Consequently, concepts are of phenomena only, and express the general relations among solids. They are abstract symbols of reality¹⁵ that represent the outer face of things, but not their inner reality.¹⁶ In short, the world of concepts is made up of symbols that substitute for reality as it is, signs that are mathematical, artificial, and conventional, but signs that make it easy for us to handle the world "under an arrested form."¹⁷ What Bergson means is that concepts are like the snapshots of a moving train. They give us what is common between the train in motion at T1, T2, or T3, but they cannot represent the reality of the moving train as such. Concepts are artificial reconstructions of reality. As such, the intellect can never know reality or the within of things. In order to grasp reality in itself, Bergson taught that there was another faculty of the human spirit, namely, intuition.

By means of intuition, one begins by looking into one's own consciousness and grasping reality that is at once spiritual and pure duration. The function of intuition, then, is to penetrate reality and become one in sympathy with it. In other words, by means of intuition, one is transported into the interior of reality in order to coincide with it. There is a real penetration into reality. What one knows, then, is reality as duration.

¹³ Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, trans. Arthur Mitchell (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1911), 137; hereafter referred to as CE.

¹⁴ Ibid. 138; 150.

¹⁵ Ibid. 161.

¹⁶ Ibid. 329.

¹⁷ Henri Bergson, *The Creative Mind*, trans. Mabelle L. Andison (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), 45; hereafter referred to as CM.

In *The Creative Mind*, Bergson describes intuition that grasps pure duration:

The duration we refer to then bears above all upon internal duration. It grasps a succession which is not juxtaposed, a growth from within, the uninterrupted prolongation of the past into the present which is already blending into the future. It is the direct vision of the mind by the mind.¹⁸

A common metaphor used by Bergson to describe this uninterrupted prolongation of the past into the future is music. Music is an organic whole where the notes do not succeed one another as much as they permeate one another in a single musical phrase, where the past enters the present as it moves into the future.

Intuition, then, and not the intellect with its concepts, introduces us to the heart of reality, and is thereby the starting point of metaphysics.¹⁹ Bergson optimistically assured his listeners that they could discover truths by penetrating reality, and approaching the Absolute itself. It was this spiritual teaching that captured Maritain's imagination, ended for him the reign of matter, science, and determinism, and freed him from metaphysical anguish and despair. Bergson, according to Robert Grogin, was "the voice of liberation for a generation driven by torment and a restlessness which seemed beyond satisfaction" ²⁰ He certainly was a voice of liberation for Jacques Maritain in that he freed him from scientific positivism and opened for him, in the words of Raissa "the very possibility of metaphysical work."²¹

Maritain's Philosophical Crisis Over Bergson's Philosophy of the Concept

At the same time that Jacques Maritain was inspired by the lectures of Henri Bergson, he was introduced to the Catholic Church and its revealed truths expressed in dogmatic propositions. The attempt to marry Bergsonian thought about the nature of our concepts and the revelations of intuition with Maritain's new found faith in Catholicism provoked a crisis. This is Maritain's account of it:

¹⁸ Ibid. 35.

¹⁹ CE, 268.

²⁰ BFC, 315.

²¹ WHB, 86.

It was in 1908 . . . while I was deliberating in the country near Heidelberg whether or not I could harmonize Bergson's critique of the concept and formulas of revealed dogma, that the irreducible conflict between the "conceptual" pronouncements of that theological faith which had recently opened my eyes and the philosophical doctrine to which I had such a passionate devotion during my student years, and to which I owed my delivery from the idols of materialism, appeared to me as one of those all too certain facts from which the soul -- once it begins to admit it -- immediately knows that it cannot escape. The effort, obscurely pursued for months, to realize a reconciliation -- which was the goal of all my desires -- suddenly ended in this undeniable conclusion. I had to choose, and hence to admit that all the philosophical work with which I had busied myself had to be begun anew. Since God proposes to us in concepts and conceptual propositions. . . truths which are the most transcendent and inaccessible to our reason. . . this means that the concept is not a mere practical instrument which is incapable in itself of transmitting reality to our minds, serviceable only for artificially cutting up ineffable continuities, and which lets the absolute escape like water through a sieve. . . . At that time I had not as yet become acquainted with Saint Thomas. My philosophical reflection leaned upon the indestructible truth of objects presented by faith in order to restore the natural order of the intelligence to being, and to recognize the ontological bearing of the work of reason. Thenceforth, in affirming to myself, without chicanery or diminution, the authentic value as reality of our human instruments of knowledge, I was already a Thomist without knowing it. When, several months later, I was to meet the *Summa Theologica* I would erect no obstacle to its luminous flood.²²

Maritain was for months pondering over two incompatible theories about the nature of concepts: either Bergson is right about the concept being reduced to symbols of the relative aspects of things or there is a broader view to be had about concepts, namely, that they can be about

²² WHB, 198-200; Jacques Maritain, *Bergsonina Philosophy and Thomism*, trans. Mabelle L. Andison (New York: Philosophical Library, 1955) , 16-17.

the truth, i.e., they can be about reality itself. The tension arose when Maritain became aware that the Catholic Church toward which he was attracted made dogmatic pronouncements about the truths of revelation. In doing so, the Church, in its philosophy, admits certain metaphysical tenets that are incompatible with Bergson's view of the concept. To claim that dogmatic pronouncements are about the truth of revelation is to claim that reality is able to be expressed in concepts. Bergson's reduction of the concept to the practical order and to its symbolic value only must be incompatible with the metaphysical views of the Catholic Church. Maritain could not square his Bergsonian philosophy with the philosophy that must underpin the dogmatic assumptions of his new-found faith. By his own admission, he struggled for months to find a solution to this philosophical dilemma. The struggle for reconciliation "suddenly ended in an undeniable conclusion."²³ Maritain said that he had to choose between Bergson's view of the concept as relative or rely on the indestructible truth of objects presented by faith. In other words, he had to choose between a philosophy that holds that reality cannot be known in concepts and one that holds that it can. The whole question of being able to know the truth was at stake here. It was a question of the intellect's capacity to truly know reality (being).

In *Bergsonian Philosophy and Thomism*, Maritain, in the absence of any explicit account, gives us a glimpse of how he might have reflected on the problem. If truth could not be known by reason, then intelligence must be transcended to find something better that would be able to know the truth. Bergson claimed that the "something better" was intuition. Intuition, then, is the faculty for knowing the truth. However, intuition's object was pure duration or becoming only. If so, then the truth cannot really be known because truth is unchangeable. The faculty that is reduced to knowing only what changes cannot know what does not change. In addition, what is known by way of Bergsonian intuition cannot be expressed in conceptual terms. But the truths of the Catholic Church, as well as the truths of the assertions of common intelligence are. Then came Maritain's flash of insight: Bergson's thesis must be incorrect. All knowledge must be able to be expressed in concepts by the intellect itself. The intellect must be the faculty of knowing the truth. If not, "all our knowledge becomes false, there is no more truth for us."²⁴

Maritain accepts the intuition provisionally and puts it to the test when he is introduced to Aquinas and the *Summa Theologica* by Father

²³ Ibid. 199.

²⁴ BPT, 169-170.

Humbert Clerissac, O.P.²⁵ Following Aquinas, Father Clerissac taught that the Christian life was grounded in the intellect. He was often heard to say "Christian life is based on intelligence Before everything else, God is truth."²⁶

Maritain's Criticism of Bergson as Anti-Intellectual

Armed with the notion that the intellect can know reality in itself, and driven by a desire for truth, Maritain began to look at Bergson's philosophy through Thomistic eyes, and launched a rather harsh criticism regarding the nature of Bergson's intuition in a series of lectures on "The Philosophy of M. Bergson and Christian Philosophy," delivered in April and May, 1912 at the *Institut Catholique* of Paris.²⁷ The substance of those lectures found its way into *Bergsonian Philosophy and Thomism* originally published as *La Philosophie Bergsonienne*. There, Maritain argued that Bergson put intuition and intellect in opposition to each other, and brought upon himself the reputation of being anti-intellectual.²⁸ Because Maritain views Bergson's intuition as nothing more than a deepening and widening of sense perception by an effort of the will,²⁹ he claims that no matter how Bergson tries to characterize it as "ultra-intellectual,"³⁰ it can in fact only be "infra-intellectual."³¹ He claims that ". . . only on paper will it ever be made into an 'intellectual' or 'supra-intellectual' intuition."³² The reason for this, according to Maritain, is that Bergson wounded intelligence whose object is being³³ and not only phenomena. Bergson was wrong. The intellect is not reduced to knowing practical concepts only; rather it is able to know being itself in a concept. The intellect is speculative as well as practical.

²⁵ Raissa Maritain, *Adventures in Grace*, trans. Julie Kernan (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1942), 5; hereafter referred to as AIG

²⁶ Ibid. 10.

²⁷ Ibid. 201.

²⁸ BPT, 22.

²⁹ CM, 158-159.

³⁰ CE, 360.

³¹ BPT, 28.

³² Ibid. 29.

³³ Ibid. 28.

In a rather lengthy and detailed criticism, Maritain claims that the concept is the fruit of the speculative intellect whose goal is to know being. Its role is to be the means by which reality is known as an object. Hence, the goal of the intellect is not the concept itself; rather, the goal is being. The intellect, therefore, conceives not for its own sake but in order to know what is real.³⁴ It follows, then, that intuition is an act of the intellect by which being is known immediately in and through a concept. In *The Degrees of Knowledge*,³⁵ Maritain distinguishes among the thing, the concept and the object. The thing is that which exists outside the mind in a state of individuality. The object is the thing as known. It is the term of knowledge. The concept is the means by which the thing is known as an object. It is not what is immediately known. Rather, Maritain refers to it as a formal sign of the thing and the means by which the thing is known as an object. Bergson, on the other hand, besides reducing the concept to the practical order, claimed that it was the concept itself that was immediately known by the intellect, and that it was the practical intellect alone that formed abstract concepts.

It is in this sense that Maritain claims that Bergson committed the capital sin of ripping "apart the life of the intellect."³⁶ He radically separated intuition and intellect. In doing so he reduced the intellect to the faculty of knowing only concepts, albeit concepts with spatial and temporal dimensions, concepts of matter only. All that Bergsonian intellect knows is concepts that are relative and symbolic of reality. All it knows is the outer face of material things. To grasp the absolute or the real within is left to another faculty which is intuition. This alone is the faculty that Bergson reserved for knowing the truth. As such, it "has only an apparent resemblance to the intellectual perception recognized in scholastic teaching."³⁷ In the end, no matter how much Bergson speaks of intuition as supra-intellectual, Maritain hammers home the fact that it is only that in name. For Maritain, Bergsonian intuition is essentially reduced to heightened instinct³⁸ that grasps the concrete particular. Maritain argues that it is a sensible faculty akin to the cogitative sense of

³⁴ Ibid.31-33.

³⁵ Jacques Maritain, *The Degrees of Knowledge*, trans. Gerald B. Phelan (New York: Charles Scribner's and Sons, 1964) 90-107; 119-128 ; hereafter referred to as DK

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid. 108.

³⁸ Ibid. 29.

the scholastics "which is none other than instinct."³⁹ The tragic error here, according to Maritain, is to make sense perception, heightened and widened as it may be, the instrument of philosophy. This mimics true intellect while in fact destroying the intellect by dissolving the very laws of the intellect. For example, a knowledge of being had as pure duration is incompatible with the principle of contradiction.⁴⁰ In duration what is not (past) is (present).

