

A CONTROVERSY RECONSIDERED

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It is usually said by historians of the topic that the subject of Christian philosophy in contemporary thought was initiated by an essay written by the noted historian of philosophy Émile Bréhier, appearing in *Revue de métaphysique et de moral* in 1931,¹ entitled "Is there a Christian Philosophy?" The answer, according to Bréhier, was negative.

In one way or another this provoked a number of responses in what has been called "the debate of 1931"² concerning the meaning and validity of Christian philosophy. For our purposes the most significant statements in reply, if you will, were by Etienne Gilson in *The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy*, and by Jacques Maritain in *Christian Philosophy*, with further elaborations and answers to critics in *Science and Wisdom*. If Gilson, on the one hand, argued that on the theoretical side of philosophy there was indeed a significant biblical influence on metaphysics—the metaphysics of *Exodus*—it was Maritain's contention that only a moral philosophy subalternated to faith and theology could produce what he called a moral philosophy adequately considered, that is, adequate to its object. This is what he means by Christian philosophy. If Maritain confines his claim to practical philosophy, Gilson seems to confine his to theoretical. I should add that the name of Maurice Blondel is also mentioned in this context.³

I want to argue that Maritain's treatment of the issues confronting moral philosophy underwent a development in which the role of

¹ Émile Bréhier, "Y a-t-il une philosophie chrétienne?" *Revue de métaphysique et de moral* 38 (avril juin 1931), pp. 133-62.

² Henry Bars, *Maritain en notre temps* (Paris: Bernard Grasset, 1959), p. 211. Father Bars also wrote "A propos du *Paysan de la Garonne*," *Revue Thomiste* (Janvier-Mars 1968): 89-100. The long introduction to Father Joseph Owens's *Towards a Christian Philosophy* (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1990), pp. 1-59, gives a good idea of the state of the question at that time.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 209.

philosophy at first dependent on theology, in part at least, expands and becomes of assistance to theology. If this expansion meant that philosophy has become a sophisticated instrument at the behest of faith, Maritain would simply have become a theologian, given the age-old concept of philosophy as handmaiden to theology. But Maritain, as we shall see, insists even when dealing with Christology or Ecclesiology that he does so as a philosopher. But how does he move from the initial position in which moral philosophy is subalternated to theology to the final position in which he stresses that philosophy has something to offer theology? And how to deal with texts that appeared in the interim in which he concentrates on the problems of moral philosophy and its history in *An Introduction to the Basic Problems of Moral Philosophy*⁴ and in *Moral Philosophy*?⁵ How does all this hang together?

I shall proceed in three stages: first, the elaboration of the concept of moral philosophy adequately considered; secondly, the works dealing with moral philosophy in itself and in its history; and third, and last, the new role for moral philosophy, if not philosophy altogether, announced in *The Peasant of the Garonne*,⁶ and exemplified in *The Grace and Humanity of Jesus*.⁷

Those of us of an older generation remember those days in which Thomism, textbook or otherwise, was widely taught in Catholic institutions. Some will say that died with the Second Vatican Council. In any case, there was a diversity of approaches to Thomism, which included the use of the two *Summas* to identify Aquinas's main philosophical principles and positions, as well as an approach based on

⁴ Jacques Maritain, *An Introduction to the Basic Problems of Moral Philosophy*, trans. Cornelia N. Bergerhoff (Albany, New York: Magi Books, 1990).

⁵ Jacques Maritain, *Moral Philosophy: An Historical and Critical Survey of the Great Systems*, trans. under the direction of Joseph W. Evans (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1964).

⁶ Jacques Maritain, *The Peasant of the Garonne: An Old Layman Questions Himself about the Present Time*, trans. Michael Cuddihy and Elizabeth Hughes (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1968).

⁷ Jacques Maritain, *On the Grace and Humanity of Jesus*, trans. Joseph W. Evans (London: Burns and Oates, 1969).

the assumption that the genuine philosophical thought of Aquinas did not exist in a pure state in theological treatises, but in his commentaries on the works of Aristotle. The impression was given that the commentaries were not just interpretive works, but were an exposition of Thomas's own ideas. And no doubt other approaches were also employed.

Now Maritain had written a number of works in which he attempted to explain Thomas's philosophy and, just prior to his first presentation of Christian philosophy, he had published a study of Thomas Aquinas anticipating some aspects of moral philosophy adequately considered.⁸ We are prepared for further elucidation.

