PART II

Aristotle to Aquinas

3rd Century BCE thru 13th Century AD

(Chapters 16 – 32)

Aristotle

Next to Plato, Aristotle holds the title as one of the most influential thinkers in the West, including amongst some of the Islamic philosophers. Still it is probably his 'scientific' thinking which has the most influence in our daily lives. If all of Western philosophy is a footnote to Plato, think that all Western science is a footnote to Aristotle.

Aristotle represents a serious break in thought with previous philosophers (re: Socrates and Plato) and yet he breaks little new ground in terms of questions. While he starts with and refines some of Plato's ideas, he abandons his mentor's view of higher, non-physical truths and seeks meaning within the world. He creates the analytical/deductive method, observing with the senses to understand and know something, creating the movement from a posteriori to a priori thinking.

A Man, A Plan….

We know a lot about Aristotle's life. A lot. Of the highlights, though, we know his father was a physician to the king of Macedonia but he was orphaned early and eventually placed into Plato's Academy at 17. Plato himself was impressed with the lad, so impressed that he called him "the mind of the school", which probably sounds much more poetic in Greek.

After Plato's death, he found his thought too different from his mentor and therefore the school he founded. Aristotle headed out, seeking his own way, hanging with other graduates and classmates (sounds like some teen-age coming of age movie). Eventually, he was summoned back to educate the young son of a certain Macedonian ruler named Phillip. This young man Alexander , who eventually became known as 'the Great' (which sounds pretty good even in English), also went on to have some influence on the thinking patterns of a large number of people.

In connection with the ascendency of Alexander, Aristotle made his way back to Athens to open a school in the Lyceum. Here he assembled a large library aided by money and materials sent by Alexander from all over the new empire.

Unfortunately for him, all good things must come to an end and with the death of Alexander the negative reaction to his rule swept Aristotle up. Similarly accused like his mentor's mentor, he choose to not let Athens 'sin twice against philosophy' (which sounds bad in both Greek and English) and unlike his grand-mentor, fled the city. Soon afterwards he got sick and died which may or may not prove Socrates' point.

Not a bad resume. His parentage places him squarely within the political system, of which the Academy sought to influence. His natural intellect and impressive mind guarantee him a seat there and influence in the regime. The peace and influence of Alexander ensured a wide effect of his thought. The idea of the library flourished, most famously in Alexandria in Egypt and still survives, though not in Alexandria. Many of his works, most probably lecture notes, survive. The right man in the right place at the right time.

The Big Themes

What distinguishes Aristotle from earlier thinkers? Not much really but to be fair it is more than just his position in the historical timeline which calls our attention to him. Logic. Vices and virtues. Understanding objects through Categories. Final cause. Biology. Psychology. Rhetoric. Poetics. You name it, he had a thought on it. He accomplished this volume of thought by breaking things down in to their components in order to better understand them. He was a *divider not a uniter* to paraphrase. He divided the 'sciences' (think of the word meaning understanding/knowledge) up into

three categories: the theoretical, the practical and the productive. Science gives us information, but that information has different ultimate ends: knowledge, conduct and the making of 'beautiful' objects.

For Aristotle, life surrounds us and is larger than just our moral actions. The quantification and qualification of the world around us requires a portion of our thought as well. Still, knowing involves right action. That is to say, contrary to some opinions just because we can do something, we should not because it is not ethical.

Thought Exercise

Compare and contrast this understanding of knowledge and the purpose of knowledge with Plato's.

Aristotle Interrupted

But we digress. As stated previously, Aristotle wrote on a great many things. The following are notes are on some of the works or lectures which are part of his main thought. Later we will explore these and other ideas but for now, a mere overview because to expound on them would take more room than we have.

One last observation is that Aristotle was the master of the opening line.

Metaphysics

"All men desire to know." (*Metaphysics Bk. 1:1*) This fundamental function within humans requires much thought. If Nature is the physical world around us, what is the nature of what is beyond Nature? What knowledge is best characterized as 'Wisdom', and how do we acquire it? While he takes a slightly different approach than Plato, the subject is similar.

Science (Physics)

What is the nature of Nature? Here he takes on some of the big ones we have glanced at: Motion, something or nothing, Time and change. Biology and Psychology fall into this realm. What are some of the 'first principles' of Nature? The term 'natural philosopher' is used for a follower of science, one that has been dropped in favor of 'scientist'.

Logic

We have previously examined this idea, but let us now look at the term in terms of the man. Well, now comes the hard part. Sheepishly and with as much as the word is bandied about here, contritely, I must inform you that Aristotle never formally assign a work to it, nor did he actually use the word. It comes to us later probably from Cicero. His word would be more correctly translated 'analytics'. Aristotle saw logic not so much as a science but a function of every human being and society. That is to say, it is, as we have proffered it to you, an *instrument* of science and the necessary basis of science. He took it for granted that it had to be understood and practiced in order to do any of the sciences.

Still we brazenly assign the moniker 'Aristotelian Logic' because he did wax at length on the subject as it was so important to his system. He introduces the syllogism as the basis for all reasoning.

The Soul

How different could this be from Plato, right? For Aristotle the study of the soul is Psychology (think *Psyche*); therefore the end of Psychology is to study and reach an understanding "first of its essential nature and secondly its properties" (*De Anima Bk. 1:7*). As he presents it, the study of how and why we understand is perhaps the greatest in rank of the sciences. In this way he still reflects Plato. What is the end of knowledge except that we should live better?

Ethics (Nicomachean)

More than just a motivation, a system unto itself and a name *Nicomachean* (most probably because it was written down by his son, Nicomachus). Everything by all accounts is aimed toward the good, so it must be that the good is that toward which all is aimed. I wished I had said that and people would be quoting me instead of the first line of the *Ethics*. An interesting development is the non-relativistic notion that some goods are subservient to other goods.

So what is the Good? Think back; virtue, as Plato saw it was involved the whole of the person working toward a synthesis of thought and deed. Aristotle, never content to let whole things be whole, dissects virtue back into two parts: intellectual (thoughts) and moral (actions).

Politics

Well everyone has an opinion right? Aristotle's opinion was that Politics was the science of the good, that of which Ethics speaks. In that sense and if we look at the categories of knowledge, this would be the most practical science. As with Plato, Aristotle puts high value on political thought.

Putting It Together

So as we begin to examine this great thinker, we have to stand in awe of the effect his formalized thought has on so much of what we think today.

Ironically (if irony were not dead, but that is another class), at least to this observer, the idea of 'free-thinking' that we cling to and the ideas we often dismiss through *Science*, are often at odds with what was embraced by this author of Science.

"That which is there to be spoken of and thought of, must be." Parmenides, Fragment 6

Aristotle Unveiled

Our previous discussion shows the breadth of Aristotle's thought, but gives very little in the way of depth. The ultimate problem not just for us in our limited format, and not just for the voluminous Aristotle, but for most philosophers is the extent of their writings and thought. What to pick and choose? What to survey that will be good for later? What is good just to know in and of itself? Well, not easily answered questions, at least for this writer. In the meantime, we have never let ignorance stop us. Knowing that the extent of our treatment will be a mere pale shade compared to the works themselves, let us press on. To do that we must pierce the veil; well maybe at best we can spend some time peeking beneath the curtain and come to understand some of the language and thought of Aristotle.

Aristotle often invokes the *dialectical* method. Plato (and Socrates) employs it but more often uses the Socratic method because he really believes in drawing the answer out of the individual. Aristotle *dialogs* with other thinkers to work through the idea. Whereas Plato believes the answer lies within the individual, Aristotle believes the idea lies within the thinking, that it is more external, because it lies in the observation.

And The Categories Are…

We will first tackle the *idea* of Categories. This is an essential part of the understanding of not only Aristotelian thought but that of many later philosophers (like Kant). In a rash and completely generalized statement we can state that Socrates and Plato really did not care as to the minutiae when it came to thinking. They were more about the big ideas. Aristotle, on the other hand, saw that not being exact led to errors in thinking, so he set out to formalize thought and thinking. Not the ideas, but the methods are new. Many people before him have mentioned many of the things he will explore, but his genius provides a formal structure to the thinking.

Aside from just an obvious glee about how the world is put together, he really wants to get down to a how we can think about things that will give us a consistent way to discuss them. Now on Aristotle's cue we must define the word *categories*. The Greek word is probably best transliterated as 'predicate' as in *subject* and *predicate*. So, at their simplest, categories are those things which can be the predicate or subject in a statement or an argument.

We might also say that one thing is predictable of or predicated on another, as in "this sentence is predicated in the idea that I know what I'm talking about."

So how do categories help us and how are they determined? The two questions are actually the same question. The determining of categories helps us to understand them and vice versa. Okay, okay, I hear the cynics (small 'c') among you saying 'that sounds like a load of…categories'. Were we not always taught that you cannot define a thing with itself? Did not Aristotle himself classify that as a logical fallacy? Well, yes. Okay you caught me.

The main problem with categorizing categories is that there are so many ways to do it and so many ways to understand it. Aristotle himself relies on categorizing yet his official list of categories seems to be fluid. The main point is that when we are thinking about things we are trying to get to their heart, not by stripping away everything but getting down to their basic definition and their definition to everything else. Along the way we do not abandon what we know about the thing, just come to greater understand of the thing in its larger context.

Meaning, for 100

How do I categorize things, let me count the ways. We tend to think in generals and specifics. Sometimes the two can get in each other's way. The meaning of words, the concepts they represent need to be bounded, so that we can understand the context in which we use them. Aristotle starts out by addressing this using three words:

1. **Equivocally**: That is to say something has the same name as something else but the definition is different (equivalency) – *world*: the collection of people and the planet.
2. **Univocally**: Is the case when the name and the definition applied to that name are the same (oneness) – *car*: same whether it is a Ford or a Toyota.
3. **Derivatively**: Something derives its name from something else (inheritance) – *computer*: something which computes.

How do we get meaning? What are the ways in which something is the thing on which other things depend? This *definition* is in a sense what a category is, that is, it is the thing on which others are based, or the bucket into which they fall. Hence we can talk about humans and birds as both being animals, even though they are not the same kind of animal. He ends up by telling us that the definition of something, that by which we know it as *it*, is what we have when we strip away everything which can exist apart from it. This is how I *know* a bird from a tree.

Double Jeopardy

Why is definition and defining and categorizing things so important? Why did Aristotle feel the need to go in this direction? What aspect of Platonic thought caused him diverge from defining things by their Form? Taking three steps forward and two steps back we dance back to Plato and take a look at that central tenet of Platonic thought: the Forms. There are three theses about Forms which not only I conveniently left out till now but state they are:

1. **Individual.** Forms (or *ideals* or *common natures*) are **individuals** that express (and explain) all features common to the individuals that share that nature.
2. **Distinct from particulars.** The common nature (goodness, humanity) is distinct from any of the individual things that share it (good things, humans).
3. **Self-predicable.** The common nature must be predicable of itself. Goodness is good, Humanity is human, etc.

From this Platonic definition, Aristotle, in a kind of Sherman and Peabody flight through the *Way-Back* machine, runs into the *Third Man* paradox:

> *Human* is predicable both of Socrates and of *humanity*. So *human* must be distinct from both Socrates and *humanity*. So we need yet another common nature *human' (human prime)* distinct from *human* and from Socrates. And yet another nature again that is distinct from *human'*, *human* and Socrates. But this will go on forever, which means we really have no explanation for what makes Socrates human. He tells us the same problem would also occur with "white".

Basically Aristotle counters with the idea of *Substance* and *Accidents*. Recall from earlier brief discussions (See Chapter 9) that *Substance* is that which makes something what it is – human for example, and *Accidents* are what distinguish the individual Substances from one another – hair color and height. This avoids the way-back argument because you distinguish things from one another not by some external 'form' but by their accidents. As an extra thought remember that definition-wise what for Aristotle could be a substance for one thing might be an accident for another, but that is where having categories helps us (more on that later).

Logic, for 500

Logic is the core tool or as Aristotle would call it, an *instrument* (*organon*) for all thinking. Sound familiar? That aside, as you can see from the discussion of Categories why their idea was necessary before he could even posit the idea of logical thinking, and that logical thinking would be required to define the categories. Go back and look at the *Square of Opposition* (Chapter 2) where you can see the categories at work.

Aristotle has works on both the a priori and a posteriori *analytics*, as he would call them. Now, we do not want to re-hash all of the logic section, as helpful as that may be, but put it into context. For Aristotle the reasoning for anything in the theoretical sciences was based in true-false statements in relationship to one another. The idea of the syllogism, based on 'truths', is basically statements predicated about a subject, or more succinctly: *propositions*. Aristotle believed that the flaw in so many explanations was the lack of logic. The idea and imperative nature of logic meant that consistency is assured and that also 'foundational truths' or *demonstration* can be established. As with the categories, this just means that you do not have to go back a re-prove everything in order to proceed in an argument. You also avoid confusing yourself and committing a fallacy.

Language, for 1000

"Spoken words are the symbols of mental experience and written words are the symbols of the spoken word." *Thus spake Aristotle* (*De Interpretatione* 16). Words have to be understood. The words we use for communicating ideas must be understood. Aristotle acknowledges that there are a variety of linguistic possibilities dealing with truths and the means of communicating. These ideas, like so many others contained here, will be bounced about by later philosophers.

But for now, our discussion is not so much on the words themselves, but word forms and their definition such as nouns, verbs and the like are of concern here (that is language). Truth and falsity are derived here by combining words together, which like thoughts have neither validity nor non-validity in and of themselves, they just are. So this is a step beyond just the categories, which in and of themselves are neither true nor false but in only context of an argument, of predication, do they acquire some truth or falsity.

By reducing language down to these simple ideas, Aristotle makes it easier to create the categories for which Science and we ourselves are so indebted. But is there a down side? Does this reduce language to a very base and uninteresting phenomena in humans? Not for Aristotle. Remember, he really wants to understand things and he knows that you can be distracted when you say things like, but what about different languages and colloquial words and phrases, etc., etc. *Stay on target* (Gold Five, *Star Wars*).

Final Jeopardy

"This is the understanding of what knowledge is." And the question is "What is Metaphysics?" Close; how much did you wager? Really the question we are trying to answer is what knowledge (*epistemology*) was for Aristotle. Well, we know that it was important to him; we know that there are types of knowledge (theoretical, practical and productive) but how did he see the sciences (*instruments* of thinking) falling into those categories? Well here are some quick examples:

Metaphysics, physics and mathematics fall under the theoretical knowledge realm, that is to say their end aim is to provide knowledge that is of the thing itself not of the *thinker*. Alternatively, practical knowledge, in which ethics and politics fall, concentrates on action and it emerges from the *doer* not in some external reality.

Theoretical knowledge requires the understanding of the principles of and the application of deductive thinking or Logic, with the capital 'L'. Basically, how can you discuss/learn anything unless you have a definition of argumentation?

Practical knowledge is an interesting distinction from productive knowledge, in that these would seem to be 'productive' as anything practical would be productive, right? Not exactly; think of the root more in terms of 'practice' instead of 'pragmatic' (which is a whole other class).

Productive knowledge kind of speaks for itself, but just in case the voice is too quiet I will boldly speak for it. Think back to Plato's *Ion*. How did he see 'practical' knowledge? For Aristotle it was not much different. He classified medicine, construction and the like here, as Plato might say, 'the arts'.

Putting It Together

This is a massive discussion, and yet very incomplete. The ideas and notions which lie behind it press unseen like the water behind a dam. Aristotle cannot really be encapsulated without some loss, so some reading is required. What we seek here is to understand how important it was for Aristotle that distinctions be made, and not just arbitrarily, at the time you want to prove your point but at all times, such that the point remains valid from there on. Defining and understanding things in relationship to one another gave them distinction but also kept them in the big picture. As for Plato, knowledge was the goal, and not just knowledge but *right* knowledge.

Plato felt reason alone was the means to wisdom. Aristotle really wants to add observation to the mix. He begins with our sense of wonder and awe of the world around us. This must count for something. Consequentially, things are knowable in and from themselves (thing *qua* thing). Think of it as the perfect is held within them as opposed to some external place. This is a difference in *Epistemology* between the two.

"I'm not talking about clams in general; I'm talking about each clam individually. I mean, how can you have each one generally? Well I guess you could, but it wouldn't be, like…what I mean." ***Arlo Guthrie**, The Story of Reuben Clamzo and His Strange Daughter in the Key of A.*

CATEGORIES (*Chapters 1-6*)

1

1 [a]1 Things are said to be named 'equivocally' when, though they have a common name, the definition corresponding with the name differs for each. Thus, a real man and a figure in a picture can both lay claim to the name 'animal'; yet these are equivocally so named, for, though they have a common name, the definition corresponding with the name differs for each. For should any one define in what sense each is an animal, his definition in the one case will be appropriate to that case only.

1 [a]6 On the other hand, things are said to be named 'univocally' which have both the name and the definition answering to the name in common. A man and an ox are both 'animal', and these are univocally so named, inasmuch as not only the name, but also the definition, is the same in both cases: for if a man should state in what sense each is an animal, the statement in the one case would be identical with that in the other.

1 [a]12 Things are said to be named 'derivatively', which derive their name from some other name, but differ from it in termination. Thus the grammarian derives his name from the word 'grammar', and the courageous man from the word 'courage'.

2

1 [a]16 Forms of speech are either simple or composite. Examples of the latter are such expressions as 'the man runs', 'the man wins'; of the former 'man', 'ox', 'runs', 'wins'.

1 [a]20 Of things themselves some are predicable of a subject, and are never present in a subject. Thus 'man' is predicable of the individual man, and is never present in a subject. By being 'present in a subject' I do not mean present as parts are present in a whole, but being incapable of existence apart from the said subject.

1 [a]25 Some things, again, are present in a subject, but are never predicable of a subject. For instance, a certain point of grammatical knowledge is present in the mind, but is not predicable of any subject; or again, a certain whiteness may be present in the body (for color requires a material basis), yet it is never predicable of anything.

1 [b] Other things, again, are both predicable of a subject and present in a subject. Thus while knowledge is present in the human mind, it is predicable of grammar.

1 [b]3 There is, lastly, a class of things which are neither present in a subject nor predicable of a subject, such as the individual man or the individual horse. But, to speak more generally, that which is individual and has the character of a unit is never predicable of a subject. Yet in some cases there is nothing to prevent such being present in a subject. Thus a certain point of grammatical knowledge is present in a subject.

3

1 [b]10 When one thing is predicated of another, all that which is predicable of the predicate will be predicable also of the subject. Thus, 'man' is predicated of the individual man; but 'animal' is predicated of 'man'; it will, therefore, be predicable of the individual man also: for the individual man is both 'man' and 'animal'.

1 [b]16 If genera are different and co-ordinate, their differentiae are themselves different in kind. Take as an instance the genus 'animal' and the genus 'knowledge'. 'With feet', 'two-footed', 'winged', 'aquatic', are differentiae of 'animal'; the species of knowledge are not distinguished by the same differentiae. One species of knowledge does not differ from another in being 'two-

footed'.

1 But where one genus is subordinate to another, there is
b20 nothing to prevent their having the same differentiae: for the greater class is predicated of the lesser, so that all the differentiae of the predicate will be differentiae also of the subject.

4

1 Expressions which are in no way composite signify substance,
b25 quantity, quality, relation, place, time, position, state, action, or affection. To sketch my meaning roughly, examples of substance are 'man' or 'the horse', of quantity, such terms as 'two cubits long' or 'three cubits long', of quality, such attributes as 'white', 'grammatical'. 'Double', 'half', 'greater', fall under the category of relation; 'in a the market place', 'in the Lyceum', under that of place; 'yesterday', 'last year', under that of time. 'Lying', 'sitting', are terms indicating position, 'shod', 'armed', state; 'to lance', 'to cauterize', action; 'to be lanced', 'to be cauterized', affection.

2 No one of these terms, in and by itself, involves an affirmation;
a4 it is by the combination of such terms that positive or negative statements arise. For every assertion must, as is admitted, be either true or false, whereas expressions which are not in any way composite such as 'man', 'white', 'runs', 'wins', cannot be either true or false.

5

2a11 Substance, in the truest and primary and most definite sense of the word, is that which is neither predicable of a subject nor present in a subject; for instance, the individual man or horse. But in a secondary sense those things are called substances within which, as species, the primary substances are included; also those which, as genera, include the species. For instance, the individual man is included in the species 'man', and the genus to which the species belongs is 'animal'; these, therefore-that is to say, the species 'man' and the genus 'animal,-are termed secondary substances.

2a19 It is plain from what has been said that both the name and the definition of the predicate must be predicable of the subject. For instance, 'man' is predicted of the individual man. Now in this case the name of the species man' is applied to the individual, for we use the term 'man' in describing the individual; and the definition of 'man' will also be predicated of the individual man, for the individual man is both man and animal. Thus, both the name and the definition of the species are predicable of the individual.

2a27 With regard, on the other hand, to those things which are present in a subject, it is generally the case that neither their name nor their definition is predicable of that in which they are present. Though, however, the definition is never predicable, there is nothing in certain cases to prevent the name being used. For instance, 'white' being present in a body is predicated of that in which it is present, for a body is called white: the definition, however, of the color white' is never predicable of the body.

2a34 Everything except primary substances is either predicable of a primary substance or present in a primary substance. This becomes evident by reference to particular instances which occur. 'Animal' is predicated of the species 'man', therefore of the individual man, for if there were no individual man of whom it
2b could be predicated, it could not be predicated of the species 'man' at all. Again, color is present in body, therefore in individual bodies, for if there were no individual body in which it was present, it could not be present in body at all. Thus everything except primary substances is either predicated of primary substances, or is present in them, and if these last did not exist, it would be impossible for anything else to exist.

2b7 Of secondary substances, the species is more truly substance than the genus, being more nearly related to primary substance. For if any one should render an account of what a primary substance is, he would render a more instructive account, and one more proper to the subject, by stating the species than by stating the genus. Thus, he would give a more instructive account of an individual man by stating that he was man than by stating that he was animal, for the former description is peculiar to the individual in a greater degree, while the latter is too general. Again, the man who gives an account of the nature of an individual tree will give a more instructive account by mentioning the species 'tree' than by

mentioning the genus 'plant'.

2^b15 Moreover, primary substances are most properly called substances in virtue of the fact that they are the entities which underlie every. else, and that everything else is either predicated of them or present in them. Now the same relation which subsists between primary substance and everything else subsists also between the species and the genus: for the species is to the genus as subject is to predicate, since the genus is predicated of the species, whereas the species cannot be predicated of the genus. Thus we have a second ground for asserting that the species is more truly substance than the genus.

2^b22 Of species themselves, except in the case of such as are genera, no one is more truly substance than another. We should not give a more appropriate account of the individual man by stating the species to which he belonged, than we should of an individual horse by adopting the same method of definition. In the same way, of primary substances, no one is more truly substance than another; an individual man is not more truly substance than an individual ox.

2^b29 It is, then, with good reason that of all that remains, when we exclude primary substances, we concede to species and genera alone the name 'secondary substance', for these alone of all the predicates convey a knowledge of primary substance. For it is by stating the species or the genus that we appropriately define any individual man; and we shall make our definition more exact by stating the former than by stating the latter. All other things that we state, such as that he is white, that he runs, and so on, are irrelevant to the definition. Thus it is just that these alone, apart from primary substances, should be called substances.

2^b37 Further, primary substances are most properly so called, because they underlie and are the subjects of everything else. Now

3^a the same relation that subsists between primary substance and everything else subsists also between the species and the genus to which the primary substance belongs, on the one hand, and every attribute which is not included within these, on the other. For these are the subjects of all such. If we call an individual man 'skilled in grammar', the predicate is applicable also to the species and to the genus to which he belongs. This law holds good in all cases.

3^a7 It is a common characteristic of all substance that it is never present in a subject. For primary substance is neither present in a subject nor predicated of a subject; while, with regard to secondary substances, it is clear from the following arguments (apart from others) that they are not present in a subject. For 'man' is predicated of the individual man, but is not present in any subject: for manhood is not present in the individual man. In the same way, 'animal' is also predicated of the individual man, but is not present in him. Again, when a thing is present in a subject, though the name may quite well be applied to that in which it is present, the definition cannot be applied. Yet of secondary substances, not only the name, but also the definition, applies to the subject: we should use both the definition of the species and that of the genus with reference to the individual man. Thus substance cannot be present in a subject.

3^a21 Yet this is not peculiar to substance, for it is also the case that differentiae cannot be present in subjects. The characteristics 'terrestrial' and 'two-footed' are predicated of the species 'man', but not present in it. For they are not in man. Moreover, the definition of the differentia may be predicated of that of which the differentia itself is predicated. For instance, if the characteristic 'terrestrial' is predicated of the species 'man', the definition also of that characteristic may be used to form the predicate of the species 'man': for 'man' is terrestrial.

3^a29 The fact that the parts of substances appear to be present in the whole, as in a subject, should not make us apprehensive lest we should have to admit that such parts are not substances: for in explaining the phrase 'being present in a subject', we stated' that we meant 'otherwise than as parts in a whole'.

3^a33 It is the mark of substances and of differentiae that, in all propositions of which they form the predicate, they are predicated univocally. For all such propositions have for their subject either the individual or the species. It is true that, inasmuch as primary

substance is not predicable of anything, it can never form the
3[b] predicate of any proposition. But of secondary substances, the species is predicated of the individual, the genus both of the species and of the individual. Similarly the differentiae are predicated of the species and of the individuals. Moreover, the definition of the species and that of the genus are applicable to the primary substance, and that of the genus to the species. For all that is predicated of the predicate will be predicated also of the subject. Similarly, the definition of the differentiae will be applicable to the species and to the individuals. But it was stated above that the word 'univocal' was applied to those things which had both name and definition in common. It is, therefore, established that in every proposition, of which either substance or a differentia forms the predicate, these are predicated univocally.

3[b]10 All substance appears to signify that which is individual. In the case of primary substance this is indisputably true, for the thing is a unit. In the case of secondary substances, when we speak, for instance, of 'man' or 'animal', our form of speech gives the impression that we are here also indicating that which is individual, but the impression is not strictly true; for a secondary substance is not an individual, but a class with a certain qualification; for it is not one and single as a primary substance is; the words 'man', 'animal', are predicable of more than one subject.

3 Yet species and genus do not merely indicate quality, like the
[b]17 term 'white'; 'white' indicates quality and nothing further, but species and genus determine the quality with reference to a substance: they signify substance qualitatively differentiated. The determinate qualification covers a larger field in the case of the genus that in that of the species: he who uses the word 'animal' is herein using a word of wider extension than he who uses the word 'man'.

3 Another mark of substance is that it has no contrary. What
[b]24 could be the contrary of any primary substance, such as the individual man or animal? It has none. Nor can the species or the genus have a contrary. Yet this characteristic is not peculiar to substance, but is true of many other things, such as quantity. There is nothing that forms the contrary of 'two cubits long' or of 'three cubits long', or of 'ten', or of any such term. A man may contend that 'much' is the contrary of 'little', or 'great' of 'small', but of definite quantitative terms no contrary exists.

3[b]33 Substance, again, does not appear to admit of variation of degree. I do not mean by this that one substance cannot be more or less truly substance than another, for it has already been stated' that this is the case; but that no single substance admits of varying degrees within itself. For instance, one particular substance, 'man', cannot be more or less man either than himself at some other time or than some other man. One man cannot be more man than another, as that which is white may be more or less white than
4[a] some other white object, or as that which is beautiful may be more or less beautiful than some other beautiful object. The same quality, moreover, is said to subsist in a thing in varying degrees at different times. A body, being white, is said to be whiter at one time than it was before, or, being warm, is said to be warmer or less warm than at some other time. But substance is not said to be more or less that which it is: a man is not more truly a man at one time than he was before, nor is anything, if it is substance, more or less what it is. Substance, then, does not admit of variation of degree.

4[a]10 The most distinctive mark of substance appears to be that, while remaining numerically one and the same, it is capable of admitting contrary qualities. From among things other than substance, we should find ourselves unable to bring forward any which possessed this mark. Thus, one and the same color cannot be white and black. Nor can the same one action be good and bad: this law holds good with everything that is not substance. But one and the selfsame substance, while retaining its identity, is yet capable of admitting contrary qualities. The same individual person is at one time white, at another black, at one time warm, at another cold, at one time good, at another bad. This capacity is found nowhere else, though it might be maintained that a statement or opinion was an exception to the rule. The same statement, it is agreed, can be both true and false. For if the

statement 'he is sitting' is true, yet, when the person in question has risen, the same statement will be false. The same applies to opinions. For if anyone thinks truly that a person is sitting, yet, when that person has risen, this same opinion, if still held, will be false. Yet although this exception may be allowed, there is, nevertheless, a difference in the manner in which the thing takes place. It is by themselves changing that substances admit contrary qualities. It is thus that that which was hot becomes cold, for it has entered into a different state. Similarly that which was white becomes black, and that which was bad good, by a process of change; and in the same way in all other cases it is by changing that substances are capable of admitting contrary qualities. But statements and opinions themselves remain unaltered in all
4b respects: it is by the alteration in the facts of the case that the contrary quality comes to be theirs. The statement 'he is sitting' remains unaltered, but it is at one time true, at another false, according to circumstances. What has been said of statements applies also to opinions. Thus, in respect of the manner in which the thing takes place, it is the peculiar mark of substance that it should be capable of admitting contrary qualities; for it is by itself changing that it does so.

4b4 If, then, a man should make this exception and contend that statements and opinions are capable of admitting contrary qualities, his contention is unsound. For statements and opinions are said to have this capacity, not because they themselves undergo modification, but because this modification occurs in the case of something else. The truth or falsity of a statement depends on facts, and not on any power on the part of the statement itself of admitting contrary qualities. In short, there is nothing which can alter the nature of statements and opinions. As, then, no change takes place in themselves, these cannot be said to be capable of admitting contrary qualities.

4b12 But it is by reason of the modification which takes place within the substance itself that a substance is said to be capable of admitting contrary qualities; for a substance admits within itself either disease or health, whiteness or blackness. It is in this sense that it is said to be capable of admitting contrary qualities.

4b16 To sum up, it is a distinctive mark of substance, that, while remaining numerically one and the same, it is capable of admitting contrary qualities, the modification taking place through a change in the substance itself.

4b19 Let these remarks suffice on the subject of substance.

6

4b20 Quantity is either discrete or continuous. Moreover, some quantities are such that each part of the whole has a relative position to the other parts: others have within them no such relation of part to part.

4b24 Instances of discrete quantities are number and speech; of continuous, lines, surfaces, solids, and, besides these, timeand place.

4b25 In the case of the parts of a number, there is no common boundary at which they join. For example: two fives make ten, but the two fives have no common boundary, but are separate; the parts three and seven also do not join at any boundary. Nor, to generalize, would it ever be possible in the case of number that there should be a common boundary among the parts; they are always separate. Number, therefore, is a discrete quantity.

4b31 The same is true of speech. That speech is a quantity is evident: for it is measured in long and short syllables. I mean here that speech which is vocal. Moreover, it is a discrete quantity for its parts have no common boundary. There is no common boundary at which the syllables join, but each is separate and distinct from the rest.

5a A line, on the other hand, is a continuous quantity, for it is possible to find a common boundary at which its parts join. In the case of the line, this common boundary is the point; in the case of the plane, it is the line: for the parts of the plane have also a common boundary. Similarly you can find a common boundary in the case of the parts of a solid, namely either a line or a plane.

5a6 Space and time also belong to this class of quantities. Time, past, present, and future, forms a continuous whole. Space, likewise, is a continuous quantity; for the parts of a solid occupy a

certain space, and these have a common boundary; it follows that the parts of space also, which are occupied by the parts of the solid, have the same common boundary as the parts of the solid. Thus, not only time, but space also, is a continuous quantity, for its parts have a common boundary.

5[a]15 Quantities consist either of parts which bear a relative position each to each, or of parts which do not. The parts of a line bear a relative position to each other, for each lies somewhere, and it would be possible to distinguish each, and to state the position of each on the plane and to explain to what sort of part among the rest each was contiguous. Similarly the parts of a plane have position, for it could similarly be stated what was the position of each and what sort of parts were contiguous. The same is true with regard to the solid and to space. But it would be impossible to show that the arts of a number had a relative position each to each, or a particular position, or to state what parts were contiguous. Nor could this be done in the case of time, for none of the parts of time has an abiding existence, and that which does not abide can hardly have position. It would be better to say that such parts had a relative order, in virtue of one being prior to another. Similarly with number: in counting, 'one' is prior to 'two', and 'two' to 'three', and thus the parts of number may be said to possess a relative order, though it would be impossible to discover any distinct position for each. This holds good also in the case of speech. None of its parts has an abiding existence: when once a syllable is pronounced, it is not possible to retain it, so that, naturally, as the parts do not abide, they cannot have position. Thus, some quantities consist of parts which have position, and some of those which have not.

