called 'major miracles' occur. Positive science is a precious help in their analysis but the final verdict in their regard depends on the decision of the person involved in the inquiry.

Finally, when a man as a religious person who also follows the rules of critical thinking, is confronted with the facts and their background he has no choice but to recognize them as genuine divine signs and to open his whole being to the contents they signify: the message of the living God (352).

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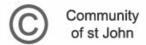
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L'unité d'être dans le Christ d'après S Thomas. By A PATFOORT
OP. Bibliothèque de théologie, Théologie dogmatique
Série I, vol. 4. Tournai: Desclée, 1965. Pp 326.

In his Foreword the author specifies that the subtitle of this work—A la croisée de l'ontologie et de la christologie—gives a fairly accurate rendering of the experience he had while inquiring and meditating on the subject. For if philosophy is the hand-maid of theology, it can also be said that theology can come to the aid of philosophy. Is not this precisely the particular interest of the question discussed here? At first sight it might seem that the issue in question is a theological conclusion, and that the author's purpose is to express clearly St Thomas' thought concerning this particular point in his work on the Incarnation; this would already make for a valuable study, though one perhaps of only minor interest to twentieth-century theology. But if one goes further into the question it soon becomes apparent that it not only involves a whole conception of being, of the act of being (esse), and thus of metaphysics itself (entering into contact here with one of the most lively preoccupations of those presently working with St Thomas' metaphysics) but also it brings into play a whole way of considering theologically the mystery of Christ's humanity: his special way of existing. We are dealing here with a theological conclusion, for our faith in the mystery of the Incarnation tells us nothing explicit about the unity or duality of esse in Christ. This theological conclusion remains, all the same, truly meaningful and important today, since it emphasizes the transcendent unity of Christ, his unity of being, which not only does not lessen the realism of his human nature but, on the contrary, enables it to exist in the fullest way possible.

The question raised requires—if one wishes to meet it adequately—a concern for exegetical and historical rigour with regard to the texts where St Thomas speaks of the *esse* of Christ, as well as an effort of metaphysical penetration concerning the conception of





substantiel au sens fort, c'est à dire autonome, indépendant, exclusif de tout autre au sein de la même unité substantielle ' (id.). Thus in every supposit or person there will be, in the sphere of substantiality, the necessary oneness of esse. If substantial esse, by reason of its incommunicability, appears as unique and exclusive, it is also, by reason of its maximum communicability, one and 'unifiant'. But this 'communicabilité maxima' is not achieved in a univocal manner. Esse is not communicated in the same way to the 'inferior' and 'superior' elements of any one being. From this it can be seen how 'la doctrine classique de l'unité d'être dans le Christ s'inscrit dans la ligne des propriétés générales de l'esse, dans celle en particulier de son unité supérieure, de sa simplicité trans-

But one must recognize, in all fairness, that it is precisely in the cendante' (209). name of the requirements of Thomistic esse that this conception of the unity of being in Christ has been attacked, and that is why it is necessary to specify Les incidences sur le langage et sur l'emploi du verbe être de cette communicabilité dans la simplicité (209). It must be clearly understood that 'plusieurs jugements distincts, plusieurs emplois distincts du verbe être ne nous mettent pas nécessairement et à tout coup en présence d'autant d'esse distincts, alors que pourtant ils mettent en cause des réalités vraiment distinctes l'une de l'autre' (210). This amounts to saying that one cannot attribute to St Thomas the principle: culibet entitatirespondet suum esse. With that the author unmasks one of the important points in the debate. Is it not the case that the opponents of the classical doctrine say, in one way or another:

impossible de tenir en vérité et en réalité que le Fils de Dieu est homme, s'il n'y a pas en lui d'esse humain, d'acte d'être distinct et correspondant exactement, adéquatement à la nature humaine, et ceci au nom de la correspondance nécessaire et rigoureuse entre chaque emploi du verbe être et un esse parfaitement ajusté à cet