The key distinction used by Maritain in his little treatise on Christian philosophy is that between nature and state in regard to philosophy. The question of the nature or definition of philosophy is one matter. Its state is another. So Christian philosophy involves "those utterly distinctive conditions of existence and exercise into which Christianity has ushered the thinking subject."⁹ Philosophy includes a number of *habitus* specified according to their distinctive objects. However, the order of exercise, the conditions as he says, have to be taken into account: philosophy as exercised by the Christian. In fact, there are two ways in which Christianity affects moral philosophy: "by providing objective data, and by supplying certain subjective reinforcements."¹⁰ The former concerns what has been revealed by God and particularly, in regard to moral philosophy, "the ultimate end of man."¹¹ The latter concerns the virtues infused as well as acquired and how they are "interconnected in exercise," for, "without charity, they have no real connection, they are not bound together in one strong

⁸ Jacques Maritain, *St. Thomas Aquinas*, trans. Joseph W. Evans and Peter O'Reilly (New York: Meridian Books, 1958), p. 126.

⁹ Ralph Nelson, "Moral Philosophy Adequately Considered," in Joseph W. Evans, ed., *Jacques Maritain: The Man and His Achievement* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1963), p. 139.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 140.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 142.

organism, because they are only *connected in statu virtutis*.”¹² This is described as “the synergic union.”

The relative autonomy of philosophy is assured because moral philosophy does not need theology “in a radical or originative way.”¹³ It is “completive and perfective.”¹⁴ In short, “only theology knows the true state of man, and it is not possible to direct human actions if one is in ignorance of their conditions of exercise.”¹⁵ In *Science and Wisdom*, this is spoken of as philosophy in faith.¹⁶

At the risk of some simplification, it can be fairly stated that the critics of Maritain’s notion of moral philosophy adequately considered found no place for a third alternative between moral philosophy, on the one hand, and moral theology, on the other. There is nothing in between. For them, a moral philosophy subalternated to theology was purely and simply theology. This does not mean that they were defenders of a pure moral philosophy.

The case of Yves Simon in this regard is significant. When he first treated the concept of a subalternated moral philosophy in his *Critique of Moral Knowledge*,¹⁷ in 1934, he stated the notion as follows: “No purely natural system of morality can be completely true, because it is essential to moral philosophy to take into account the existential conditions of humanity.”¹⁸ He then goes on to say that the idea of moral philosophy adequately considered is “quite new, involved in

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 153.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Jacques Maritain, *An Essay on Christian Philosophy*, trans. Edward H. Flannery (New York: Philosophical Library, 1955), p. 89.

¹⁵ Ralph Nelson, “Moral Philosophy Adequately Considered,” pp. 150-51.

¹⁶ Jacques Maritain, *Science and Wisdom*, trans. Bernard Wall (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1940), p. 70.

¹⁷ Yves R. Simon, *Critique de la connaissance morale* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1934). An English translation of this work, by Ralph M. McInerny, has recently been published as *Critique of Moral Knowledge* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2003).

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 121, n. 1.

discussions, and we do not intend to take sides on the issue."¹⁹ He obviously is unwilling at this point to come to a conclusion, in spite of the respect he has for Maritain.

It turned out to be a long time before the question was privately expressed in several letters he exchanged with Maritain shortly before Simon's death in 1961.²⁰ In one of these, dated February 11, 1961, he says: "I have no doubt that a moral philosophy which is not subordinated to theology cannot be existentially true."²¹ Yet, in the same letter, Simon expresses "my remaining doubts concerning the necessity of a moral philosophy adequately taken."²² He is definitely opposed to granting to moral theology complete possession of the moral field; he still defends a role for moral philosophy. In short, while conceding the validity of Maritain's basic argument, he seems to refuse to give up his reservations. In a letter dated February 22, 1961, Maritain assumes an endorsement when he says: "I am very happy with our agreement over the notion of moral philosophy adequately considered."²³ Indeed, Simon's subsequent letter of March 8, 1961, apparently concurs with Maritain's estimation. And, if this were Simon's last statement on the subject, one might speak of an intellectual conversion. But it is not. For, in the last truly public utterance in regard to this general question of philosophical ethics, Simon insists that he prefers the method of isolation:

When these positions are clearly formulated, the question remains as to whether it is desirable that philosophical issues be treated in a state of abstraction or in a concrete condition of association with the problems of our super-natural destiny. I would not hesitate to say that it is, to a large extent, a question of calling. I am strongly attracted by the method of isolation

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Yves R. Simon, *Practical Knowledge*, ed. Robert J. Mulvaney (New York: Fordham University Press, 1991).

