

DUMÉRY AND THE DYNAMISM OF THE SPIRIT

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IN RECENT months a number of works dealing with the philosophy of Maurice Blondel have appeared in English.¹ During the same period translations of Karl Rahner's metaphysics of knowledge, *Spirit in the World*,² and of his major work on philosophy of religion, *Hearers of the Word*,³ have also come out, together with an English version of Emerich Coreth's *Metaphysics*⁴ and Otto Muck's excellent exposition of the methodology of transcendental Thomism and its use by the major practitioners of that system.⁵ The reaction to the latter series of publications by several American philosophers⁶ has shown the relevance which Blondel's philosophy still possesses, for a number of American philosophers at least, and at the same time the reserve which some of them now express, not only toward transcendental Thomism, but toward any metaphysics grounded in the dynamism of the human spirit as a philosophical instrument for the interpretation of man's personal, social, and historical experience. Since these philosophers are men of the Catholic tradition who are concerned with the relation of man's philosophical understanding of the universe to theology, and with the encounter of a historical subject with the Word of God, which must maintain its identity while freshly understood through the changing categories of an evolving experience, the publication of these books and of the articles written in reaction to them is one more sign of the remarkable philosophical diversity which now exists in the Catholic community concerning the metaphysical interpretation of man and his universe. It also illustrates the profound consequences which such diversity entails for discourse about God and for the integration of the data of revelation into a coherent, reflexive, rationally tested, and organized interpretation of experience.

Since the emergence of this philosophical and theological diversity,

¹ Henri Bouillard, *Blondel and Christianity* (Washington, 1969); Jean Lacroix, *Maurice Blondel: An Introduction to the Man and His Philosophy* (New York, 1968); James M. Somerville, S.J., *Total Commitment: Blondel's L'Action* (Washington, 1968).

² Karl Rahner, *Spirit in the World* (New York, 1968).

³ Karl Rahner, *Hearers of the Word* (New York, 1969).

⁴ Emerich Coreth, *Metaphysics* (New York, 1968).

⁵ Otto Muck, *The Transcendental Method* (New York, 1968).

⁶ Richard Hinners, "Theology and 'Archeology,'" Edward MacKinnon, S.J., "Transcendental Turn: Necessary but Not Sufficient," Bernard A. M. Nachbar, "Is It Thomism?" in *Continuum* 6 (1968).

especially on the American scene, has occurred with great rapidity, it is hard at times for American readers to follow the pattern of its evolution. This is particularly true when, as with Blondel and the transcendental Thomists, there has been a delay in the translation of texts and important commentaries. With the publication of the commentaries on Blondel it can be hoped that American readers will have an opportunity to acquaint themselves more thoroughly with a rich and original thought whose possibilities of evolution are by no means confined to the line of development taken by transcendental Thomism. Many of these possibilities were opened up in the evolution of Blondel's metaphysics of the spirit by one of his most devoted disciples, Henry Duméry. Unfortunately, very little has been written in English about the original and provocative direction which Duméry gave to the development of Blondel's thought in a series of books which a decade ago brought him into violent conflict, not only with the Maréchalians theologians, but with many others as well. It may be of some service, therefore, to present a brief sketch of Duméry's philosophy and to recall some of the critiques advanced against it by more traditional theologians. For in doing so we may be able to observe the possibilities of developing Blondel's philosophy of the spirit in union with phenomenology in a way quite different from the direction taken by transcendental Thomism following upon a similar union. We can also see the divergencies between the two systems and some of the theological consequences which follow from them. A further comparison of Duméry's philosophical approach with a dehellenized philosophy of the human subject, in which phenomenology can be admitted but an innate dynamism of the spirit must be eschewed, will bring to light another philosophical approach now current which, for all its similarity to Duméry in aim and in approach, presents a radical challenge to Blondelian approach. These comparisons can be useful at a time when a great variety of options is beginning to present itself and a much greater systematic pluralism in theology than was dreamed of a decade ago seems possible.

I

DUMÉRY'S CONCEPTION OF PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

Major Influences: Blondel, Husserl, Sartre, Plotinus

Duméry began his impressive career as a writer in 1948 with the publication of *La philosophie de l'action*.⁷ This work, introduced by

⁷ Henry Duméry, *La philosophie de l'action: Essai sur l'intellectualisme blondélien* (Paris, 1948).

a preface by Blondel himself, quickly drew favorable attention to its young author. In the course of the following two decades it has been followed by several other works devoted to the philosophy of Blondel,⁸ and today, even though Duméry's interpretation of Blondel has by no means gone unchallenged,⁹ he is rightly considered one of the major figures in Blondelian exegesis. Blondel has not been the only influence in the formation of Duméry's own thought, since he is a man of wide-ranging erudition, a fact which has been remarked on by those who have addressed themselves to his philosophy, and which is apparent in both the texts and the notes of his volumes on the philosophy of religion. Among these influences a major place must be given to the phenomenology of Husserl, the existentialism of Sartre, and the metaphysics of Plotinus. These three streams of thought have been united by Duméry in the creation of a philosophy of the spirit which is distinctively his own. It is an original philosophical system in which a metaphysics of the human subject and its dynamic relation to an Absolute One becomes the basis on which a philosophy of religion can be constructed. Nevertheless, despite the presence of these diverse influences, the mark of Blondel's *Action* is clearly visible in the orientation and the development of the system, and in the philosophical preoccupations which have directed its evolution. The heart of Duméry's synthesis, which still remains incomplete,¹⁰ is a philosophy of religion whose purpose is to describe, criticize, and adjudicate the rational coherence and the affirmability of the expressions through which the intentionality of the act of faith is objectified on the various levels of human consciousness.

It is apparent therefore that, even though Duméry's own philosophy has been radically transformed by other influences, he is moved by the same concern which moved Blondel to compose the *Action* of 1893. Like Blondel, Duméry places modern man before the concrete fact of Catholic belief. He confronts his contemporary with the act through which the Catholic believer commits himself to Christ and the Church, and the expressions which correspond to it at the object pole of human con-

⁸ "Blondel et la philosophie contemporaine" in *Etudes blondéliennes*, fasc. 2 (Paris, 1952); *Blondel et la religion* (Paris, 1954); "Le cas Blondel" in *La tentation de faire du bien* (Paris, 1956); *Les grands courants de la pensée mondiale (Le modernisme; Maurice Blondel)* (Paris, 1963); *Raison et religion dans la philosophie de l'action* (Paris, 1963).

⁹ The controversy between Duméry and Henri Bouillard, another well-known interpreter of Blondel, is a celebrated one. For their difference of opinion concerning the significance of the option, see *Blondel and Christianity* and *Raison et religion dans la philosophie de l'action*.

¹⁰ In 1963 Duméry announced the publication of another volume, *Le sens de l'Absolu dans la philosophie de la religion*. It has not yet appeared.

sciousness. Like Blondel, Duméry endeavors to reflect on the relation of the concrete human subject to the supernatural act of faith without abandoning the method of strict philosophical reflection or compromising its legitimate autonomy; and, like Blondel, Duméry endeavors to ground both the reasonableness of the act of faith and its legitimacy as an object of philosophical consideration by showing its necessary place in the series of acts through which the intentionality of the human subject tends to bring him to authentic realization through his response to the objects and other subjects of his world.