To grasp more clearly the equivocation involved in such statements (the confusion of the formally-distinct senses of the words esse or existence), Fr Patfoort recalls the diverse meanings of the word esse as used by St Thomas (214-229). The latter employs the same word esse, esse (in) actu, to mean sometimes the simple truth of a judgement, sometimes the 'très honorable "état de réalite" et la possession effective par un sujet, d'une " chose " donnée, and sometimes 'l'acte d'être en vertu duquel la dite chose et le dit sujet sont' (234). And the author concludes:

au plan des réalités accidentelles, les esse se multiplient exactement comme les réalités elles-mêmes qui viennent entient leur sujet how he in fact expressed himself differently in the Quaestio tandis qu'au plan de la substance l'esse que l'on a touché par le how he in fact expressed himself differently in the Quaestio tandis qu'au plan de la substance et qui a paru si disputata; De unione Verhi incarratione de la substance et qui a paru si disputata; tandis qu'au plan de la substance i esse que i on a course disputata; De unione Verhi incarnati and in the Summa Theologiae, biais des diverses composantes de la substance et qui a paru si disputata; De unione Verhi incarnati and in the Summa Theologiae.

multiplier avec elles en des jugements distincts, en des possessions distinctes, reste unique. . . . d'un côté un esse par réalité distincte, autant d'esse que d'"existences" (jugements vrais ou réalités 'en état de réalité'), de l'autre un seul esse pour toutes les réalités, en dépit de la multiplicité des 'existences' (228).

Then comes the application: it is not inconceivable

de dire que le Fils de Dieu a vraiment une 'existence' humaine (une réelle nature humaine, actuée en fait par un esse, et rangeant le Fils de Dieu dans l'espèce et la race humaine) sans pourtant lui attribuer une existence (acte d'être) purement et formellement humaine (229).

The objection raised against the classical doctrine of the unity of being in Christ is broadly the following: if the divine esse of the Word is communicated to the human nature, this would radically question the consistence of that nature as a veritable reality; for the divine esse cannot be the act of being of a created reality. Is not esse the whole reality of a thing? Thus, if the divine esse directly actuates the human nature, the latter is then divine: it can no longer remain human (cf 236). This objection leads the author in chapter eight (La 'discrétion' de l'esse et la réalité propre de l'essence) to specify that esse, such as St Thomas conceives it, possesses a subtle and complex quality, 'discrétion' ('dosage délicat d'intimité et d'effacement', he notes on page 235) which amounts to showing the profound rapport between the esse and the essence. For if the esse actuates the essence, there is an 'intimité sans absorption, distinction sans coupure dans une véritable unité substantielle' (235). It seems that the objection forgot this most proper quality of esse: its 'discrétion'.

Does not the error in the objection spring from a confusion between the subject or 'patient' of the formal cause and the (formal) effect of this cause, the effect being none other than the cause itself (insofar as it is communicated)? . . . Once you confuse that which is affected by the formal cause with the proper effect of the cause, the formal cause can no longer be considered as that which enriches and communicates itself to a subject; rather, it is considered as that which 'supplante et dévore son sujet' (239). The esse is then held to be the whole reality of the thing. How far this is from the discretion of esse! Forgotten is the fact that the essence is by and in itself something real, radically dependent upon, and existing only through esse, while yet having its own determination and intelligibility.

In chapter nine (La diversité et la relative souplesse des liens de l'esse avec l'essence) the author pushes his analysis still further. He wants to find out how St Thomas was able to vary his opinions,



This calls for a very close and attentive look at the rapport between esse and form. At first it seems that St Thomas recognized the indissoluble bond between every form and its esse. But we must clearly understand the nature of this connexion: that every form fundamentally needs an esse in order to exist, is beyond discussion; but if that esse is normally its esse 'modelé par elle', 'déterminé par elle', this does not mean that the Author of being cannot intervene and communicate an 'esse suréminent' to the form: there is nothing impossible about this, for not only is the esse not the quiddity of the form it actuates, it is also not immediately possessed by the form. Only the supposit or person immediately possesses the esse. It is for this reason that

si une forme substantielle nouvelle se trouve intégrée dans une personne qui possède déjà son esse, elle devra, et par suite elle pourra exister en vertu d'un esse qui la 'déborde' . . . (247).

The author stipulates further that

l'esse n'est pas un acte opératif, émanant d'une substance déjà constituée . . . mais un acte substantiel préalable à toute activité autonome et ne dépendant de l'essence dans la ligne propre de celle-ci que selon une causalité de type matériel (261).