²¹ Ibid., p. 105.

²² Ibid., p. 106.

²³ Ibid., p. 108.

because it furnishes special guaranties of epistemological purity and logical rigor.²⁴

I interpret his remark to mean that he wants to pursue a moral philosophy distinct from moral theology or theology *tout court* for reasons of method and argument. However inadequate such an approach may be, he is convinced that it is the only way that the lack of confusion can be assured. This moral philosophy has its shortcomings; it does not present the whole picture, but he accepts it, warts and all.

Some years after his essays on Christian philosophy, philosophy in faith, Maritain once again devotes considerable energy in developing the critical concepts of a moral philosophy, first in *An Introduction to the Basic Problems of Moral Philosophy* and then in the historical treatment of moral philosophy in the lengthy study *Moral Philosophy*. For those who might interpret this new endeavor as a departure from the notion of moral philosophy adequately considered, he is quite clear on his abiding adherence to that conception.²⁵

Were one to plan systematically an investigation of moral philosophy, it is obvious that one would follow an order directly opposite to that which Maritain followed. After an historical canvass of the subject, the next step would be doctrinal, that is, the philosopher's own conception of the basic principles of moral philosophy, followed by an assessment of its adequacy. The press of philosophical discussion led him into the initial expression of a Christian philosophy, before having extensively treated moral philosophy as such. Then, having looked into the basic problems of moral philosophy, he undertook the historical and critical examination of the subject. He envisioned a return to the basic problems in a subsequent volume:

Yet the systematic examination of the fundamental problems of moral philosophy has been left to a second volume which I hope to undertake after the publication of the present [*Moral*

²⁴ Yves R. Simon, "Jacques Maritain: The Growth of a Christian Philosopher," in *The Man and His Achievement*, p. 23.

²⁵ Jacques Maritain, *Moral Philosophy*, p. 422. There are numerous references in *Basic Problems of Moral Philosophy*.

Philosophy]. A central fragment of this projected volume has already been offered in outline form—however incomplete—in a few lectures previously published.²⁶

We know, of course, that this second volume never appeared.

What is particularly significant in the series of lectures translated as *An Introduction to the Basic Problems of Moral Philosophy* is the way in which Maritain relates moral philosophy to other forms of knowledge. It must be said that the epistemological map of knowledge has been a constant preoccupation of the author. Here, he argues that, in order “to justify the real objective validity of social norms and values....we must have recourse to metaphysics.”²⁷ Whether it be the relation of being and the good, or the distinction between theoretical and practical value judgments, or the analysis of teleology, the understanding of value, the *debitum*, and the analogous meanings of evil, he begins from the metaphysical concept and moves on to the moral. As he emphasizes: “Here again, the best philosophical approach is to begin with the metaphysical or ontological perspective, in order to move on from there to the specifically moral one.”²⁸

And yet, lest we believe that this recourse to metaphysics in ethical inquiry compromises the study of moral philosophy, he describes the latter as “*autonomous and irreducible*.”²⁹ He wants to say that it indeed is autonomous, but not self-sufficient or independent, for it relies on metaphysical argument.

Another important conception concerns the “natural knowledge” of the natural law.³⁰ The fundamental knowledge human beings have is “*by the mode of inclination*.”³¹ Maritain has insisted on this primitive knowledge, sharply contrasted with philosophical knowledge, in a

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. ix. I have changed the translation, replacing “lessons” by “lectures”.

²⁷ Jacques Maritain, *Basic Problems*, p. 18.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 183.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

number of works, notably in *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry*.³² He reiterates his conviction that it is the natural way, the primitive way, the original way human beings came to form value judgments, and even those norms and values stemming from a socialized morality are grafted on to knowledge of this kind. But, once again, it is not philosophical knowledge.

