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TRUTH AS FINAL CAUSE: ESCHATOLOGY AND HOPE IN LACAN AND PRZYWARA

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Abstract. Truth is a locus of guilt for the Christian, according to Jacques Lacan. The religious person, he argues, punitively defers truth eschatologically. Yet Lacan's own view dissolves eschatological deferral to the world, as the "Real". The metaphysics of Erich Przywara SJ helps highlight that this mirrors Lacan's view of the religious person. Przywara's Christian metaphysics and Lacanian psychoanalysis converge on the immanence of truth to history. But Przywaran analogy corrects Lacan's position on the religious person, which by implication calls for an adjustment to Lacan's worldview. In the final analysis, Lacan's dialectical nihilism should yield to a Christian's hopeful relation to the truth.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In what follows, I have sought to offer some insight on the various relations to 'truth as cause' offered by Jacques Lacan (1901–1980) in his essay "Science and Truth."[1] Not only is this an exploration of the way science understands truth (as a prelude to the question of the scientific status of psychoanalysis) but more importantly for our considerations, the way that religion relates to truth. In this latter case, Lacan specifically has Christianity in mind, especially as represented in the attitude espoused by the Church Fathers. Drawing upon Aristotelian causality to characterise various ways in which truth acts as cause, Lacan identifies the religious (Christian) attitude to truth as one of final causality. Two principal matters emerge from this identification: that Christianity confers "upon truth the status of guilt," and that truth "is deferred to an end-of-the-world judgement." Key to our analysis will be the metaphysical thought of Erich Przywara (1889–1972), whose *analogia entis* (analogy of being) will offer us a means of splicing a dialectical polarity in Lacan's thought. This difficult but necessary operation opens a vista onto Lacan's metaphysical presuppositions, and allows us to consider anew the relation to the transcendent which makes the eschatologising of truth possible—beyond an immanent noetic structure, and with ontological reality. In this way, I argue that Lacan's presuppositions are misguided in a way that Przywara allows us to see, and that this relation to the truth constitutes a genuine Christian hope.

In his essay "Science and Truth," Jacques Lacan suggests that four broad forms of thought (magical, scientific, psychoanalytic, and religious) can be identified as relating to "truth as cause". Following the four Aristotelian causes, magic relates to truth as efficient cause, science as formal, psychoanalytic as material, and religion as final cause. We are particularly concerned here with the religious person's relation to truth as final cause; but also, to understand Lacan's position better, the psychoanalytic material cause. For the religious person, truth is revealed as from the exteriority of Divine agency, in revelation. In this sense, truth is "eschatologised," placed beyond our grasp. The religious person's place in the causality of truth is thus eclipsed by revelation, and so truth as final cause is an assertion which radically exteriorises humanity from truth. This is why Lacan says "revelation in religion translates as a negation [*dénégation*] of truth as

1 Jacques Lacan, "Science and Truth", in *Écrits*: *The First Complete Edition in English*, trans. Bruce Fink, Héloïse Fink and Russell Grigg (W. W. Norton & Company, 2006).

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cause,"[2] because the religious person plays no part in the truth. Lacan's reading of the situation thus harbours a Protestant inflection which stresses both a Divine exteriority, and a depravity in humanity which causes us to "confer upon truth the status of guilt."[3] As such, the issue of "truth as cause" in religion gives us reason to think about: the relationship between immanence and transcendence (God in relation to the world), the nature of the human person as an acting subject, and the relationship of truth to history. In each of these areas, Erich Przywara gives us reason to doubt Lacan's formulation of the religious person's relation to truth as final cause. Przywara's *analogia entis* (analogy of being) is the doctrine of the *in-über* (what Betz and Bentley Hart translate as "in-and-beyond") relationship, ultimately between God and the world, which characterises all of Przywara's thought. The *analogia entis* is a frustration of the nihilism implicit in the aforementioned Protestant-inflected dialectic of Lacan's thought. Przywara thus adds flesh to the Christian bones of hope in an "eschatologised" truth.

If religion is hopeful in this sense, then perhaps we might suggest psychoanalysis is hopeless? This is to question the nature of a desired object (such as the truth) with the aid of the psychoanalytic observation that objects are less the end or goal of desire in themselves than they are the actors or causes of desire. "Hopeless" here, then, means nothing more than "without a goal". Therefore, the concept of "truth as cause" concerns the effect that truth has on the person's orientation in the world, and not a goal to which the person tends. This may seem to cut across the sense in which it operates as "final cause" in religion, for the eschatological might suggest *nothing more than* a complete vision to which the person tends. It is not so much that the religious person seeks finally to attain full and complete knowledge (still less in the here and now) but that the truth is conceived as a *telos*, effective upon the world from a point beyond or outside it. The "cause of his desire" has been relinquished to God; and in this "sacrifice", the religious person's "demand is subordinated to his presumed desire for God,"[4] which is why truth becomes a matter of guilt. This gives birth to an intense epistemological scepticism.

