INTRODUCTION

IN THE TWO DECADES SINCE THE CLOSE OF THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, the conciliar mandates of ecumenism, of openness to the secular world and for the elimination of clericalism, juridicalism and triumphalism from ecclesial life have combined to produce a diffidence among Catholic theologians respecting themes both traditional in and familiar to the preconciliar Church. The corollary is a willingness to consider the confessional stance of those Protestant communions to which the Council referred as belonging to the Church of Christ although not in full communion with the Catholic Church in which the Church of Christ is actual. The consequences have been particularly evident in the theology of the sacraments, wherein the tensions between those within and those outside the Catholic Church are most palpable.

Within the continuing ecumenical discussions of the past two decades, it has been particularly in the area of the Eucharist and its correlative, Orders, that the most refractory problems have been encountered, and, in fact, left unresolved; nor is there any present likelihood of further ecumenical progress in this direction. A considerable impatience has resulted; the prospects of ecumenical union raised by the Council have not materialized, and it is easy to indict the sacramental system of Catholic worship as the major obstacle to the union of the People of God. Attention having been focused particularly upon the Eucharist, given that this is the sacrament of union, the question of intercommunion has become crucial, for it raises the possibility of a church union on the level of praxis without waiting indefinitely upon one at the level of doxa. Perhaps in consequence, one now hears a good deal about orthopraxis as the surrogate for orthodoxy. Such suggestions place the whole of Catholic sacramentalism in issue, and have done so with particular success in the American theological community. This has been the case at least since the appearance in English of Hans Kung’s The Church, which introduced a thoroughgoing revision of the Catholic theological tradition on Reformation principles. The ecclesiological focus of Kung’s book immediately put the issue of the ex opere operato in the foreground, and Kung’s dismissal of that doctrine prefigured its general neglect by American Catholic theologians henceforth, to the point that the American episcopacy also is no longer entirely comfortable with that emphasis. Neither are the various theologians of liberation who, taught by Kung and Metz, have discerned in the sacramental structure of Catholic worship what their tutors postulate a priori of historical structure as such, i.e., an imposition upon the Christian freedom of the faithful. This relativization of the Catholic sacraments rests upon
the rediscovery and restatement of a classic doctrine of the Reform in the contemporary idiom of historical criticism, viz., the total corruption of the historical order, and the consequent a priori incapacity, the unworthiness, of any historical actuality to mediate the risen Christ. Under Luther this emphasis focused upon denying the representation of the sacrifice of Christ in the Mass; this is also the point of doctrine found most neuralgic by the current movement for the ordination of women to the priesthood, which here may stand as typical of those trends within contemporary Catholicism which contend, as did Anaximander long ago, that all historical differentiation is rooted in injustice.

What is most striking in the Eucharistic theology of these Catholic theologians is its reiteration of the cosmological themes which, although much older than the Reformation, are nonetheless characteristic of it; at heart, the center of the “new” Catholic sacramental theology, as of the Reformation, is a historical pessimism, a set conviction of the opacity of history to the Kingdom of God. This pessimism is now articulate as scholarly method, as an abstract ratio whose veridical supremacy is not to be challenged. Such rationalist historical scholarship, which arose during the renaissance and triumphed during the Enlightenment, postulates a monist notion of truth irreconcilable with that of the Catholic historical tradition of the revelation in Christ of the Triune God. That same monism is now normative in the circles of what used to be called positive theology, i.e., among the practitioners of those nominally theological disciplines which exploit some autonomous and overtly nonmetaphysical methodology of humane science such as history, sociology, philology and the like. The abandonment of the metaphysical interest is of course nearly if not quite axiomatic in the secular academy; it is a point of view which not only has powerful support in the theology of the Reform, but which is also, as positivist, so identified with modernity that Catholic theologians are not generally unwilling to contest its validity.

THE SYSTEMATIC IMPASSE

The positivist abdication by Catholic theologians of the Catholic theological interest in metaphysics is due in considerable measure to the fact that Thomism, the one significant metaphysics with theological application, has largely exhausted itself in a doomed effort to transcend, by appeal to the immanent necessities of thought, the Kantian critique of rationalist metaphysics. Whether led by a Rahner or a Lonergan, the systematically dehistoricizing thrust of “transcendental” Thomism is the best indication of its continuing theological irrelevance, for the only metaphysics - or historical science or sociology or hermeneutics or whatever other humanism for that matter - which can serve the Catholic faith as a theological quaerens must first recognize that the truth of the faith is free, and that it is appropriated only by an intelligence freed from the immanent necessities of an otherwise monist logic by the graced appropriation in faith of the Trinitarian revelation. It is only by this emancipation from the determinism of monadic logic that a humane discipline becomes a theology. The methodology consistent with that theological emancipation must then be comparably freed from the immanence of the fallen reason’s spontaneous monism by that reason’s graced and therefore free subordination to the prime truth which is the New Covenant, the historical revelation of the Trinity, whose covenantal immanence in history constitutes and establishes the criterion of all historical reality. Concretely, such subordination to the Revelation as to the criterion of historical truth imposes upon the abstract rational construct of the theoretician the status of hypothesis, which is to say, of possible rather than of actual truth; this alone permits the theologian’s inquiry - and that of any other academic discipline - to remain experimental and historical.

However, the recognition that theological method is first and foremost a method of inquiry into a radically free and therefore novel historical reality is now generally lacking among Catholic theologians as a consequence not only of the influence of a pervasive modernity, but also because of the kind of theological method taken for granted by the Thomism in which most of them were trained before the Second Vatican Council. They find themselves in two camps, the one now disdainful of all metaphysics and reliant upon one of the so-called positive methods of theologizing, the other committed to the metaphysical realism of Catholic sacramentalism, but led by the logic of school Thomism into surrendering more and more of that realism.

This impasse may best be understood by examining two contrasting Catholic studies in sacramental theology as these bear upon Eucharistic realism. One of these, by Tad Guzie, is frankly antimeetaphysical; the other, by Colman O’Neill, O.P., is the work of an orthodox Thomist theologian, entirely intent upon upholding and exploring the Catholic tradition. Their only link,
apart from an interest in the Eucharist, is their common acceptance of the monadic notion of being and its transcendentals which is proper alike to school Thomism and to the positive methodologies which now more and more displace metaphysical theology, together with the correlative tendency to dehistoricize the sacramental worship of Catholicism. On this rationalist basis, Guzie has constructed his rejection of all sacramental realism; O'Neill on the contrary would ground his defense of that realism on that same rationalism. On examination, it will be seen that Guzie's revisionism is the more consistent development of this monist understanding of reality, at the evident price of denying outright the historicity of the faith and worship of the historical Catholic Church.

Nonetheless, however contradictory their intentions, Guzie and O'Neill share a common error, the cosmological monism of an unconverted Aristotelian logic, and we shall see that it drives both of them to comparable dehistoricizations of the Eucharist.

This cosmological\textsuperscript{15} mentality, which from within the historical-liturgical tradition of Catholicism can be described only as a false consciousness, a historical pessimism in fundamental contradiction to the Catholic optimism which worships in history the Lord of history, is for most contemporary theologians simply the conventional wisdom and so the common ground, express or implicit, for all theological discussion.\textsuperscript{16}

Such false consciousness is a permanent reality in the Church of sinners; it stands over against the Catholic faith as a temptation, a possible idolatry, which would elevate above the truth of Christ some ideal and non-historical criterion that must bar all historicity from the Word made flesh. This consciousness became explicit in Marcion, but it was in the air when John wrote his letters, and has remained as a mimetic possibility throughout all the ages of the Church, precipitated here and there across the centuries in banal variants of the prototypical gnostic rejection of the compatibility of God and man in history.

When Luther was driven to deny the historicity of the Eucharist, i.e., when he rejected the event-character of Christ's presence in the Mass whether labelled sacrifice or transubstantiation, he did no more than accept the implications of the nominalist denial of any intrinsic transempirical reality in the historical order. This denial, the last consequence of the rationalist elimina-

Luther's own participation in this project was not wholehearted; he insisted upon the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and if he refused any language which would point to this as an event of history, he nonetheless treated it as one, for he refused as well that sacramentarian reduction of the reality of the Eucharist to the reality of faith which was pressed upon him by his erstwhile followers. The ambiguity he left unresolved; it remained to men such as Zwingli, Beza and Calvin to cut the tie that bound Luther to the ancient realism, and to make the presence of the Christ something indistinct from the faith of the believer. The abstract sola fide criteriology then proceeded to divorce that faith from any reliable manifestation or expression in history, for history was now no more than the nominalist facticity, the empirical \textit{duree}, of time as quantified and so reduced to mere temporal succession; meanwhile Christianity, heretofore the historical faith of a people unified historically and intrinsically by their Eucharistic worship, now became the nonhistorical faith of the individual's interior union with the absent Lord: \textit{Sursum corda} obviated the words of consecration.\textsuperscript{19}

The basic postulates of this pessimism are those of a monism, a necessitarian rationale of the pagan conviction that material reality is radically irredeemable, no more than an irrational tension between being and its negation whose sole remedy is the absolute isolation of being from non-being; thus conceived, being becomes the ideal immaterial unity of number, and nonbeing becomes mere chaos, nothingness. This same historical pessimism, this same refusal of the intrinsic unity, truth and goodness of the material and historical creation, underlies the heretical movements which have troubled the Church from its inception: gnosticism, Marcion's heresy, mo-
narchianism, modalism, the Montanist which beguiled Tertullian, the Manichaeism which for nearly a decade was able to persuade even an Augustine, Arianism, Nestorianism, Eutychianism, iconoclasm, millenarianism, the Eucharistic “symbolism” of Ratramnus of Corbie and later of Berengarius, still later of Wyclif and Hus, the Reformation itself, the contemporary “consequentialist” morality, all rely upon the presumptive opacity of history to God, and upon the consequent impossibility of the mediation of God to man through any concrete historical event.

For all these aberrant movements, history is the realm of the senseless, of an absurd manifold, the intolerable tension of being and nonbeing, of truth and falsehood, of unity and multiplicity, of eternity and time, of God and man.

The denial of the historicity of the New Covenant attained a fuller development as the dynamics of immanent reason were explored in renaissance and post-renaissance philosophy and in the criticism of historical religion which proceeds from the Enlightenment, but the denial is firmly in place with the Calvinist sacramental doctrine whereby the alienation of the risen Christ from the historical order is accepted as the inevitable corollary of justification sola fide, for this alienation amounts to the logical, the necessary dissociation of the divine and the human; pushed to its ultimate reaches, it can only conclude to the nihilism which in history must say nothing of either.

The postulates of this pessimism have surfaced sporadically throughout the Church’s history in movements which amount to the rediscovery, whether as a temptation or a heresy, of the pagan despair of any perduring human value, of any truth or goodness or beauty or unity which time will not devour. The familiar monist logic then unfolds: truth becomes simply the idea and reality the ideal, the immanent product of the mind, and being is then a monadic absolute unity apart from which is only chaotic nothingness. The conclusion is inescapable; the diverse concrete particularities of history must be annulled: thought has no other task and man no other recourse than to escape from the nonbeing, from the illusion, the anguish, of significant, meaningful, sacramental existence in history.

It is the tragedy of Catholic theology that it has been haunted and continually tempted by this logic of monadic being, whose prime analogate is not Triune but simply One. The Thomist attempt to transcend this monadic logic by means of the analogy of being had failed by the end of the thirteenth century; hereafter, the confident Catholic rationality which Thomas above all exemplifies began to founder, and with it failed the theological optimism of this, “the greatest of centuries”. Logic had triumphed over the free order of the trinitarian creation, and the intrinsic truth, unity, goodness and beauty of the world began to lose all concrete objectivity. This conviction emerged in its clarity with Ockham, and proceeded to dominate the Western intelligence to the point that the technological worldview of “modernity” can no longer imagine a concrete unity which would not be quantifiable, mathematical at bottom, nor a historical order which would be free. It is not then remarkable that theology should share this blindness, for the failure of the Western intelligence is its own. The indebtedness of the classical theology to the genius of Plato and Aristotle carried with it the assumption of a false, a radically pagan problematic, that of rationalizing the otherwise dichotomous and fragmented world in which monadic unity excludes all multiplicity whether as structure or as history, and summarily, the divine opposes the human. Plato had found the origin of these oppositions in a mythic fall, and their remedy in a return to the primordial integrity through eros, through dialectical ascent, through death. This, the most sublime expression of the pagan religious quest, nourished the speculation of Greek and Roman Christianity for a thousand years, until the reception of Aristotelian metaphysics in the medieval West succeeded in minimizing the factual fallenness of things by the projection of a naturally good creation whose metaphysical structure corresponded to the act-potency relation between predicate and subject in logical discourse. Thus the Latin Christian conversion of Neoplatonism, the
Augustinian anamnesis—become-illumination which the Western patristic theology had adopted, became otiose and was by the end of the thirteenth century abandoned; henceforth, contra the need for illumination posited by the Christian Platonism of the Latin Fathers from Ambrose and Augustine down to St. Bernard and St. Peter Damian, and by the Augustinian theological tradition through Bonaventure, the immanent logic of unaided reason was held to suffice for an account of the relation between unity and multiplicity, between permanence and change, between eternity and time, even between man and God. All of these relations, intrinsic to historical humanity under the Christian dispensation, thus intrinsic to creation, under Aristotelian auspices became natural, a term now imbued with the rationalist Aristotelian necessitarianism. So complete was the triumph of this confident monist logic that the order of freedom, of gratuity, of grace itself, came to be rationalized as adventitious, accidental, arbitrary, extrinsic to rationality and finally an affront to it, instead of as heretofore the very wellspring of truth, the New Covenant from whose freedom theological rationality proceeds and apart from reliance on which foundation theology does not and cannot exist.21

This naive rationalism rendered the Trinitarian revelation of the meaning of unity unintelligible, unavailable to theological assimilation and exploitation; although all the great heresies rested from the beginning upon a monadism, and required to be countered by a reaffirmation of the Trinitarian faith, that central article of the Catholic faith had been first immanently by its rationalist isolation from its Revelation in the Christ, and then, thus dehistoricized, had become and thereafter remained an interest largely irrelevant to systematic theology because extrinsic to its still monadic a priori, whether as responsive to the medieval quest for a metaphysics, or to the more historical and sociological interests of current theology. Among the theologians of the high middle ages, only Saint Bonaventure seems to have understood the unity of being as trine, believing as he did that the Trinitarian nature of God was the condition of divine creativity. But his Christology is still held captive by a literalist reading of the patristic propter peccatum; and while he places Christ at the center of creation, it is not clear how this consists with the prior centrality he has conceded to the Word. Unless, as with O’Neill, Christ’s historicity is subordinated to a prior creation by the immanent Trinity,22 in which case the historicity which Bonaventure attributes to creation, as essential to its intelligibility, must be distinguished from that historicity which, because it is Christocentric and consequently propter peccatum, is therefore not essential to its intelligibility precisely because sin itself is not. Bonaventure does not address the problem of relating these two levels of historicity.