Blondel: The Dialectic of Action and the Option

Duméry's basic conception of philosophy as a "second reflection" on a prior vital and concrete commitment is also an evolution of one of the possibilities of Blondelianism. The *Action* of 1893 was, in its own way, a phenomenology and a dialectic. Although at the time of its composition, Blondel was not familiar with the philosophy of Hegel, he was aware of the metaphysical possibilities of a dialectic of the spirit through his reading of Fichte and Schelling.¹¹ As Blondel conceived it, a reflection on the concrete movement of the will begins on the purely phenomenal level. In its course it elucidates the implicit movement of the will, which is operative in every concrete choice, and which forces it to move ceaselessly beyond the concrete, limited object which is its explicit term. A dialectic of dissatisfaction, in which the will assumes the object of each choice into a drive which goes beyond it, reveals that these concrete objects of its choices are unequal to the content of the will which moves toward them and through them. In doing so, this dialectic shows that, in the concrete act in which the will has chosen them, it has simultaneously, though implicitly, chosen "more" than them. In fact, it would be more accurate to say that the will can choose these concrete objects precisely because it has simultaneously chosen more than them. The "more" contained in every act of willing is brought to awareness through the ascending levels of adequation which reveal themselves in the course of Blondel's reflection on the connected orders of objects "co-chosen" with the object of every explicit choice. Beginning at the basic level in which its object of choice is taken to be no more than the simplest sensible phenomenon, Blondel brings to light, through a dialectical logic of necessary implication, the ascending levels of values which are simultaneously and implicitly contained in the intentionality of the initial act of choice: sensation, science, con-

¹¹ For a definitive study of the sources of the 1893 *Action*, see John J. McNeill, S. J., *The Blondelian Synthesis: A Study of the Influence of German Philosophical Sources on the Formation of Blondel's Method and Thought* (Leiden, 1966).

sciousness, freedom, society, metaphysics, the idea of God, religious expectancy, the supernatural. In its motion through these levels the logic of action makes explicit in their necessary connection the series of means through which the will proceeds towards its union with the term which alone is seen to be adequate to the exigencies of its implicit choice. Yet since man is free, intellectual perception of the ordered series of ends and the final term is not enough to enable human action to reach its goal. The order of ends and its final term must be freely ratified in the option through which man chooses to submit to them in his practical living and, in choosing to do so, to realize in the order of actuality the true meaning of his life. In this dialectic of ideally connected ends, God, the Uniquely Necessary Being, is reached as the final term of man's implicit choice, in and through whom every other object is implicitly chosen, and without whom the dynamism of the will cannot be satisfied. Furthermore, with the emergence of God as the Uniquely Necessary Being there emerges also the hypothesis of divine revelation and God's free constitution of a supernatural order. Consequently, in the option through which man freely ratifies and actualizes the logic of action the hypothesis of a supernatural order is also ratified. Only faith and revelation can tell man whether this hypothesis has been verified in fact, but the logic of action, which is the proper province of the philosopher, brings man to the option through which he not only accepts the reasonableness of the supernatural but also chooses to adopt the dispositions which are required for its acceptance. In the tradition of Augustine and Bonaventure, the science of action exacts of its practitioner more than intellectual reflection. Involving as it does the totality of the human spirit, it demands a moral conversion as well.^{11a}

Their Transformation in Duméry's Philosophy

Although these major elements of Blondel's dialectic of action have been incorporated into Duméry's conception of philosophy as "a second reflection on reflection in act, a methodical, systematic control of a 'self-control' immanent in our spontaneous actions,"¹² they have undergone radical transformation. Blondel's logic of action, a chain of ideal ends linked in logical necessity, was a "retrospection" explicitly

^{11a} *Le problème de Dieu en philosophie de religion* (Paris, 1957) pp. 69-73. This is the only book of Duméry to be translated into English: *The Problem of God in Philosophy of Religion* (Evanston, 1964). It is interesting to note that Duméry has edited an edition of Bonaventure's *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* (Paris, 1960).

¹² *Critique et religion* (Paris, 1957) p. 24.

revealing the intelligibility implicitly present in the concrete action of the intellect and will. Concrete human choices possessed their intelligibility prior to retrospective reflection, and the free action of the concrete person grounded both the option on which his destiny depended and the commitment of the act of faith through which the existence of the supernatural order was affirmed. Though the realm of rigorous philosophical necessity could exhibit the reasonableness of the act of faith, it remained always a second reflection upon the intelligibility of a commitment to the real performed in concrete action. In this sense Blondel was justified in saying that truth was conformity, not between the intellect and things, but rather between the intellect and life.¹³ This distinction between a logically rigorous philosophical reflection and the prereflexive intelligibility immanent in concrete vital choices, which alone commit the human subject to reality, is essential to the understanding of Duméry's conception of philosophy and of its relation to the act of faith. Combined with a theory of the constitution of essences and human values inspired by Husserl and Sartre, this distinction is an operative element in a philosophy of man and God and a philosophy of revelation which Blondel himself would find difficult to accept. Still, we cannot deny that it is one avenue of Blondelian development. Similarly, in Duméry's philosophy the conversion of the human spirit demanded by the dialectic of human action becomes a Plotinian purification leading to a return to the One.¹⁴ Here too, although Blondel would find difficulty in accepting Duméry's development of his thought, we can see a genuine connection with the philosophy of action, for in both philosophies we are dealing with a purification of the spirit which is required for the immanent intentionality of human freedom to reach its term. A diverse understanding of the intelligibility of the prereflexive commitment immanent in our spontaneous actions is the key to the diversity of the philosophies of Blondel and Duméry and to the transformations in the elements of the Blondelian synthesis taken over by the latter. Once we understand how Duméry has come to understand the intentionality of prereflexive action we can understand the connection of his philosophy with the philosophy of action, and we can also see how it can use phenomenological intentionality in a way which would not be legitimate in a philosophy in which phenomenology was not united to a metaphysics grounded in the dynamism of the human spirit.

¹³ Maurice Blondel, *Carnets intimes* (Paris, 1961) p. 86; *Critique et religion*, pp. 75-78.

¹⁴ The conversion to the One is the heart of the reductive process in Duméry's work on theodicy, *Le problème de Dieu*.

Philosophy of Religion: Phenomenology and Metaphysics

In *Critique et religion*¹⁵ Duméry sets down what he considers philosophy of religion to be. It is the rational critique of positive religion. The act of faith itself, through which the subject commits himself to the reality of the order of religious objects, eludes its grasp, since, as a free, constituting initiative distinct from its objects, this act is not itself an object of reflex consciousness. Consequently, in the exercise of his second reflection, the philosopher neither considers it directly nor does he make it.¹⁶ His area of competence is restricted to the expressions which correspond to it at the object pole of consciousness. These the philosopher can criticize. It is legitimate for him to examine their rationality and coherence and pass on their affirmability in the light of their relation to each other and to the intentionality of the religious act from which they proceed as its objective mediations. Then, upon the completion of his task, he must simply remit to the concrete human subject the responsibility of placing or refusing the act of faith itself.¹⁷

Since philosophy of religion is a critique of the objective expression of concrete religious acts in the light of their intentionality, the religions which it studies must be the concrete religions which actually exist or have existed (in Duméry's philosophy of religion its object is the Catholic faith).¹⁸ The God with whom it concerns itself is the term of real worship, the concrete God actually adored in historical religious acts. He is not the abstract God of the philosophers.¹⁹ Certain consequences concerning its method follow immediately. If philosophy of religion is concerned with the objective expressions corresponding to the intentionality of a religious act, its method cannot confine itself to a positivistic explanation of religion in terms of the relations between pure, objective phenomena.²⁰ Neither should it follow the Scholastic method of confrontation, in which the philosopher confines his attention to an order of already constituted objects corresponding to the intentionality of natural reason, the theologian considers another order of constituted objects which are the intentional correlates of the act of faith, while the Christian philosopher endeavors to indicate the harmony between these two orders of objects.²¹ Kant was correct. as

¹⁵ Following the logical order, *Critique et religion* is the first in Duméry's series of books on philosophy of religion, all of which came out in 1957, with the exception of *Foi et institution*. *Critique et religion* describes and justifies the method to be followed in the subsequent volumes.

¹⁶ *Critique et religion*, pp. 15, 189-93. ¹⁷ *Critique et religion*, pp. 16-17, 220-28.

¹⁸ *Critique et religion*, pp. 32-43, 275-84.

¹⁹ *Critique et religion*, pp. 229-30; *Problème de Dieu*, pp. 11-47.

²⁰ *Critique et religion*, pp. 46-81. ²¹ *Critique et religion*, pp. 82-112.