Lacan asserts, however, that the goal of a united truth for the human subject is, at the very least, unattainable. Quintessentially, this is a distaste for final causes *per se*. Such hopelessness—if we may call it that—Lacan expresses when critiquing the view that the ego be considered as "a function both of synthesis and of integration."[5] Lacan continues:

> nothing in the concrete life of a single individual allows us to ground the idea that such a finality directs his life and could lead him [...] to harmony with himself as well as to approval from the world on which his happiness depends.[6]

The religious person's scepticism towards knowledge, stemming from truth's guilt-status, seems to be appropriated by Lacan, in his own case, towards the eschatological altogether. Rhetorically we ask: whence Lacan's wariness of transcendent externalisation?

Lacan's emphasis on the guilt status of truth in Christianity relies on the assertion of a *nihil* that belongs to the scepticism of the religious person towards knowledge. This maximally realised scepticism towards knowledge, Lacan thinks, is something which is demonstrated by the articulation of mystery (such as Trinitarian theology) at the intersection between dogma and heresy.[7] The early Church produced dogmatic statements in a conciliar fashion, not as an arbitrary enunciation of positive truths, but in response to heresies—in response to negativities which miss the as-yet unrealised knowledge of eschatologised truth, and which emerge from the application of this scepticism resulting from truth as final cause. Responding to the "impasse" Lacan perceives in the tension between Trinitarian theology

2 Lacan, "Science and Truth", 741.
3 Ibid.
4 Lacan, "Science and Truth", 741.
5 Jacques Lacan, "Discourse to Catholics", in *The Triumph of Religion. Preceded by Discourse to Catholics*, trans. Bruce Fink (Polity Press, 2014), 9.
6 Ibid.
7 Lacan, "Science and Truth", 741.

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and divine unity,[8] the eschatologised "truth as cause" procures a scepticism towards philosophical and theological formulations which in some interior manner stand on the wrong side of the law enunciated by truth's "end-of-the-world judgement,"[9] driving religious desire to articulate knowledge about God in this particular way. Lacan's understanding of the relationship of the religious person to heresy is therefore an articulation of a relationship *between* the eschatological and the historical.

This relationship between the eschatological and the historical contains within it a repudiation of the dialectical dichotomy (between God and the world) which characterises Lacan's entire conception of the religious person. For Lacan, psychoanalysis treats truth as material cause, which means uncovering the truth in what is said by the analysand, as the "matter" of truth. Metaphysically speaking, the exteriorised nature of revelation can only be received in the way dictated by the creaturely being of the one receiving it; psychoanalytically, for Lacan, this would mean revelation is always and necessarily received in language or the symbolic, but these do not get a full grip on the reality (Lacan's "Real" being that which is beyond the grasp of language).

Whatever knowledge is procured as a result of "truth as cause", it is always in the creaturely *modi significandi* (modes of signification) which properly belong to the historical creature. This introduces the question of the immanent structure of nature as a relationship between essence and existence, between being and becoming. At any rate, this intimation of the creaturely metaphysics of being and becoming already articulates a point of connection to Lacan's "Real", and to his rejection of a unitary goal for the human condition. The result is the always-ever incomplete knowledge of the acting subject—a subject who is in "becoming". From this perspective, Lacan's own view and his description of the religious person are strikingly similar. It speaks, at the very least, to the material *of* truth in psychoanalysis, insofar as Lacan considers psychoanalysis to relate to truth as material cause:[10] the "matter" in question—the historically grounded subject—belongs to the immanent philosophy of the relationship between essence and existence, between being and becoming. This is very different from Lacan's suggestion that "[h]istory unfolds only in going against the rhythm of development,"[11] as though "development" here could be construed as the metaphysics of becoming. Our point is first and foremost an observation of the relationship *between* essence and existence, and not Lacan's concern that the analyst repudiate "a providential conception of its [history's] course."[12] This latter point shows how Lacan's position excludes God in favour of the immanence of the world.

Beyond the individual question of the religious person's relationship to truth as cause is the broader matter of a nihilistic cadence in Lacan's conception of the world (and God). It is this subducted nihilism which places Lacan's thought in the field of modern philosophy and away from a conception of hope whose transcendent (eschatologised) position is analogically encountered as both within and beyond the immanence of life. If Lacan's point about religion is to mean anything, one must first articulate the psychoanalytic construal of immanence and transcendence. It is in light of the relationship between these two (should one exist at all) that truth as final cause in religion demonstrates its exigency for a dialectic after the pattern of Lacan's thought as a whole. This could be turned into the suggestion that Lacan (mis) recognises in religion a semblance of his own psychoanalytic thought. In religion, truth as final cause diminishes humanity. In Lacan, truth as material cause diminishes God. The former, as we will see, is an expression of theopanism, the latter is an expression of pantheism. Neither position is analogical, which is what prevents the religious person in Lacan's thought from experiencing an eschatologised "truth as cause" as hopeful; rather, it is the site of punitive extrusion and guilt.