For a number of reasons, Maritain's conception of a moral philosophy based in some sense on metaphysics, and his conception of knowledge "by the mode of inclination"³³ are both specifically rejected by "the new natural law theory" that was expressed in the writings of Germain Grisez, John Finnis, and, more recently, Robert George.³⁴ The advocates of this tendency argue for a different conception of the autonomy of practical reason and moral philosophy, and reject out of hand the very notion of a knowledge by the mode of inclination. Since I am primarily concerned with the exposition of Maritain's moral theory, I point this out here as a possible line of objection to it.

Aware of the way in which various sciences have become a source of moral theories, particularly Darwinian biology, Marxist economics, and Freudian psychology, Maritain places himself in the wake of those French thinkers who were influenced by sociology of the Durkheim School. What he is suggesting is that sociology and anthropology are the most useful sources of information among the social sciences about human beings. Of course, it must be recognized that Durkheim and Lévy-Bruhl fell into the error of making "socialized morality... the

³² Jacques Maritain, *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1977), pp. 117-25.

³³ Jacques Maritain, *Basic Problems*, p. 62.

³⁴ A seminal essay by Germain G. Grisez, "The First Principle of Practical Reason" in Anthony Kenny, ed., *Aquinas: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1969), pp. 340-82, was followed by John Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), and Robert P. George, ed., *Natural Law and Moral Inquiry* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 1998). There are several other works by George.

whole of human morality,"³⁵ of falling into sociologism. I have argued elsewhere how Maritain may be related to Durkheim and Bergson in a kind of dialectical series,³⁶ in which Bergson, follower and critic of Durkheim, in turn is subject to criticism.

Finally, in this lecture series, described later as an outline, Maritain returns once more to the conception of a moral philosophy adequately considered.³⁷ The reasons for continuing to uphold this conception are as before, objective data—such as the notion of the ultimate end of human life, known from theology—and those subjective reinforcements, the infused virtues. If anything, he broadens the conception, no longer speaking of just Christian philosophy, but stressing "that moral philosophy has no chance of being adequate to its object unless it attaches itself to one or another of the religious traditions of humanity."³⁸ He does not, however, examine the difficulties of say a Muslim philosophy, or any kind other than the Christian. The reliance in any case is on "the concrete existential state of human nature."³⁹ He attacks once again the notion of a separate philosophy, an idea he had introduced many years before in an essay on Descartes, when he said the latter wanted to philosophize in complete separation from theology.⁴⁰

If the *Introduction* largely passed unobserved when it was first published, *Moral Philosophy* was severely criticized because it had very little to say about certain important contributors to moral philosophy and gave the impression that the British had little to offer to the

³⁵ Jacques Maritain, *Basic Problems*, p. 13.

³⁶ Ralph Nelson, "Maritain and the Continuation of Bergson," *Maritain Studies* 6 (June 1990): 107-28.

³⁷ Jacques Maritain, *Basic Problems of Moral Philosophy*, pp. 97, 98, 107, 113, 115, 118-19, 130, n. 5, 139, 140, 154, 196, 214, and 215.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

⁴⁰ Jacques Maritain, *The Dream of Descartes*, trans. Mabelle L. Andison (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1944), p. 74.

subject.⁴¹ One thinks of the moral writings of Henry B. Veatch that involved him in a constant dialogue with leading British ethicists. Even though Maritain had clearly announced that his purpose was “doctrinal in order, not historical,”⁴² the historical chronicle following easily led to misunderstanding. The only English speaking philosopher examined was Dewey, though his Hegelian background was made much of. Nothing was said of Max Scheler’s important contribution to moral philosophy, although Sartre’s moral thought is discussed. Maritain’s allusion to “great systems”⁴³ explains why so much space is assigned to a detailed exposition of Hegel and Comte. The overall impression is that this is very much a continental European perspective on moral philosophy and Maritain is hardly the first to see Dewey’s work evolving, as much as Marx’s and Kierkegaard’s, out of the massive system of Hegel.

In the statement of aims, it is pointed out that “our task is philosophical, not theological,” that moral philosophy, authentic moral philosophy, “has yet to be developed.”⁴⁴ This explains why Maritain plays down the teleological approach to ethics, which we identify with Aristotle, and takes an analysis of moral obligation as a suitable starting point in the course of commenting on Bergson’s *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*.

Let us summarize by saying that the primary purpose of the work is to present “the method proper to moral philosophy as an authentically philosophic discipline.”⁴⁵ Moral philosophy, or moral science, is distinguished from the natural knowledge of natural law, affective connaturality. Then the secondary purpose appears to be sketching out that super-moral knowledge that comes from faith and theology.