Blondel clearly saw, in refusing the extrinsicism of the Scholastic method and in insisting that no object, even a religious one, can become an object of affirmation unless it corresponds in some way to the a priori of the affirming mind. Nevertheless, he too failed to understand the nature of the philosophy of religion when he confined it to the justification of a religion within the limits of pure reason, the validity of whose affirmations was grounded in its formal a priori. Religion is a positive reality. In it God has been the term of concrete acts of worship whose intentionality has been objectivized in the determined tenets, rites, and pieties of the historical religions.²² A phenomenology of concrete religions, therefore, is an essential element of a genuine philosophy of religion. Still, the philosopher of religion cannot be content simply to describe. He must adjudicate, and adjudication is possible only in terms of a metaphysics of man and God. The method to be followed by the philosopher, therefore, is the method of comprehension, in which the historical expressions of man's religious intentionality are described and located on their proper noetic levels and then adjudicated in the light of a definite metaphysics.²³

Duméry's philosophy of religion is an effort to meet the requirements of the method of comprehension in regard to both phenomenology and metaphysics. *Le problème de Dieu*,^{23a} a study of the category of the Absolute and the scheme of transcendence, employs the form of a phenomenological reduction and carries it on into a metaphysics of God. The first volume of *Philosophie de la religion* has two sections. The first devotes itself to a study of the category of the subject and the scheme of the soul, uniting the phenomenology of religion to a metaphysics of the human subject, in what Duméry calls his critical anthropology. The second section, devoted to the category of grace and to the scheme of the supernatural, is a phenomenological study of the origin of a notion. The second volume of *Philosophie de la religion* (and *La foi n'est pas un cri*, which covers part of the same ground more extensively)^{23b} is what could be called an axiological phenomenology. Taking as its theme the category of faith and its corresponding schemes, it critically examines the doctrinal expressions of Christian-

²² *Critique et religion*, pp. 113-34.

²³ *Critique et religion*, pp. 161-77, 178-220, esp. 203-5.

^{23a} *Problème de Dieu*, pp. 48-61 (*The Problem of God*, pp. 39-52). For Duméry's understanding of the reductions, see also *Critique et religion*, pp. 136-61.

^{23b} *Philosophie de la religion* (2 vols.; Paris, 1957); *La foi n'est pas un cri* (Paris, 1957). A second emended edition of the latter work, followed by a volume devoted to answering the attacks of Duméry's critics, was published two years later under the title *La foi n'est pas un cri, suivi de foi et institution* (Paris, 1959). For an outline of Duméry's program, see *Critique et religion*, pp. 221-28.

ity on the various levels of consciousness to determine the reasonableness of their affirmation.

Philosophy Criticizes Faith's Objective Expressions

Duméry, as we have seen, considers that man's commitment to the reality of the object of faith is made in the act of faith itself. Furthermore, we have already seen that through his transformation of Blondel's prospection he has made the act of faith a prereflexive act, which proceeds from man's vital spirituality and whose free position as such transcends the range of a philosophical second reflection, which must confine itself to faith's objective expressions. This distinction enables him to give philosophy of religion the right to pass critical judgment upon all of faith's objective expressions, and still claim that he is neither encroaching upon the autonomy of the act of faith nor endangering its freedom. This is, of course, a revolutionary position, and it has been vigorously challenged by the theologians who took issue with Duméry in the controversy prior to the condemnation of his books by the Holy Office in 1958.²⁴ Yet, it is a consistent one, if Duméry's reading of the intentionality of the act of faith is right.

II

DUMÉRY'S METAPHYSICS OF GOD AND MAN

Husserl's Reductions and the Transcendental Ego

The justification of that reading is presented in Duméry's philosophical anthropology and in his theodicy.²⁵ Duméry adopts for his own purposes Husserl's triple reduction, through which the *eide*, or the essences, of the data given in consciousness manifest themselves (the eidetic reduction), the objects of consciousness are reduced through the phenomenological *epoche* to the status of *cogitata*, objective correlates, of a *cogito* (the phenomenological reduction) which (at least in Eugen Fink's interpretation of Husserl which Duméry follows) reveals itself as an a priori source of meaning, a transcendental ego or produc-

²⁴ For a selected list of the more important articles written during the controversy, see René Virgoulay, "Foi et critique: La philosophie de la religion et la théologie," *Recherches de science religieuse* 54 (1966) 497-529, and Henk van Luijk, S.J., *La philosophie du fait chrétien: L'Analyse critique du christianisme de Henry Duméry* (Paris, 1964). Van Luijk's masterly study of Duméry has not received the attention it deserves. It is the best available guide to his thought. For Duméry's reply to his critics, see *Foi et institution*. Duméry's books on philosophy of religion were placed on the Index by the Holy Office on June 21, 1958.

²⁵ *Le problème de Dieu*. See also *Philosophie de la religion* 1, 35-110, and *Critique et religion*, pp. 136-74.

tive subject actively conferring through its intentionality their sense or meaning on the objects of its world (the transcendental reduction).

Duméry's use of the triple reduction enables him to incorporate into his philosophy Husserl's distinction between the psychological subject, whose natural attitude to the world characterizes a consciousness which has not been clarified through the use of the reductions, and the intellectual subject, whose critical attitude toward the world results from their employment. The former views himself as a living, sensing, thinking thing, a member of the world. The latter realizes that the subject, a pure intellectual source of meaning, can only be a transcendental ego, an a priori source who gives meaning to the world and thus cannot be a member of it. The consequences of this distinction are significant. A metaphysics of man based on the natural attitude of consciousness in which he appears as one thing among the many which make up the world loses its validity. The compositions of substance and accident, soul and body, soul and faculties, which characterized the Scholastic metaphysics of man, must give place to a radical functionalism, which alone is compatible with the critical awareness of the intellectual subject that he is a transcendental ego who constitutes the meaning of the objects of the world, including his own body.²⁶

The Henological Reduction: God, the Absolute One

Husserl's three reductions, Duméry believes, must be complemented by a fourth, the henological reduction, if the intentionality of the human subject is to be fully disclosed. In *Le problème de Dieu* Duméry addresses himself to the question whether the idea of God encountered in historical religions can survive the test imposed by the reductive process.²⁷ His answer is that it can. Human consciousness, as it reveals itself in the phenomenological reductions, is an intentionality whose source is unity, and which tends toward unity through its objective expressions in the world. To halt the process of reduction at the transcendental ego is to stop short before the process of explication has reached its term. The first three reductions have shown that our individual consciousness is a tendency to unify our knowledge. Continued reflection makes it evident that consciousness is a tendency toward a unity greater than that of the transcendental ego, whose necessary relation to the world infects it with an inevitable duality. Furthermore, our experience of intersubjectivity reveals that there is a community of transcendental egos. The intersubjective world which they constitute must have a single superpersonal source from which, as ground of

²⁶ *Philosophie de religion* 1, 35-38, 44-49, 91-100.

²⁷ *Problème de Dieu*, pp. 21-25, 48-51 (*The Problem of God*, pp. 12-25, 39-52).

the intelligible unity which pervades it, it must proceed. In intersubjective human consciousness, therefore, we discover the presence of the superpersonal One from which it proceeds and toward which it tends. This discovery is the henological reduction, at whose term we find the Absolute, the pure form in which the idea of God has survived the process of reduction.²⁸

The Dynamism of the Spirit: Husserl and Plotinus

In the course of the henological reduction Duméry has moved from the level of phenomenology to the level of metaphysics, since the presence of the One reveals itself as the metaphysical ground of an intentionality which is a real tendency toward unity. Thus the metaphysics of the dynamism of the spirit is the bridge which unites in Duméry the philosophy of Husserl with the metaphysics of Plotinus. The One who reveals Himself at the term of the henological reduction is a real principle, God, from whom, as in Plotinus, the real world proceeds. A number of conclusions follow immediately. As in Plotinus, theodicy is apophatic. The One is above the predications which belong to the lower order of intelligence.²⁹ The One is not Being who grants to other beings a participation in the perfection which He is. The One is non-Being from whom proceed the beings which He is not.³⁰ In transcendental Thomism the dynamism of the spirit is the ground of a metaphysics of participation on which is built the analogy of being which governs the proper predication of the divine attributes. In Duméry the dynamism of the spirit is the ground of a metaphysics of procession which excludes the possibility of the analogy of being.³¹ The crucial point of divergency between the two metaphysics of the dynamism of the spirit is whether its term is *Ipsum Esse*, the Being of St. Thomas, or the Plotinian One.

²⁸ *Problème de Dieu*, pp. 138-42 (*The Problem of God*, pp. 127-31).