8 The objection Lacan raises relative to this issue seems to draw its force from the principle of non-contradiction (PNC). It is worthy of note that Przywara treats the problem of the PNC taken strictly dialectically in his *Analogia Entis*, though with such detail as to render it impossible to redact here; therefore we reference it only in passing. See Erich Przywara, *Analogia Entis: Metaphysics, Original Structure and Universal Rhythm* (Eerdmans, 2014), 198–237.

9 Lacan, "Science and Truth", 741.

10 Lacan, "Science and Truth", 743.

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid., 744.

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II. TRANSCENDENCE: THEOPANISM OR PANTHEISM

The immanent and the transcendent have, in some measure, already emerged in what we have said thus far, and this we may subject to Przywara's analysis. The immanent belongs to the question of the nature of the world in itself, and thus the relationship between essence and existence. We will need to look more closely at the immanent in Lacan, as well as Przywara's view that modernity relates to the immanent either by intellectualism or by voluntarism.[13] The transcendent, on the other hand, concerns the relationship between God and the world. Neither immanence nor transcendence is monolithic in its concerns; both accrue a constellation of issues and relations. Nevertheless, a disposition towards one is always a disposition towards the other, and they are for that reason always related (we will consider this later as an analogy of proportionality). For Przywara, the transcendent as conceived in contemporary thought may be subdivided into theopanism and pantheism.[14] In essence, however, both theopanism and pantheism are really polarised expressions of an underlying nihilism.

Theopanism in this sense involves the negation of the world, either denying it substantial ontological reality, or else depriving it of any agency or moral and spiritual value.[15] The result is an all-expansive God who, in having nothing real or of any value to relate to, *is* everything absolutely speaking. As Przywara puts it, "the world" means nothing other than "the 'All-Alone' of God," the "divinising of the world to God."[16] Pantheism, therefore, is the precise opposite: the exclusion of God such that the world itself is all-expansive, the only true reality, and thus itself God. Again, as Przywara puts it, "God" means nothing other than "the 'All-Alone' of the world," the "de-divinisation of God to the world."[17] It is for this reason that Przywara is even able to include Heidegger among the pantheists, for his theory of Being is essentially one of nothing.[18] In either case of the dialectic at the heart of theopanism or pantheism, it is the focus on the *nihil*, wherever it is posited, which is both the source of fault and the guarantor of the absolutism of its opposite, whether God (in theopanism) or the world (in pantheism). For this reason, Przywara considers the "All-Alone" to be the "codeword" for both theopanism and pantheism,[19] each containing within itself a violent interplay between extreme presence in the "All," and extreme negation in the "Alone."

In light of these conceptual definitions, Lacan seems to view the religious person in theopanistic terms (revelation eclipses the subject, truth has the status of guilt, and they self-identify as the "waste object left behind out of divine retribution"[20]), whereas his own view of the world seems pantheistic (extrusion of transcendent otherness as traumatic and punitive). What Przywara highlights for us is that Lacan's wrestling with religion is a struggle between these two forms of "All-Alone," between the religious person's theopanism and his own pantheism, as a manifestation of the question of transcendence. Yet in some measure, because he suggests the psychoanalyst has to reject all three of the other relations to truth as cause ("magical thinking" as efficient, science as formal, and religious as final) it is not only in religion that he overwrites a theopanistic view. In magic there is an externalising attribution "to someone else,"[21] and in science the annulling of the observing subject and ultimately the rejection of truth as cause altogether.[22]

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13 Erich Przywara, *Ringen der Gegenwart: Gesammelte Aufsätze 1922–1927* (Dr. Benno Filser-Verlag, 1929), 958.
14 Ibid., 958.
15 Ibid. See also John R. Betz, "Translator's Introduction", in Erich Przywara, *Analogia Entis: Metaphysics, Original Structure and Universal Rhythm*, (Eerdmans, 2014), 50–51. Betz neatly summarises Przywara's position from across his works, showing how the 'Lutheran-Reformed' tradition falls under this concept of theopanism.
16 Przywara, *Ringen der Gegenwart*, 958.
17 Ibid.
18 Betz, "Translator's Introduction", 51 n. 138: "Przywara strikingly refers to Heidegger's philosophy of *Sein als Nichts* precisely as a form of pantheism."
19 Przywara, *Ringen der Gegenwart*, 958.
20 Jacques Lacan, *Anxiety*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller (Polity Press, 2015), 220.
21 Lacan, "Science and Truth", 744.
22 Ibid., 742.

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Manifestations of the theopanistic through into modernity confirm the observation of a Protestant inflection to Lacan's conception of the religious person. For Przywara, as John Betz shows, theopanism's diminishment of the created world can be seen both "with Buddhism and *mutatis mutandis* Lutheran-Reformed theology to the extent that the latter denies any cooperation with grace."[23] The Protestant dialectic between the transcendent and the immanent is displayed in Lacan's linking of religion to obsessional neurosis[24]—presumably a nod at least to the ritualism of Catholicism, but coloured by a Protestant dialectic which seeks to maintain a distancing from God (as transcendent).[25] By the same token Lacan draws upon the image of Buddhist self-mummification as expressive of the obsessional neurotic who tries to "realize himself as an object";[26] that is, to (theopanistically) diminish oneself in the face of the will of the "Other". For Przywara, the Lutheran-Reformed tradition idealistically annunciates God as "*Alleinwirksamkeit*" ("exclusive agency"),[27] and denunciates the world in a way which led the philosophies that grew out of it to view the world as "a complete *Nein-Nichts*"[28] (No-Nothing). Both are instances of the theopanistic diminishment of the human person and the world, and thus manifestations of a polarising which eclipses hope.

Despite Lacan's argument that the truth as final cause (negatively) impacts the social order by instituting hierarchies, as in Catholicism,[29] our Przywaran analysis shows that the real implication of Lacan's position for the religious person is to abolish all hierarchies in favour of a theopanistic Divine absolutism. In essence, Przywara's critique of the eschatological nature of religion, so conceived, stands in opposition to the Church[30]—no real relation between the eschatological and the world is possible because the eschatological seems to involve, for Lacan, a punitive extrusion of truth in much the same way as he himself considers the Real.[31] For this reason, Lacan's remark about the eschatologising of truth as cause needs to be carefully considered against Christianity's claim that there *is* a relationship between truth and history. For Przywara, that claim is analogical, and is what circumnavigates what we might call the hopelessness of nihilism.

III. IMMANENCE: RATIONALISM OR VOLUNTARISM

Having considered the transcendent dimension of Lacan's view of the religious person, we return to the immanent. The immanent is a concern for that which belongs to creaturely metaphysics properly speaking, which is to say, the relationship between essence and existence as it is in creatures. Modernity tends, Przywara thinks, in one of two directions to deal with this relationship between being and becoming: either "intellectualism" (or rationalism) or "voluntarism."[32] Intellectualism, or rationalism, as an *a priori* philosophy of essence, does not lend itself to psychoanalysis conceived as relating to truth as *material* cause. Lacan's view may flirt with the eidetic and noetic focus of intellectualism (as the basis of modern science) out of a desire to secure the scientific status of psychoanalysis; but because Lacan seeks to resist the call of science's relation to truth as *formal* cause, intellectualism cannot be said to belong to Lacan's psychoanalytic worldview.

It is in light of the pantheism of Lacan's thought that the immanent is foregrounded, and the hope-filled connection to any form of eschatologised truth is foreclosed. The theopanistic conception of the reli-

23 Betz, "Translator's Introduction", 51–52.
24 Lacan, "Science and Truth", 740.
25 Jacques Lacan, *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis: 1959–1960*, Seminar of Jacques Lacan Book VII, trans. Dennis Porter, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller, (Routledge, 2007), 160–61.
26 Jacques Lacan, "The Subversion of the Subject and the Dialectic of Desire in the Freudian Unconscious", in *Écrits*: *The First Complete Edition in English*, trans. Bruce Fink, Héloïse Fink and Russell Grigg (W. W. Norton & Company, 2006), 700.
27 Betz, "Translator's Introduction", 51 n. 139.
28 Przywara, *Ringen der Gegenwart*, 960.
29 Lacan, "Science and Truth", 744.
30 Przywara, *Ringen der Gegenwart*, 49.
31 Note how language as dissolved into the "unnamable thing" (the Real of truth) through "prosopopeia" results in "horror". Lacan, "Science and Truth", 736.
32 Przywara, *Ringen der Gegenwart*, 958.

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gious person is but an observation of a causal structure particular to him or her—whether revelation is real matters less than the question of what effect believing it to be true has on the person. This is the psychoanalytic rationale of truth conceived as material cause. But the philosophical territory of the immanent in the religious person will draw upon Lacan's own understanding of the world. One could suppose that the religious person is an expression of a theopanistic-rationalism (as in Malebranche)—the rationalism here accounting for the immanent. Realistically, however, the religious person's theopanism (as a dialectical inversion of Lacan's own position) will only ever be taken in immanence relative to questions belonging more to an *a posteriori* philosophy of existence, namely voluntarism. Such an *a posteriori* immanentism is already suggested by Lacan's choosing to frame all relation to truth in terms of Aristotelian causality.