⁴¹ If Vernon Bourke has almost nothing good to say about the treatise in his review in *The Modern Schoolman* 43 (November 1965): 81-82, James Collins is extremely favorable to it in his account in *The Critic* 23 (August 1964): 69-70.

⁴² Jacques Maritain, *Moral Philosophy*, p. ix.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. x.

Christianity played an enormous role in the development of moral knowledge, and much is said about the Christian moral experience, but in the great modern systems, such as those of Hegel and Comte, religion, particularly Christian religion, is either transcended in Hegel's absolute knowledge, or becomes outmoded in Comtean positivism. Only Kierkegaard and Bergson are mentioned among modern philosophers as instances in which Christian revelation continues to be relevant. And while Maritain makes only one reference to the conception of moral philosophy adequately considered in this *magnum opus*,⁴⁶ he too joins them as a Christian philosopher.

Once more, as at the outset, he announces a second volume "given over to the doctrinal examination of the great problems [which] must constitute the normal conclusion of the long historico-critical introduction that has been the object of the present volume."⁴⁷ It never appeared, and so *The Introduction* remains as a kind of sketch of this proposed work.

And now we come to the third stage of this exposition. I am not at all convinced that the course taken by Maritain could have been foreseen from what he says in *Moral Philosophy*. It is expressed in *The Peasant of the Garonne* for the first time and illustrated in the study *The Grace and Humanity of Jesus*.⁴⁸ Henceforth, for his remaining years, it will predominate. After having mentioned Christian philosophy ("and faith can enter the domain of reason bringing along the help of a light and truth which are superior, and which elevate reason in its own order")—he prefers to call it "philosophy of faith"⁴⁹—he examines the condition of theology and is concerned about certain tendencies, though he asserts "the superior rights of faith and of the queen of sacred knowledge."⁵⁰ A new note enters in as he expands the task of Christian

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 422.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 449.

⁴⁸ Perhaps the practice preceded the declaration in *The Sin of the Angel*, trans. William Rossner, S.J. (Westminster, Maryland: Newman Press, 1959).

⁴⁹ Jacques Maritain, *Peasant*, p. 142.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 164.

philosophy: "If it is sufficiently versed in theology," Christian philosophy "may happen-with no intention, of course, settling the matter definitely-to become interested in questions which, by themselves, fall within the province of the theologian."⁵¹ But he will view such questions from a philosophical perspective. There is a risk involved, he says, and I suppose this means he may be accused of doing theology, or going beyond his own competence. With the assistance of faith, Christian philosophy is authorized "to concern itself in its own way with matters belonging to theology."⁵² In this way, "philosophy can eventually be of service to theology, since, by its own nature, it is more available for a work of research and discovery. At this point the *ancilla* becomes research-worker."⁵³ The earlier definition of Christian philosophy depended on the aid received from theology; the extended definition concerns what philosophy can do for theology. If the philosopher presents the theologian with the research hypothesis, does this not mean that the philosopher acts as a kind of research assistant and hence falls into that instrumental role traditionally assigned to the philosopher by theology? Is not the autonomy of philosophy compromised by this new task?⁵⁴ In any case, this bears on the future role of the Christian philosopher. Maritain thinks the philosopher has more freedom in these matters, has an advantage in dealing with dialogue between rival opinions, and melds with an increased role for the laity.

I said that *On the Grace and Humanity of Jesus* illustrates or exemplifies this new role of Christian philosophy. It also shows the risks involved in that role, as witness the criticism that the concepts are archaic and cumbersome—symptomatic of the reaction against Thomism—or that Maritain ignores theologians who have made a contribution to Christology.⁵⁵ During this period, Maritain deals with angelology,⁵⁶

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

⁵⁵ I refer to the review by Father Bruce Vawter, C.M., in *The Critic* 27 (June 1969): 76.