²⁹ "If God is distinct from the intelligible (or the transcendental), how can we avoid saying that he is in series with it? Does one not add items that are identical? Not here, because the terms are not of the same order. Addition is impossible and illegitimate because *God and the intelligible do not constitute two orders, but the absence of 'order' and the presence of an 'order.'* God can be only if he is transordinal" (*The Problem of God*, p. 84; *Problème de Dieu*, pp. 94-95). "When one holds simultaneously that *the intelligible has to make itself intelligible* and that it affirms God, not as something of its order but as that which permits the intelligible to pose itself as an order, where is the sin against interiority?" (*The Problem of God*, p. 92; *Problème de Dieu*, p. 102). "This is why intelligence itself, which implies redoubling and multiplicity, is transcended by the One" (*The Problem of God*, p. 112; *Problème de Dieu*, p. 122).

³⁰ *Problème de Dieu*, pp. 98-99 (*The Problem of God*, pp. 88-89).

³¹ *Problème de Dieu*, pp. 98-99 (*The Problem of God*, pp. 88-89); *Foi et institution*, pp. 309-22.

Liberty and the Act-Law: Plotinus and Sartre

The diversity between the two philosophies becomes even sharper in Duméry's account of the procession of the intellectual subject from the One. At this point Duméry, in a most original way, unites the metaphysics of Plotinus with the existentialism of Sartre and Polin.³² He accepts as valid Sartre's thesis that human liberty would not be authentic and creative if it were no more than a liberty to conform to a world of already constituted essences and values. Human liberty, existence, by its fundamental project, must create its world of essences and values, and, by doing so, create itself. From Plotinus Duméry accepts the thesis that the intelligible world of ideas and values proceeds immediately from the One, and that this intelligible world, as their abiding norm, governs the lower levels of reality. Then he combines this Plotinian thesis with Sartre's concept of existence as the liberty which creates itself through its free constitution of its world of essences and values. The result is a conception of the human subject as act-law, an intelligible act which, proceeding from the One, constitutes itself a person in its own creative choice of the ideas and values in which its intentionality objectifies itself and which govern as their abiding regulative norms the objectifications of its intentionality on the lower noetic levels. The One, therefore, is a dynamic source through whose presence the human subject derives the energy to place the act of self-position which constitutes him as a person. The immediate metaphysical conclusion is that the world of ideas and values is not located in a Second Hypostasis, or Nous, as in Plotinus, nor in the divine intellect as in the Augustinian and Thomistic development of the Platonic tradition. It is found rather in the individual intellectual subjects, each one of whom places himself as an act-law by creating his individual world of ideas and values, and thus choosing himself, as the unique intentional relation to the Absolute which he is. Thus the act of self-position, the choice of self, and not the world of the divine ideas, becomes, we may say, the norm of ontological truth. Though the identical One is present in every consciousness as the source of the energy through which it places itself, each individual's world of ideas and values will vary, since it is the result of the unique act of self-position whose perduring intentionality is the dynamic ground of human personality. *Quot personae, tot mundi intelligibiles*.³³ Neither through an Augustinian metaphysics of truth present in the soul nor through a Thomistic understanding of revelation can we hope to gain a participation in God's

³² *Critique et religion*, p. 53. For Duméry's appreciation of Sartre, see "La question Sartre," in *Foi et interrogation* (Paris, 1953) pp. 75-126.

³³ *Philosophie de religion* 1, 50-90, esp. 55-56.

ideal knowledge. The One has no ideal knowledge, and revelation can be no more than the word which the human subject speaks to himself through the energy given to him by the One. The Absolute is not an Absolute of dialogue.³⁴

The Lower Levels of Consciousness: Categories and Schemes

Although the human subject, the *ego cogito*, constitutes himself on the intelligible level by his fundamental choice of ideas and values, he must give expression to them through concepts on the rational level and through sensible representations on the sensible level; for after all it is through the mediation of his body that the human subject is present to the world. Consequently, the Plotinian descending levels of intelligibility—ideas, concepts, sensible representations—must be translated into a hierarchy of noetic levels in the human consciousness through which the subject's fundamental intentionality can give itself objective expression. To achieve this objective expression, the fundamental project of human consciousness must make use of categories and schemes. The categories form the bond between the intelligible and the rational levels of consciousness, and enable the a priori of evaluation, resulting from the subject's fundamental choice, to express itself in the judgment through the rational determination of the concept. The schemes are the bond between the rational and the sensible levels of consciousness. From the rational level they derive their capacity to structure sensible images, and from the sensible level they derive their capacity to relate things to concepts or, in other words, to give concepts an objective signification. Thus they manifest the necessary role which imagination must play in every act of knowledge by uniting the understanding to sensibility. Although the Kantian origin of Duméry's schemes and categories is obvious, it is also clear that they have been adapted to meet the needs of his functional metaphysics of man. Duméry's schemes and categories are no longer a fixed number of formal a prioris identified with pure reason as such. Rather they are functions of the *cogito*. They are ways in which the act-law expresses its intentionality through its presence on the lower levels of consciousness. A category is a definite manner in which the *cogito* is present in a determined intention on the conceptual level. A scheme is a determined way in which the *cogito* is present in one of its concrete perceptions on the

³⁴ "In short, the theologian is using a convenient formula when he says that revelation is the word of God. The philosopher, however, corrects that anthropomorphism, since he knows that God does not speak in a human manner. The philosopher says simply that revelation is God present to the spirit which gives expression to that presence in words" (*Critique et religion*, p. 114). For Duméry's rejection of an "Absolute of Dialogue" in favor of an "Absolute of Exigence," see *Problème de Dieu*, pp. 129-37 (*The Problem of God*, pp. 118-26). See also *Foi et institution*, pp. 214-38.

sensible level. Since schemes and categories are functions of the act-law in its constitution of consciousness, the distinction between them is actual. Although their number and type are not fixed, as they are in Kant's philosophy, categories and schemes are nonetheless indispensable elements of consciousness, since an act-law which is also a being in the world must express itself through conceptual judgments and imaginative representations. Nevertheless, the categories and schemes of consciousness are subject to the laws of history; for, as we shall see, although the *cogito* as act-law has constituted itself a person by choosing a fundamental project which transcends time and is eternal, its expression of itself through categories and schemes on the level of the judgment is the motion which constitutes temporal and historical consciousness.³⁵

Consequently, Duméry will not look for a metaphysical safeguard against historicism and relativism in a fixed a priori of schemes and categories. He has found all that he needs, he believes, and the only safeguard against relativism which we can truly affirm in the fundamental intentionality of the act-law toward the eternal Absolute. The act-law, posing its world of ideas and values, objectifies its choice of a fundamental intentionality toward the One. The categories and schemes on the lower levels of consciousness can then be criticized by the philosopher who uses as his norm their adequacy and coherence as objective expressions of this fundamental intentionality. In a new and more radical sense, Duméry can employ Blondel's definition of truth: the adequacy of the intellect, not to things, but to life. It will guide him in his critique of the categories and schemes through which the formulations and imaginative representations of the Catholic faith have found expression during its history.³⁶

Eternity and Freedom: Attributes of the Act-Law

Time and freedom, the elements of history, are interpreted by Duméry in terms of the intentionality of the act-law expressing and incarnating itself through its objectivations on the lower noetic levels of human consciousness. As the summit of the spirit, whose abiding intentionality penetrates the movement of objectivation on the lower levels of consciousness, the act-law is the unifying unity whose influence prevents the flow of consciousness from degenerating into an evanescent becoming. Through the act-law the flow of consciousness receives an enduring significance and becomes the measured mobility which merits the name of time. The temporal mobility of consciousness has a double source: the body, through which it is open to the world

³⁵ *Critique et religion*, pp. 211-16; *Philosophie de religion* 1, 91-98.

³⁶ *Philosophie de religion* 1, 131-36.

of material process, and a higher source which is the ground of the invariant sense, expressed in the judgment, which gives to it its single irreversible direction. This higher source must be the act-law, since the source of the invariant sense, which constitutes time on the rational level, must be located on the higher intelligible level. Thus, in the experience of temporality, the act-law reveals itself as the intelligible ground of time, and since it transcends time as its higher source and ground, it manifests itself to be eternal. Time and eternity thus reveal themselves together in human consciousness.³⁷ And for Duméry, eternity shows itself to be an attribute, not of the One, but of the transcendental ego, the act-law.

Freedom too is an attribute of the act-law. It is not an attribute of the psychological subject, who manifests himself on the lower noetic levels, and so can be mistaken for the authentic human subject by the nonscientific thinker, whose natural attitude has not been corrected by the Husserlian reductions. The lower noetic levels, the rational and the sensible, as Kant and many phenomenologists have clearly seen, are orders whose temporal succession is subject to strict determinism. Within these lower orders there are no gaps into which freedom can insert itself; for, in the very act of choosing itself, the eternal act-law has chosen an order of objects. As this order deploys itself in time, one event follows upon another with the strict logical necessity demanded by the process of temporalization through which a chosen intentionality gives sense and intelligible connection to the process of empirico-psychological consciousness.³⁸

The Eternal Act-Law and Temporal Freedom

Consequently, Duméry is convinced that the celebrated problem of reconciling the divine foreknowledge and omnipotence with the freedom of the human will is the result of the metaphysical mistakes of the Scholastic theologians. There is no order of possibles or divine ideas in God to terminate His knowledge and present itself to His free

³⁷ *Philosophie de religion* 1, 71-82. For Duméry, both cyclic and linear time are imaginative schemes neither of which should be hypostatized. "The truth of the matter is that, rather than being objective representations, the cycle and the line are simply schemes which we find ready at hand. The line has doubtless always belonged to the individual as the form of his personal memory. The cycle at first was the form of collective becoming, at least when it became possible to think about it on the cosmic scale" (p. 77).

³⁸ *Philosophie de religion* 1, 54-71. "On the contrary, as Kant saw, it is because everything is linked together phenomenally that noumenally everything is prescribed. Liberty provides itself with a phenomenon in which everything is bound together so that it can express itself coherently in that phenomenon without compromising itself or becoming the prisoner of the causal series which it institutes" (p. 85).

choice. The order of ideas is in the act-law, not in God, and it is grounded in the act of self-position which is the act-law's fundamental exercise of His creative liberty. The liberty of indifference in the human will which the Scholastic theologians endeavored to reconcile with the divine foreknowledge and omnipotence is seen to be an illusion once we understand how the act-law chooses itself by choosing an order of objects which on the rational and sensible levels of temporal consciousness is necessarily determined. Nor do we find, in a true metaphysics of freedom, any predetermination of our human history by a prior eternal knowledge and free choice. The eternal choice of the act-law is always actually present, dynamically choosing itself, *in* its objective expressions, since, as we have seen, in human consciousness time and eternity go together. "This is why we need not fear that an intelligible or noumenal liberty will force our historical choices or even make them in the place of the real subject. No pre-existing liberty precedes the process through which liberation brings itself into being."³⁹ The before and after of temporal consciousness are validly applicable only within the orders in which the act-law, as psyche, exercises the function of structuring the lower levels of consciousness. Unsatisfying though it may be for the imagination, if we would avoid illusion, we can only say that, in accordance with the law of intelligible procession, which is intrinsic to its nature, the act-law can only place the eternal act of self-position which constitutes him as a person in and through the world of objects whose temporal deployment constitutes his personal history. Thus the individual events of his history as a psychological and temporal subject are penetrated by the intentionality of the eternal free choice which, on the intelligible level, makes the act-law the intentional relation to the One which, as a unique person, he is. Furthermore, since, as we have just seen, according to the law of intelligible procession the fundamental intentionality of the act-law must penetrate the individual events in which it is objectified, these events, as essential elements, also enter into the eternal act through which that intentionality is placed.⁴⁰

III

DUMÉRY'S PHILOSOPHICAL CRITIQUE OF FAITH

The Projective Intentionality of Religious Consciousness

Once Duméry has established the relations between the One and the act-law and between the act-law and the lower levels of conscious-

³⁹ *Philosophie de religion* 1, 85.

⁴⁰ Duméry uses this mutual relation, grounded on the law of intelligible procession, as his proof for personal immortality; see *Philosophie de religion* 1, 84-89.

ness, he is in a position to undertake his axiological critique of the act of faith and of the categories and schemes which structure its expression on the lower levels of consciousness. As a second reflection on an act of faith, philosophy of religion must confine itself to a phenomenology of its expressions, their coherence on the diverse levels of noetic consciousness, and their affirmability as adequate expressions, according to the mechanisms of religious consciousness, of the fundamental intentionality which passes through them, as its objectivations, toward the One.⁴¹ In every human consciousness, no matter how primitive, there is a tendency toward the Absolute; for every act-law, in the eternal act through which it chooses its ideas and values, chooses itself as an *élan* toward the One. The eternally present One, therefore, is the term of the intentionality through which incarnate human consciousness gives significance to the facts and events which, through its body, it encounters in the world of process. For a fact to be a "human fact" it must receive its significance through the intentionality which has its ground in the eternal choice of ideas and values by the act-law, and ultimately in the presence of the One. In this limited sense Duméry can say that consciousness is projective.

Furthermore, since in the Plotinian tradition return to the One, who transcends both the intelligible world and the world of space and time, is an ascent of mystical liberation, the intentionality of that return is a movement toward salvation in a union with the One, which is also a liberation from the duality of the lower worlds. Therefore the drive toward liberation through return to the One, which is built into the very structure of man, is the ground of religion and of its soteriological character. That drive, individualized by the eternal act through which the act-law chooses his religious values, must, under the necessary laws of procession, find expression on all the levels of consciousness.⁴² The intentionality of human consciousness, returning to the One through the eternal religious values chosen by the act-law, operates on the lower levels of consciousness as hierophantic consciousness. The human subject whose uncritical self-awareness is confined to the temporal world of psychological consciousness is incapable of explicitly recognizing the religious intentionality of his prereflexive consciousness for what it is. Thus, primitive man projects upon exterior objects the quality of a special relation to God, of "being sacred," without becoming aware that in doing so he is simply exteriorizing his own in-

⁴¹ The critique of the category of faith and its schemes is the theme of the second volume of *Philosophie de religion*. It is also the topic of both editions of *La foi n'est pas un cri*.

⁴² *Philosophie de religion* 1, 1.

terior attitude toward the Absolute. Unacceptable as many of the primitive forms of religious expression may be, the intentionality of the attitude to which they gave expression was frequently quite pure. Their weakness lay, not in the eternal ground of their intentionality, the One and the act-law, but in the schemes of primitive consciousness through which religious categories received objective expression. Yet, categories and schemes are inevitable elements of any religious consciousness and are operative in the expression of any religion. Furthermore, a discursive consciousness must make full use of the schemes of the imagination, even of mythological schemes, if it is to give expression on all of its noetic levels to its religious intentionality toward the One. Categories and schemes can be understood, as the laws of their operation in consciousness are brought to explicit awareness. They can be purified and evaluated by the philosopher who uses as his norm their capacity to give expression to the intentionality of consciousness in the manner suited to their proper noetic level. But they can never be eliminated.⁴³

The Schemes and Categories of Christian Faith

Faith consists in linking of the spirit's intrinsic relation to God to a fact or series of facts. It is consequently an affirmation which becomes possible when this fact or series of facts grounds the schematization through which the ensemble of religious categories possessed by the subject can be applied to the sensible order, thus permitting his intentional relation to the One to receive objective expression.⁴⁴ Christian faith becomes possible when the historical facts of Jesus' life are given their significance through the intentionality of His disciples. They then become salvific facts, and, since they are historical facts, through their interpretation Christianity arises as a historical religion.

Modern man, therefore, encounters the Christian faith as a positive tradition in which the historical fact of Jesus and its fundamental interpretation, Jesus is God, have been constituted by the perduring intentionality of the community's religious consciousness, received expression on all its levels, and become incarnate in dogmas, rites, institutions, imaginative and affective piety. He thus finds himself in contact with a concrete religious experience which he can examine, criticize, and perhaps make his own, if he does not already share it. If

⁴³ *Philosophie de religion* 2, 114-29, 224-27.

⁴⁴ "Believing means placing upon a series of facts (the history of Jesus, in which the prophetic history of Israel comes to flower) the affirmation of an intrinsic relation of the spirit to God. . . . Liberty assumes the responsibility of adopting certain facts as the schemes of its intentions" (*Philosophie de religion* 2, 111).

he is to pass judgment on it as a philosopher, it will be his task to examine critically the rationality of attaching the human subject's salvific tendency toward the One to the positive historical fact of Jesus, and to determine whether its interpretation through the categories and schemes of the Catholic tradition are truly coherent ways in which religious consciousness can objectivize its drive toward the One in the form of the positive religion which is Catholic Christianity.

The Religious Experience of Jesus: His Fundamental Attitude

In that critical examination the philosopher of religion discovers at the base of Christianity the religious experience of Jesus which is the source of His revelation. Jesus' religious experience was rooted in His fundamental attitude, the relation to the One grounded in the eternal choice of religious values by His act-law, and given expression on the level of psychological consciousness, through the categories and schemes operative in the culture of His time, before issuing in the teaching of His words and works. The philosopher of religion, however, like the members of the Christian community, encounters the religious experience of Jesus only as interpreted by the Christians of the first generation. Thus we have in Christianity an interpretation of Jesus' religious attitude through the application to His words and works of the categories and schemes operative in the religious experience of the first generation of His disciples. His words and deeds could receive the sense which they possessed for the early Christians as manifestations of Jesus' religious attitude toward the Infinite Absolute only through the process in which His historical reality was subsumed under categories such as the Messiah and the Logos, and imaginative expression was given to their signification through schemes such as the Resurrection. The crucial moment for the origin of the Catholic faith was the experience of Pentecost. At that instant, in which the first disciples were able to give significance to the life of Jesus by affirming their interpretation of Him as the Messiah, they were able to project (in the six restricted senses which Duméry gives to this term) on the events of Jesus' life the schemes and categories of their religious experience, and, by doing so, to make the affirmation which is the act of faith.⁴⁵

The Category of the Messiah: Revelation of the Absolute

The philosopher of religion can judge the rationality of those categories and schemes by considering their adequacy to the attitude of

⁴⁵ The reasonableness of the categories and schemes through which the first disciples expressed their interpretation of Jesus is the theme of *La foi n'est pas un cri*.

Jesus, which they interpret, and their coherence with the laws of religious experience as they reveal themselves in critical anthropology. Any historical religion must express itself in the categories and schemes operative in a given culture. Christianity therefore will be no exception. Beginning with the experience of Jesus Himself, Christianity continues and deepens the purification and universalization of religion which had already been carried very far by Judaism. In Judaism religious experience had progressed from the hierophanies of naturalistic religions to the presence of God in concrete human history. Not only is Judaism a historical religion, it is a typological religion; for in Judaism men make history by following in their historical, moral action the example of great leaders, patriarchs, kings, and prophets, through whom the eternal is present in a special way in the temporal process. In Judaism, therefore, we see the expressions of religious experience become more adequate to man's fundamental intentionality, to his drive to unite himself to the Absolute through a human history whose temporality derives its sense from an eternal presence. There is an awareness that the history of the chosen people is a history of salvation, and that it is destined for the salvation of all men. Still, in Judaism religion has not yet reached its perfect expression, and so the religious and moral finalism which permeates its conception of history is essentially futuristic. It is not surprising, then, that in the period antecedent to the birth of Christ Judaism's understanding of its meaning as a historical, typological, and universal religion received its highest expression through the idea of the Messiah, the figure in whom the Absolute would achieve His most perfect presence, and reveal that presence in the words and works through which the history of Israel would receive its eternal and universal salutary significance.⁴⁶

The Category of the Logos: Presence by Identity of the Absolute

In Jesus, whom His disciples identified with this Messiah, we find an attitude toward the Absolute which manifests an awareness of the interior and universal presence of the Infinite in human consciousness so profound that no future religious revelation can improve upon the objectivization which His words and works have given to the fundamental intentionality of human consciousness. The act of faith which the apostles placed in Jesus, therefore, is reasonable. Jesus' revelation of the Absolute, undistorted by human weakness, darkened by no separation of His will from the divine will, is the pure revelation of the Infinite. Such a revelation requires in the consciousness of the revealer a presence of the Infinite so intimate that it can be nothing short of

⁴⁶ *La foi n'est pas un cri* (2nd ed.) pp. 34-70.

presence by identity. Jesus, the Messiah, must be the Infinite Presence revealing Himself, and such a Messiah must be divine. Consequently, His disciples' understanding of the religious experience of Jesus was given perfect expression by the author of the fourth Gospel when he subsumed the historical reality of Jesus under the category of the Logos; for in the religious consciousness of Hellenized Judaism the Logos is the category used to designate God in His active relation to His creation.⁴⁷

The Scheme of the Resurrection

Thus the experience of Pentecost in which the apostles realized that Jesus was the Messiah of Jewish religious tradition brought about, in the new and richer understanding of that idea which came to them from their reflection on Jesus' life and teaching, their simultaneous awareness of His divinity. Consequently, the apostles understood that, because of His identity with the Infinite, Jesus was immortal, and that, as the eternal source of salvation to those who returned to the Infinite by making His attitude their own, He was also the eternal source of life to His disciples. On the rational level, Duméry believes, the idea of glorification gives expression to this realization of the apostles that death can have no hold upon those who are united to the Infinite. In order for its significance to receive expression on the sensible level of consciousness, however, imaginative schemes must come into play, such as the Jewish scheme of the resurrection of the body and the scheme of the particular and general judgments, which are penetrated by the temporality suited to this level of consciousness.⁴⁸

Categories and Schemes of Pauline Soteriology

The fuller significance of the attitude of a man which demands that He be recognized as the Messiah, although His history includes His violent death, was given expression by St. Paul in his soteriology. Paul employs not only ideas but schemes which lead to expressions on all the noetic levels of consciousness: on the psychological, through an awareness of sin and culpability; on the mythological, through the use of the sin of Adam at the ultimate beginning of time (the *illud tempus* of mythological consciousness); on the institutional, through the ritual of the Eucharist; and, of course, on the historical, through which all these expressions of the significance of Christ are constantly referred to His concrete existence.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ *La foi n'est pas un cri* (2nd ed.) pp. 90-106; *Philosophie de religion* 2, 98-105.

⁴⁸ *Philosophie de religion* 2, 87-96; *La foi n'est pas un cri* (2nd ed.) pp. 79-89.

⁴⁹ *La foi n'est pas un cri* (2nd ed.) pp. 95-100; *Philosophie de religion* 2, 185-201.

Thus the philosopher, at the conclusion of his phenomenological and metaphysical adjudication of the objective expressions of the act of faith, is satisfied that they are reasonable. His metaphysics of God and of man has enabled him to understand the function of categories and schemes in a projective consciousness which can return to the One only by giving meaning to the facts of a historical and sensible world. The relation of the One, through the act-law, to the world of time grounds the reasonableness of adopting the categories and schemes of a historical religion as intentional determinants of the spirit's movement of purifying return to the Absolute in whose successful completion man's salvation consists. The facts of Jesus' life are the expression of a religious attitude which could have been freely chosen only by an act-law in whom the presence of the Absolute was a presence by identity. The categories and schemes through which Jesus' disciples objectified the significance of Jesus' attitude are coherent. They are consistent with the laws which govern the expression of the act-law's intentionality on the various levels of consciousness. Each of them, on its proper level, is an adequate expression of the sense of Jesus' fundamental attitude toward the Absolute. Consequently, the philosopher of religion can only judge that the act of faith is indeed a reasonable act for a man to place. With that conclusion his task is finished, since it belongs to the vital prereflexive act of faith itself to make the existential commitment of actual belief.