Voluntarism concerns us here because it pertains to the nature of the acting subject, whose existence, given the debased status of the world according to Lacan's religious person, fluctuates within a state of refusal or denial and a despotic power struggle. Voluntarism, as John Betz describes Przywara's position, is an outgrowth of "Luther's existentialist-nominalist theology," which ultimately "terminates in the historicism, relativism, and will to power of Nietzsche."[33] It is not clear why Nietzsche should be considered the terminus of this dialectical tendency to voluntarism, for a conception of the human person as an acting subject driven by an overarching, unifying force, however conceived, extends at least into psychoanalysis within the ego-psychology tradition. We can think of the energy of the libido in Freud, especially in the tension between life and death in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*; or in Jung, for whom the unending resonance of archetypal forms constellates around the unity of meaning.[34] In both cases the nominal centrality of the functioning subject is clear; but precisely what *kind* of functioning subject this is remains unclear: where exactly is the acting subject given the oppositional forces within the psyche? Lacan, on the other hand, asks us to think about the acting subject, not as a unified whole as voluntarism would normally require of us, but in the complex matrices of intersubjective interaction. Try to pinpoint the locus of a "self" in Lacan, and one is endlessly frustrated. At any rate, it certainly does not rest in consciousness. Consciousness, Lacan thinks, ought not to be considered "the culmination of life."[35] Herein lies the central objection to an ego-psychology.

A certain frustration of the voluntarist position in Lacan is clear from the clinical implications of his thought. The analysand's desire to change, to be rid of his or her symptom, is not considered a reliable motivational source. At a deeper level, it is presumed, the analysand in fact rejects the idea of "cure", and for this reason, it is the position and place of the analyst to supply the desire necessary to effect any change.[36] Rather like the religious person, even in the clinical setting the dialectic of an externalised cause seems necessary. This position of the analyst relative to the analysand's desire is not a conscious process—at least not for the analysand. In such a position, the analyst does not obviously or consciously lead the analysand on in desire; rather, this occurs through mechanisms such as the analyst's "neutrality" (in the case of neurosis), manifest in a refraining from offering a plethora of interpretations.[37] It deliberately leaves the analysand wanting; yet he or she must be convinced that "the analyst's desire was in no way involved in the matter."[38] Whereas for Feuerbach God is an extrusion of the human person's self-reflection, and is only efficacious insofar as he or she is unaware of this fact, the analytic setup recasts this structure in a reverse Feuerbachean hue, for clinical efficacy requires the analysand to be oblivious to the causal position of the analyst. Yet it is a reversal because, unlike Feuerbach's God, the analyst is a really existing external cause.

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33 Betz, "Translator's Introduction", 50–51.
34 David Henderson, "Aspects of Negation in Freud and Jung", *Psychodynamic Practice* 17, no. 2 (2011).
35 Lacan, "Discourse to Catholics", 9.
36 Bruce Fink, *A Clinical Introduction to Lacanian Psychoanalysis: Theory and Technique* (Harvard Univ. Press, 1997), 3–4.
37 Lacan, "The Subversion of the Subject and the Dialectic of Desire in the Freudian Unconscious", 698. See also Jacques Lacan, "Position of the Unconscious", in *Écrits*: *The First Complete Edition in English*, trans. Bruce Fink, Héloïse Fink and Russell Grigg (W. W. Norton & Company, 2006), 708 — here Lacan gives a brief summary, in passing, of the analyst's "role": "fostering the patient's discourse, restoring its meaning effect, putting himself on the line [*s'y mettre en cause*] by responding, as well as by remaining silent."
38 Ibid., 698.

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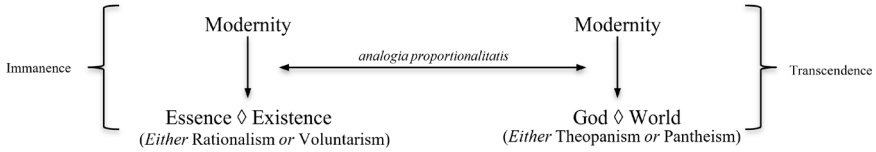
IV. TRANSCENDENCE AND IMMANENCE: AN ANALOGY OF PROPORTIONALITY?

In touching upon both the transcendent and the immanent, the question of the relationship between these two modes goes unanswered. There is what we could describe as an analogy of proportionality (an analogous relation between two relations) between the secular attitude of modernity towards the dialectical relationship between God and the world (God ◊ world), and the secular attitude to the "philosophies of essence and philosophies of existence"[39] (essence ◊ existence). The former is the transcendent, and the latter the immanent. The analogy of proportionality suggests that there is a relationship between the way secular modernity relates to the transcendent question (either pantheism or theopanism) and the way it relates to the immanent question (either rationalism or voluntarism).[40] The analogy of proportionality thus asks whether there is an analogical relationship between the choice of either a secularised pantheism or theopanism, on the one hand, and the choice of rationalism or voluntarism, on the other (see the diagram below). We suggest such an analogy of proportionality in order to add greater specificity to the symbiosis between the transcendent and immanent positions (*e.g.* differences between pantheistic or theopanistic rationalism, and pantheistic or theopanistic voluntarism; and between rationalistic or voluntaristic pantheism and rationalistic or voluntaristic theopanism). The unique conception of the acting subject in Lacan frustrates this analogy, for the voluntarism implied by the secular pantheism of his broader thought is not, as we have already seen, reducible to a singly identifiable locus within the human person. This could be a point, therefore, where Lacan's observations call for a deeper conception of the acting person in Przywara's *analogia entis*. The Lacanian conceptual frustration of this analogy of proportionality (as diagrammed below) might give us cause to say, therefore, that the peculiarities of Lacan's pantheism modifies the voluntarism, or vice versa. By the same token, we might say that the modified voluntarism of the acting subject, in Lacan, in turn colours the theopanistic conception of the religious person. Examples of this might be to consider, given a theopanistic view of the world, the role of the unconscious in someone who positions truth as final cause, or what the relationship is between their "ideal ego" (the projected self-image which shows one to be "tougher than others") and "ego-ideal" (the "introject[ed] paternal image" which acts as an organising principle for the actions of the ideal ego).[41]



Whilst what accounts for voluntarism is an emphasis on the will, for Lacan the will is not reducible to any act of "pure consciousness,"[42] for this implies a unified and identifiable self. The person, for Lacan, is spread across "the four corners of the schema" (what he calls "Schema L"), which means across: the "Subject" (S), "his objects" (*a*), "his ego" (*a'*), and "the Other" (A).[43] It is not necessary to define these "corners" here; they serve only to demonstrate the complexity of the person in Lacan against the models of the self in the spectra of rationalism and voluntarism. Although it is difficult to classify Lacan's position as one of "pure consciousness," we might note that the schema indicates the foregrounding of noetic structures. This is perhaps inevitable for any psychoanalytic theory; but more specifically it means a conception of the immanent as noetic *over against* the ontological. It is for this reason that Lacan says "there is no such

39 Betz, "Translator's Introduction", 50.
40 Betz, "Translator's Introduction", 50.
41 Jacques Lacan, *Transference*, The Seminar of Jacques Lacan Book VIII, trans. Bruce Fink, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller (Polity Press, 2015), 340–41. See also Lacan, "The Subversion of the Subject and the Dialectic of Desire in the Freudian Unconscious", 685.
42 Przywara, *Analogia Entis*, 122.
43 Jacques Lacan, "On a Question Prior to Any Possible Treatment of Psychosis", in *Écrits*: *The First Complete Edition in English*, trans. Bruce Fink, Héloïse Fink and Russell Grigg (W. W. Norton, 2006), 459.

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thing as a metalanguage [...] no language being able to say the truth about truth."[44] This allows us to more sharply envision truth as material cause, because truth here is expressed as a transcendence *within* the immanent — "truth speaks," in fact, "going by the name of the unconscious."[45] This is to say, truth has an "external" form (the unknowability of the unconscious as the locus of truth), but is firmly *within* the continuum of the world conceived pantheistically (the "All-Alone" of the world as pure immanence). Every instance of speech is therefore an attempt to write over the unknowability of the world in itself, an attempt to put into words something which is unsayable. To put it metaphysically: the transcendence of the ontological in itself is covered over noetically. For this reason we can say there is in Lacan the prioritising of the noetic over the ontological. This, following the aforementioned nihilism, weakens the epistemological grasp on hoped-for ontological realities.

Although in some measure this clearly sits within the Kantian tradition of the *noumenon*, the absence of a unified subject whose noetic acts are premised on sense perception, and a concomitant stress on the historical shape of thought, make it difficult to ascribe any clear definition of rationalism or voluntarism to Lacan's position. As such, Lacan even frustrates many of the presuppositions of dominant secular philosophies. Perhaps, therefore, we might posit Lacan's position to be something like a "*post factum* linguisticism," where all that can be said of the world is always a retroactive imposition of linguistic structure which overwrites the reality it tries to describe, whilst always falling short of it. How can one describe, for example, the child in its pre-linguistic dyadic relationship to its mother? Either this is a retroactive myth,[46] imposed by a post-linguistic conception of the world, or else it is an unknowable instance of the Real, inaccessible in itself to language. Not only is there failure at the heart of the linguistic struggle with the always-out-of-reach of the world, the world itself is ultimately and ineluctably traumatic and horrific.[47] This negativised cadence of language reaffirms our earlier observation that what Lacan says about the religious person is a semblable of his own position.

What makes Lacan's point of view religiously potent is that it is precisely at the point of the world's immanent ontology that the transcendent is discovered (the always-out-of-reach reality of the world). Its difference to the religious, however, subsists in it being a transcendence purely *within* immanence. For Przywara, transcendence can only ever be "in-and-beyond" immanence, as this is the essence of the Catholic metaphysics of analogy. In a practical manner, Lacan may well be inclined to treat the ontologically transcendent (*i.e.* God) as having no substantial difference in effect upon the human subject than what is contained within the immanently transcendent (*i.e.* the always-out-of-reach of the world). For example, we might say that the mysterious allure of the infinite in cosmology, or the exuberance of endless discovery in biological diversity, as secular causes for scientific pursuits, seems structurally akin to ebullience for a Christian philosophical and theological exploration of the mystery of the Trinity. Similarly, following Lacan's position, we might say that the atheist (the ideal ego) acts as though some Other is watching when no-one is around (the ego-ideal) in much the same way as the theist who believes that Other to be God: they may act differently to one another, and focus on different subjects and their outcomes, but the structure is the same. It would seem wholly unsubstantiated, however, even assuming the truth of Lacan's position (the world as immanently transcendent), to assert that the religious position (real transcendent otherness) is therefore an untruth. One might even consider it, in its agnosticism for real transcendent otherness, a manifestation of *hopelessness*.

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44 Lacan, "Science and Truth", 737.
45 Ibid., 737.
46 Lacan, "Position of the Unconscious", 711. See also Jacques Lacan, "The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis", in *Écrits*: *The First Complete Edition in English*, trans. Bruce Fink, Héloïse Fink and Russell Grigg (W. W. Norton, 2006), 228–29.
47 See n. 31 above.

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V. TRUTH'S RELATION TO HISTORY: SCIENCE AND MODERN PHILOSOPHY

Part of the problem of voluntarism in relation to Lacan is the degree to which its conceptualising requires a relation to self-consciousness. For Lacan, full self-consciousness is not possible, as this is caught up in the false and imaginary narrative about the self which constitutes the ideal ego. "One does not see oneself as one is," Lacan says, "and even less so when one approaches oneself wearing philosophical masks."[48] Here Lacan traces a critique of science's modification of the "subject position," in that its view of the subject flows from the "historically defined moment" brought about by Descartes' *cogito*.[49] Its results are ultimately to be seen in the approaches of Lucien Lévy-Bruhl and Jean Piaget, who both express what Lacan terms "the psychologization of the subject,"[50] or (borrowing the phrase from Claude Lévi-Strauss) an "archaic illusion."[51] Lévy-Bruhl fails in the sense that he posits a "prelogical mentality"[52] among primitive peoples, which presumes too much about the nature of their thought whilst standing outside of it; and Piaget's "egocentric discourse" fails because it tautologically writes into the answers, given by the children in his experiments, "the very same logic that governs the enunciation of the statements that make up the test."[53] In this way, "children are taken to be undeveloped men, masking the truth about what originally happens during childhood."[54] This critique is formulated on the basis of the work of, among others, Alexandre Koyré.

We should note that Przywara too draws upon Koyré as an observer of the way in which "modern philosophy presupposes the problems of Scholasticism."[55] This historical connection — the need to be taken by the "current"[56] of historical thought — unites Lacan and Przywara in criticising the tendency of contemporary science, and the modern philosophy on which it rests, of foreclosing the force of historical thought which is internal to considering the human subject. In other words, for Lacan the apriorism of science leads, through Descartes and ultimately ego-psychology, to the mistaken positions of the likes of Lévy-Bruhl and Piaget. For Przywara, the apriorism of modern philosophy rejects the culmination of Scholastic thought on which its problems ultimately rest. For Lacan with respect to science, and Przywara with respect to modern philosophy, the Enlightenment bears within it the risk of having pressed a reset button on history. From Hegel, Przywara adds, we even learn that modern philosophy "bears in itself the form, specifically, of Protestant theology," and must therefore "trace its Protestant theological form back still further, to its origin [...in] the undiminished spectrum of Catholic theology."[57] Perhaps, given what we have considered already, this critique ought to extend in some way to Lacan's conception of the religious person.