Of course, Maritain does not mean that Bergson intended to destroy the intellect. He admits that Bergson was a lover of the intellect as is demonstrated by how large a part intellect plays in his doctrine. What he intended was to criticize and destroy the notion that scientific knowledge is the only paradigm of knowledge. He intended to do this by opening up the metaphysical realm. He wanted to show that the human person could know being and reality. Unfortunately, Bergson had at his disposal no other way to enter the metaphysical realm than by way of intuition as a separate faculty. He stood in a tradition that derived from Kant the assumption that all that the intellect could know was phenomena. If so, there had to be another faculty for metaphysics, namely, intuition. This is what in fact happened, but it was not his intention. Bergson did not really intend to reduce the intellect to a practical instrument and raise instinct to intuition as Maritain seemed to think. But looked at through the eyes of Thomism it would be easy to see why Bergson's intuition would appear to be anti-intellectual and reducible to heightened instinct, sentiment and feeling.

Bergson was aware of that kind of criticism and in order to combat it, he wrote:

How could certain people have mistaken my meaning? To say nothing of the kind of person who would insist that my "intuition" was instinct or feeling. Not one line of what I have written could lend itself to such an interpretation. And in everything I have written there is assurance to the contrary: my intuition is reflection.⁴¹

³⁹ Ibid.109.

⁴⁰ Ibid.45.

⁴¹ CM 103.

What is an act of reflection cannot be reduced to pure heightened instinct.⁴² Instinct, yes, coincides with life and is sympathy.⁴³ It proceeds organically and carries out the work of biological life. For example, when the chick breaks out of the shell, it does so by instinct. It carries on the movement of life which has borne it through embryonic life. In this way, instinct is an extension of life and movement, and coincides with it. The chick by instinct "knows" itself and what it can do. But Bergson explicitly argues that intuition is "instinct that has become disinterested, self-conscious, capable of reflecting upon its object and of enlarging it indefinitely."⁴⁴ First, it can be argued, then, that what is self-conscious and self-reflective cannot be just a difference in degree. It must be a difference in kind. Pure instinct cannot be self-reflection. Second, intuition is a faculty of the human person, and Bergson insists that in the evolutionary process of life, there is a difference in kind between the animal and the human.⁴⁵ In the human being, life takes on two opposing currents, intellect and intuition. But they are both currents of human consciousness, the former aimed outward to things, the latter inward to itself. In this sense, intuition is self-consciousness and self-reflection. It is an operation of the human spirit. In *The Creative Mind*, Bergson explicitly states that intuition is a direct vision of the spirit by the spirit.⁴⁶ He re-emphasizes the same point in *Creative Evolution* when he says that the more philosophy advances in uniting fleeting intuitions the more it notices that intuition is the same as spirit.⁴⁷ Third, Bergson insists that, in the animal, instinct is habitual and trapped in routine reaction. In other words, instinct is determined and subject to mechanical laws. However, "with man, consciousness breaks the chain. In man, and in man alone, it sets itself free."⁴⁸ How then, can what is essentially free be instinct? Raïssa herself recognized that an act of freedom was ultimately an act of the "deep seated self rushing up to the surface."⁴⁹ She goes on to say that "this free activity . . . is the very life of

⁴² CE, 167-168.

⁴³ Ibid. 176.

⁴⁴ Ibid. 176.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 182

⁴⁶ CM, 48.

⁴⁷ CE, 68.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ WHB, 91.

the spiritual personality, and duration, spirit and life are synonymous."⁵⁰ Consequently, it is difficult from within Bergsonian thought itself to argue that intuition is not an act of self-reflection, an act of the human spirit, an act of freedom, in essence an act different in kind from instinct.⁵¹

By way of summary, for Bergson, intuition is not pure instinct, as Maritain thought. Rather, it is analogous to instinct. It is like instinct in that it is a sympathy, i.e., an entering into the object to become one with the object's own life. But it is unlike instinct in that it is reflective. It is an act of the spirit. In this sense it is ultra-intellectual, i.e., it grasps what scientific intellect cannot grasp, namely, the inner face of reality itself. To say that is to say that it surpasses the activity of scientific intellect but is in no way inferior to it.

Jacques Chevalier, a student of Bergson, is in essential agreement that Bergson is not anti-intellectual. He says that Bergson's intuition is an "intellectual sympathy."⁵² It is like Pascal's "the heart: it knows."⁵³ Furthermore, Chevalier says that Bergson extolled Pascal because he "introduced into philosophy a certain way of thinking which is not pure reason, since it corrects by the *esprit de finesse* the mathematical part of reasoning. . . ."⁵⁴ And so, to accuse Bergson of being anti-intellectual is false, according to Chevalier. Bergson only criticizes a "false intellectualism"⁵⁵ but seeks to reestablish a "true intellectualism."⁵⁶ As such, "'Intuition,' as Bergson conceives it, is not short of intelligence, but ahead of it. It does not exclude reasoning; it supplements and goes beyond

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ For a more comprehensive discussion on the question of the human being being different in kind from animals, see Mortimer Adler, *The Difference of Man and the Difference It Makes* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967), 131. Adler cites Bergson as one among other philosophers who indicate reasons for thinking that human beings differ in kind only.

⁵² Jacques Chevalier, *Henri Bergson*, trans. Lilian Clare (New York: Macmillan Co., 1928), 114

⁵³ Ibid.118.

⁵⁴ Ibid. 112.

⁵⁵ Ibid. 111.

⁵⁶ Ibid

it.”⁵⁷ Intuition, then, is not inferior to intellect; rather it transcends it as an act of the human spirit.

Etiénne Gilson likewise argues that Bergson was not anti-intellectual. He claims that Bergson started his philosophical reflection by looking at the accepted notion of intelligence⁵⁸ conducted by a mind fond of accuracy and never satisfied with itself. In other words, his starting point was scientific intelligence. From there, he began his criticism of intelligence. However, it was not a criticism of intelligence in the broad sense, but only of a narrow use of intelligence. It followed that because Bergson began with and accepted a narrow definition of intelligence, and because he wanted to revive metaphysics as a science, he had to look elsewhere for a faculty for metaphysics since intelligence disqualified itself.⁵⁹ In short, then, Bergson was not anti-intellectual in the broad sense. He was only anti-intellectual in the narrow sense of claiming that scientific intellect was unable to plumb the depths of metaphysical reality. In practice, however, Bergson used his intelligence to transcend the narrow confines of scientific intelligence. In fact, he was known to have said at the *Collège de France* that one must not strait jacket reality to fit one's ideas; rather, one must expand one's ideas upon reality. Arguing that none of science's present ideas are broad enough to embrace all of reality, he proclaimed:

Let us work to dilate our thinking, let us force our understanding, if necessary to break our routines; but let us not narrow down reality to the measure of our ideas since it is up to our ideas to model themselves, enlarged, upon reality.⁶⁰

These are not the words of a man who is anti-intellectual in the broad sense. Gilson goes on to claim that, although Bergson did say that intelligence is characterized by a natural incomprehension of life, by this he never meant that this negative aspect of scientific intelligence was the very essence of intelligence itself.⁶¹

⁵⁷ Ibid.119.

⁵⁸ Etiénne Gilson, *The Philosopher and Theology*. trans. Cecile Gilson (New York: Random House, 1962); hereafter referred to as PT.

⁵⁹ Ibid.114-115.

⁶⁰ Ibid. 115.

⁶¹ Ibid.138.

Bergson, then, was not intentionally anti-intellectual.⁶² He clearly saw and argued passionately for a spiritual faculty which was intuitive and able to know the real. According to Gilson, he even sought to expand the notion of intelligence in practice. Unfortunately, he was not totally successful in breaking through the narrow sense of intelligence and calling the spiritual faculty of intuition "intelligence" due to the reigning understanding of what intelligence was. Even Raissa admits that at the time she and Jacques attended Bergson's lectures, they could not give the spiritual faculty of knowing a name. She said they probably would have called it intelligence,⁶³ but, like Bergson himself, they could not yet do so. They would do so only after they discovered Thomas Aquinas and realized that intelligence is much more than practical scientific reasoning. It is speculative and essentially intuitive. Hence, intellect could know reality.

It seems that in spite of Maritain's harsh criticism of what in fact Bergson taught, Maritain did not want to attack Bergson's philosophy directly. He himself saw the value in Bergson's philosophy and in what he intended to do when he wrote that if one were to transfer to intellectual perception so-called . . . certain values and privileges that Bergson attributes to 'intuition,' the Bergsonian critique of the intellect would find itself as it were automatically rectified. . . ."⁶⁴ In other words, he knew that certain tenets of Bergson's philosophy could be easily corrected if transformed by Aquinas's view of the intellect as the natural faculty for being. Second, Maritain's harshness against Bergson and his staunch defense of the intellect and truth was directed more to what Raissa says Jacques saw as: . . . cheap Bergsonism -- for which Bergson himself was far from responsible -- spreading among young people, especially among many young priests, and feeding theological modernism with the most crude anti-intellectual topics in which a purposeless sentimentality

⁶² BPT, 285-288. Maritain speaks of two Bergsonisms: the Bergsonism of Fact and the Bergsonism of Intention. Bergson was in fact in opposition to the truths of perennial Theistic philosophy. He in fact sacrificed the Thomistic emphasis on the speculative intellect and being. He replaced substance with movement as the very essence of being. His intention, on the other hand, was to go beyond the mechanistic physico-mathematical reductionism which did not get to the bottom of reality. He intended to reach being and the spiritual dimension of being. But, according to Maritain, he destroyed both truth at its roots and the spiritual thesis he wished to restore.

⁶³ WHB, 85.

⁶⁴ BPT, 21.

disguised as "intuition," a confused pragmatism and a childish passion to conform to the age were destroying in souls the sense of truth, the sense of the sanctity of truth.⁶⁵

For Jacques Maritain, it was "a question of truth alone and the rights of intelligence."⁶⁶ His purpose was to defend the primacy of the intellect in the Catholic tradition because he was convinced that "In destroying Intelligence and Reason, and natural Truth one destroys the foundation of Faith."⁶⁷ To claim this, however, is not to say that Maritain's work was primarily theological. It was carried on against the horizon of theology and faith, but it was always deliberately and primarily philosophical.⁶⁸ His frame of mind always remained more philosophical than theological. Neither was his criticism of Bergson and his defense of intelligence a question of academic debate. From the time of his discovery of Bergson and Bergson's gift of the spiritual, of reality, of the possibility of metaphysics and a knowledge of the Absolute, philosophy, for Maritain, was an existential question of life or death.⁶⁹ However, in the Preface to the Second Edition of *Bergsonian Philosophy and Thomism*, Maritain pays tribute to Bergson and expresses his indebtedness to him. At the same time, he reproaches himself for the fact that he allowed the philosophical controversy with Bergson "to take on, at times, an almost partisan tone. . . ."⁷⁰

Maritain's Transformed Bergsonism and His Reconciliation with Bergson

It is my contention that Maritain is indebted to Bergson for more than meets the eye if what one is looking at is only Maritain's Thomistic criticism of Bergson's system. There Maritain is extremely critical of the facts of Bergsonian philosophy as seen through Thomistic glasses. But if one looks at Bergson through Bergson's own glasses and sees what he intended, one will see that Maritain is deeply indebted to Bergson for basic insights and values that, transformed within the framework of Thomas Aquinas, become the basis for Maritain's own philosophy, namely, the

⁶⁵ AIG, 204.

⁶⁶ Ibid.202.

⁶⁷ Ibid

⁶⁸ Ibid.215.

⁶⁹ Ibid.202.

⁷⁰ BPT, 13.

intellectual metaphysical intuition of being and the various forms of intuitive knowledge by means of connaturality.