IV

CRITIQUE OF DUMÉRY'S PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

Central Place of the Dynamism of the Spirit

From this rapid and incomplete account of Duméry's philosophy of religion it is clear that his account of the dynamism of the spirit is the key to his whole system. From Blondel Duméry took over the notion of a retrospective philosophy which would be a rigorous and logical reflection on the dynamism of spontaneous human action. This dynamism, under the influence of Husserl and Sartre, he identified with the intelligence and freedom of prereflexive consciousness.⁵⁰ Philosophy then becomes a rigorous reflection on a prior intelligence and freedom which alone can commit man, as Blondel's option did, to reality. It is in this prereflexive act, under the influence of grace, that the act of

⁵⁰ Duméry's use of Husserl, like his use of Blondel, is original. The use which he makes of the reductive process is quite different from the use which Husserl made of it. The henological reduction through which he makes his passage to a metaphysics of the One would be unacceptable to Husserl.

faith takes place. Under the influence of Husserl, Duméry also identifies the dynamic spirit of Blondel with the act of intellectual consciousness which constitutes the signification of the objective world. From this identification comes his functional anthropology with all the consequences which his reduction of the soul and its faculties to the functional presence of the act-law, as psyche, in the objectivations of the lower levels of consciousness entails for the theology of grace, eschatology, and the hypostatic union. It is the further identification of the dynamism of consciousness with the unifying function of consciousness discovered in the reductions which led to his identification of the Absolute with the One of Plotinus. Furthermore, his conviction that the dynamism of the human spirit must be the dynamism of a freedom which creates its ideas and values led to the peculiar form given to the Plotinian intelligible world in the act-law, the form which human consciousness takes on the intellectual level. The dynamic intentionality of the act-law, tending toward the One through its objectivation by means of categories and schemes on the lower levels of human consciousness, provides Duméry's norm for the interpretation of the objectivations of religious consciousness, and enables him to argue that a religious intentionality, even in its mythological schematicisms, is a tendency toward the real. The relation between the One and the act-law is the ground of Duméry's philosophy of revelation. God present in the intellect is the transcendent presence which enables the intellect to speak that presence through the categories and schemes by whose functioning the religious values chosen by the act-law find expression. It is the reason why the Absolute can never be an Absolute of dialogue and why metaphysics can never be a metaphysics of participation on which an analogy of being can be built. Finally, it makes possible the development of Duméry's philosophy of revelation in his account of the reasonableness of the interpretation of the fact of Jesus by the Christian community. In *Critique et religion* Duméry was quite explicit in his statement of the fundamental role of metaphysics in his system. Now we see that it is a metaphysics of the spirit which accounts not only for the procession of the world from the One but for a return to the One by following the dynamism of the human spirit in a process of purification which, even if in the hands of a philosopher it employs the name reduction, remains the intellectual and moral discipline which in the Plotinian tradition is called conversion.⁵¹

⁵¹ "Reduction is neither mechanical reasoning nor triumphant intuition; at its summit, it is the simultaneous discovery that the multiple is dependent and that the One is present" (*The Problem of God*, p. 128; *Problème de Dieu*, p. 139).

Creation of Values and Knowledge of God

Nevertheless, the dynamism of the spirit as interpreted by Duméry has presented problems to more conservative philosophers and theologians. Is the dynamism of the human spirit the dynamism of the act-law through which it becomes the creator of ideas and values? Even Maréchal theologians, whose background made them sympathetic to the dynamism of the spirit, found this position of Duméry completely unacceptable. Léopold Malevez took issue with him on this point.⁵² Is not the dynamism of the spirit which expresses itself in the judgment a tendency to commit oneself to being, and are we not truer to human experience when we speak of it with Aimé Forest as a consent to being than when we speak of it as a creation of values in the Sartrean sense? This is clearly the reading of the dynamism of the intellect in Maréchal; and it is also the reading of the dynamism of the will by Rahner.⁵³ The situationalists may be right in their insistence that there is more to freedom than our conforming to universal norms, but there are norms which are objective. We are back here at the old problem of the intentionality of the judgment, and today it is an active one. Duméry's theory of the creation of values by the act-law indicates how extensive are the consequences of the position which the philosopher or the theologian adopts toward it.

The intentionality of the judgment also enters into the discussion between Duméry and his critics over the relation of God to the human spirit. For Duméry God is the One and the world of ideas and values varies with the eternal free choice of each act-law. There can be no metaphysics of participation based on being, for God is not in any way the being which we are. He is the non-Being which we are not. In our discourse about God the ground of the attributes which we affirm of Him is simply the dynamism of our consciousness toward the One, and we know that in His absolute simplicity the One excludes the duality of a subject of whom attributes can be predicated by identity. Although Duméry softened his exclusion of the analogy of being in response to the difficulties brought against his position by his critics and claimed that his position can be reconciled with the analogy of St. Thomas, if not the analogy of Suarez,⁵⁴ his critics remain unsatisfied. Malevez is insistent on an interpretation of the analogy much closer to the

⁵² Léopold Malevez, S.J., *Transcendence de Dieu et création des valeurs* (Louvain, 1958) pp. 136-37. For Duméry's reply see *Foi et institution*, pp. 211-12.

⁵³ "Bemerkung über das Naturgesetz und seine Erkennbarkeit," *Orientierung* 19 (1955) 239-43.

⁵⁴ *Foi et institution*, pp. 210-322.

Maréchalian understanding of it than Duméry would be willing to admit.⁵⁵

This difference is a crucial one between Duméry and the Maréchalians. Both Lonergan and Rahner have built a metaphysics on the dynamism of the discursive intellect. For both of them insight into the phantasm and the affirmation of being in the judgment are essential for the construction of a metaphysics of analogy which will account for the possibility of revelation and make possible scientific discourse about God.⁵⁶ Neither of these theologians would be willing to admit that either the henology of Duméry or the choice of values which he attributes to the act-law is a valid interpretation of the dynamism of the spirit. Duméry in turn, committed as he is through the influence of Husserl and Sartre to the conception of consciousness as constitutive of meaning, could not accept the Maréchalian metaphysics of Lonergan and Rahner, which are based on an abstractive theory of knowledge. The consequences of the differences between the two systems for the theology of revelation are very great.

Sin and Grace

The act-law of Duméry has also been a cause of difficulty to theologians. For Duméry it is one function of consciousness, the function which it exercises on the intellectual level, as opposed to the other functions which consciousness performs on the lower levels of consciousness. Therefore, he does not see how his theory of the act-law endangers the unity of consciousness, as some of his critics have asserted. Nevertheless, despite Duméry's defense of his theory, it presents difficulties for the theology of sin and redemption.⁵⁷ The act-law is eternal and its fundamental intentionality arises from its eternal free choice of ideas and values. How then can it sin in time, and how can it be redeemed in time through a free conversion? Duméry, as we have seen, has shown in his account of the coexistence of eternity and time

⁵⁵ Malevez, *op. cit.*

⁵⁶ Rahner's *Spirit in the World* is built around the theme of insight into the phantasm as the ground of metaphysics. For the position of Bernard Lonergan, see *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas* (Notre Dame, 1967) and *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding* (New York, 1965).

⁵⁷ For an exposition of these difficulties, see the article by Georges Dejaifve, S.J., "La foi n'est pas un cri," *Nouvelle revue théologique* 80 (1958) 468-94. See also the article by Jean Mouroux, "La tentative de M. H. Duméry," *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 43 (1959) 95-102. For Duméry's reply to Mouroux, see *Foi et institution*, pp. 319-22. Mouroux's article is one of the most important of the critiques advanced against Duméry's philosophy of religion. A considerable part of *Foi et institution* is devoted to a reply to his objections.

that the act-law does not pre-exist before the arising of the temporality whose before and after comes into existence on the lower levels on which, as psyche, it exercises its function of structuring objectivations. He has also given an account of the coexistence of freedom and determinism through which liberty of indetermination is shown to be an illusion. Despite these explanations, which are logical enough, many theologians will be inclined to think that they are confronted here with a Platonism which is still wrestling with the difficulties of time and freedom which earlier Platonists, like Origen, were unable to resolve successfully in their theologies of sin, redemption, and eschatology. And even if they are not, they will be aware of the radical consequences which the philosophy of the act-law entails for theology.

We have already seen its consequences for the theology of the divine foreknowledge and free will. The consequences for the theology of grace are also very great. In the functional anthropology of Duméry, freedom is located on the level of the act-law, and the old conception of the soul as the form of the body and the subject of its faculties has been invalidated through the process of the reductions. If it is to be a coherent expression of the intentionality of the act of faith, the theology of the supernatural life, of grace, and of the virtues will have to be radically revised. The supernatural turns out to be an imaginative scheme through whose mediation the category of grace can express the reality that only a God who can share His spontaneity can assure the liberty and dignity of the spirit. Grace and supernature are accurate expressions of the truth that our return to the One can never be our own merit, since it must always be the result of His dynamic initiative.⁵⁸

Duméry and the Dehellenization of Theology

The North American philosophers whose names have been associated with the projected "dehellenization" of Catholic theology have much in common with Duméry.⁵⁹ Like Duméry, they are interested in the problem of the reasonableness of the act of faith for contemporary man. They are also aware of the role which culture plays in the expression of the intentionality of faith and of the essential role

⁵⁸ *Philosophie de religion* 1, 277-99.

⁵⁹ The most famous name in this group is Leslie Dewart. His *Future of Belief* (New York, 1966) was the occasion of a heated controversy. A number of the articles written in reaction to Dewart's thesis have been published in *The Future of Belief Debate* (New York, 1967). A less known but significant book is Richard C. Hinners, *Ideology and Analysis* (New York, 1966), to which Dewart refers in *The Future of Belief*, and in which the philosophical underpinnings of the dehellenist position are systematically worked out.

which a philosopher must play in judging the reasonableness of the conceptual forms through which the intentionality of faith is formulated. They also share Duméry's conviction that a critically justified metaphysics is an indispensable instrument in determining the adequacy of the categories through which the content of faith is structured and for the expression of the intentionality of the act of faith itself.⁶⁰ Like Duméry, they are convinced that modern philosophy, especially the work of the phenomenologists and existentialists, has rendered St. Thomas' anthropology obsolete. Knowledge is not the operation of a material-spiritual substance through which it effects its intentional "intussusception" of extramental reality. It is man's being present to himself, and knowledge, the establishment of intentional relations with another, is the act through which man becomes present to himself by differentiating himself from the totality of being. Consciousness, therefore, is not the act of a faculty, the operation of a self-contained substance. It is the process or function whereby the being of man emerges. There is no further place in philosophy for a theory of knowledge in which truth is defined as conformity of the judgment to reality, or for a theory of nature which would deprive the person of his creative freedom as the maker of meaning in a world in which essences no longer are predetermined by the necessary truth of the divine ideas.⁶¹ The advocates of dehellenization agree with Duméry that God cannot be called being, since He is the presence through whom man's intentionality has as its correlate the world of objects to which the name of being properly belongs.⁶² Consequently, they share Duméry's reserve toward the analogy of being—indeed, they are blunt in their rejection of it⁶³—and believe, as he does, that a radical revision of our understanding of the divine attributes is necessary.⁶⁴

The Essential Hellenism of Duméry's Philosophy

Yet their disagreement with Duméry is fundamental, and its ground is precisely their rejection of an intrinsic dynamism of the spirit. A

⁶⁰ *The Future of Belief*, pp. 1-10, 41-43, 49-50 (citations are made from the sixth impression, 1968).

⁶¹ *The Future of Belief*, pp. 78-96. For Bernard Lonergan's reply to Dewart's strictures on the correspondence theory of truth and the metaphysics of being, see *The Future of Belief Debate*, pp. 69-91.

⁶² *The Future of Belief*, pp. 152-84, esp. 175-77; *Ideology and Analysis*, pp. 27, 189-92, 264-67.

⁶³ "As a means of developing the Christian conception of God, the method of analogical predication is no longer useful" (*The Future of Belief*, p. 178).

⁶⁴ *The Future of Belief*, pp. 185-215. See also the article by Eugene Fontinell, "Reflections on Faith and Metaphysics," *Cross Currents* 16 (1966) 15-40.

natural dynamism of the spirit, they contend, is an essential element of the Hellenic metaphysics which is no longer compatible with modern experience, and its elimination is a major item in their program. There is no such dynamism.⁶⁵ Neither can being be called intrinsically and necessarily intelligible. Being is *de facto* intelligible, since *de facto* men do know beings, and that is all that modern man, in the light of his experience of the essential and existential contingency of every being, is justified in saying.⁶⁶ The Platonic *eros* and its correlate, the hierarchy of intelligibles, belong to a discredited Hellenic universe.

Consequently, Duméry's philosophy of religion is not radical enough to meet the requirements set down for the dehellenization of Christianity. Its God is the Plotinian One, and the intentionality of the human subject, even though it be creative of values, is still essentially the Platonic *eros* whose possibility depends on the dynamic presence of the unchanging Absolute. Even though Duméry has seen, in the light of modern phenomenology, that time should be properly understood as a function in the constitution of discursive consciousness rather than as the Aristotelian measure of motion, his notion of eternity is still Hellenic. His act-law is a changeless intelligible world of ideas and values whose eternal choice constitutes the meaning whose objective expression is structured on the lower levels of consciousness through categories which share in the fixity of the act-law itself. Thus, for a philosopher committed to dehellenization, Duméry's henology is not an acceptable solution to the problem of God, and the act-law, categories, and schemes which he has adapted from Plotinus and Kant are inseparable from the Hellenic metaphysics which reached its peak in Hegel. They have no place in a philosophy built upon contemporary experience, one of whose basic insights is that concepts, although necessary for its structure, are completely cultural products in no way determined by an a priori of the mind.⁶⁷

Duméry, they would say, does not go far enough. He cannot and still remain the Hellenist he is. His Hellenism, in their mind, would ac-

⁶⁵ Hinnens, *Ideology and Analysis*, pp. 119-126.

⁶⁶ "To be sure, reality will now be as a matter of fact intelligible. But its intelligibility will now be a matter of *fact*, not of necessity. Being is intelligible, but not *as such*. Things can be understood, and can be conceived as being, because if they in fact exist they will also have a history—and this history makes them relatable to mind. Essences therefore, what things are, are always created, whether created by another or self created (in the case of consciousness)" (*The Future of Belief*, p. 174). For a more detailed exposition of a "nonideological" philosophy which takes its stand on the "fact of objectivity" rather than on the "intrinsically intelligible being" which is the object of "speculative faith," see *Ideology and Analysis*, pp. 126-36.

⁶⁷ *The Future of Belief*, pp. 100-107, 162-63; *Ideology and Analysis*, p. 131.

count for the fact that, despite the revolutionary nature of a project which brought down on his head the wrath of the theologians and the condemnation of the Holy Office, he was still basically concerned with showing the reasonableness of the categories in which the first Christians objectivized their experience of Jesus. He is still, they would feel, looking for the best way in which a Greek mind can objectify an experience of the One. To them, consciousness, creating itself in history through the beings in which it discovers the nonobjective, and therefore invident, presence of the God who is non-Being, can never hope to find the best way of objectivizing its experience in culturally determined concepts. No set of conceptual expressions, be they those of the early Christians or those of contemporary theologians, can be completely adequate or definitive ones in which to objectify the intentionality of faith. All are inadequate, and a consciousness whose law it is to constantly intensify its experience of the nonobjective presence of God must constantly be engaged in the search for new formulae in which to objectify a constantly growing experience of Him.⁶⁸

It is to be regretted that in the past few years Duméry has not continued his series of works devoted to the philosophy of religion. A continued debate in which he could exchange his views with the Maréchalians and with the advocates of dehellenization would be most useful. It would enable us to judge more accurately whether the line of thought which has its origin in Blondel contains a variety of viable options, or whether dehellenization, by its attack on the dynamism of the spirit, will show that it is a blind alley. However, Duméry and the Maréchalians are not the only Catholic philosophers and theologians who are concerning themselves with the possibilities of the dynamism of the spirit. There are good prospects, therefore, that the debate will be continued, and it is urgent that it should be. Theology has profited immensely from its concentration on Scripture and on history during the past decade. It cannot afford, however, to neglect the radical questions concerning its foundations and formulations which are being pressed today by the philosophers in the fold.

⁶⁸ "It follows that the Christian tradition's continuity in truth does not reside in the absoluteness of the cultural form that it takes at any given time—even in that of its earliest or original cultural form—nor therefore in the concepts in which it is cast" (*The Future of Belief*, p. 114). "In this conception therefore the truth of Christianity is a historical, not an eternal one. Christianity has a contingent, factual, temporal truth, because contingency, factuality and temporality are the notes of God's historical presence and self-revelation to men" (*ibid.*, p. 121).