Christology, and ecclesiology: that is, with subject matter known by faith, not by philosophical experience. Of course, it is true that Plato and Aristotle had something to say about intellectual substances, but what we know about the angels comes from Sacred Scripture, along with the extensive interpretations of Aquinas and others. Maritain always insisted that he approaches these matters from a philosophical perspective: "Shall I hesitate to make this exposition because I will appear to be treading on the flower-beds of the theologians, I who am not a theologian, but a mere philosopher?"⁵⁷ He proceeds to point out that his perspective is that of a Christian philosopher. He then repeats verbatim what he has said about the research-worker and the offering of hypotheses of research in *The Peasant of the Garonne*. And in his book on the Church Maritain proposes "to enter, yes, onto the proper terrain of the *sacra doctrina* in order to make there itself an effort of reason and to propose there eventually to the competent doctors new views."⁵⁸ The philosopher can do this because he is free of the responsibilities of the theologian. It is rather puzzling, then, when he tells us "this book has nothing to do either with a treatise of ecclesiology,"⁵⁹ a term which seems best to signify its genre. So by now we are accustomed to these declarations that he is doing philosophical work—"I who am not a theologian"—while dealing with theological matters.⁶⁰ Among his contributions are the distinction between the person and the personnel of the Church, and the use made of the distinction between proper and instrumental causes.

⁵⁶ This is not a term Maritain used, but it has gained a certain currency today. Michel Serres says, "Perhaps what I was writing all along was an angelology": Micheal Serres with Bruno Latour, *Conversations on Science, Culture, and Time*, trans. Roxanne Lapidus (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1995), p. 118.

⁵⁷ Jacques Maritain, *Grace and Humanity*, p. 11. Later (p. 111, n. 43), he says: "I who am not an exegete but a philosopher."

⁵⁸ Jacques Maritain, *On the Church of Christ: The Person of the Church and Her Personnel*, trans. Joseph W. Evans (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1973), pp. v-vi.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. vi.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 203. See other remarks on pp. 14, 35, 117, and 174.

The culmination of the task of research worker for theology is found in that long section of *Untrammelled Approaches* dealing with theological matters, although the essay on intuitivity is only marginally theological.⁶¹ Here, Maritain deals with such topics as our nature wounded by sin and its effect on theoretical intellect, theological knowledge, exegesis, the substitute for theology among the simple, the sacrifice of the Mass, the Church of Heaven, the priesthood and the laity. But for our concern in this paper, the most pertinent passages are expressed in his discussion of theological knowledge. He speaks of "the application of his philosophical reflection to the more lofty questions treated by that knowledge superior to his own which is called theology."⁶² Yet, far from being reduced to a servant, philosophy is actually set free. A philosopher, he goes on, "should take on as the object of his reflection matters which of themselves depend on the science of theology."⁶³ But this can only occur if he educates himself through the teachings of theology. As a research worker, he is subject to the control of theology, requiring a certain docility on his part. And his strongest statement:

There could be no Christian philosophy that is not led eventually to raise its eyes toward theology, and to propose tentatively its own views on matters whose *knowledge* (Christian philosophy knows this) depends, not on philosophy, but on a superior wisdom to which the *opus theologicum* is dedicated.⁶⁴

So that it may be said that theology is the destination of Christian philosophy.

Now, despite Maritain's frequent references to himself as a philosopher, who is also a research worker in theological matters, his good friend Cardinal Journet, who had access to most of the pieces in

⁶¹ Jacques Maritain, *Untrammelled Approaches*, trans. Bernard Doering (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997). Chapter fourteen deals with intuitivity and only refers to theology in a footnote (p. 345, n. 49).

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 266.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 267.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 269.

the theology section of *Untrammelled Approaches* (these having appeared previously in *Revue Thomiste* and *Nova et Vetera*) waves aside that characterization: "But I regard him as being in his own way the most penetrating theologian of our time."⁶⁵ High praise indeed, however problematic it renders the whole project of Maritain, first spelled out in *The Peasant of the Garonne*.

By way of a conclusion, I return to the manner in which Yves R. Simon distinguished two callings between which the philosopher who is a Christian must choose, mindful of the inadequacies of the philosophical approach. True to his calling, Simon, to my knowledge, had written only one article in which theology is discussed at any length.⁶⁶ His comments on method at the end of his life are consonant with his writings throughout his life. True to his calling, Maritain the Christian philosopher had undertaken a journey that eventually led him to theological matters, however emphatic he was that he was only doing so as a philosopher.

⁶⁵ Charles Journet, "Jacques Maritain Theologian," *The New Scholasticism* 46.1 (Winter 1972): 32.

⁶⁶ Yves R. Simon, "The Rationality of the Christian Faith," in Anthony O. Simon, ed., *Philosopher at Work* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 1999), pp. 41-55.