Unlike in the natural sciences, both religion and psychoanalysis place emphasis on the historical nature of truths. Whereas the discovery of mathematical or geometric truths may have been made in various places and times according to prevailing "intellectual attitudes,"[58] their *a priori* and thus eidetic-noetic nature removes them from their historical unfolding. The body of knowledge in the natural sciences therefore, according to Ratzinger, functions as a "self-contained intellectual treasury."[59] This is no criticism; rather an admonition against crossing over into the sorts of thinking required in philosophy, theology, and biblical exegesis. The various philosophies of history, Ratzinger notes, "are a series of raids on the deep places of

48 Lacan, "Science and Truth", 736.
49 Ibid., 726–27.
50 Ibid., 730.
51 Ibid., 729.
52 Ibid., 730.
53 Ibid., 730.
54 Ibid., 729.
55 Przywara, *Analogia Entis*, 150.
56 Ibid., 150.
57 Ibid., 150.
58 Joseph Ratzinger, *Eschatology: Death and Eternal Life* (Catholic Univ. of America Press, 1988), 23.
59 Ibid.

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being, carried out according to the possibilities of their own time."[60] This does not dichotomise between natural science and philosophy as though one is Platonic-eidetic, and the other Aristotelian-morphologic; rather, it illustrates that the empirical apriorism of the natural sciences gives an incomplete picture of human life and the world.

Positing that religion places truth as final cause — notwithstanding the Aristotelian meta-structure of causality Lacan is appropriating — gives truth the status of what Przywara calls a "superhistorical telos."[61] Przywara emphasises the historical way in which this plays out: the historical movement of the *a posteriori* which acts as a "critical reflection" on the emergence of truths is possible only because there is an appreciation of the *a priori*, "an inner knowledge of the objective problems that lie at its foundation" and "an orientation towards their evolving solution."[62] These two standpoints — the *a posteriori* and the *a priori* — are not wholly separate, because the *a priori* objectivity of truth is "already intrinsically determined by the thinker's historical position within the entirety of the tradition in which he lives, even if he does not know it."[63] Thus, Przywara concludes, the historical nature of truth is a twofold movement: "what is 'beyond history,' makes itself known always only 'in history,'" and thus "reveals itself 'in history' as 'beyond history.'"[64] This establishes the "in-and-beyond" relationship of truth to history which characterises the *analogia entis*, and acts as a corrective to Lacan's conception of the religious person. In other words, hoped-for truths may well be eschatological, as Lacan suggests, or "beyond" as Przywara suggests; but this hope is abolished by the polarising pantheism and nihilism of Lacan's position. It is only adequately restored, on Przywara's analysis, when these "All-Alone" polarities (truth as eschatologised, and the exclusion of real transcendent otherness) are dealt with analogically. Under such conditions, to paraphrase Przywara, hope in something "beyond" is manifest only as "in" earthly life; and thus "in" earthly life is revealed the "beyond" of hope.

VI. CONCLUSION

Lacan's conception of the religious person as relating to truth as final cause displays signs of a Protestant inflection: truth is eschatologised, placed solely in the hands of God, resulting in an extreme dialectic which nullifies the world, rendering the religious person sceptical and truth guilty. This can be described, according to a Przywaran analysis, as theopanism. But Lacan's observation seems to model itself upon his own view of the world, though inversed. The psychoanalytic position is to view truth as material cause, eschewing the dialectical transcendence-immanence of the religious final cause. Nevertheless, Lacan seems to dissolve the transcendent into the immanent under the guise of the Real, or the always-out-of-reach of the world. More than this, the Real itself is punitively extruded (noetically, not ontologically) due to its traumatic nature. As a result, Lacan's position is in accord with Przywara's understanding of pantheism — the inverse of theopanism. But all of this only considers the "transcendent question": what is the relationship, if any, between God and the world?

The immanent, on the other hand, at least according to Przywara, is really a question of the relationship between essence and existence, between being and becoming in the world. Only one of two avenues are open to the secular philosophies of modernity to account for this: either rationalism, as a philosophy of essence, or voluntarism, as a philosophy of existence. Only the position of analogy can raise philosophy out of this either-or; but at least an analogy of proportionality seems to exist between the philosophies of immanence and the philosophies of transcendence. Though leaning more in the direction of a philosophy of existence, Lacan seems to frustrate this rationalism-voluntarism bifurcation by providing an account of the human subject in terms which, at the very least, run contrary to the dominant theories

60 Ibid., 24.
61 Przywara, *Analogia Entis*, 149.
62 Ibid., 152.
63 Ibid.
64 Ibid.

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of ego-psychology. It is then through this, in the final analysis, that we come to recognise a certain degree of convergence in Lacan's and Przywara's positions, relative to science and modern philosophy, respectively. That convergence is in the form of the relationship between truth and history. But it is just here that this undercuts Lacan's conception of the religious person's truth as final cause, for the very thing Lacan repudiates about science is, for Przywara, a philosophical outgrowth of the Lutheran-Reformed theology which, ironically, characterises both Lacan's theopanistic conception of the religious person's truth as cause, and the secular pantheistic "*post factum* linguisticism" of Lacan's position. The solution for both Lacan and this particular conception of the religious person, offering real hope, is in the *analogia entis*, which rejects the nihilistic dialecticism on which both are premised.

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