5[a]37 Strictly speaking, only the things which I have mentioned belong to the category of quantity: everything else that is called quantitative is a quantity in a secondary sense. It is because we have in mind some one of these quantities, properly so called, that
5[b] we apply quantitative terms to other things. We speak of what is white as large, because the surface over which the white extends is large; we speak of an action or a process as lengthy, because the time covered is long; these things cannot in their own right claim the quantitative epithet. For instance, should any one explain how long an action was, his statement would be made in terms of the time taken, to the effect that it lasted a year, or something of that sort. In the same way, he would explain the size of a white object in terms of surface, for he would state the area which it covered. Thus the things already mentioned, and these alone, are in their intrinsic nature quantities; nothing else can claim the name in its own right, but, if at all, only in a secondary sense.

5[b]11 Quantities have no contraries. In the case of definite quantities this is obvious; thus, there is nothing that is the contrary of 'two cubits long' or of 'three cubits long', or of a surface, or of any such quantities. A man might, indeed, argue that 'much' was the contrary of 'little', and 'great' of 'small'. But these are not quantitative, but relative; things are not great or small absolutely, they are so called rather as the result of an act of comparison. For instance, a mountain is called small, a grain large, in virtue of the fact that the latter is greater than others of its kind, the former less. Thus there is a reference here to an external standard, for if the terms 'great' and 'small' were used absolutely, a mountain would never be called small or a grain large. Again, we say that there are many people in a village, and few in Athens, although those in the city are many times as numerous as those in the village: or we say that a house has many in it, and a theatre few, though those in the theatre far outnumber those in the house. The terms 'two cubits long, “three cubits long,' and so on indicate quantity, the terms 'great' and 'small' indicate relation, for they have reference to an external standard. It is, therefore, plain that these are to be classed as relative.

5[b]30 Again, whether we define them as quantitative or not, they have no contraries: for how can there be a contrary of an attribute which is not to be apprehended in or by itself, but only by reference to something external? Again, if 'great' and 'small' are contraries, it will come about that the same subject can admit contrary qualities at one and the same time, and that things will themselves be contrary to themselves. For it happens at times that

the same thing is both small and great. For the same thing may be small in comparison with one thing, and great in comparison with another, so that the same thing comes to be both small and great at one and the same time, and is of such a nature as to admit contrary qualities at one and the same moment. Yet it was agreed, 6[a] when substance was being discussed, that nothing admits contrary qualities at one and the same moment. For though substance is capable of admitting contrary qualities, yet no one is at the same time both sick and healthy, nothing is at the same time both white and black. Nor is there anything which is qualified in contrary ways at one and the same time.

6[a]4 Moreover, if these were contraries, they would themselves be contrary to themselves. For if 'great' is the contrary of 'small', and the same thing is both great and small at the same time, then 'small' or 'great' is the contrary of itself. But this is impossible. The term 'great', therefore, is not the contrary of the term 'small', nor 'much' of 'little'. And even though a man should call these terms not relative but quantitative, they would not have contraries.

6[a]11 It is in the case of space that quantity most plausibly appears to admit of a contrary. For men define the term 'above' as the contrary of 'below', when it is the region at the centre they mean by 'below'; and this is so, because nothing is farther from the extremities of the universe than the region at the centre. Indeed, it seems that in defining contraries of every kind men have recourse to a spatial metaphor, for they say that those things are contraries which, within the same class, are separated by the greatest possible distance.

6[a]19 Quantity does not, it appears, admit of variation of degree. One thing cannot be two cubits long in a greater degree than another. Similarly with regard to number: what is 'three' is not more truly three than what is 'five' is five; nor is one set of three more truly three than another set. Again, one period of time is not said to be more truly time than another. Nor is there any other kind of quantity, of all that have been mentioned, with regard to which variation of degree can be predicated. The category of quantity, therefore, does not admit of variation of degree.

6[a]26 The most distinctive mark of quantity is that equality and inequality are predicated of it. Each of the aforesaid quantities is said to be equal or unequal. For instance, one solid is said to be equal or unequal to another; number, too, and time can have these terms applied to them, indeed can all those kinds of quantity that have been mentioned.

6[a]31 That which is not a quantity can by no means, it would seem, be termed equal or unequal to anything else. One particular disposition or one particular quality, such as whiteness, is by no means compared with another in terms of equality and inequality but rather in terms of similarity. Thus it is the distinctive mark of quantity that it can be called equal and unequal.

Translation by E. M. Edghill

Making Sense Of It All: *Categories* Thought Sheet

Thought Point	Points of Thought

Describe this Lecture Section	
Main Point (What is he talking about?)	
What is a Category?	
What are the attributes of a Category?	
What does *predicated* mean?	
What is Substance?	
What are the two types of Substance?	
What is Quantity? Why is it separate from Substance?	

Aristotle's More Physical Side

Okay we have an overview and a foundation, now let us examine the specifics of his philosophy, specifically his more earthy side: *Physics*. Theoretical knowledge itself has forms and while this subject may seem to be less theoretical than practical, for Aristotle it still falls within the *theoretical* realm (never let it be said that if Aristotle thought that if it was good enough to be categorized, it was not good enough to be sub-categorized). It is because of the *type of thinking* involved that Physics falls under the theoretical sciences, which would seem odd to our 'modern' minds except that *we cognoscenti* understand the way Aristotle classifies knowledge (*see Chapter 16*).

More Than Just Good Looks

That said, the depths to which we plunge are still very shallow, after all looks are only skin deep, right? With that in mind, in this episode let us examine what we might call the 'hard' sciences. Physics deals with things which have a separate existence but are changeable or to put it another way, things which are in and of themselves what they are (regardless of what I may think about them) but are able to be 'changed'. The stars are the stars *and* are subject to the laws of motion, i.e. they change positions.

To put it one more way, *Physical* things (nature) are the things that have form (*substance*) but do not have within themselves causes or actions, that is, they are acted upon externally. In the study of physical things, the first level is that of matter and form (define 'star'). Next comes the inquiry into movement ('change') and finally into the cause of movement (what is the source of the change/movement). What all this means is that Aristotle will spend time on the physical attributes of a thing but in order to fully understand it we must also understand the forces which work upon it. Back again to the stars. Simply put, the motion of heavenly bodies is part of who they are. If we merely look at the substance and accidents of stars but do not look at planetary motion and the relationship of that to the star itself our knowledge is incomplete. Further, if we do not understand the causes of planetary motion we still do not understand stars and their significance. *N'est-il pas*?

A Rugged Exterior

So the physical is observable and the observable gives us knowledge. We know that the categories help us to understand things and how they relate. We understand the idea of primary and secondary substances as defining aspects of the thing. We understand all these things, right?

Well, let us just move on anyway. Suffice it to say from all we understand that the thing itself (not just the individual instances) needs to be kept separate in understanding from the things which are part of it but are not necessarily the thing itself. That is to say, that while we are bi-pedal (which is a thing-in-itself) we cannot say human = bi-pedal. We do know that bi-pedal separates us from quad-pedal dogs even though we are both animals, and therefore defines us in the animal genus as different from dogs. As a geek aside, that little discussion used both the substance and the quantity categories to discuss a thing or things. Rolling so far?

So physics deals with the things which we encounter every day, the things that surround us and make up our world. These are things which have meaning in and of themselves but they also help us to understand deeper patterns and concepts. Ultimately Aristotle has a scale of reality, from matter without form on one end (think: the *ether*) to form without matter (think: ideas, similar to Plato's *Forms*) at the other. All of these things are observable and quantifiable in some sense even the theoretical ones. We know the sky exists because we see the stars move through it. We know ideas

exist because we can think them. All of these things can be understood and not only understood but they allow us through their various properties to understand other things.

So to state it formally, things have four *defining features*: an origin, a purpose, a matter and defining characteristics. A thing's origin is its *efficient* cause; a thing's purpose is its *final* cause; a thing's matter is its *material* cause; a thing's defining characteristics are its *formal* cause.

Ch-Ch-Ch-Ch-Changes

Motion is basically *change* according to Aristotle. He postulates four types of motion: substantive (particularly its beginning and its ending), qualitative (changing qualities), quantitative (increasing and decreasing it), and locomotive (changing its place) and the ideas of *potentiality* and *actuality* get thrown in for good measure. Recall back to our original discussion (kindly referenced as such) of motion and the idea of *something* or *nothing*. We know that Plato was in the *something* class (a *pluralist*) and Aristotle seems to follow in his footsteps. So, if motion implies *something* and if motion stops, then the thing stops being *something*. Well we just cannot have that, can we? For our man, activity can be thought of as something even just being itself. Life is in an active state one might say. Couch Potato Alert: you are what you are (aside from just being a slug) even at rest, because rest itself does not stop you from being what you are.

So when one asks a question or better, makes a statement like Bono does in *Mysterious Ways*, that we should *see the boy inside the man*, is the man the same as the boy was or has the boy disappeared and stopped being and been replaced by the man? We can see that the *ideas* and *words used* are intricately linked. Change/Motion/Activity then is more than just a movement from here to there, i.e. of position but also state: bat to ball, boy to man, egg to chicken. This idea of remaining the same even in change relies on the *substance* category we saw earlier. Static states rely upon and are the result of some activity of the thing. So, the primary substance defines the thing and secondary substance(s), which might be static, rise from that.

Mysterious Ways

So just what causes a boy to become a man? This is the final idea physics talks about. In what may once again seem a contrary notion to our modern ears, when Aristotle fixes something into its place, he leaves it there. Physics does not imply evolution. The individual contains the definition within it. There would be no dinosaur-to-bird evolutionary movement because the bird would already have to be in the dinosaur (or better, be a *dinobird*); part of its primary substance or to put it better, due to *contraries* (remember that from the reading?) it would have to cease to be in order for the other to be (extinction aside).

Things do not really shift place because Aristotle believes in a hierarchical structure of nature. Some things are ‘higher’ than others. Humans over animals over sponges over rocks…you get the idea.

Again, remember way back when our discussion of movement and *something or nothing*? We can place Aristotle in the *something* camp. Aristotle rejects the idea of space being a void because empty space is simply impossible. In an Einsteinian move he links space, time and motion together. Space is defined as the limit of the surrounding body towards what is surrounded, that is, a relationship between bodies defining their limits (we know when a tree stops being a tree and the bird on the branch starts being a bird). Time is defined as the *measure of motion* in regard to before and after, and so depends for its very existence upon motion (queue *Twilight Zone* theme).

Simply put, if there were no motion/change, there would be no time. This linking them together proves them. Since Time is the measuring of motion, it also depends for its existence on an intellect

able to count (something must perceive it) and measure it. If there were no mind to count, there could be no time (hmm, sounds suspiciously like a Biology and Psychology segue).

…Don't Know Much Biology

And so it shall be. Everything has a place and everything in its place (in time). Aristotle provides in this groundwork the basis for the main idea for his physics: the study of the hierarchy of being. Also called the *scale* of being, it is a movement from simplicity to complexity, with the higher, more complex things being 'worth more' than the lower things (think rocks versus humans). Organizing together into organisms is based on this idea of a rising scale.

Without going into depth of the *how* on this subject, suffice it to say the more complex the organism, the higher on the totem pole, the more 'valuable'; hence humans, *the animal that thinks*, which have a *rational soul*, is at the top.

Still, Aristotle struggles with classification. He knows that a single difference (*differentia*) is insufficient to distinguish things, yet he really does not give hard and fast rules for deciding which differences qualify. Again he turns to levels of general divisions and that (as we can still see today) is fairly sufficient.

Put simply, Biology is the classification of the world around us. We divide and understand things within this framework. Ultimately we understand, in his vein of contraries, what we are by what we are not. For obvious reasons the Body rests here. The basic concepts of Being and not-Being fall under this topic (people = being, rocks = !being so we do not study rocks in Biology) but not at the level that we will discuss in the next section.

As a single aside, he also appears to be the first to realize that there are sea mammals, i.e. that dolphins are mammals not fish.

A Heart Of Gold

Psychology is the classification of the world within us. The Soul rests here. The focus of the study here is different than the study which will take place at other times. The focus here is on the human. There really is not a psychology of non-humans (or rocks). The 'soul' within the contraries (i.e. not-humans) is of a different nature than that of humans, due to the complexity of the human organism and therefore its height on the scale. Living or life or the animating principle or the Soul (*anima* is most often translated 'soul') is the principle which gives *internal* organization to the higher or organic items on the scale of being. That is to say, the *life-force* of any animate object is part of the level of the organism.

Plants are the lowest forms of life on the scale, and their souls contain a *nutritive* element by which it preserves itself. Animals are above plants on the scale, and their souls contain an *appetitive* feature which allows them to have sensations, desires, and thus gives them the ability to move (*hmmmm* ***Philosophy Action****:* stroke chin pensively). Finally, at the top, the human soul shares the *nutritive* element with plants, and the *appetitive* element with animals, but also has a *rational* element.

There really is no dichotomy between body and soul. They are distinguished but not separate. The soul is the animating principle of the body, and the organization of the body involves the soul. One cannot exist without the other.

Putting It Together

Metaphysics was the *First Philosophy* to Aristotle but he also recognized it was not the only one. The physical had its understanding within the Metaphysical, because it is understood by the Soul. Only by understanding these physical things first could we come to understand the world around us

and our place within it. Still, in opposition to Plato, you did not have to leave the world to understand its forms and to be led to an understanding of the metaphysical. There was no need to posit a Form when everything has within it its form, its motion and its cause.

Relationships are what Aristotle is talking about. Everything is in relationship to something else, whether it be in time, space or complexity. But even the complex things are based on the simpler things and it is the relationship of those simpler things in the complex which help us to understand them. Certainly we categorize and organize things based on traits but that does not mean they are not dependent on each other, or in any way separate. The reason to make distinct species or distinguish between things is to enable the understanding of all things and ultimately ourselves.

PHILOSOPHICAL MOMENT: Do Aristotle's idea of *Substance* and Leibniz's idea of *Identity of Indiscernibles* (*from Chapter 1*) correlate?

Aristotle's (Meta) Physical Side

We know he likes kids and long walks along on the Mediterranean but what kind of puppies are his favorite? Not the other side we had in mind. Aristotle's Metaphysics is as I stated early on, about things that we would consider 'beyond the physical'. But I also have a confession to make. The original reason that it was called Metaphysics is that an early editor placed these lecture notes *after* the ones on Physics; hence he called them *meta*-Physics. Not as sexy, I know, so we will cling in ignorant bliss to our earlier understanding.

Still if we know an object, as Aristotle professed in *Physics* (Bk 1) by understanding its substance, the 'first principles' and its 'simplest elements' what can we know about the ineffable?

Accentuate The Positive

Oddly enough, the ineffable is not so ineffable. Cause is the differentia. If physical things do not have within themselves their cause, then alternatively (contrarily) what are the things which do have their cause within them and are not subject to change (as a single word on the subject, mathematics studies objects that although not subject to change are nevertheless not separate from matter)? In physics we study the thing through its substance/principles and its change/cause; in metaphysics we study causes and principles, knowable through its *being*. Again, in an observable world, first principles and causes are knowable.

What do we know? Let us approach this muddled beginning from another angle. For Aristotle, *Knowledge* consists of *particular truths* that we learn through experience and the *general truths* of art and science (observation). *Wisdom* on the other hand consists in understanding the most general truths of all, which are the *fundamental principles* and causes that *govern* everything. Remember, in Aristotle's thought, Philosophy provides the deepest understanding of the world and of all the other things by pursuing the sense of wonder and awe we feel toward reality (our reason to even pursue knowledge). This is why Metaphysics is the *first* science/philosophy, because in this hierarchical world it is the ultimate one.

As with all things, according to Aristotle, we start with what we know and move to what we do not yet know. Similar to the four defining features discussed earlier (Chapter 18) there are four kinds of cause (or kinds of explanation if you will): the *efficient* cause, which explains the process by which it came into being; the *material* cause, which explains what a thing is made of; the *formal* cause, which explains the form a thing assumes; and the *final* cause, which explains the end or purpose it serves. Aristotle acknowledges (dialectically) that Plato's Theory of Forms gives a viable accounting of the formal cause, but it fails to prove that Forms exist *and* to explain how objects in the physical world participate in said Forms.

From The Beginning

So Aristotle wants to understand not just the thing, but the thing *qua* other thing (thing understood by other thing). Plato would seem to argue that knowing the Form is sufficient. But Aristotle wants more. The problem is how to get there. Metaphysics he tells us concerns itself with the loftier thoughts and questions we have (wisdom, theology, and the like). How do we begin to talk about them? Aristotle introduces us to the principle of *non-contradiction*. Think back to some of our earlier discussions. *"…the same attribute cannot at the same time belong and not belong to the same subject and in the same respect*" (*Metaphysics* 1005b19). Things cannot both be and not be present in or defining of the subject they are part of at the same time. Anti-matter and Matter

cannot both be present in the *essential* make-up (form/substance) of the universe (though to wander, both can be together as secondary substances).

This understanding, Aristotle says, is the most primary and known of all principles, and it is not just a hypothesis. It cannot, however, be proved, since it is used *implicitly* in all proofs, no matter what the subject matter. It is a *first principle*, and as we know is not derived from anything more basic. Aristotle performs a kind of George Jetson treadmill cry "*Jane, stop this crazy thing!*" saying that we have to start somewhere, or else we keep running into a *Chicken and the Egg* circular argument. This truth, that something cannot both have and not have an attribute is a foundational statement, one we can and must, according to Aristotle, take for granted; I think he dares us to deny it.

If you have noticed, we have returned to the idea of Substance (and you thought we read that just for fun!) yet we are touching on the idea of the eternal, the *Prime Mover/Cause* or the *Unmoved Mover* as well. *God* must exist because the idea of an infinite causal series is absurd, and thus there must be a first cause which is not itself caused.

Mind Games

The idea of knowledge as we said is different than wisdom. The eternal things, which we study here are only studied by humans. We can understand how a clam is put together or that whales and dogs are mammals but what understanding do we gain from that.

Humans are different than every other being in the universe. Our sense of wonder and awe causes us to ask the deeper questions, to seek something other than just the bare minimum level of existence. We desire more than just sustenance and, procreation.

Why is this so? What is it about our mind which sets us apart from the minds of animals? How do we come to know? Is the sensible world sufficient to tell us everything we know? I can know a rock or a table as a rock or a table because its sensible (observable) properties help me to not only identify it as such be even identify it to you by the mere action of pointing. We on the other hand are defined by something more, we are in a sense responsible for our own definition. We eat food, drink liquids but do not become those things. Unlike a wet rock the water we drink becomes part of us. Our true nature is eternal and unchangeable. So in terms of our last section, Metaphysics is the study of the One Substance (and its Properties) which exists and causes all things, and is therefore the necessary foundation for all human knowledge.

Knowledge is the key. Those that know the first principles, i.e. acquire wisdom, are wise because they know the *why* of things, unlike those who only know *that* things are a certain way based on their memory and sensations. Thus Aristotle's ideas are very important, for within them are the clues to the solution of this most profound of all problems, 'what exists', and thus what it means to be 'human'.

Soul Man

Aristotle was a soul man. He tells us that while metaphysics is the first science, the study of the soul is the primary first science. The soul was the reason for the body. Sure we looked at it in Psychology, because it is so bound to the body, but its realm of study of its nature is here (actually it is not in this work but in the work *De Anima* and we tend to think of it as a metaphysical subject so I lump it here). Substance and essence become closely identified in Aristotle's thought. Being, and the animating force which powers it, in this case is still called substance but is more like *be-ing*. What he is really saying is that in the category of substance, regardless of the study (physics or metaphysics), *the thing is what the thing is* (thing qua being). The Soul defines the Body and asking if they are

separate is as, Aristotle says, like asking “whether the wax and the shape given it by the stamp are one…” However, the soul does survive the body, at least “parts of it” do.

As to how and where, well there is some discussion on that. This author falls into the camp that this is in relationship to the Prime Mover, per our earlier section discussions (and some of Aristotle’s later). It is something from which we are separate (else we would be that thing) and yet we participate within it via our soul, our mind and wisdom.

Being There

So now for a moment let us wander through this garden. The basic understanding of categories and substance help us to arrive at the understanding or wisdom which helps us to understand ourselves in terms of two things: the observable substances and the principle substances. These two boundaries (in the simplest of terms) help us to understand our *being*. Still, there are many forms of being and Aristotle explores them. Separability and 'this-ness' are fundamental to our concept of substance. Our individuality relies on these concepts. Along these lines Aristotle distinguishes within the human mind the *active* and *passive* intellects. Aristotle says that the passive intellect receives the intelligible forms of things, but that the active intellect is required to make the *potential knowledge* into *actual knowledge*, in the same way that light makes potential colors into actual colors.

As part of all this discussion and because there could be objections to his teachings, Aristotle also explores the idea *Potentiality* verses *Actuality* or you might say Actual (visible) to Potential (unseen). As we have discussed there are fundamental questions about how we know something *is* something, of potential possible and potential probable. Will a rock always remain a rock? Is a boy a man? Does God or gods exist? Are there hidden and plain natures?

Being is an action. Hence our words for life are active. Could you argue though that someone sleeping is not truly alive? Do the things which define and explain a thing all have to be present *and* active in order for the thing to be the thing? This is where the singular view of Aristotle must be kept in mind. Nothing can be pigeon-holed, except that that pigeon-hole is part of a cote. Though we categorize we categorize to separate for understanding, not for isolation.

We derive such terms as kinetic energy from the Greek word Aristotle uses to define cause within the thing (*kinêsis*). Cause within the thing is probably best re-worded as the ability within the thing to change. We even tend to think of it that way. For instance a yo-yo has potential or kinetic energy stored within it and we attribute its return up the string to that internal force. Of course, we also use the other word he uses for actuality – *energeia*. So if irony were not dead then the term *kinetic energy* could be used to describe the whole of Aristotle’s thought on the subject.

Actuality is to potentiality, Aristotle tells us, as “*someone waking is to someone sleeping, as someone seeing is to a sighted person with his eyes closed, as that which has been shaped out of some matter is to the matter from which it has been shaped*”. (*M* 1048b) What does this mean? Ultimately and for our purposes, it means that the thing remains itself regardless of the state it finds itself. This is true of the ineffable as much as it is of the observed.

Putting It Together

There is a great struggle within this section. Besides the obvious struggle to put complex works and ideas into some order, there is the challenge to follow Aristotle down some roads we may or may not be willing to take. For Aristotle, Metaphysics is the ultimate goal of thought and learning. With echoes of Plato ringing in our heads, knowledge in and of itself has only wisdom as its end and is not an end in itself.

Physical Science is not the final answer. To reduce human thought and spirit down to a couple of electrodes and hormones/chemical reactions really does injustice to the human which is only slightly beneath the unmoved mover at the top of the being chain. The whole is not just the sum of its parts, though without those parts one would not be what one is. How do we understand/come to understand the distinctions which make us human and individuals? And past that, where do we fit in the larger universe of being?

There are also many ramifications of this question and its answer which we will cover in the next and final installment of the Aristotle series. For now, know that there are many approaches to Aristotle and many aspects of his thought which overlap and the ability to easily and chaotically shift from one subject to another is ably demonstrated here by this humble author. Reading his works in order may be the best route, but the Metaphysics can be daunting because of the sometimes disjointed nature of the notes, most probably redacted together into the one work. Still, it is a good place to see the overlap of Aristotle's thought and how one aspect relies on another.

"The first philosophy (Metaphysics) is universal and is exclusively concerned with primary substance. ... And here we will have the science to study that which is just as that which is, both in its essence and in the properties which, just as a thing that is, it has."
"The entire preoccupation of the physicist is with things that contain within themselves a principle of movement and rest. And to seek for this is to seek for the second kind of principle, that from which comes the beginning of the change"**.** (**Aristotle**)

What is he trying to say? Is this a good summary of Metaphysics?

Aristotle's Fourth Third

Are we worn out on Aristotle yet? I hope not, because if you are it is best to stop this train and get off now, because honey, this becomes a non-stop to a far destination.

Transportation aside, we actually are close to our destination, but what we have to remember is that the train of Western Thought is powered by and runs on Plato and Aristotle. We will never get very far without it. So in this final stop before Grand Central Station, let us explore some final aspects of Aristotle's thought which will be the shuttle that carries us to our hotel.

Logic: Syllogism In A And B Therefore C minor

Come on now, logically, do we really need another section on logic? Well frankly yes. If Aristotle for all practical purposes defined Western Logic, then we just will not be able to get enough. What we have spoken of until now is Aristotle's *method* for *how to think correctly*. In this section we will examine what the *act* of thinking correctly means and how it is accomplished. Think of it just like we have looked at the physical/metaphysical, where one is knowledge and the other wisdom.

Suffice it to say that you should know up front that there have actually been many things left out of our discussion on Aristotelian Logic. That said, since this may seem like the last word on the subject, we have discussed that we do see the world in both *a priori* and *a posteriori* ways. Simplistically speaking we can put forth that this is pretty much what Aristotle would call m*odal* thinking.

These modes of thinking might be thought of as *unqualified* (deductive) or *assertoric* and *qualified*, with the qualifications being *possible* and *necessary*, Again, and I cannot stress this enough, in the simplest terms, deductive and inductive. We can use arguments but we must be aware that things are relative to their mode. This does not mean that Aristotle is wishy-washy or that relativism creeps into his thought, but more that we can weigh thoughts by their mode.

The modes can be in the following combinations:

- Two necessary premises
- One necessary and one assertoric premise
- Two possible premises
- One assertoric and one possible premise
- One necessary and one possible premise

So what does this come down too? Well, aside from the oversimplification, it allows for a bit of inductive reasoning to be part of our deductive reasoning. Just because something is possible does not automatically mean that it is a legitimate argument, but in an argument we can apply a certain amount of possible as long as we remember to qualify it. We argue in many modes, *syllogistically*, *dialectically* and *demonstratively*.

Aristotle often contrasts *dialectical arguments* with demonstrations. The difference, he tells us, is in the character of their premises, not in their logical structure: whether an argument is a *syllogism* is only a matter of whether its conclusion results of necessity from its premises. The premises of demonstrations must be *true and primary*, that is, not only true but also prior to their conclusions. The premises of dialectical deductions, by contrast, must be *accepted*, that is to say the majority of people would accept it as true, or it is commonly held by the majority.

As one final note on argumentation, *Rhetoric* is more along the lines of persuasive speech, kind of the opposite or more precisely the counterpoint of *dialectic* which Aristotle employs liberally. It is used similarly because knowing what premises an audience of a given type is likely to believe, and

knowing how to find premises from which the desired conclusion follows will accomplish the goal of convincing the audience of the point.

Ethics: Andante Ma Non Troppo

We are now good on thinking so now we look to the best end of thinking and we have to ask "*what is virtuous thinking*?" In a word: *moderation*. Well that is too simple of an answer to let it go at that, right (at least for me, because it would make for a short section as well)?

Ethics for Aristotle, is tied to his understanding of human nature (our being): that everyone is intent upon the good (which we might call happiness, but only carefully), and that which is good is good in and of itself. The soul, and specifically the human (rational) soul, has one end. To that end, the activity of the rational soul guided by virtue is (hierarchically) the *supreme* good ("happiness").

How and when do we gauge happiness? Remember that some part of the soul survives death. So we examine happiness or goodness of both the living and the dead. When talking about happiness, we have to consider a person's life as a whole, not just brief moments of it. This raises the paradoxical idea that a person can then only be considered happy after their death, that is, once we can examine the person's life as a whole.

We know from Socrates and Plato that good person will always behave in a virtuous manner. Aristotle feels the same way, but carries it even further: even when faced with great misfortune, a good person will bear themselves well and will not descend into mean-spiritedness. What we might call the human spirit displays itself and we call it virtuous. Therefore some amount of happiness must be applied to a person during life.

But can we still be happy after death? Yes, but it probably will be based on your life because once you are dead the accolades or derisions placed upon you or the actions of your children can only have minimum effect.

We know that Plato and Socrates saw knowledge as virtue, and knowing oneself as probably the greatest of virtues. Aristotle as we have seen likes to tie the Forms of Plato to the reality of everyday life, so virtue is found all around us. Things have an end. Virtues are really the middle ground between positive and negative traits. If we set up a contraries square of opposition, we always find that what lies in the crossroads is a virtue. For example *Courage*. Courage is a virtue placed between *Rashness* and *Cowardice*. Rashness consists of too much confidence and not enough fear; Cowardice of too much fear and not enough confidence. Where the contraries cross, there you have courage. It is the right balance of fear and confidence.

Ethics, simplistically, consists of grasping the middle ground in a situation. This is not to say the path of least resistance or even compromise. Middle ground does not mean giving up but finding the truth, the balance. We only give to name courage to certain actions. We know those actions to be courageous; other actions we recognize as not courageous or almost courageous but not *as courageous*.

Politics: The Art Of The Possible

What is the most practical end of virtuous thinking? Why people living together in harmony of course. Humans are a *political animal*, Aristotle informs us. Before we get too far and people get their thoughts all out of whack, let us look at the term *political*. It derives from the word Aristotle uses: *polis*, meaning *city*. What he is saying is not that we are naturally Democrats and Republicans, but that we naturally gravitate together into societal units, mainly cities and specifically the city-state (like Athens or Sparta).

Nothing we do will take place in a vacuum. Our natural propensity to do good, as hard as it may be, benefits not only ourselves but everyone else as well.

As a short side note, in an extension of Plato's Philosopher Kings, Aristotle does actually defend (like Plato), slavery. This is because there are two kinds of people, *thems what need to be led and thems what do the leading* (well really more like those that lead and those that keep the state running). But he does differ as well. For Aristotle, slavery is not a natural condition. That is to say, for example, persons born of slaves are not automatically slaves nor are those conquered in battle. It is an individual assessment, based more on the person than on their genetics or situation. This radical departure, though it may not seem so to us, means that though one may find one's self in slavery, one is not always destined to be a slave, unless, that is your nature (although we might recall the story Socrates relates back in Chapter N).

This innate right to human dignity (non-slavery) make sense in Aristotle's system. If it is the nature of each individual to seek the good (and to think otherwise just makes no sense according to Aristotle), then it is the responsibility of the state (*polis*) to see that each individual is able to achieve that goal. Almost ironically Aristotle holds that only as a collective can each of us fulfill our full potential for "happiness".

There are many types of political systems and Aristotle does disagree with Plato (and most Americans) on the subject of which is best. When a single person rules, a system is a monarchy if the ruler is good and a tyranny if the ruler is bad. When a small elite rules, a system is an aristocracy if the rulers are good and an oligarchy if the rulers are bad. When the masses rule, a system is a polity if they rule well and a democracy if they rule badly.

Aristotle does not fail to discuss the tension between individual liberty and the demands of the state. The idea of a private life would seem absurd in a Greek city-state. All the highest aims in life, from political debate to physical exercise, take place in and for the public sphere, and there is no conception of a "private persona," which would be different from the face people present in public. Consequently, the interests of the individual and the interests of the state are equivalent in Aristotle's view. We can see the echoes of this in his Ethics.

Putting It Together

Aristotle is a multi-faceted thinker. From just our short reading earlier we can see the immense amount of thinking which must have gone into each work before the work was even produced. Now multiply that by all the other works and we see a very impressive intellect at work.

Still, it is based in some fairly simple ideas, which rely upon each other and are interwoven within the whole of his thought. This is true of his thought and his thoughts on human interaction and purpose. Friendship is so important to Aristotle that he devotes whole sections of his work to the types, meaning and ramification of this relationship. Like his thoughts on physical relationships between substances, our interactions start at the smallest level and progress toward the whole of humanity. Small to big, lower to higher, what we know to what we do not know, what we can perceive to what we cannot perceive everything is in relation. Not a relation of relativistic nature but one of *inter-dependence*.

Keeping this in mind will keep us from falling into a trap of segmenting his thought into separate boxes, creating a relativistic justification based on his thought

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"*Let me 'splain…No, there is too much. Let me sum up*." Inigo Montoya – *The Princess Bride*

Nicomachean Ethics

BOOK I

1

Every art and every investigation, and likewise every practical pursuit or undertaking, seems to aim at some good: hence it has
[2] been well said that the Good is *That at which all things aim* (It is true that a certain variety is to be observed among the ends at which the arts and sciences aim: in some cases the activity of practicing the art is itself the end, whereas in others the end is some product over and above the mere exercise of the art; and in the arts whose ends are certain things beside the practice of the
[3] arts themselves, these products are essentially superior in value to the activities). But as there are numerous pursuits and arts and sciences, it follows that their ends are correspondingly numerous: for instance, the end of the science of medicine is health, that of
[4] the art of shipbuilding a vessel, that of strategy victory, that of domestic economy wealth. Now in cases where several such pursuits are subordinate to some single faculty—as bridle-making and the other trades concerned with horses' harness are subordinate to horsemanship, and this and every other military pursuit to the science of strategy, and similarly other arts to different arts again—in all these cases, I say, the ends of the
[6] master arts are things more to be desired than the ends of the arts subordinate to them; since the latter ends are only pursued for the sake of the former (And it makes no difference whether the ends of the pursuits are the activities themselves or some other thing beside these, as in the case of the sciences mentioned.

2

If therefore among the ends at which our actions aim there be one which we will for its own sake, while we will the others only for the sake of this, and if we do not choose everything for the sake of something else (which would obviously result in a process *ad infinitum*, so that all desire would be futile and vain), it is clear that this one ultimate End must be the Good, and indeed the
[2] Supreme Good. Will not then a knowledge of this Supreme Good be also of great practical importance for the conduct of life? Will it not better enable us to attain our proper object, like archers having a target to aim at? If this be so, we ought to make an
[3] attempt to determine at all events in outline what exactly this Supreme Good is, and of which of the sciences or faculties it is the object.

[4] Now it would seem that this supreme End must be the object of the most authoritative of the sciences—some science which is pre-eminently a master-craft. But such is manifestly the science of
[5] Politics; for it is this that ordains which of the sciences are to exist in states, and what branches of knowledge the different classes of the citizens are to learn, and up to what point; and we observe that
[6] even the most highly esteemed of the faculties, such as strategy, domestic economy, oratory, are subordinate to the political science. Inasmuch then as the rest of the sciences are employed by this one, and as it moreover lays down laws as to what people shall do and what things they shall refrain from doing, the end of this science
[7] must include the ends of all the others. Therefore, the Good of man must be the end of the science of Politics. For even though it be the case that the Good is the same for the individual and for the state, nevertheless, the good of the state is manifestly a greater and more perfect good, both to attain and to preserve. To secure the good of one person only is better than nothing; but to secure the good of a
[8] nation or a state is a nobler and more divine achievement. This then being its aim, our investigation is in a sense the study of Politics.

3

Now our treatment of this science will be adequate, if it achieves that amount of precision which belongs to its subject matter. The same exactness must not be expected in all
[2] departments of philosophy alike, any more than in all the products of the arts and crafts. The subjects studied by political science are Moral Nobility and Justice; but these conceptions involve much
[3] difference of opinion and uncertainty, so that they are sometimes believed to be mere conventions and to have no real existence in the nature of things. And a similar uncertainty surrounds the conception of the Good, because it frequently occurs that good
[4] things have harmful consequences: people have before now been ruined by wealth, and in other cases courage has cost men their lives. We must therefore be content if, in dealing with subjects and starting from premises thus uncertain, we succeed in presenting a broad outline of the truth: when our subjects and our premises are merely generalities, it is enough if we arrive at generally valid conclusions. Accordingly we may ask the student also to accept the various views we put forward in the same spirit; for it is the mark of an educated mind to expect that amount of exactness in each kind which the nature of the particular subject admits. It is equally unreasonable to accept merely probable conclusions from a mathematician and to demand strict demonstration from an orator.

[5] Again, each man judges correctly those matters with which he is acquainted; it is of these that he is a competent critic. To criticize a particular subject, therefore, a man must have been trained in that subject: to be a good critic generally, he must have had an all-round education. Hence the young are not fit to be students of Political Science. For they have no experience of life and conduct, and it is these that supply the premises and subject matter of this branch of
[6] philosophy. And moreover they are led by their feelings; so that they will study the subject to no purpose or advantage, since the end
[7] of this science is not knowledge but action. And it makes no difference whether they are young in years or immature in character: the defect is not a question of time, it is because their life and its various aims are guided by feeling; for to such persons their knowledge is of no use, any more than it is to persons of defective self-restraint. But Moral Science may be of great value to those who
[8] guide their desires and actions by principle.

Let so much suffice by way of introduction as to the student of the subject, the spirit in which our conclusions are to be received, and the object that we set before us.

4

To resume, inasmuch as all studies and undertakings are directed to the attainment of some good, let us discuss what it is that we pronounce to be the aim of Politics, that is, what is the highest of all the goods that action can achieve. As far as the name goes, we may
[2] almost say that the great majority of mankind are agreed about this; for both the multitude and persons of refinement speak of it as Happiness, and conceive 'the good life' or 'doing well' to be the same thing as 'being happy.' But what constitutes happiness is a matter of dispute; and the popular account of it is not the same as that given by the philosophers. Ordinary people identify it with
[3] some obvious and visible good, such as pleasure or wealth or honor—some say one thing and some another, indeed very often the same man says different things at different times: when he falls sick he thinks health is happiness, when he is poor, wealth. At other times, feeling conscious of their own ignorance, men admire those who propound something grand and above their heads; and it has been held by some thinkers that beside the many good things we have mentioned, there exists another Good, that is good in itself, and stands to all those goods as the cause of their being good.
Now perhaps it would be a somewhat fruitless task to review all the different opinions that are held. It will suffice to examine those that
[4] are most widely prevalent, or that seem to have some argument in their favor.
And we must not overlook the distinction between arguments that start from first principles and those that lead to first principles. It was a good practice of Plato to raise this question, and to enquire whether the true procedure is to start from or to lead up to one's first
[5] principles, as in a race-course one may run from the judges to the far end of the track or the reverse. Now no doubt it is proper to start from the known. But 'the known' has two meanings—'what is

known to us,' which is one thing, and 'what is knowable in itself,' which is another. Perhaps then for us at all events it proper to start from what is known to us. This is why in order to be a competent student of the Right and Just, and in short of the topics of Politics in general, the pupil is bound to have been well-trained in his habits. For the starting-point or first principle is the fact that a thing is so; if this be satisfactorily ascertained, there will be no need also to know the reason why it is so. And the man of good moral training [6] knows first principles already, or can easily acquire them. As for the person who neither knows nor can learn, let him hear the words of Hesiod:

"Best is the man who can himself advise; [7] He too is good who hearkens to the wise; But who, himself being witless, will not heed Another's wisdom, is a fool indeed."

5

But let us continue from the point where we digressed. To judge from men's lives, the more or less reasoned conceptions of the Good or Happiness that seem to prevail are the following. On the one hand the generality of men and the most vulgar identify the Good with pleasure, and accordingly are content with the Life of [2] Enjoyment—for there are three specially prominent Lives, the one just mentioned, the Life of Politics, and thirdly, the Life of Contemplation. The generality of mankind then show themselves to be utterly slavish, by preferring what is only a life for cattle; but [3] they get a hearing for their view as reasonable because many persons of high position share the feelings of Sardanapallus.
Men of refinement, on the other hand, and men of action think that the Good is honor—for this may be said to be the end of the Life of Politics. But honor after all seems too superficial to be the Good for [4] which we are seeking; since it appears to depend on those who confer it more than on him upon whom it is conferred, whereas we instinctively feel that the Good must be something proper to its possessor and not easy to be taken away from him. Moreover men's motive in pursuing honor seems to be to assure themselves of their own merit; at least they seek to be honored by men of judgment and by people who know them, that is, they desire to be honored on the ground of virtue. It is clear therefore that in the opinion at all events [5] of men of action, virtue is a greater good than honor; and one might perhaps accordingly suppose that virtue rather than honor is the end of the Political Life. But even virtue proves on examination to be too incomplete to be the End; since it appears possible to possess it while you are asleep, or without putting it into practice throughout the whole of your life; and also for the virtuous man to suffer the [6] greatest misery and misfortune— though no one would pronounce a man living a life of misery to be happy, unless for the sake of maintaining a paradox. But we need not pursue this subject, since it has been sufficiently treated in the ordinary discussions.
The third type of life is the Life of Contemplation, which we shall consider in the sequel.

The Life of Money-making is a constrained kind of life, and clearly wealth is not the Good we are in search of, for it is only good as being useful, a means to something else. On this score indeed one might conceive the ends before mentioned to have a better claim, for they are approved for their own sakes. But even [7] they do not really seem to be the Supreme Good; however, many arguments against them have been disseminated, so we may dismiss them.

[8]

6

But perhaps it is desirable that we should examine the notion of a Universal Good, and review the difficulties that it involves, although such an inquiry goes against the grain because of our friendship for the authors of the Theory of Ideas. Still perhaps it would appear desirable, and indeed it would seem to be obligatory, especially for a philosopher, to sacrifice even one's closest personal ties in defense of the truth. Both are dear to us, yet 'tis our duty to prefer the truth.

[2] The originators of this theory, then, used not to postulate Ideas of groups of things in which they posited an order of priority and

posteriority (for which reason they did not construct an Idea of numbers in general). But Good is predicated alike in the Categories of Substance, of Quality, and Relation; yet the Absolute, or Substance, is prior in nature to the Relative, which seems to be a sort of offshoot or 'accident' of Substance; so that there cannot be a common Idea corresponding to the absolutely good and the relatively good.

[3] Again, the word 'good' is used in as many senses as the word 'is'; for we may predicate good in the Category of Substance, for instance of God, or intelligence; in that of Quality—the excellences; in that of Quantity—moderate in amount; in that of Relation—useful; in that of Time—a favorable opportunity; in that of Place—a suitable 'habitat'; and so on. So clearly good cannot be a single and universal general notion; if it were, it would not be predicable in all the Categories, but only in one.

[4] Again, things that come under a single Idea must be objects of a single science; hence there ought to be a single science dealing with all good things. But as a matter of fact there are a number of sciences even for the goods in one Category: for example, opportunity, for opportunity in war comes under the science of strategy, in disease under that of medicine; and the due amount in diet comes under medicine, in bodily exercise under gymnastics.

[5] One might also raise the question what precisely they mean by their expression the 'Ideal so and-so,' seeing that one and the same definition of man applies both to 'the Ideal man' and to 'man,' for in so far as both are man, there will be no difference between them; and if so, no more will there be any difference

[6] between 'the Ideal Good' and 'Good' in so far as both are good. Nor yet will the Ideal Good be any more good because it is eternal, seeing that a white thing that lasts a long time is no whiter than one that lasts only a day.

[7] The Pythagoreans seem to give a more probable doctrine on the subject of the Good when they place Unity in their column of goods; and indeed Speusippus appears to have followed them. But this subject must be left for another discussion.

[8] We can descry an objection that may be raised against our arguments on the ground that the theory in question was not intended to apply to every sort of good, and that only things pursued and accepted for their own sake are pronounced good as belonging to a single species, while things productive or preservative of these in any way, or preventive of their opposites,

[9] are said to be good as a means to these, and in a different sense. Clearly then the term 'goods' would have two meanings, 1) things good in themselves and 2) things good as a means to these; let us then separate things good in themselves from things useful as

[10] means, and consider whether the former are called good because they fall under a single Idea. But what sort of things is one to class as good in themselves? Are they not those things which are sought after even without any accessory advantage, such as wisdom, sight, and certain pleasures and honors? for even if we also pursue these things as means to something else, still one would class them among things good in themselves. Or is there nothing else

[11] good in itself except the Idea? If so, the species will be of no use. If on the contrary the class of things good in themselves includes these objects, the same notion of good ought to be manifested in all of them, just as the same notion of white is manifested in snow and in white paint. But as a matter of fact the notions of honor and wisdom and pleasure, as being good, are different and distinct. Therefore, good is not a general term corresponding to a single Idea.

[12] But in what sense then are different things called good? For they do not seem to be a case of things that bear the same name merely by chance. Possibly things are called good in virtue of being derived from one good; or because they all contribute to one good. Or perhaps it is rather by way of a proportion: that is, as sight is good in the body, so intelligence is good in the soul, and similarly another thing in something else.

[13] Perhaps however this question must be dismissed for the present, since a detailed investigation of it belongs more properly to another branch of philosophy And likewise with the Idea of the Good; for even if the goodness predicated of various in common really is a unity or something existing separately and absolute, it

clearly will not be practicable or attainable by man; but the Good which we are now seeking is a good within human reach.

[14] But possibly someone may think that to know the Ideal Good may be desirable as an aid to achieving those goods which are practicable and attainable: having the Ideal Good as a pattern we shall more easily know what things are good for us, and knowing them, obtain them. Now it is true that this argument has a certain [15] plausibility; but it does not seem to square with the actual procedure of the sciences. For these all aim at some good, and seek to make up their deficiencies, but they do not trouble about a knowledge of the Ideal Good. Yet if it were so potent an aid, it is improbable that all the professors of the arts and sciences should not know it, nor even seek to discover it. Moreover, it is not easy to see how knowing that same Ideal Good will help a weaver or [16] carpenter in the practice of his own craft, or how anybody will be a better physician or general for having contemplated the absolute Idea. In fact it does not appear that the physician studies even health in the abstract; he studies the health of the human being—or rather of some particular human being, for it is individuals that he has to cure.

Let us here conclude our discussion of this subject.

7

We may now return to the Good which is the object of our search, and try to find out what exactly it can be. For good appears to be one thing in one pursuit or art and another in another: it is different in medicine from what it is in strategy, and so on with the rest of the arts. What definition of the Good then will hold true in all the arts? Perhaps we may define it as that for the sake of which everything else is done. This applies to something different in each different art—to health in the case of medicine, to victory in that of strategy, to a house in architecture, and to something else in each of the other arts; but in every pursuit or undertaking it describes the end of that pursuit or undertaking, since in all of them it is for the sake of the end that everything else is done. Hence if there be something which is the end of all the things done by human action, this will be the practicable Good—or if there be [2] several such ends, the sum of these will be the Good. Thus by changing its ground the argument has reached the same result as before. We must attempt however to render this still more precise.

[3] Now there do appear to be several ends at which our actions aim; but as we choose some of them—for instance wealth, or flutes, and instruments generally—as a means to something else, it is clear that not all of them are final ends; whereas the Supreme Good seems to be something final. Consequently if there be some one thing which alone is a final end, this thing—or if there be several final ends, the one among them which is the most final—will be the Good which we are seeking. In speaking of degrees of [4] finality, we mean that a thing pursued as an end in itself is more final than one pursued as a means to something else, and that a thing never chosen as a means to anything else is more final than things chosen both as ends in themselves and as means to that thing; and accordingly a thing chosen always as an end and never as a means we call absolutely final. Now happiness above all else appears to be absolutely final in this sense, since we always choose [5] it for its own sake and never as a means to something else; whereas honor, pleasure, intelligence, and excellence in its various forms, we choose indeed for their own sakes (since we should be

glad to have each of them although no extraneous advantage resulted from it), but we also choose them for the sake of happiness, in the belief that they will be a means to our securing it. But no one chooses happiness for the sake of honor, pleasure, etc., nor as a means to anything whatever other than itself.

[6] The same conclusion also appears to follow from a consideration of the self-sufficiency of happiness—for it is felt that the final good must be a thing sufficient in itself. The term self-sufficient, however, we employ with reference not to oneself alone, living a life of isolation, but also to one's parents and children and wife, and one's friends and fellow citizens in general, since man is by nature a social being. On the other hand a limit has to be assumed in these relationships; for if the list be extended to [7] one's ancestors and descendants and to the friends of one's friends, it will go on ad infinitum. But this is a point that must be considered later on; we take a self-sufficient thing to mean a thing which merely standing by itself alone renders life desirable lacking in nothing, and such a thing we deem happiness to be. Moreover, we think happiness the most desirable of all good things without [8] being itself reckoned as one among the rest; for if it were so reckoned, it is clear that we should consider it more desirable when even the smallest of other good things were combined with it, since this addition would result in a larger total of good, and of two goods the greater is always the more desirable.

Happiness, therefore, being found to be something final and self-sufficient, is the End at which all actions aim.

[9] To say however that the Supreme Good is happiness will probably appear a truism; we still require a more explicit account of what constitutes happiness. Perhaps then we may arrive at this [10] by ascertaining what is man's function. For the goodness or efficiency of a flute-player or sculptor or craftsman of any sort, and in general of anybody who has some function or business to perform, is thought to reside in that function; and similarly it may be held that the good of man resides in the function of man, if he has a function.

[11] Are we then to suppose that, while the carpenter and the shoemaker have definite functions or businesses belonging to them, man as such has none, and is not designed by nature to fulfill any function? Must we not rather assume that, just as the eye, the hand, the foot and each of the various members of the body manifestly has a certain function of its own, so a human being also has a certain function over and above all the functions of his particular members? What then precisely can this function [12] be? The mere act of living appears to be shared even by plants, whereas we are looking for the function peculiar to man; we must therefore set aside the vital activity of nutrition and growth. Next in the scale will come some form of sentient life; but this too appears to be shared by horses, oxen, and animals generally. There remains therefore what may be called the practical life of the [13] rational part of man. (This part has two divisions, one rational as obedient to principle, the others possessing principle and exercising intelligence). Rational life again has two meanings; let us assume that we are here concerned with the active exercise of the rational faculty, since this seems to be the more proper sense of the term. If then the function of man is the active exercise of the soul's faculties in conformity with rational principle, or at all events not in dissociation from rational principle, and if we acknowledge [14] the function of an individual and of a good individual of the same class (for instance, a harper and a good harper, and so generally with all classes) to be generically the same, the qualification of the latter's superiority in excellence being added to the function in his case (I mean that if the function of a harper is to play the harp, that of a good harper is to play the harp well): if this is so, and if we declare that the function of man is a certain form of life, and define that form of life as the exercise of the soul's faculties and activities in association with rational principle, and say that the function of a good man is to perform these activities well and rightly, and if a function is well performed when it is performed in accordance with its own proper excellence—from these premises it follows that the Good of man is the active exercise of his soul's [15] faculties in conformity with excellence or virtue, or if there be several human excellences or virtues, in conformity with the best

and most perfect among them. Moreover, to be happy takes a complete lifetime; for one swallow does not make spring, nor does one fine day; and similarly one day or a brief period of happiness does not make a man supremely blessed and happy.

[16]

[17] Let this account then serve to describe the Good in outline—for no doubt the proper procedure is to begin by making a rough sketch, and to fill it in afterwards. If a work has been well laid down in outline, to carry it on and complete it in detail may be supposed to be within the capacity of anybody; and in this working out of details Time seems to be a good inventor or at all events coadjutor. This indeed is how advances in the arts have actually come about, since anyone can fill in the gaps. Also the warning given above must not be forgotten; we must not look for equal [18] exactness in all departments of study, but only such as belongs to the subject matter of each, and in such a degree as is appropriate to the particular line of enquiry. A carpenter and a geometrician both try to find a right angle, but in different ways; the former is content with that approximation to it which satisfies the purpose [19] of his work; the latter, being a student of truth, seeks to find its essence or essential attributes. We should therefore proceed in the same manner in other subjects also, and not allow side issues to outbalance the main task in hand.

[20] Nor again must we in all matters alike demand an explanation of the reason why things are what they are; in some cases it is enough if the fact that they are so is satisfactorily established. This is the case with first principles; and the fact is the primary thing—it **is** a first principle. And principles are studied—some by induction, [21] others by perception, others by some form of habituation, and also others otherwise; so we must endeavor to arrive at the principles of each kind in their natural manner, and must also be careful to define them correctly, since they are of great importance for the [22] subsequent course of the enquiry. The beginning is admittedly more than half of the whole, and throws light at once on many of the questions under investigation.

[23]

BOOK II

1

Virtue being, as we have seen, of two kinds, intellectual and moral, intellectual virtue is for the most part both produced and increased by instruction, and therefore requires experience and time; whereas moral or ethical virtue is the product of habit （ethos）, and has indeed derived its name, with a slight variation of [2] form, from that word. And therefore it is clear that none of the moral virtues formed is engendered in us by nature, for no natural property can be altered by habit. For instance, it is the nature of a stone to move downwards, and it cannot be trained to move upwards, even though you should try to train it to do so by throwing it up into the air ten thousand times; nor can fire be trained to move downwards, nor can anything else that naturally behaves in one way be trained into a habit of behaving in another way. The virtues therefore are engendered in us neither by nature [3] nor yet in violation of nature; nature gives us the capacity to receive them, and this capacity is brought to maturity by habit.

[4] Moreover, the faculties given us by nature are bestowed on us first in a potential form; we exhibit their actual exercise afterwards. This is clearly so with our senses: we did not acquire the faculty of sight or hearing by repeatedly seeing or repeatedly listening, but the other way about—because we had the senses we began to use them, we did not get them by using them. The virtues on the other hand we acquire by first having actually practiced them, just as we do the arts. We learn an art or craft by doing the things that we shall have to do when we have learnt it: for instance, men become builders by building houses, harpers by playing on the harp. Similarly we become just by doing just acts, temperate by doing temperate acts, brave by doing brave acts. [This truth is attested by the experience of states: lawgivers make

5] the citizens good by training them in habits of right action—this is the aim of all legislation, and if it fails to do this it is a failure; this is what distinguishes a good form of constitution from a bad one. Again, the actions from or through which any virtue is produced [are the same as those through which it also is destroyed—just as is 6] the case with skill in the arts, for both the good harpers and the bad ones are produced by harping, and similarly with builders and all the other craftsmen: as you will become a good builder from building well, so you will become a bad one from building badly. Were this not so, there would be no need for teachers of the arts, but everybody would be born a good or bad craftsman as the case [might be. The same then is true of the virtues. It is by taking part in 7] transactions with our fellow-men that some of us become just and others unjust; by acting in dangerous situations and forming a habit of fear or of confidence we become courageous or cowardly. And the same holds good of our dispositions with regard to the appetites, and anger; some men become temperate and gentle, others profligate and irascible, by actually comporting themselves in one way or the other in relation to those passions. In a word, our moral dispositions are formed as a result of the corresponding activities. Hence it is incumbent on us to control the character of our activities, since on the quality of these depends the quality of our dispositions. It is therefore not of small moment whether we [are trained from childhood in one set of habits or another; on the 8] contrary it is of very great, or rather of supreme, importance.

2

As then our present study, unlike the other branches of philosophy, has a practical aim (for we are not investigating the nature of virtue for the sake of knowing what it is, but in order that we may become good, without which result our investigation would be of no use), we have consequently to carry our enquiry into the region of conduct, and to ask how we are to act rightly; since our actions, as we have said, determine the quality of our dispositions.

[Now the formula 'to act in conformity with right principle' is 2] common ground, and may be assumed as the basis of our discussion. (We shall speak about this formula later, and consider both the definition of right principle and its relation to the other virtues.)

[But let it be granted to begin with that the whole theory of 3] conduct is bound to be an outline only and not an exact system, in accordance with the rule we laid down at the beginning, that philosophical theories must only be required to correspond to their subject matter; and matters of conduct and expediency have nothing fixed or invariable about them, any more than have matters of health. And if this is true of the general theory of ethics, [still less is exact precision possible in dealing with particular cases 4] of conduct; for these come under no science or professional tradition, but the agents themselves have to consider what is suited to the circumstances on each occasion, just as is the case with the art of medicine or of navigation. But although the discussion now proceeding is thus necessarily inexact, we must do [our best to help it out. 5]

[First of all then we have to observe, that moral qualities are so 6] constituted as to be destroyed by excess and by deficiency—as we see is the case with bodily strength and health (for one is forced to explain what is invisible by means of visible illustrations). Strength is destroyed both by excessive and by deficient exercises, and similarly health is destroyed both by too much and by too little food and drink; while they are produced, increased and preserved by suitable quantities. The same therefore is true of Temperance, [Courage, and the other virtues. The man who runs away from 7] everything in fear and never endures anything becomes a coward; the man who fears nothing whatsoever but encounters everything becomes rash. Similarly he that indulges in every pleasure and refrains from none turns out a profligate, and he that shuns all pleasure, as boorish persons do, becomes what may be called insensible. Thus Temperance and Courage are destroyed by excess

and deficiency, and preserved by the observance of the mean.

[8] But not only are the virtues both generated and fostered on the one hand, and destroyed on the other, from and by the same actions, but they will also find their full exercise in the same actions. This is clearly the case with the other more visible qualities, such as bodily strength: for strength is produced by taking much food and undergoing much exertion, while also it is the strong man who will be able to eat most food and endure most [9] exertion. The same holds good with the virtues. We become temperate by abstaining from pleasures, and at the same time we are best able to abstain from pleasures when we have become temperate. And so with Courage: we become brave by training ourselves to despise and endure terrors, and we shall be best able to endure terrors when we have become brave.

3

An index of our dispositions is afforded by the pleasure or pain that accompanies our actions. A man is temperate if he abstains from bodily pleasures and finds this abstinence itself enjoyable, profligate if he feels it irksome; he is brave if he faces danger with pleasure or at all events without pain, cowardly if he does so with pain.

In fact pleasures and pains are the things with which moral virtue is concerned.

For 1) pleasure causes us to do base actions and pain causes us [2] to abstain from doing noble actions. Hence the importance, as Plato points out, of having been definitely trained from childhood to like and dislike the proper things; this is what good education means.

[3] 2) Again, if the virtues have to do with actions and feelings, and every action is attended with pleasure or pain, this too shows that virtue has to do with pleasure and pain.

[4] 3) Another indication is the fact that pain is the medium of punishment; for punishment is a sort of medicine, and the nature of medicine to work by means of opposites.

[5] 4) Again, as we said before, every formed disposition of the soul realizes its full nature in relation to and in dealing with that class of objects by which it is its nature to be corrupted or improved. But men are corrupted through pleasures and pains, that is, either by pursuing and avoiding the wrong pleasures and pains, or by pursuing and avoiding them at the wrong time, or in the wrong manner, or in one of the other wrong ways under which errors of conduct can be logically classified. This is why some thinkers define the virtues as states of impassivity or tranquility, though they make a mistake in using these terms absolutely, without adding 'in the right (or wrong) manner' and 'at the right (or wrong) time' and the other qualifications.

[6] We assume therefore that moral virtue is the quality of acting in the best way in relation to pleasures and pains, and that vice is the opposite.

[7] But the following considerations also will give us further light on the same point.

5) There are three things that are the motives of choice and three that are the motives of avoidance; namely, the noble, the expedient, and the pleasant, and their opposites, the base, the harmful, and the painful. Now in respect of all these the good man is likely to go right and the bad to go wrong, but especially in respect of pleasure; for pleasure is common to man with the lower animals, and also it is a concomitant of all the objects of choice, since both the noble and the expedient appear to us pleasant.

[8] 6) Again, the susceptibility to pleasure has grown up with all of us from the cradle. Hence this feeling is hard to eradicate, being engrained in the fabric of our lives.

7) Again, pleasure and pain are also[1] the standards by which we [9] all, in a greater or less degree, regulate our actions. On this account therefore pleasure and pain are necessarily our main concern, since to feel pleasure and pain rightly or wrongly has a great effect on conduct.

[10] 8) And again, it is harder to fight against pleasure than against anger (hard as that is, as Heracleitus says); but virtue, like art, is constantly dealing with what is harder, since the harder the task

the better is success. For this reason also therefore pleasure and pain are necessarily the main concern both of virtue and of political science, since he who comports himself towards them rightly will be good, and he who does so wrongly, bad.

[11] We may then take it as established that virtue has to do with pleasures and pains, that the actions which produce it are those which increase it, and also, if differently performed, destroy it, and that the actions from which it was produced are also those in which it is exercised.

4

A difficulty may however be raised as to what we mean by saying that in order to become just men must do just actions, and in order to become temperate they must do temperate actions. For if they do just and temperate actions, they are just and temperate already, just as, if they spell correctly or play in tune, they are scholars or musicians.

[2] But perhaps this is not the case even with the arts. It is possible to spell a word correctly by chance, or because someone else prompts you; hence you will be a scholar only if you spell correctly in the scholar's way, that is, in virtue of the scholarly knowledge which you yourself possess.

[3] Moreover the case of the arts is not really analogous to that of the virtues. Works of art have their merit in themselves, so that it is enough if they are produced having a certain quality of their own; but acts done in conformity with the virtues are not done justly or temperately if they themselves are of a certain sort, but only if the agent also is in a certain state of mind when he does them: first he must act with knowledge; secondly he must deliberately choose the act, and choose it for its own sake; and thirdly the act must spring from a fixed and permanent disposition of character. For the possession of an art, none of these conditions is included, except the mere qualification of knowledge; but for the possession of the virtues, knowledge is of little or no avail, whereas the other conditions, so far from being of little moment, are all-important, inasmuch as virtue results from the repeated performance of just and temperate actions. Thus although actions

[4] are entitled just and temperate when they are such acts as just and temperate men would do, the agent is just and temperate not when he does these acts merely, but when he does them in the way in which just and temperate men do them. It is correct therefore to say that a man becomes just by doing just actions and

[5] temperate by doing temperate actions; and no one can have the remotest chance of becoming good without doing them. But the mass of mankind, instead of doing virtuous acts, have recourse to discussing virtue, and fancy that they are pursuing philosophy and

[6] that this will make them good men. In so doing they act like invalids who listen carefully to what the doctor says, but entirely neglect to carry out his prescriptions. That sort of philosophy will no more lead to a healthy state of soul than will the mode of treatment produce health of body.

1

BOOK VI

We have already said that it is right to choose the mean and to avoid excess and deficiency, and that the mean is prescribed by the right principle. Let us now analyze the latter notion.

In the case of each of the moral qualities or dispositions that have been discussed, as with all the other virtues also, there is a certain mark to aim at, on which the man who knows the principle involved fixes his gaze, and increases or relaxes the tension accordingly; there is a certain standard determining those modes of observing the mean which we define as lying between excess and defect, being in conformity with the right principle. This bare statement however, although true, is not at all enlightening. In all

[2] departments of human endeavor that have been reduced to a science, it is true to say that effort ought to be exerted and relaxed neither too much nor too little, but to the medium amount, and as the right principle decides. Yet a person knowing this truth will be no wiser than before: for example, he will not know what medicines to take merely from being told to take everything that medical science or a medical expert would prescribe. Hence with

[3] respect to the qualities of the soul also, it is not enough merely to have established the truth of the above formula; we also have to define exactly what the right principle is, and what is the standard

that determines it.

[4] Now we have divided the Virtues of the Soul into two groups, the Virtues of the Character and the Virtues of the Intellect. The former, the Moral Virtues, we have already discussed. Our account of the latter must be prefaced by some remarks about psychology.

[5] It has been said before that the soul has two parts, one rational and the other irrational. Let us now similarly divide the rational part, and let it be assumed that there are two rational faculties, one whereby we contemplate those things whose first principles are invariable, and one whereby we contemplate those things which admit of variation: since, on the assumption that knowledge is based on a likeness or affinity of some sort between subject and object, the parts of the soul adapted to the cognition of objects that are of different kinds must themselves differ in kind. These two rational faculties may be designated the Scientific Faculty and the Calculative Faculty respectively; since calculation is the same [6] as deliberation, and deliberation is never exercised about things that are invariable, so that the Calculative Faculty is a separate part of the rational half of the soul.

[7] We have therefore to ascertain what disposition of each of these faculties is the best, for that will be the special virtue of each.

2 But the virtue of a faculty is related to the special function which that faculty performs. Now there are three elements in the soul which control action and the attainment of truth: namely, Sensation, Intellect, and Desire.

[2] Of these, Sensation never originates action, as is shown by the fact that animals have sensation but are not capable of action.

Pursuit and avoidance in the sphere of Desire correspond to affirmation and denial in the sphere of the Intellect. Hence inasmuch as moral virtue is a disposition of the mind in regard to choice, and choice is deliberate desire, it follows that, if the choice is to be good, both the principle must be true and the desire right, and that desire must pursue the same things as principle affirms. We are here speaking of practical thinking, and of the attainment

[3] of truth in regard to action; with speculative thought, which is not concerned with action or production, right and wrong functioning consist in the attainment of truth and falsehood respectively. The attainment of truth is indeed the function of every part of the intellect, but that of the practical intelligence is the attainment of truth corresponding to right desire.

[4] Now the cause of action (the efficient, not the final cause) is choice, and the cause of choice is desire and reasoning directed to some end. Hence choice necessarily involves both intellect or thought and a certain disposition of character [for doing well and the reverse in the sphere of action necessarily involve thought and character].

[5] Thought by itself however moves nothing, but only thought directed to an end, and dealing with action. This indeed is the moving cause of productive activity also, since he who makes something always has some further end in view: the act of making is not an end in itself, it is only a means, and belongs to something else. Whereas a thing done is an end in itself: since doing well (welfare) is the End, and it is at this that desire aims.

Hence Choice may be called either thought related to desire or desire related to thought; and man, as an originator of action, is a union of desire and intellect.

[6] (Choice is not concerned with what has happened already: for example, no one chooses to have sacked Troy; for neither does one deliberate about what has happened in the past, but about what still lies in the future and may happen or not; what has happened cannot be made not to have happened. Hence Agathon is right in saying

> "This only is denied even to God,
> The power to make what has been done undone.)

" The attainment of truth is then the function of both the intellectual parts of the soul. Therefore their respective virtues are those dispositions which will best qualify them to attain truth.

1

BOOK VIII

Our next business after this will be to discuss Friendship. For friendship is a virtue, or involves virtue; and also it is one of the most indispensable requirements of life. For no one would choose to live without friends, but possessing all other good things. In fact

rich men, rulers and potentates are thought especially to require friends, since what would be the good of their prosperity without an outlet for beneficence, which is displayed in its fullest and most praiseworthy form towards friends? And how could such prosperity be safeguarded and preserved without friends? For the greater it is, the greater is its insecurity. And in poverty or any other misfortune men think friends are their only resource. Friends are an aid to the young, to guard them from error; to the elderly, to tend them, and to supplement their failing powers of action; to those in the prime of life, to assist them in noble deeds— " When twain together go—"

for two are better able both to plan and to execute. And the affection of parent for offspring and of offspring for parent seems to be a natural instinct, not only in man but also in birds and in most animals; as also is friendship between members of the same species; and this is especially strong in the human race; for which reason we praise those who love their fellow men. Even when travelling abroad one can observe that a natural affinity and friendship exist between man and man universally. Moreover, as friendship appears to be the bond of the state; and lawgivers seem to set more store by it than they do by justice, for to promote concord, which seems akin to friendship, is their chief aim, while faction, which is enmity, is what they are most anxious to banish. And if men are friends, there is no need of justice between them; whereas merely to be just is not enough—a feeling of friendship also is necessary. Indeed the highest form of justice seems to have an element of friendly feeling in it.

And friendship is not only indispensable as a means, it is also noble in itself. We praise those who love their friends, and it is counted a noble thing to have many friends; and some people think that a true friend must be a good man.

But there is much difference of opinion as to the nature of friendship. Some define it as a matter of similarity; they say that we love those who are like ourselves: whence the proverbs 'Like finds his like,' 'Birds of a feather flock together,' and so on. Others on the contrary say that with men who are alike it is always a case of 'two of a trade.' Some try to find a more profound and scientific explanation of the nature of affection. Euripides writes that 'Earth years for the rain' when dried up, 'And the majestic Heaven when filled with rain Yearns to fall to Earth.' Heracleitus says, 'Opposition unites,' and 'The fairest harmony springs from difference,' and ''Tis strife that makes the world go on.' Others maintain the opposite view, notably Empedocles, who declares that 'Like seeks after like.'

Dismissing then these scientific speculations as not germane to our present enquiry, let us investigate the human aspect of the matter, and examine the questions that relate to man's character and emotions: for instance, whether all men are capable of friendship, or bad men cannot be friends; and whether there is only one sort of friendship or several. Those who hold that all friendship is of the same kind because friendship admits of degree, are relying on an insufficient proof, for things of different kinds also can differ in degree. But this has been discussed before.

2

Perhaps the answer to these questions will appear if we ascertain what sort of things arouses liking or love. It seems that not everything is loved, but only what is lovable, and that this is either what is good, or pleasant, or useful. But useful may be taken to mean productive of some good or of pleasure, so that the class of things lovable as ends is reduced to the good and the pleasant. Then, do men like what is really good, or what is good for them? For sometimes the two may be at variance; and the same with what is pleasant. Now it appears that each person loves what is good for himself, and that while what is really good is lovable absolutely, what is good for a particular person is lovable for that person. Further, each person loves not what is really good for himself, but what appears to him to be so; however, this will not affect our argument, for 'lovable' will mean 'what appears lovable.'

There being then three motives of love, the term Friendship is not applied to love for inanimate objects, since here there is no return of affection, and also no wish for the good of the object—

for instance, it would be ridiculous to wish well to a bottle of wine: at the most one wishes that it may keep well in order that one may have it oneself; whereas we are told that we ought to wish our friend well for his own sake. But persons who wish another good for his own sake, if the feeling is not reciprocated, are merely said to feel goodwill for him: only when mutual is such goodwill termed friendship. And perhaps we should also add the qualification that [the feeling of goodwill must be known to its object. For a man 4] often feels goodwill towards persons whom he has never seen, but whom he believes to be good or useful, and one of these persons may also entertain the same feeling towards him. Here then we have a case of two people mutually well-disposed, whom nevertheless we cannot speak of as friends, because they are not aware of each other's regard. To be friends therefore, men must 1) feel goodwill for each other, that is, wish each other's good, and 2) be aware of each other's goodwill, and 3) the cause of their goodwill must be one of the lovable qualities mentioned above.

3

Now these qualities differ in kind; hence the affection or friendship they occasion may differ in kind also. There are accordingly three kinds of friendship, corresponding in number to the three lovable qualities; since a reciprocal affection, known to either party, can be based on each of the three, and when men love each other, they wish each other well in respect of the quality which is the ground of their friendship. Thus friends whose affection is based on utility do not love each other in themselves, but in so far as some benefit accrues to them from each other. And similarly with those whose friendship is based on pleasure: for instance, we enjoy the society of witty people not because of what [they are in themselves, but because they are agreeable to us. 2] Hence in a friendship based on utility or on pleasure men love their friend for their own good or their own pleasure, and not as being the person loved, but as useful or agreeable. And therefore these friendships are based on an accident, since the friend is not loved for being what he is, but as affording some benefit or pleasure as [the case may be. Consequently friendships of this kind are easily 3] broken off, in the event of the parties themselves changing, for if no longer pleasant or useful to each other, they cease to love each other. And utility is not a permanent quality; it differs at different times. Hence when the motive of the friendship has passed away, the friendship itself is dissolved, having existed merely as a means to that end.

[Friendships of Utility seem to occur most frequently between 4] the old, as in old age men do not pursue pleasure but profit; and between those persons in the prime of life and young people whose object in life is gain. Friends of this kind do not indeed frequent each other's company much, for in some cases they are not even pleasing to each other, and therefore have no use for friendly intercourse unless they are mutually profitable; since their pleasure in each other goes no further than their expectations of advantage.

With these friendships are classed family ties of hospitality with foreigners.

[With the young on the other hand the motive of friendship 5] appears to be pleasure, since the young guide their lives by emotion, and for the most part pursue what is pleasant to themselves, and the object of the moment. And the things that please them change as their age alters; hence they both form friendships and drop them quickly, since their affections alter with what gives them pleasure, and the tastes of youth change quickly. Also the young are prone to fall in love, as love is chiefly guided by emotion, and grounded on pleasure; hence they form attachments quickly and give them up quickly, often changing before the day is out.

The young do desire to pass their time in their friend's company, for that is how they get the enjoyment of their friendship.

[The perfect form of friendship is that between the good, and 6] those who resemble each other in virtue. For these friends wish each alike the other's good in respect of their goodness, and they are good in themselves; but it is those who wish the good of their friends for their friends' sake who are friends in the fullest sense,

since they love each other for themselves and not accidentally. Hence the friendship of these lasts as long as they continue to be good; and virtue is a permanent quality. And each is good relatively to his friend as well as absolutely, since the good are both good absolutely and profitable to each other. And each is pleasant in both ways also, since good men are pleasant both absolutely and to each other; for everyone is pleased by his own actions, and therefore by actions that resemble his own, and the actions of all good men are the same or similar.— Such friendship [7] is naturally permanent, since it combines in itself all the attributes that friends ought to possess. All affection is based on good or on pleasure, either absolute or relative to the person who feels it, and is prompted by similarity of some sort; but this friendship possesses all these attributes in the friends themselves, for they are alike, et cetera, in that way. Also the absolutely good is pleasant absolutely as well; but the absolutely good and pleasant are the chief objects of affection; therefore it is between good men that affection and friendship exist in their fullest and best form.

[8] Such friendships are of course rare, because such men are few. Moreover they require time and intimacy: as the saying goes, you cannot get to know a man till you have consumed the proverbial amount of salt in his company; and so you cannot admit him to friendship or really be friends, before each has shown the other that he is worthy of friendship and has won his confidence. People [9] who enter into friendly relations quickly have the wish to be friends, but cannot really be friends without being worthy of friendship and also knowing each other to be so; the wish to be friends is a quick growth, but friendship is not.

In an effort to save some space I have not reproduced the complete work. Still it produces a fairly hefty tome. *(Edited by H. Rackham)*

Making Sense Of It All: *Nicomachean Ethics* Thought Sheet

Thought Point	Points of Thought
Describe these Lecture Sections	

Main Point(s) (What is he talking about?)	
What is the Good?	
What is Virtue?	
What is Ethics?	
What is Friendship?	
What does the Mean mean?	
Do you agree with Aristotle?	

Science and the East

This may or may not be a legitimate chapter in our exploration. Valid or not it does rise from a simple question: “Had there already been or did there develop in the East a similar ‘scientific’ thinker to Aristotle?”

The answer depends on how you define ‘science’. Does the East view ‘science’ differently? We can definitely say from our discussion of Aristotle that science is broader than we define it today. If we bear that in mind, any system which seeks information on or questions and examines nature can in some way be considered similar to Aristotle’s system or vice-versa. It is the broadness of Aristotle’s system which makes it stand out, so to re-ask the question is there a *similar thinker* in the East?

It’s Not Just The Speed Of Light, It’s The Law

In much of the Eastern philosophy we have examined, the natural world does not seem to follow laws, but instead simply 'is'. Humans can look for regularities and pattern in the flow of nature, but any 'laws' detected there are the product of human imposition, a personal, interior way of organizing experiences (*a posteriori*), and are not the underlying basis of the phenomena being observed. An ‘understanding’, or acknowledgment, of some phenomenon would be considered accurate if it brings greater *self*-awareness not necessarily greater awareness of the world.

By contrast and only in the broadest sense, the Western philosophy seems to prefer verbal or logical models of reality evaluated along the criterion of an overall objective idea called ‘Truth’. In this case a model would be considered accurate if it expresses the ‘true’ nature of reality regardless of individual ‘awareness’ (this may not sound odd, but it does go to the struggle between science and faith in the West, whereas in the East you could have a Confucian Buddhist, or an Atheist Buddhist).

Aristotle’s system of categories and hierarchy implies that there are slots into which something fits, or is bounded if you so please. This system enables us to understand ourselves and to understand ourselves in relationship to other things (everything has a place and everything in its place). This would imply certain rigidity and makes our own self-awareness inter-dependent upon some external objective truth.

But can we not also say that despite all of their protestations to the contrary, certain Eastern philosophers delved into similar sciences, divided the world up similarly for the purpose of deeper understanding and enlightenment? Certainly we can see early development of astronomical calculations, geometry, and metallurgy in the Indus civilization of the last millennium BCE but does it compare (for lack of a better word) with the developments of Aristotle?

Apples And Oranges

Part of the problem may still be the word *science*. In my limited research on this subject, I find very few discussions in the East philosophical tradition of the word as applied by Aristotle. That is not to say that there are not works that the authors consider to be discussions of the subject, just that there are few real discussions on the comparative *idea*, meaning that very little discussion can take place because it seems to this humble author that everyone is interpreting the would *science* to fit the nature of the studies and knowledge put forth by their respective areas or cultures and yet at the same time pointing out that their understanding is the only possible understanding of the word.

Warning: author opinion induced statements ahead (*but then do not look in the rear-view mirror)***!*** I think that we may be comparing apples and oranges, to use Aristotle's categorical thinking. The argument made by many pundits and authors is that the East was miles ahead of the West in everything and that the theoretical, practical and productive arts of the East were transferred (usurped?) to the West (and in some cases to the far East) and that every thinking owes its existence to the Indus Valley civilization or the Buddhists of India, who oddly enough according to themselves do not give a damn about any of it. So where does that leave us in our innocent, nay, naive and humble search for knowledge and truth?

The Sound Of One Hand Clapping

Perhaps it is best to see this as a one sided discussion by both sides. If it is true that Eastern civilization, especially the Indian, developed centuries ahead of the West and from archeological and literary evidence it appears to be so in some areas, then why was it 'lost'? Did the West appropriate it and even if they did it seems that would have expanded its influence not diminished it. They say history is written by the victors, but the Greeks (aside from the fact that Alexander did not conquer the Indian peninsula, in fact aside from his illness, it probably was his undoing) had a penchant for citing and referencing (if often only in rebuttal or dialectically like Aristotle) which seems to imply (asides aside, I really do have a point here) that the charge by modern authors of intellectual hubris by Western scholars only applied to ancient cultures *or* that an idea can develop in isolation. And if that is the case perhaps the Vedic culture stole their ideas from someone else as well. With pre-history, we are left to decide from sketchy evidence.

There is no denying that the Vedic culture has some merit for exploration. If, as I understand, *vedic* means 'knowledge' then it fits right into our discussion of knowledge and virtue. Does Vedic science meet the definition which we give to Aristotle's understanding of the definition, as a tool to self-awareness and virtue? Does Aristotle's compare to the Vedic?

Unfortunately this insufficiency we have of historical writing and historical-analytical writing of our period (and an understanding of 'historical'), and the writings we do have are limited and/or slanted toward one end or another. What we can access and quantify is an understanding of the results. While gunpowder was created in China, we see that very little of it was used for war craft or industrial expansion and that mainly it was used for entertainment purposes.

Some knowledge ends up being exploited merely for curiosities. For example the harnessing of steam power by the Greeks was rarely used to move trains but to power intellectual oddities, curiosities or toys. Speaking of venting, I guess that is what I am doing here. Innovation can be an end in and of itself. In cultures which value stability, which most do, innovation does not fuel new enterprises or thought but entertains and amuses. Why is the vision of Atlantis populated by advanced beings which so many have, not true? Was knowledge held only by an elite few while as in the West (according to some) the majority of people starved in ignorance? Why must great human endeavors only be attributable to an alien influence?

My guess is that at the time most cultural exchange is not seen as stealing or vindictive. The intellectual community in any society seems to be more about the exchange of ideas than bragging rights. Why else would you open a university? What a culture does with the knowledge is what makes the difference.

Putting It Together

I am not sure about this chapter, but I found it to be a fascinating exploration of history, culture, cultural bias and just plain bias. Now I am always open to being corrected if I am wrong, and I will adapt and revise this text if enough information comes my way, but in my humble and incomplete

exploration of the ideas which have shaped all of civilization, the decline of civilizations does not mean that the next one stole everything they knew from the previous one – except maybe the Romans, I guess (poor Etruscans, and Greeks). Civilizations rise and fall on their own merits. In relatively stable situations ideas flow freely and are exchanged freely. The inability to adapt to changing conditions, ecological, political, economic, or whatever, due to the cultural restrictions is probably more to blame than usurpation.

There are many theories and books of theories out there about the movers of civilization, both human and environmental. Salt, biological, geological, bio-geographical, technology, resources; all of these have some legitimate hand in the furthering of human civilization. We though seek to understand it from the philosophical, epistemological. The human mind and spirit as it struggles with and passes through each of these factors.

Basically the investigation and writing of this chapter just made me frustrated. Objective opinion was hard to come by, and much building up and tearing down of cultures (or more appropriately tearing down to build up) was the lion's share of what I found.

Actually, on second thought, a very important lesson indeed.

Epicureans

Alright! Enough of that deep thinking stuff! Wahoo-woo! Let us get to the rowdiest bunch of crazies to ever put forth a philosophy. Finally, a group of thinkers to which geek philosophers can look to with as much admiration as engineers look to *Apollo 13*. There is hope for us! Toga! Toga! Toga….

Seriously. What tends to happen when dour asceticism and intellectualism overcome good sense? Intellectualism looses badly at a drinking game and good sense gets rough-shod by hedonism. We seekers though, ask does Epicurus who has lent his name to this movement have more to offer than just binge hedonism?

Let us see, and in the end remember, no matter who you hang out with, all the cool chicks and dudes just think you are goofy anyway.

Putting It In Context: The Players

Dates	Philosophers	Main Points
412?-320?	Diogenes	*Cynicism; stressed stoic self-sufficiency and the rejection of luxury; searched for an honest man with a lantern in daylight.*
341-270	Epicurus	*There is no afterlife, live now to the fullest. Ethics should be guided by feeling like Physics is guided by our senses.*
335-263	Zeno if Citium	*Stoicism; peace and well being come from living in harmony with nature.*
298-230	Hsun-tzu	*Confucian; natural human evil tendencies must be overcome with ritual and education. He distinguishes what is born in man and what must be learned through rigorous education.*

Table 1: Epicurus in Context

Epicurus marks the transition to the *new* century. Plato and Aristotle are dead but well entrenched and thanks to Aristotle, larger observations on the meaning of life are being taken on. Epicurus steps into this ordered, moral world. He was born some twenty years after the death of Aristotle outside of Athens and began his teaching outside of Athens as well, but eventually gravitated there, opening a school known as 'the Garden' because of the garden within its walls wherein he taught (ironically placed halfway between the *stoa* of the market and the Academy). He was known for his generosity and kept the school open for at least the last 30 some odd years of his life then provided for it in his will, to allow it to stay open, which it did. He was also the first to freely admit women (to learn of course, get your mind out of the gutter despite the subject).

Epicurus lives in a period of constant struggle between Alexander's generals to establish control of his empire. In a sense the empire has already begun to decline. But he is long enough after that the great patronage of the Ptolemaic rulers, establishing libraries and universities does provide a stable and fertile ground for the development of thought. Still, one could honestly look at the world and ask what good did Plato's and Aristotle's calls for discipline and asceticism and philosopher kings do for the people of Greece?

Since we know that Socrates was reacting to a popular world view held by (among others) the Sophists and that Plato and Aristotle established schools which lasted centuries, in such a established garden what effect could a system which swung the pendulum back have? An amazing amount apparently. Epicurus' influence was great, his system becoming one of the major

philosophies of the Mediterranean, influencing even the Romans as late as the poet Lucretius (mid first century BCE) who provided us with a fairly large summary of Epicurus' wisdom and thoughts.

Let The Party Begin

Enough background. Let us get to the meat (and wine) of it. Epicurus basically debunks every aspect of the moral philosophies of Plato and Aristotle. Shocking, I know. He does this by denying the existence of an after-life of which he contends there is no proof. With no after-life to worry about, there is only here and now. The gods leave us be and really have no concern for us and any belief in an after-life is simple not rational (i.e. there is no *rational* proof of it).

Epicurus does not propose or even really rely on any formal system of logic. For him, the purpose of philosophy is to attain the happy, tranquil life, characterized by peace, freedom from fear, the absence of pain, and by living a self-sufficient life surrounded by friends (an important part of Aristotle's thought as well which we read – *Ethics Book VIII*). Pleasure and pain are the measures of what is good and bad. Our physical senses define these. Death is demoted from a transition to another type of *being* and so the end of the body *and* the soul should not be feared. Removal of this ultimate fear redefines life. Because death is the end, the gods do not reward or punish humans, no tally being kept, one more fear down.

There are many echoes of Aristotle's thought which seem to come through in Epicurus but we do not want to get hung up there. Epicurus was not a disciple of Aristotle. In addition, this lifestyle also called for a certain amount of detachment from social involvement, meaning that social moral action was not as important. Working for the good did not really mean politics like Aristotle taught, or Plato's philosopher kings. The individual 'pleasure principle' dictated actions, almost dogmatically (oddly enough) because only fools would think otherwise.

So if there is no after-life, no final external consequences save the immediate ones during our life time, how do we learn to live and why should we live that way?

Everybody's Workin' For The Weekend

Epicurus' works are not massive is scope, and for the most part only come down to us through secondary sources. Like Aristotle before him, he divides his thoughts into parts, but only three: *The Canon*, *Physics*, and *Ethics*.

The Canon, similarly to Aristotle's *Categories*, are the criteria for all thinking in the other two parts. *Canon* comes from the word for 'list' and has nothing to do with explosions (contrary to the explosive nature of this thought).

The basic premise is that experience dictates knowledge and to place the root of knowledge outside of ourselves would be to deny the validity of our experience and therefore our ability to know anything. Without an experience of truth how could we tell it from ignorance?

Knowledge is built from incremental sense experiences in an associative, concept-based way. What that means is that we lump real-time and memory of similar sensory experiences together until we grasp a concept, like when the sun is out it gets hot. So heat gets associated with things which are hot. The idea of *human* comes to us through a reoccurring complex pattern of qualities which are similar enough (even for different 'objects') that we call each other *humans*. But we do not just take it on past knowledge. We must also continue to poll our sensory information or else we might lump a mannequin in with humans.

There are no Forms as for Plato and no substance/being as for Aristotle. Knowledge from sensory experience alone (ours and others) gives the form. Without getting into how he posits we receive ideas and images, he does hammer language for being part of the problem. Because we can give something a name, like death, we can extrapolate out and begin to fear it. He really stresses the

idea of understanding the base meaning of a word and avoiding embellishing it with extra meaning, which according to the aforesaid lack of explaining is a short-circuit of the actual meaning.

Let's Get Physical

Epicurus' Physics has only use within the scope of praxis. He feels that the only use for natural science is the healing of people's ills. All speculation of other life forms and rocks only has use if it can be applied to human suffering.

Think about Aristotle. Knowledge leads to virtue and that is its main goal. Not so fast Epicurus says. What good are the platitudes of philosophers to heal the ills of the world? Knowledge must have a pragmatic purpose.

Interestingly, he attributes most sickness and suffering to superstitious beliefs which rise from external forces and the incessant worry it causes. One tries to be what one is not or else seeks constant escape from the reality of who one is to the final detriment caused by the hatred of the self which one is trying to escape. Hmmm.

Democritus (mentioned but not really explored in *Chapter 9*), provides the natural world explanation for Epicurus. His atomism explains how we get sensory information through the free-range atoms bouncing around. So aside from the function and end of physics, Epicurus' ideas are pretty much based on Democritus. This frees Epicurus up to wax on the nature of nature.

Aristotle is thought of as the first 'realist', in that he looked to the observable world around us for meaning. Still he connected to an objective outside of things. Epicurus goes one step further and dismisses the objective as having any bearing. Sure there may be gods but what observable evidence is there that they do anything? How therefore could we 'participate' in any way with them? So even our mind, the connecting point for Aristotle, is a physical thing, connected as it is to the physical body. The mind hurts when the body hurts the body moves when the mind tells it. End of story.

The gods, death and other seemingly observable things really do not matter to the physical world. The universe is infinite and eternal, and events in the world are ultimately based on the motions and interactions of atoms moving in empty space (he has a great observation about the dust motes floating in sunbeams). So *hakuna matata* and hang loose.

Feelings, Woh, Woh, Woh, Woh, Woh, Feelings

If all of that is true, can there be an objective based lifestyle? Aristotle justified it with this connectivity focused in the soul, as a natural off-shoot of an objective truth. Epicurus rejects that. So how do you justify ethics when you remove that connection? Ethics, he tells us, is based in feelings. Not mushy feelings but *sensing* (of or by the senses). Just as our fingers can sense an object, so our minds can *sense* good and evil. We get a feeling, like the willies, when we see something which does not feel right.

Ethics then is not based in external truths. We sense within ourselves the nature of something. Death is so final there is no connection beyond it. If death is the end, there can be no punishment after death, nor any regrets for the life that has been lost, only for the life not lived.

In a way, contrary to what I said before, Aristotle himself prepared the way for the hedonistic thoughts of Epicurus. His focus on 'happiness' (*The Good*) and the way he wrote about it, could be taken to mean freedom from pain, suffering and sorrow. When we do good things we are happy. Epicurus takes it a bit further. Pleasure is only attained when we overcome pain. Food is not a pleasure until we overcome hunger. In this way, Epicurus kind of presents a threshold based on contraries also similar to Aristotle but without the mean. We can see this in many of his ideas for

instance, justice and injustice arise from the laws made to 'correct' wrongs or impose rights, not from some external understanding of what is just and unjust.

Epicurus classifies desires into three types: some are natural, others are empty; and natural desires are of two sorts, those that are necessary and those that are merely natural. Natural and necessary ones are those that look to happiness, physical well-being, or life itself. Unnecessary but natural desires are for pleasant things like sweet odors and good-tasting food and drink (and for various pleasurable activities of sorts other than simple smelling, touching and tasting; think passing, transitory pleasures). Empty desires are those that have as their objects things designated by *empty sounds*, such as immortality, which cannot exist for human beings *and* do not correspond to any *genuine* need. The same holds for the desire for physical jones' like great wealth or for the trappings of fame. Again, they cannot provide the security that is the genuine object of the desire.

Such desires, because they have no basis in reality, can never be satisfied, any more than the corresponding fears (like the fear of death) can never be alleviated, since neither has a *genuine* concrete referent, i.e., death as something harmful (the fear of not being) or that of wealth and power as panacea for anxiety). Such empty fears and desires, based on what Epicurus calls *empty belief*, are themselves the main source of fear and pain in civilized life (where you do not really have to worry about being eaten by something or starving to death where the wall protects and the farmer provides), since they are the reason why people are forever driven to strive for limitless wealth and power, subjecting themselves to the very dangers they imagine they are avoiding.

Alright. Deep breath. Ethics then consists in seeking the right things judged by our feelings. It is a natural desire to gravitate toward pleasure and avoid pain. For Epicurus this sensual understanding must be valid (as we have discussed above), or else all else could be called into question. Since that is so (that we can *feel* right and wrong), we are free, due to an amount of randomness in the universe, to act (we are not determined by outside forces, which gives us freedom). That is, true freedom comes from not being slaves to fears or irrational ideas.

Still if one does not fear the gods or any sort of final punishment, what motive is there for living a virtuous life or even justly? We want what is best for ourselves *and* our friends which means we will always act in accordance with that desire. Because it is preferable not to commit crimes, even secret ones, since there will always be anxiety over the possibility of detection, and this will disrupt the tranquility that is the chief basis of happiness in life. Justice, for Epicurus, depends on the capacity to make compacts neither to harm others nor be harmed by them, and consists in such compacts; justice is nothing in itself, independent of such arrangements. Someone who is incapable of living prudently, honorably, and justly cannot live pleasurably, and vice versa. Finally and similarly to Plato and Aristotle, prudence or wisdom (no matter how it is learned) is the chief of the virtues: on it depend all the rest, including our actions. For example a wise man would feel the pains of a friend no less than his own, and would die for a friend rather than wrong him in any way, otherwise his own life would be in turmoil and he could not be happy.

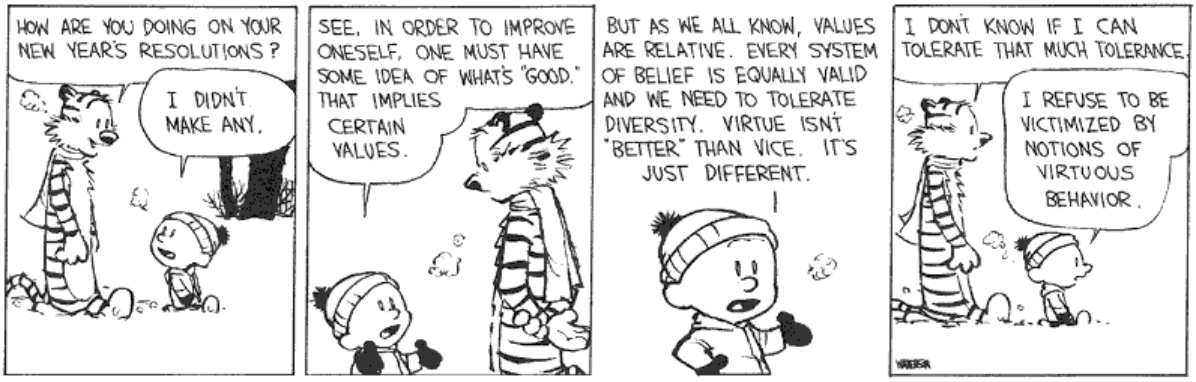
Putting It Together

When the times are good there are good times to be had. The problem with systems which require a lot of responsibility, self-discipline and self-regulating action like Plato's and Aristotle's seems to be that they really require a lot of work. Self discipline and Selflessness are sometimes a hard sell when things seem to be going well. Think late 20th early 21st century and the SUV. People who would laugh at others as they ran over them with their Hummers suddenly become the loudest proponents of conservation when it seems that they really would not be able to get their gas for under $2 a gallon. They decried President Carter in the Seventies only to echo his words in the Nineties and Aughts.

The pendulum of ‘philosophical’ thought swings wide as well. There is always a prophet willing to tell you what you want to hear, like ‘lose weight while you eat what you want”. Still, what do the Epicureans have to tell us? Is there a valid aspect to his thought? Is Epicurus all about pleasure and no responsibility?

We would argue that the answer is no but ultimately it is a matter of perspective. When Epicurus sloughed off the immortal coil, he began to look at a different end to life. He began to focus on the things here and now, right in front of us. The immediacy of life became apparent to him. His love of friendship even amidst suffering (his kidney stones are eventually what killed him) is admirable and worth imitating. Life was simple enough: at the end of the day we will do the right thing because it feels good, because we desire to avoid feeling bad, and because others are so important that it must be the greatest virtue.

All this is not to say that there were not some fuzzy areas for him as well. As with others, there were times when he said, *well that matter is for a greater mind than mine*.



Stoicism

Zeno *of Citium* is the founder of Stoicism. The name for this system though derives from the *stoa* or columns/porch in the agora from which Zeno taught. He arrives, like Epicurus, soon after Aristotle's death, and almost in parallel.

With this discussion, we cover the last of what Marcus Aurelius (a Stoic and philosopher king himself) considered the four chairs of philosophy: Platonic, Aristotelian**,** Epicurean and Stoic. These systems, in opposition to others like the Sophists (*Chapter 9*) or the Cyrenaics (*Chapter 15*), tend to take the long-term or moral view which probably lent them to more enduring adherents.

What that means is that for a while longer we are wading in the final foundations of Western Philosophy.

Zeno (Of Citium)

Like Socrates, Zeno sought the public forum to espouse his teachings and so set up at the painted (murals) porch colonnade in the marketplace of Athens. Therefore, like Socrates, it is the foundation laid by his followers which we really know. Most of the writings of the Stoics come to us from much later, mainly through the Romans. As is so often the case in the way that Zeno extended Cynicism, the life of Stoicism is much larger than Zeno's thought.

Still, we have to start somewhere and what better place than the beginning. As stated, Zeno's ideas developed from those of the Cynics (*Chapter 15*), whose founding father, Antisthenes if you recall, was a disciple of Socrates. In Zeno's teachings, their call for ultra-austerity is balanced by Aristotle's call for rationality, though he remains faithful to the Socratic call. And as appears to be the flavor of the post-Aristotle day, like Epicurus, Zeno's philosophical system covered three main themes: physics, logic, and ethics (so designated at a later time).

Feelings, No, No, No, No, No Feelings….

Where Epicurus embraced feeling and emotion as the foundation of knowledge (we know what we sense) and therefore happiness (virtue), the Stoics took the opposite view: emotion was the flaw which produced all suffering. Destructive emotions, such as anger or jealousy kept us from happiness and therefore had to be kept in check.

Logic and reason rule the day. Self-control and fortitude are the means of overcoming these destructive emotions.

Reason is the sole judge. The sensations and impressions of Epicurus are not the end of truth. That is to say, where as Epicurus would say we *sense* or *feel* something to be true, Stoics would argue that while that may be true, the final decision is made on those senses and feelings by *reason*. The mind has the ability to judge (approve or reject) a sensation, enabling it to distinguish a true feeling or sense of reality from one which is false. And in terms of that judgment, we can say that some impressions can be agreed to immediately (everybody automatically ~~feels~~ knows that killing is wrong), but that other impressions can only achieve varying degrees of approval which can be labeled *belief* or *opinion*. It is only through the use of reason that we can achieve clear comprehension *and* belief. Certainty and true knowledge is achieved by verifying the belief with the expertise of peers and the collective judgment of humanity.

Vulcans Have Feelings Too

Cultural Pause: Remember the *Start Trek* episode where the pretty flowers shot spore at the crew and took away rational judgment for all practical purposes? Remember how Spock cried because he was unable to express emotion for so much of his life? The episode was about the struggle between getting in touch with one's self and what that really meant.

Okay before I go on, I realize that there *might* be some out there who could possibly be unfamiliar with the *Start Trek* series. If that is so and none of the previous statements make any sense to you then, darn it go to your local library or video store and get a copy of This *Side of Paradise* (Season 1 Episode 26) or *The Naked Time* and watch it! Get with the program!

Anyway, Stoicism is not about no emotions, but about keeping our emotions in check, balanced by the rational mind (which incidentally for those who do not know, is basically the Vulcan approach, until the *Kolinahr*, which is the ceremony for the purging of all emotions).

Contrary to earlier thinkers of happy memory, Knowledge is not *the* Virtue. Virtue is the Will in tune with Nature. One seeks to eliminate the destructive aspects of one's life not so much by asceticism but more of a discipline of will.

Stoicism is not just a lack of emotions but is a system based in rationality and action. In the Faith vs. Works discussion (is this really a discussion or just a misunderstanding between friends?), we can consider them part of the Works camp.

Logic, Captain?

The Stoics, in opposition to the Epicureans had a *system* of logic. In opposition to Aristotle it was based in statements rather than just predicates. What that means is that Aristotle (thought you were done?) started at the base term, like 'star' and combined it with another term like 'gaseous body' (neither of which has conclusive truth or falseness contained within it, though it can be a 'truth' itself from a previous argument) and stated a conclusion from them as in the case *All stars are made of burning gas; burning gas gives off light; therefore, stars give off light* (which must contain a truth within it). This method spends time defining the thing and is very useful in discussions.

Stoic Logic on the other hand, connects propositions together via logical operators to produce ideas and reflects in a way the Stoic propensity to action. *The Earth is round; Paris is the capital of France.* Those are *statements* or *propositions*. To spend time on the terms, as does Aristotle is to waste time on *incomplete ideas*. That is to say, The Earth is round tells us about things which we do not have to worry about defining. To say *The Earth is round* AND *the Earth rotates* means *Therefore the Earth is a round thing which rotates.* We can see it in this quote from Zeno: "*No evil is honorable: but death is honorable; therefore death is not evil.*"

Logic then, is the means of putting things in relationship to one another. This logic is essentially about how the statements (*propositions*) connect together. The logical ways of combining or altering statements or propositions to form more complicated statements or propositions is the main focus of this type of logic. For that reason Stoic or *propositional* logic can be thought of as (primarily) the study of *logical operators*, i.e. any word or phrase used either to modify one statement to make a different statement, or join multiple statements together to form a more complicated statement. For example "and", "or", "not", "if-then", "because", and "necessarily", are all operators. The Stoics make several distinctions of the *types* of operators but we will not worry about that here.

As to that, why spend any time on this? Well, later this form of logic will be of interest.

Physical reality is consistent with universal laws...[1]

Stoics have a sense of physics which is similar to earlier thinkers with a few twists. The universe is a physical place of cause and effect. Basically there are *antecedent* causes and *principle* causes. Think of it like a bowling ball. You flinging the ball down the lane is the antecedent and the roundness of the ball (which allows it to continue rolling) is the principle. If you flung a square box down the lane you would not have a principle which would allow it to continue down the lane; you would observe a different effect. This ties into their logic.

Along those lines, there is a sort of central core, a prime mover, a universal or divine reason, which can be called God (or Zeus or whatever you feel so inclined). What does that have to do with physics you might insightfully ask? Nature *is* God, or at least what we can understand of God. Something (everything) participates in God because it is part of the universe (i.e. Nature). This nature is therefore ruled by reason (*Logos*) (*Heraclitus Chapter 8; Plato Chapter 13b*), has laws and the world adheres to these laws. Physics is the study of the operations (workings) of Divine Reason, which is the relation of causes to effects (just as logic is the study of relations).

Matter is all there is. There is something rather than nothing. But what about those nothings like ideas? How can things not exist (in the sense that only matter exists), yet be? Stoics propose a simple solution similar to Aristotle: they belong to different species of the same genus. There are material and immaterial things, in an order of nature, with the immaterial things being of the highest order. I used our earlier *something rather than nothing* because it still applies here. That is to say, space is something rather than nothing (something capable of being occupied yet not occupied). Ideas follow the same route. Very roughly put, they exist, physically, but they have a matter sensible only to the mind.

The idea of the soul, as with Aristotle, is approached in physics. The soul exists, but unlike Plato and Aristotle, it is not eternal. Without going too deep, the whole universe is in a cycle of destruction and creation/resurrection. Souls might hang around for a while, some longer than others, for a hierarchy of reasons, but eventually all are caught up in the cycle.

It is curious how often you humans manage to obtain that which you do not want.[2]

So once again we see physics and ethics tied together. “All things are parts of one single system, which is called Nature; the individual life is good when it is in harmony with Nature.” (*Zeno***)** As stated before, the will, in tune with nature is Virtue{XE “virtue”}. So what does that have to do with how we act toward one another?

If God is Nature (in a somewhat pan-theistic way), then when we follow Universal Reason (the *Logos*, the Natural Law which is also within us), we are in tune with God’s Will. We have virtue. “Happiness is a good flow of life,” said Zeno, and this can only be achieved through the use of right Reason coinciding with the *Logos* which governs everything. A bad feeling “is a disturbance of the mind repugnant to Reason, and against Nature.” This rational conscience, this soul, this convergence of God and the mind out of which morally good actions spring is Virtue; true good can only consist in Virtue. We seek to do the good for one another, because that is the Natural Law, the divine Will, the structure of the universe or however you want to portray it.

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[1] Physical reality is consistent with universal laws. Where the laws do not operate, there is no reality -- we judge reality by the responses of our senses. Once we are convinced of the reality of a given situation, we abide by its rules. – Spock, *Specter of the Gun – a bit long for a section title but presented here in full for your edification.*

[2] Spock in *‘Errand of Mercy’*

Similar to Plato and Socrates' idea of evil rising from ignorance, Stoics taught that evil rose from the rejection of right Reason. Differently, it is all black and white for the Stoics. Actions are either good or bad, they cannot be both nor can they even be a little of one and a lot of the other. All errors must be rooted out, not merely set aside, and replaced with right Reason. The suppression/eradication of the negative emotions which cause suffering and sorrow (*desire, fear, pleasure and pain*) produces moral actions and immoral actions are those not guided by right Reason. Period.

As a foundational aside, the idea of 'freewill' fluctuates within Stoic thought but basically boils down to (because it is the one I want to emphasize) following the Will or choosing to not follow the Will. There is a certain deterministic view present in the Stoic discussion as shown in the example of a dog tied to a cart. If the dog chooses to go with the cart when it moves, *va bene*. Or he can choose to not go with the cart, but in the end will be drug along anyway.

True freedom is freedom from emotional control and attachment. Indifference is not apathy but a refusal to be mastered by the thing, an indifference to it. Functionally, when you think about it, if one did not care then what would be the point of living? *How* one cares and acts is the rub. One does not want to help someone out of pity (an emotion) but out of the rational understanding of the good. Freedom then is merely the choice between right Reason and well, frankly, stupidity. Happiness will only come from (rational) moral actions. This would also imply a certain amount of social interaction and Stoics as a whole are encouraged to participate and even lead, in the philosopher king vein.

Damn it Jim, I'm A Doctor, Not A Greek!

In *Star Trek* the rational yet emotional Captain Kirk is advised by the cool rationality of Mr. Spock and by the deep passion of Dr. McCoy. Kirk often plays the two off of each other, provoking humorous situations, yet he seems to genuinely respect both men. He values both their brilliance and their beliefs. Many of the best stories are those where the three banter and struggle to look at the world as one mind, aside from the command structure.

Spock seeks the most rational course of action. He is not without a compass and he is not strictly relativistic because the rational thing to do is of course the best thing to do. How could it be seen otherwise? He cares about the mission, his friends and the ship he sails in but he does it without emotional attachment. If logic dictated an emotionally charged action he would still take it, because it is logical and therefore the right action.

Dr. McCoy on the other hand is a brilliant medical officer who often questions the utilitarian decisions of Spock because they seem cold and calculating (in the sense of bean counter). They chastise each other, and they often trade good-natured barbs. The question is constantly raised between the good of the one and the good of the many and which one has more value. Spock would approach the problem logically, rationally and the good doctor often with compassion. In the end one sometimes defers to the other.

The Stoics approach life with the sense of balance, as said not so much with asceticism but rationality. All are equal under God. One weighs the correct action based on reason, the natural law and a *preferred* list of things. Wealth and health are to be *preferred* to poverty and disease. But the why of the preference is the motive behind the decision. McCoy and Spock might reach the same decision but for totally different reasons, for which Spock would still disagree with McCoy.

We cannot control the things without us. The world pretty much runs itself, based rational and rationally knowable set laws. What is in our power, then, is the 'authority over ourselves' that we have regarding our capacity to judge what is good and what is evil. Outside our power are 'external things', which are 'indifferent' with respect to being good or evil.

The soul does have an irrational part (where else would the passions come from?), but if kept in check only good things will happen. The even-keel judgment being promoted also implies a certain unquestionable fairness when dealing with others. In the end it is the group as a whole, as for the universe as a whole which is the measure of virtue.

Putting It Together

The Stoics bring not just an opposing view to the Epicureans, something that was certainly the practice before Plato, they re-introduce the idea of stability and objectivity over relativism and subjectivity.

Still, what is the best way of looking at the world? For that matter what are the basic questions for which we seek answers? In the end it is a basis for action. What is the seat of the mind? By that we are asking what is the role, the place and the composition of rationality and epistemology. As we can see from our explorations so far, most of our discussion hinges on this understanding. What does it mean to be human? Can I trust my senses and my mind? How should we act? What is the best way to act and what is the best way to go about living so that we find our purpose?

What is the good? Is it a healthy emotional life like the Epicureans espouse or a healthy rational judgment in harmony with Nature as for the Stoics? Is knowledge virtue or freedom from perturbation? Either way, a lack of extremes would be the order of the day for both camps, and put them square in the camp of Aristotle's understanding of moderation.

Live long and prosper.

Pertinent *Star Trek* Spock quotes:

- [being a Vulcan] means to adopt a philosophy, a way of life which is logical and beneficial. We cannot disregard that philosophy merely for personal gain, no matter how important that gain might be. *Journey to Babel*
- If I let go a hammer on a planet having a positive gravity, I need not see it fall to know that it has, in fact, fallen. *Court Martial*
- After a time, you may find that 'having' is not so pleasing a thing, after all, as 'wanting.' It is not logical, but it is often true. *Amok Time*
- Where there's no emotion, there's no motive for violence. *Dagger of the Mind*
- *McCoy:* The release of emotion is what keeps us healthy. Emotionally healthy.
  Spock: That may be, Doctor. However, I have noted that the healthy release of emotion is frequently unhealthy for those closest to you. *Plato's Stepchildren*

Marcus Aurelius (Excerpts from *Meditations*)

- Always bear this in mind, what is the nature of the whole, and what is my nature, and how this is related to that, and what kind of a part it is of and what kind of a whole; and that there is no one who hinders you from always doing and saying the things which are according to the nature of which you are a part.
- The period of human life is a point, and the substance is in a flux, and the perception dull, and the composition of the whole body subject to putrefaction, and the soul a whirl, and fortune hard to divine, and fame a thing devoid of judgment. And, to say all in a word, everything which belongs to the body is a stream, and what belongs to the soul is a dream and vapor, and life is a warfare and a stranger's sojourn, and after-fame is oblivion. What then is that which is able to conduct a man? One thing and only one, philosophy. But this consists in keeping the daemon within a man free from violence and unharmed, superior to pains and pleasures, doing nothing without purpose, nor yet falsely and with hypocrisy, not feeling the need of another man's doing or not doing anything; and besides, accepting all that happens, and all that is allotted, as coming from thence, wherever it is, from whence he himself came; and, finally, waiting for death with a cheerful mind, as being nothing else than a dissolution of the elements of which every living being is compounded. But if there is no harm to the elements themselves in each continually changing into another, why should a man have any apprehension about the change and dissolution of all the elements? For it is according to nature, and nothing is evil which is according to nature.
- Throwing away then all things, hold to these only which are few; and besides bear in mind that every man lives only this present time, which is an indivisible point, and that all the rest of his life is either past or it is uncertain. Short then is the time which every man lives, and small the nook of the earth where he lives; and short too the longest posthumous fame, and even this only continued by a succession of poor human beings, who will very soon die, and who know not even themselves, much less him who died long ago.
- Body, soul, and intelligence: to the body belong sensations, to the soul appetites, to the intelligence principles. To receive the impressions of forms by means of appearances belongs even to animals; to be pulled by the strings of desire belongs both to wild beasts and to men who have made themselves into women, and to a Phalaris and a Nero: and to have the intelligence that guides to the things which appear suitable belongs also to those who do not believe in the gods, and who betray their country, and do their impure deeds when they have shut the doors. If then everything else is common to all that I have mentioned, there remains that which is peculiar to the good man, to be pleased and content with what happens, and with the thread which is spun for him; and not to defile the divinity which is planted in his breast, nor disturb it by a crowd of images, but to preserve it tranquil, following it obediently as a god, neither saying anything contrary to the truth, nor doing anything contrary to justice. And if all men refuse to believe that he lives a simple, modest, and contented life, he is neither angry with any of them, nor does he deviate from the way which leads to the end of life, to which a man ought to come pure, tranquil, ready to depart, and without any compulsion perfectly reconciled to his lot.
- Men seek retreats for themselves, houses in the country, sea-shores, and mountains; and you too are wont to desire such things very much. But this is altogether a mark of the most common sort of men, for it is in your power whenever you shall choose to retire into yourself. For nowhere either with more quiet or more freedom from trouble does a man retire than into his own soul, particularly when he has within him such thoughts that by looking into them he is immediately in perfect tranquility; and I affirm that tranquility is nothing else than the good ordering of the mind. Constantly then give to yourself this retreat, and renew yourself; and let your

principles be brief and fundamental, which, as soon as you shall recur to them, will be sufficient to cleanse the soul completely, and to send you back free from all discontent with the things to which you return. For with what are you discontented? With the badness of men? Recall to your mind this conclusion, that rational animals exist for one another, and that to endure is a part of justice, and that men do wrong involuntarily; and consider how many already, after mutual enmity, suspicion, hatred, and fighting, have been stretched dead, reduced to ashes; and be quiet at last.- But perhaps you are dissatisfied with that which is assigned to you out of the universe.- Recall to your recollection this alternative; either there is providence or atoms, fortuitous concurrence of things; or remember the arguments by which it has been proved that the world is a kind of political community, and be quiet at last.- But perhaps corporeal things will still fasten upon you.- Consider then further that the mind mingles not with the breath, whether moving gently or violently, when it has once drawn itself apart and discovered its own power, and think also of all that you hast heard and assented to about pain and pleasure, and be quiet at last.- But perhaps the desire of the thing called fame will torment you.- See how soon everything is forgotten, and look at the chaos of infinite time on each side of the present, and the emptiness of applause, and the changeableness and want of judgment in those who pretend to give praise, and the narrowness of the space within which it is circumscribed, and be quiet at last. For the whole earth is a point, and how small a nook in it is this your dwelling, and how few are there in it, and what kind of people are they who will praise you.

- This then remains: Remember to retire into this little territory of your own, and above all do not distract or strain yourself, but be free, and look at things as a man, as a human being, as a citizen, as a mortal. But among the things readiest to your hand to which you shall turn, let there be these, which are two. One is that things do not touch the soul, for they are external and remain immovable; but our perturbations come only from the opinion which is within. The other is that all these things, which you see, change immediately and will no longer be; and constantly bear in mind how many of these changes you hast already witnessed. The universe is transformation: life is opinion.
- You have existed as a part. You shall disappear in that which produced you; but rather you shall be received back into its seminal principle by transmutation.
- If souls continue to exist, how does the air contain them from eternity?- But how does the earth contain the bodies of those who have been buried from time so remote? For as here the mutation of these bodies after a certain continuance, whatever it may be, and their dissolution make room for other dead bodies; so the souls which are removed into the air after subsisting for some time are transmuted and diffused, and assume a fiery nature by being received into the seminal intelligence of the universe, and in this way make room for the fresh souls which come to dwell there. And this is the answer which a man might give on the hypothesis of souls continuing to exist. But we must not only think of the number of bodies which are thus buried, but also of the number of animals which are daily eaten by us and the other animals. For what a number is consumed, and thus in a manner buried in the bodies of those who feed on them! And nevertheless this earth receives them by reason of the changes of these bodies into blood, and the transformations into the aerial or the fiery element.
- Constantly regard the universe as one living being, having one substance and one soul; and observe how all things have reference to one perception, the perception of this one living being; and how all things act with one movement; and how all things are the cooperating causes of all things which exist; observe too the continuous spinning of the thread and the contexture of the web.
- Thou art a little soul bearing about a corpse, as Epictetus used to say.
- Think continually how many physicians are dead after often contracting their eyebrows over the sick; and how many astrologers after predicting with great pretensions the deaths of others; and how many philosophers after endless discourses on death or immortality; how many heroes after killing thousands; and how many tyrants who have used their power over men's lives with terrible insolence as if they were immortal; and how many cities are entirely dead, so to speak, Helice and Pompeii and Herculaneum, and others innumerable. Add to the reckoning all whom you have known, one after another. One man after burying another has been laid out dead, and another buries him: and all this in a short time. To conclude,

always observe how ephemeral and worthless human things are, and what was yesterday a little mucus to-morrow will be a mummy or ashes. Pass then through this little space of time conformably to nature, and end thy journey in content, just as an olive falls off when it is ripe, blessing nature who produced it, and thanking the tree on which it grew.

- Be like the promontory against which the waves continually break, but it stands firm and tames the fury of the water around it.
- Unhappy am I because this has happened to me. Not so, but happy am I, though this has happened to me, because I continue free from pain, neither crushed by the present nor fearing the future. For such a thing as this might have happened to every man; but every man would not have continued free from pain on such an occasion. Why then is that rather a misfortune than this a good fortune? And do you in all cases call that a man's misfortune, which is not a deviation from man's nature? And does a thing seem to you to be a deviation from man's nature, when it is not contrary to the will of man's nature? Well, you know the will of nature. Will then this which has happened prevent you from being just, magnanimous, temperate, prudent, and secure against inconsiderate opinions and falsehood; will it prevent you from having modesty, freedom, and everything else, by the presence of which man's nature obtains all that is its own? Remember too on every occasion which leads you to vexation to apply this principle: not that this is a misfortune, but that to bear it nobly is good fortune

Greco-Roman Thought

This chapter title is perhaps a bit deceptive. The Romans were great adapters and the Greeks provided them with plenty to adapt. This period of transition, starting really with the Roman conquering of the Ptolemaic empire of the Egypt, marks the decline of Greek influence in political matters, but not in matters of the mind (much to Cato's chagrin).

Though the library hey-day created by Alexander and Aristotle and perfected by the Ptolemaists has begun serious decline if not ruin, the Roman leaders began to be influenced by the cultures they were encountering. Even if Caesar accidently burned down the library in Alexandria while trying to burn its fleet in the harbor, the importance of Greek thought to the development of Rome and any other society which came into contact with it cannot be overlooked.

So we can also look at this chapter as type of follow-on discussion of Chapter 21.

The Players

Dates	Philosophers	Main Points
335-263	Zeno	*Stoicism; peace and well being come from living in harmony with nature.*
341-270	Epicurus	*There is no afterlife, live now to the fullest. Ethics should be guided by feeling like Physics is guided by our senses.*
214-129	Carneades	*Skeptic; reason and senses are flawed so suspend judgment*
106-43	Cicero	*Platonic, Stoic; an eclectic philosopher*
100-55	Lucretius	*Student and connoisseur of Epicurean thought.*
20-40 AD/CE	Philo of Alexandria	*Jewish philosopher, main influence is on later non-Jewish thinkers; synthesis of Greek and Jewish thought.*
506-574?	Bodhidharma?	*?*

Table 2: The Greco-Roman Players

I know, I know, I hear you. Look at that list! What are you thinking? How big a bucket do you think we need to carry here? And besides have we not already pounded the Greeks into the ground?

Well, yes…and no. We put forth here the influences of the Greco-Roman Empire (and Republic, and, etc.). Why? Because the influences are not only great within Rome, but because Rome touches (if not conquers) most of the civilized western world. Never underestimate the influence of trade, not just in goods but in ideas. The standardization of Roman rule and practices produces a certain amount of standardization of thought as well.

Take a moment and think of the influence of the French culture, or now, the American. Today we can see the struggle between the two. The French academy of language struggling to keep the china shop bull of Americanisms out of their language, something they failed to do with blue jeans.

And look, there are a few new names there.

The Greek System

Let's face it. The Greeks spread their *idée semines* like brothers at a frat house and it was not like their partners were not willing either.

One example of the influences which bear mention would be that of Greek thought on Buddhismand through that later into Zen and even Christianity. If you want a longer article on this then probably a good intro would be the only one I stumbled across http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greco-Buddhism. The summation would be that the art, philosophy and practice of Buddhism in the areas of Greek occupation drastically changed to include Greek ideas and styles, not just during the occupation but permanently creating a new synthesis of ideas and at the same time those Greek thinkers were also influenced by their Buddhist counterparts.

Roman Hands and Russian Fingers

Talking about a finger in every pot, the Roman Empire, long in the making and in the unmaking, extended throughout the world as known to the West. Interestingly enough and as a total sidebar here, the religions which took hold in Rome were as varied as the countries the Romans occupied – but that is another class. As always we must be careful in making generalizations about periods of human history which took millennia to accomplish, but that does not mean that it will not happen here.

The Romans were a practical lot. They stood on ceremony, but often not for long, as it was difficult to get off the bottom of your sandal. It is the practical things which attract them within a philosophy and the esoteric things which they dismiss. Cato, after hearing Greek philosophical arguments during a dispute, dismissed the whole lot as, well, liars and idiots (as well as those who might be influenced by them). He saw no use in rhetoric except to confuse and misdirect. He bemoaned that Rome was being swayed and enamored with philosophers and saw it as her downfall.

Oddly enough though it did not have the effects of his dire predictions, but it does show a bit the Roman mindset. Other Romans embraced philosophy and what they perceived to be its benefits. Greek replaced Latin as the language of the educated. The Roman ability to integrate, synthesize and adapt provided a common cultural lingua franca if you will for the exchange of ideas and since they were ‘everywhere’ in the known Western World, ideas in India could be exchanged with ideas in Spain or England.

The *In* Crowd

Still, until later in time, the mindset of Rome was somewhat reserved for Roman citizens. But who would not want to be a Roman citizen, what with its privileges and legal rights? Okay, aside from the Jews and the Egyptians, and the Scots, and the Picts, and…okay frankly there were a few but other than them? I mean the Germans invaded to become Roman.

Somewhat akin to Truman Capote in New York, the Romans often embraced ideas for vogue effect until something better came along or the quaint country cousin pointed out some flaw or failing.

Alright, what am I getting at, right? Citizens enjoyed rights in which the common rabble could not participate. Sure they kept local customs and law, and in some cases even religion, but they were always within the context of the larger Roman culture. This could translate into a freedom of thought which meant freedom within Roman thinking. Groups that might rise up based on independent thinking often found themselves in opposition to local Roman leadership. Local things were only as protected at the pleasure of Roman leaders.

In the end the Greeks had a full sense of debate and the Romans had an un-erring sense of law. The term Greco-Roman is probably akin to shooting and stuffing an endangered species in order to preserve it.

Pre-nups: Get It In Writing

Let us take a moment and talk about the Skeptics (from the Greek for *to look for*). Carneades, head of the Academy in Athens, was not the first Skeptic, but he did really introduce it into the Roman mind.

Skepticism is not the automatic nay-saying of any idea (*c.f. end note for Chapter 4*) nor is it just doubt. Skepticism basically states that we can make no definite statements about anything. Think of it as merely an attitude of suspending judgment on something because frankly no judgment can be made. The truth cannot be known, or even demonstrated so you should refrain from defining truths.

We are back to the questions of *where do we start* and *how do we know*. For most of the philosophers whom we have looked at until now there is comes a point where they say we just have to accept an idea as *reasonable* (*Chapter 1*) and move on. The Skeptics would say no. This may seem contrary to what we think. This also kind of flies in the face of Aristotle and Logic the whole target of which is to discover truths. Skeptics do just that without compunction, arguing that in actuality it is an endless regression of trying to determine the truth, and each truth just leads you to the search for the basis of that truth. So in a Zen-like state the Skeptic says, why even try?

The Blue Or The Red Pill (or One Pill Makes you Taller…)

Spoiler Alert: We can see this in yet another cultural reference, in the movie *The Matrix* (again, haven't seen it? Rent it!). As the main character Neo learns, reality is up for grabs. That which we see, the very basis for any doubt we may have is bounded by a machine's construct which then is another reality in itself encased within yet another reality. Neo's journey of self-awareness shows us that to begin to doubt reality does not necessarily lead one to understanding of what one knows to be true. In other words, Skepticism is the philosophy which challenges the ordinary assumption that there is evidence available that can help to discriminate between the real world and some counterfeit world that appears in all ways to be identical to the real world. What we must come to understand is that ordinary doubt develops within the context of other propositions of a similar sort taken to be known, and it can be eliminated by discovering the truth of some further proposition of the relevant type. Doubt then, can never really be answered within the context in which it arises. In the end there really is just no way to *know* so just reserve judgment on the matter at hand.

It is the very layers of reality which prevent us, nay obstruct us from understanding reality. When one makes decisions about reality and tries to order one's life around those decisions one (or really everyone) discovers the boundary within which one made the decision, meaning that those decisions are only good within that boundary and so another set of decisions are now called for, and so on and so on (*whew!*). In the very end, it is Neo who sets the boundary of his reality, knowing that it still exists within a larger reality.

Doubt then, is not the central core of Skepticism, except the doubt that there can be any known truths. It is more an understanding that questioning is really useless, that it leads to unhappiness, frustration and futility. Better to go through life skeptical of proffered truths and systems, and reserving judgment about any of the big questions in life.

I would not reduce the intellectual life of the Romans to Stoicism and Skepticism but in our great condensing they can be considered two main currents to said intellectual life.

Putting It Together

The advancement of thought and culture sometimes go together. Sometimes not. We have in a sense been looking at synthesizers, people who build upon or meld ideas from earlier thinkers together. Then there are those who are more amassers than synthesizers. Ultimately the camps usually divide, with those who synthesize more and those who synthesize less. The Greco-Roman world was filled with adapters and conglomerates, creating a broad-based philosophical movement subsisting mostly in existing systems. We can see the effects in the society, its thinkers and its writers. They were great at it. The question for us then is what does the amassing of ideas produce?

Often times our understanding of things is based on incomplete or sketchy memories and facts. For example, if you were to ask people who would know about such things to tell you the Christmas story, they would most likely tell you an amalgamation of stories rather than the story contained in Luke or Matthew specifically (yes, they are different). If you were to ask the specific reference for different parts of their story, they would most likely be unable to tell you (if you even knew yourself). Okay you say, but is that a bad thing?

It can be. Let us not forget our early lessons about bias. Think back to your initial beliefs about Epicurean hedonism. If we clump things together then we do not understand them fully, though we may have the gist. Take this work for instance, with often condenses deep philosophical systems and thoughts to one-liners. Full understanding only comes with depth.

The stability of political systems, even though they seem chaotic on the surface, especially the *Pax Romana* can lead to a type of stagnation of thought. And why should it not? *If it ain't broke don't fix it*. We can see further refinements and clarification but little innovation (c.f. *Chapter 22*). It is nothing new, nor will it continue to be.

The seeking of spiritual truth can lead one down varied paths, and into the error of mediocrity.

Relevant scene from *Monty Python's Life of Brian*.

Reg: What have the Romans ever done for us?

Various Attendees: Sanitation? Medicine? Education? Wine? Public order? Irrigation? Roads? The fresh water system? Public health?

Reg: All right, but apart from the sanitation, medicine, education, wine, public order, irrigation, roads, the fresh water system and public health, what have the Romans ever done for us?

Attendee: Brought peace?

Reg: Oh, peace - shut up!

Philosophical Weaknesses

Okay. As I've probably said someplace before and will most likely say again, most people might think that this is a strange chapter for a couple of reasons. One: *Weaknesses*? *Isn't it a bit late for that?* Two: *But isn't that why we are here?* Valid, true, but again, bear with me.

Technically this is the second part of the previous chapter (and therefore a third part to Chapter 21). We have examined the foundational systems of Western and Eastern thought and we can be relatively cocky about the future of these philosophical systems. Even with the introduction of religious based ideas the themes and views expressed by these systems pretty much rule the day and influence everything we hold to be true about humanity and the world.

Philosophical Synthesis

Who is right? Plato? Aristotle? Confucius? Zeno? Buddha? Epicurus? Are they all right in their own way?

We can see that each seems to hit upon an aspect of the human condition which makes sense. Scientifically, perhaps some have a better handle on the structure of things than others, and we must have science in order to bring understanding (or do we?). We who have the benefit of hind-sight and some great experimental science under our belt understand the universe at a different level than they did (right?). Can we then, pick and choose better than they? Perceived advances in understanding (via faith or science) may seem to give us an advantage that these poor misguided saps did not as they muddled through. In some things, this is most definitely true. We have a *greater* understanding of the brain and the body, of the stars and of atoms, yet we still struggle with the fundamental questions and come no further sometimes than they.

The thinkers to come will exercise a bit of mental gymnastics in order to come up with explanations for things which are really actually very hard to explain. In a way they are like us. Certainly the educated populous knows the ideas of the Greeks, has possibly even argued about them and even decided to live by them. We begin to move into a time when the society as a whole will be introduced to these ideas at the grassroots level.

Forget them for a moment. Let us concentrate on ourselves.

Philosophical Exercises

Alright then, let us engage in a bit of our own philosophical gymnastics. Examine your own beliefs and try to plug them into the philosophies we have examined so far. Our first task is to once again not pigeon-hole any of the thinkers we have encountered. We do not care about where they are from, what cultural situation from which they arose, nor do we care about things they say which we may think ridiculous or offensive. We want to look at them within the context of their thought alone (logically), and not what we think of them.

So slough off those biases and stereotypes and cast your mind back to the ideas which struck you, excited you, gave you pause. Try to classify yourself in one type of system, or the follower of one system or philosopher. It is okay, I will wait. (hmm, hmmm, la, la, la, bum-de-bum, la, la, la) Good? Got it?

Whether you answered yes or no, begin to formulate an argument for your choice. Write it here (or someplace in your notebook, you are keeping a notebook aren't you?). Once again, I will wait:

My raison d'être by [*insert your name here*]:

Exercise 1: My Raison d'être

Philologus Ludi

Wait, that is Latin right? Does that make it a fallacy? Ha, ha, good memory (well, at least I do, except when it comes to my car keys), but no, though we are looking for a bit of fun. We have stretched our minds in the last section so let us take some time to put that expanded mind to the test.

Thought	Philosopher/y
"Life comes at you pretty fast; if you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it."	
"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit."	
"You know freedom's just a stupid superstition, 'cause life's a highway that you travel blind."	
"Hey, hey, hey, hey-now. Don't be mean; we don't have to be mean, 'cuz, remember, no matter where you go, there you are."	
"Quite simply captain, I examined the problem from all angles, and it was plainly hopeless. Logic informed me that under the circumstances, the only logical action would have to be one of desperation. Logical decision logically arrived at."	
"Everything I needed to know, I learned in Kindergarten."	

Exercise 2: Thought to Philosopher

Not too hard, eh? Game one down. Now, game two. Match the philosophy/philosopher to the thought.

Socrates	**Virtue**
Skeptics	**Inner Peace**
Confucius	**The Soul**
Aristotle	**Reality is not what it seems**
Epicurus	**Friendship is everything**
Stoics	**Reincarnation**
Buddha	**Be in harmony**

Exercise 3: Philosopher to Thought

Not so easy this time you say? Okay so I put some tricky ones in there. As was intimated in the previous chapter, sometimes we can confuse or lump together ideas. Sometimes a single idea has many iterations and sometimes a different idea means the same thing in different systems.

What you should have noticed by now (and shame on me if you did not) is that often these systems are not very far from one another. At their base is a particular idea and at their goal is a particular idea, and though the pathways may be different often even those share similar ideas or methods. We can see parallels between East and West, between Greeks and Chinese, Modern and Ancient.

BONUS: what logical fallacy(ies) did I employ in the last puzzle?

Putting It Together

How we put things together says much about us. We have looked at this idea earlier, but without the benefit of the basic (and I emphasize basic) knowledge of these fundamental systems. Now, with some hindsight we look at the 'problem' again. Sometimes *how* someone puts an argument is as effective as the argument itself. Two philosophers may state the same point, but one has an argument which appeals to us personally over what the other argues.

The true name of this chapter then is *OUR Philosophical Weaknesses*. This is more or less a heads up chapter, because soon we will be entering into a period similar to the Roman period, where ideas can become muddled, or our own biases and prejudices can easily come into play. It is always important to keep in mind where we have come from, as well as where we want to go, though in philosophy the goal can sometimes get lost amid the rhetoric.

Buck up campers! Do not get discouraged and be up for the ride to come!

"What was that middle thing?" Otto, *A Fish Named Wanda*

Early Jewish and Christian Philosophy

How do different societies and civilizations change when they come into contact with one another? No, this is not a continuation of the previous continuations. This time we are going to look at it from the other direction. These thinkers are not concerned with the city-state/empire in which they reside but an understanding of the God which resides within which they reside. Jewish culture is built upon the monarchy of the one God and Christianity is built upon the Jewish Messianic culture. Unlike the later Roman Emperor cult, God is the ultimate leader of the society, religiously, politically, and ethically.

The idea of a human leader usurping God is not viable within this framework as God will always usurp any upstart human (usually because they die[3]). With the wide scale acceptance of the human/God Jesus by Christians the idea of a political/religious state lessens (*I know, I know, but that is later*). The functions of the state are separate from the functions of Faith. Within Christianity one is called to live ethically within the state, even if the foundation of that state is unethical because the foundation of life is within God. This may sound like Socrates, but it is not because of, as he would say, some sort of agreement between the state and the individual (remember *Crito*).

What this means is that the drive to Wisdom, or ethical behavior is not driven by human/worldly concerns but by concerns of the divine (divine reason, objective truth, whatever you want to call it), who can be the *only* source for such behavior. So how does one reconcile the seeking of Wisdom with the desire to seek God?

Philosophy VS. Theology

This brings us to the sticky subject. If philosophy is literally the *love of wisdom* then we can literally define theology as the *study of God*. In this period of time the line between the two blurs somewhat. Is there a difference? Well there are many arguments for and against that statement, but let it suffice us to say yes and no. In some ways they stand apart from one another, in others they stand upon one another. If one takes the *sole reason* route, then philosophy and theology cannot be reconciled. If one takes the ethics route then they are definitely complimentary. This can create something of a quandary for us, but only if we let it. As with Plato, Aristotle and the rest, we seek to understand the philosophical nature of the thought and its ramifications within a system, not argue its merits or deficiencies on the God question.

Each of the following groups is philosophically guided by a system of thought. The question becomes one of authority. By what authority do we make pronouncements? Is it purely by reason, and what can be reasoned, or is there a single authority which makes it *reasonably* so? We are back to our earlier discussion of Prime Mover: is it physics or God(Chapter 4)? How the thinkers of this time resolve that question is larger than we can really cover here, but it does have effect not just now, but in philosophies to come.

Initially we will see the Wisdom/Logos—God connection being made, seeming to reconcile the two. We also will see an argument develop known as the '*what does Athens have to do with Jerusalem*'. Some saw a basis for understanding God within philosophy. Others saw philosophy as a tool of theology. Still others saw philosophy as the root of all error within theology (hence the Athens/Jerusalem reference).

[3] God is dead – Nietzsche; Nietzsche is dead – God.

The Players

Dates	Philosophers	Main Points
20-40 AD/CE	Philo of Alexandria	*Jewish, but main influence is on later non-Jewish thinkers; synthesis of Greek and Jewish thought.*
?-65	Paul of Tarsus	*Christian, used Greek thought to spread Christian ideas*
100?-165	Justin Martyr	*Stoic; Logos is Christ; we must accept what comes to us because of our faith.*

Table 3: Early Jewish and Christian Players

Jewish Philosophers

As we have previously discussed, the spread of Greek thought was not without effect. The Jews did have a run-in with Hellenistic culture (recall the feast of *Hanukkah* as recounted in the Old Testament book of Maccabeus). In fact besides the influence it had on them (c.f. the *Hellenists* references in Scripture) they had influence within it themselves. The term *Lovers of God* (also mentioned in Scripture) referred to Greek/non-genetic Jews who had devoted themselves to the practice of Judaism.

First and foremost is Philo of Alexandria. As the name implies he lived in that Egyptian city named for Aristotle's pupil. While his fusion of Greek and Hebraic thought was not really influential among the Jews, it does influence later Christian writers.

Philo saw himself not only as a Jew but also as a Platonist/Stoic. He really sought a synthesis of Hebraic and Greek thought mainly aimed at -- big word warning! -- *exegesis* or the critical discussion/interpretation of scripture. He used Greek philosophy to expound and explain aspects of the Hebrew Scriptures (most probably the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures) which he views in both a literal and allegorical light. We might place him in the *Hermeneutics* branch of philosophy if we were so inclined.

For Philo, God is the only efficient cause, in the mode of divine reason immanent in the world. The powers emanating from God and suffusing the world and the doctrine of the *Logos* figure within his thought. We can begin to see a pattern which, eh? Still, Philo does make a distinction between *philosophy* and *wisdom*. Philosophy is the devotion to wisdom and Wisdom is the knowledge of divine things. A subtle difference in thought from some earlier systems as we have already noted.

As a tidbit, most of what we know of Philo aside from his writings comes to us through another familiar name, Josephus, the Jewish historian. In the end, these are not the only philosophers who were Jews, but as we shall see in time to come, while philosophers continue to shade their thought with their religious affiliation, it becomes less about being a Jewish or Christian or whatever philosopher and more about being a philosopher which is of that faith (or lack thereof). But those are later chapters.

Early Christian Philosophers

WARNING: Oversimplifications Ahead! We can actually start with Paul of Tarsus. Most people might not think of him as a philosopher, but his adaptation of Hellenistic thought to Christianity and vice versa was significant. From the book known as the *Acts of the Apostles* we know that he engaged in philosophical debate. Spurred on by Epicureans and Stoic philosophers, Paul mounted the Areopagus in Athens (a large flat hill above the agora and just beneath the Acropolis: the soapbox of its day) and was challenged to a discussion of ideas. The outcome was mixed, and while some derided his thought (most probably the Epicureans because he discussed the soul) some did

follow his teachings (*Acts 17:16-34*) which means he had some rhetorical ability and had to have some knowledge of their thought.

We can see it in his writings, known as *Epistles* (literally *letters*). For example Paul's discussion of body and soul is a direct appeal to the Greek mind. In Hebraic thought there was no dichotomy of body and soul, they were of one substance. If there was any division it would be between heart and mind, not between the physical and the metaphysical.

With the rise of Christianity, and in the vein of Paul, Apologists arise to spread their message using the rhetorical formula familiar in the Near East and the West. These are not just speakers but *writers* and we have the results of several of their efforts.

The significance of this may not seem large except for the fact that they are also an insight into the mindset of the Roman empire, its leaders, its citizens and its inhabitants. What kind of argumentation are they using? What does that say about the audience of these works? Many Christians are 'converts' and the thinkers are often well-educated especially in the arts and philosophy.

Justin Martyr

Of specific note along those lines was Justin Martyr who lived in the second century, and died about 100 years after the events he is defending, ironically during the reign of the philosopher-king Marcus Aurelius. As a quick note, early Christianity was identified with Judaism, and because Judaism was an ancient religion, its practice was protected under Roman law. Jews were not bound by Roman custom where it interfered in the practice of their own religious beliefs. Christianity shared this protection until someone argued that they were not the same, at which time, Christians became obligated to follow Roman religious customs, such as military service and offering sacrifice to the gods, the emperor, etc. This they refused to do and needless to say, it got them into trouble with the local constabulary.

Justin opened a Christian school in Rome, training many students in Christian apologetics and theology as well as philosophy. But his main works are apologetic. He wrote to the Emperor, the Senate, to Greeks, to Roman officials, whoever he thought might have influence and might be influenced by his arguments, hoping to keep Christianity and Christians safe.

As a philosopher, Justin was intent on showing how Christianity brought completeness to the pagan philosophies. One of the ways he does this is to use of the idea of the *Logos*. By now the idea of the *Logos* was widely familiar to educated men, and the designation of the Son of God as the *Logos* was not new to Christian theology. The manner in which Justin identifies the historical Christ with the rational force operative in the universe leads up to a claim of all truth and virtue being contained within Christianity and the adoration of Christ (which aroused so much opposition) is the only reasonable attitude, that is, as we have seen philosophers state before, it is the only *reasonable* way to think.

It is not so much that Justin depends upon understood philosophical concepts to explain Christology or Trinitarian doctrine or other Christian beliefs but that he wants his audience to see that what they believe is *contained within* and perfected by belief in Christ.

Cynics

Another ancient group which bears some expansion of discussion here are the Cynics (*c.f. Chapter 15*). The asceticism of the Cynics appealed to Christian thinkers. Paul of Tarsus seemed to espouse the idea that the end was coming soon, that the return of Jesus to once and for all set the world right was imminent. For this reason, strict asceticism was called for, denouncing the things of the world and embracing virtue.

The Cynics still saw themselves as Platonists, almost as Socratic in their view of their role as gad-fly, using satire and bull-dog tactics to constantly point out the flaws within society and calling it forward. This too has a certain appeal within Christianity.

A growing sense of the expanse of the empire also played to the Cynic idea of 'citizen of the world', not just a city or country. People belonged to something larger, not just provincial concerns. The translation of this into concern for others outside ones family or city also had great appeal to Christians, which we can see from the earliest decisions to provide aid to communities no matter where they were established (*c.f. Acts*), as well as the concept of community extending even beyond death (*aka the Communion of Saints*).

Still certain practices, such as a complete disregard for modesty, were derided by Christian writers, such as Augustine, and understandably, not integrated into the mainstream thinking.

Heresy

Speaking of deriding, while the thinkers and writers of this period were focused mainly on secular powers and thinkers, there also developed an internal strife between thinkers within Christianity. The early attempts at apologetics also produced lines of thinking based within the Greco-Roman mindset which fell into conflict with *orthodox* teachings.

As time goes by and less and less effort was needed to convince the populous, the writings and argumentation turned more toward Christian ideas and the discussion of whether or not the ideas had merit within the Christian ethos.

Both of these situations produced what has become known as heresy. Heresy comes from the Greek for *to choose*, as in choosing what you want to believe, and in a no-brainer, the conflict of that belief with orthodoxy (*right belief*). Some disputes were in terms of orthodoxy to lunatic fringe kind of issues, like some *Gnostics* (from Gk *to know*) and other mystery cults but others were the product of sincere and intellectually honest efforts to reach understanding using the philosophical concepts of the day.

Most of the earliest heresies deal with the nature of Christ as both human and divine, or what is called the *hypostatic union*. This idea is central to the Christo-centric Christians, and informs not only many doctrines but many future theologians and philosophers. Because of this, the ideas of nature, substance, accidents, the soul, the divine and many other previously discussed subjects all come into play. At the same time the meaning of a term, the way in which it is used and its use to describe a single aspect of Christology could often be misconstrued and/or over-developed, resulting in conflict.

Ecumenical Councils

In line with this and especially with the legitimization of Christianity, the cosmopolitan nature of the believers lent itself to the solving of global problems and standardization of doctrinal issues. The means of accomplishing this was the *council*, specifically an *ecumenical* (meaning non-regional, or with everybody) *council* and the theological discussions were informed by philosophical and scriptural language. The conflict over the nature of Christ took many forms and the arguments from both philosophical and scriptural sources raged over centuries.

The idea of an ecumenical council was not new in the 4th century. In fact it has a long history within Christianity and Judaism. The development of the council allowed Christianity and Judaism to a certain extent, to finalized the means of establishing authority and uniformity (orthodoxy) . The norms fall under three titles: Scripture (both Hebrew and Christian), Tradition (both Jewish and Apostolic) and Magisterium (which is just a big Latin word for teachers – Rabbis and Bishops); Scripture as the written word, Tradition is the spoken words and sanctioned actions practiced but

not ‘written down’ and Magisterium as the teaching/conserving body. Appeals to reason will often refer to one of these bodies.

Theology is not necessarily limited to these authorities, because it is the exploration of God using human intellect (both a priori and a posteriori experience), and as such is often brought into conflict with the established authority. In the end, any appeal, either theological or doctrinal will be made to these authorities.

Putting It Together

At this time, the main thinkers I bring up here did not have a large influence. So why bring them up? In the 70’s Jerusalem is destroyed and the Jews are dispersed. Soon, Christianity will become a major influence in Roman society. By the time Constantine arrives on the scene (*the 320s*), a majority of the bureaucracy of the Roman Empire is actually Christian. The previous pogroms and persecutions have failed to rout the society of the mal-content Jews or the blasphemous Christians. Not only failed but the people you begin to rely on to carry them out really have no incentive to disperse, arrest or crucify themselves.

What we are beginning to see is not just the synthesis of ideas but the codification of beliefs as ideas and the insinuation of ideas into belief.

Until now, while most systems referenced a divinity or prime cause, often calling it *God* or *the gods* or *divine reason,* the systems were about the systems themselves and how the god/gods fit into them. Here we begin to see the movement toward God as being the *reason for* the system. Not to say this is not present in the earlier systems but not to the extent we see now. Now we begin to see the rationalization or justification of these systems in light of the religious/theological framework/system.

So maybe this chapter is really about the Philosophy v Theology problem. Perhaps we really need to spend some more time exploring that idea and I am sure we will.

“I fell in love with the prophets and these men who had loved Christ; I reflected on all their words and found that this philosophy alone was true and profitable.”
“No one who is rightly minded turns from true belief to false.” **Justin Martyr**

Apologetic Writers

Here is a sampling from various authors. Notice the use of various concepts within them which might be familiar to us. There may be some theological concepts which are unfamiliar but that is okay, because we are examining the *context* for them.

Justin Martyr: *First Apology*

XVIII PROOF OF IMMORTALITY AND THE RESURRECTION.

For reflect upon the end of each of the preceding kings, how they died the death common to all, which, if it issued in insensibility, would be a godsend to all the wicked. But since sensation remains to all who have ever lived, and eternal punishment is laid up (i.e., for the wicked), see that you neglect not to be convinced, and to hold as your belief, that these things are true. For let even necromancy, and the divinations you practice by immaculate children, and the evoking of departed human souls, and those who are called among the magi, Dream-senders and Assistant-spirits (Familiars), and all that is done by those who are skilled in such matters--let these persuade you that even after death souls are in a state of sensation; and those who are seized and cast about by the spirits of the dead, whom all call demoniacs or madmen; and what you repute as oracles, both of Amphilochus, Dodana, Pytho, and as many other such as exist; and the opinions of your authors, Empedocles and Pythagoras, Plato and Socrates, and the pit of Homer, and the descent of Ulysses to inspect these things, and all that has been uttered of a like kind. Such favor as you grant to these, grant also to us, who not less but more firmly than they believe in God; since we expect to receive again our own bodies, though they be dead and cast into the earth, for we maintain that with God nothing is impossible.

XXXVI DIFFERENT MODES OF PROPHECY.

But when you hear the utterances of the prophets spoken as it were personally, you must not suppose that they are spoken by the inspired themselves, but by the Divine Word who moves them. For sometimes He declares things that are to come to pass, in the manner of one who foretells the future; sometimes He speaks as from the person of God the Lord and Father of all; sometimes as from the person of Christ; sometimes as from the person of the people answering the Lord or His Father, just as you can see even in your own writers, one man being the writer of the whole, but introducing the persons who converse.

XLII RESPONSIBILITY ASSERTED.

But lest some suppose, from what has been said by us, that we say that whatever happens, happens by a fatal necessity, because it is foretold as known beforehand, this too we explain. We have learned from the prophets, and we hold it to be true, that punishments, and chastisements, and good rewards, are rendered according to the merit of each man's actions. Since if it be not so, but all things happen by fate, neither is anything at all in our own power. For if it be fated that this man, e.g., be good, and this other evil, neither is the former meritorious nor the latter to be blamed. And again, unless the human race has the power of avoiding evil and choosing good by free choice, they are not accountable for their actions, of whatever kind they be. But that it is by free choice they both walk uprightly and stumble, we thus demonstrate. We see the same man making a transition to opposite things. Now, if it had been fated that he were to be either good or bad, he could never have been capable of both the opposites, nor of so many transitions. But not even would some be good and others bad, since we thus make fate the cause of evil, and exhibit her as acting in opposition to herself; or that which has been already stated would seem to be true, that neither virtue nor vice is anything, but that things are only reckoned good or evil by opinion; which, as the true word shows, is the greatest impiety and wickedness. But this we assert is inevitable fate, that they who choose the good have worthy rewards, and they who choose the opposite have their merited awards. For not like other things, as trees and quadrupeds, which cannot act by choice, did God make man: for neither would he be worthy of reward or praise did he not of himself choose the good, but were created for this end; nor, if he were evil, would he be worthy of punishment, not being evil of himself, but being able to be nothing else than what he was made.

Athenagoras Of Athens

V ***A PLEA FOR THE CHRISTIANS***: TESTIMONY OF THE POETS TO THE UNITY OF GOD.

Poets and philosophers have not been voted atheists for inquiring concerning God. Euripides, speaking of those who, according to popular preconception, are ignorantly called gods, says doubtingly: “If Zeus indeed does reign in heaven above, He ought not on the righteous ills to send.” But speaking of Him who is apprehended by the understanding as matter of certain knowledge, he gives his opinion decidedly, and with intelligence, thus:- “See you on high him who, with humid arms, Clasps both the boundless ether and the earth? Him reckon Zeus, and him regard as God.”

XV ***ON THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD***: ARGUMENT FOR THE RESURRECTION FROM THE NATURE OF MAN.

But while the cause discoverable in the creation of men is of itself sufficient to prove that the resurrection follows by natural sequence on the dissolution of bodies, yet it is perhaps right not to shrink from adducing either of the proposed arguments, but, agreeably to what has been said, to point out to those who are not able of themselves to discern them, the arguments from each of the truths evolved from the primary; and first and foremost, the nature of the men created, which conducts us to the same notion, and has the same force as evidence of the resurrection. For if the whole nature of men in general is composed of an immortal soul and a body which was fitted to it in the creation, and if neither to the nature of the soul by itself, nor to the nature of the body separately, has God assigned such a creation or such a life and entire course of existence as this, but to men compounded of the two, in order that they may, when they have passed through their present existence, arrive at one common end, with the same elements of which they are composed at their birth and during life, it unavoidably follows, since one living-being is formed from the two, experiencing whatever the soul experiences and whatever the body experiences, doing and performing whatever requires the judgment of the senses or of the reason, that the whole series of these things must be referred to some one end, in order that they all, and by means of all, namely, man's creation, man's nature, man's life, man's doings and sufferings, his course of existence, and the end suitable to his nature,--may concur in one harmony and the same common experience. But if there is someone harmony and community of experience belonging to the whole being, whether of the things which spring from the soul or of those which are accomplished by means of the body, the end for all these must also be one. And the end will be in strictness one, if the being whose end that end is remains the same in its constitution; and the being-will be exactly the same, if all those things of which the being consists as parts are the same. And they will be the same in respect of their peculiar union, if the parts dissolved are again united for the constitution of the being. And the constitution of the same men of necessity proves that a resurrection will follow of the dead and dissolved bodies; for without this, neither could the same parts be united according to nature with one another, nor could the nature of the same men be reconstituted. And if both understanding and reason have been given to men for the discernment of things which are perceived by the understanding, and not of existences only, but also of the goodness and wisdom and rectitude of their Giver, it necessarily follows that, since those things continue for the sake of which the rational judgment is given, the judgment given for these things should also continue. But it is impossible for this to continue, unless the nature which has received it, and in which it adheres, continues. But that which has received both understanding and reason is man, not the soul by itself. Man, therefore, who consists of the two parts, must continue forever. But it is impossible for him to continue unless he rise again. For if no resurrection was to take place, the nature of men as men would not continue. And if the nature of men does not continue, in vain has the soul been fitted to the need of the body and to its experiences; in vain has the body been lettered so that it cannot obtain what it longs for, obedient to the reins of the soul, and guided by it as with a bridle; in vain is the understanding, in vain is wisdom, and the observance of rectitude, or even the practice of every virtue, and the enactment and enforcement of laws,--to say all in a word,

whatever is noble in men or for men's sake, or rather the very creation and nature of men. But if vanity is utterly excluded from all the works of God, and from all the gifts bestowed by Him, the conclusion is unavoidable, that, along with the interminable duration of the soul, there will be a perpetual continuance of the body according to its proper nature.

Irenaeus: *Against Heresies, Book II*

2,1 It is proper, then, that I should begin with the first and most important head, that is, God the Creator, who made the heaven and the earth, and all things that are therein (whom these men blasphemously style the fruit of a defect), and to demonstrate that there is nothing either above Him or after Him; nor that, influenced by any one, but of His own free will, He created all things, since He is the only God, the only Lord, the only Creator, the only Father, alone containing all things, and Himself commanding all things into existence.

2,2 For how can there be any other Fullness [Pleroma], or Principle, or Power, or God, above Him, since it is matter of necessity that God, the Pleroma (Fullness) of all these, should contain all things in His immensity, and should be contained by no one? But if there is anything beyond Him, He is not then the Pleroma of all, nor does He contain all. For that which they declare to be beyond Him will be wanting to the Pleroma, or, [in other words,] to that God who is above all things. But that which is wanting, and falls in any way short, is not the Pleroma of all things. In such a case, He would have both a beginning, middle, and end, with respect to those who are beyond Him. And if He has an end in regard to those things which are below, He has also a beginning with respect to those things which are above. In like manner, there is an absolute necessity that He should experience the very same thing at all other points, and should be held in, bounded, and enclosed by those existences that are outside of Him. For that being who is the end downwards necessarily circumscribes and surrounds him who finds his end in it. And thus, according to them, the Father of all (that is, He whom they call Proön and Proarche), with their Pleroma, and the good God of Marcion, is established and enclosed in some other, and is surrounded from without by another mighty Being, who must of necessity be greater, inasmuch as that which contains is greater than that which is contained. But then that which is greater is also stronger, and in a greater degree Lord; and that which is greater, and stronger, and in a greater degree Lord— must be God.

2,3 Now, since there exists, according to them, also something else which they declare to be outside of the Pleroma, into which they further hold there descended that higher power who went astray, it is in every way necessary that the Pleroma either contains that which is beyond, yet is contained (for otherwise, it will not be beyond the Pleroma; for if there is anything beyond the Pleroma, there will be a Pleroma within this very Pleroma which they declare to be outside of the Pleroma, and the Pleroma will be contained by that which is beyond: and with the Pleroma is understood also the first God); or, again, they must be an infinite distance separated from each other — the Pleroma [I mean], and that which is beyond it. But if they maintain this, there will then be a third kind of existence, which separates by immensity the Pleroma and that which is beyond it. This third kind of existence will therefore bound and contain both the others, and will be greater both than the Pleroma, and than that which is beyond it, inasmuch as it contains both in its bosom. In this way, talk might go on forever concerning those things which are contained, and those which contain. For if this third existence has its beginning above, and its end beneath, there is an absolute necessity that it be also bounded on the sides, either beginning or ceasing at certain other points, [where new existences begin.] These, again, and others which are above and below, will have their beginnings at certain other points, and so on ad *infinitum*; so that their thoughts would never rest in one God, but, in consequence of seeking after more than exists, would wander away to that which has no existence, and depart from the true God.

6,1 …For though it is true, as they declare, that they were very far separated from Him through their inferiority [of nature], yet, as His dominion extended over all of them, it behooved them to know their Ruler, and to be aware of this in particular, that He who created them is Lord of all. For since His invisible essence

is mighty, it confers on all a profound mental intuition and perception of His most powerful, yea, omnipotent greatness. Wherefore, although no one knows the Father, except the Son, nor the Son except the Father, and those to whom the Son will reveal Him (Matthew 11:27) , yet all [beings] do know this one fact at least, because reason, implanted in their minds, moves them, and reveals to them [the truth] that there is one God, the Lord of all.

9,1 That God is the Creator of the world is accepted even by those very persons who in many ways speak against Him, and yet acknowledge Him, styling Him the Creator, and an angel, not to mention that all the Scriptures call out [to the same effect], and the Lord teaches us of this Father who is in heaven, and no other, as I shall show in the sequel of this work. For the present, however, that proof which is derived from those who allege doctrines opposite to ours, is of itself sufficient—all men, in fact, consenting to this truth: the ancients on their part preserving with special care, from the tradition of the first-formed man, this persuasion, while they celebrate the praises of one God, the Maker of heaven and earth; others, again, after them, being reminded of this fact by the prophets of God, while the very heathen learned it from creation itself. For even creation reveals Him who formed it, and the very work made suggests Him who made it, and the world manifests Him who ordered it. The Universal Church, moreover, through the whole world, has received this tradition from the apostles.

13, 8 …For they maintain that Logos and Zoe were sent forth by him (i.e., Nous) as fashioners of this Pleroma; while they conceive of an emission of Logos, that is, the Word after the analogy of human feelings, and rashly form conjectures respecting God, as if they had discovered something wonderful in their assertion that Logos was I produced by Nous. All indeed have a clear perception that this may be logically affirmed with respect to men. But in Him who is God over all, since He is all Nous, and all Logos, as I have said before, and has in Himself nothing more ancient or late than another, and nothing at variance with another, but continues altogether equal, and similar, and homogeneous, there is no longer ground for conceiving of such production in the order which has been mentioned. Just as he does not err who declares that God is all vision, and all hearing (for in what manner He sees, in that also He hears; and in what manner He hears, in that also He sees), so also he who affirms that He is all intelligence, and all word, and that, in whatever respect He is intelligence, in that also He is word, and that this Nous is His Logos, will still indeed have only an inadequate conception of the Father of all, but will entertain far more becoming [thoughts regarding Him] than do those who transfer the generation of the word to which men gave utterance to the eternal Word of God, assigning a beginning and course of production [to Him], even as they do to their own word. And in what respect will the Word of God— yes, rather God Himself, since He is the Word — differ from the word of men, if He follows the same order and process of generation?

30, 9 For if the Savior formed the things which have been made, by means of him (the Demiurge [a craftsman]), he is proved in that case not to be inferior but superior to them, since he is found to have been the former even of themselves; for they, too, have a place among created things. How, then, can it be argued that these men indeed are spiritual, but that he by whom they were created is of an animal nature? Or, again, if (which is indeed the only true supposition, as I have shown by numerous arguments of the very clearest nature) He (the Creator) made all things freely, and by His own power, and arranged and finished them, and His will is the substance of all things, then He is discovered to be the one only God who created all things, who alone is Omnipotent, and who is the only Father rounding and forming all things, visible and invisible, such as may be perceived by our senses and such as cannot, heavenly and earthly, by the word of His power; Hebrews 1:3 and He has fitted and arranged all things by His wisdom, while He contains all things, but He Himself can be contained by no one: He is the Former, He the Builder, He the Discoverer, He the Creator, He the Lord of all; and there is no one besides Him, or above Him, neither has He any mother, as they falsely ascribe to Him; nor is there a second God, as Marcion has imagined; nor is there a Pleroma of thirty Æons [personified spiritual power emanating from the Supreme Being], which has been shown a vain supposition; nor is there any such being as Bythus or Proarche; nor are there a series of

heavens; nor is there a virginal light, nor an unnamable Æon, nor, in fact, any one of those things which are madly dreamt of by these, and by all the heretics. But there is one only God, the Creator— He who is above every Principality, and Power, and Dominion, and Virtue: He is Father, He is God, He the Founder, He the Maker, He the Creator, who made those things by Himself, that is, through His Word and His Wisdom— heaven and earth, and the seas, and all things that are in them: He is just; He is good; He it is who formed man, who planted paradise, who made the world, who gave rise to the flood, who saved Noah; He is the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of the living: He it is whom the law proclaims, whom the prophets preach, whom Christ reveals, whom the apostles make known to us, and in whom the Church believes. He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: through His Word, who is His Son, through Him He is revealed and manifested to all to whom He is revealed; for those [only] know Him to whom the Son has revealed Him. But the Son, eternally co-existing with the Father, from of old, yea, from the beginning, always reveals the Father to Angels, Archangels, Powers, Virtues, and all to whom He wills that God should be revealed.

Book IV

6,6 For by means of the creation itself, the Word reveals God the Creator; and by means of the world [does He declare] the Lord the Maker of the world; and by means of the formation [of man] the Artificer who formed him; and by the Son that Father who begot the Son: and these things do indeed address all men in the same manner, but all do not in the same way believe them. But by the law and the prophets did the Word preach both Himself and the Father alike [to all]; and all the people heard Him alike, but all did not alike believe. And through the Word Himself who had been made visible and palpable, was the Father shown forth, although all did not equally believe in Him; but all saw the Father in the Son: for the Father is the invisible of the Son, but the Son the visible of the Father. And for this reason all spoke with Christ when He was present [upon earth], and they named Him God. Yea, even the demons exclaimed, on beholding the Son: We know You who You are, the Holy One of God (Mark 1:24). And the devil looking at Him, and tempting Him, said: If You are the Son of God (Matthew 4:3; Luke 4:3); — all thus indeed seeing and speaking of the Son and the Father, but all not believing [in them].

Clement of Alexandria: *Exhortation to the Greeks*

I Whether, then, the Phrygians are shown to be the most ancient people by the goats of the fable; or, on the other hand, the Arcadians by the poets, who describe them as older than the moon; or, finally, the Egyptians by those who dream that this land first gave birth to gods and men: yet none of these at least existed before the world. But before the foundation of the world were we, who, because destined to be in Him, pre-existed in the eye of God before—we the rational creatures of the Word of God, on whose account we date from the beginning; for in the beginning was the Word. Well, inasmuch as the Word was from the first, He was and is the divine source of all things; but inasmuch as He has now assumed the name Christ, consecrated of old, and worthy of power, he has been called by me the New Song. This Word, then, the Christ, the cause of both our being at first (for He was in God) and of our well-being, this very Word has now appeared as man, He alone being both, both God and man— the Author of all blessings to us; by whom we, being taught to live well, are sent on our way to life eternal. For, according to that inspired apostle of the Lord, the grace of God which brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for the blessed hope, and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ (Titus 2:11-13).

Clement of Alexandria: *The Instructor of Children Book III*

1,1, 1 It is then, as appears, the greatest of all lessons to know one's self. For if one knows himself, he will know God; and knowing God, he will be made like God, not by wearing gold or long robes, but by well-doing, and by requiring as few things as possible.

1,1, 5 Passions break out, pleasures overflow; beauty fades, and falls quicker than the leaf on the ground, when the amorous storms of lust blow on it before the coming of autumn, and is withered by destruction. For lust becomes and fabricates all things, and wishes to cheat, so as to conceal the man. But that man with whom the Word dwells does not alter himself, does not get himself up: he has the form which is of the Word; he is made like to God; he is beautiful; he does not ornament himself: his is beauty, the true beauty, for it is God; and that man becomes God, since God so wills. Heraclitus, then, rightly said, Men are gods, and gods are men. For the Word Himself is the manifest mystery: God in man, and man God. And the Mediator executes the Father's will; for the Mediator is the Word, who is common to both— the Son of God, the Savior of men; His Servant, our Teacher.

Tertullian: *Apology*

XXI We have already set forth, that God formed this universal world by His Word, and His Reason, and His Power. Among your own wise men also it is agreed, that Logos, that is, 'Word' and 'Reason', should be accounted the Maker of all things. For Zeno determines that this Maker, who has formed all things and ordered them, should also be called *Fate*, and *God*, and the *Mind of Jupitery*, and the *Necessity* of all things. These titles Cleanthes confer upon the Spirit which, he affirms, pervades the universe. And we also ascribe, as its proper substance, to the Word and the Reason and the Power also, through which we have said that God has formed all things, a Spirit, in which is the Word when It declares and with which is the Reason when It orders, and over which is the Power when It executes. This, we have learned, was brought forth from God, and by this Forth-bringing, was Begotten, and therefore is called the Son of God, and God, from being 'of one substance with' Him; for that God also is a Spirit. Even 'when a ray is put forth' from the sun, it is a part of a whole; but the sun will be in the ray because it is a ray of the sun, and the substance is not divided, but extended. So comes Spirit of Spirit and 'God of God', as 'light' is kindled 'of light', 'the parent matter' remains entire and without loss, although one should borrow from it many channels of its qualities. So likewise that which has come forth from God is God, and the Son of God, and Both are One. And so this Spirit of Spirit, and God of God, has become 'the second' in mode not in number, in order not in condition, and has (*Mic. 5:1*) gone forth, not gone out, of the original Source. Therefore this 'ray of God', as was ever foretold before, entering into a certain virgin, and in her womb endued with the form of flesh, is born Man joined together with God. The flesh many may be kindled, but remaining the same.

From New Advent; Translated variously by Alexander Roberts and William Rambaut, William Wilson

1. **Mark and notate passages by philosophical system.**
2. **Try to find specific ideas within each thinker and mark them.**

Thought Point	Points of Thought
What are these guys talking about?	
Which arguments are reminiscent of Plato?	
Is there a dialectical style reminiscent of Aristotle?	
What are the Stoic elements?	
What are some characteristics of the Word?	
How are the arguments different from the Stoics?	

Interlude: The Divided Empire

If you had two sons and control of the known Western world, what would you do?

Figure 1: The Divided Empire

What You See Is What You Get

History and my opinion can often be unkind, but for me, at least, it is rarely with malice.

Ramming Speed

Constantine had found an empire in decline, which through a series of actions, some of which might be shocking to our 21st century sensibilities, he stabilized. One of the things he found was that persecution had not really rooted out Christians, in fact most of his bureaucracy was Christian.

Putting It Together

What does the split mean?

Late Roman And Early Medieval Philosophy

This period of philosophical development relies heavily on the Christian world-view. Roman 'pagan' ideas do not disappear, but as the medieval period gets going they definitely decline. In earlier chapters we introduced the idea of static and dynamic styles of thinking (*Chapter 6*) and as we intimated in the last chapter, we are entering a period of 'static' thinking. So in that way this chapter provides an overlap with the last chapter and provides a more in-depth look at this rather long period of philosophical history.

First thing to realize is that the people at this time did not really see the Roman Empire as 'fallen' (except perhaps in the Biblical sense). In the West the Church was stepping into the role previously held by secular Romans government. In the East, the Empire was becoming a theocracy with a tight relationship between Church and State. The stability of the State rests in the stability of the Church (and vice-versa, early on).

The main concerns are still about 'how to live' with both the Church and secular philosophers offering advice.

The Players

Dates	Philosophers	Main Points
55-135	Epictetus	*Stoic; concentrated on ethics; what is really good? Big on fate.*
?-165	Justin Martyr	*Stoic; Logos is Christ; we must accept what comes to us because of our faith.*
121-180	Marcus Aurelius	*Stoic, philosopher king. Persecuted Christians.*
160-240	Tertullian	*Anti-philosophy apologist.*
150-213	Clement Alexandria	*Founded Alexandrian school; Develops Philo's thoughts*
185-255	Origen	*Heir to Clement; really applies Platonic thought*
204-270	Plotinus	*'Pagan'. Founds Neo-Platonism; interpreted and defended Plato's thought and teachings*
354-430	St. Augustine	*Platonist; sin, salvation, natural law, time.*
480-525	Boethius	*Translated Aristotle; the world is transitory, only the things of the mind have lasting value; Plato and Aristotle are compatible with Christian thought*
810-877	John Scotus Eriugena	*Attempted to create a consistent, systematic, Christian Neo-Platonism using mainly Christian sources.*
1033-1109	St. Anselm	*True Medieval Man; Proofs for God.*

Table 4: Late Roman and Early Medievals

Calling Mr. Plato…Call for Mr. Plato…

As said (and I swear I will stop saying it after this chapter…maybe), Greek thought played heavily into early religious philosophy. There is an explosion of Platonic thought and influence…well maybe not an explosion, probably more like a harmonic convergence[4], especially as promulgated in secular society through Stoic philosophy, and the coming to the forefront of Platonic thinkers. The Apologists of earlier times utilized Plato and Cynics and Stoics to make their arguments for Christianity understandable to the common people and their leaders. Plato gave a platform for

[4] As opposed to a *harmonica* convergence where a bunch of harmonica players come together.

speaking about the one perfect God, about the soul about justice and virtue and living well. The Logos of the Stoics applied directly to Jesus.

Still, in the end, one had to say (especially in order to make their argument), that Jesus was the only true fullness of understanding, especially as Wisdom/Reason or the Logos. Until Jesus all understanding was incomplete. This was a simple step for them to make as how could it be complete if Jesus, the fullness of the revelation of God was not known to these thinkers? They had glimpsed the truth, because as Socrates taught, the truth is within us (as we are created) and as they could see from the Hebrew Scriptures various foreshadowing of Jesus. As Aristotle understood and the Stoics taught, the divine will and the knowledge of that will lay within us, within our very substance and was the very reason we could think. But in the end only Jesus gives the full understanding of the human and the divine. Following Jesus led one to understand all the answers for which these mere mortals could only know pieces.

This is not to say that paganism disappeared overnight.

It's Fate

Fate is not really a philosophical concept, but more of a Greek theological one. So why deal with it here? Well, we have to because most people have a tendency to confuse the two. It is a powerful concept which can creep into any system, whether for faith or reason. Theologically it is an actual controlling force. In a Stoic philosophical sense fate is related to the overall divine rational. It is 'the way of the world' one might say and like Fate, how can you fight that (recall the sense of the dog tied to the cart)?

Epictetus, a former slave turned philosopher, states: "When I see a man anxious, I say, '*What does this man want?*' If he did not want something which is not in his power, how could he be anxious?" (*Discourses*, Long). In an almost Epicurean manner he continues on about those things on which most of us, most of the time, spend our time. The things that we consider will fulfill us are usually things that are not within our power to obtain, and therefore the hope we have for securing these things is placed in the hands of others or in the hands of *fate*. So fate is seen as an outside force, the order of the universe which provides things by design. You may therefore, either get it or not, depending upon some external operator. And when we are thwarted in our efforts to gain what we desire we become frustrated (or depressed or envious or angry, or all of these things). Like a good Stoic, he attributes all these ills to 'passions'. Instead of trying to remove these unpleasant emotions by working harder to secure what we desire, he tells us, we should rather place our hope not in 'external' things which are not in our power, but in our own reason and moral character, which is within our power. In short, we should limit our desire to virtue and to becoming (to the best of our ability) examples of 'excellence'. If we do not do this, we are basically screwed in a downward spiral of self-fulfilling angst. And as is the common experience of all people at some time or other, when we are in the grip of such emotions we run the risk of becoming blind to the best course of action; that is, we lose reason.

Okay, Maybe It's Will

A very quick word about the concept of Will. Until now, the will has been closely related to reason, the Logos, the Divine Will, etc. With Christianity, the will takes on a second meaning: *volition*. This somewhat goes within our earlier discussion (*Chapter 23*) but with a twist: the *human* will within each individual, while a reflection of *The Will*, is a special gift of the Creator to each individual *outside* of The Will (though an integral part of divine reason). This is the idea of *freewill* which means that each individual is free to follow The Will or not and that, unlike the dog dragged

about by the cart, you can act *outside* of the Will, and for eternal reward remain outside of the Will (*think back to the sensation of the soul in Justin's* First Apology).

Basically this is the idea that the *human will* exists outside of the *divine will*, in parallel to it while still participating in it. This comes partially from the theology of the two natures of Christ (human and divine) co-existing within him, as well as the Creation story in Genesis, among other things. The ramifications of this teaching will have far reaching meanings and consequences.

Party Line

Plotinus also was neither a Christian nor a Jewish thinker. He was however a strict Platonist (as opposed to a Stoic or the like), and responsible for the Neo-Platonic movement. This was basically a resurgence of Platonic thinking and ideas in and of themselves (as opposed to a Stoic or Christian adaption) as well as the call for living virtuously as called for by Plato. He found sufficient reason within Plato, and thought that the Christians were wrong when they called his thought 'incomplete'. In fact, somewhat ironically, he will provide some points within Christian thought, while the movement was probably, shall we say at the least antagonistic toward the Christian thinkers and sect.

Plotinus was said to have had ecstatic visions (visions which proceed from a condition/trance of an extreme out-of-body-kind-of-thing/mystical nature). From these he posited a God who was both the *ultimate inconceivable* and the *source of all first principles* (is this sounding more and more familiar?). Of course, like Plato he sees these as knowable even though they are not imminent.

While a Platonist, it is some of his extensions of Platonic thought which produces the Neo-Platonist movement. We can recall the idea of the Unity of Virtues (*Chapter 11*), where in the end all virtues follow a single pattern of sorts. Plotinus also saw everything as a unity, on a sliding scale of perfection. We can know this in a way similar to knowing the Forms. Recall that for Plato, the material world was flawed so for Plotinus, nothing sensible can be true Unity, for even we, who are probably the closest to perfect unity, are still a body *and* a soul(not one thing). Think of it along the lines of a person, though made up of parts is close to Unity, whereas a bunch of people at a football game doing The Wave, though hopefully acting in unity are not as unified as each individual person.

Plotinus also distinguishes four kinds of knowledge (utilize *the Cave*):

- **Sense knowledge,** which is an obscure representation of truth (think *subjective reasoning*);
- **Reason cognition,** which gives us knowledge of the essences of things (think *substance* and *essence*);
- **Intellectual cognition,** which gives us knowledge of ourselves (think *ourselves*);
- **Ecstasy,** which consists in a supernatural intuition of God, in which our natural knowledge ceases in the divine unconsciousness (think whatever you want).

So this 'ecstasy' thing we might consider 'new' or at least a new way of thinking about Platonic objective truth/reason. We will also see it in Christian terms through what we will call *Mysticism*, though the term can apply secularly as it does here.

We can probably also add here that since he is focusing on Plato, there is not a system of logic. Knowledge and logic are therefore not tied together as for Aristotle. This allows for a bit of latitude when making a conclusion, especially when relying on ecstatic visions for rational. This also sets him somewhat at odds with Stoics as well, because even though they are based in Plato, they have extended his system to include logic (*c.f. Chapter 23*).

Neo-Platonism deserves more discussion than I give it here but hopefully some of its characteristics will become clearer as we explore its proponents and effects. To that end, between Epictetus and Plotinus we can see that the general thinking in the late Empire was very similar to Christian thinking and vice versa. That does not mean they are always good bed fellows.

The Imperfect Tense

Ergo sum, there is a bit of a clash of ideas here. Let us pause a moment and take on the idea of 'incomplete'. Whereas the Mahayana Buddhists integrated and transformed Buddhism with Greek thought, the religious writers of the West were developing a different viewpoint as to the seat of all wisdom. The instantiation of God in systems as a necessary for the system is increasing in the West. This means, as we have been intimating, that God and Jesus are becoming central to the reason for the system. It is not so much that Plato and the group did not get it right, they just did not get it right *enough*. Jesus, in their arguments, has existed forever, just not in *human* form. It is only when the *incarnation* (the in-fleshing) takes place that the true knowledge can be imparted. Think of it like, until then we could not read the clues, did not have enough information to solve the mystery.

So, in the end one had to say (especially in order to make their argument), that Jesus was the only true fullness of understanding, especially as Wisdom or the Logos. Until Jesus all understanding was incomplete and any Wisdom there was, came through God (this is a major condensation of theological points, but we just do not have that time for anything else). So the rational is how could it be complete if Jesus, the fullness of the revelation of God was not known/revealed to these thinkers? They glimpsed the truth, because as Socrates taught, the truth is within us, because God himself created us that way. As Aristotle understood and the Stoics taught, the divine will and the knowledge of that divine will lie within us, within our very substance, our soul (do not forget them meaning of substance!). But in the end only Jesus, as true God and true human, gives the full understanding of the human and the divine. Following Jesus led one to understand all the answers for which these mere mortals could only know pieces.

On a tangent, Tertullian a Roman lawyer turned theologian, represents the trend within the growing Christian sect to eschew secular (or as he would call it, *pagan*) philosophy. Philosophers, he feels were not just *incomplete* but *inadequate*. He is of the school which, while using some philosophical methods and ideas, really sees philosophy as the mother of heresy, and the cause of the introduction of error into theological thought.

What Was That Middle Thing?

Medieval (from the words for 'middle ages') philosophy then has the advantage of hanging on a more stable theological and philosophical basis than did earlier Roman thinkers. Neo-Platonism has taken hold and is finding many proponents within the Christian theological community. It is not that Aristotle and the like were forgotten though, it is more that the ability to synthesize some of Aristotle's thought with Christianity was more difficult. Still theologian/philosophers are borrowing the terms they need to explain the ineffable to as we said when we defined philosophy so long ago, allow us to come to Wisdom.

We put things into the medieval realm through the arbitrarily dated 'fall' of the Roman Empire at the end of the 5th century until the 'discovery' of America at the end of 15th century[5]. These dates roughly follow the end of true Romans being in charge until the triumph of nationalism. But that is a later understanding. Keep in mind that although things did not look that good in the West, most people during these times did not consider the decline, sacking and shifting of power as a fall. Still there was, because of these things, a shift in the direction of the Empire. The Church (and through it

[5] I would argue, arguably all by myself, that really the 13th century, right before what is known as the High Middle ages and the true advent of humanism is the end of the philosophical Middle Ages. In my mind, and again most likely in my mind alone, the Scholasticism of the 14th – 15th centuries is a different animal. Historically most would probably argue that medieval times coincide with the fortunes of the Roman Church, hence the dating, but I am arguing philosophically, and since this is my work, decision made, case closed.

the concept known as the 'Kingdom of God') is seen as the new Empire (c.f. Augustine's *City of God*). This shift also lends credence to the naming of the transition to this time, like declaring a 21 year old to be an adult.

Augustine

Okay, the cat is out of the bag. I have bandied the name about already so let us get to it. Though the next chapters will deal deeper with him and, as in the previous chapter, there were many thinkers not mentioned here, Augustine stands out. Augustine wandered through philosophies and belief systems finally settling in his thirties on Plato, Neo-Platonism and Christianity (especially as proposed by St. Paul). Even in that path he wandered through at least one heresy. In the end what he managed to do was use Platonic ideas and thinking to develop a quite complex explanation Christian beliefs and development of Christian doctrine.

While apologists utilized philosophical thought to explain Christianity, Augustine as they say 'baptized' it, transformed it from secular, pagan thought into Christian thought. His reasoning moved reason and wisdom to be aspects of God, of a gift given to humans in order to understand how to live correctly, and make sense of the conflicts within the world. Augustine wants to understand how God and especially as revealed in Jesus put things together, how to make sense of them in terms of reason. So he wants to put the tools of the intellect to use. In other words, the thought of Augustine is more concerned with the solution of religious, ethical and moral problems than with those of pure speculation.

A quick look at some of Augustine's main themes:

- Evil and Sin
- Grace
- Human will
- Time

Time you say? The others you can understand but time? Well give me some time and you will see.

Boethius

Not what you might call a mainstream thinker. Translated and introduced Aristotelian thought into the fray. Boethius is described as the last representative of ancient Roman culture and the first of the Medieval intellectuals. Boethius started out making translations of and commentaries on Aristotle, who had be somewhat denigrated due to the overwhelming acceptance of Neo-Platonism. Logic, Aristotelian Logic to be exact, became a favorite topic of this addendum to our hall of fame. He held that it did not conflict with Plato's teachings (the thinking of the day) because it functioned only in the *sensible world*, to which our language refers, as opposed to the *rational world*. Because of him, Neo-Platonists accepted the importance of Aristotelian logic, and the harmony between Platonic and Aristotelian teaching which helped keep Aristotle from becoming lost.

He held that philosophy, in the sense of the quest for true wisdom, was the true medicine of the soul (*Book I*). Philosophy was life's consolation (hence the name of his final work, *Consolation of Philosophy*). *Adversa fortune (not by Carl Orff)* not only reveals how fleeting and short-lived life is, but can help us see and keep *authentic* relations among human beings (does any of this sound familiar – ten points if you can get it). That is to say, life's difficulties, makes it possible to discern false from true friends and makes one realize that nothing is more precious than a true friendship (five points if you get it here). Suffering then has a positive power and the fatalistic acceptance of a condition of suffering is the opposite of God's will, because "*it eliminates at its roots the very possibility of prayer and of theological hope, which form the basis of man's relationship with God*"

(*Book V*, 3). "*So combat vices, dedicate yourselves to a virtuous life oriented by hope, which draws the heart upwards until it reaches Heaven with prayers nourished by humility. Should you refuse to lie, the imposition you have suffered can change into the enormous advantage of always having before your eyes the supreme Judge, who sees and knows how things truly are*" (*Book V*, 6). Will overcomes Fate.

For you literature (and French Quarter) fans out there, *A Confederacy of Dunces* by John K. Toole has a main character named Ignatius J. Reilly who pronounces that, among other things, the world lacks enough *theology and geometry*. Ignatius's, the main character's life reflects the structure of his favorite book, Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*; to the length that *Dunces* is even structured like Boethius' work. Suffice it to say without giving away too much, a copy of the *Consolation of Philosophy* is even part of the story. Ignatius' sufferings reflect Boethius' suffering. Okay, really that does not tell us much about Boethius, but I really love that book.

Anselm

Who's the baddest mother of all medieval philosophers?
(Hush yo' mouth!)
I'm just talking about Anselm.
(Anselm!)

Okay it is no *Shaft* but it is what we can say about Anselm, the widest-ranged Christian thinker between Augustine and Thomas Aquinas. Okay and I also know he technically is not an 'early' medieval philosopher and 'what happened to everyone else', blah, blah, blah. Write your own book.

Like Aristotle, Anselm thought about everything, but through the eyes of Faith. Still it is the 'proofs for God' for which he is probably most remembered (a shame). Again, these are not proofs in the scientific sense but in the logical (geometrical, might we say?) sense (*c.f. Chapter 4*).

Anselm defined theology as *Faith seeking reason* (or *understanding* depending on how you choose to translate *intellectum*). This battle cry, picked up from Augustine, was a driving force in his life.

Putting It Together

Alright…this was kind of a long one, if not muddled. So many things are coming together during this rather long time that it is hard not to try to shove at least an introduction to the concepts into this chapter, which also means shifting characters around a bit.

We know that a long time ago, I said that theology was a 'branch' of philosophy (*Chapter 5*) though we can see that some think it is the other way around. The ultimate point is: what does theology have to do with philosophy? From our study of Aristotle we know that the desire of the human spirit is to know, and not just the things around us but of even those things which we cannot quantify. It points us toward *the other*. We seek not just knowledge or happiness but understanding, wisdom. The medieval Christian thinkers saw this basic human drive as the seeking of God, or Wisdom itself, through God the Son, Jesus Christ or Wisdom himself. They operate from the notion that we are built to worship the Divine, know we should through the very gift of Wisdom; we desire to know Wisdom, also a gift, to reach perfection in Wisdom and eventually dwell within Wisdom.

Plato offered the best platform for discussing this journey, this desire and the reasons for it. But blind faith rarely suffices for itself. True freedom derives from truly free choices for which head and heart must work together. This extra understanding through Faith, subtly shifts Platonic thought, and with the addition of Aristotle, creates an atmosphere not of proof seeking but wisdom seeking. As with Aristotle, all scientific activity serves the function of Wisdom, serves to help us to understand the ineffable. It is, as Anselm says, *Faith seeking understanding*.

"Possession of anything new or expensive only reflected a person's lack of theology and geometry; it could even cast doubts upon one's soul.
Ignatius himself was dressed comfortably and sensibly. The hunting cap prevented head colds. The voluminous tweed trousers were durable and permitted unusually free locomotion....The outfit was acceptable by any theological or geometrical standards, however abstruse, and suggested a rich inner life." ***A Confederacy of Dunces*** **by John K. Toole** (*Chapter 1*)

"But what is philosophy? Does it not mean making preparation to meet the things that come upon us?" **Epictetus *Discourses*** (3.10.6, trans. Oldfather)

A Closer Look

Because of their impact Augustine and Anselm deserve a bit more of our time. Though they are six hundred years apart they are still fighting the same fight of understanding and defining what it means to be a Christian in the world. In a way they are the bookends of Medieval thinking, especially if you ignore everyone else.

Just A Closer Walk With Thee…

We can view the people and thoughts of this time as the final closure of apologetics and the move to doctrinal development (especially, again, if we ignore everyone else). The legitimization of the Church by Constantine (there really is no Orthodox/Roman division until much later) means that theological exploration has moved out in the open and becomes part and parcel of ordinary conversation. Christian doctrine is moving to the forefront, and the concerns of Christian thought and lifestyle are beginning to change the Empire. The number of Christians is becoming so great that disagreements within the Church are threatening the stability of the empire. This hand-in-hand nature of the society and politics also sounds the decline of 'pagan' thinking and influence.

The other thing we need to remember is the almost exclusive use of Platonic thought by these philosophers; we are not really dealing with non-Platonic based thought. Until the re-introduction of Aristotle, the issues, the language and the nature of the arguments are Platonic and even afterwards it remains the main foundation of Medieval thought.

The Players

Dates	Philosophers	Main Points
354-430	St. Augustine	*Platonist; sin, salvation, natural law, time.*
480-525	Boethius	*Translated Aristotle; the world is transitory, only the things of the mind have lasting value; Plato and Aristotle are compatible with Christian thought*
810-877	John Scotus Eriugena	*Attempted to create a consistent, systematic, Christian Neo-Platonism from mainly Christian sources.*
1033-1109	St. Anselm	*The consummate Medieval Man. Proofs for God.*
1079-1144	Peter Abelard	*Notorious romantic and know-it-all.*

Table 5: The Early Medieval Players

Augustine Again

Augustine stands as another one of those thresholds in philosophic history. He dwells in that hinterland between the late Roman World (and all that implies) and the early Medieval World (and all that implies). He pulls the wisdom of the past forward into the time to come. In a way then, we can consider him as the last Roman, with a view toward the future.

Augustine was not always a believer. In the proof of the statement that Christianity was still not the dominant thought, Augustine, though raised Christian, roamed from system to system, fathering a child out of wedlock and generally causing his mother Monica much heartache (and probably headaches as well). His mother, no slouch in her own right, prayed long and hard for the conversion of her wayward son (as do most mothers) which apparently (eventually) took. He did the majority of

his studies in Carthage in North Africa, eventually opening a school of rhetoric there. Eventually the deep questions of life drove him outward, first to Rome and finally to Milan, as Rome was declining in importance as an intellectual center. He dies, bishop of Hippo in Africa, just as the Vandals attack (literally). His death coincides with what is traditionally thought of as the 'fall' of the Roman Empire.

Augustine personifies the changing of the playing field from earlier apologists. Whereas they used Greek philosophy to help their pagan hearers understand Christian concepts and doctrines, Augustine is using it to produce and refine Christian doctrine. He is by no means alone in this, but for our purposes, since we are not mentioning any of the others, he is.

But Neo-Platonism is not always in sync with Judeo-Christian Scripture and doctrine.

Something Rather Than Nothing

It never really goes away; it just keeps showing up in a different costume. We are not looking at every argument in this line, just Plato's since that is where Augustine is coming from. Augustine is a proponent of *ex nihilo* creation (or creation *from nothing*) as opposed to Plato who posits that God created from a primitive matter (from something rather than from nothing). In this case God creates *substance* as well as *form*. Recall that for Stoics/Neo-Platonists, The Will (Reason) gives form and order to creation, that is to say something cannot come from nothing but structure can be given to something. And that is to say Reason is the potter for the clay of the universe.

At the risk of over-simplifying this whole argument[6], on the other hand Genesis states that God creates something out of nothing (hence the *ex nihlio*) and that argument is good enough for Augustine because God is more than just *The Will*. God is not only the potter but the creator of the clay. He accomplishes this through his very nature, which is *triune* (divided into thirds). The Father is Creator, the Son/Logos is the means of that creation and the Spirit is action of creation. So the Son, the Logos is the means, as for the Platonists, for *structure* and since the person of the Father is not limited to just being the Son he can be responsible for the substance. As said, for Augustine the triune God means that there is no necessary explanation needed beyond them for this fact.

It's A Shame, Bless His Heart

Okay, jump back a bit and recall that Epicurus thought that evil was worrying about things you should not, and Stoics think it is worrying about things you cannot change. And before I jump forward, let me put here that one of Augustine's wanderings led him to the follow the thought of one named Mani from Persia, and what was called Manichaeism. Mani combined elements of Zorasticism, Buddhism, and Christianity. Maybe you can see where this is going. Maybe not. Evil is a force and basically the world is forever locked into a battle of Good and Evil, Light and Darkness.

Augustine's mission is to not balance these ideas, as did Mani (heresy) but put their correct meaning into words (in light of Faith). His thoughts on Sin[7] and Evil are bound up not in some external powers but in his thoughts on the human will. Sin is a perversion of the will away from *The Will*. Yet the human will is *"…all important. Because, if it is wrong, these emotions of the soul will be wrong, but if it is right, they will be not merely blameless, but even praiseworthy. For the will is in them all; truly, none of them is anything else than will*" (*City Of God*, Book XIV). "*And I inquired what iniquity* [sin/evil] *was, and ascertained it not to be a substance, but a perversion of the will, bent aside from You, O God, the Supreme Substance, towards these lower things….*" (*Confessions* VII: Chapter 16). "*I knew as well that I had a will as that I had life: when, therefore, I was willing or*

[6] A risk I am apparently often willing to take.

[7] *Sin* will be very loosely defined as the anti-social actions of humans and *evil* will be similarly defined as the root of that anti-social behavior, or in the Platonic sense: ignorance, or…well, you get the picture.

unwilling to do anything, I was most certain that it was none but myself that was willing and unwilling; and immediately I perceived that there was the cause of my sin." (*Confessions* VII: Chapter 3)

In a sense we can see the Stoic idea of Reason playing in here, with human will playing the part of Reason. But, we also see that Augustine has placed this will as an extension of reason, not just Reason itself. The wisdom of the world (Reason) is insufficient without the Will and the Logos.

Grace Period

If sin is the perversion of the will and evil is its result, what makes it all better?Non Christians blamed the sack of Rome by the Goths on Christianity because it had caused so many to turn away from the old gods who, apparently due to nostalgia on the part of their adherents, had kept Rome safe. Augustine saw it differently; the old Rome was being swept away in favor of the new Jerusalem. Like Plato and his perfect Republic based in laws and run with Wisdom by philosopher kings, Augustine saw the perfect city based in love and run by Christ the King, who was the Logos, Wisdom personified.

Grace is the gift of God to help us on our way. We are free to take it or leave it. But only by humble submission of the human will to the divine will does peace and happiness come. Augustine does not see this as weakness, as might Epicurus, but like the Stoics or Plato, as the adjustment of our thinking to the natural flow of the universe.

It's About Time!

So what you ask. Well, if there was a time when things were not (remember that ex nihilo thing?), then there was a time when *time* was not. Augustine begins to explore an understanding of history, a reason for it, an understanding and that understanding is based in Wisdom. For him God is timeless, eternal. All time is present to him (that is available, even for interaction) and I mean *all* (that is all time all the time). By creating from nothing, God is obviously placed outside of that creation. He is not *along with* the form that already existed as for Platonists; he formed it *and* created it. God is therefore outside of time, hence he is *eternal*.

Time then, only comes into being with creation. More on this later.

John Scottus Eriugena

As someone must have so wisely pointed out by now, we are getting back to the prime mover thing so we are just going to slip this guy in here in light of Augustine's cosmological thought. Eriugena (not to be confused with *John Dun Scottus* whom we shall meet later) was a monk (possibly Irish) who developed a highly complex cosmology, where the highest principle, the 'the immovable self-identical one' (*unum et idipsum immobile*), creates all things and retrieves them back.

The God he is discussing is the familiar 'omni-*everything*' God. So, in short, like all good theologians at the time, Eriugena developed a cosmology using a Neo-Platonic foundation according to which God - infinite, transcendent and 'unknown' (who, as the monikers intimate, is beyond being *and* non-being, an idea which we see in the apologists) moves through a process of 'self-creation' (in the sense of becoming known not of being created – this is tied up in complex Christology but that is for another time).

He moves from 'darkness' (or 'non-being' or not being known) into the light (of 'being', that is knowable), speaking the Word who is understood as Christ. At the same *timeless* moment (re: Augustine) He brings forth the *Primary Causes* of all creation (recall the

Genesis creation story of God speaking the Word and all being created). These causes in turn proceed into their *Created Effects* and as such are creatures entirely dependent on, and will ultimately return to, their sources (re: Plato), which are the Causes or Ideas in God (as from Isaiah 15:11, *So shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; It shall not return to me void, but shall do my will, achieving the end for which I sent it -- NAB).*

These 'Causes', considered as diverse and infinite in themselves, are actually one single principle in God (the divine 'One'). The whole of reality or nature, then, is involved in a dynamic process of outgoing from and return to God, the One or the Good or the highest principle, which transcends all. In an original departure from traditional Neo-Platonism this first and highest cosmic principle is called 'nature' and is said to include both God and creation.

This does not mean that God is pan-en-theistic (*within everything;* one more time: heresy). This 'nature' is the 'totality of all things', including both the things which *are* as well as those which *are not* (harkening to the *nominalism* of Peter Abelard), and since God is neither but, as the Prime Mover, is part and parcel of it. Clear? Nature is all that is, and all that God makes…*is*. He is both the reason of and the reason for nature. The divine nature may be divided and these divisions of nature taken together are to be understood as God, presented as the 'beginning, middle and end of all things'.

Apart from having a minor influence later on, Eriugena's really did not catch on with philosophers and theologians of his time, and his philosophical system was generally neglected until sometime about the seventeenth century, but in the nineteenth century interest in him grew, especially among followers of Hegel who saw Eriugena as a forerunner to *speculative idealism*. So he gets special mention here, but again, more on that later.

Anselm

Anselm really lays the groundwork for the High Middle Ages period to come or as some would call it the Scholastic Age. He is best known for having designed and proffered what is called by Kant the *ontological argument* (basically – and I mean really basically – because we can conceive of God there must be a God – which we touched on in *Chapter 4*) but his work is much more complex and touches on the aspects and the unity of the divine nature; the extent and limitations of human understanding of the divine nature; the complex nature of the will and its involvement in free choice; the interworkings of the human will and action and divine grace; the natures of truth and justice; the natures and origins of virtues and vices; the nature of evil as twisting or negating of what is good; and the condition and implications of original sin (things that we saw in Augustine as well as Plato).

Anselm's life was similar to many at that time. He settled into the monastic life and was eventually elevated into ecclesiastical office. There, historically at least, he is probably best known as the Archbishop of Canterbury (though he was born in North Italy, which shows you the renewing breadth of societal structures of both the rising nations and the Church) under Rufus and Henry the First, and for creating the compromise which muddled many of the lines between Church and State.

The times in which he lived were becoming better that those of his predecessors, in that the Vikings and other invading groups had pretty much stopped invading and were settling down and adopting the cultural and religious practices of their 'host' countries. This stability allowed a rise in monasteries and schools. Anselm was highly influenced by Augustine and somewhat by Boethius and perhaps slightly by our previously mentioned friend, Eriugena (thought that was just a fluke, eh?). What this means to us is that in Anselm, the high Neo-Platonism of Augustine and Eriugena and the Logic of Aristotle as proffered by Boethius come together.

Say What?

This is not to say that Anselm was merely spouting the words of former greats. The ontological argument has in itself has spawned critics, defenders, and adaptors over the centuries, least among them Bonaventure, Aquinas, Descartes, Spinoza, Locke, Leibniz, Kant, Hegel, and an even into this last century, with people like Heidegger. As Augustine straddled the Roman and Medieval worlds, Anselm straddles the more chaotic and unsure times of the late first millennium and the developing somewhat more stable scholastic world.

One of the distinguishing aspects of Anselm's thought is to attempt to explain or 'prove' ideas without appeal to scripture, that is, through reason alone. "[I was challenged that] *nothing whatsoever in these matters should be made convincing by the authority of Scripture, but whatsoever the conclusion, through individual investigations, should assert…the necessity of reason would concisely prove, and the clarity of truth would evidently show that this is the case. They also wished that I not disdain to meet and address simpleminded and almost foolish objections that occurred to me."* (*Monologion*: Prologue) Apparently he had quite the gift for reasonable argumentation and persuasion. While this may sound similar to the earlier Apologists, he is writing for people who already believe or at least have had explicit exposure to the ideas he is confronting. So like the apologists he has to rely on language outside of the authority of scriptural texts, but unlike them he is not just explaining but is offering 'proofs' which end any argumentation on the subject.

You Would Argue With A Brick Wall, Wouldn't You?

The methods he employed were many. One we have spoken of was *reductio ad absurdum* (*Chapter 4* again), the running an of idea to its logical but silly extreme. If you could push it without reaching an extreme which was unreasonable, then you must have arrived at the correct idea. But what we want to focus on is Anselm's use of deductive reasoning, as laid out by Aristotle and championed by Boethius, to provide 'necessary reasons' for the teachings of Faith. In the end it is this synthesis of thought which sets him apart.

This has led to some discussion about the 'validity' of his thought. This may seem odd because his method seems to imply that he will use reason alone and that the arguments will be legitimate and ironclad. But as we have seen in the past, the prime mover is hard to nail down and open to many interpretations. Anselm himself attempts to address many of these concerns, creating arguments which are designed to answer any objection in a dialogue/dialectical style reminiscent of Plato and Aristotle respectively. Once again though, we must remember that Anselm is trying to achieve arguments which put articles of Faith into reasonable light, that is, he is seeking to understand the Faith he already has, and really has no desire to understand them outside of that Faith.

Putting It Together

Okay another long one. Augustine, Eriugena and Anselm all seek to expound on the Christian Faith. One note here is that the word *Faith* did not mean *belief* in the active sense. The act of believing or 'having faith' was based *in* Faith. Faith was the truths handed down or revealed which were immutable and foundational. When Anselm invokes *Faith seeking understanding*, he is using understanding in the active sense and Faith in the nominative sense. So, they are seeking to give reasonable meaning to doctrinal ideas, not increase their belief. Many later arguments will be leveled for and against their thought based on that misconception.

Also, as you may have noticed, I have begun some serious name dropping in this section. I know I probably could (if not do) say this every time that these thinkers influenced the thinking of those that came after them, but more so in that they have distilled and expanded the ideas of Plato and Aristotle. We must understand Plato and Aristotle to understand these guys and we must understand them to understand those who follow them. It is the 'triumph' of Plato over Aristotle, an argument for something beyond just the physical world which is gathering force here, and throughout the Medieval period.

In the end, once again, these men are not beholden to worldly reason to the exclusion of divine reason; they practice it because they see it practiced by God.

"I do not seek to understand that I might believe but I believe in order to understand. For I believe this: unless I believe, I will not understand." **Anselm** *Proslogium* Chapter 1

"*Eternity's a terrible thought. I mean, where's it all going to end?"* **Tom Stoppard** *Rosencrantz And Guildenstern Are Dead (1967)*

Augustine *Confessions*

Book XI

The design of his confessions being declared, he seeks from God the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, and begins to expound the words of Genesis 1:1, concerning the creation of the world. The questions of rash disputers being refuted, What did God before he created the world? That he might the better overcome his opponents, he adds a copious disquisition concerning time.

1

By Confession He Desires to Stimulate Towards God His Own Love and That of His Readers.

1. O Lord, since eternity is Yours, are You ignorant of the things which I say to You? Or see You at the time that which comes to pass in time? Why, therefore, do I place before You so many relations of things? Not surely that You might know them through me, but that I may awaken my own love and that of my readers towards You, that we may all say, Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised. I have already said, and shall say, for the love of Your love do I this. For we also pray, and yet Truth says, Your Father knows what things you have need of before you ask Him. (Matthew 6:8) Therefore do we make known to You our love, in confessing to You our own miseries and Your mercies upon us, that You may free us altogether, since You have begun, that we may cease to be wretched in ourselves, and that we may be blessed in You; since You have called us, that we may be poor in spirit, and meek, and mourners, and hungering and thirsty after righteousness, and merciful, and pure in heart, and peacemakers. (Matthew 5:3-9) Behold, I have told to You many things, which I could and which I would, for You first would that I should confess to You, the Lord my God, for You are good, since Your mercy endures forever.

2

He Begs of God that Through the Holy Scriptures He May Be Led to Truth.

2. But when shall I suffice with the tongue of my pen to express all Your exhortations, and all Your terrors, and comforts, and guidance, whereby You have led me to preach Your Word and to dispense Your Sacrament to Your people? And if I suffice to utter these things in order, the drops of time are dear to me. Long time have I burned to meditate in Your law, and in it to confess to You my knowledge and ignorance, the beginning of Your enlightening, and the remains of my darkness, until infirmity be swallowed up by strength. And I would not that to anything else those hours should flow away, which I find free from the necessities of refreshing my body, and the care of my mind, and of the service which we owe to men, and which, though we owe not, even yet we pay.

3. O Lord my God, hear my prayer, and let Your mercy regard my longing, since it bums not for myself alone, but because it desires to benefit brotherly charity; and You see into my heart, that so it is. I would sacrifice to You the service of my thought and tongue; and do You give what I may offer to You. For I am poor and needy, You rich to all that call upon You, (Romans 10:12) who free from care, cares for us. Circumcise from all rashness and from all lying my inward and outward lips. (Exodus 6:12) Let Your Scriptures be my chaste delights. Neither let me be deceived in them, nor deceive out of them. Lord, hear and pity, O Lord my God, light of the blind, and strength of the weak; even also light of those that see, and strength of the strong, hearken to my soul, and hear it crying out of the depths. For unless Your ears be present in the depths also, whither shall we go? Whither shall we cry? The day is Yours, and the night also is Yours. At Your nod the moments flee by. Grant thereof space for our meditations among the hidden things of Your law, nor close it against us who knock. For not in vain have You willed that the obscure secret of so many pages should be written. Nor is it that those forests have

not their harts, betaking themselves therein, and ranging, and walking, and feeding, lying down, and ruminating. Perfect me, O Lord, and reveal them to me. Behold, Your voice is my joy, Your voice surpasses the abundance of pleasures. Give that which I love, for I do love; and this have You given. Abandon not Your own gifts, nor despise Your grass that thirsts. Let me confess to You whatsoever I shall have found in Your books, and let me hear the voice of praise, and let me imbibe You, and reflect on the wonderful things of Your law; even from the beginning, wherein You made the heaven and the earth, to the everlasting kingdom of Your holy city that is with You.

4. Lord, have mercy on me and hear my desire. For I think that it is not of the earth, nor of gold and silver, and precious stones, nor gorgeous apparel, nor honors and powers, nor the pleasures of the flesh, nor necessaries for the body, and this life of our pilgrimage; all which are added to those that seek Your kingdom and Your righteousness. (Matthew 6:33) Behold, O Lord my God, whence is my desire. The unrighteous have told me of delights, but not such as Your law, O Lord. Behold whence my desire is. Behold, Father, look and see, and approve; and let it be pleasing in the sight of Your mercy, that I may find grace before You, that the secret things of Your Word may be opened to me when I knock. I beseech, by our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, the Man of Your right hand, the Son of man, whom You made strong for Yourself, as Your Mediator and ours, through whom You have sought us, although not seeking You, but sought us that we might seek You, — Your Word through whom You have made all things, (John 1:3) and among them me also, Your Only-begotten, through whom You have called to adoption the believing people, and therein me also. I beseech You through Him, who sits at Your right hand, and makes intercession for us, (Romans 8:34) in whom are hid all treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (Colossians 2:3) Him do I seek in Your books. Of Him did Moses write; (John 5:4-6) this says Himself; this says the Truth.

3

He Begins from the Creation of the World— Not Understanding the Hebrew Text.

5. Let me hear and understand how in the beginning You made the heaven and the earth. (Genesis 1:1) Moses wrote this; he wrote and departed—passed hence from You to You. Nor now is he before me; for if he were I would hold him, and ask him, and would adjure him by You that he would open to me these things, and I would lend the ears of my body to the sounds bursting forth from his mouth. And should he speak in the Hebrew tongue, in vain would it beat on my senses, nor would anything touch my mind; but if in Latin, I should know what he said. But whence should I know whether he said what was true? But if I knew this even, should I know it from him? Verily within me, within in the chamber of my thought, Truth, neither Hebrew, nor Greek, nor Latin, nor barbarian, without the organs of voice and tongue, without the sound of syllables, would say, He speaks the truth, and I, immediately assured of it, confidently would say to that man of Yours, You speak the truth. As, then, I cannot inquire of him, I beseech You—You, O Truth, full of whom he spoke truth—You, my God, I beseech, forgive my sins; and do Thou, who gave to that Your servant to speak these things, grant to me also to understand them.

4

Heaven and Earth Cry Out that They Have Been Created by God.

6. Behold, the heaven and earth are; they proclaim that they were made, for they are changed and varied. Whereas whatsoever has not been made, and yet has being, has nothing in it which there was not before; this is what it is to be changed and varied. They also proclaim that they made not themselves; therefore we are, because we have been made; we were not therefore before we were, so that we could have made ourselves. And the voice of those that speak is in itself evidence. You, therefore, Lord, made these things; You who are beautiful, for they are beautiful; You who are good, for they are good; You who art, for they are. Nor even so are they beautiful, nor good, nor are they, as You their Creator art; compared with whom they are neither beautiful, nor good, nor are at all. These things we know, thanks be to You. And our knowledge, compared with Your knowledge, is ignorance.

5

God Created the World Not from Any Certain Matter, But in His Own Word.

7. But how did You make the heaven and the earth, and what was the

instrument of Your so mighty work? For it was not as a human worker fashioning body from body, according to the fancy of his mind, in some way able to assign a form which it perceives in itself by its inner eye. And whence should he be able to do this, had not You made that mind? And he assigns to it already existing, and as it were having a being, a form, as clay, or stone, or wood, or gold, or such like. And whence should these things be, had not You appointed them? You made for the workman his body—You the mind commanding the limbs—You the matter whereof he makes anything, — You the capacity whereby he may apprehend his art, and see within what he may do without—You the sense of his body, by which, as by an interpreter, he may from mind to matter convey that which he does, and report to his mind what may have been done, that it within may consult the truth, presiding over itself, whether it be well done. All these things praise You, the Creator of all. But how do You make them? How, O God, did You make heaven and earth? Truly, neither in the heaven nor in the earth did You make heaven and earth; nor in the air, nor in the waters, since these also belong to the heaven and the earth; nor in the whole world did You make the whole world; because there was no place wherein it could be made before it was made, that it might be; nor did You hold anything in Your hand wherewith to make heaven and earth. For whence could You have what You had not made, whereof to make anything? For what is, save because You are? Therefore You spoke and they were made, and in Your Word You made these things.

6

He Did Not, However, Create It by a Sounding and Passing Word.

8. But how did You speak? Was it in that manner in which the voice came from the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son? (Matthew 17:5) For that voice was uttered and passed away, began and ended. The syllables sounded and passed by, the second after the first, the third after the second, and thence in order, until the last after the rest, and silence after the last. Hence it is clear and plain that the motion of a creature expressed it, itself temporal, obeying Your Eternal will. And these your words formed at the time, the outer ear conveyed to the intelligent mind, whose inner ear lay attentive to Your eternal word. But it compared these words sounding in time with Your eternal word in silence, and said, It is different, very different. These words are far beneath me, nor are they, since they flee and pass away; but the Word of my Lord remains above me forever. If, then, in sounding and fleeting words You said that heaven and earth should be made, and thus made heaven and earth, there was already a corporeal creature before heaven and earth by whose temporal motions that voice might take its course in time. But there was nothing corporeal before heaven and earth; or if there were, certainly You without a transitory voice had created that whence You would make the passing voice, by which to say that the heaven and the earth should be made. For whatsoever that was of which such a voice was made, unless it were made by You, it could not be at all. By what word of Yours was it decreed that a body might be made, whereby these words might be made?

7

By His Co-Eternal Word He Speaks, and All Things are Done.

9. You call us, therefore, to understand the Word, God with You, God, (John 1:1) which is spoken eternally, and by it are all things spoken eternally. For what was spoken was not finished, and another spoken until all were spoken; but all things at once and for ever. For otherwise have we time and change, and not a true eternity, nor a true immortality. This I know, O my God, and give thanks. I know, I confess to You, O Lord, and whosoever is not unthankful to certain truth, knows and blesses You with me. We know, O Lord, we know; since in proportion as anything is not what it was, and is what it was not, in that proportion does it die and arise. Not anything, therefore, of Your Word gives place and comes into place again, because it is truly immortal and eternal. And, therefore, to the Word co-eternal with You, You dost at once and for ever say all that You dost say; and whatever You say shall be made, is made; nor dost You make otherwise than by speaking; yet all things are not made both together and everlasting which You make by speaking.

8

That Word Itself is the Beginning of All Things, in Which We are Instructed as to Evangelical Truth.

10. Why is this, I beseech You, O Lord my God? I see it, however; but how I shall express it, I know not, unless that everything which

begins to be and ceases to be, then begins and ceases when in Your eternal Reason it is known that it ought to begin or cease where nothing begins or ceases. The same is Your Word, which is also the Beginning, because also It speaks to us. Thus, in the gospel He speaks through the flesh; and this sounded outwardly in the ears of men, that it might be believed and sought inwardly, and that it might be found in the eternal Truth, where the good and only Master teaches all His disciples. There, O Lord, I hear Your voice, the voice of one speaking to me, since He speaks to us who teaches us. But He that teaches us not, although He speaks, speaks not to us. Moreover, who teaches us, unless it is the immutable Truth? For even when we are admonished through a changeable creature, we are led to the Truth immutable. There we learn truly while we stand and hear Him, and rejoice greatly because of the Bridegroom's voice, (John 3:29) restoring us to that whence we are. And, therefore, the Beginning, because unless It remained, there would not, where we strayed, be whither to return. But when we return from error, it is by knowing that we return. But that we may know, He teaches us, because He is the Beginning and speaks to us.

9

Wisdom and the Beginning.

11. In this Beginning, O God, have You made heaven and earth—in Your Word, in Your Son, in Your Power, in Your Wisdom, in Your Truth, wondrously speaking and wondrously making. Who shall comprehend? Who shall relate it? What is that which shines through me, and strikes my heart without injury, and I both shudder and burn? I shudder inasmuch as I am unlike it; and I burn inasmuch as I am like it. It is Wisdom itself that shines through me, clearing my cloudiness, which again overwhelms me, fainting from it, in the darkness and amount of my punishment. For my strength is brought down in need, so that I cannot endure my blessings, until Thou, O Lord, who hast been gracious to all mine iniquities, heal also all mine infirmities; because You shall also redeem my life from corruption, and crown me with Your loving-kindness and mercy, and shall satisfy my desire with good things, because my youth shall be renewed like the eagle's. For by hope we are saved; and through patience we await Your promises. (Romans 8:24-25) Let him that is able hear You discoursing within. I will with confidence cry out from Your oracle, How wonderful are Your works, O Lord, in Wisdom have You made them all. And this Wisdom is the Beginning, and in that Beginning have You made heaven and earth.

10

The Rashness of Those Who Inquire What God Did Before He Created Heaven and Earth.

12. Lo, are they not full of their ancient way, who say to us, What was God doing before He made heaven and earth? For if, say they, He was unoccupied, and did nothing, why does He not for ever also, and from henceforth, cease from working, as in times past He did? For if any new motion has arisen in God, and a new will, to form a creature which He had never before formed, however can that be a true eternity where there arises a will which was not before? For the will of God is not a creature, but before the creature; because nothing could be created unless the will of the Creator were before it. The will of God, therefore, pertains to His very Substance. But if anything has arisen in the Substance of God which was not before, that Substance is not truly called eternal. But if it was the eternal will of God that the creature should be, why was not the creature also from eternity?

11

They Who Ask This Have Not as Yet Known the Eternity of God, Which is Exempt from the Relation of Time.

13. Those who say these things do not as yet understand You, O You Wisdom of God, You light of souls; not as yet do they understand how these things be made which are made by and in You. They even endeavor to comprehend things eternal; but as yet their heart flies about in the past and future motions of things, and is still wavering. Who shall hold it and fix it, that it may rest a little, and by degrees catch the glory of that ever standing eternity, and compare it with the times which never stand, and see that it is incomparable; and that a long time cannot become long, save from the many motions that pass by, which cannot at the same instant be prolonged; but that in the Eternal nothing passes away, but that the whole is present; but no time is wholly present; and let him see that all time past is forced on by the future, and that all the future follows from the past, and that all, both past and future, is created and issues from that which is always present? Who will hold the heart of man, that it may stand still, and

see how the still-standing eternity, itself neither future nor past, utters the times future and past? Can my hand accomplish this, or the hand of my mouth by persuasion bring about a thing so great?

12 *What God Did Before the Creation of the World.*

14. Behold, I answer to him who asks, What was God doing before He made heaven and earth? I answer not, as a certain person is reported to have done facetiously (avoiding the pressure of the question), He was preparing hell, says he, for those who pry into mysteries. It is one thing to perceive, another to laugh—these things I answer not. For more willingly would I have answered, I know not what I know not, than that I should make him a laughing-stock who asks deep things, and gain praise as one who answers false things. But I say that Thou, our God, art the Creator of every creature; and if by the term heaven and earth every creature is understood, I boldly say, That before God made heaven and earth, He made not anything. For if He did, what did He make unless the creature? And would that I knew whatever I desire to know to my advantage, as I know that no creature was made before any creature was made.

13 *Before the Times Created by God, Times Were Not.*

15. But if the roving thought of any one should wander through the images of bygone time, and wonder that You, the God Almighty, and All-creating, and All-sustaining, the Architect of heaven and earth, for innumerable ages refrained from so great a work before You would make it, let him awake and consider that he wonders at false things. For whence could innumerable ages pass by which You did not make, since You are the Author and Creator of all ages? Or what times should those be which were not made by You? Or how should they pass by if they had not been? Since, therefore, You are the Creator of all times, if any time was before You made heaven and earth, why is it said that You refrained from working? For that very time You made, nor could times pass by before You made times. But if before heaven and earth there was no time, why is it asked, What were You doing then? For there was no then when time was not.

16. Nor dost You by time precede time; else would not You precede all times. But in the excellence of an ever-present eternity, You precedes all times past, and survives all future times, because they are future, and when they have come they will be past; but You are the same, and Your years shall have no end. Your years neither go nor come; but ours both go and come, that all may come. All Your years stand at once since they do stand; nor were they when departing excluded by coming years, because they pass not away; but all these of ours shall be when all shall cease to be. Your years are one day, and Your day is not daily, but today; because Your today yields not with tomorrow, for neither does it follow yesterday. Your today is eternity; therefore You begot the Co-eternal, to whom You said, This day have I begotten You. You have made all time; and before all times You are, nor in any time was there not time.

14 *Neither Time Past Nor Future, But the Present Only, Really is.*

17. At no time, therefore, had You not made anything, because You had made time itself. And no times are co-eternal with You, because You remains for ever; but should these continue, they would not be times. For what is time? Who can easily and briefly explain it? Who even in thought can comprehend it, even to the pronouncing of a word concerning it? But what in speaking do we refer to more familiarly and knowingly than time? And certainly we understand when we speak of it; we understand also when we hear it spoken of by another. What, then, is time? If no one ask of me, I know; if I wish to explain to him who asks, I know not. Yet I say with confidence, that I know that if nothing passed away, there would not be past time; and if nothing were coming, there would not be future time; and if nothing were, there would not be present time. Those two times, therefore, past and future, how are they, when even the past now is not; and the future is not as yet? But should the present be always present, and should it not pass into time past, time truly it could not be, but eternity. If, then, time present— if it be time— only comes into existence because it passes into time past, how do we say that even this is, whose cause of being is that it shall not be— namely, so that we cannot truly say that time is, unless because it tends not to be?

15 *There is Only a Moment of Present Time.*

5

18. And yet we say that time is long and time is short; nor do we speak of this save of time past and future. A long time past, for example, we call a hundred years ago; in like manner a long time to come, a hundred years hence. But a short time past we call, say, ten days ago: and a short time to come, ten days hence. But in what sense is that long or short which is not? For the past is not now, and the future is not yet. Therefore let us not say, It is long; but let us say of the past, It has been long, and of the future, It will be long. O my Lord, my light, shall not even here Your truth deride man? For that past time which was long, was it long when it was already past, or when it was as yet present? For then it might be long when there was that which could be long, but when past it no longer was; wherefore that could not be long which was not at all. Let us not, therefore, say, Time past has been long; for we shall not find what may have been long, seeing that since it was past it is not; but let us say that present time was long, because when it was present it was long. For it had not as yet passed away so as not to be, and therefore there was that which could be long. But after it passed, that ceased also to be long which ceased to be.

19. Let us therefore see, O human soul, whether present time can be long; for to you is it given to perceive and to measure periods of time. What will you reply to me? Is a hundred years when present a long time? See, first, whether a hundred years can be present. For if the first year of these is current, that is present, but the other ninety and nine are future, and therefore they are not as yet. But if the second year is current, one is already past, the other present, the rest future. And thus, if we fix on any middle year of this hundred as present, those before it are past, those after it are future; wherefore a hundred years cannot be present. See at least whether that year itself which is current can be present. For if its first month be current, the rest are future; if the second, the first has already passed, and the remainder are not yet. Therefore neither is the year which is current as a whole present; and if it is not present as a whole, then the year is not present. For twelve months make the year, of which each individual month which is current is itself present, but the rest are either past or future. Although neither is that month which is current present, but one day only: if the first, the rest being to come, if the last, the rest being past; if any of the middle, then between past and future.

20. Behold, the present time, which alone we found could be called long, is abridged to the space scarcely of one day. But let us discuss even that, for there is not one day present as a whole. For it is made up of four-and-twenty hours of night and day, whereof the first has the rest future, the last has them past, but any one of the intervening has those before it past, those after it future. And that one hour passes away in fleeting particles. Whatever of it has flown away is past, whatever remains is future. If any portion often be conceived which cannot now be divided into even the minutest particles of moments, this only is that which may be called present; which, however, flies so rapidly from future to past, that it cannot be extended by any delay. For if it be extended, it is divided into the past and future; but the present has no space. Where, therefore, is the time which we may call long? Is it nature? Indeed we do not say, *It is long*, because it is not yet, so as to be long; but we say, *It will be long*. When, then, will it be? For if even then, since as yet it is future, it will not be long, because what may be long is not as yet; but it shall be long, when from the future, which as yet is not, it shall already have begun to be, and will have become present, so that there could be that which may be long; then does the present time cry out in the words above that it cannot be long.

16

Time Can Only Be Perceived or Measured While It is Passing.

21. And yet, O Lord, we perceive intervals of times, and we compare them with themselves, and we say some are longer, others shorter. We even measure by how much shorter or longer this time may be than that; and we answer, That this is double or treble, while that is but once, or only as much as that. But we measure times passing when we measure them by perceiving them; but past times, which now are not, or future times, which as yet are not, who can measure them? Unless, perchance, any one will dare to say, that that can be measured which is not. When, therefore, time is passing, it can be perceived and measured; but when it has passed, it cannot, since it is not.

17

Nevertheless There is Time Past and Future.

2. I ask, Father, I do not affirm. O my God, rule and guide me. Who is

there who can say to me that there are not three times (as we learned when boys, and as we have taught boys), the past, present, and future, but only present, because these two are not? Or are they also; but when from future it becomes present, comes it forth from some secret place, and when from the present it becomes past, does it retire into anything secret? For where have they, who have foretold future things, seen these things, if as yet they are not? For that which is not cannot be seen. And they who relate things past could not relate them as true, did they not perceive them in their mind. Which things, if they were not, they could in no way be discerned. There are therefore things both future and past.

18

Past and Future Times Cannot Be Thought of But as Present.

23. Allow me, O Lord, to seek further; O my Hope, let not my purpose be confounded. For if there are times past and future, I desire to know where they are. But if as yet I do not succeed, I still know, wherever they are, that they are not there as future or past, but as present. For if there also they be future, they are not as yet there; if even there they be past, they are no longer there. Wheresoever, therefore, they are, whatsoever they are, they are only so as present. Although past things are related as true, they are drawn out from the memory, — not the things themselves, which have passed, but the words conceived from the images of the things which they have formed in the mind as footprints in their passage through the senses. My childhood, indeed, which no longer is, is in time past, which now is not; but when I call to mind its image, and speak of it, I behold it in the present, because it is as yet in my memory. Whether there be a like cause of foretelling future things, that of things which as yet are not the images may be perceived as already existing, I confess, my God, I know not. This certainly I know, that we generally think before on our future actions, and that this premeditation is present; but that the action whereon we premeditate is not yet, because it is future; which when we shall have entered upon, and have begun to do that which we were premeditating, then shall that action be, because then it is not future, but present.

24. In whatever manner, therefore, this secret preconception of future things may be, nothing can be seen, save what is. But what now is is not future, but present. When, therefore, they say that things future are seen, it is not themselves, which as yet are not (that is, which are future); but their causes or their signs perhaps are seen, which already are. Therefore, to those already beholding them, they are not future, but present, from which future things conceived in the mind are foretold. Which conceptions again now are, and they who foretell those things behold these conceptions present before them. Let now so multitudinous a variety of things afford me some example. I behold daybreak; I foretell that the sun is about to rise. That which I behold is present; what I foretell is future—not that the sun is future, which already is; but his rising, which is not yet. Yet even its rising I could not predict unless I had an image of it in my mind, as now I have while I speak. But that dawn which I see in the sky is not the rising of the sun, although it may go before it, nor that imagination in my mind; which two are seen as present, that the other which is future may be foretold. Future things, therefore, are not as yet; and if they are not as yet, they are not. And if they are not, they cannot be seen at all; but they can be foretold from things present which now are, and are seen.

19

We are Ignorant in What Manner God Teaches Future Things.

25. You, therefore, Ruler of Your creatures, what is the method by which You teaches souls those things which are future? For You have taught Your prophets. What is that way by which Thou, to whom nothing is future, dost teach future things; or rather of future things dost teach present? For what is not, of a certainty cannot be taught. Too far is this way from my view; it is too mighty for me, I cannot attain to it; but by You I shall be enabled, when You shall have granted it, sweet light of my hidden eyes.

20

In What Manner Time May Properly Be Designated.

26. But what now is manifest and clear is, that neither are there future nor past things. Nor is it fitly said, There are three times, past, present and future; but perchance it might be fitly said, There are three times; a present of things past, a present of things present, and a present of things future. For these three do somehow exist in the soul, and

otherwise I see them not: present of things past, memory; present of things present, sight; present of things future, expectation. If of these things we are permitted to speak, I see three times, and I grant there are three. It may also be said, There are three times, past, present and future, as usage falsely has it. See, I trouble not, nor gainsay, nor reprove; provided always that which is said may be understood, that neither the future, nor that which is past, now is. For there are but few things which we speak properly, many things improperly; but what we may wish to say is understood.

21 ### *How Time May Be Measured.*

27. I have just now said, then, that we measure times as they pass, that we may be able to say that this time is twice as much as that one, or that this is only as much as that, and so of any other of the parts of time which we are able to tell by measuring. Wherefore, as I said, we measure times as they pass. And if anyone should ask me, Whence do you know? I can answer, I know, because we measure; nor can we measure things that are not; and things past and future are not. But how do we measure present time, since it has not space? It is measured while it passes; but when it shall have passed, it is not measured; for there will not be anything that can be measured. But whence, in what way, and whither does it pass while it is being measured? Whence, but from the future? Which way, save through the present? Whither, but into the past? From that, therefore, which as yet is not, through that which has no space, into that which now is not. But what do we measure, unless time in some space? For we say not single, and double, and triple, and equal, or in any other way in which we speak of time, unless with respect to the spaces of times. In what space, then, do we measure passing time? Is it in the future, whence it passes over? But what yet we measure not, is not. Or is it in the present, by which it passes? But no space, we do not measure. Or in the past, whither it passes? But that which is not now, we measure not.

22 ### *He Prays God that He Would Explain This Most Entangled Enigma.*

28. My soul yearns to know this most entangled enigma. Forbear to shut up, O Lord my God, good Father,— through Christ I beseech You—forbear to shut up these things, both usual and hidden, from my desire, that it may be hindered from penetrating them; but let them dawn through Your enlightening mercy, O Lord. Of whom shall I inquire concerning these things? And to whom shall I with more advantage confess my ignorance than to You, to whom these my studies, so vehemently kindled towards Your Scriptures, are not troublesome? Give that which I love; for I do love, and this have You given me. Give, Father, who truly know to give good gifts to Your children. (Matthew 7:11) Give, since I have undertaken to know, and trouble is before me until You dost open it. Through Christ, I beseech You, in His name, Holy of Holies, let no man interrupt me. For I believed, and therefore do I speak. This is my hope; for this do I live, that I may contemplate the delights of the Lord. Behold, You have made my days old, and they pass away, and in what manner I know not. And we speak as to time and time, times and times—How long is the time since he said this? How long the time since he did this? and, How long the time since I saw that? and, This syllable has double the time of that single short syllable. These words we speak, and these we hear; and we are understood, and we understand. They are most manifest and most usual, and the same things again lie hidden too deeply, and the discovery of them is new.

23 ### *That Time is a Certain Extension.*

29. I have heard from a learned man that the motions of the sun, moon, and stars constituted time, and I assented not. For why should not rather the motions of all bodies be time? What if the lights of heaven should cease, and a potter's wheel run round, would there be no time by which we might measure those revolutions, and say either that it turned with equal pauses, or, if it were moved at one time more slowly, at another more quickly, that some revolutions were longer, others less so? Or while we were saying this, should we not also be speaking in time? Or should there in our words be some syllables long, others short, but because those sounded in a longer time, these in a shorter? God grant to men to see in a small thing ideas common to things great and small. Both the stars and luminaries of heaven are

for signs and for seasons, and for days and years. (Genesis 1:14) No doubt they are; but neither should I say that the circuit of that wooden wheel was a day, nor yet should he say that therefore there was no time.

30. I desire to know the power and nature of time, by which we measure the motions of bodies, and say (for example) that this motion is twice as long as that. For, I ask, since day declares not the stay only of the sun upon the earth, according to which day is one thing, night another, but also its entire circuit from east even to east—according to which we say, So many days have passed (the nights being included when we say so many days, and their spaces not counted apart)—since, then, the day is finished by the motion of the sun, and by his circuit from east to east, I ask, whether the motion itself is the day, or the period in which that motion is completed, or both? For if the first be the day, then would there be a day although the sun should finish that course in so small a space often as an hour. If the second, then that would not be a day if from one sunrise to another there were but so short a period as an hour, but the sun must go round four-and-twenty times to complete a day. If both, neither could that be called a day if the sun should run his entire round in the space of an hour; nor that, if, while the sun stood still, so much time should pass as the sun is accustomed to accomplish his whole course in from morning to morning. I shall not therefore now ask, what that is which is called day, but what time is, by which we, measuring the circuit of the sun, should say that it was accomplished in half the space of time it was wont, if it had been completed in so small a space as twelve hours; and comparing both times, we should call that single, this double time, although the sun should run his course from east to east sometimes in that single, sometimes in that double time. Let no man then tell me that the motions of the heavenly bodies are times, because, when at the prayer of one the sun stood still in order that he might achieve his victorious battle, the sun stood still, but time went on. For in such space of time as was sufficient was that battle fought and ended. (Joshua 10:12-14) I see that time, then, is a certain extension. But do I see it, or do I seem to see it? Thou, O Light and Truth, wilt show me.

2 *That Time is Not a Motion of a Body Which We Measure by*

4 *Time.*

31. Do you command that I should assent, if any one should say that time is the motion of a body? You dost not command me. For I hear that nobody is moved but in time. This You say; but that the very motion of a body is time, I hear not; You say it not. For when a body is moved, I by time measure how long it may be moving from the time in which it began to be moved till it left off. And if I saw not whence it began, and it continued to be moved, so that I see not when it leaves off, I cannot measure unless, perchance, from the time I began until I cease to see. But if I look long, I only proclaim that the time is long, but not how long it may be because when we say, How long, we speak by comparison, as, This is as long as that, or, This is double as long as that, or any other thing of the kind. But if we were able to note down the distances of places whence and whither comes the body which is moved, or its parts, if it moved as in a wheel, we can say in how much time the motion of the body or its part, from this place to that, was performed. Since, then, the motion of a body is one thing, that by which we measure how long it is another, who cannot see which of these is rather to be called time ? For, although a body be sometimes moved, sometimes stand still, we measure not its motion only, but also its standing still, by time; and we say, It stood still as much as it moved; or, It stood still twice or thrice as long as it moved; and if any other space which our measuring has either determined or imagined, more or less, as we are accustomed to say. Time, therefore, is not the motion of a body.

2 5 *He Calls on God to Enlighten His Mind.*

32. And I confess to You, O Lord, that I am as yet ignorant as to what time is, and again I confess to You, O Lord, that I know that I speak these things in time, and that I have already long spoken of time, and that very long is not long save by the stay of time. How, then, know I this, when I know not what time is? Or is it, perchance, that I know not in what wise I may express what I know? Alas for me, that I do not at least know the extent of my own ignorance! Behold, O my God, before You I lie not. As I speak, so is my heart. You shall light my candle; Thou, O Lord my God, wilt enlighten my darkness.

26

We Measure Longer Events by Shorter in Time.

33. Does not my soul pour out to You truly in confession that I do measure times? But do I thus measure, O my God, and know not what I measure? I measure the motion of a body by time; and the time itself do I not measure? But, in truth, could I measure the motion of a body, how long it is, and how long it is in coming from this place to that, unless I should measure the time in which it is moved? How, therefore, do I measure this very time itself? Or do we by a shorter time measure a longer, as by the space of a cubit the space of a crossbeam? For thus, indeed, we seem by the space of a short syllable to measure the space of a long syllable, and to say that this is double. Thus we measure the spaces of stanzas by the spaces of the verses, and the spaces of the verses by the spaces of the feet, and the spaces of the feet by the spaces of the syllables, and the spaces of long by the spaces of short syllables; not measuring by pages (for in that manner we measure spaces, not times), but when in uttering the words they pass by, and we say, It is a long stanza because it is made up of so many verses; long verses, because they consist of so many feet; long feet, because they are prolonged by so many syllables; a long syllable, because double a short one. But neither thus is any certain measure of time obtained; since it is possible that a shorter verse, if it be pronounced more fully, may take up more time than a longer one, if pronounced more hurriedly. Thus for a stanzas, thus for a foot, thus for a syllable. Whence it appeared to me that time is nothing else than protraction; but of what I know not. It is wonderful to me, if it be not of the mind itself. For what do I measure, I beseech You, O my God, even when I say either indefinitely, This time is longer than that; or even definitely, This is double that? That I measure time, I know. But I measure not the future, for it is not yet; nor do I measure the present, because it is extended by no space; nor do I measure the past, because it no longer is. What, therefore, do I measure? Is it times passing, not past? For thus had I said.

27

Times are Measured in Proportion as They Pass by.

34. Persevere, O my mind, and give earnest heed. God is our helper; He made us, and not we ourselves. Give heed, where truth dawns. Lo, suppose the voice of a body begins to sound, and does sound, and sounds on, and lo! It ceases—it is now silence, and that voice is past and is no longer a voice. It was future before it sounded, and could not be measured, because as yet it was not; and now it cannot, because it no longer is. