SUBLATING RATIONALITY: THE EUCHARIST AS AN EXISTENTIAL TRIAL

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The Eucharist, as a pillar of Christian life and faith, stands at the center of the Mass. It bears multi-dimensional meanings and functions, each of which addresses a different aspect of Christian life and mindset. This study resonates dialectically between the Eucharist as a unique religious affirmation of faith and philosophical strategies that are developed to meet its challenges, particularly the rational frameworks by which the believer affirms that the consecrated bread and wine are Christ's body and blood. On the one hand, the philosophical examination offers new perspectives to understand the Eucharist and its influence on the faithful; on the other hand, the Eucharist and the unique challenges it poses allow us to examine man's relation to reality within the colors of faith. It will be argued that Edward Schillebeeckx's discussion of the Eucharist, particularly his attempt to bridge between reality and the symbolic sphere, accords with Heidegger's reevaluation of the question of Being. The present reading limits itself to the encounter between the mind and the phenomenon and does not proceed to the meaning of the Eucharist as part of the Mass and the crucifixion of Christ. However, the focus of the article is not on the phenomenon but rather on the existential position of the subject and his orientation toward reality.

I am not a Christian. In fact, I am a non-observant Jew. This biographical fact is of great importance when I try to explain why I have undertaken this study of the Eucharist, and addresses the underlying reasoning that dictates its flow. Even though I am treating it as a philosophical examination, I cannot approach the Eucharist from a scholarly detachment. I find it uncomfortable to confront the Eucharist and the claim that the real presence of Christ is manifested in the consecrated bread and wine. As a non-believing Jew, I approach the Eucharist not from the circle of the faithful nor as a citizen of the Christian mindset, but rather from the outside. I hold within me both the Jewish rejection of Jesus as the Son of God, as well as a secular alienation from religious rituals. Writing about the Eucharist is thus no small challenge for me, and the choice to open this essay from a personal perspective is not accidental. As Christianity is not my home nor part of my upbringing, I cannot genuinely confront the liturgical or anthropological aspects of the Eucharist. Nevertheless, the essential claim of the Eucharist, that Christ, "true God and man, is truly, really, and substantially contained"[2] in the consecrated bread and wine, confronts Jews no less forcefully than it does those who affirm it. Jews, be they religiously observant or not, cannot be indifferent to Christianity. This is the inevitable hermeneutical ground of the Jews' engagement with Christian theological claims. Born of and within Judaism, Christianity perforce speaks to Jews, and engendering a defensive dismissal or an existential and spiritual challenge.

The notion of being an "outside non-believer" is somewhat misleading. Whereas a Christian has to affirm the *credo*, a Jew, according to Jewish law, only has to be born to a Jewish mother. He might believe;

1 I want to thank Avital Wohlman for the discussions that initiated this study, to Paul Mendes-Flohr, Eli Rotenberg, and David Goodman for their friendship and advice. I would also like to express my deep gratitude to the reviewers of the study, whose careful reading and remarks are part of the final result.

2 Henry Denzinger, "Decree,On the Most Holy Eucharist, Council of Trent", in *The Sources of Catholic Dogma*: (Herder, 1957), ch.1 874.

he might not. A secular Jew is a Jew nonetheless. A Jew who loses his faith is said to "leave with questioning," and one who finds faith is said to "return with an answer." Faith, for a Jew, is a matter of positioning oneself between questions and answers. Thus I am not an indifferent outsider nor a denier of faith. On the contrary, my standing at the gates of faith, neither affirming nor denying, sets the proximity-tonality by which I approach the Eucharist, vacillating between questions and answers.[3]

BELIEF AND FAITH

As this study is focused on the philosophical consequences that follow the trial of faith, let us first introduce the notions of belief and faith, primarily as J. L. Schellenberg presents them. Schellenberg, as well as W. P. Alston, distinguishes between two senses in which belief is spoken of: 1. the psychological state of believing; 2. the propositional claim that is expressed by believing.[4] According to Schellenberg, belief should be understood primarily in the former way while the latter is secondary. Contrary to common opinion, Schellenberg holds that the object of belief is not the proposition — that only expresses it — but the psychological state of affairs. Schellenberg explains that because the proposition gives verbal expression to the psychological state of affairs, it is natural for us to work backwards. For that reason, I speak of propositional belief, though belief refers primarily not to the proposition but rather to the psychological state: "I am not, one wants to say, thinking of a proposition … under the impression that it is true; rather, I am thinking of a state of affairs … under the impression that it obtains."[5] Schellenberg criticizes the position of Richard Swinburne, who treats belief and plausibility together. According to Swinburne

> Belief is relative to alternatives. … You believe one proposition as against another proposition or propositions … Someone who has the concept of probability can express this contrastive character of belief in probabilistic terms. Normally, to believe that *p* is to believe that *p* is more probable or more likely than not-*p*… normally to believe that *p* is to believe that *p* is probable.[6]

Schellenberg holds that propositional thought, which is not propositional but psychological, and a propositional consideration of it — are different things.[7] Thus, Schellenberg argues against Swinburne's position that when one gives an account of a state of affairs, e.g., answering "happy" to a question regarding how he feels, this answer, though expressed propositionally, does not require him to consider and compare his answer to the plausibility of the proposition "I am unhappy."[8] According to Schellenberg, that which is responsible for believing things to be such and such is not a result of a comparison between opposing propositions but is instead a disposition to believe things in a specific state of affairs: "*S* is disposed to apprehend the state of affairs reported by *p,* when that state of affairs comes to mind, under the concept *reality.*"[9] Thus it can be argued that holding something to be plausible or likely is a result of a reflection regarding the propositional content of a belief.

My belief that things are such and such is not because I willed these beliefs to be such and such but rather because I was convinced that they *are* such and such. Belief, Schellenberg continues, is a disposition, i.e., something passive, a passion. Nothing substantial impedes our judgment from trusting these beliefs. Moreover, our beliefs must not be determined by our will, that turns belief from a disposition that is formed passively in correspondence with experience, into something I will to believe. In the words of Richard Swinburne:

3 Derrida, quoting Reb Lema, summarizes the Jewish position: "The book of man is a book of question. 'To every question, the Jew answers with a question.'" Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference* (Univ. of Chicago Press, 1978), 81.

4 John L. Schellenberg, *Prolegomena to a Philosophy of Religion* (Cornell Univ. Press, 2005), 40 ; William P. Alston, "Belief, Acceptance, and Religious Faith", in *Faith, Freedom, and Rationality: Philosophy of Religion Today*, ed. Jeffrey Jordan and Daniel Howard-Snyder (Rowman & Littlefield, 1996).

5 Schellenberg, *Prolegomena to a Philosophy of Religion*, 43–44 .

6 Richard Swinburne, *Faith and Reason* (Clarendon Press, 2005), 5.

7 Schellenberg, *Prolegomena to a Philosophy of Religion*, 43.

8 Ibid., 62–63.

9 Ibid., 50.

> a person cannot choose what to believe there and then. Believing is something that happens to someone, not something that he does. … If his beliefs were to be under his voluntary control, then either his basic propositions and the degree of his confidence in them or his inductive criteria would have to be under his voluntary control. Yet our reason for trusting our basic propositions is our conviction that they are formed by outside factors independently of our will. If I was to control at will my basic propositions [or the inductive criteria] and the degree of my confidence in them, I would know that I controlled them; and hence I would know that whether a proposition was among my basic propositions was not determined or even influenced by whether what it reported was the case. If I chose at will to believe that I now see a table, then I would realize that this belief originated from my will and so had no connection with whether or not there was a table there, and so I would know that I had no reason for trusting my belief, and so I would not really believe.[10]

This does not mean we are entirely determined by our beliefs. Swinburne notes that we can look for new evidence or a new explanation, thus allowing the wiring that forms our beliefs to reconstitute itself. Moreover, the conviction of beliefs only produces a qualified outcome, for beliefs can be manifested in different ways according to different conditioned tendencies: "To say that one has a tendency to A is to say that A will be forthcoming in the absence of sufficient contravening influences, where we have some conception of what counts as such an influence."[11]

Schellenberg holds that belief concerns the state of affairs and not the proposition. That said, we are accustomed to thinking that the object of belief is the proposition and not the state of affairs, for a proposition expresses that belief.

Since the object of belief is expressed secondarily by a proposition, both the believer and the non-believer may consider the same proposition but approach it from an entirely different existential attitude:

> although it seems that "having a thought of the state of affairs reported by p" must be the same for one who believes that p as for one who does not, … this is in fact not so. … in the case not involving belief … the person has had a thought of *what it would be like* if the relevant arrangement of things were actual. … But what I mean when I say in the case that does involve belief that someone has had a thought of a state of affairs … is that he has had a thought of the relevant arrangement of things being actual. … the believer… is simply thinking of the world.[12]

It is the will that primarily distinguishes between faith and belief. Schellenberg explains that propositional faith requires three elements: "weak evidence, a favorable evaluation, and a policy of tenaciously representing to oneself the state of affairs thus favorably assessed."[13] One cannot hold a belief and faith in something at the same time. Faith steps in when one cannot attain belief. Secondly, faith requires the will, and the will desires the good.[14] Lastly, by favorably desiring something to be true, one's will requires the *world* to have a certain character:

> in taking on an attitude of faith I tenaciously represent the world to myself, through the power of will and imagination, as having a certain character, and I determine to continue (at least for some time) representing it in that way. Here I see one of the clear differences between propositional faith and propositional belief. When I have faith, I consciously and deliberately don a pair of glasses that give everything—or at least the relevant things—a certain hue (and it may be difficult to keep the glasses on). I know that it is the glasses that produce this effect, while not denying that it might match what I would see without glasses if my vision were sufficiently penetrating. The experience of belief, on the other hand, is like wearing the glasses without knowing it.[15]

Trust is a form of belief and faith in a thing, a person, a group, or an institution, where one holds the thing, the person, the group, or the institution to be reliable, to fulfill commitments, obligations, and promises.[16] We trust people, but we also trust the technological environment that surrounds us, e.g., cars and planes,

10 Swinburne, *Faith and Reason*, 24–25.
11 Alston, 4.
12 Schellenberg, *Prolegomena to a Philosophy of Religion*, 46.
13 Ibid., 134.
14 In regard to our discussion, I think Schellenberg's qualifications, in regard to Alston's notion of *pro-attitude*, and his suggestion of *favorable evaluation*, though interesting, are too specific for our discussion. Ibid., 133.
15 Ibid., 134.
16 Alston, 12–13.

computers, and the food we purchase. Trusting is not a speculative thing. When we put our trust in something, we rely on it. When we cross the street, we trust the traffic light system to be coordinated. This is a question of life and death. Just as a belief requires a signification in reality, without which it would only be hypothetical, so there exists a difference between thinking someone to be trustworthy and actually handing another person the keys of one's car (Schellenberg's example): "To suppose that he will do what I need or want is only a beginning: it is just to suppose that he is trust worthy, it is not yet to trust. And the same goes for religious trust: I may suppose that God will be and do for me what I need or want, but if I am not disposed to act on this supposition in any way, how can I be said to have placed my trust in God?"[17]

When one says that one trusts the traffic light, this trust can be understood in two senses: 1. The first sense relates to the traffic light itself, i.e., that it was well constructed and consequently will not malfunction. This trust is a trust in the production process and a system that guarantees that the traffic light is made according to regulated standards. So long as no one deliberately sabotages the production and the regulation process, one can objectively assume that a traffic light should work effectively. The trust is not merely in the traffic light but rather in the whole assembly process. This process objectifies our trust and turns it into a well-founded belief. 2. In the second sense that trust is mentioned, the traffic light does not refer only to the traffic light as a product of an objectified process but rather also to those who programmed it, for they could easily have programmed the traffic light, assuming it works properly, to cause harm. It is for this reason that Socrates said that physicians, who are best equipped with medical knowledge, are also best at knowing how to harm others.[18] Similarly, when a father says he trusts his son's driving, this could be understood objectively insofar as the father holds a well-founded belief that his son has mastered the skills required to control a car; alternatively, the father's trust can be understood subjectively insofar as the father has, in addition to his objective assessment, a trust, based on his son's character, that he would not drive after drinking alcohol, or that he would pull over when he is tired. In this respect, the father has faith in his son. Moshe Halbertal explains that "the [Hebrew] source of the verb 'to believe,' [le'ha'amin] is in the giving of trust in relation to security [bit'ahon]."[19] If the father does not trust his son completely, a promise may be required, i.e., an agreement about the terms of use that requires the son to act according to specific terms. In many situations where one does not feel confident about a partner, one can require him to commit to specific terms of use or behavior that minimize the need to trust the person himself.

A further distinction can be drawn between faith *in* and faith *that*. Whereas faith *in* is to have faith in something or someone, faith *that* is more specific and can be called propositional faith, e.g., that someone has faith *that* "God will keep his promises."[20] Daniel Howard-Snyder states that though it seems natural to equate the two, he feels, though he cannot explain why, that there is a difference between the two. I think that the prior discussion that distinguished between objectified and subjectified trusts may assist us. As we have seen, subjectified trust is composed of an objectified belief, e.g., the son's driving skills, and a subjectified faith in the son's personality. When one has faith that someone will do such and such, e.g., that God will fulfill his promise, this faith *that* is similar to a subjectified trust, for one needs to both have faith *in* God's character, and an objectified belief *that* God has the needed skill to execute his promise.

Trust can thus be divided into rational trust and faith-based trust. "[B]elief is rational if it is in a proposition which is self-evident, evident to the senses, or is in proportion to the evidence provided for it by such propositions."[21] These words of Kenny to describe what Plantinga termed the *foundationalist*

17 Schellenberg, *Prolegomena to a Philosophy of Religion*, 110.

18 Plato, Republic I, 332d.

19 Moshe Halbertal, "On Faith," in *Al Ha-emunah: Studies in the Concept of Faith and its History in the Jewish Tradition*, eds. Moshe Halbertal, David Kurzweil and Avi Sagi (Keter, 2005), 12.

20 Daniel Howard-Snyder, "Does Faith Entail Belief?," *Faith and Philosophy* 33, no. 2 (2016): 144.

21 Anthony Kenny, *What Is Faith?: Essays in the Philosophy of Religion* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1992), 9. This definition of rationality was defined by Plantinga as *foundationalism*. According to Kenny, "Such a theory appears to be self-refuting, in that this criterion for rational belief seems to be itself neither self-evident nor evident to the senses, nor is it easy to see by what process of reasoning it could be derived from such premises". Ibid., 19.

view, generally distinguish between what one trusts rationally, i.e., what is given by the senses, what is evident to our thoughts, and what is rigorously deduced from them. On the other hand, what cannot be rigorously grounded, cannot be trusted rationally and thus requires one to have faith *in* it. It can be said that what distinguishes between belief and faith is that, through belief, we approach things or persons in an objectified manner. In contrast, with regard to faith, we put our trust in something subjective that cannot be objectified and which alters the meaning according to which we interpret and determine our actions and reactions. As we have seen above, legal procedures such as contracts or promises can be used to limit the need to put our faith in other people or institutions.