Or, if you wish:

La forme, ordinairement, 'cause' l'esse comme cause matérielle et à ce titre elle le limite (cf Pot. q.7, a.2, ad 9) mais aussi le sustente, le porte pour autant qu'il n'est pas subsistant (262).

But it does so only in depending, itself, upon that esse.

After having examined the connexion between the form and the esse, it's necessary to take up the rapport between the esse and creation (chapter ten). It was objected to the classical doctrine of the unity of being in Christ that St Thomas clearly maintains that Christ's human nature is a 'created' reality. But it is essential to the creative act to produce the esse of that which is created. Therefore . . . (263). It is thus a question of clarifying the exact relationship existing between esse and the act of creation. In St Thomas' perspective what characterizes the act of creation is not the production of esse-this terminates every productive act-but rather it is 'la totalité de l'être, à savoir tout ce qui "est" dans le sujet existant', 'les réalités subsistantes', the realities which possess being. '... l'accent est donc plus sur l'idée de la possession de l'esse que sur celle de l'esse possédé' (266). For this reason,

exclure de la nature humaine du Christ . . . l'esse proprium et creatum ne lui enlèverait sa qualité de réalité crée que si cela lui enlevait la ratio entis . . . (274).

For St Thomas the human nature of Christ is certainly something created, but in the sense that it is created in a supposit which itself is not created.

Finally, in chapter eleven, the author answers an objection: does not the communication of divine esse to Christ's human nature end necessarily, always according to Thomistic metaphysics, in a fusion or absorption of the humanity by the divinity? (292) which would obviously be very serious.

In Thomism does not the main difficulty, involved in the idea of a communication of divine being to a created reality, come from the fact that for St Thomas esse truly exercises a causality of a formal kind? For God, precisely, cannot be the form of any object. In what way then are we to understand the exercise of the formal causality of esse? Basing himself on texts of St Thomas, the author tries to determine the exact role of esse in relation to essence, and he concludes:

L'esse et la subsistance . . . ne sont, comme la species intelligible, des formes qu'en un sens analogique et, sur le point qui nous occupe, sont beaucoup plus proches de celle-ci que de la forme ordinaire (301).

From this we can understand how it can be affirmed that in the mystery of the Incarnation

Dieu 's'unit' réellement en qualité d'esse et à ce titre 'compose' avec une réalité crée; cela n'entraîne d'aucune facon qu'il soit luimême limité par ce à quoi il s'unit (302).

And this in no way requires that the humanity be absorbed by the divinity. The author can then conclude:

Et voilà comment la 'discrétion' générale de l'esse, son 'nonengagement' dans l'essence et dans la constitution (au plan des déterminations) du sujet, se trouvent illustrés et confirmés, à l'intérieur de la pensée thomiste, par la doctrine classique de l'unité d'être . . . (302).

We can see from the above the importance of this study, its honesty and its rigour. The author neglects nothing, in order that the question be treated with the maximum possible objectivity and so that the reasons of the objectors be considered with all the seriousness they deserve, by being directly confronted with the doctrine of St Thomas. We cannot but thank Fr Patfoort for having undertaken such a study, even if some doubts remain with regard to some of his interpretations. Here we have in mind especially the way he explains St Thomas' 'faux-pas' concerning the Quaestio disputata: De unione Verbi incarnati (185). Was there really a 'redoubtable inattention' (186)? It cannot be denied that St Thomas takes a clear stand in the sed contra of article four of this Ouaestio disputata: . . . 'Christus est unum simpliciter. . . . Ergo in eo est unum esse'. In the body of the article he affirms with equal force that esse is said proprie et vere de supposito subsistente. In Christ the subsistent supposit is the person of the



Son of God, quae simpliciter substantificatur per naturam divinam.... Is the 'faux-pas' in the conclusion?

Just as Christ is one simpliciter because of the unity of the supposit, and two secundum quid by reason of the two natures, so has he one esse simpliciter, because of the unique eternal esse of the eternal supposit. And yet that supposit has another esse, not insofar as it is eternal but insofar as it became man temporaliter.

That esse is not accidental, but it is secondary. And in his response to the first objection St Thomas affirms: 'The esse of the human nature is not the esse of the divine nature. Nevertheless we should not say in an absolute sense that Christ is two according to esse, since the eternal supposit does not regard the one and the other esse in the same way'.

This esse is therefore not other in an absolute sense; it is secondary, for it belongs to the same supposit. What does St Thomas mean by esse secundarium? For existence is essentially act, and thus separate. 'Secondary' means, precisely, that that other esse cannot be understood except in function of the assumed human nature. The latter does not subsist in itself and therefore it has no esse of its own.3 The other esse here expresses how eternal being is communicated in time to the assumed human nature. That is why you cannot say simpliciter that there is a two-fold esse in Christ. Simpliciter there is only one, but because of the nature assumed in time you can say that there is another esse belonging to the one supposit.

We should note the insistence with which St Thomas speaks here of eternity and time. The unique esse is eternal, the other is temporaliter. The unique eternal esse, by reason of the assumed human nature, has become temporal. In order to express this new manner of existing—which in no way perfects the first—St Thomas speaks of aliud esse; but it is not an aliud in the full sense, being as it is only the temporal communication of the first eternal esse.

Can one say that St Thomas really stands in opposition to what he already said and to what he will say later in the Summa? Can one draw the author's conclusion that we are dealing here with a 'veritable dualité d'esse' (106)? It is sure that an absolute unity is affirmed and maintained. Is not St Thomas' intention in that Quaestio disputata to show another aspect of the mystery: the unique divine esse of the eternal supposit, in assuming the human nature in time, becomes secondarily temporal?

Despite all this, what is said of Thomistic esse in this study seems to me to be extremely interesting. For my part, I should simply have wished that the author placed more emphasis on the profound metaphysical significance of the esse-actus entis. Is it not the characteristic of act to terminate, and not to inform? If esse does exercise a certain kind of formal causality, does it not do so in a thoroughly original way? By terminating it completes essence. Esse, as act, terminates; as actus essendi (such mode of act) it terminates and completes, in an immanent way, and therefore after the manner of formal causality. And if form is distinguished from matter, act is distinguished from potency. The essence, insofar as it is distinct from esse should therefore be considered in the first place as that which is capable of exercising the role of that which is in potency with regard to esse. It must be clearly understood that the matter-form distinction is situated on the level of being-in-movement, whereas that of potency and act is on the level of being.

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6. Logic and Reality in Leibniz's Metaphysics. By G H R PARKINSON. Pp x+196. Leibniz, Logical Papers. A Selection. Translated and edited with an Introduction by G H R PARKINSON. Pp lxv+148. London: Clarendon Press, Oxford University Press, 1966. Each 35s.

In the first of these books Mr Parkinson re-examines the thesis set forth by Bertrand Russell in 1900, according to which Leibniz's philosophy 'was almost entirely derived from his logic'. The reexamination takes place in two stages: first Leibniz's views concerning logic are discussed and secondly the validity of the derivation of the metaphysical from the logical views is investigated.

With respect to the first point, Parkinson agrees with Russell that Leibniz's logical views have to be abandoned, but he tries to show that some of Russell's criticisms are unjustified. We will come back to this point shortly.

Concerning the second question, Parkinson denies that Leibniz's metaphysics does in fact follow from Leibniz's logical views; the crucial point being, that the logical principle of sufficient reason ('Every true proposition can be proven', i.e. 'Every true proposition is, or is reducible to, an identical proposition') and the theological principle of the best ('Because the perfections of God include perfect wisdom, power and goodness, therefore he created the world which is the most perfect possible') are two independent principles. Parkinson stresses that according to Leibniz a statement



<sup>3.</sup> Just as Fr Synave said with such force in his review of F Pelster, Bulletin Thomiste, January 1926, p 17: 'Cet esse secundarium, c'est d'abord un esse suppositi

<sup>4.</sup> Cf Fr Synave, art. cit. 20: 'De l'examen du De Unione en lui-même et de sa comparaison avec la Somme et les Sentences, il appert que S Thomas n'a pas varié d'une ligne sur le fond de sa doctrine'.