Maritain, like Bergson, never tired of saying that it was by means of an intuition that one entered into metaphysics. In Maritain's case, the intuition was an intuition of being. It is a "direct and immediate"⁷¹ perception of reality, "a very simple sight"⁷² coming about "in a moment of decisive emotion."⁷³ In it the soul is "in a penetrating and illuminating contact with the reality which it touches and which takes hold of it."⁷⁴ Maritain claims that both his intuition and Bergson's share similar characteristics, with the essential difference that Maritain's is an intuition of the speculative intellect. It is preeminently intellectual. This is Maritain's transformative element. Being does not produce the intuition by means of a sympathy brought on by an act of will; rather, being is known by the intellect by means of a concept. For Bergson, there is no room for a concept in the intuition. Concepts and intuition belong to two distinct orders of knowing. But in Maritain's rehabilitation of Bergsonian intuition, the intuition is of its very nature abstractive and produces a concept or idea of being. For this reason, Maritain calls it an "eidetic or ideating visualisation [sic]."⁷⁵

In addition to the metaphysical intuition of being, Maritain further transformed Bergson's intuition by what he discovered in Aquinas as connatural knowledge. Connatural knowledge is "a kind of knowledge which is produced in the intellect but not by virtue of conceptual connections and by way of demonstration."⁷⁶ It is knowledge of self and reality had "through inclination .. and the inner bents or propensities of our own being."⁷⁷ In other words, it is knowledge by way of love and

⁷¹ Jacques Maritain, *A Preface to Metaphysics*, (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1948), 46.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid. 58.

⁷⁶ Jacques Maritain, "On Knowledge Through Connaturality," *The Review of Metaphysics*, IV, (June 1951), 473. hereafter referred to as OKC

⁷⁷ Ibid. 474.

"affective inclinations and the dispositions of the will."⁷⁸ By means of connatural knowledge, the knower is co-natured to some reality and becomes one with it without any intermediary. There is a lived coincidence or sympathy between the self knowing and the reality known. The intellect is at work here but in a deep penetrating way that bypasses its normal functioning by way of concepts, reasoning, and logic.⁷⁹ For Maritain, intuition by means of connaturality is at work in various and analogous modes of knowing, namely, in a pre-philosophical awareness of the natural law,⁸⁰ in the virtuous act,⁸¹ in the prudent judgment,⁸² in inter-subjective relations between persons in love⁸³ in natural and supernatural mystical experiences,⁸⁴ and in the poetic intuition of an artist.⁸⁵ What Maritain does here is take Bergson's intuition which is not intellectual and grounds it in an intellectual act.

Given Bergson's contribution to Maritain's own brand of Thomism, toward the end of his life, Maritain softened his critical attitude toward Bergson and explicitly acknowledged the contribution that Bergson made to Thomism. He focused more on what Bergson intended than on what Bergson in fact taught. He saw Bergson as a man in love with the intellect who did not consciously intend to destroy it. He merely intended to criticize the popular position that the paradigm of knowledge was scientific reason. To that end, he passionately argued for a spiritual faculty that could know being by way of intuition. However, he could not

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 477-480; and Jacques Maritain, *The Range of Reason* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952), 66-71.

⁸¹ Ibid., 473-474.

⁸² See Jacques Maritain, *Existence and the Existent*, trans. Lewis Galantier and Gerald B. Phelan (New York: Pantheon Books, Inc., 1948) 50-61; hereafter referred to as EE.

⁸³ See OKC, 475; DK 368-369; EE, 40; and William L. Rossner, S.J., "Love in the Thought of Jacques Maritain" in *Jacques Maritain: The Man and His Achievement*, ed. Joseph W. Evans, (New

⁸⁴ See OKC, 475-476; DK, 247-277; 338-383; and Jacques Maritain, *Ransoming the Time*, trans. Harry Lorin Binsee (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1944), 255-289.

⁸⁵ See Jacques Maritain, *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry*. New York: Meridian Books, 1955.

place that faculty in the intellect itself because intellect was strait jacketed into a practical intellect knowing phenomena only. What Maritain now saw was that what Bergson intended was much closer to Thomism than what he once thought. Maritain writes about his reconciliation with Bergson:

. . . although I am not forgetting that there is a “Bergsonism of intention” much nearer than one believes to Thomistic realism, nor that Bergson, toward the end of his life, said once that he and myself, that poor Jacques who had criticized him so severely, had met “in the middle of the road.”⁸⁶

Met in the middle of the road they did. At the end of his life, Maritain admitted that Bergson had the intuition of being virtually,⁸⁷ was a great metaphysician, and never really intended to deny reason. He wrote:

Bergson had it [the intuition of being] virtually. He went overboard in his criticism of intelligence and the concept, but he was too intelligent himself to ever really deny reason. The intuition on which his thinking lived was not poetic intuition used to satisfy the desire for a metaphysical wisdom which is natural to our spirit or to nourish dreams of dialectics that would lead us to Absolute Knowing. It was also not the completely liberated philosophical intuition that pure intellect requires. But it was an endeavor of the whole soul toward this intuition and a beginning of it. That is why Bergson was a metaphysician, and that is why we should be thankful to him for having given, with a loud voice in the metaphysical desert of our age, the signal for the profound

⁸⁶ Jacques Maritain, *The Peasant of the Garonne*, trans. Michael Cuddihy and Elizabeth Hughs (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968), 110; hereafter referred to as PG.

⁸⁷ See, *A Preface to Metaphysics*, pp. 48-64. The intuition of being is an intellectual intuition into the intelligible mystery concealed in existing things, namely being as such. This intuition produces the concept of being as being which is the subject matter of Thomistic metaphysics.

renewal for which philosophy had waited for three centuries.⁸⁸

Maritain went even further in his reconciliation with Bergson when he claimed that, although there is nothing in fact common between Bergson's intuition of duration and the intellectual intuition of being, nevertheless, Thomists should be greatly indebted to Bergson for ". . . the essential and absolutely rock bottom importance of the intuition of being in their own philosophy. From this point of view, one ought to consider Bergson a great liberator."⁸⁹

Many young French Catholic intellectuals between 1900-1914 were highly influenced by Henri Bergson and looked upon him as a liberator from scientific materialism. Some, like Charles Peguy and Edouard Le Roy were staunch defenders⁹⁰ while others like Jacques Maritain were critical. They all understood him well, however, and according to Robert C. Grogin "All in fact, took from [him] what they wanted -- his inspiration and with it at least a patina of his thought -- and refashioned it to meet their own personal needs."⁹¹ Jacques Maritain was a prime example. He was inspired by the spirituality of Bergson, took basic tenets from Bergson's philosophy, especially the notion of intuition, and used them for his own purposes once they were transformed by Thomistic insights.

⁸⁸ Jacques Maritain, "*Pas de savoir sans intuitivité*" in *Approches sans entraves* in *Oeuvres complètes*, vol. 13 (Fribourg: Editions Universitaires; Paris: Editions Saint-Paul), 956.

⁸⁹ PG, 139.

⁹⁰ BFC, 318-321.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 322.

**Evil Answers: A Study of How Reversals
Reveal a Theological Message or Not**

Wars have slaughtered our security; violence has pulverized our peace; betrayal has battered our hearts; the noose of hunger has slowly strangled helpless humans, and those who dodge these horrors are congratulated with a visit from death, the eager executioner who pardons no one. The problem of evil is a blaring siren that has jarred man's consciousness. For those of us who maintain belief in the divine, how do we reconcile our belief with the evil we experience? The Hebrew Story of Joseph, taken from a translation of Genesis by Robert Alter, and *Antigone*, a Greek drama by Sophocles, each offer an answer to the question of evil. The fundamental difference is that the Story of Joseph presents one God who can bring good out of evil, while *Antigone* presents many gods who cannot. First, I will investigate the differing theologies and answers that each story gives to the question of evil. Then, I will investigate the use of reversal in each, showing how those in the Story of Joseph uniquely point to a deeper theological message: God brings good out of evil.

To those of us from a Judeo-Christian background, the theology presented in the Story of Joseph will be familiar; there is only one God, who is portrayed as fundamentally good. This assertion can be supported by the following examples. First, God chooses to bless Joseph with success. Chapter 39 reads, "And the Lord was with Joseph and he was a successful man" (181). Second, even in a time of hardship, as Joseph was imprisoned on false charges, "God was with Joseph and extended kindness to him" (182). In his divine goodness, God chooses to accompany, rather than abandon, Joseph in his time of trial.

While it may be expected that God treats Joseph well, considering that he is a member of God's chosen people, God's goodness is not shown only to Joseph or even to just God's chosen people. God also treats Pharaoh and all of Egypt with benevolence. As Joseph says, "God will answer [Pharaoh's dream] for Pharaoh's well-being" (183). Moreover, Joseph reveals that God has chosen to warn Pharaoh of the coming famine saying that, "What God is about to do He has told Pharaoh" (184). Perhaps most of all, God's goodness is seen in that he freely chooses to bring good out of evil. This point will be treated later in the discussion of literary reversals. In sum, the Story of Joseph presents one God who is all good.

To understand the Story of Joseph's answer to the problem of evil, one must grasp that it presents a completely good God, as shown above. God, who is all good, does not cause or do evil. However, evil certainly occurs in the story. An example of this is when Joseph's brothers betrayed him as "they took him and flung him into the pit" (181). In keeping with the rest of the Book of Genesis, the author assumes that God has created man with free will. Evil occurs because of man's abuse of free will, as when Joseph's brothers sell him to the merchants and lie to their father (181). In part, the Story of Joseph's answer to the problem of evil is that it is not caused by God, who is all good. Rather, evil is allowed by God and is a result of man's misuse of free will. This story's full answer to evil will be treated shortly in a discussion of literary reversal.

The theology presented in *Antigone* differs from that in the story of Joseph in that this Greek drama reflects a polytheistic worldview. This is a fundamental difference because the Story of Joseph presents only one God, who is transcendent, wholly other, and all good. However, *Antigone* presents many anthropomorphic gods who are neither all good nor all bad. In *Antigone*, the gods can be good and helpful. As Haimon says in *Antigone*, "The gods instill reason in men" (765). However, the gods can also cause direct evil. The elders speak to the evil the gods inflict, reflecting that, "Once the gods attack a family, their curse never relents" (762). Not only do the elders attribute evil to the gods' actions, but they view it as a chronic evil.

Antigone's answer to evil is that man causes some evil. This is seen when Kreon looks at Haimon's dead body and admits, "I killed you, that's the reality" (782). The second part of *Antigone's* answer, hinted at above, is that the gods also cause evil. In sum, *Antigone's* understanding is that evil is a result of both human and divine actions.

A crucial theological difference between the two stories: God brings good out of evil in the Story of Joseph and the gods in *Antigone* do not. As previously mentioned, the gods in *Antigone* are not good by nature. Rather, they cause some evil. Moreover, the gods in *Antigone* are not capable of bringing good out of evil. This theological point impacts the use of literary reversal in the drama. Perhaps the largest reversal is when Kreon realizes his error in sentencing *Antigone* to death after a discussion with Tiresias, a prophet. Kreon says, "I'm the one who has changed, I who locked her away will go there to free her" (776). While Kreon's change of heart does follow a discussion with the prophet, which in some way suggests divine influence, this reversal does not give the reader a reason to believe that the gods can or will bring good out of Kreon's mistake. On the contrary, even with this divine warning,

Antigone, Haimon, and Eurydike die tragically. In brief, the reversals in *Antigone* are not used to make theological statements.

On the other hand, the reversals in the Story of Joseph are used to point to a larger theological truth: God brings good out of evil. The first example of this is that Joseph, who was initially a slave to the Egyptians was “set . . . over all the land of Egypt” by Pharaoh (184). Joseph, once a slave, becomes by God’s grace, “lord to all Egypt” (189). Joseph testifies that this is the work of the Lord with the name he gives his second child, “Ephraim, meaning, God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction” (185). This reversal reveals that God brings good out of the affliction of Joseph’s slavery.

The second and perhaps most striking example of reversal being used to demonstrate the redeeming power of God occurs near the end of the story. After Joseph reveals his identity to his brothers, he says, “God has sent me before you to make you a remnant on earth and to preserve life” (189). In this reversal, Joseph sees how God has used the evil he has experienced to bring good not only to him, but also to others. Joseph then tells them, “And so, it is not you who sent me here but God” (189). These words may seem false on a natural level, because it was the evil of Joseph’s brothers that led him to Egypt. However, on a supernatural level, these words ring true because Joseph recognizes that God has actively used the evil he allowed the brothers to commit to bring good to an entire people. The author uses this reversal to communicate that God is able bring good out of evil.

To the question of evil, *Antigone* responds that both gods and man cause evil. On the other hand, the Story of Joseph declares that God is all good, and he allows man to commit evil with his free will. While both stories use literary reversals, only in the Story of Joseph are reversals used to reveal a larger theological message: God brings good out of evil. Although the distressing dissonance of evil still jars our contemporary consciousness, the Story of Joseph invites us to faith in the God who, like a skilled composer, is willing and able to bring the consoling consonance of good out of the distressing dissonance of evil.

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Dennis Hodapp

Discovering the Standard for Sacred Music

The ten short paragraphs pertaining to sacred music in the Second Vatican Council's document, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, are arguably the most influential words ever to be promulgated by the magisterium in regards to the ecclesial policies of liturgical music. For the first time in history, it appeared that almost *any* genre or form of music, with only a minimum of requisites, might be found suitable for the Liturgy. As the document states, compositions are eligible for liturgical use as long as they have both the "needed qualities"¹ and accord with the "spirit of the liturgical action."² These ambiguous directives, along with the document's call for "fully conscious and active participation" were used by many liturgists and clergy as an opportunity for liturgical experimentation, and so followed a great watershed of new and contemporary compositions within several emerging genres and their incorporation thereof into liturgical celebrations during and after the Council (there was a preference toward contemporary folk and Protestant hymnody in the United States). A conservative resistance against this trend has slowly gained traction throughout the fifty or so years following the end of the Council, and while there has been headway in the Church's effort to more clearly define the requirements for liturgical music,³ there is yet a lack of guidance for composers, liturgists and pastors in sorting through the oppressively vast panoply of musical repertoire that has been brought into the Church's Liturgy.

The question at the center of the debate: "What, precisely, are the musical qualities which qualify an arrangement as *sacred*?" One kind of answer was especially popular during the proximate years following the Council, "[T]here is nothing in the music itself—even in complicated

¹ Pope Paul VI, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, Dec 4th, 1963, Papal Archive, The Holy See, 112.

² *Ibid.*, 116.

³ See, for instance, *Musicam Sacram* (1967) issued by the Second Vatican Council's *Concilium*, directives for composition in the CDF's *Liturgiam Authenticam* (2001) and the USCCB document *Sing to the Lord* (2007).

rhythms—that by nature is sacred or secular.”⁴ This position expresses the prevailing relativistic opinion of Western musical philosophy in the past several decades: there is no standard by which to judge the quality of music except that of our personal preference. In opposition to this prevailing opinion, I propose instead an approach rooted preeminently in the eternal, objective and immutable Christ; for, as sacred music is proper to the Liturgy and as the Liturgy is “an action of Christ the priest,”⁵ sacred music must be seen as an action of God’s single and perfect act of creation in Christ.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.”⁶ The Word who was with the Father before the dawn of creation, eternally spoken by the Father in the single and perfect creative act, created all things from nothingness. “And God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth.’”⁷ Being made in God’s image and likeness implies that man’s words must resemble the eternal Word, albeit in an infinitely lesser and limited fashion. God gives to man dominion over all creation, a dominion originating in His creating Word, by giving man words with which he is to name the animals: “So out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name.”⁸

Thus, man’s words, particularly in the act of naming, can be seen as a participation in the creative action of God in Christ whom, in His One Word, speaks *everything*, thereby endowing essence and existence unto all things. God’s Word is eternal and immaterial, but man’s words live in time and space, expressed through matter, the medium of air. The single Word, then, not only births all creation, but by Its unique transmission as *Spirit*

⁴ Richard J. Schuler, “What Makes Music Sacred?,” *Sacred Music*, Vol. 112, No. 2 (Summer 1985): 10.

⁵ Pope Paul VI, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 7.

⁶ John 1:1-3 (RSV-2CE).

⁷ Gen. 1:26.

⁸ Gen. 2:19.

into the first man, manifested in speech, gives him the power of transcending the created toward and into the uncreated.

Why is this understanding of man's speech as a derivative manifestation of God's eternal Word important to music [not simply liturgical music, though this is the proper subject of our inquiry]? The ancients and medievals believed that the cosmos was a kind of *musica universalis* in which the bodily movements of both the heavens (Heaven only for the medievals) and Earth harmonize in a single cosmic symphony. Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger connects this idea with the concept of the Word as the cosmic creative act stating that the, "[T]he musification of the Word is . . . discovery of the song that lies at the bottom of things."⁹ Of "things" that are, earthly beings are subordinated to the higher, celestial beings and reach their perfection by a conformance and harmonization with them. For the Christian man, this can be interpreted as the actualization of his *likeness* to God, the ultimate celestial being. God's eternal Word has set in motion the great symphonic music of the cosmos, and like Him, man is called upon to enjoin his voice with the multitude of cosmic voices in the great harmony of praise. To sing is the prerequisite of harmony; thus man is called to *sing*. To sing is to join creation's cosmic song of praise to its Creator—the song of the Son in loving praise and adoration to His Father.

This discussion suggests a kind of quality in music that transcends the temporal into the fixed eternal, and, as such, it presents an *ontological* dimension of music that I propose must be used as a guide in the task of evaluating liturgical compositions. This approach has a historical precedent: Aristotle, as well as other influential authors of antiquity, ascribed affective attributes to the seven Greek musical modes, the ancient equivalent of modern scales, stating that they "differ essentially from one another, and those who hear them are differently affected by each."¹⁰ The very essence of each mode determined its unique effects *universally*; personal preference could not negate their inherent ability to produce affectations in the human soul. According to Cardinal Ratzinger, the Greeks broadly categorized music into two basic types: Apollonian, "[T]he music that draws senses into spirit and so brings man to wholeness," and Dionysian which "drags man into the intoxication of the senses, crushes

⁹ Joseph Ratzinger, "Liturgy and Sacred Music," *Adoremus Bulletin*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (April 2008). Accessed May 1, 2016. <http://www.adoremus.org/0408SacredMusic.html>.

¹⁰ Aristotle, *Politics*, trans. Benjamin Jowett, in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon (New York: Random House, 1941), 8.5 1340a40.

rationality, and subjects the spirit to the senses.”¹¹ Apollonian music gives priority to the mind and spirit; Dionysian music prioritizes the body and its passions.

If this most general of distinctions is accepted, how might it be used to categorize the great corpus of music that has developed since the era of simple instruments and seven solitary modes? It is likely that no man-made music is purely Apollonian or Dionysian. While it is possible that the angels sing objectively unadulterated Apollonian hymns, and the birds in their springtime agitation chirp entirely carnal, Dionysian love-songs, such a discussion must be left for another time. That a song is labeled Apollonian or Dionysian can be said to be an assertion of its predominant disposition toward spirit or body. It may be helpful to give a few examples. It can be said that the great corpus of Gregorian chant, Renaissance polyphony, and perhaps many of the works of Bach, Mozart, and other early classical composers ought to be considered Apollonian. Many modern musical genres like new age, ambient electronica and avant-garde might also be considered Apollonian. Dionysian music is not difficult to find—one only needs to turn on the radio to find music which engages and even overwhelms the body and its senses: rock, rap, R&B, pop and most anything with a strong “groove” or pulse would probably qualify.

What does this distinction between Apollonian and Dionysian have to do with liturgical music? I suggest that the Church, in her dogmatic prescriptions, implicitly excludes the latter category from liturgical context. The introduction of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* states:

It is of the essence of the Church that she be both human and divine, visible and yet invisibly equipped, eager to act and yet intent on contemplation, present in this world and yet not at home in it; and she is all these things in such wise that in her the human is directed and subordinated to the divine, the visible likewise to the invisible, action to contemplation, and this present world to that city yet to come, which we seek.¹²

That “she is all these things in such wise that in her the human is directed toward and subordinated to the divine” implies an imperative to present herself as ordering the body toward the spiritual. Does this exclude Dionysian works from the Liturgy? It would seem so. And does this imply

¹¹ Joseph Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000), 150.

¹² Pope Paul VI, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 2.

a liberal permission for the Apollonian repertoire? Before answering this question, a further refinement must be made, for as Ratzinger notes, “Apollo is not Christ.”¹³ Christ’s Church is “both human and divine” as our dogmatic constitution on the Liturgy reminds us. Sacred music cannot become a “pure spiritualization”; it must affirm the gift of both soul and body such that “through integration into the spirit, the senses receive a new depth and reach into the infinity of the spiritual adventure.”¹⁴

So far we have treated liturgical music in an ontological dimension apart from the specific content of Revelation. St. John Paul II considers the importance of this content in his *Chirograph on Sacred Music* stating, “[musical] quality alone does not suffice. Indeed, liturgical music must meet the specific prerequisites of the Liturgy: full adherence to the text it presents, synchronization with the time and moment in the Liturgy for which it is intended, appropriately reflecting the gestures proposed by the rite.”¹⁵ Regardless of the harmonic beauty with which a piece is written, if it does not cooperate with the liturgical text, its setting within the Liturgy, its conformance to the liturgical rubrics, and even the details concerning the circumstances of performance (e.g. liturgical day, singers, and acoustical environment), then it has failed in its purpose: to dignify and adorn the Liturgy. Sacred music always manifests in a delicate interplay between music and message; priority, however, must be given to the message. This message is the revelation of Love made incarnate, the Gospel which incites us to “sing to the Lord a new song...tell of his salvation from day to day.”¹⁶ When music overwhelms its message, there is an effective shift toward the Dionysian, and Truth is stifled. To avoid this danger, both composer and liturgist must inquire of their liturgical selections: What is the intended purpose? How well does each song communicate its message? Are the liturgical rubrics adhered to? Does each song integrate aesthetically into the liturgical celebration? Answering these questions moves beyond simply an aural analysis of liturgical suitability into a personal participation in the *mens ecclesiae*, in her mission to give honor and glory to God.

¹³ Ratzinger, “Liturgy and Sacred Music.”

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ John Paul II, *Chirograph of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II for the Centenary of the Motu Proprio ‘Tra Le Sollecitudini’ on Sacred Music* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2003), 5.

¹⁶ Psalm 96:1, 3.

This last suggestion hints at the movement we have made from objective to subjective, though not without reference to the former. In fact, our analysis would be incomplete without this movement, for Christ represents perfect objectivity as much as perfect subjectivity, given fullest expression in the Incarnation. This movement helps acknowledge and confront the prevailing opinion of subjectivism so prevalent in the modern musical mindset. It is undeniable that there are broad preferences in musical tastes even within the limited umbrella of sacred music. Not only are there as many preferences as there are individuals, but in each cultural and ideological community of worshipers there is expressed a unique and legitimate spirit of reception and appropriation of the sacred. God's creative expression is as diverse as it is united. The preferences of individuals and communities represent a *breadth* to the liturgical consciousness, but this consciousness also possesses a *depth* revealed only in a historical appropriation of the Church's heritage of liturgical consciousness throughout the passage of time. This *tradition* and its past, present and ongoing development in and through the Holy Spirit constitutes what Ratzinger calls the "hermeneutic of continuity." Every preferential expression of an individual or community, understood as having its origin in the creative expression of the immutable Christ, must be contextualized in this hermeneutic of continuity; however, to use this as an excuse to repress an individual's preference in any manner would be to stifle the ever creative Spirit. To accomplish this requires true charity — a genuine attempt to understand every individual, their unique expression of the Word, and their particular placement within the Church's multifaceted musical heritage.

These platitudes are not sufficient for developing an adequate and practical method of analyzing liturgical music. Mother Church provides a grounded standard in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*: "The church acknowledges Gregorian chant as specially suited to the Roman liturgy: therefore, other things being equal, it should be given pride of place in liturgical services."¹⁷ Additionally, St. John Paul II echoing the words of his predecessor, St. Pius X, in his encyclical, *Tra Le Sollecitudini*, states that, "The more closely a composition for church approaches in its movement, inspiration and savour the Gregorian melodic form, the more sacred and liturgical it becomes; and the more out of harmony it is with that supreme model, the less worthy it is of the temple."¹⁸ Undoubtedly then, that the majority of churches today incorporate little to no authentic Gregorian chant poses a serious obstacle in their attempts to understand the essence of

¹⁷ Pope Paul VI, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 116.

¹⁸ John Paul II, *Chirograph*, 12.

sacred music, for it is by this standard of chant that all other forms of liturgical music are measured. He goes on to say:

St. Pius X pointed out that the Church had “inherited it from the Fathers of the Church”, that she has “jealously guarded [it] for centuries in her liturgical codices” and still “proposes it to the faithful” as her own, considering it “the supreme model of sacred music”. Thus, Gregorian chant continues also today to be an element of unity in the Roman Liturgy.¹⁹

Gregorian chant, being the supreme model of sacred music, is *always* appropriate to liturgical celebration because it has grown up with the Liturgy and forms its essential identity. Chant, “an element of unity,” is truly catholic. Chant transcends cultural trends, for it can be observed that while a great many musical genres have gone in and out of vogue in liturgical celebrations throughout the history of the Church, chant has always fulfilled the role which is necessitated by the truth that, “sacred song united to...words...forms a necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy.”²⁰

It may be asked, what about Gregorian chant makes it supremely suitable for the Liturgy? This question cannot be answered here, but we may, at least, examine a few features of this unique *corpus musicae* that make it such, beginning with an analysis of its ontological dimension. Modern musical analysis universally accepts a comprehensive set of elements, applicable to any musical item and with which we may investigate the unique qualities of chant: melody, harmony, rhythm, timbre, form, dynamics and silence. We will only consider two of these, timbre and rhythm, for the sake of brevity, although each element merits its own inquiry. *Timbre* is the quality of sound which distinguishes one instrument from another. The timbre of Gregorian chant is a simple, humble and natural vocal tone. It floats smoothly and ethereally, especially in a well-trained choir; it is neither gritty, nor harsh, nor does it carry a heavy vibrato like opera. It engages the body without shocking or assaulting it, but it also does not blend too much into the silence to the point that it becomes atmospheric ambience. Theologically speaking, voice is the most natural instrument, intrinsic to every human—it is the pneumatic breath of God given to man at the dawn of Creation, and in this way it is both the most human and God-like of all instruments. Thus, even when the booming organ and bold trumpet are incorporated into the Liturgy, they are able to be appropriately understood as handmaids to the

¹⁹ Ibid, 7.

²⁰ Pope Paul VI, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 112.

humble “musification of the Word.” The timbre of these, and surely other instruments, might be thought of as accents to the perfectly balanced human voice which lies at the mean between utter silence and chaotic noise.

The element of *rhythm* in Gregorian chant has a unique, unmetred quality, unlike almost all modern secular music. Secular music is most often shaped around a steady pulse, often in the regularly metered 4/4 or 3/4 time signatures. In contrast, chant flows loosely and often pushes and pulls the tempo to create subtle tensing and relaxing effects. To illustrate this point, try to clap to the traditional *Salve Regina* chant as one might to an arena rock anthem or country folk tune. This rhythmic quality, being freed from metered constraints, gives chant an organic, unpredictable but nevertheless virile quality. The unmetred rhythm of chant is perhaps the most salient characteristic that separates and sacralizes it. The guardians of Gregorian chant, the monks of Solesmes, comment on the purpose of this unique rhythmic quality in the introduction to their highly influential *Liber Usualis*: “The Plainsong composers—much less the interpreters—did not create this rhythm; they found it in outline, already in existence, in the Latin prose text which their music is intended to clothe and adorn.”²¹ This corroborates the previously mentioned principle that, in the marriage of text and song, there should be a primacy of word over music, and the music should work in conjunction with the text to illuminate and enhance the prayers of the liturgical celebration. The music does not fight with the text for attention, but draws attention to the words of the Lord.

Although it has been demonstrated here that sacred music finds its foundation in Christ, the eternal, immutable Word, there remains much unfinished work in the endeavor to more clearly define what is and is not sacred music. This task is not made any easier as the music of the Church continues to evolve, as it ought, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Here, a hermeneutic and standard for judging sacred compositions has been proposed, though not in any kind of full explication, but hopefully in a viable, nascent form. One area for future examination are the directives for and corpus of polyphony and organ music which the Church has also declared to be especially appropriate for the Liturgy.²² To conclude, it must always be remembered that beauty is, in the words of St. Augustine, “ever ancient, ever new”: liturgical music is always developing organically through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. If sacred music is composed,

²¹ The Benedictines of Solesmes, *The Liber Usualis* (Tournai, Belgium: Desclée & Co. 1961), xxx.

²² *Ibid.*, 116, 120.

developed and transmitted in the virtues of patience and humility within the rich tradition of the Church, the faithful, drawn into Her life-giving Spirit, may together be more completely lifted into the endless song of praise and joy at the Bridegroom's Heavenly feast.

David Mannino

Boarding the Boat of Providence

Parting with places is much like parting with friends, but places have no mouths and cannot say “goodbye.” I will soon part with a familiar place, for the next stage in life is barreling in like an unavoidable train. While the new destination is obscure, I know I must visit my beloved place one last time before journeying on. It is a place forgotten by many and visited by few. Through the eyes of many it may amount to nothing, but through my eyes it amounts to much. This place is a garden tucked in the woods of a Benedictine monastery. It is not a calculated garden of delicate refinement like that of Versailles. Rather it is a beautiful mess, full of half-finished projects and crooked lines. Certainly the plants here could grow better somewhere else, but the fact is they are *here* with me in this garden. I cannot really love the symmetrical hedges and shrubs of faraway Versailles because I am not involved with the care of those plants. In Versailles I would be only a distant observer, free from responsibility and yet sadly free from any true affection. However, in my garden, I am no tourist, for I love it because it is mine. So it is there my steps hasten to discover what wonders it has for me. I’ve been there many times, but this time is different.

As I think about this, I walk the same woodland path of the past four years. My feet press along the moist ground as the bees buzz by. The ever-changing group of maintenance men wave hello. While faces come and go, their smoking habits stay the same. How come all maintenance men smoke? Peculiar. What would that picnic table be without them sitting there smoking? The same sort of questions morph into these thoughts: “what would be the garden without me?” Certainly it would be less of what it is, and yet I think “what would I be without the garden?” I would certainly be less. I would be less patient with repetition, less appreciative of the small things and more annoyed by failures. Now I arrive to that gated *sanctum* and assess the work needed to be done. I’ll need to turn the compost pile, water the buckwheat and see about the broccoli plants. Crouched down, I pull up weeds and lift up the underbellies of the broccoli leaves to squash the plump cabbage worms. If not killed they will surely munch away all the leaves, leaving the broccoli a pitiful plant. Sometimes I’ll check every leaf and still not find a worm, which is good, but also somewhat disappointing. The work seems useless, to repeat that same action without actually changing anything. By giving my attention to the monotonous pulling of weeds and checking of leaves I don’t have to think about much of anything. It is a cathartic activity, responding to my anxious

rationality. I'm told thinking is always good, but I reckon sometimes it is not the highest good. Maybe squashing these cabbage worms is sometimes a higher good. I finish up my tasks and count the dead worms: six -that is two less than last time.

As I walk back, every gnarled crepe myrtle looks familiar, like an old friend. Soon enough they will be old friends, for I will not stay much longer. I know full well that the summer will take its toll on this garden with maybe no one to tend it. Perhaps all my tedious work may be futile, for weeds grow quickly in a summer of neglect. However, it does not bother me because the garden teaches me something invaluable about weakness and about love. I take care of the garden, for in its weakness it would fall apart. I love it so because it is weak. There is a strange fondness that grows for a friend that is weak and a place that needs you.

This activity of a daily weed and water emulates in one way the love of a person. The affection for this place imitates in some way the affection for people, and so it is a priceless practice in learning to love people, both now and in the future. So what does squashing cabbage worms on broccoli plants have to do with love? Well, a loving action does not need constant chatter or proofs. I do it or I don't; it's incredibly simple. Repetition creates affinity for a particular. I've learned the repetition needed for committed love. People are not plants, I realize that, but the gardening has taught me to care for something and eventually care for someone. Only now do I know that I'm leaving this place soon, but the whole time I was being prepared to leave by the repetitive acts of tending to this place. I've realized everything was truly worthwhile for, in learning to love this particular place, I now know that I can better love a new particular place and a particular person. So even squashing cabbage worms has prepared me for that brilliant light of life to come.

Anticipated is a new direction in life, which is both invigorating and sad. It is the sort of sorrow that accompanies leaving a job, not because of something one did or did not do, but because of new circumstances. I have to say "goodbye," because it is *time* to say goodbye. Simultaneously, it is invigorating, for there is a new path opening up, a new beginning, beginning anew. Perhaps that is repetitive, but then again most of life is. It is madly fascinating, all the repetition! I am constantly being passed from place to place, being ripped from one and tied to another. I am constantly treading some path previously taken by others. My story is so reminiscent of the masses of ordinary people in history. My life will follow a pattern so familiar and repetitive, yet new to me. I guess that is what *really* fascinates me. I'll soon leave this place and go somewhere else. The garden will no longer be my garden.

Someone else will have the same desire to pull up the weeds, till the soil, and eat the fruit of his toil. I say this, but I haven't been eating much "fruit", mostly radishes and peppers. So it is true, that the garden does not actually produce much of anything . . . not yet. Or that's the hope anyway. The produce of the plant is the fruition of the hope of the seed planted. This is why I say parting from this garden is like parting from a friend. It is the same for a friend, that the very "goodbye" anticipates an eventual "hello." I say "goodbye" to the garden in hope that another person will say "hello" to it. So someone will share in the same tasks, for the boat of Providence will bring them there to love that particular place. Ownership can be a strange thing, for possessions pass along in time to others. Thoreau alludes to that reality when talking about a boat he used to own. Thoreau says about a boat as I say about this garden: "But the boat, after passing from hand to hand, has gone down the stream of time" (*Walden, Civil Disobedience, and Other Writings*, 61). That is my faint hope: that repetition will not end with me. Yes, plants will perish and the weeds will thrive again. Wood will be eaten and rot. Rust will rule a little more. Yet someone . . . someone will pick up the tools again and hold them in their hands as I did and as I do. That person will gather, perhaps unwittingly, a glimpse of what loving a person is like by loving so infirm a place as this garden and its repetition. This thought puts me at ease so I may board the boat of Providence that, like a pair of calloused hands, will bring me across the frightful water. As I approach the shores of a new place, I wonder what person Providence will give me to love.

Matthew Prosperie

Faith and Knowledge; Wonder and Science

“Our culture has filled our heads but emptied our hearts, stuffed our wallets but starved our wonder. It has fed our thirst for facts but not for meaning or mystery. It produces ‘nice’ people, not heroes.” –Peter Kreeft

“Wonder is the desire for knowledge.” –Thomas Aquinas

These days, there is a debate between science and faith, and, I think, “wonder” is the solution that will reconcile them. When I was in high school, I used to be filled with wonder at sunsets and sunrises. Every morning on the way to school, I would be overjoyed when I saw a beautiful sunrise; if I had a challenging day ahead, those sunrises gave me courage because they reminded me of God’s particular love for me. Sunrises were God’s way of speaking to me at that point in my life; they reminded me of His beauty, despite all the ugly trials of life. Depending on the time I arrived at school, I would sometimes either sit in the car in silence as I watched the sun rise or step outside on the stairwells of school and look out as the vibrant, golden light spread across the green fields of grass or fell on the walls of the building. I would cherish that light.

On the way home after track practice, the sun was setting, so sometimes I would pull over in a parking lot that had a good view and just enjoy the sunset with God. I would be in wonder at how the clouds caught the sunlight, at how slowly and persistently the clouds marched on to the horizon (as opposed to the cars stopping and going, stopping and going for the streetlights, like our hurried, racing thoughts) and at how the sunlight moved across the clouds, sometimes like a hand waving or an eye shutting, before the last rays of rich orange disappeared, leaving the sky empty, silent, and at peace.

My point is this: I was filled with wonder at sunrises and sunsets, and they taught me so much—and that is what wonder is: to be intrigued by an object, to therefore seek knowledge of it, and to delight in it without ever feeling or thinking that you know it completely, or have experienced it completely.

I think Kreeft puts it very well. With all of the scientific data we have, we think we know everything. There are a few problems with thinking that way, but one that sticks out to me is: if we know everything,

then all the fun and beauty disappears from life. Some might cease to wonder at the sunrise because all they think when they see it is the factual data. Are you fine with saying that when you look into another person's eyes, all that you are experiencing is explainable by the concept of "cells" [or whatever they'll say- I'll just use "cells"]? What's the point of poetry then, and if there is one answer to everything (cells interacting with one another), then why do we find so many different ways of expressing things? Why are we able to gain so many perspectives on the world -- scientific, poetic, theological? To say it's all just cells interacting, or atoms bouncing off each other, is like saying, "now that we have iTunes we no longer need music"!

This isn't to say that we should not pursue scientific knowledge. We should! But we must not pretend to know *why* something happens when we merely know *how* it happens. This is not science but only the distortion of it into a cookie-cutter conception of the world called *Scientism*. Wonder disagrees with *Scientism*, the view that "science alone can put us in touch with the ultimate depths of the world," but not with science. Good science embraces wonder because science humbly and patiently studies the world.

Heroes such as St. Maximilian Kolbe and Martin Luther King Jr. cannot be explained through cells and chemicals *alone*. Science simply does not do justice to our *total experience*. Cells and chemicals might explain an *aspect* of our experience; indeed it does do this, but it does not explain the *whole* of it. *Scientism* changes the questions we are asking and pretends that it doesn't. The real question we humans ask is "*why* do humans do what we do?" and *Scientism* answers that question with the answer to a different question: "*how* do humans do what we do?" Most of the time, when we hear the "how" answer, we recognize that it is a true explanation of what happens, but we don't recognize that it is a true answer to a *different* question. That's why *Scientism* is so alluring, but the question matters as much as the answer. I'm beginning to learn that much of the misunderstandings/errors of life come about because someone takes an aspect of something and explains it as if it is the whole thing. The next time you deeply feel that something a person says is wrong but can't exactly put your finger on what it is, try thinking of what is true about the statement, but also what aspect(s) of the truth he or she is leaving out.

Thus, for knowledge to be preserved, it must be saved by Wonder, by humility, which has as its starting point an understanding that the truth of life is an inexhaustible truth about which one can think forever, constantly discovering new things, and always finding more meaning, more beauty, simply more to be known and valued in what you have found. And Wonder also causes us to seek to know what we experience

better, like my experience with sunrise and sunsets. A perfect example is given on the Feast of the Epiphany in the “Star of Wonder” which we sing of in the Christmas Carol “We Three Kings.” Science tells us that the Star was probably a conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn or maybe a comet or a supernova. For the Magi, though, this Star of Wonder was more than that; it led to Jesus, God Incarnate, who is the eternal Mystery. I am convinced that all true Wonder leads to Christ precisely because He is the deepest beauty, the deepest Mystery. Science cannot explain why, but Wonder pulls us deeper into that question, and leads us, like it led the Magi and myself when I was in high school, to Christ.

In summary, Faith and Science have no quarrel, but Faith and Scientism do. Scientism stuffs our heads with facts but starves our hearts. It limits us to asking the “how” question and pretends the “why” question doesn’t exist. Scientism has given us true answers but for the wrong questions. Let’s start asking the right questions again, and the answers which fill our heads and hearts but still somehow retain their mystery and wonder in us are the answers which we should seek. It is not a matter of knowing less or more but of remembering why you seek to learn in the first place.

Since we are in a world which is so fallen and corrupt, the paradoxical answer which doesn’t make sense to the logic of the world (but actually does make perfect sense) sounds like a sure bet to me, and there is only one King of paradox and mystery, and His name is Jesus Christ. The only Being who could do just fine on His own chooses to help those who receive everything from Him; He is Creator of Man, yet He Himself became man; He died for us in order to rise for us; He tells us that those who love their life will lose it and those who lose their life for His sake will save it; He tells adults to become like children again, and many more examples could be given. So much paradox.

It has worked wonders in my life, and in the lives of thousands of Saints throughout centuries of history and across the world, who say such things as their “deepest sorrows become their greatest joys” when they unite those sorrows to the Cross of Jesus Christ for love of Him and those He loves. Those are the heroes I’m looking for; I’ll search for that kind of Knowledge; I’ll live for that kind of Love. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts” (Isaiah 55: 9). Ultimately, Wonder at things such as the sunrise are not ends in themselves, but they lead us as the “Star of Wonder,” which led the Magi to contemplate the face of Christ Himself.

Paolo Taffaro

**The Lifestyle of the Living Dead in
“The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock”**

In T.S. Eliot’s famous poem “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock,” both fragmentation and synecdoche are utilized in order to contribute to some of the main themes, such as isolation, loneliness, consciousness, and the narrator’s self-perception. In this Modernist response to Romanticism, Eliot describes a man who simply cannot bring himself to a decisive moment when it comes to interaction with women. Eliot’s statement therein is that twentieth century life is one in which the individual’s autonomy is, in a sense, removed, and people must simply submit to the social mandates in which they live. This can be seen in a Freudian sense as the struggle between the id and the superego never being able to reach the point of ego stasis. It is precisely Prufrock’s inability to reconcile these two opposing forces within himself that results in his loneliness and angst. His unending struggle with the id and the superego is juxtaposed to the hell in Dante’s *Inferno* by way of the epigraph as to suggest that Modernity has ushered in a mode of existence in which no man is capable of truly encountering another person. This is a truly ironic model in which to see Prufrock because his hell is the exact opposite from that of Montefeltro’s. In the *Inferno*, Montefeltro’s hell is that he can never have any real encounter with humans because he has lost all of his self-consciousness. For Prufrock, his hell is that he can never have a true human encounter because he is overly self-conscious. Thus, upper-class British women pose a threat because of his fear of how they will judge him. In a word, Modernity is hell. In this hell, he travels down the chain of existence from a cat, to a crab, to an insect, revealing the painfully analytical mind of the modern man as well as the way in which society judges him to the point of paralysis.

Two critics that support such an interpretation of Prufrock are John Hakac and Elisabeth Schneider. John Hakac, in his article titled “The Yellow Fog of ‘Prufrock,’” analyzes the stanza that mentions the “yellow fog,” claiming that it is imagery of the love which Prufrock desires to have yet never achieves. He writes:

Three distinct phases of love are traceable in this unique, self-contained passage which stresses one aggressive and one passive partner. The fog, likened by Prufrock to a yellow tom-cat, woos, experiences a climax, and rests. [...] In the wooing phase (ll. 15-

20), the yellow cat-fog “rubs its back,” “rubs its muzzle,” “licked its tongue,” and “slipped by the terrace.” The consummation (l. 20) is achieved with the quick “made a sudden leap,” followed by the cozy rest phase.¹

The stanza represents the ideal of love which Prufrock desires. However, he is never able to achieve love, nor anything close to it, because of his indecisiveness in social interaction with women.

Prufrock’s ideal love, which appears in the beginning, parallels the ending in which Prufrock hears mermaids singing and sees them riding seaward on the waves. However, they don’t sing to him. Mermaids have been spoken of in stories as singing to sailors, seducing them, and pulling them into the depths of the sea to drown them and even steal their souls. Yet Prufrock doesn’t even get this experience. He has the ideal love which he desires in his mind from the beginning of the poem, but at the sight of these mermaids he drowns, not because of the mermaids, but because of “human voices.” It is not the ideal of love which exists in a fantastic image in his mind that he realizes. Instead, what drowns him is the reality of modern human life as incapable of giving him the ideal he so desires.

The mermaid imagery builds upon the foundation that the yellow fog imagery creates in the beginning of Prufrock’s love song. It is this fog stanza, strategically placed at the beginning, that functions as an ideal that Prufrock seeks, yet never achieves. Hakac says:

From this point on, this vision of healthy love operates as the poem’s informing idea. It is the revealing clue, visibly suspended, of what is missing in Prufrock, serving the reader as an ironic reminder of good love as he struggles sympathetically to understand the long and obscure revelation of Prufrock’s tortured incapacity for such good love which follows to the end.²

Not only is this image the “informing idea,” it is also very much a microcosm of the poem. Within it is contained the ideal love, expressed in a way that suggests that Prufrock will never truly experience it. For instance, the image of a cat is suggested, but it is only referred to as something which rubs its back, its muzzle, its tongue and is never called a cat. This contributes to Eliot’s use of fragmentation: the cat is suggested,

¹ John Hakac, “The Yellow Fog of ‘Prufrock,’” *The Bulletin of the Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association* 26, no. 2 (June 1972), 53.

² *Ibid.*

but it is broken into parts. Additionally, the theme of isolation is suggested by the rubbing against “window-panes,” as the cat, symbolizing Prufrock’s romantic desires, only sees from outside the apparent “room” in which the “women come and go.” Therefore, Prufrock only sees women from the outside, from a distance, and is never able to truly enter into the “room” and come face to face with the women who activate his desires in the first place.

At the realized failure of his ideal love, Prufrock turns further inward on himself and degrades his own dignity as a man. He sings: “I should have been a pair of ragged claws / Scuttling across the floors of silent seas.” This couplet is perhaps the most explicit statement of his own wish for himself as well as his pitiful yearning for a life of solitude. This point, together with the change to future tense then to past tense, gets at the heart of what it means to live in Prufrock’s hell. In her article titled “Prufrock and After: The Theme of Change,” Elisabeth Schneider addresses these issues:

His vacillations of will have moved cautiously toward this possible if still somewhat meager affirmation, the subjunctive *should I* giving way to the more vivid future, *shall I*. But the will’s approach to action generates its own reversal and flight in the automatic reaction expressed through the grotesque central image of the poem, which embodies Prufrock’s recognition of what essentially he is.³

As his indecisiveness overtakes him, he, in a sense, ironically *decides* what he should have been. He sees himself as “a subhuman crustacean, doubly dehumanized by the synecdoche of claws even beyond its identity as crab or lobster, and moving, a cold and solitary being, in armored solitude on the sea floor.”⁴ It is the synecdoche that again contributes to the theme of fragmentation, and it reveals the solitary life Prufrock dreads yet considers as better than his current state. He is not a sea-dwelling crustacean, but he thinks he might as well be one because of his social fears.

This crustacean imagery means even more. The statement Prufrock makes here is as if to say, “all of my worrying is worthless anyway.” In this respect, Prufrock is degrading himself further by eschewing the part of his life that degrades him in the first place: his indecision. Additionally, the “scuttling” of the “ragged claws” carries the

³ Elisabeth Schneider, “Prufrock and After: The Theme of Change,” *Modern Language Association* 87, no. 5 (October 1972): 1104.

⁴ *Ibid.*

connotation of fear and timidity. Prufrock sees himself in relation to society as being better off as a scared, small solitary creature on the floor of the sea. "Scuttling" also hints at a certain indecisiveness as the word implies an almost zig-zag or simply random motion. This image reveals how Prufrock is so overly conscious of the social pressures that weigh him down that he wishes he could have refuge as a solitary, unhuman being.

The self-perception of Prufrock within the society he lives descends the chain of being even further as he realizes what he actually is. He may wish that he could be a crustacean on the seafloor, completely cut off from humanity, but he finds himself unable to escape the judgments of society. He becomes fixed in a "formulated phrase" and "sprawling on a pin," "wriggling on the wall" as a small insect. Thus, Prufrock has further fragmented himself. He has once imagined himself as a cat with desires and excitement. Yet, now he is no more than a small trapped insect beneath the label society places on him. He is, as the beginning of the poem says, "Like a patient etherized upon a table." He is paralyzed by his self-conscious fears of the humans whom he sees as standing over him, examining and inspecting every detail. It is no wonder he would rather be a solitary crustacean.

As Prufrock continues to struggle with his indecisiveness, he worries about fulfilling the demands of the modern world. He tries to prepare himself to take part in the timed rituals of tea and cakes so as to fit in with the women who intimidate him. This Freudian tension between the id and the superego is never resolved or reconciled. He fails to achieve stasis because his id drives him to ask the distant woman he desires some question, which remains untold, but the superego present in this prim-and-proper culture is holding him back. He starts to ascend the stair, but halfway up, returns back down beneath the women where his self-consciousness tells him he belongs. He twice describes the place and the women he so fears: "In the room the women come and go / Talking of Michelangelo." Perhaps it is the sophistication of these women that scares Prufrock to the point of turning back. They are free as they "come and go"; he is not. They are well-educated as they talk of Michelangelo. In light of this, Prufrock is afraid of the women. Since he does not understand the women, he worries that if he were to "force the moment to its crisis," that is, ask that certain unknown question, she will say, "that is not what I meant at all." Thus, the fear, which causes his negative self-perception, indecisiveness, and isolation, is embedded in the reality of his irreconcilable id and superego.

Prufrock finds himself in the hell of modernity, unable to have a truly human encounter. The epigraph sets the tone for the poem as it speaks of Dante's hell in his *Inferno*. This hell is full of body parts but no

whole people. Thus, just as the hell in the *Inferno* is seeing parts of a person and hearing voices, so Prufrock sees body parts throughout the poem and hears voices. This reveals his own flaw, which is the foundation for his hellish experience: his modern, analytical mind. Thus, Prufrock is an allegory of twentieth century man. Eliot suggests in this quality of Prufrock that the problem with modern man is the tendency to be “meticulous,” to fragment people as if they were a “patient etherized upon a table.” The theme of fragmentation is revealed even at the center of Prufrock’s character. In the words of Schneider, “The Love Song is more than a retreat from love, however; it is the portrait of a man in Hell, though until this truth is clearly realized, the hell appears to be merely the trivial one of the self-conscious individual in a sterile society.”⁵

At the surface, Prufrock is simply a man who gets caught up in all of the details. But beneath the surface is the truth. He is a figure of Modernity. It may seem like he is simply taking his time to make decisions, but it quickly becomes apparent that he is no careful thinker. Rather, he is an obsessive coward, unable to see the whole picture because, as he admits, “I have measured out my life with coffee spoons.” In other words, he analyzes every little detail in his mind. As such, Prufrock is a victim of Modernity in two ways: first, he is formed as a modern man who is highly scientific and analytical; and second, he is a victim of the society which casts his very “nerves in patterns on a screen.” In the end, after the song of his mind is over, it is “human voices” that cause him to drown. Prufrock sings his last words: “We have lingered in the chambers of the sea / By sea-girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown / Till human voices wake us, and we drown.” The ideal of love originally imagined by Prufrock in the image of the “yellow fog” has reached its fantastic climax as he lingers by the “sea-girls,” but at the sound of “human voices” he is awakened. He is brought into the reality of Modernity’s version of love which drowns him, and the imagined ideal love has left him completely. As Hakac puts it: “He is, like Guido...a figure of living death.”⁶

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Hakac, “Yellow Fog,” 54.

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Cuong Tran

The Divine Madness of Yahweh

Prospective seminarians should have no qualms about studying ancient literature since many books of the Old Testament fall within that category. Besides, studying ancient works provides wide-ranging perspectives on the classical problems of suffering, death, and sin that will be useful to them as future pastors. In fact, in the second paragraph of *Nostra Aetate*, Pope Paul VI declared, “She [the Church] regards with sincere reverence those ways of conduct and of life, those precepts and teachings which, though differing in many aspects from the ones she holds and sets forth, nonetheless often reflect a ray of that Truth which enlightens all men.” Accordingly, the timeless truths that are encountered in ancient texts can enable us to enter more deeply into the mysteries of Divine Revelation. In particular, by examining love as divine madness, Sappho’s poetry and Plato’s *Phaedrus* reveal the radical *eros* inherent in God’s agapic love for humanity.

One might object that the love analyzed by Sappho and Plato, which is *eros*, is incompatible with the Christian understanding of agapic love. At first glance, the gentle love of the Good Shepherd appears to contradict Sappho’s description of love as “Eros the melter of limbs... sweetbitter unmanageable creature who steals in” (643). Furthermore, Plato’s concept of love springs from Sappho’s definition of *eros*, for Socrates explains, “But if Love is a god or something divine- which he is- he can’t be bad in any way” (521). Despite the continual heartache and nagging jealousies that haunt erotic love, Sappho and Plato both agree that *eros* is one of the highest goods.

Despite these authors’ seeming to go against the Christian ethos of love as a freely chosen act of the will, God’s love for humanity cannot be described as a purely rational decision; rather, God, too, partakes in the madness espoused by Plato and Sappho. Likewise, Christians must plunge headfirst into the abyss of divine madness in order to encounter God, for He cannot be contained in mere words expounded as dogmas and creeds. Ultimately, He must be experienced in the shadow of divine madness wherein we catch a glimpse of His pure, unmediated essence as agape.

In the *Phaedrus*, Plato recognizes this contemplative truth in describing the inadequacy of rhetoric and writing in elucidating the Forms, which provide the stability behind reality that allows for the existence of truth. His description of the Forms, as elsewhere in all of his works, is vague, yet Christians should easily identify God with this depiction:

The place beyond heaven- none of our earthly poets has ever sung or ever will sing its praises enough!... What is in this place is without color and without shape and without solidity, a being that really is what it is, the subject of all true knowledge, visible only to intelligence, the soul's steersman. (Plato 525)

In his mythic account of the nature of the soul and its incarnation, Plato uncovers several truths that would later be revealed in their entirety through Christ. He recognizes the effect of concupiscence through the inevitable fall of the soul from heaven and the nearly uncontrollable black horse that constitutes a part of every soul. Most importantly, Plato apprehends the presence of the Forms in all things, especially in beautiful objects. He states: "But now beauty alone has this privilege, to be the most clearly visible and the most loved" (528).

Just as beautiful things participate in the Form of Beauty, all things ultimately participate in the beauty and existence of God. Like the Forms, God can be perceived through creation, but He cannot be identified with any one thing. Thus, one must continually search for God as Socrates searches for wisdom and a greater understanding of the Forms. Although it is impossible to fully express the essence of God in speech and writing, one must nurture an everlasting hunger for a glimpse of the infinite that is gained through dialectics. This consuming thirst for truth that can be characterized as divine madness is the aim of all love, including *eros*. Therefore, Sappho's obsessive *eros* finds its proper context in divine madness.

Thus, the reluctance to read ancient texts like Sappho's poetry because of its highly sexualized imagery ignores the eternal beauty that captivates and inspires such poetry. Sappho's poems are evocative of the Song of Songs in describing divine madness as a grace that consumes and destroys our cold, calculating, human heart and forges a heart of flesh in its place, burning with longing for beauty and truth. With this in mind, the passage in Poem 1 that raises questions of the lack of free will in *eros* is resolved. Sappho writes: "For if she flees, soon she will pursue / If she refuses gifts, rather will she give them / If she does not love, soon she will love even unwilling" (638). Once we are captured by divine madness, there is no escape, for we are made for such an encounter with the divine.

And, incredibly, God is also caught by this same madness in his love for humanity. As we are held captive by the beauty of God, He is spellbound by our beauty. We are like the boy that Plato describes:

Then the boy is in love, but has no idea what he loves. He does not understand, and cannot explain, what has happened to him. It is as if he had caught an eye disease from someone else, but could

not identify the cause; he does not realize that he is seeing himself in the lover as in a mirror. So when the lover is near, the boy's pain is relieved just as the lover's is, and when they are apart he yearns as much as he is yearned for, because he has a mirror image of love in him-'backlove'- though he neither speaks nor thinks of it as love, but as friendship. Still, his desire is nearly the same as the lover's, though weaker. (532)

Ecstatic with divine madness, we cannot clearly articulate our love for God, and we do not realize that we see an image of ourselves in God. In addition to recognizing God's crazed love for us in the madness of the cross, we must also perceive how much we have conformed ourselves to that standard of divine madness. The dialectical nature of divine madness allows God to be a mirror for our souls, and it also enables us to be mirrors of God's infinite reality. Of course, as Plato points out, our love and mirroring is not as strong as our lover's, but it is just as potent. By cooperating with divine madness in any way possible, we steadily enter into the divine life of the Trinity by manifesting heavenly love as divine madness here on earth.

In the end, the seemingly incompatible view of erotic love as divine madness is an apt analogy for God's very mode of being as love since God's agapic love defies human reason and includes eros. Drawing upon this conclusion, St. Paul describes the cross as a sign of contradiction, "For Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles" (NABRE, 1 Cor. 1. 22-23). Sappho's consuming desire is seen as foolishness because of the weakness of a selfish, calculating reason as represented by Lysias' speech favoring the non-lover over the lover. Yet, seminarians enter into the foolishness of divine madness in reciprocating God's love through the sacrificial act of celibacy, for lifelong celibacy is ultimately based on an *eros* that hungers for God alone. Thus, in our study of God, aspirants to the priesthood must be informed by a faith that models the divine madness espoused by Sappho and Plato.

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Alex Odom

Perfect Changes

I am made, formed with the rest of my choir as all the Choirs are called into being by the Divine. The Divine reveals His nature and ours, and we choose what our song contains, to whom we are singing. A brother of mine from a choir greater than mine sings a song which is not in the nature of the Divine and many others are with this creature, choosing this song to sing. I sing, with most of the Divine's Choirs, of the Divine in his majesty, rejecting that song which my brother calls for.

The Spirit and Word flow in the Divine way by the Divine Will, and I marvel at all that is made. Primary in my vision is the invention of time -- that glorious reality which allows change and newness of form. My brother's legion sings in opposition while I revel in the workings of my Maker. Entering into time, I experienced a sensation I had formerly been incapable of knowing, of being near something which is young.

The youth of the universe was unprecedented in all of creation, for the rest of Divine creation was not subject to time and thus is unable to age; if you cannot become old, then you are never young, as the dichotomy is not in your nature. While this revelation was glorious, the confusion it caused me was great. Why would The Word have created a mode and means for change? If something is perfect, would not any change destroy that perfection?

That is when I noticed the beauty of motion, a concept not available to those outside of time as it is a time-dependent reality. This was beauty in motion, change itself as perfection. The Eternal Wisdom of the Divine is truly marvelous to have created such a place where things are in constant change without a loss in perfection. And oh how the universe danced before the Divine, energy and matter in a joyous exchange, colors created and destroyed, all the universe joyously dancing for its Creator. I was swept up in this dance and sang to the wisdom of The Word in creating such a mode of praise.

I followed a minute creature as it flit through creation constantly changing form, contracting and expanding, twirling amongst its brethren as they proclaimed the might of the Divine with their infantile exchange of joy. I found joy in following so small a thing with such glee in its existence.

There came a point in the dance when it slowed, and matter began to coalesce and take shape. As it formed, the dance changed; it was no longer the tumultuous swirling of an Infant universe but a tentative

beginning to a much more ordered and intricate dance of praise. Forming matter defined shapes and patterns in the dance, weaving themselves together to form ever more complex patterns.

After following this dance and learning its pattern, I saw The Word come down upon a small member of the dance. Drawing near to see what would be made, I saw creatures which could create. Oh the unfathomable glory and wisdom of the Divine Word in creating things which can participate in creation. Exploring what had been made, I was captivated by the beauty of these creatures, not just in sight but in sound and smell also. Oh, the smells of just one of the many growing things contained a tale intricate and beautiful enough to give reason for the whole of this creation. Even so, the Glory of the Divine was pleased to create thousands and thousands of them each with its own unique and glorious scent. Then I turned to listen more completely to the chorus of moving things as they joined in the song to their creator; varied notes mingled amongst those moving creatures. Some sang high, others sang low, some sang long and melodiously, others sang short and simply, and yet all sang for His Glory.

As I marveled at this, The Word came again and formed and breathed into a new being, giving it a nature like unto mine in will. Unlike the other moving creatures, this being would not merely follow what had already been done but would choose the mode of praise it brought to the Divine. How gracious the Divine is to grant to this, a part of creation, the beautiful capacity to dance a new dance and sing a new song for its creator!

As the creature sang and danced, I saw its relation to the universe. This was to be the master, steward, and servant of the dance I had been learning; this being would serve the dance, and the dance would serve it. Overjoyed at this, I once again joined the dance to see all that The Word had made and how its new master would begin to shape and conduct its movements of praise.

I saw the universe rejoicing in its newfound purpose and the wonders of which it may become a part. I reveled in the joy of the universe as I -- the dance faltered. The perfectly balanced patterns that had been, were shifted and the balance was destroyed. Matter had whirled in perfect harmony, but now that harmony was corrupted; the universe would decay and destroy itself.

The tears I wept were of the deepest sorrow; the dance continued but was no longer the perfection it had been. What could have caused the destruction of such beauty? Who would wish such perfection to be lost and so brutally? I wept over all that had been lost and cried out to the Divine

that it might be returned. In reply, I received a sigh of such sadness as to break the hearts of all who heard it. None but the Divine can know such sorrow as no other being loves with the Divine's perfect love. It was some time before I could once again look upon the universe I had loved and danced with as it flowed unblemished from the mouth of the Divine Word. When I did, it was with great effort that I continued gazing upon such broken beauty.

Remembering the steward, I returned to see what had become of it at the stumbling of the dance. Coming upon the land from whence the steward had been formed I found only some of my brethren, surrounding the land as if protecting it from something. Curious, I inquired as to what could have led to such a thing being asked of them. Hearing the tale, I wished I had not asked.

For a time the steward had served the Divine rightly, but the steward was incomplete, alone, not finding any of the moving creatures to be worthy of his partnership. Therefore, the Divine formed out of him another steward and she was found worthy of being a companion and partner to the first as she was his equal, having been formed out of him. Together these stewards served faithfully for a time, and it was good. Until my brother, the Traitor, envious of the universe the stewards had been given, deceived them, causing them to break from the true path of praise, which is the task and glory of all the Divine's creatures. Lying to them and using his power, he led them to doubt the Divine's nature; they believed Him to be limiting them, and so they strived for greatness separate from Him, thus destroying their union with Him. The union broken, they could not stay nor could they return. Therefore, my brothers kept watch.

How could the Traitor have done such a thing as this, taking from these beings the perfection they were given? By his Evil they were led astray; by following him they ceased following the Divine. Why does my brother hate Him so? Tricking His creatures into denying the source of their life. I wept as I saw their pain and corruption; having been wrenched from the source of their life, they cried out for His return though it was they who had left. Upon hearing of their crimes, their pain and their death, I let out a wail as I had never done before, and I begged that this creation had never been; the pain of its corruption was more than could be borne by any living being. I cried out, begging to be spared this sight and memory until The Word came to me and said:

"My child, you who know my sorrow. This, my creation, is not beyond hope. Oh, that it had stayed as it was, it would have brought such beauty as had not been known. But it was not to be. I knew of your brother's plans and knew what destruction he would cause. I allowed him to carry them out, just as I allowed those of my choirs to flee from me at

their choosing. Without such allowance, what love you gave to me would not have been yours. The same is true of these. Unlike those choirs of mine who turned from my love, these stewards of mine may yet return to me. I will go to them as they are and offer them healing of their souls that they may have another chance to turn to my love. You, my child, shall be called Gabriel and you will bear my message to them, announcing my coming."

Robert Calmes

For Paul: *Via Negativa*

Just below the upper canopy is the lower
Below the low one is the underbrush
Leaves, loam and loess
In layers of shade

Just below are the artifacts in their perfect form
Shiny like white trout in the marsh
But pulled from soil

Whether plowing or praying, the form is revealed
Brown points lying still in the soil
Just below the business
Of works and ways

Lies a greater silence

Caleb Krischke

The Mystery of Fraternity

The sun grows weary as time drags forth.
Soon it absconds
Its post for a time of respite.
Where has the time gone?
What did it leave?

Hearken to the sound of the heart,
Beating fast,
As he gazes upon
A beginning, a journey, adventure.
Discovering himself through time.

He enters into a sacred union which presents
Smiles, gossips, laughter, and scowls
Presumptions, doubt, and known regrets.
The young heart struggles
In imitating the Nazarene.

Behold! He observes on the horizon,
Fellow hearts,
Earnestly moving forward in
The dance of life,
Holding their heads above the waters.

Experienced, they have, together
The Spirit of God

Which breathes life to
A blossoming of character.
As the hearts heed the beckoning of the shepherd.

The time is not spent
But is simply transformed
Into food for the soul.
Which the heart chooses
To nourish or to poison.

So with friends at his side,
The young heart beams.
Knowing that the dance,
The gift, is the present,
And his brothers are a blessing.

Joseph Marcantel

Scourging

I was standing by the river
The remains of people glowed behind me.
Their pain was my first scourging.

They moaned for a forgiveness they did not desire
They cried for a rewritten past they would not accept

I crossed the river
The demon-king glared down at me from his pulpit.
His eyes were my second scourging.

I moaned for forgiveness
I cried for a rewritten past

His devils brought me down
The Severed welcomed me as their own.
Their welcome was my third scourging.

I had left Charity's Child to die
Now I wander aimless
Carrying my head by the hair

Joseph Marcantel

Fire and Rain

Embers plummet towards the earth
A ferocious parasitic fire
Clinging to whatever it touches
Consuming, obliterating

The wrathful inferno rages on
Its claws rake the trees
Blackening everything in its path

The Fire continues to consume
But as it howls on, a new sound can be heard
The whistling wind and the descending raindrops

A sizzle begins in the midst of the inferno
It begins to grow as water begins to trickle down the hillside like fiery tears
The torrent builds again; sheets begin to pour, the fire and the wind roar
Like two lions in an arena, they battle each other; claws locked in claws,
howling
And roaring; tangled manes of fire and water rustle, creating a sheet of
steam and vapor

A heap of ash on the hillside
The rain remains

Joseph Marcantel

Coated White

Once I stood upon a glacier
So steep, so narrow
My toes hung over the edge
Imprinting their darkness on the canvas below

Across the white chasm
In the after-glow of dusk
Stood that siren
Staring at me

Her black wings created a black scar on the white canvas
Enshrouding the ice like a curtain of dread
She emanated the heat of a forest fire
She melted everything around her

Then I looked down and saw at my feet a puddle
And in the puddle my reflection
I had the head of a badger and the comb of a rooster
And my mouth was hanging open like I had no jaw

Then the Earth began to shake and my feet began to quake
I began to slip into that chasm of white
And she was up there standing over me
That person I knew I would never understand

And here I still sit

On this white canvas in the bottom of this pit
Slowly painting my story out
So that I will be seen by that siren above me

John Dugas

Dismas

O setting sun, you continue your labor
Pain like lightning coursing through every ounce of your being
I came here because of my sins, and so did you
“Today you will be with me in paradise”

The world stands still, as its Lord pays redemption’s fee
I asked for remembrance, and you baptized me in my blood
Which is now mingled with tears of Joy
“Today you will be with me in paradise”

I, the first to win the unfading crown
Who am I that I should enter that Kingdom?
I, a miserable thief, was given what could never be stolen
“Today you will be with me in paradise”

Those long years of darkness,
Seizing everything, but enjoying nothing
You are what I have always been searching for.
“Today you will be with me in paradise”

These hands, these hands, which did violence
Expel crimson guilt, burning me within my body
At one time a punishment, now my penance and liberation
“Today you will be with me in paradise”

He breathes his last
Silence cloaks what is below
The sun has set, while I have arisen

Joe Seiter

Procession

The harvest is complete,
And the grain grows in proper storage.
With this breath of air,
Flames fill the hollowed hearth
Now ready for kindling.

Farmers leave the field,
Walking down the path
Paved with rocks and fallen leaves,
That crunch beneath leathered feet,
To visit sleeping friends,
Who have had their fill
Of bountiful harvests
And that fire which burned so hot.

As the throng walks
And the bell rings,
Smiles turn to somber faces.
Neglected flames suffocate,
And the Sun starts to hide.
Still the harvesters trample
The leafy rocks, which refuse
To be pushed away

As the throng walks
And the bells ring,

Smiles turn to somber faces.
Nurtured flames steady,
And the Sun starts to shine
Still the harvesters trample
The rocky leaves, which cannot
Be pushed away

They arrive and the choir sings
Faintly, the bell still rings
Its toll falls upon frozen ears
That have grown deaf
In the cold night.
With unkindled flames long-expired
And grain long-consumed,
They crawl into their beds of stone
All alone.

They arrive and the choirs sing
Clearly, the bells still ring
Their chimes overwhelm fit ears
That have sought to listen
To the secrets of the day.
With flames well-kept
And grain resowed,
They climb into their beds of grass
In the company of friends.