Religious creeds, are, by their nature, not grounded in the senses nor are they evident to the mind, and consequently require one to have faith *in* them. Alston is well aware of the fact that not all believers can fully affirm such religious creeds and distinguishes between propositional belief and propositional acceptance. On the one hand are those who accept, without question, some proposition, e.g., "Jesus of Nazareth was an incarnation of the second person of the Trinity, that he was resurrected after being crucified and buried, and that he is alive today and in a personal relationship with the faithful." On the other hand, particularly in our era, many committed believers are not as assured as the believers just mentioned: "They are troubled by doubts; they ask themselves or others what reasons there are to believe that all this really happened. They take it as a live possibility that all or some central Christian doctrines are false. How, then, can they be sincere, committed Christians?"[22] Alston presents two alternatives for such believers, either to believe in these beliefs in a "less than full" manner, or to accept these doubts, so that they do not believe that these beliefs are truly real but rather accept these beliefs as the basis for an attitude towards the world and a way of life.[23]

The problem with this sort of faith as acceptance, is, as I see it, that the object of faith is not that in which one declares one's belief but rather some sort of additional element that is associated with it, e.g., belonging to a community of the faithful or even an ideology with which one feels this or that kind of affinity. The question of truth is set aside in favor of where one feels at home. It seems, however, that by equating the believer and the "accepter," both of whom pray and worship God in a similar fashion, Alston is overlooking the crux of the matter. For, while the first truly trusts God, the latter does not position himself in relation to God but to the additional element that ensues from these actions. Alston discusses, at the end of his paper, the Apostles' creed where the believer affirms that "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord…." Alston concludes that "there is nothing in the language of the creeds that requires these commitments to be beliefs rather than acceptances."[24] Returning to Schellenberg's argument, that the difference between the believer and non-believer does not lie in the proposition but rather in our existential attitude toward it, one can reply to Alston by saying that there is an utterly different meaning when one truly believes the creed, and when one accepts it as part of a way of life within a community.

THE EUCHARIST

Affirming reality as it appears to us, is not a question of faith, as it is based on well-founded and adequate beliefs, that repeatedly match our predictions of reality. We cannot predict everything, and there are many things we make exceptions for and accept our inability to predict. However, generally speaking, we surround ourselves with a world that we trust. For example, we trust the cars and planes we travel in. We generally trust the vaccinations we give our children or the food and water we eat and drink (for if we did not, we would buy mineral water and so on). But when we turn to questions of faith, such as whether God exists or not, there is no corresponding situation. Though no corresponding evidence can be supplied,

22 Alston, "Belief, Acceptance, and Religious Faith," 16.
23 Ibid., 17.
24 Ibid., 22.

the question of faith is not a speculative one but a practical one, for by affirming, postponing, or denying faith, one determines the tonality of one's life.

A "general" affirmation of the existence of God is indifferent to the question of evidence, for there exists nothing that supports or denies either alternative in any possible world. Instead, such affirmations support their claims by turning to other grounds, e.g., abstract truths that are derived from principles of thinking that do not concern themselves with whether God created this or that world. Consequently, both alternatives are equally reasonable, for there is insufficient reason to accept or reject either alternative. In this sense, they affirm general objectified knowledge about God rather than specific affirmations about God. *Revealed truths*, however, disclose *specific* truths about *this* specific world and God's specific *relationships* and *intentions* toward creation and man. Whereas the question of faith is relatively reasonable regarding general truths about God, it is highly questionable with respect to *revealed truths*. Revealed truths are said to become known through experience, like empirical experimental truths. However, unlike empirical experimental truths, they are historical and cannot be reaffirmed through additional experiments or observations. Whereas general knowledge about God is attained abstractly by the intellect, specific knowledge about his intentions or why the world is as it is, is grounded in revealed truths, the validity of which our reason cannot affirm or deny.

Since our empirical encounter with reality is generally harmonious, our natural attitude toward it is that of belief. We accept it passively and do not pay much attention to how we form our beliefs. Our everyday attitude accepts that there exists some discrepancy between reality and the way we perceive it; however, we trust the feedback we gain through experience to allow us to bridge the gap between the two. Not only is the truth of the Eucharist a revealed truth ("this is my body… this is my blood" (Matt. 26:26–28)), but it also directly contradicts our empirical experimental encounter with the world. The Eucharist, by definition, explicitly contradicts sensory givenness and what we claim it to be. One may examine the bread as much as one wants, yet a person would be nothing but crazy if he claimed that his senses perceived Christ and not a piece of bread.

This harsh language is not new. Similar words were used by Berengar of Tours (999–1088), an important theologian and a forerunner of rationalism, who termed "mad" the claim that Christ is truly present in the Eucharist and that a substantial transformation takes place as a result of the consecration.[25] Instead, and in opposition to the substantial claim, that is independent of the believers themselves, Berengar maintained that a symbolic transformation takes place through the faith and understanding of the recipients.[26] Berengar's view was quickly condemned as heretical. And yet, as occurred with other heresies, Berengar's position functioned as an accelerator around which theological thinking fruitfully developed, from his time and many years forward. Two centuries later, Aquinas, whose formulation of the doctrine of transubstantiation became a central Catholic view, was still troubled by Berengar's position. In the article, titled "Whether the body of Christ be in this sacrament in very truth, or merely as in a figure or sign," he writes:

> Some men accordingly, not paying heed to these things, have contended that Christ's body and blood are not in this sacrament except as in a sign, a thing to be rejected as heretical, since it is contrary to Christ's words. Hence Berengarius, who had been the first deviser of this heresy, was afterwards forced to withdraw his error, and to acknowledge the truth of the faith.[27]

Following (and altering) Aristotle's metaphysics, Aquinas maintained that a real substantial change takes place. Though hidden to the senses, it is visible to the intellect, that is strengthened by faith: "There is no deception in this sacrament; for the accidents which are discerned by the senses are truly present. However, the intellect, whose proper object is substance as is said in De Anima iii, is preserved by faith

25 "Erat autem Burgundus in sententia, immo vecordia vulgi, Paschasii atque Lanfranci, minime superesse in altari post consecrationem substantiam panis atque vini." Berengar, Scr. C. synodum, quoted in *De corp.* 375.156–159 (412D). See also A J Macdonald, *Berengar and the Reform of Sacramental Doctrine* (Longmans, Green), 256.

26 See ibid., 261.

27 Aquinas, III *Summa Theologiae,* q. 75, a. 1, answer. Trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (Benziger Bros., 1947).

from deception."[28] Whereas Berengar's rationalism argued that the judgment of the senses could not be rejected, Aquinas utilized Aristotelian metaphysics to distinguish between substantive and accidental knowledge. While limiting the importance of the judgment of the senses, he bolstered the judgment of the intellect. This not only eased the tension between faith and human experience but strengthened the claim that faith and reason are not antagonistic to each other. This Aquinas phrases in the Eucharistic Hymn *Adoro te*:

Visus, tactus, gustus in te fallitur	Sight, touch, taste are all deceived in their judgment of you
Sed auditu solo tuto creditor	But hearing suffices firmly to believe

As Charles David explains, the usage of the term transubstantiation first appeared in the twelfth century, predating the medieval attempt to amalgamate Christianity with Aristotelianism. Confronting reformation theologians' criticism that supported alternative understandings of the Eucharist (consubstantiation, symbolic, etc.), the Council of Trent strongly reaffirmed the real presence of Christ and the doctrine of transubstantiation. Davis explains that the usage of the term substance in the doctrine of transubstantiation, as formulated by the Council of Trent, was not borrowed directly from Aristotle's philosophy or any other philosophical school. Instead, it "indicate[d] the intimate or basic reality of the bread as opposed to the appearances. The Council of Trent declared that the bread ceases in reality to be bread, although what we directly perceive remains the same."[29] The fact of the matter is that there exists no agreed explanation for what exactly happens in the Eucharist. Even though the Catholic Church supported the doctrine of transubstantiation unequivocally,[30] the question of what happens under the hood remained open. John Macquarrie states, for instance, that transubstantiation is nothing but a "very good attempt to elucidate the Eucharistic mystery."[31] Thus, the Eucharist is dependent not on an explanation but rather upon faith alone that is accompanied by different explanations for how this might occur.

Christianity, almost from its inception, has appropriated Athens to assist it in formulating and understanding the meaning encapsulated in the *Word* of Jerusalem. In line with Anselm's motto, "faith seeking understanding," philosophical thought was interwoven into Christianity's language and thought, not to confront doubts or facilitate belief, but rather to understand better that which one believes in. In the words of Anselm: "I do not seek to understand so that I may believe; but I believe so that I may understand."[32] A shadow philosophical dialogue thus accompanies the historical theological discussion. This dialogue is fundamentally dialectical. On the one hand, it enriches the theological discussion, while, on the other hand, demanding that philosophy, whose task is to understand the logos of that which *is*, broaden its horizons. Thus, the Eucharist pushes philosophy to develop sophisticated epistemic and metaphysical systems, in attempting to overcome the head-on collision with common sense. In the following, we shall examine three philosophical approaches to rationalizing the Eucharist that are developed within the dialectic between theology and philosophy. Naturally, there is some overlap with the previous discussion, particularly concerning the doctrine of transubstantiation and the symbolic interpretation of the Eucharist. However, these approaches are presented ahistorically, i.e., under the logical moments of the dialectic. One should also note that some theologians' ideas appear at different stages following the stage of the dialectic. It is at this place that the purpose of this study needs to be understood, not as a discussion of the Eucharist nor as a discussion of philosophy but instead as a discussion of the dialectical logic between philosophy and theology, with the Eucharist as a point of collision between reality and thought.

28 Ibid., q. 75, a. 5, ad. 2.
29 Charles Davis, "The Theology of Transubstantiation," *Sophia* 3, no. 1 (1964): 12–13.
30 Denzinger, "Canons on the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, Council of Trent," Session XIII, #883, #84.
31 John Macquarrie, *Path in Spirituality* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 88.
32 Anselm, "Proslogion," in *Anselm of Canterbury: The Major Works*, ed. Brian David and G.R. Evans (Oxford Univ. Press, 1998), 87.

The first course of action is to rationalize the Eucharist through the mediation of a theoretical extrapolation that translocates the discussion from the perception of the senses to a hidden sphere. An example of that is the use of the Aristotelian distinction between substance and accident. This extrapolation distinguishes between the appearance of things, i.e., things' accidental features, and things as they are in themselves, i.e., their substances. In so doing, this explanation resolves the problem that nothing in the bread and wine seems to change. This option argues that a change in the accident does not imply a change in the substance and vice versa.

Consequently, the fact that the bread and wine seem to remain the same before and after the consecration does not imply that the substance has not changed. The problem with such an explanation is that it also does not imply that the substance has changed. There is insufficient reason to draw either conclusion. In an attempt to support this explanation, many theologians did not try to prove that such a transformation takes place. Instead, by addressing the substance of the bread and wine, i.e., evading the need to address the physicality of the Eucharist,[33] that testifies to nothing, they tried to argue that such a transformation, as a possibility, does not entail a contradiction. Thus the believer can reasonably claim he believes that such a transformation takes place without the need to present any evidence. Putting aside the fact that the Aristotelian doctrine of substances seems to be obsolete, this doctrine straightforwardly grounds what is provided immediately by the senses in something which is claimed to underlie it without having any fact to support or disprove its existence. Thus it can be said that one who affirms the Eucharist through such an extrapolation acts reasonably within a non-justified theoretical domain.

In the wake of Vatican II, the Catholic Church sought to reassess its place and attitude toward modernity, and the needs of the believers. These brought with them an openness to consider theological matters such as the Eucharist by implementing new philosophical frameworks such as phenomenology and hermeneutics. In so doing, the Church did not turn its back on its former doctrines but used the new intellectual frameworks to cast meaning that is relevant to our time. The difficulty of dealing with the reality that underlies what is given, amplifies the need to understand the role of the believer. Following the phenomenological account of Merleau-Ponty, Edward Schillebeeckx opposes the use of the Aristotelian distinction between substance and accidents. There is no deeper level than that which is perceived. The reality does not "situate itself behind its phenomenal appearance— the appearance is the reality itself." Consequently, the use of this distinction by the scholastics to overcome the phenomenological fact that the bread and wine do not seem to change cannot do the job. No hidden substance can do the trick. The Eucharistic miracle must be addressed directly without turning to an explanation that transcends the phenomenological realm. That which is perceived is precisely the thing that in our perception: "our entire human consciousness is situated *in* human perception, and not behind, above or beneath it."[34] For Schillebeeckx, the meaning of the Eucharist must always return to the actuality of the Eucharist, i.e., to the actual encounter of the believer with the Eucharistic bread and wine.

Schillebeeckx understands perception as neither objective nor subjective. That which is perceived cannot be divorced from the perceiving mind; it "cannot be separated from the subject who perceives it."[35] Not only that but perceptions within the mind are not abstracted from reality but are perceptions of reality. When one abstracts a perception, the perception is abstracted from its sensory reality, thus losing its meaning as a thing within a world. When abstracted from reality, the perception loses its signification of reality: "the phenomenal is the sign of the reality."[36] Without such sensory significations, man cannot approach reality. Schillebeeckx holds that one should be careful not to mix the objective and the subjective spheres. In the Eucharist, the alteration of the bread and wine into Christ's body and blood must be distinguished into its objective realistic element and its subjective mental one. On the one hand,

33 See Jan Heiner Tück, *A Gift of Presence: The Theology and Poetry of the Eucharist in Thomas Aquinas*, trans. Scott G Hefelfinger (The Catholoic Univ. of America Press, 2018), 74.
34 Edward Schillebeeckx, *The Eucharist*, trans. N. D. Smith (Sheed and Ward, 1968), 146.
35 Ibid., 145.
36 Ibid., 148.

transubstantiation refers to the bread and wine as they are substantially transformed; on the other hand, transignification refers to the transformation of the bread and wine insofar as they are understood to be transformed into Christ's body and blood. Though transignification presupposed transubstantiation, it is "impossible simply to identify them." As a result, transignification, which is subjective, though it signifies something *as objective*, can never truly reach reality. As such, the act of faith, which transforms the signification of the bread, "does not bring about the real presence, but presupposes it as a metaphysical priority."[37]

The attribution of reality, as we recall, is that which distinguishes between the believer and the non-believer who consider the same proposition. Believing something is equivalent to understanding the thing as real and actual in the world. This basic understanding transcends later considerations as to how exactly things are located and interact in a world that might be faced with some inadequacies due to misinterpretations on our part; for example, one might deduce that the world is flat or that the sun orbits the earth, although the sensory input does not support such claims. Whereas belief is passive and does not involve the will of the believer, the Eucharist demands a voluntary act of faith that explicitly contradicts our objectified beliefs.[38] By undertaking such an act, the "significance of the phenomenal forms of bread and wine changes. … the reality to which the phenomenal refers is changed—it *is* no longer bread and wine, but nothing less than the 'body of the Lord' … Because what is signified via the phenomenal is changed objectively, the significance of the phenomenal itself is also changed."[39]

Despite Schillebeeckx's efforts to reduce the gap between reality and thought through the relationship between transignification and transubstantiation — the gap remains. The second alternative claims that the consecration of the Eucharist produces only a symbolic change without the ability to affirm a real transformation in the bread itself. The second stage believer cannot "see" how it is possible to think that what appears to be bread is Christ's body in reality. In this respect, the believer's reason does not allow him to deduce something that he cannot ground in perception. Though rooted in faith, immediate reality cannot be denied without sufficient reason. The inability to affirm is not equivalent to a denial. Instead, such a believer can embrace a symbolic understanding of the Eucharist, e.g., that the bread is a food that one shares with others and which symbolizes the gathering of the communion. In the words of Louis Marie Chauvet, "the symbolic order is the mediation through which subjects build themselves while building the real into a 'world,' their familiar 'world' where they can live."[40] It is important to note that Chauvet does not reject transubstantiation but suggests a symbolic perspective to understanding it.[41] When the bread is transformed into Christ's flesh, the substance of the bread is transubstantiated only in a qualified manner insofar as it participates in the symbolic perspective wherein such transubstantiation shines forth.

Some are satisfied with the symbolic approach, others might feel they have been offered a good substitute, but not the real thing, and they cannot bring themselves to state that they genuinely believe that the bread and wine *are* the body and blood of Christ. For Chauvet, the lack of ability to see Christ in the bread symbolizes something profound about God — his absence: "*The assembly of Christians* gathered in the name of Christ … [is] the first sacramental representation of his presence. At the same time, it is the first stumbling block for faith, for such a representation is also the radical mark of his absence."[42] This believer accepts Schillebeeckx's contention that the Eucharist must be addressed directly and not through a theological extrapolation. Nevertheless, he cannot bring himself to affirm this in reality. For him to make such an affirmation, without the liberty to turn to lateral explanations, is tantamount to sacrificing

37 Ibid., 150. See also Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson (Harper, 1962), 300 [256].
38 Schellenberg, *Prolegomena to a Philosophy of Religion*, 119.
39 Schillebeeckx, *The Eucharist*, 149.
40 Louis Marie Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament: A Sacramental Reinterpretation of Christian Existence*, trans. Patrick Madigan and Madeleine Beaumont (Liturgical Press, 1995), 86.
41 Glenn P Ambrose, *The Theology of Louis-Marie Chauvet: Overcoming onto-Theology with the Sacramental Tradition* (Ashgate, 2012), 127.
42 Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 187.

his rationality. And since this believer cannot make such a sacrifice, and cannot accept literally Christ's words "this is my body… this is my blood" (Matt. 26:26–28), he reverts to a qualified symbolic interpretation that emphasizes Christ's absence: Christ as the *not-yet* present. The second coming of Christ is perceived as a future event, and there the Eucharist symbolizes the promise of his coming. The Eucharist is deprived of its reality and is converted into the internal sphere of meaning. The second believer can gaze into the Eucharistic abyss directly but can only see Christ's absence symbolically. He cannot bring himself to transcend from the symbolic sphere to that which exists in reality, and to affirm the presence of that which is absent. The symbolic affirmation of Christ is an abstract affirmation of his absence and an abstract affirmation of his future coming.

Phenomenologists such as Jean-Luc Marion transcend the realist doubt altogether. Marion perceives the Eucharist as a hermeneutical event that allows the believer to transcend his perspectival interpretation. Christ appears as a self-explanatory presence that illuminates the correct interpretation of the *Word* and allows the believer to take part in the *divine truth*. Christ, as he appears in the Eucharistic event, is a hermeneutical key that grants us true access to God:[43]

> The Eucharist alone completes the hermeneutic, the hermeneutic culminates in the Eucharist; the one assures the other its condition of possibility: the intervention in person of the referent of the text as center of its meaning, of the Word, outside of the words, to reappropriate them to himself.[44]

Despite ontological connotations, particularly concerning the phrase *saturated phenomena*, the four kinds of saturated phenomena (historical event, the idol, the flesh, and the icon) leave it unclear whether this saturation should be understood as an ontological abundance, or perhaps a symbolical one.[45] As Christina M. Gschwandtner explains, Marion's phenomenological analysis of religious practices such as the Eucharist "can be performed without needing to prove something as true in a factual sense."[46] Truth should not be focused on actuality, on what happened, but rather on the manifestation of the divine truths and their ultimate meaning.

The symbolic approach to the Eucharist, whether adopted by those who find themselves unable to affirm that Christ in his reality is present in the Eucharist, or by those who find no need to affirm reality in the first place, recalls an almost millennium-old quarrel regarding the redeeming role of Christ. Abelard rejected the prevailing view that understood Christ's passion and crucifixion, by which he redeemed humanity, as a payment for man's sin against God:

> [w]hat need was there, I say, that the Son of God, for our redemption, should take upon him our flesh and endure such numerous fastings, insults, scourgings and spittings … For how cruel and wicked it seems that anyone should demand the blood of an innocent person as the price for anything, or that it should in any way please him that an innocent man should be slain—still less that God should consider the death of his Son so agreeable that by it he should be reconciled to the whole world![47]

Abelard maintained that one should not understand Christ's sacrifice as payment but rather as an imitation example through which man can learn to overcome his fallen state. This view, later to be labeled *exemplarism*, holds:

> through this unique act of grace manifested to us—in that his Son has taken upon himself our nature and persevered therein in teaching us by word and example even unto death—he has more fully bound us to himself by love; with the result that our hearts should be enkindled by such a gift of divine grace, and true charity should not now shrink from enduring anything for him. … everyone becomes more righteous… after the Passion of Christ than before, since a realized gift inspires greater love than one which is only

43 Christina M Gschwandtner, *Degrees of Givenness: On Saturation in Jean-Luc Marion*, Indiana Series in the Philosophy of Religion (Indiana Univ. Press, 2014), 177–78.

44 Jean-Luc Marion, *God without Being: Hors-Texte*, trans. Thomas A. Carlson, Religion and Postmodernism (Univ. of Chicago Press, 1995), 150.

45 Merold Westphal, "The Second Great Revolution in Phenomenology," *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 26, no. 2 (2012): 343.

46 Gschwandtner, *Degrees of Givenness: On Saturation in Jean-Luc Marion*, 191.

47 Peter Abelard, "Peter Abailard: Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans (an Excerpt from the Second Book)," in *A Scholastic Miscellany: Anselm to Ockham*, ed. Eugene R. Fairweather (SCM Press, 1956), 282–83.

> hoped for. Wherefore, our redemption through Christ's suffering is that deeper aflection [dilectio] in us which not only frees us from slavery to sin, but also wins for us the true liberty of sons of God, so that we do all things out of love rather than fear.[48]

The *Imitatio Christi* teaches man humility and love through which an opening is made to let God in. By dying on the cross, Christ offers humanity a way out of our self-absorbed prison. This solution provides a reasonable psychological-symbolic account of how Man can overcome his bent egoistic constitution.

St. Bernard of Clairvaux was the person responsible for condemning Abelard's position as holding a Pelagian tendency, i.e., the heretical claim that man can attain redemption without divine aid. Bernard's reading of Abelard was that "by His life and teaching He [Christ] handed down to men a pattern of life, [and] that by His suffering and death He set up a standard of love." Thus, Bernard argued, it follows from Abelard's position that Christ only teaches "righteousness and not bestow[s] it; reveal[s] love and not infuse[s] it."[49] If Christ's Passion is only intended to exemplify a teaching, one can justly argue that such a teaching can be offered by other less divine teachers, and consequently that Christ's crucifixion is not necessary. In other words, the teaching and the correction of our fallen state can be achieved without the aid of any supernatural assistance.

This theological discussion of Christ's work of redemption underlies a significant ontological criticism of the symbolic approach to the Eucharist, i.e., whether Christ's reality is genuinely required either in his crucifixion or in the Eucharist. The symbolic call to let go of actuality and to transcend to the meaning of the Eucharistic event is indeed powerful. Nevertheless, the words "this is my body… this is my blood" do not refer to the bread and wine abstractly or symbolically but rather in their full concreteness: "*Hoc* est enim Corpus meum... *Hic* est enim calix sanguinis Mei". The words themselves, particularly the use of 'this,' seem to reject any attempt to consider them in a manner that does not address them less than in full actuality.

The third alternative, which Schillebeeckx's account coalesces around, is one where the believer does not seek to support his rationality by turning to unproved theories that cannot be disproved but rather embraces what seems to be absurd.[50] The believer is required to gaze into the abyss and to affirm that that which is absent is present, not as meaning or a *sign* but in reality. In so doing, the third believer affirms in reality and concretely what the second believer could only accept symbolically. As Kierkegaard emphasized, the abstract can never be a substitute for reality as it only supports a conception of faith and not faith itself. Real faith requires real sacrifice, not an abstract one within the domain of meaning. Through this affirmation, the believer might be seen as sacrificing his rationality for his faith. The leap that is required might appear, particularly to those who reside outside the circle of faith, as madness that cannot be explained by philosophy alone. Kierkegaard explains this leap as a "profound change of self-understanding which is not a matter of nor explicable by reason."[51] I would qualify this statement: not explicable by objective reason. It is the leap that opens a new horizon to apprehend reality and rationality, whereby the believer attains the means to affirm the seeming contradiction. The affirmation that the Eucharistic bread and wine are Christ's body and blood in their reality requires the believer to apprehend at the same time that *that-which-is-present* and *that-which-is-absent* are present at the same time. This is not a result of a mistake or a miscalculation, and there is only one way to escape the contradiction that does not result in sacrificing our rationality (sacrificium intellectus):[52] to sublate it.

Whereas for the second believer, the presence of Christ is conceived symbolically as something which promises to come into existence eventually, a *not-yet*, like death at the end of our life, the third believer affirms Christ's absence as *here* and *now*. As opposed to the external *not-yet* that comes at the

48 Ibid., 283–84.

49 Bernard of Clairvaux, Tractatus ad Innocentium II Pontificem contra quaedam capitula errorum Abaelardi, quoted in Grensted, *A Short History*, 106. Trans. in Quinn, 357.

50 On the *Absurd* see Swinburne, *Faith and Reason*, 23–24.

51 Carol J. White, *Time and Death: Heidegger's Analysis of Finitude* (Ashgate, 2005), 60.

52 Pierre Biihler, "Tertullian: The Teacher of the Credo Quia Absurdum," in *Kierkegaard and the Patristic and Medieval Traditions*, ed. Jon Stewart, *Kierkegaard Research: Sources, Reception and Recources* (Ashgate, 2008), 136–38.

end of one's life, Heidegger locates a *not-yet* which grounds the constitution of our selves, or the *Dasein*, which "exists in just such a manner that its 'not-yet' belongs to it":[53] Death. Death is not something that comes at the end of our days; death is something one lives at each moment and through which all things attain meaning:

> In death, Dasein has not been fulfilled nor has it simply disappeared; it has not become finished nor is it wholly at one's disposal as something ready-to-hand. On the contrary, just as Dasein is already its "not-yet," and is its "not-yet" constantly as long as it is, it is already its end too. The "ending" which we have in view when we speak of death, does not signify Dasein's Being-at-an-end [Zu-Ende-sein], but a Being-towards-the-end [Sein zum Ende] of this entity. Death is a way to be, which Dasein takes over as soon as it is. 'As soon as man comes to life, he is at once old enough to die.'[54]

The perpetual presence of dying defines our finitude and is that through which things gain their meaning as an integral part of our becoming. The absurd is resolved by accepting that our being is *being-unto-death*. Heidegger's philosophy teaches us to recognize the presence of the nothingness here in this reality, and so to understand our life as an active process of dying. According to Heidegger, "[d]eath is the possibility of the absolute impossibility of Dasein."[55] This impossibility is where the Dasein is no more. The believer who affirms the Eucharist affirms the coming of Christ in that exact nothingness. Dying, and alternatively, the presence of Christ for the faithful, should not be understood as a future event but as an ever-present and actual nothingness through which everything attains its meaning. Chauvet, following Heidegger's poetical approach to Being, echoes this intimacy with the absence that constitutes our existential standing. He writes:

> [I]t is the thinking which experiences the present absence of the gods. But 'this absence is not nothing; it is the presence of the hidden plenitude of what . . . is' and what the Greeks, the Hebrew prophets, and Jesus named 'the divine.' It bears a 'no more' which in itself is a 'not yet,' the 'not yet' of the 'hidden coming of its inexhaustible being.'[56]

The chasm between reality as it is, and reality as it is perceived, can never be bridged satisfactorily. The inability to unify the transubstantiation and the transignification is not specific to the Eucharist. Any affirmation of reality, stating that it is such and such, demands a projective act of affirmation. As we have seen above, while rational trust is grounded in the senses or is evident to the mind, religious creeds, which are mostly abstract statements of faith, do not enjoy established grounds. What is unique about the Eucharist is that not only does the believer need to affirm something that is not supported by empirical facts or evident to the mind, like other creeds, but additionally, the believer is required to affirm something that explicitly contradicts what is perceived by his senses. In this respect, the act of faith that is involved with the Eucharist does not accord with a regular act of faith, which is based on insufficient evidence. On the contrary, the Eucharist compels one to repudiate well-formed evidence that directly contradicts what the phenomenon provides straightforwardly, for "when I reflect about the Eucharist, our noses are, so to speak, pushed into it."[57] This pushing of our noses into it resembles Kierkegaard's emphasis on the risk-taking that is involved in faith: "Without risk, no faith. Faith is the contradiction between the infinite passion of inwardness and the objective uncertainty."[58] The acceptance of the Eucharist by "a projective act of faith which is an element *of and in* faith in Christ's Eucharistic presence,"[59] requires the believer to affirm, without sufficient reason, and indeed contrary to all evidence that indicates otherwise, that what one thinks exists is something utterly different than what one perceives. As we recall,

53 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 287 [43]. For more on the different senses of the *not-yet* see §§46–48. See also White, *Time and Death: Heidegger's Analysis of Finitude*, 67.
54 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 289 [45].
55 Ibid., 194 [250–51].
56 Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 61–62.
57 Schillebeeckx, *The Eucharist*, 149.
58 Søren Kierkegaard, *Kierkegaard: Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, ed. Robert L. Perkins, vol. 12, International Kierkegaard Commentary (Cambridge Univ. Press, 2009), 171–72.
59 Schillebeeckx, *The Eucharist*, 150.