The monadic reduction of truth to non-historical necessity of course reduced historical freedom to randomness, regarding it as unintelligible and irrational until submitted to the nonhistorical idea, the theory whose atemporality and consequent immunity from change and fragmentation was thought to be identically its security in truth. The lonely individual, man as monad, formerly, when under pagan auspices, the pawn of fate or the game of the gods, and submitted thus to an arbitrary force majeste, was submitted again, under such pseudo-Christian speculation, to the same monadic authority whose sole function continued to be to order the world by the elimination of the supposed randomness which in actuality is the spontaneity of freedom and history. Thus is understandable the enthusiasm in the medieval schools for the Roman law and for the Aristotelian psychology and sociology; an enthusiasm echoed in the contemporary sociological and political theology whose adepts continue to find historical freedom meaningless until submitted to the non-historical eschatological verities of the inexorable utopian process.

This monadism has been the native air of systematic theology since Christians first tried to counter the pagan criticism of their faith. It has not affected the magisterial proclamation of doctrine for that has its ground in the historical worship of the Catholic community, radically free because Eucharistic: the Magisterium uses theology, but does not depend upon it. However, the theological academy, when corrected by the higher truth of Catholic doctrine, has an unfortunate tendency to regard that correction in obediential and monadic terms:23 not then, as an invitation to the free conversion and reorientation of the intelligence to a higher and historical truth, but as a voluntary submission to a command - for that the truth is free, appropriated only in freedom, is a notion alien to the immanent rationality of the monadic mind. The historical tradition of the historical faith then is encountered as suppressive, oppressive, and the devil has all the good words: freedom, truth, intellectual honesty - these indices of human dignity are seen then to require the sort of eternal warfare against doctrine, as against “all that would enslave the mind of man,” to which the deist Jefferson was vowed. Unfortunately the outcome of this revolt of the autonomous mind against
the doctrinal tradition, which argues from the non-necessity or gratuity, i.e., the historicity, of the revelation to its lack of *intrinsic* truth and so to its merely arbitrary imposition *ab extra* by a divine or ecclesial despotism, is the reinvo
cation of that despair of the divine-human relation which is the hallmark of paganism: the autonomous mind, having absoluted God and man, now finds both absolutes to be empty as the logical implication of their absoluteness.

Outside the rather circumscribed environment of contemporary theology, whether in Protestant or Catholic guise, the incapacies of the autonomous intelligence have for some time been admitted. Since Godel’s famous proof of the incoherence of all arithme
tical reasoning, the last bastion of monadic logic and so of the immanently self-sufficient mind has fallen, a fall long presaged by the Pythagorean discovery of irrational numbers and later by Aristotle’s recognition of the dependence of logical discourse upon the potentiality of all human understanding.

It is long since commonplace that the value-free historical objectivity which von Ranke ambitioned is illusory; even in modern physics, the search for physical objectivity has produced the dead-end dilemma posed by the so-called Copenhagen interpretation of quantum mechanics versus that required by Einstein and Planck, where on the one hand physical reality is reduced to a chaos utterly dissociate from the equations of the physicist, and where on the other the physicist still seeks the equations which will annul the spontaneity of the subatomic world. The former viewpoint is equivalently that of Buddhism; the latter still moves out of the traditional Judaeo-Christian conviction that the physical world is intrinsically intelligible, but insists that intelligibility must finally be ideal, not historical and not free. Neither position can justify the experimental mode of science, which is intent upon the irreducible intrinsic truth of the particular event as the historical corrective of all ideal nonhistorical theory and hypothesis. Only a historical optimism can justify the experimental method which underlies science as such, and only faith in the Lord of history can warrant that optimism. But once that faith and that optimism are in place, the determinist logic of monadic being has been rejected; only the trinitarian logic of the free creation, i.e., of the world whose intelligible unity images in history that of the Triune God, can serve the experimental mode proper to historical intelligence, for this logic relativizes the oth-
erwise insurmountable dichotomies of the autonomous mind, of truth as monadic, “the antinomies of reason,” by providing their historical, their trinitarian synthesis. This trinitarian rationality is the structure of the Chris
tian revelation whose articulation is the New Covenant, a free historical event which is the immanence of God in man and in history. Only here is overcome the pagan fatality, the divine-human antipathy, the contradiction found pervading all non-identity whenever the Lord of history is not acknowledged and the goodness and the unity, truth and beauty of the qualified, variegated and multitudinous creation in its imaging of the triune God is not in consequence admitted. Evidently, a theologian must take this trinitarian, this covenantal sign-value of creation very seriously, and so resist a outrance the allure of those arguments which would persuade him that the finite is not capable of the infinite, that man is locked within the ancient fatalities to which even God must be submitted.

To delineate the disaster attendant upon a monist nominalism is not at all to urge the triumphant return of medieval or baroque or neo-scholastic metaphysics; it is of these that nominalism was and is the logical, the immanently necessary development, for such metaphysics labors under the pagan notion of the monadic unity of being, and of the transcendentals - truth, goodness, beauty. This monadism necessarily dehistoricized reality; it is not an aberration which has seen an equation between the high medieval syntheses and those of German idealism for the same notion of being as monadic identity rules both. Clearly, the medieval theologians accepted doctrinal correctives, but it did not occur to them that these entailed a revision of the notion of being and therefore of metaphysics and epistemology. Consequently there arose the conflict between the old cosmology and the revealed truth, inadequately papered over by nominalist language: e.g., creation became the placing of a finite reality outside its transcendent cause, and grace became an accidental modification of natural substance. Such nominalist recourses inevitably emerged triumphant once the Aristotelian logic was employed critically in theology, and their emergence signalled the demise of metaphysics as theology.

When in the twelfth century the old Augustinian theology gave way to the new “dialectic” under the impetus provided by Anselm’s quest for necessary reasons, the faith could survive as always by the sustenance given in its liturgical worship, but the Catholic *quaerens*
intellectum began to undergo a progressive rationalization which the structure of the Summa Theologiae well illustrates: there the unity of God as Creator is distanced from the treatment of the Trinity, which is dealt with unhistorically in complete dissociation from Christology as well as from creation, which are also conceived unhistorically; the treatment of grace is the final consideration, which should have been the first and indeed the only subject of a truly theological synthesis. This Thomist synthesis of metaphysics and theology reflects the Aristotelian notion of the necessary and monadic unity of finite being, not the Christian revelation of the free and covenantal event of a creation in Christ who is sent by the Father to give the Spiritus Creator. Thomism was forced by this monadic logic to begin with the “One God,” the creator, and therefore to regard the creation as natural, prior to and independent of the Christian revelation: nature then became the metaphysical prius of grace, an incoherence which still embarrasses the entirety of Thomist theology. The Trinity was considered in isolation from its revelation in Christ, and so in isolation from history, from Christology; even the radical shift imposed upon Aristotelian metaphysics by the gratuity of creation and by the Chalcedonian dogma - the expansion of the act-potency analysis of the intrinsic intelligibility of material being by the addition of the esse-essence polarity - was never exploited theologically save for the single application to the hypostatic union, again conceived nonhistorically, viz., as the contingent structure of a hypostatic entity rather than as the free historical event which is at once Mission, Incarnation and the New Covenant. The freedom of the supernatural was understood as merely logical, as a predicamental contingency, as accidental in the technical sense, and its application to the relation of divine and human freedom remained locked within this determinism, an acute embarrassment to Catholic theology for centuries.

Such criticism, were it applied to the genius, the saint, the doctor of the Church whose authority is matched only by St. Augustine’s, would be clearly anachronistic. Thomas died seven centuries ago, before he had reached fifty years of age, but not before he made obsolete the eclectic metaphysical theology of his time by his theological transformation of the Aristotelian cosmological metaphysics; by adapting this determinist act-potency analysis to a free creation and to the Incarnation of the Word, St. Thomas established the method of a theological system whose unlimited range of implication was open to exploitation by all future theologians. It would be idle to complain that he did not do their work; his astonishing achievement is to have seen what his predecessors had not seen, that Aristotle was to be corrected on the level of what today we would call method, for nothing less radical would permit a Christian metaphysics logically structured by the act-potency relation to proceed. It is the tragedy of that theology, in the centuries since the foundation by St. Thomas, that its practitioners have not understood its correction of Aristotle for what it is: a methodological conversion from a pagan, monadic, necessitarian and non-historical notion of being to a free, Trinitarian, and covenantal-historical notion. The result of this failure to grasp the trinitarian dimension of the essence-esse correlation has been the idiosyncratic and eclectic “Thomism” of the schools: formerly those associated with the Spanish and Portuguese universities which kept interest in the Thomist metaphysics alive during the Counter-Reformation, more recently the Roman and Louvain faculties of theology, and in the present century primarily those Thomist theologians in such faculties as Lyon-Fouviere, Innsbruck, and the Gregorian University who have followed Blondel and developed the Marechal’s riposte to the Kantian critique. Such Thomism as still survives academically however does so in the main as philosophy, not as theology.

This is the price paid for the supposition that Thomist metaphysics is not a formally theological science, not a method of inquiry into the intelligibility intrinsic to the free and trinitarian creation, but that it is on the contrary an already completed body of nonhistorical and logically necessary truth buried somewhere in the text of St. Thomas and only awaiting its discovery by the scholar who will at last thereby uncover the entire, the adequate, the necessary statement of the Thomist metaphysics. The attempts to derive this statement whether by means of logic or by textual analysis have set the Thomist “schools” in opposition, and have reduced Thomist scholarship to an unprofitable search for the texts which finally nail down the preferred synthesis - invariably one whose flaws are vividly apparent to the adherents of the other brands of nominal Thomism.

It is not then very surprising that the notion of
a free, historical and trinitarian rationality should be unfamiliar in today’s Catholic theology, for it has never entered into the classic Thomist systematizations of theology, and the contemporary political and sociological systematizations of theology are in no different case. It is nonetheless tragic, for it leaves the historicity of the Catholic doctrinal and liturgical tradition defenseless before a rationalist criticism already ancient but which emerges now from within the Catholic household as though a fresh discovery.


Since this small book was published it has been widely received, particularly in its paperback format, by the catechists, the directors of seminary education and the instructors in religion in the Catholic colleges and universities of North America. Its evident influence in such centers of Catholic education is regrettable in that the work’s theological viewpoint is entirely incompatible with the Catholic doctrinal and liturgical tradition. The chief appeal of the book would seem to lie in its iconoclastic style, which insinuates that the historical Catholic tradition was effectively abandoned at the Second Vatican Council, and that this departure from the dogmatic and liturgical constraints of an unsophisticated Catholic past, already taken for granted by the catechists and theologians, should also be a commonplace among those who do not wish to be left behind by the modern Church (e.g., 103ff.). Notwithstanding its flippancy, Guzie’s book can be read with profit as an illustration of the rationalist critique of Eucharistic realism first spelled out with clarity during the eleventh century by Berengarius and exploited since by whoever is unable to understand that the criterion of reality and truth is not the monad. This inability is today a failure so common as to be characteristic of those Catholic theologians who, finding themselves in full flight from the school Thomism of their youth, now think to find an intellectual haven in an illusory “historical consciousness.”

Guzie’s notion of the Eucharist is best described as warmed-over Calvinism. Its basic assumptions are, like Calvin’s, those of late medieval nominalism, restated in the context of contemporary analytic philosophy by writers such as Suzanne Langer, with whose early work Guzie has been much taken. Such nominalism, which rejected *a priori* all metaphysical reality in the historical order and all metaphysical connotation in religious symbols as implicit limitations upon the divine *potentia absoluta*, had then to undertake to revise the traditional solution to the problem of meaning, for at first glance the symbols of Catholic worship would seem to affirm what nominalism exists to deny. Guzie’s version of this revisionism postulates a two-level universe of discourse (24–41, esp. 27ff.). In this universe, which he identifies with that of religious sophistication, the first level of meaning is provided by the quantitative or mechanical interpretation of experience which is the specific concern and interest of the physical scientist; for this interpretation, the symbolism of mathematics, of numerical unity, is alone appropriate. This is the level of “things” and “events;” for Guzie, these have no significance other than the pragmatic and empirical, that which is applied to them by the scientist’s use of pointer readings and measuring sticks. Technological civilizations, in which the use of mathematical symbolism is highly developed, are often tempted as the West has been for three centuries by the mistaken notion that truth is capable of statement by no other means, and that non- or trans-empirical statements are without any meaning; here the early Ayer may stand as a particularly vivid example of a viewpoint now rejected even by Ayer. Guzie also knows better; he has learned from Langer, *inter alia*, the dangers of such naivete. He finds another and second level of meaning; since the first level is concerned with a quantified world, we may take the second as concerned with the qualified world (the terms are not Guzie’s; he would prefer “factual” and “symbolic,” although these terms introduce confusion, inasmuch as he supposes the “factual” as well as the “symbolic” world to be constructed by the symbolic interpretation of experience). The qualified or “symbolic” world or universe of rational discourse is the world of culture, of art, of religion; its “symbolic” meaning is constructed not by an ever more subtle deployment of those quantitative integers whose common sense application has already constructed the world of pragmatic facts and events, but by application of the archetypal symbols of human self-understanding through which man expresses the meaning for him of “things and events out there.” These symbols are the stuff of myth; like the mathematical integers, they utter not a truth intrinsic to events and things (for Guzie considers that there are no events or things apart from our construction of them through the symbolization of experience) but the truth as immanent in man, the truth of human experience as human (97ff.). Both sets of symbols, the mathematical and the religious or, as we have named them here, the quantitative and the qualitative, are human in their origin; they are the immanent
forms of human consciousness (55), and their use is at one with the use of the mind (29). The problem to which their use gives rise, from Guzie’s nominalist standpoint, is of course that of their confusion, a confusion which Guzie believes to be perennial in Catholicism. This is a confusion of meaning; the referent of the quantitatively symbol is taken to be the same as that of the religious symbol, and there arises that fallacy of misplaced concretion which in Guzie’s view so bedevils Catholic piety (1-7). It has in his view produced such mistakes as the Trinitarian doctrine of transubstantiation (22ff., 63), of real presence (71ff., 111ff.), and of the sacrifice of the Mass (150ff.). Such mergers of the quantitative and the qualitative symbols, such mergers of the levels of meaning which they express, Guzie thinks to be inevitable in popular religion, and he is unable to find any self-corrective factor in this popular Catholic liturgical piety, governed as it is by the doctrinal tradition, which would operate spontaneously to remove such aberrations as may develop there. For that purification we must rely upon theologians and theologically well-informed catechists, who should be alert to counter any suggestion in the contemporary liturgy of a world of physical things imbued with arcane qualities and pervaded with the numinous (5, 58). Such was the world of the medieval Catholic metaphysicians, who assumed without question the intrinsic qualification of material reality (67).

When nonetheless that medieval metaphysics broke down under the demands made upon it by the supposed need for a notion of being sufficiently unified to infer God from creation without presupposing His existence as the prime analogate, the Scotists and later the nominalists attempted to replace the failed analogous notion of being with one more unified because more abstract. The new concept of being was found to be usable only insofar as capable of conceptually distinct determinations, whose conceptual distinction tended to remove the unity of being from the qualifications marking historical finitude, inasmuch as these qualitatively diverse concepts were conceived of as extrinsic to the pure concept of being as being, i.e., as unqualified unity. Thus was set the stage for the contemporary monist logical analysis whose model since Galileo has been secular, that of “natural philosophy,” and whose symbolism has been quantitative simply; the monist logic led ineluctably back to Plato’s punctillist mathematicism, the rediscovery of which, with its attendant expulsion of qualities from the universe, ironically opened the modern age.

In consequence, the contemporary “scientific man” is locked into the ancient and inexorable monist dilemma, identical to that which rendered experimental science abortive in the great non-Christian cultures of the past. Physics when governed by the monist logic of mathematical symbols must either abjure any relation of its mathematical symbols to reality, as the Copenhagen School requires, or following Einstein and Planck must resist all suggestion of an indeterminate material reality and so strive continually to find the master formula which will remove materiality from all historical contingency - because from the viewpoint of that logic, any contingency which is irreducible to necessity by theoretical reason is randomness merely. Paradoxically, as we have seen, the end in view is then the elimination of experimental science; whether the quasi-Buddhist stance of the Copenhagen interpretation is adopted or the quasi-Aristotelian stance of Einstein and Planck, the same dichotomy between truth and historical reality is presupposed.

Theology, once conformed to this historical pessimism as by a Guzie, cannot but be equally bent upon the same dehistoricizing of its object, the Word made flesh (97ff.); Guzie posits the necessary evolution from myth to metaphysics to the immanent necessities of monadic reason (18-21, 128ff.) which the Newtonian mechanics once was thought to have forever vindicated, which Kant systematized, which Comte preached as the secular faith, before whose criticism Schleiermacher surrendered and which theological liberalism has since continued to celebrate. Guzie’s version of this monism proceeds out of the routine liberal postulate of a primitive Christianity uninterested in history which then fell into the urkatholische materialism that in Luke-Acts unfortunately reverted to a mythic-historic interpretation of the supposedly nonhistorical symbols of the primitive Christian faith (96ff.). Recovery from this Fall of the Church - a theme indispensable to liberal theology, which in this follows Plato’s cosmology blindly - must proceed by way of the “interiorization” of the symbols which the mythic imagination of Catholic piety has insisted upon reading as expressive of a truth intrinsic to the things and events of the historical order (139ff.). Once these symbols are understood, under theological correction, to be “second-level interpretations” uttering a meaning entirely distinct from and in no sense immanent within the physical-historical world, Catholic worship can recover its pristine freedom from the randomness of space and time, and from the hopelessness of historical necessity (111ff.). Guzie’s pseudo-Catholic liberalism knows, as the
Church Fathers, as the Evangelists themselves and as Paul could not, that the Resurrection of the Christ is not event but idea, an interpretation of the death of Jesus corresponding to no novel event in history and to no novel reality in Jesus, but expressing merely a human ideal immanent in human subjectivity, whether that of Jesus or of anyone else (55ff., 88ff.).

For Guzie, the Eucharistic symbolism is thus a general statement about death, an ideal tied to no particular event or even ritual, but ever emergent in man’s ongoing self-interpretation: all meals, if one will have it so, are Eucharists. Here again is an echo of Calvin: only those who rightly interpret the Eucharistic symbolism can receive the reality symbolized: there can be no manducatio impiorum. This view is also akin to Luther’s rejection of the event-character of the real presence, whether as transubstantiation or as sacrifice; otherwise one must invoke a metaphysical sacramental realism ruinous to justification sola fide.

Such nominalism, as has been said, reduces the historical order “of things and events” to that upon which the old Newtonian physics bore, a world supposedly governed by ideal mathematical necessities appropriately stated in the equations governing the relations between bodies moving blindly in fields of force. Freedom and history are disjunct in such a calculus; this the Reformation knew, this Guzie has understood. So had the entirety of the pagan world. We have pointed out sufficiently the bankruptcy of this position. The notion that Historie is available as a value-free object or as a blind process thrives today only among those Catholic historians who have been persuaded that the unity of the Catholic faith, the Catholic worship and the Catholic Church is not historical, and this on the same authority which persuaded Schleiermacher. The consequent surrender of the intrinsic value and significance, the inherent objectivity, of the Church’s historical worship, in favor of a faith which has no permanently valid historical and liturgical expression has permitted many of these scholars, committed to what they presume to be historical criticism, to suppose that it is therefore compatible with their Catholicism to submit its liturgically-grounded affirmation, its credal symbolism, to the erosive criticism of some approved necessitarian rationale, Marxist for preference, of the historical order of reality, a rationale which crystallizes a despair of history into a determinist historical-critical methodology now presumed to be the single criterion of historical honesty and the sole avenue to historical freedom and responsibility - understood always as a radical dissociation of the present from the past. It is only in Modernist and neo-Modernist circles that this sort of historicism still reigns; elsewhere the work of men such as Newman, Dilthey, Kahler, Gadamer and Pelikan has made it obsolete.

Meanwhile, the Cartesian clarities upon which this positivism relies have elsewhere provided their own refutation; the dichotomization of quantity and quality, of object and subject, of thing and idea and all the rest have concluded to dead ends in physics, in the social sciences, in historiography, in philosophy. It is no longer possible to posit as of course the reductionisms which the resolution of such antinomies entails; only in contemporary theology does the need to nullify the intrinsic significance of the material individual and of the temporal event continue to dominate discussion, and this, by a supreme irony, under the aegis of “historical consciousness”. That it does so is not difficult to understand, for it is the historical and sacramental appropriation of covenanted reality which is in issue - the issue upon which the Reformation turned and turns yet. Once it is accepted that the nominalist account of the real is inadequate, simply false, it is necessary to come to grips with the consequence, viz., given the collapse of the sole base yet suggested for the rejection of sacramental realism, the ancient faith in the sacramental-covenantal-trinitarian order of Catholic worship remains in possession. It is on this ground that theology as Catholic must stand; there is no other. It is time to abandon the futile quest for an Archimedean point outside the world from which to launch a discovery of God’s immanence within the world. Theology, as fides
Guzie, in his early years, was the victim of such a presentation of “school” Thomism as has been described; while still a student he produced a book on Thomist epistemology under the tutelage of the Jesuit faculty of Thomist philosophy at St. Louis University, at that time the protagonists of what was known in Jesuit circles as “St. Louis Thomism.” Later on, informed of the inadequacies of this supposed metaphysical-theological synthesis by the Protestant theologians under whom he studied at Cambridge, he abandoned the metaphysical naiveties of his Jesuit mentors for such anti-metaphysical simplicities as Langer’s analysis of sign and symbol. That this refusal of all metaphysics entailed also the refusal of sacramental realism he has accepted in good part.

Here Guzie simply finds himself in the company of Kung, Kilmartin, Cooke, Schillebeeckx, Martos, Power, and in fact most of those who have published material on these subjects in the popular Catholic press in recent years. Like Kiing, like Guzie, these theologians have long distanced themselves from the school Thomism in which they were trained during the years of their theological and religious formation. The Thomism of that pre-conciliar period had been thought of by its protagonists as continuous with the magisterial proclamation to the point that the distinction between theological and doctrinal certitude had for them become blurred. The qualitative difference between the doctrinal statement itself and its immediate logically-structured theological analysis could not but be difficult to appreciate for a generation whose metaphysicians still argued over the reality of “possibles” and whose theologians had earlier to be restrained by papal edict from logically reducing theological disagreement to heresy per se. The controversy De auxiliis was still alive for the generation of Jesuits who taught Guzie his Thomism, and it is hardly to be wondered at that he should, in discovering the deficiencies of the metaphysics which had generated it, find himself in difficulties with the doctrines of his faith, for he had not been much alerted to the difference between the one and the other, and still less to the reasons underlying that distinction. Like his Jesuit professors, he thought his brand of Thomism to be identified with the Catholic faith in meta-empirical sacramental reality simply, and the failure of the one was the failure of the other.

However, such difficulties may be experienced on the one hand as spurs to a fides quaerens intellectum, or on the other as the motive for dropping the quest entirely and transposing the entire theological problematic to a nonhistorical plane which allows no space for metaphysical questions. This latter option, the refusal of the historical significance of religious symbols, is basic to Guzie’s understanding of the Eucharist; as it empties the consecrated bread and wine of any intrinsic meaning so also it frees him from the credal symbols such as those promulgated at the Council of Trent. Such formal declaration of independence from the Church’s historicity is not very interesting any more; its modalities have long since been explored and spelled out in the two millennia of the Church’s history and nothing very startling emerges in Guzie’s version of it. Novelty does not arise from within the monadic mind; if one cannot learn at all, and soon it becomes necessary to deny what has been learned, for the revelation, as free, always turns out to be unnecessary.

Guzie’s eucharistic theology is simply a popularization of Calvinism; his argument for that position restates the nominalist denial, required by a monist logic, of the intrinsic, free significance of historical reality; upon this denial, as has been seen, the Reformation rests.


O’Neill has been for twenty years professor of systematic theology at the University of Fribourg; his particular concern has been sacramental theology, and over the two decades intervening since the publication of an earlier book in sacramental theology it led him to appreciate the need for a systematic restatement of Catholic theology across the board. He particularly wishes to avoid the impersonalism and juridicalism which is associated in his mind, as in that of most contemporary theologians, with the neo-scholastic sacramental theology of the pre-conciliar epoch, and which some, perhaps more than ordinarily afflicted by modernity, would find inescapable from any reliance upon a salvation achieved fundamentally by another human being, even if the Christ. At the same time, O’Neill is alert to the contemporary temptation to reduce sacramental efficacy to “the category of the word” (139, 149, 184).

Consequently he has looked for a synthetic prin-
ciple which might serve, as the title of the book proposes, to ground a general theory of the sacraments whose realism, as he insists, must be affirmed as indispensable to the Church’s life and worship, and that would at the same time protect the equally indispensable freedom of that life and worship. He recognizes that such a principle would immediately provide the a priori base for systematic theology across the board.

O’Neill thinks to find this base in the Thomist philosophy of creation, exemplified in the “five ways,” seen not so much as means of demonstrating the existence of the One God as of justifying the categories of God-language as such (158, 162-3) and particularly that of causality, which he thinks basic to all theological systematization. For O’Neill, the realism of the Eucharistic presence and of its res et sacramentum analogues in the other sacraments absolutely requires a metaphysics of natural creation, a philosophical entry into the irreducibility of existence as grasped in the judgment whereby the realism of sense experience is affirmed:

The only way there is to say something positive about God and his creative and saving activity, however imperfect the concept must be acknowledged to be, relies in the last analysis upon the conviction that it is legitimate and helpful to speak of the act of creation in terms of efficient causality. (160)

O’Neill maintains that the Father’s creative love, which has formed man in his image and has been revealed in the Christ and in the gift of the Spirit, can in principle be known apart from revelation (190); the articulation of this knowledge is the task of metaphysics, while the task of Catholic theology is to synthesize the reality of creation with that of revelation (27ff.; cf. 146, 160).

This task is not distinct from that which the older theology knew as the problem of the relation between grace and nature, and shares the confusion typical of that problematic, a confusion which is due to an uncritical oscillation between an experiential and an analytic understanding of such terms as creation, nature and grace. For example, creation passive spectata can be looked at in the Augustinian fashion as that which is universally given to experience, or it can be looked at analytically as ontological dependency in the order of substance. In either view, creation is thought of as nature or natural; this latter term is again read ambiguously, denoting either the universally given (the phenomenological, Augustinian or commonsense notion), or as the condition of possibility of some supposedly ungraced activity (the analytic Thomist notion which looks for intrinsic causes in terms of act-potency). The temptation to identify these usages of the term “nature” is at the heart of the Thomist theological dilemma, for such identification assumes that the supernatural gratuity which is gratia Christi is distinct from the supposedly natural gratuity of creation. The usual remedy is merely nominal, an explanation assigning nonmetaphysical meanings to words whose prima facie denotation is metaphysical and analytical: grace becomes a gratuity on the level of the accidental, while creation is seen to be a substantial gratuity. This merely verbal solution works well enough until submitted to the Thomist metaphysical analysis, whereupon it is seen to be a nonsensical subordination of the gratuity of grace to the necessity of nature. From this point onward, nature is the dominant category. It then becomes very difficult to take the Fall with any real seriousness, a problem which is native to the Thomist theology, and it becomes impossible to understand the Incarnation to be absolutely novel without dissociating it absolutely from the order of creation. The classic Thomist theology has found no solution to this problem.

O’Neill therefore accepts the usual postulates of school Thomism when he relies upon a creationist metaphysics as the ground of his theology (27ff.). This Thomism considers that creation is through the Father’s Word, and therefore is at least implicitly Trinitarian (the Father is seen to be the Creator, through the Word), but not Christological, inasmuch as only its renewal, its redemption, is through the Incarnation of the Word (30ff., 124, 161). The Incarnation then is not understood to be implicit in creation itself, but rather is given independent-ly of it, i.e., propter peccatum (92).

O’Neill’s use of these postulates is inconsistent; in the hands of a Schillebeeckx they are shown to conclude to the secularization of the Church and/or the sanctification of the world on some extra-Christological base, but O’Neill’s willingness to accept implications which are in tension with the realism of the doctrinal and liturgical tradition is tempered by his conviction of the necessity
of that realism, and his desire to defend it (139ff.). It is the possibility of mounting that defense on such a metaphysics of a supposed non-Christocentric creation that is contested here. Before entering upon an examination of its details, some central religious ideas of O'Neill's should be set out, because they are not obvious and yet they control a good deal of his theology. In the first place, for O'Neill, Christ is the image par excellence of the Triune God (35ff.) and is therefore in some sense archetypal (56-7), present at the creation (60); although not implicit in the Father's creative act nor in the Old Alliance, he renews the former and is the final form of the latter (39, 59); he is therefore mediator of the “alliance,” of salvation, of the Spirit, and of the “Father’s creative love;” by his death and resurrection the New Covenant is established (35ff.). If creation and Old Covenant do not identify, their association is so close in O'Neill’s thought as to permit that inference (27, 59); similarly Christ’s mediation is single (33). Secondly, O'Neill echoes the Thomist minimalization of the consequences of the Fall in that he does not consider and even excludes suffering as a positive factor in the redemption of the world except insofar as it may be reduced to a painful struggle for personal maturity (43-44); the evident question as to why the redemption required the Cross is either refused (45) or trivialized by observations which refer it to the physical environment together with the corruption effected by sin (43). In O'Neill’s view such penal connotations as those which associate Christ’s suffering with “propitiation for sin,” “reparation” and “satisfaction” invoke a God of vengeance, a deity intent upon vindicating his own dignity against the affront of sin a Father whose just anger must be soothed by guilt-offerings (33-49). This unchristian and mythical view of God, as he thinks, underlies much of the proclivity for the juridical and impersonal categories which plague the neo-scholastic theology of grace and redemption. It leads him to a further conclusion: the exclusion of any question of an a priori redemptive suffering of Christ which as substitutional for the punishment due the sins of the world would be radically effective independent of its free appropriation by the faithful (37, 104). In association with this distaste for all objectivizing of the redemption worked by Christ’s passion and death, and for all talk of satisfaction for sin, propitiation, ransoming and the like, there goes an experiential approach to theology (53), one in tension with the Thomist act-potency metaphysics of intrinsic causality (whose categories are non-experiential of necessity, denoting as they do the intrinsic conditions of possibility of experience) which intends to stress the phenomenological side of Eucharistic worship to the detriment of the metaphysical. This eclectic methodology, not unknown in the work of Thomas himself, is best illustrated by O'Neill’s reduction of the res et sacramentum of the Eucharist to the “real presence” of the risen Lord, and his referring all talk of Eucharistic sacrifice to the phenomenological or experiential dimension, that of the sacramentum tantum or of the res tantum in the classic idiom (91-92, 94, 106-108), in such wise that any identification of the “real presence” with Christ’s self-offering is ruled out. This leaves to one side the theology of transsubstantiation; while O'Neill accepts the term as the implication of the “This is my body” of the words of institution, he declines to enter into any metaphysical or theological examination of that dogmatic event, leaving at least one reader with the impression that he considers such interest to be “cosmological,” concerned with “the nature of matter” and so not properly existential or of interest to metaphysics (155ff.). This in turn leaves a considerable doubt as to the historicity of the “real presence” which he has in view; granted its reality as living, personal and existential, the “real presence” turns out to be incapable, or at least highly impatient, of any metaphysical analysis (i.e., an analysis in terms of intrinsic causality) and is therefore “presence” in a merely nominal sense, indistinguishable as idea from “absence.” Its historicity or event-character is similarly nominal, for its “beginning” or event-dimension is not to be identified as Christ’s sacrifice. Thereupon reappear all the dilemmas which Luther’s Eucharistic doctrine set - but could not resolve.

A further set of difficulties arising out of the phenomenological or experiential approach which O'Neill associates with the personalism to which he is committed has to do with our solidarity with Christ as well as our solidarity in sin, which cannot be dealt with simply as experiential realities without impoverishment; in order that the grace of Christ be grace for us there must be some antecedent community between ourselves and the Christ. O'Neill does not discuss our solidarity in sin, but takes it for granted, while our solidarity in Christ is in O'Neill’s hands less than Christocentric, since it finds its roots in our creation to the image of the Trinity through the non-Incarnate Word, in the Father’s creative love, and so is metaphysically prior to the Incarnation (29ff.). Our historical solidarity with Christ is for O'Neill a matter of our truly acting as persons, of imaging God in imitation of Christ’s imaging which culminated on the Cross, and of accepting the suffering which this growth toward maturity and real personhood imposes: in short, of con
forming our love to his in the unity of “one person.”

It might be asked what the slaughter before Verdun or the holocaust at such killing grounds as Belsen had to do with growth in personal maturity and humanity; one might even instance the agony routinely undergone by the animal world and by children born and unborn, or the senseless lottery of carnage played out on our highways and airways, and so on indefinitely, none of which tragedies, great or small, seem to be touched by O'Neill’s account of the ethical meaning of our suffering in its relation to Christ’s passion (44). Here the *instinctus fidei* patent in the liturgical piety of reparation finds a depth of mystery in the evil of sin transcending all mere impediments to personal maturity and speaks far more profoundly to the human condition than can the theology which O'Neill’s would summon to its approfondissement (91). This traditional Catholic piety, this devotion to the Cross, finds in our fallenness a negation vast to the point of horror to be undone by the redeemer, and the cultic language of reparation and satisfaction, of a suffering servant-hero, by which this faith-instinct is uttered is not to be dismissed summarily as myth: there is more than myth in the common conviction of the New Testament writers that the Christ “had to suffer these things” as the ransom, the price of the renewal of the good creation, in which he was as man primordially immanent, and in which his immanence did not cease by reason of the Fall but became a humiliation, a passion and a crucifixion. Thus understood, the creative primordial immanence of the Son becomes, upon the Fall, at once recreatio as well, in obedience to a single Mission from the Father to give the Spiritus Creator now the Spiritus Redemptor as well. In such a Christocentric creation, the emphasis upon creation through the Word remains, but through the Word as He reveals himself, Incarnate, actual in history as the Lord of history, and not through some putative cosmic divine decree antecedent to the Incarnation and unknown to the New Testament, as O’Neill would have it (27-30, 38). For O’Neill, however, our graced solidarity in Christ, incarnate *propter peccatum*, looks to a future completion or achievement; it is not a fact already objectively irrevocable because at one with the primordial Incarnation.

The central theological problem, one which O’Neill recognizes as central, is the systematic or metaphysical account of the relation between creation and the order of redemption in Christ (30). The assumptions which govern O’Neill’s metaphysics make this task impossible; when confronted by the crucial metaphysical questions, he lapses back into the experiential mode of explanation, which has nothing to do with his metaphysics, and which contributes nothing to our theological understanding of sacramental reality. The remainder of this discussion will demonstrate the fact.

There is already an anticipation of this tension between O’Neill’s Thomist metaphysical ratio and Catholic doctrine in Thomas’ own conviction of the *intrinsically* nonhistorical character of creation; St. Thomas considers the idea of creation to be intelligible apart from any temporal beginning (30), as against the more traditional view of an Augustinian such as Bonaventure that creation to be intelligible must have a beginning in time - or that, to use a more contemporary idiom, its free contingency is intrinsic and so is ultimately historical.51 The Thomist stress upon the logically necessary conditions of a creation which is by theological postulate free makes unintelligible O’Neill’s own proper insistence upon the novelty and originality of the existential order, for such terms invoke the free intelligibility which is the historicity of creation, not ‘Thomas’ notion of the contingency of creation as a timeless and ultimately merely logical and
nominal relation of substantial dependency upon the transcendent God who is not immanent in creation and is *a priori* incapable of relation to creation.

It then becomes impossible for Thomas to solve the central theological problem, viz., the construction of a metaphysical account of the relation of the Incarnation, the Father’s sending of the Son to give the Spirit, to the Father’s act of creation. Presupposing these to be distinct, Thomas was unable to explain how or why they are so, inasmuch as he applied exactly the same metaphysical analysis of esse-essence to provide for the intelligibility of both. But this analysis of intrinsic causality, entirely adequate to investigate the clearly intrinsic intelligibility of the *Logos sscr egeneto*, i.e., of the Christological immanence of God in creation, is by reason of its methodological a priori entirely unable to account for a free creation apart from the immanence of God in that creation, for without this immanence of the Creator in creation there is no more than a nominal or *extrinsic* relation of creation to the Creator-God - which does not satisfy the a priori postulate of this act-potency analysis: viz., the intrinsic intelligibility of its subject matter, creation as such.

These incongruities have their theological consequences; when it becomes impossible to provide a metaphysical account of the relation of the Father’s “decreed” of creation to his sending of the Son to give the Spirit, some sort of non-metaphysical, which is to say non-theological, statement of that relationship must be set out (once given the Thomist postulate of a natural creation). O’Neill uses for this the analogy of marriage, which like Schillebeeckx he assumes to be at once “natural” and sacramental, and therefore an apt illustration of the creation-Incarnation relation, understood as a “merger” - but so to proceed is again to provide purely nominal or verbal solutions without undertaking the metaphysical analysis of that relation, a task which for O’Neill is the *raison d’être* of theology (25ff., 187ff.).

When the historicity of creation is understood to be merely nominal (a postulate which we have seen to be proper to classic Thomism), i.e., when historicity is not intrinsic to the very intelligibility of creation as contingent, and when creation so understood is uncritically merged with the historical order of *gratia Christi* proper to sacramental theology, the historicity of *gratia Christi* cannot but suffer, to become also merely nominal and not essential to its intelligibility, for the alternative would be the abandonment of the notion that “natural” cre-

The usual objection to requiring a Christocentric ground for metaphysics is that it amounts to “fideism.” Since O’Neill has not employed it, this is not the place to reply to that rather obscure indictment, save to remark that its usual interpretation relies upon the supposition that the Dogmatic Constitution *Dei filius* of Vatican I interpreting Rom 1:19-20 is to be read as a Thomist statement about the ungraced order of creation. Whether or not O’Neill is of this opinion, rather than accept the radical Christocentrism systematically demanded of any metaphysical inquiry into a free creation, he has allowed the distinction between the *res et sacramentum* of the Eucharist to evanescence by reducing the event of the Eucharistic sacrifice to the purely symbolic order (that of the *sacramentum tantum*) of the Church’s sacrifice of praise (106) or to the ethical order of personal response (210). While O’Neill is well aware of the *sola fide* implications of this reduction, he is unable to circumvent them, as his theology of eucharistic sacrifice, which we will presently examine, manifests.

Some of his other emphases, such as the distinction between symbolism and realism in the sacraments and the need to find a balance between these aspects (15, 104), his fastidiousness over the impersonal juridicalism which he thinks latent in the Tridentine *ex opere operato* and in all talk of Christ’s merits, vicarious satisfaction for sin, propitiatory sacrifice and objective redemption, together with his consequent reduction of Christ’s “propitiation” and “satisfaction” to “a change brought about in man when God’s love reaches out to him” (31ff., 91-92; cf. 111), also closely parallel Guzie’s program for the “interiorization” of Eucharistic realism. Like Guzie, O’Neill fails to grasp that the Eucharistic symbolism of
the liturgy is intrinsically realist from the outset (104) and that its causality requires no theological “justification” by appeal to an antecedent hermeneutical norm, whether that provided by a philosophical metaphysics of creation (162, 204ff.) or by Guzie’s two-level epistemology. In consequence O’Neill must not only refuse to ground his metaphysics in Christ’s incarnational and covenantal immanence in the good creation ab initio (27), but must also systematically exclude any Christocentric metaphysics by referring the universal dimension of our redemption to the order of a non-Christocentric creation by the Trinity (39, 46, 55, 59, 87). This is to add to the patristic propter peccatum Christology a rationalist sensu negante thrust which distorts it (29, 92). Clearly, the Fall is more than an accidental modification of the good creation which fell in Adam; the Fall is at the level of substance, from life to death, from pneuma to sarx; if the Christ does indeed redeem and renew the fallen good creation, he does so on the level of creation (161), and unless we are to deal metaphysically with two orders of creation, which is systematically impossible, it is necessary to recognize at the outset that creatio and recreatio are both in Christ, a single consequence of the Mission of the Word. If the efficacy, the irrevocability, of the Father’s sending of the Son to give the Spirit is not achieved primordially in an unfallen creation antecedent to the Fall, then there is no alternative to supposing, as O’Neill supposes, that the full efficacy and significance of Christ’s sacrifice waits throughout history upon the historical response of the faithful (45), and an ambiguity is then at work which cannot be resolved by the merger of Christ and the faithful into “one person,” as O’Neill translates the Pauline “one body” (37, 109); the Calvinist ring of his language is here unmistakable: the Spirit can do that which is contradictory:

Clearly also the community cannot ratify and make its own the sacrifice of Calvary if Christ has not already sent his Spirit on the assembly; and this means that Christ offers in his members in virtue of that mysterious union of the Spirit which identifies them with him even though they retain their autonomy (107).

It is not at all accidental that this dilemma emerged in its sharpness for Thomism with the problem posed by the Immaculate Conception, which a sensu negante interpretation of the Anselmian propter peccatum account of the Incarnation could not accommodate. The New Covenant, as a matter of definition, is God’s free immanence in humanity, actual in the Father’s sending of the Son to give the Spirit; it is a reality whose complete historical mediation by Jesus the Christ may await upon the vagaries of our fallenness, for its reality, the Covenant itself, is already given, as Paul tells us, “once and for all.” Nor will a “one person” Christomonism suffice for the free, because covenantal, Eucharistic immanence of the risen Christ, an immanence which not only does not but must be understood not to override and annul human freedom in order that the Emmanuel may be given us; otherwise, theology abdicates before the mystery which it exists to question. If the paradox of God’s freedom causing our own is to be paradoxical rather than flat nonsense, it must rest upon an utterly gratuitous Covenant already in place, fulfilled, irrevocable, the created marital image of the Triune God which thus grounds in freedom and in mystery all created reality and truth - a mystery and paradox which invite the fides quaerens intellectum.

The basic affinity of O’Neill’s with Guzie’s Eucharistic theology emerges in O’Neill’s treatment of the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross, both as the historical sacrifice which is the cause of our redemption, and as represented sacramentally in the Eucharist (89ff.). In the first place, he finds an impossible ambivalence in the idea that the past event on the Cross is sacramentally represented; this seems to him to smack of the repetition of an irretrievably past event (92, 104, 105, 108), the typically nominalist and anti-sacramental conclusion to which Luther also was led. Neither is O’Neill at peace with the Servant Christology underlying the most ancient liturgical tradition, i.e., with that symbolism, explicit in each of the Institution Narratives by which Jesus’ “once for all” sacrifice on the Cross, sacramentally represented in the Eucharist, is the unanticipatable fulfillment of the prophecy of the Servant Songs in Isaiah(45). Unless it is carefully dehistoricized, O’Neill finds this Christology to invoke the juridical mentality implicit in all talk of vicarious suffering, vicarious satisfaction, vicarious merit, objective redemption, and summarily, in the view that Christ’s redemptive sacrifice is effective in se without reference to its free appropriation by the faithful. To this it must be said that our solidarity with Christ is certainly not to be relegated to a “natural” creation in the image of God, but is rather the most fundamental level of gratia Christi, of our graced creation in Christ, and is actual, a reality, apart from and prior to any appropriation; we are not free to avoid this solidarity, which is not juridical but ontological, not prospective but actual, and finally, not accidental but substantial, in the order of creation. O’Neill following St. Thomas considers the ontological
reality of creation to be eo ipso independent of the Incarnation of the Word, who mediates a gratuity created entirely apart from his Mission to give the Spirit (38). This entails a strained reading of the pre-existence passages in the Johannine Prologue and the hymns in Ephesians, Colossians and Philippians; there is no justification for reading into the biblical attribution of preexistence to the Christ the immanent-economic distinction of much later Trinitarian speculation. The New Testament always treats concretely of the Christ, and never prescinds from the Incarnation, even in the Prologue, whose Logos saxe egeneto speaks of the kenois of the Christ who, in Pauline language, is made sin, not man, for us - for his humanity is the prius of our own: we are created in him as the implication of his Incarnation; his Incarnation is not the implication of our fallenness. This is not the place to pursue the exegetical problem, but it is time to abandon the supposition that one can read the New Testament as though it were a Thomist document, and proceed to translate saxe as natura humana materia quantitate signata individuata. In any case, even O'Neill recognizes that the mediation of the Christ is effective on the level of creation, for he understands the Christ to be the mediator of the Father's creative love. While it is undoubtedly true that the free creation must be appropriated in freedom, an appropriation made possible by the gift of the Holy Spirit, the metaphysical analysis of this appropriation is not provided in O'Neill's theology; it would conclude to the requirement of a Christocentric creation to provide the graced conditions of possibility of the Fall, which in turn obviously would demand a Christocentric metaphysics.

There well may be an entirely too ready willingness to externalize or objectify the grace of Christ in Catholic as well as in Protestant theology, as O'Neill has intimated, but his remedy, the identification of Christ and the faithful as “one person,” is hardly the panacea for a juridical sacramental impersonalism, apart from being a doubtful rendition of the Pauline “One Flesh” of Christ and his Bridal Church. In the first place, as has been seen, O'Neill's theology does not provide for the intrinsic conditions of possibility of such a union, but offers a merely verbal or nominal analogy, that of marriage, in which natural creation and sacramental grace are thought to “merge” (30) - which is only to beg the question which theology is expected to answer. In fact, while leaving the problem of juridicalism and impersonalism intact, O'Neill introduces a Christomonism quite incompatible with the historical presence-as-event of the risen Christ to his historical Church, but quite consistent with the Lutheran ecclesiology, according to which Christ's Eucharistic presence insofar as dynamic can only be cosmic (cf. 163), for it is not historical, not by way of any event: this nominalist refusal of the historical reality of the transempirical or metaphysical is the refusal of the ex opere operato effect of the sacramental sign, the res et sacramentum of the classic Augustinian analysis. Certainly this is not O'Neill's intention; unlike Guzie, whose reading of the ex opere operato explicitly requires the “interiorization” of the res et sacramentum, O'Neill wants to rest his sacramental realism on the objective reality of Christ's Eucharistic presence, which he knows to be fundamental to Eucharistic realism as well as to the realism of all the other sacraments. Nonetheless, he is unable to refer to this Eucharistic presence (the res et sacramentum) as that of the event of Christ's sacrifice on the Cross, represented here and now in the event of the sacrifice of the Mass. This Tridentine view of the Eucharistic realization of the historical sacrifice of Christ on the Cross as the once-for-all and utterly transcendent fulfillment of the entirety of the promises of the Old Testament is incompatible with the cosmic interpretation of the Christ which is intrinsic to O'Neill's theological base (27, 161): if the creative love of the Father is the real ground of our salvation, then the concrete suffering of the Christ, if not relevant to it, is certainly peripheral (43, 44, 46), little more than a necessary concomitant and therefore unimportant reflex of his presence in a humanity whose sins add to but do not seem to account for the suffering of the world (43, 124). On this theory, Paul's doctrine of fall through a First Adam and redemption through the Last Adam, a dialectic which knows that suffering and death are rooted in original sin and not at all in the laws of the physical world, is unintelligible, as is his invocation of the Adamic and covenantal solidarity of fallen humanity with Christ in creation, in suffering, in death and in resurrection. In O'Neill's theology, the redemptive value of the Cross relies for its efficacy upon the response of the faithful, upon their acceptance of suffering as the price of “Christian maturity” and of growth in the image of God (here there is a clear resonance with Guzie's talk of “personal process” toward the “interiorization” of the “will of God”: cf. Guzie, 128ff., O'Neill 1121).

O'Neill begins his discussion of the place of Christ’s sacrifice in the Mass by remarking that there is no theological agreement as to the meaning of Eucharistic sacrifice in the New Testament and thereupon deciding to pursue the inquiry by looking first to that which
is more clear, the non-Eucharistic uses of the word (82ff.). This leads him to suppose that the ethical meaning of the term as it appears particularly in the Letter to the Hebrews can clarify the specifically cultic usage. He makes the point that the ethical dimension of sacrifice as this is presented in the New Testament cannot be separated from the Christological dimension; he then goes on to say that in the New Testament the spiritual sacrifice of Christians “is stated in terms of its ethical demands which derive from the holiness of God himself” (84). Taken at the letter, this is unexceptionable; within the cosmological context of O’Neill’s Thomism however it implies a theological priority in the creative love of the One God over the historical death of Christ on the Cross, so that the latter is submitted to a cosmological a priori (the One God exploited by the Jewish and Moslem Aristotelianizing theologians tributary to St. Thomas, such as Alfarabi, Avicenna, Avicebron, Averrhoes and Maimonide, cf. 27, 158ff.) elevated over the historical Revelation and effectively nullifying, through its criteriological role, the redemptive value of the latter’s novel and concrete historicity. Again, this is by no means O’Neill’s intention: he wishes to save the Eucharistic reference of the sacrifices of the faithful to the One Sacrifice of the Christ, but he does so by dehistoricizing that relation:

The question must, therefore, be asked whether the New Testament writers, when they applied sacrificial terminology in so broad a context, were using simple figures of speech, or whether they intended a much more concrete allusion. Their acute consciousness of the all-pervading mystery of Christ suggests that they did not use such terms so lightly.

The proposal made here is that, when the Christian life is spoken of in terms of spiritual sacrifice, it is being related, whether explicitly or implicitly, to Christ’s personal sacrifice on Calvary (86).

No doubt: but is the relation historically concrete and actual in the Eucharist, or does it rather depend upon the psychological affects of the faithful? The latter is the case, for according to O’Neill, the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross is not represented in the Eucharist: the blood of the Covenant is not offered there (112), and even as offered on the Cross, it may be called sacrificial only insofar as it is understood to be an act of obedience to the Father, and a mediation of his creative love which images Him.

So, the whole ethical life of Christians is sacrificial, not only because it depends on the mediation of one whose love brought him to suffering and death; but, as well, because it is the service of ideals whose final meaning comes from the fact that they conform to the Father’s will and, as such, are inwardly related to the obedience and worship of Christ on the cross (92).

This language amounts to an insistence upon the priority of Creation over the Mission of the Son. Further, the sacrifice of the faithful is of the same order, viz., ethical conduct referred indeed to the exemplary image of Christ on the Cross, but as clarified by and so not as itself clarifying, by revealing, the antecedent will of the Father.

For it is not to be forgotten, O’Neill continues, that while the Christ is the Mediator, he mediates “the creative love of God.” It is this love which is primary, and while in fact it is mediated by the Christ, there is no systematic explanation of why this should be so; i.e., there is no theological linkage between the historical sacrifice of Christ and the Father’s creation of man in the image of God: as has been seen, O’Neill’s Christology is exclusively propter peccatum. When he passes from the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary, the once-for-all event by which we are redeemed, to the relation of this sacrifice to the Eucharist, the same disinterest in the historical dimension of the Christ is apparent: we are told that it is the real presence of Christ which is primary in the Eucharist (210), and we find the sacrificial dimension of the Eucharist seriously diluted in O’Neill’s account of it, for he limits it to the sacrifice of the faithful (45, 104, 108, 110, 112), restricting the “abiding” aspect of the Eucharist (the res et sacramentum) to the real presence of the risen Christ whose One Sacrifice is an event of the past, not of the present. O’Neill sees in the sacrifice on the Cross a closed historical event; cosmically it is presented by the risen Christ semper interpellando for us before the Father, but who is not present in the Mass as victim (108); his sacrifice is not represented in the Eucharist. This undercuts the historicity of the Church: patristic theology, as de Lubac informs us, has always seen in the Eucharist the sacramentally real representation of the event which at once links, unifies and distinguishes the Old Testament and the New, viz., the One Sacrifice, fulfilling all sacrifices, of Jesus on the Cross.55 Apart from the res et sacramentum realism of this representation of the historical event of the Cross, there is no historical Church, for the
Church's historicity is that of her worship: it is a sacramental historicity, for all her reality is sacramental, caused by, because signified by, the sacramental, covenantal immanence within her of the High Priest and the One Sacrifice. If the “sacrifice of the Mass” is reduced to the “sacrifice of praise” as O'Neill would have it, there is no substantial difference between his view of the Eucharist and Luther's.

Luther also knew a real presence; he also refused the Eucharistic representation of the Cross, and this on grounds which are not distinct from O'Neill's, whose Thomism is finally a nominalism. If this nominalism is given further scope and allowed to infect Christology as well, it can only conclude explicitly to the dichotomy, instinctive to liberal theology, between the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith, for this is already implicit in O'Neill's isolation of the cosmic from the historical Christ in the Eucharist; if these are not “one and the same” in the event of Eucharistic worship, they can hardly be so in doctrine and in theology. Something of this dichotomy is already available in O'Neill's less guarded statements, e.g., “Though Christ goes to his death in the full autonomy of his freedom, the essential feature of this sacrifice is that it is God who is primarily active” (89).

For O'Neill, it is the Son's eternal imaging of and eschatological union with the Father that is effective for our redemption, not the Blood of the New Covenant, not Christ's oblation on the Cross; at its fullest, here Jesus' love only “shares ... in the creative power of God's own love” (36-37). This amounts to a cosmic view of salvation as accomplished not in a historical self-offering by Jesus the Christ which culminates upon the Cross, but effective rather through that imitation of him by the faithful which makes his own sacrifice meaningful because conducive to their maturity, to their imaging of the Creator's love concrete in Jesus' presence among them. Further, if the love of the Father is effective radically in our creation to His image, then our imaging of God is quite independent of the Christ, as creation is, and Christ, as image, is no more than an instance or exemplar of a value independent of the Incarnation. It is a value, moreover, which is cosmic rather than historical, for on this view, our historical existence is not a consequence of having been created to the divine image, because O'Neill does not understand this image to be historical, as Thomas himself did not - as Thomas saw it, angels are created more to the image of God than men are, because they are more purely intellectual and this by reason precisely of their nonhistoricity, their incorporeality, their monadic nature. But O'Neill is not very clear about what “creation to the image” means; he does not specifically invoke the Thomist notion, neither does he disavow it. On the one hand, he refers it to the so-called psychological analogy of Augustine, later developed by Thomas, which finds the Trinity imaged by the human soul as at once memory, intellect and will (66 ff.); this quite nonhistorical and structural notion of our imaging of God matches the quite nonhistorical notion of our creation to the divine image, a creation which is in fact renewed by Christ, but cosmically rather than by reason of any deed in history, and in terms of a propter pecatum Incarnation which has no intrinsic nexus with our creation in the image of God. For O'Neill, the Pauline and Johannine doctrine of our creation in Christ is to be referred to the “immanent” Trinity, to the Word apart from any Incarnation. This is a classic Thomist exegesis; it reads back into the New Testament a rationalist and cosmological isolation of the Trinity from the revelation of the Trinity which is today indefensible. On the other hand, there can be no question but that O'Neill considers that our imaging of God is fulfilled in terms of our imitation of Christ's imaging. In the last analysis, it is the transcendent novelty, the unique historicity, of the imaging which is Christ's that is in issue. Can this novelty remain, if foreclosed by the antecedently naturally known dimensions of creation, which Christ mediates but does not constitute? The systematic answer must be in the negative.

The logical consequence of this non-historical and therefore cosmological notion of our imaging of God is O'Neill's radically cosmological interpretation of Catholicism and of Catholic worship as centered indeed upon the Eucharist but understood in a way that avoids the trap of reducing the Eucharist to the “category of the word” only by failing to develop the final consequences of this cosmological logic. When O'Neill admits (115) that the presence of the risen Christ in the Eucharist “begins” he seems to accept, if hesitantly, the event-character of the Eucharistic “presence” of the Christ (115). This presence, the sacramental representation of that historical life of our Lord which found its culmination on the Cross, the sacrifice which is the cause and source of the Church, is therefore historical as a covenantal and constitutive event, the event in which the freedom of the Bridegroom the Head, as such signifies, causes and meets the integral created freedom of the Bride in the One Flesh of their imaging of the Triune God. The Council of Trent has identified that event as sacrifice and as transsubstantia-
tion, and the sacrifice as that of Christ on the Cross, thus precisely meeting and contradicting the Lutheran denial of the representation of the sacrifice of Christ in the Mass. Doubtless the consequences of this Tridentine definition, in the context of the theological rationalism of the time, was an over-emphasis upon the points stressed and a failure to develop the covenantal character of the Eucharistic sacrifice; analogous consequences attend all conciliar statements, not least those of Vatican II. However, the Tridentine doctrine does not stand in the way of the fuller appreciation of the Eucharistic worship which is now necessary. Rather, what blocks that development is the sort of nominalism by which the Counter-Reformation theologians rationalized divine authority, and which in our day rationalizes human autonomy; both nominalist mentalities, with their talk then and now of Christ’s Eucharistic “presence,” lose sight of the sacramental event of New Covenant, the sacrificial community of the “one flesh” in which the freedom of the sacrifice of Christ and the responsive freedom of the Church’s bridal sacrifice of praise, inseparable from and irreducible to each other in their covenantal union, are represented in the Eucharistic worship by the One Flesh of the Eucharistic sacrifice. For this union, “real presence” will not suffice; it is a name without historical content once dissociated from the Cross and from that event of change in the Eucharistic elements from bread and wine to the sacrificial body and blood of Christ which Trent, following the ancient realist tradition, designated as transubstantiation. This sacrificial content removed, only the name remains, which refers to no historical reality, no actual “beginning” because no actual event in history. O’Neill wishes to identify this real presence as an “offer of grace, which becomes grace only when it has been transposed into personal response” (210). “Offer of grace” is mere metaphor, and juridical at that; until submitted to metaphysical analysis, it is nominalism, not theology. When so submitted, a real offer will turn out to require a real event.

It may be that at bottom the point of agreement between Guzie and O’Neill is that both have a nominalist and merely empirical conception of the Church which prevents their seeing her as the sacramental bride of Christ in the Eucharistic worship that here and now is at once her historical-covenantal reality and His. Insofar as O’Neill is concerned, this ecclesiology seems to be rooted in his forgetting that the res et sacramentum of the Eucharist must be dynamic, for as sacramentum it is not only effect, but also causal sign, which by signifying causes that which it signifies. “Presence” is not a sign; because without significant content, it cannot cause by signifying. The correlative of this presence is therefore the congregation, those of the faithful who are “present” to the empirical sacramentum tantum in an empirical sense and whose Spiritual unity is that of the nonhistorical, cosmic Christ. From this ecclesiology, the consequences which we have seen proceed; they amount to the corroboration of a revisionist interpretation of the Eucharist which cannot come to terms with the substantial reality of the New Covenant in history.

In the Eucharist, the risen and glorified Christ is present as the sacrifice offered to the Father in and by which our own sacrifice is accepted because offered in union with His Body, the Church; the risen and glorified Bride, the Kingdom, is sacramentally present in history as the worshipping Church, caused to be sacramentally actual in history by the historical representation of Christ’s sacrificial body and blood. Where His sacrifice is not historically represented, not sacramentally actual, the actuality of the Church, caused and specified by the Eucharistic Lord, can not be historical, nor can her worship, and the Eucharist ceases to escape “the category of word.” When O’Neill finds the Eucharist to represent the Church’s sacrifice merely, he forgets that this sacrifice can be offered in the here and now only if “one flesh” with Christ’s, here and now. This consequence has been explored to its outer limits in the theology of the Reform, and it entails the elimination of the res et sacramentum of the Mass, and so of the entire sacramental worship of the church; no sacramental realism can survive the loss of the historical event which is the sacramental representation of Christ’s sacrifice in the Mass. This, and not the “real presence,” is the center of Catholic life and worship, and no Catholic theology which fails to find there its ground can stand.

RESUMÉ

For as long as the Thomist metaphysics ignores the intrinsic and historical contingency of creation, which is to say, for as long as the contingency of the Incarnation is not identified with that of creation as such (the systematic ground for this identification having been provided by Thomas’ application of the same esse-essence analysis to both), it will remain no more than a static cosmology unable to accommodate the historical order of gratia Christi, the New Covenant, for between a contingency within the a priori order of cosmological structure and a contingency in the order of history is all the difference
between the Aristotelian act-potency analysis proper to a necessary cosmos incapable of a more than nominal accommodation to the *ex nihilo* whether of creation or of Incarnation, and the properly theological analysis proper to the *ex nihilo* at once of creation and of the Incarnation. When Thomas used the esse-essence relation to account for the Incarnation as well as for the contingency of creation, he applied it to what is in fact a historical and free contingency, that of the New Covenant; from that moment, it became systematically necessary, which is to say, necessary if Thomist metaphysics were to continue to make sense, to identify the freedom of the New Covenant with the freedom *ex nihilo* of creation: creation in Christ, in the *incarnatus* Word, then became the single possible basis for and single interest of Thomism, an act-potency metaphysical analysis henceforth methodologically theological, radically Christological and Trinitarian. The only alternative is the methodological and metaphysical incoherence of the philosophico-theological Thomism of the schools. It need astonish no one that Thomas himself did not realize the radical character of his achievement, but it does become somewhat puzzling to find this intrinsically historical methodology of the Thomist metaphysics so resolutely ignored in favor of a cosmology during all the centuries which have seen avowed Thomists at work. The loss for Catholic theology is beyond calculation, for every systematic question which arises finds in conventional Thomism, such as O’Neill uses here, at least its impoverishment and more often its entire frustration; the ancient dilemmas recur, time-honored in their antiquity - for they are much older than St. Thomas - and adamantine in their intractability. They arise out of the Greek cosmological penchant for the rationalization of God and man, which demands that there be some *a priori* ground in the cosmos, in the supposedly determinate order of the everyday world, for their interrelation, or, in Christian terms, for the contingency of grace. Thomas accepted this cosmological prius without question, although he did not enter into, the *mediente anima* trap which has hampered Christology since Origen and which since Blondel has become integral to the transcendental Thomism of Rahner and his disciples. Thomas did suppose that the natural order of creation is in some fashion the metaphysical prius of the order of grace, since he assigned to grace the category of accident rather than substance, having reserved that of substance to nature, to the nonhistorical contingency of creation. This is to understand an event, a historical contingency, the New Covenant, as already given within the cosmological and merely structural contingency of the “natural” creation - which is to say, to assume grace to be within the potency of nature, as though freedom could be discovered as implicit within the necessary structures of natural substance. On this radical incoherence Thomist theologians are still fixed; it has removed them from the possibility of serious theological speculation which is their sole justification, for they are engaged in a most fundamental contradiction at the level of method and it poisons all they do; not least, it forces the trivialization of the Fall.

There is no continuity, no analogy whatever between cosmos and history, between the contingency of Aristotelian act-potency relations and those of essence, and to assert one nonetheless is to accept a nominalist deformation and implicit disavowal of the *ex nihilo* of creation as well as of the Incarnation. The *ex nihilo* does not refer merely to the absence of a *prior* material cause; it refers to the absence *quoad nos* of any prior possibility, of any *prior ratio*, whether in God or in the cosmos, of the free creation. It forbids, for example, the referring of creation to the *prior* omnipotence or to the creative love of God, even to the prior freedom of God: the *ex nihilo* imports the end of all metaphysical dualism, but it also by that fact imports the end of prior logical-ontological potentiality, as the structuring principle of reality: *reality is now the structured freedom, free structure of the event of the New Covenant*, and its theological analysis must begin with this freedom, this free structure whose prime analogate is the Trinity in *free and irrevocable* historical relation to its image, the New Covenant, and not with some prior notion of the *Deus unus* who is also the Creator apart from any consideration of the *Logos sark egeneto*. To insert the Trinity into the non-historical cosmos is to dissociate it from its historical truth, to reduce the Trinity to some absolute level of *status quo ante* immanence - which is to deform it in the interests of cosmological neatness, for of such a divinity nothing can be known, as a matter of definition, and so considered the Trinity cannot be known to be Triune. The Trinity cannot be dissociated, without its dissolution, from its free revelation in Christ and from the historicity of the New Covenant. Ever and again, we suppose that the given as given in history is no longer free, and we then look to some non-historical prius to protect the freedom in history of the Lord of history, a manner of proceeding which is on its face arbitrary, and which cannot be made systematically coherent.
When the Trinity is cosmically conceived, in disassociation from faith in Christ, the notion of a “natural” created imaging of the Trinity becomes pressing; its solution has been to find a timeless analogical structure of nous (the intellectus, memoria, amor adopted by Augustine and adapted by Thomas) which then ineluctably begins to be seen as the prior possibility of the Incarnation, with the cosmic implication now explicit, i.e., that the creation of humanity is the prius of an Incarnation merely proper peccatum (O’Neill, 92). The Fall then can no longer be understood as from Christocentric integrity, and the solidarity of our humanity in falleness then has only an extrinsic and nominal relation to our unity in Christ. From this point onward, theology becomes a more and more unlikely narrative of divine decrees imposed despotically by a God the Father whose Old Testament unity is affronted by all qualification in being, by all multiplicity, as Ockham pointed out, and this impasse is simply unbridgeable by any rational device whatever, including the analogous predication of being, for the analogy bespeaks a prior compatibility, which is not available from the One God on any basis other than the juridical, the master-slave relation which is eo ipso dualist. The revelation of the Old Testament cannot stand alone; it is a propaedeutic, as Paul insisted in Galatians, a guide to Christianity and apart from that telos, the inner paradox of the Old Testament, that posed by the One God whose unqualified unity is active in history, remains unresolved. One cannot, as O’Neill wishes, found a theology on a least-common-denominator, philosophically constructed divinity, on the One God common to Greek, Christian, Jewish and Moslem speculation. The One God is Trinity, and no ecumenical theology may suppose Godhead to be dissociable from the Trinity, or the Trinity from Christ, or Christ from the Covenant, or the Covenant from the Church’s historical worship of the Lord of history (O’Neill, 23, 28, 159). A theologian may transmit the question of whether one can construct philosophy on a theological foundation, after the manner of Blondel, but it is far too evident that the reverse is quite impossible: seven centuries of Thomist disputation witness to the futility of such efforts.

Thomas did not merely add a set of act-potency relations to those already in place, in such wise that Aristotelianism is merely an incomplete Thomism; it is rather the case that Aristotelianism is a merely potential Thomism. The actualization of that potentiality is ex nihilo, for it has the character of conversion, which is to say, of grace. By this conversion from its essential and determinist paganism to the Christian reality and truth, Thomas transformed the entirety of the Aristotelian metaphysical analysis, giving it an object unimaginable to Aristotle, and leaving no aspect of Aristotelianism in possession. For instance, there is, from the determinist stance of the Aristotelian act-potency analysis nothing whatever to be learned from the individual, from the “material singular.” Such a dismissal of all interest in the concrete individual is paradoxical, considering Aristotle’s enormous curiosity for the world about him, but he was a pagan before he was an empirical scientist, and in his metaphysics the pagan derogation of the concrete physical entity was not second nature but first; he never was able so to transcend Platonism as to allow a material, a world-immanent prime analogate of being, however intent he was upon the immanence of form in matter, and on this account his act-potency analysis finally fails, for it can in fact provide no world-immanent specific and non-individuated form in which the individual might participate as a member of the common formality of the species and which might account for the unity of the actio immans of the species, nor is there any immanent cosmological principle of unity which might transcend and so unify the multitude of species: the cosmos itself fails to be one, and therefore truly to be, precisely because of its materiality, and this failure infects the individual itself, which for Aristotle and often for Thomas as well is not intelligible except insofar as referred to the universal, the specific form - this, both for Aristotle and for Thomas must be ideal, for it can not be immanent to the world except as individuated by materia quantitate signata. This failure cannot but be proper to Thomism also for as long as it remains a cosmology, a nonhistorical analysis of nonhistorical reality, for it too can provide no world-immanent principle of unity, as the common reliance upon the divine ideas, the Thomist version of the Platonic forms, well illustrates. These ideas are in God, not in the world, and reliance upon them is impossible for any metaphysics which presupposes, as Thomism does, as Aristotelianism did, as any act-potency metaphysics must, the immanent, intrinsic intelligibility of the physical world. Plato can logically invoke the world of forms as the ultima ratio, but he does so in consequence of an explicit pessimism; for him, the cosmos is as cosmos fallen, and its redemption must be acosmic, the return of cosmic multiplicity, variety and change to the ideal condition of unity by the absolute exclusion of matter from form. For Aristotle, the only way out is Hegel’s, a pantheism of the intellectus agent, for a Thomist, the only solution which is theological is that first proposed by Rousselot, in which
the Word made flesh is the source of all theological intelligibility, apart from the consideration of whose free and covenantal immanence in creation theology does not exist because creation does not.\textsuperscript{64}

O’Neill’s Thomism tries to make the best of both worlds, the Aristotelian and the Christian, a compromise in which he is hardly alone.\textsuperscript{65} The compromise in this instance amounts to the ongoing cosmologization or dehistoricization of the historical worship of the historical Church, a process which when followed to its immanent conclusion is identical to the interiorization of the Eucharist upon which we have seen Guzie to be intent, and which is the program of the Reformation. This dehistoricizing follows upon the supposition, common to both Guzie and O’Neill, that the ultimate criterion of the historical actuality and truth of the Eucharistic symbol is the non-historical logic of Aristotle. This is by no means what O’Neill believes; his Eucharistic orthodoxy is explicit and unquestioned. However, we are here concerned with his theology, not his personal fidelity to the Catholic tradition, and that theology, like Guzie’s, is in flight from the historicity of the Eucharistic worship, and for the same reasons.

\textbf{NOTES}

\textsuperscript{1}The success of the efforts to transcend the polemic of the sixteenth century has been rather diplomatic than theological. None of the new approaches to ecumenical union which have been presented in the inter-faith discussions held since Vatican II have yet shown themselves able to lend any degree of approfondissement to the sacramental doctrine of either side, and thereby to provide any really new base for doctrinal agreement; what has been accomplished has not gone beyond the recognition that both sides have on occasion willingly misunderstood each other. When the fog produced by such obstinacy is dissipated however, the battlements which dominated the theological horizon of the sixteenth century reappear to loom over our own: ex opere operato and sola fide still confront each other as they did four centuries ago, and neither side is able to abandon its position and yet remain itself. See e.g.: Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue, III: The Eucharist as Sacrifice (New York and Washington: 1967); “Observations on the Anglo-Roman Catholic International Commission Final Report,” Origins 11/47 (May, 1982) 752-756; Das Opfer Jesu Christi und seine Gegenwart in der Kirche: Klarungen zum Opfercharakter des Herrenmables; herausg. von Karl Lehmann und Edmund Schlink. Ser. Dialog der Kirchen, III. (Freiburg am Breisgau: Herder; Gottingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1983).

\textsuperscript{2}See, e.g., “Documentation and Reflection: A Colloquium on the Canterbury Statement,” Anglican Theological Review 57 (1976) 82-95, in which the Protestant and Catholic participants, the latter including a bishop, agreed on the wrong-headedness of the Vatican II insistence upon the priority of the Eucharistic presence of Christ over the faith of the Church. The theme is now a common one; see Edward Kilmartin, “Apostolic Office: Sacrament of Christ,” Theological Studies 36 (1975) 243-264, cited further in note 9, infra.

\textsuperscript{3}The problem of intercommunion had already been wrestled with from the founding of the World Council of Churches (Life and Work had recommended intercommunion now, as the apt means of fostering doctrinal union, while Faith and Order had insisted that doctrinal agreement, particularly with regard to the Eucharist, must be achieved before intercommunion could be a reality), and the opposing attitudes of these two organizations whose joinder established the World Council in 1948 at Amsterdam presaged those now observable within the Roman Catholic community, in which however the typically Protestant tension between pastoral and doctrinal emphases is difficult to justify. For a detailed examination of the W.C.C. debate, see David P. Gaines, The World Council of Churches: A Study of Its Background and History, (Peterborough, N.H.: R.R. Smith, 1966), esp. 332ff.

\textsuperscript{4} “American” is used here to denote English-speaking North America; if the usage is arbitrary, its avoidance would be equally so.


\textsuperscript{6}It elicited from Karl Rahner the famous observation that henceforth one must deal with Kung’s theology as with that of liberal Protestantism. See the subsequent exchange, “A ‘Working Agreement’ to Disagree,” in Americ


9 Edward Kilmartin, art. cit.; Kilmartin proposed in this article an eight point revision of the Catholic Eucharistic worship; the eight points were those insisted upon by the Reformation and include the rationale since most relied upon by the women’s ordination movement, i.e., the presence of Christ in the Mass as secondary to the faith of the congregation. Kilmartin was honored in 1978 by the Catholic Theological Society of America for, among other things, his contribution to the renewal of sacramental theology. See the CTSA Proceedings 33 (1978) 269-270. His lead has been followed by many others, e.g., Bernard Cooke, Ministry to Word and Sacraments, History and Theory, (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976), Joseph Martos, Doors to the Sacred, (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981), David N. Power, The Sacrifice We Offer: The Tridentine Dogma and its Reinterpretation (New York: Crossroad, 1986).

10 For a comprehensive discussion of the influence of modernity so conceived upon the contemporary reception of the Catholic tradition, see Gustave Martelet, Deux mille ans d’Eglise en question: crise de la foi, crise du prêtre, (Paris: Cerf, 1984), esp. 121-148.

11 Bernard Lonergan particularly, in Method in Theology, (New York: Herder and Herder, 1973, 312-330) has been impressed by the victory of what he terms “philology,” meaning the congeries of secular human sciences whose vindication, as he believes, marks the end of all confidence in the a priori historicity of the Catholic doctrinal tradition. Historical matters, in Lonergan’s view, now await the judgment of the secular academy; Tad Guzic’s Jesus and the Eucharist (New York: Paulist Press, 1974), as shall be shown, is committed a priori to this triumph of the secular, but we shall see that some of Colman O’Neill’s observations in his most recent work, Sacramental Realism: A General Theory of the Sacraments (Wilmington, DE: Glazier, 1983) also echo it, however inadvertently; see e.g., pp. 70, 73. I have dealt more particularly with Lonergan’s theology in “A Methodological Critique of Lonergan’s Theological method,” The Thomist 50 (Jan., 1986) 28-65.

12 Étienne Gilson, in Réalisme méthodique (Paris: Téqui, 1936) and Réalisme thomiste et critique de la connaissance (Paris: Vrin, 1939) has pointed out long since the futility of trying by means of an immanentist logic to argue oneself out of that immanence. Although he is not sufficiently conscious of the theological character of his prescription of dogmatic realism, Gilson’s criticism of the rationalism of “transcendental Thomism” stands.


14 Hans Urs von Balthasar insisted upon the impossibility of any systematic theology, understanding that term as the imposition of necessary structures of thought upon a free truth. That theological system must have this effect is hardly established, but insofar as it does so proceed, the criticism is apt. See particularly his discussion of the systematics of Karl Rahner and of Teilhard in Cordula, oder der Ernstfall, mit einem Nachwort zu zweiten Aufl. (Einsiedeln: Johannes Verlag, 1967), and in the earlier discussion of the failure of Barth’s systematization in Karl Barth: Darstellung und Deutung seiner Theologie, 2nd ed. (Koln: Verlag Jacob Hegner, 1962), 306-312; for a summary of this criticism, see Die Wahrheit ist symphonisch (Einsiedeln: Johannes Verlag, 1972), 54ff.

15 “Cosmological” is used here to designate that implicitly dualist metaphysics which takes “natural” creation as its subject and attempts to coordinate the Christian revelation to that philosophy of being, inevitably by a propter peccatum Christology. So used, the term describes a metaphysics of “natural” creation which wishes to be a theology as well, and is then to be contrasted not with “anthropological” but with the Trinitarian, Christocentric, covenantal
and historical version of specifically theological metaphysics proposed here. The semantic point is of some importance since O’Neill uses the same word to denote “theories about the nature of matter,” a usage which reflects the title of one of the philosophical tracts of manual Thomism.

16David Tracy refurbished this Bultmannian notion in his Blessed Rage for Order: The New Pluralism in Theology (New York: Seabury, 1975) but it was already taken for granted in Bernard Lonergan’s Method in Theology and was the native air of Kung’s The Church.

17See O’Neill’s citation (155) of St. Thomas’ “quite staggering thought” according to which the infinite power of God “can take away whatever it is that distinguishes one being from another.” The reference is S.T. I. iii a, q. 75, a. 4, ad 3. St. Thomas’ appeal to the absolute power of God to negate the intrinsic intelligibility of creation anticipates the entirety of the nominalist dissolution of metaphysics.

18The Eucharistic unity of history had been a patristic theme; see Henri de Lubac, Corpus Mysticum: L’Eucharistie et L’Eglise du moyen âge. Etude historique; Deuxième edition. Revue et augmentée. Col. Théologie, 3. (Paris: Aubier, 1944), 75ff. The Eucharist was understood by the Latin Fathers in the early middle ages to be the actual union of the Old and the New Testaments, as scripture, as revelation, as salvation history and as worship of the One God of that one history.

19Institutes, IV, 17, 36; see also Calvin’s Tracts and Treatises, II, On the Doctrine and Worship of the Church, which contains his other major eucharistic writings. It is paradoxical that later Calvinist liturgies became so preoccupied with the consecration formula, given the radical devaluation of sacramental worship by the famous finitum non capax infiniti. For further discussion of the perduring influence of this tag, see Arthur Charles Pieckorn, Profiles in Belief, II, Protestant Denominations (New York: Harper and Row, 1978), 283; Louis Bouyer, The Spirit and Forms of Protestantism; tr. A.V. Littledale (Westminster, MD: Newman, 1956), 78, 86; John Hardon, The Protestant Churches of America (Westminster, MD: Newman, 1969), 249-265.

20The legacy of Platonism, through Philo’s scriptural commentaries to Origen, and from that towering genius to East and West alike, had its own peculiar incoherencies, which can only be pointed to here: these would seem to center on the assumption (a commonplace among both the Greek and Latin Fathers) that the hypostatic union of God and man in Christ and the Christ-Church union share a communicatio idiomatum, which if taken at the letter would force either a Nestorian Christology or a Christomonist ecclesiology. This notion has its origin in Philo’s Platonicizing exegesis of the Song of Songs, whose mystical marriage theme is referred by him to the union of the soul and the Word of God, a notion much relied upon in the patristic Christology to account for the union of the Logos with the human soul of Christ. This mediate anima Christology finds in the intellectual soul the prior possibility for the Incarnation, which is of course to undercut the utter gratuity and novelty of the Logos saxis egeneto. For an examination of this Philonic usage and its entry into Christian theology see Henri Crouzel, bígínti et mariage selon Origène. Coll. Museum Lessianum, Sec. Theologique, no. 58; (Paris et Bruges: Desesle de Brouwer, 1962).

21The Christian historian’s appreciation of the nominalist movement will be in function of his confessional stance: for a meliorative and Lutheran view, see Heiko Obermann’s Harvest of Medieval Theology (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963). Gilson’s pejorative view, as set out, e.g., in L’Esprit et les philosophies medivale (Paris: Vrin, 1944) is of course informed by Catholicism.


26The situation of the historian is analogous to that of the physicist; a historical-critical method cannot be
taken very seriously if its thrust is to suppress either the inquiry of the historian or the reality of the object of that inquiry. Historical inquiry cannot proceed under the agenda of necessary reasons, nor does its object survive if its intelligibility is in principle anticipated by such reasoning: of such an object, there could arise no curiosity for it could offer nothing new. A value-free objectivity demands a value-free object, one fundamentally uninteresting, for from it nothing new can be learned.


29 A recent statement of this determinist viewpoint, a commonplace among contemporary physicists, is that of Sheldon Lee Glasgow, in “Toward a Unified Theory of Physics,” *Michigan Quarterly Review* 23 (Spring 1984), 220: “Beyond the grand unified theory lies ‘the Theory,’ which unifies all the forces of nature. This is the greatest challenge of physics.” Both the Einstein-Planck and the Copenhagen School interpretations of quantum mechanics would accept this statement, the former because it can be referred to the necessary causal sequences intrinsic to material reality, and the latter because it can be read as referring to the determining structures of mathematical reasoning by which our brute experience is rationalized. In the latter case, physical intelligibility is intrinsic to the mind, and is thus ideal, while the physical world, being intrinsically unintelligible, is relegated to the chaotic; in the former, truth is intrinsic to a physical world independent of the human mind, but has a structure isomorphic with that of the logical necessities of human thought; Einstein considered it miraculous that this hypothesis should continually be verified; see his letter to Jaki, cited in *The Relevance of Physics*, 192-3. Reductively, Einstein’s view is pantheist, looking to an impersonal Mind as the unitary intelligence to whose necessary and monist rationality both the world and human minds conform. See A. Einstein, B. Podolsky and N. Rosen, “Can Quantum-Mechanical Description of Physical Reality be Considered Complete?” in S. Toulmin, op. cit., 124; see also Max Planck, “The Unity of the Physical World-Picture,” ibid., 25.


31 Por Hans Urs von Balthasar, both are “identity systems;” see his criticism, in the works cited in note 14, of the entire project of systematic theology.

32 It will be recalled that for St. Thomas, creation was a natural truth, not a matter of revealed faith, and his transformation of the Aristotelian metaphysics was not understood by him to be theologically grounded.

33 Witness the four centuries of Thomist contention. The debate continued until the Second Vatican Council; if it has since been dropped, this is not because anyone discovered how to provide for the prior possibility of human freedom under divine Providence. See T. Ryan, “Congregatio de Auxiliis,” *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, iv, 168-171.


36 Some fourteen years ago, John O’Malley, in “Reform, Historical Consciousness and Vatican II’s Aggiornamento,” *Theological Studies* dehistoricizing “historical consciousness.” It was greeted upon its publication as a “theological break-through.” This article, and its reiteration twelve years later, “Developments, Reforms, and Two Great
Reformations” Toward a Historical Assessment of Vatican II, ibid. 44 (1983), rely upon the same hermeneutic as does Guzie and later, does Power (op. cit., n. 9 supra) in his revisionist “reinterpretation” of the Tridentine dogma on the sacrifice of the Mass: this taught, contra Luther, that the One Sacrifice of Christ is offered sacramentally and really in persona Christi in the Mass. For such revisionism, history is whatever man (Lutheran or nominalist man, sine nomine, sine persona, sine specie) will make of it, for it has no intrinsic meaning of its own. The contemporary historicism of such as Guzie is no more than the rationalization of Luther’s pessimism. It is in every way comparable to liberation program of Gustavo Gutierrez, op. cit., who proposes a renewal of the Roman Catholic Church through the relativization of the entirety of the Church’s historicity - doctrine, sacramental worship, morality - by its submission to comparably nonhistorical and therefore revolutionary criteria. Whether the ideal truth which these criteria envisage be imposed by a putatively scholarly historical critical method or by a political praxis is quite immaterial: as Marx knew, the two are not distinct; cf. his Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Law, in which criticism becomes denunciation. For a discussion of Marx’s understanding of “theory” see Paul Eidelberg, “Karl Marx and the Declaration of Independence: The Meaning of Marxism,” The Intercollegiate Review 20 (1984), 3-11.


39Throughout this book, a work of his youth, Guzie manifests no acquaintance with the historical transformation of the myths and symbols of the pagan cosmological religions by their adaptation to the Jewish and Christian worship of the Lord of history. Neither does Suzanne Langer, upon whose early work Guzie is heavily reliant; see her Philosophy in a New Key: A Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite and Art, 3rd ed., (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1967), at the conclusion of whose chapter on “Life Symbols: The Roots of Sacrament” the following rather revealing summary statement appears: “The myth-making instinct’ however, has a history of its own, and its own life-symbols; though it is the counterpart of sacrament in the making of higher religion, it does not belong to the lower phases: or, at least, it has little importance below the level of dawning philosophical thought, which is the last reach of genuine religion, its consummation and its dissolution” (170; emphasis added). Guzie says the same: cf. 21ff., 66ff. However, the transformation which is worked upon cosmic myth and symbol by their application to this historical worship frees them of their dualistic pessimism and their monist soteriology, to the point that the basic Christian heresy has always been the gnostic effort to reconstitute that pessimism and that soteriological flight from history. Hans Urs von Balthasar has discussed this transformation in The Glory of the Lord, I: Seeing the Form, 637 ff.; see also Gerhard von Rad, Old Testament Theology, II, 349, cited by von Balthasar at 649.

40Küng, op. cit.

41E. Kilmartin, art. cit.

42B. Cooke, op. cit.; see also Sacraments and Sacramentality (Mystic, CT: Twenty-third Publications, 1983).


44J. Martos, op. cit.; see also his Message of the Sacraments (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1983).

45David N. Power, op. cit.; see also “Words that Crack: The Uses of ‘Sacrifice’ in Eucharistic Discourse,” Worship 53 (September, 1979), 386-404.

46Denziger-Schonmetzer, §1997.

47For a more signal instance of this confusion, see Hans Urs von Balthasar, Herrlichkeit: Eine theologische Ästhetik: Band III/II Im Raum der Metaphysik (Einsiedeln: Johannes Verlag, 1965), 958-983; see also his Karl Barth, 353. On this account, viz., the incompatibility with the theological quaerens of such a metaphysics, Von Balthasar has rejected the very possibility of a systematic theology; see his Karl Barth, 308-312, and Die Wahrheit ist symphonisch, 54ff.

The contrast between the Augustinian and the Thomist approaches to the Fall has been discussed by Henri Rondet, *Original Sin: The Patristic and Theological Background*, tr. by Cajetan Finegan, O.P. (New York: Alba House, 1972); see esp. pp. 162-168. The rationalist reduction of the “natural” to the necessary has had the result, e.g., of making physical death “natural” rather than a consequence of the Fall.

Cf. Henri Cardinal de Lubac, *Petite catechese sur Nature et Grace*, Col. Communio (Paris: Fayard, 1980), 137-163, in which the author, criticizing Schillebeeckx’ notion of the Church as the “sacrament of the world,” points out these consequences as implicit in that notion. Schillebeeckx’ creationist Thomism is similar to O’Neill’s. Entirely comparable Thomist emphases upon the naturalism of the created order have led contemporary Catholic moral theologians of the “natural law” such as Joseph Fuchs to a similar denial of any intrinsic moral quality in human acts, which denial is no more than the ethical implication of the standard Thomist refusal of the intrinsic intelligibility of the material singular apart from its reference to an essential form immanent in the species. Here, the Scotist haecceitas is a better guide. Better yet is a Thomism which is theological from the outset, and therefore is committed a priori to the sacramentality, and therefore the intrinsic intelligibility, of history.


The primordial marital covenant of Christ and the Church is a theme of the earliest Judaean-Christian tradition; *latent* in the Pauline deuterous Adam of Rom 5 and explicit in Eph 5:3, and taken up by I Clement and the Shepherd of Hermas, it was little developed outside the circles of Judaean-Christianity thereafter although mentioned by St. Thomas (S. T. iia, iae, q. 2, a. 7); see note 58, infra. Elsewhere, as by Justin Martyr and the Apologists generally, Christ’s pre-existence was generally conceived in terms of the asarkikos in a fashion which too easily identified sarx with human nature as such, which is hardly the biblical and historical sense of the term as it is employed by Paul and John. In our day, Pope John Paul II has revived the ancient covenantal Christology in his sermons: see *The Original Unity of Man and Woman* (Boston: St. Paul Editions, 1981), which associates marriage to our imaging of the Trinity and to the primordial covenant of God with humanity, 36, 38, 51, 62, 73-4. See also Pope John Paul II’s encyclical letter, *The Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World* (Familiaris consortio) (Boston: St. Paul Editions, n.d.) passim.


O’Neill cites Augustine’s reference to the sacrifice of Christ as offered under the form of the servant (95) but does not develop this insight. Like Guzie, O’Neill thinks linguistic analysis important for theological work, which approval would seem to underlie his fastidiousness over the theological use of such terms as “suffering servant,” “sacrifice,” “atonement,” “satisfaction,” and the like, inasmuch as he takes the primary meaning of such terms to be critically established not by the two millennia of Catholic worship, but by one or another philosophy of religion, or even by “normal” speech: (89) it would appear that the language of the Church’s public worship is in some sense beyond the linguistic pale. However his basic reservations are theological: he is unwilling to understand the Eucharist as the presence of the Suffering Servant, fearing that this would attribute to the Risen Christ present in the Eucharist an impossible ambivalence. For O’Neill, the Mass is a sacrifice only in the sense that the Church offers herself sensu negante; he thus understands the famous passage in *The City of God*, x, 6.
See note 18.

T.Iia, q. 93, a. 3. Augustine was of the same opinion: cf. De trin., iv, 9, 2; De civ. dei, xii, 21.


Guziet’s rejection of any transempirical ecclesial reality has been sufficiently accounted for; O’Neill’s similar tendency appears in his insistence upon grounding his theology in experience (20); his repeated reference to the faith-affirmation as the ground of argument, rather than the concrete reality in history which, because prior to faith, transcends the faith by causing it (see, e.g., 21, 51, 61, 71, 81, 128); the immediate “juridicalizing” interpretation of such notions as objective redemption and satisfaction with no attempt to engage in an appropriate metaphysical inquiry into the irrevocable historical achievement of Christ to which they point (35, 39, 132); the attempt to reduce the sacrifice of the Mass to either the ritual dimensions of the sacramentum tantum (45, 83, 87, 106) or the ethical dimensions of the res tantum; the continual attempt to reduce the entire historical activity of Jesus to the revelation of a non-historical Providence (e.g., 58, 90, 191); the definition of the Church as the assembly of faith (69) whose visibility is that of a “sociologically determinable entity” (133); the view of history as an extrinsic process to whose empirical determination by academic scholarship the Church is submitted as of course (71-73); finally the quite unsatisfactory account of the sacramentality of marriage (whose res et sacramentum non is the covenantal bond, the vinculum: 187). This impedes his theological exploitation of the marital structure both of image and of covenant (26-31, 62), and therefore of creation.

There is ground for thinking that in his later years St. Thomas came to see the necessity of a universally distributed grace, prior to all response, immanent in all human beings, to account at least for the sinfulness of infidelity: see the discussion in Roger Aubert, Le problème de d’acte de foi: Donnes traditionelles et résultats des controverses recentes, 3e edition (Louvan: E. Warny, 1958), 65-66. In this work, Aubert cites the In Joannem xv, lect. 5, no. 4, S. T. iia, iiae, q. 2, a. 9 ad 3, q. 10, a. 1 ad 1 and Quodl. ii, a. 6 to instance St. Thomas’ later theology of the interior instinctus ad credendum. For another view of these texts, one refusing the theological issue, see the extensive discussion of Max Schillebeeckcloc, Approches Théologiques, I: Revelation et théologie (Bruxelles: Editions du Cerf, Paris: Office general du livre, n.d.), 285-321. Later on in the Summa, St. Thomas appears to recognize the ontological primacy of Christ to creation, but this later insight plays no part in what I have referred to herein as the Thomism of the schools. See S. T. iia iiae, q. 2, a. 7: “Videtur autem incarnationem Christi praecius fuisset per hoc quod dixit Propter hoc relinquit homo patrem et matrem et adhaerit uxori suae ut habetur Gen 2, 24, et hoc Apostolus ad Eph 5, 32 dicit sacramentum magnum esse in Christo et Ecclesia; quod quidem sacramentum non est credibile primum hominem ignorasse.” Such passages must however be balanced against the repeated assertions of a preference for a propter peccatum Christology: cf. S. T. iiiia, q. 1, a. 3, c. and q. 1, a. 5, c.

Thomas does repeat the mediante anima language of the theological tradition (S. T. iiiia, q. 6, a. 5 & b), but because his act-potency anthropology is more unified than that which e.g. Augustine derives from the universal hylomorphism of Neoplatonism, the mediation problematic imposed upon men such as Origen and Augustine by their often uncritical acceptance of Neoplatonic metaphysics does not arise for him: Thomas’ analysis of the hypostatic union refers it to the ex nihilo of creation, which as a matter of definition can permit no mediation. Transcendental Thomism, by reason of the failure to exploit the implication of a graced creation which is inescapable in the Thomist metaphysics of the hypostatic union, falls back upon an alien problematic, that of Neoplatonism, and not only in this instance.

Henri de Lubac’s study of patristic exegesis has rediscovered the sacramental meaning of reality, wherein “nature” is articulate as the Old Covenant, “grace” as the New; both ordered, integrated and fulfilled by their historical reference to the Kingdom of God, which order is concrete in the One Flesh of the Church’s Eucharistic worship. See Susan Wood, S.C.L., The Church as the Social Embodiment of Grace in the Ecclesiology of Henri de Lubac (Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International, 1986).


John M. McDermott, Love and Understanding. Col. Analecta Gregoriana, vol. 29, Series Facultatis Theologiae, Sec. B, no. 77 (Roma: Universita Pontificia Gregoriana Editrice, 1983) for a detailed analysis of the discovery by Rousselot of the indispensability of Christocentrism to systematic theology. This was long since anticipated by Bonaven-

64This theme has been explored in the recent pastoral letter published by Gerald Emmett Cardinal Carter, Archbishop of Toronto: see “Do This In Memory Of Me”: *A Pastoral Letter Upon The Sacrament Of Priestly Orders* (Toronto: 8 December, 1983).

65Here may be instanced the attempts of the early Rousselot: *The Intellectualism of St. Thomas*, tr. James O’Mahony (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1935); of Marechal’s *Le point de départ de la métaphysique: leVons sur le développement historique et théorique du problème de la connaissance*, i-v, 3e edition (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1944), and of the transcendental Thomism of Rahner and Lonergan to exploit the intrinsic dynamism of rationality as the appropriate avenue of escape from the ideal immanence of thought proposed by Descartes’ methodic doubt and systematized by Kant to the destruction of all realist metaphysics. However, as has been said supra, one does not argue one’s way out of the immanentism of monadic logic. Those philosophical Thomists who eschew the transcendental method and concern themselves instead with the esse-essence correlation as the one access to Thomist realism are split as to its implications, whether a regression to a Neoplatonic monism of esse or to an Aristotelian monism of essence. See the discussion by Joyce Little, *Esse-Essence and Grace: a theological inquiry into Thomist methodology*, cited in note 27, Part One.