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Review

Reviewed Work(s): *Personal Faith: A Metaphysical Inquiry* by Carlos Cirne-Lima and G. Richard Dimler

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job available in anything close to an equal compass.

There is, to begin with, a knowledgeable sketch of the preconciliar situation that made Vatican II seem so unlikely, followed by a succinct review of the reform forces that opened the way for the progressive triumph, when it came. There is then an illuminating study of the respective geniuses and limitations of John XXIII and Paul VI—"accelerator and brake"—and their mutually interdependent contributions to the cause of *aggiornamento*. Against such a background, there is then a probing analysis of the conflict of interests between the Roman curia (chap. iv) and the majority of the bishops at the council (chap. v) and, finally, a summary balance sheet of the "Political Changes in the Light of the Council" (chap. vi).

Mr. Bull chooses three of the council's major "political repercussions" for special mention: (1) "a new system of authority within Catholicism," (2) "a new relevance in what the Church teaches to the total political situation in which Catholics live," (3) "a new alliance in the world with other Christian bodies, in broad . . . sympathy with . . . liberal humanism" (pp. 1-2). The consequences of the council will necessarily depend on the twin ventures of curial reform and administrative decentralization—both barely begun by the time of the council's adjournment. Curial reform "will be piecemeal and protracted" and will involve "the internationalization of personnel, at and near the top, and the liberalization of curial procedures and discipline" (p. 133). Decentralization will depend on how well the bishops are able to translate the doctrine of episcopal collegiality "at home" and how far the pope allows the new Senate of Bishops to become a global offset to *Romanità*.

Bull's principal conclusion is optimistic: "The reformers have achieved both of their main general purposes (1) of *shifting the balance of power inside the church* and (2) *changing the characteristic attitudes of the Church toward the outside world*" (p. 121; my italics). He is, therefore, quite confident that any simple restoration of the *status quo ante* is now impossible, "because a sufficiently intelligent, educated and aware proportion of Catholic priests and laymen have been stimulated by the proceedings and spirit of the

Council to begin seeking a new synthesis between their religious faith and their life in the world" (p. 154). This reminds the student of post-Vatican theology of the opening sentence of Leslie Dewart's *The Future of Belief*—an important book which undertakes just such a synthesis.

The chief fault in Bull's account lies in its neglect of the theological issues which are everywhere so deeply interwoven with the political that neither can be rightly understood alone. Another weakness is a tendency to ignore postconciliar developments *outside Europe*—with the effect of blurring the focus on the *global* revolution set in train by Vatican II. Even so, the over-all quality is very high indeed, and it will continue to be a valuable resource for all those interested in church renewal, in the mysteries of ecclesiastical politics, and in the ecumenical road ahead.

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Personal Faith: A Metaphysical Inquiry. By CARLOS CIRNE-LIMA. Translated by G. RICHARD DIMLER, S.J. New York: Herder & Herder, 1965. 206 pages.

For some time in Thomist circles a chiefly German-centered movement has been brewing which looks to the insights of phenomenology as potential clarification of traditional theological issues. English readers have had an opportunity to glimpse something of the novelty of the product of that concern in Bernard Lonergan's commentary on Emerich Coreth's *Metaphysik. Eine methodisch-systematische Grundlegung* (Innsbruck, 1961) in the article "Metaphysics as Horizon" (*Gregorianum*, XLIV [1963], 307-18), in the early report of Gerald A. McCool ("The Primacy of Intuition," *Thought*, XXXVII, No. 144 [1962], 57-73), and to a limited extent in the independent reworking of similar issues by Michael Novak in his *Belief and Unbelief. A Philosophy of Self-Knowledge* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1965). The movement was inspired by contentions regarding the personal character of faith in John Henry Newman's *A Grammar of Assent* and also acknowledges its dependence upon many of the interests

expressed in Max Scheler's *On the Eternal in Man*. More technically, this new orientation has been spawned by Joseph Marechal's criticisms of the registered theological implications of Immanuel Kant's first *Critique* (cf. the comments on *Le Thomisme devant la philosophie critique*, Vol. V of *Le point de départ de la métaphysique* [Paris, 1926]) and can itself be regarded as an extension of Marechal's distinction between the representation of knowledge and the fuller capacities of the intellectual act. The development of the orientation has depended largely upon the research of August Brunner (see his *Erkenntnistheorie* [Cologne, 1948] and *Glaube und Erkenntnis. Philosophisch-theologische Darlegung* [Munich, 1951]) and is both expressed and implied in the theoretical innovations upon which such an eminent Catholic theologian as Karl Rahner is building. Because of its integrative capacities as well as its sensitivity to a dominant current reflective temper, it may well be the orientation to which post-Vatican II theology will refer.

With this background, the appearance of the translation of Carlos Cirne-Lima's *Der Personale Glaube. Eine erkenntnistheoretische Studie* (originally published in Innsbruck in 1959) is perhaps more significant for what the book represents than for what it says. This is the first direct book-length illustration in English of the attempt to establish rapport between contemporary phenomenological approaches to human consciousness and traditional Scholastic epistemological theories. As such Cirne-Lima's book contains the theses for which the new orientation is known, that is, that personal knowledge is distinct from discursive knowledge and is prior to the concepts, judgments, and syllogisms which seek to explicate one or another of its aspects; that faith is a form of personal knowledge and, thus, is immediate, spontaneous (rather than representational), and totalistic in its grasp; that religious consciousness refers primarily to an intuitive level of knowledge which is both more dynamic and of greater depth than many accounts of cognition have allowed it to be; and that phenomenological discoveries provide a description of the distinction between pre-predicative assent to the presence of revelation and the assent given to the truths of revelation in the act of faith. Implied in these theses are: (a) a willingness on behalf of

Neo-Scholasticism to accept the Kantian strictures against the theological use of knowledge for what they are and, at the same time, an attempt to circumscribe the range of their rightful application; (b) a cultivation of a Husserlian corrective of Kant in referring constitution to consciousness and in separating *lebenswelt* from the world which is the product of reflection; and (c) a proposal regarding the solution of an "inside" problem of particular interest to Thomist epistemologists.

Cirne-Lima's book is divided into three parts. The first presents a phenomenology of interpersonal faith. The second discusses the metaphysical structure upon which the distinction between levels of knowledge in the first part is based. The final section provides a summary sketch of types of traditional Catholic understanding of faith, then indicates how the contentions of Parts I and II can clarify the problem which looms largest in the most acceptable option. The three parts are interwoven. Cirne-Lima contends that the question of the nature of interpersonal faith leads ineluctably to the metaphysical discussion about the nature of being. And the third section seeks to confirm the previous primarily phenomenological description of faith in terms of biblical and dogmatic precedents. The result is a clarification of traditional dogmatic formulations in the light of both phases of the phenomenological scrutiny.

The three levels of knowledge are conceptual thought, intuition, and personal knowledge as faith. The thesis is familiar to all who are aware of Karl Rahner's treatment of development of dogma, that is, that a system of thought is "merely a poorer, fainter and less certain expression" of that which has been previously grasped in a single intuition (p. 105). The priority in the cognitive situation is given to intuition (the immediate and conscious grasp of an object in its total concreteness). The intuition, which unites many relationships into a single whole, provides the basis for conceptualization. The latter occurs when analysis (or techniques of differentiation) is exercised over intuition, and implies an abstracting of determinate aspects from the prior total grasp. But the sequence is also circular: The purpose of analysis of intuition is the construction of a larger synthesis wherein the products of abstraction are "integrated into a purer and more luminous intuition" (p. 55).

Personal faith, though it belongs to the foregoing context, requires additional explanatory ingredients. In isolating the differentiating characteristic of this third level of knowledge, Cirne-Lima finds himself using such terms as "free decision of will," "personal acceptance," "the attitude of the total human person to the existent," "self-forgetting, unreserved approval," and "saying yes to a concrete Thou in his dignity and singularity." By means of such phrases he calls attention to the transformations which occur vis-à-vis the content of knowledge when intuition is constituted by both cognitive and volitional factors. Though personal faith has a volitional side, it nevertheless does not lose the immediacy, spontaneity, and total singularity of the intuitive grasp:

If we ask someone about a friend of his, or ask what kind of a person this friend really is, he finds himself quite at a loss for words. He knows his friend very well indeed, and he is deeply attached to him. Truly it is for this very reason that he cannot express what he knows in words, even if he is an experienced author. He knows his friend so well that to describe him at all appears at first sight quite impossible. . . . The extent and depth of personal knowledge in a case like this becomes therefore the reason for a kind of inability to express its contents adequately in judgments and in concepts [pp. 44, 45].

Finding a precedent for this phenomenon in Augustine's words, "Unasked we know it; if we are asked, we no longer know it," Cirne-Lima defines personal knowledge as follows: The intuition of the Thou is the cognitive element of a total attitude of our whole person toward this Thou.

The task of legitimizing this phenomenological account begins with the second section of the book. Here the author of *Personal Faith* seeks to sketch the metaphysical ground for the distinction between knowledge's levels and attempts to refer the entire discussion to a Scholastic theory of abstraction. Admittedly repeating much of what had already been written in Coreth's *Metaphysik als Aufgabe* (Innsbruck, 1958) and Rahner's *Geist in Welt* (Munich, 1957), Cirne-Lima seeks to show that an analysis of unity and relatedness leads to a confirmation of Thomas' thesis, that is, that "intuition is the starting-point as well as the goal of discursive, conceptual thought" (p. 104). The insight into the complexus of Being, or the vision of the total, is an intuition:

Intuition is that undivided simple kernel, that oneness in which many things are made manifest. Out of this intuition then arise by analysis (i.e. by division, distinction and separation) concepts, judgments and syllogisms. Conceptual knowledge is therefore nothing other than the unfolding of intuition. Thus a system, an intelligent structure of concepts and judgments, is a noble but always inadequate attempt to bring about the unfolding of unity into multiplicity. Conceptual discursive knowledge however is merely a stage in the complete evolution of our knowledge; it is not its final goal. Any system, be it ever so proud and mighty, can be no more than the penultimate stage of our intellect's unfolding evolution. The ultimate stage, the final goal, is once more intuition, the act of knowledge which embraces multiplicity in unity: *in uno multa comprehendit* [p. 104].

Within the metaphysical context Cirne-Lima argues that the form of intuition which issues in personal knowledge, even on the supernatural level, is marked by cognitive and volitional elements. Since these two elements constitute each other, it is appropriate to understand faith as the cognitive side of the volitional act and to distinguish its receptive and projective sides: "Insofar as it is an intuitive vision of a person therefore faith has a merely receptive character. It presupposes the object as something given. . . . However, insofar as it brings a personal relation into being, i.e., insofar as it adopts a cognitive attitude toward a person, faith has truth of the projective type" (p. 144). Upon the basis of these distinctions it is almost by inference that one can refer the certitude of faith to something other than the light of grace and that one can show that the act of faith arises from a disposition accurately called "pre-belief." Hence, in the course of his study Cirne-Lima has moved from an examination of the general characteristics of knowledge per se to one of the most intricate problems facing Scholastic theology.

The temptation, of course, for the non-Thomist reader is to assess the orientation reflected in Cirne-Lima's book, not in terms of its potential clarification of longstanding Scholastic difficulties (as was done by Walter Kern in *Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie*, LXXXII [1960], 461-77), but rather in the light of the more general possibilities it offers. One can see in it, for example, a technique for distinguishing various kinds of assertions of faith depending upon whether they are intuitive (as kerygmatic insights seem to be) or

conceptual-discursive (as much of theological systematization seems to be). It is also conceivable that that sort of distinction might be useful in illuminating a portion of a current post-Vatican II issue, that is, the relation between biblical and dogmatic thought patterns (cf. the essays in Herbert Vorgrimler [ed.], *Biblical vs. Dogmatic Theology* [New York, 1964]). Projected historically, the same technique might also be helpful in denominating the dominant preoccupation of particular eras in Christian theological construction as well as the issues one can expect to emerge in periods of transition. And, more directly, the emphasis upon spontaneity, immediacy, even subjectivity, can be employed to rid religious awareness of some of the problems it has acquired by association with an object world. But these sorts of uses of Cirne-Lima's work stress the novelty of the orientation almost to the exclusion of their original frame of reference and transpose the orientation from innovations upon Scholasticism to a more general approach to the philosophy of religion.

And yet, at the same time, the temptation the non-Thomist reader senses is warranted, at least in part, by the fundamental weakness of the book, that is, that the *novel* and the *traditional* are not quite adequately joined together. More pointedly, the analysis in Part I (which depends primarily upon phenomenological description) and the discussion of application in Parts II and III (which purports to depend upon metaphysical structural penetration) do not seem to entail each other. The reasons for this lack of correlation are probably numerous. For one, the author has neglected to chart the respective influences of form upon content in the *transition* from one level of knowledge to another. To do so would require cultivating a hermeneutics of intuition as well as specifying the process by which an intuitive disposition comes to inform a rational-discursive pattern. But the disjuncture is also created by the built-in antipathy between the disciplines of phenomenology and metaphysics. As Husserl contended, the isolation of *Lebenswelt*—with which Cirne-Lima's personal knowledge possesses obvious environmental affinities—demands placing strict controls over traditional forms of metaphysical engagement. Even after pages of argumentation, it is therefore difficult to see why the phenomenological description of the levels of knowledge either needs or im-

plies the subsequent metaphysical bolstering. And, finally, beyond all of this, one suspects that the first applications of a new orientation are characterized by occasional instances of naïveté—perhaps understandably so. This might partially explain Cirne-Lima's quick jumps from attempts to establish fact on the basis of analyses of knowledge's positive features to the inclusion of additional (most often traditional scholastic) materials whose sources are elsewhere. But it can neither sanction nor lend rigor to the implicit argument that the presence of the one confirms the propriety of the other.

In the light of this absence of entailment, the irony of the book is that its illustration of a transcending of Kant is conditioned by the relativity of its outcome. Indeed, some may interpret this as a further reinforcement of Scholasticism's obsolescence. But this is said about a book which originally appeared at the close of the last decade. Perhaps today that same condition would not be counted as a liability. And, with respect to the future, this provocative new orientation holds the promise of revitalizing religious consciousness and disciplining theological method.

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Principles of the Philosophy of the Future. By LUDWIG FEUERBACH. Translated and with an Introduction by MANFRED H. VOGEL. (The Library of the Liberal Arts.) Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1966. lxxxiii+85 pages. \$2.25.

At last we have in English the volume that Ludwig Feuerbach devoted to stating his mature philosophy. Only the third of his books to appear in English, out of collected works that fill thirteen volumes, it is the first to be translated since *The Essence of Religion* appeared in 1873, the year after Feuerbach died. Suddenly, we now find ourselves presented with more of his books than have been published in English in over a century: Translations of two others are due in 1967.

The present one was originally published in 1843, two years after *Das Wesen des Christentums*, the book to which Feuerbach's contribution is often confined. Unlike his other works available in our language, the *Grund-*