Schellenberg explains that propositional faith requires weak evidence. However, in our case, the bread does not present any evidence in addition to being bread. W. K. Clifford writes in his *Ethics of Belief* that deducing anything without a shred of evidence is not just groundless but merely wrong: "[i]t is wrong always, everywhere, and for anyone to believe anything upon insufficient evidence."[60] It is not difficult to imagine his disapproval at deducing something that not only is not supported by sufficient evidence but contradicts plain facts.

FAITH AND BEING

What the Eucharist emphasizes about the *dialectic of faith*, as it pushes it to the limit, is that faith is ultimately concerned with the limits of our mind to approach being in its existence. The different stages presented above, each in its own way, try to reconcile the existential absurdness posed by the Eucharist. What lies underneath the dialectic of faith is the unbridgeable gap between reality as it appears to us and what we claim it to be.

The conventional approach toward reality is that of belief. Reality is at our disposal. We experience it without paying much attention, nor do we perceive the glasses that structure its perception. These are philosophical questions with which most people do not trouble themselves. Nevertheless, some people are deeply troubled by these questions. What characterizes these people is that they become aware of the belief-glasses through which people perceive reality and the mind's relation to it. Sophisticated philosophical systems, despite their relentless efforts, cannot bridge the gap for them between the mind and reality, which escape the mind's representation of them. Similarly, science cannot grasp the reality that it continuously measures, and no cause/effect relation or correlation grasps the reality of that which *is*. In the end, they, like Schillebeeckx, cannot bridge the gap between transignification and transubstantiation. The purpose of this last part is to follow the leap between the second and third approaches to the Eucharist, and argue that a similar leap, and a similar rationalization, takes place in man's approach to reality.

The discord between the second symbolic affirmation of the Eucharist, and the third alternative that affirms the Eucharist in reality itself, recalls the disagreement between Heidegger and the Marburg Neo-Kantian School as to how to interpret Kant's philosophy. The Davos controversy between Heidegger and Ernst Cassirer, who is famous for his works on symbolic forms, presents two fundamentally different understandings regarding the role and goal of philosophy:[61] a servant of the sciences or the queen of reason. Cassirer, the leader of the Marburg Neo-Kantian School, understood the task of philosophy, and consequently, his reading of Kant's philosophy, to be concerned with problems such as certitude, evidence, and truth. Opposing the scientific reading of philosophy, Heidegger contends that the focus of Kant's philosophy is not the phenomenon as mere representation, nor our capacity to attain evident knowledge about it, but Being itself, i.e., that the Kantian project is metaphysical in the traditional sense. The intuition and the categories, Heidegger holds, both originate in a common root in the imagination, which is the manifestation of the ontological ground of the Kantian project. The phenomenon, and consequently the Kantian project, is not detached from reality but is entirely oriented toward it:[62]

> In the *Opus Postumum* Kant says that the thing in itself is not a being different from the appearance, i.e., 'the difference between the concept of a thing in itself and the appearance is not objective but merely subjective. The thing in itself is not another Object, but is rather another aspect (*respectus*) of the representation of *the same Object*.'… What is "behind the appearance" is the same being as the appearance. Because it only gives

60 Kenny, *What Is Faith?: Essays in the Philosophy of Religion*, 10.

61 For more on the Davos controversy and the divide between Heidegger and the Neo-Kantian School see Peter Eli Gordon, *Continental Divide : Heidegger, Cassirer, Davos* (Harvard Univ. Press, 2010); Calvin O. Schrag, "Heidegger and Cassirer on Kant," *Kant-Studien* 58, no. 1 (1967).

62 Schillebeeckx's statement that reality does not "situate itself behind its phenomenal appearance— the appearance is the reality itself," seems to correspond with Heidegger's interpretation of Kant. Schillebeeckx, *The Eucharist*, 147.

> the being as object, however, this appearance does not permit that same being to be seen fundamentally as a thing which stands forth.[63]

Heidegger's *destructive*[64] approach that reads Kant's philosophy as a "metaphysics of human Dasein which is required for metaphysics to be made possible," or what he calls *fundamental ontology*,[65] resonates with the unique experience of the Eucharist that brings the faithful and that which is perceived to an unbridgeable gap. The gap presented by the Eucharist, where the believer is required to affirm something utterly different than what is perceived, encapsulates an intolerable obstacle to unifying the conceptual realm of understanding and reality.

Earlier, we saw three ways to affirm that the consecrated bread, in its breadness, is, in fact, Christ's body. The first alternative splits the bread into its substantial element and its accidental elements. When the person of faith says that the bread is no longer bread s/he does not say that the features of the bread are no longer features of bread but rather that the hidden substance is transformed into another substance. Here the relationship between reality and the mind is Aquinian-Aristotelian, whereby the mind only apprehends accidentally caused effects and is unable to perceive things' substances.

The second symbolic stage presupposes a Kantian gap between reality and the mind. The Kantian framework is similar in an important respect to the Aquinian-Aristotelian structure insofar as both distinguish between the thing itself and its perceived accidents that, in the Kantian framework, are turned into phenomena. Like Aquinas, Kant accepts the ancient-medieval distinction between substances and accidents, and our inability to perceive the substance itself. Heidegger explains:

> It is a basic principle of Kantian metaphysics that I know "everything in the world" only "as cause in the cause [only in its capacity to operate as cause], or only the causality of the production of effects, hence only the effect, and thus not the thing itself and the determinations by means of which it produces the effects" and by which they are produced. "The substantial [the substance] is the thing in itself and is unknown." Only the accidents, the effects of things on one another, are manifested and therefore perceptible.[66]

Despite the similarity, Kant is not a follower of Aquinas but rather of Duns Scotus. Scotus maintained that as man perceives only accidental knowledge by his senses, the intellect cognizes things' substances only inferentially by way of description.[67] Things are not merely perceived; they are apprehended in accordance with the manner they are assembled by the mind. The question of things' thinghoodness and their being is thus transformed into the question of the meaning of being and "the givenness of the object to the subject." Dorothea Frede explains:

> For Scotus, therefore, the conditions of *subjectivity* (how does the subject grasp or interpret its objects?) attain central importance. If all "objects" depend on the meaning that is bestowed on them by the subject, and if they are always part of a wider network of a referential totality, then it must be the philosopher's task to work out in what sense there is a *structure of meaning* that stands in relation to or conditions what one might call the *structure of reality*.[68]

The following imaginative exercise that Scotus presents exemplifies how the question of the beingness of things is internalized into the subjective sphere of meaning. Surprisingly it considers the Eucharist. There are two persons. The first has seen bread only after its consecration; the second has seen bread before. Sco-

63 Martin Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, trans. Richard Taft, Studies in Continental Thought (Indiana Univ. Press, 1990), 23. Similarly he says that "appearances are not mere illusions, nor are they some sort of free-floating emissions from things. Rather appearances are objects themselves, or things. Furthermore, appearances are also not other things next to or prior to the things themselves. Rather appearances are just those things themselves *that* we encounter and discover as extant within the world." Ibid., 67–68.

64 On Heideggerian *Destruction* see Benjamin D Crowe, *Heidegger's Religious Origins: Destruction and Authenticity* (Indiana Univ. Press, 2006).

65 Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 1.

66 *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (Indiana Univ. Press, 1988), 148–49.

67 Giorgio Pini, "Scotus on Doing Metaphysics in Statu Isto," in *John Duns Scotus, Philosopher: Proceedings of 'the Quadruple Congress' on John Duns Scotus*, ed. Mary B. Ingham and Oleg Bychkov, *Archa Verbi* (Aschendorff, 2010).

68 Dorothea Frede, "The Question of Being: Heidegger's Project," in *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger*, ed. Charles Guignon (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1993), 48.

tus explains that when observing the same bread, and despite not disputing its accidental attributes, they judge it to be an entirely different thing:

> So the first person will never have abstractive knowledge of [the substance of] bread, whereas the second will have it, which is immediately against our experience, for each of these persons can experience in himself the same act of understanding bread.[69]

The Scotistic revolution, discussed exhaustively by Heidegger in his *Habilitationsschrift*, fundamentally altered the relationship between the *thing-as-it-is-in-itself* and the *thing-as-it-is-understood* by us which is re-presented through linguistic signs: "The question is then how the meaning of linguistic terms (the *ratio significandi)* reflects and conditions the concepts of the mind."[70] Consequently, the nature of the correspondence between things in reality and how they are grasped by our mind is radically altered: "The signs 'stand for' but do not bear any similarity to what they signify."[71] According to Heidegger, the neo-Kantians' fundamental mistake in their reading of Kant lay in understanding Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* Scotistically as a "theory of experience,"[72] which is grounded in logical significations. Whereas the Scotist Neo-Kantian reading of Kant follows Kant's second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, which speaks of a division of the mind into two branches of knowledge — intuition and understanding — Heidegger clings to the first edition and emphasizes that there are in fact three: intuition, imagination, and understanding. Heidegger explains: "besides intuition and thinking, there is yet a third fundamental source of the mind, out of which a phenomenon such as synthesis, which is so crucially necessary for knowledge, purely emerges."[73]

Heidegger maintains that the Neo-Kantians failed to notice that the categories are not merely logical notions but also primal concepts that are rooted in the imagination — and consequently in time:[74] "for Kant pure concepts of understanding are in one sense notions and in another sense categories. On the one hand they are viewed from the logical form of the activity of understanding. However, at the same time they are grasped as primal concepts whose content springs from the pure imaginative, time-related synthesis."[75] As opposed to the logical reading of the Neo-Kantians, Heidegger presents an ontological reading of the categories as "*rules of synthesis*" that are directed to intuition and "determine the objectivity of the object:"[76]

> The place of origin of concepts cannot only and primarily reside in understanding as such, but in an understanding which is grounded in and guided by intuition. Put differently, precisely because concepts have their origin in the faculty of understanding, in view of the mediacy of understanding, they originate primarily in intuition. Categories have a twofold origin: As notions, they originate in functions of unification; as γένη του δντος, in the pure image of sensibility, in time.[77]

The purpose of this discussion of Heidegger's reading of Kant is not its validity. What is essential about Heidegger's reading is his conviction about our transcendental disposition towards reality. Just as Schillebeeckx's transignification is oriented towards reality that it cannot attain, so Heidegger understands that the mind is fundamentally structured towards reality that remains beyond its grasp. No signification

69 John Duns Scotus, *On Being and Cognition: Ordinatio 1.3*, trans. John van den Bercken (Fordham Univ. Press, 2016), d. 3, q. X, n. 143 (p. 94).
70 Frede, "The Question of Being: Heidegger's Project."
71 Ibid., 49.
72 Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 11.
73 *Phenomenological Interpretation of Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly, Studies in Continental Thought (Indiana Univ. Press, 1997), 188 (276–77). See also *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 131 (61–62).
74 "Heidegger is claiming that pure synthesis derives its unity from its manifold of pure time. The pure concept is simply a reflection on this synthesis. The category is thus pure synthesis 'represented generally'. The synthesis does not owe its unity to the category, but the contrary: the category owes its content of *synthetic* unity to the imagination. Thus the category differs from the notion, in that the notion gets its unity from mere logical reflection, while categories have as their *content* a *synthetic* unity. This synthetic unity is derived from time through the imagination." Martin Weatherston, *Heidegger's Interpretation of Kant: Categories, Imagination and Temporality* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 91.
75 Heidegger, *Phenomenological Interpretation of Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, 205 (301). See also 212 (312–13).
76 Weatherston, *Heidegger's Interpretation of Kant,* 160–61.
77 Heidegger, *Phenomenological Interpretation of Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, 172 (252–54).

is purely logical or linguistic but rather is related a priori to intuition, i.e., to what is actually given and presented to thought. The categories, "are, so to speak, pushed into" reality — not because the "categories" have their own interest in "things" but rather because they are subordinated to a higher and actual activity which synthesizes them together with the sensual givenness that is presented by the intuition.

EPILOGUE

Let us try to summarize and conclude the dialectical movement that was undertaken in this study. Man's everyday disposition toward the world is naïve. Entities exist in it and fulfill their role. Sometimes things deviate from their "place," but quickly enough, they are repositioned. The practice of celebrating the Eucharist is a strange event. People are asked to affirm that the consecration of bread and wine turned them into something else, although no change is perceived. This praxis pushes participants to think philosophically, to understand that something greater exists. Something that subsists beyond the ephemeral impressions of the senses that can only be perceived by the intellect. And then it collapses. Man's relation to the world is clouded by doubt. Even science, with its methods and facts, takes its toll, reinforcing the gap between the manner things are understood and used by us and their physical constitution. One may understand that that which subsists beyond the impressions of the senses is the stamp of the mind. Another may lose his conviction due to a postmodern attitude that avoids affirmation. Many others simply drop out of the circle of faith, and find themselves shopping around for meaning.

Nevertheless, the fascination of the mind, or merely human basic needs, offers a person meaning, belonging, and other delights that furnish one's inner world. Falling into the depth of our mind, the reality of the real is replaced by meaning and symbols. And still, the need for reality lingers. It compels us to understand that we cannot escape it, not insofar as it knocks on our door, but insofar as our fundamental constitution is disposed toward it. We need assurance; we need truth; we need the grounding of the real. The praxis of the Eucharist, despite attempts to abate its demand for the real presence of Christ, cannot escape the understanding that without such real presence, it is all pointless, a figment of the mind; that one has to affirm reality without which no *real* salvation is possible.

Similarly, philosophers such as Heidegger understood that man, as a thinking being, is fundamentally disposed to think ontologically. Unlike a calculator that is troubled with logical operators, our thought is ultimately grounded in perceiving things in their reality, whether attributed to them directly or mediately. The presence of the real is no longer a simple substrate that lies underneath a thing's accidents. It is also not a logical or categorial attribute. Just as the Eucharist demands an act of faith by which one accepts and presupposes the reality of the Eucharist, so similarly the Heideggerian reversal of the Kantian reading, compels us to accept the reality of reality and its necessary role in the formation of thought, without which no *fundamental ontology* would be possible. As Christ is present in the Eucharist in his absence, so also reality is present in our thought in its absence, and just as the absence of Christ casts and assembles the believer into the reality of the Church and its mission, so also the absence of reality within our thought bears an ontological cast. This ontological cast does not grasp reality itself but is that which disposes the mind to assemble itself ontologically within the world.

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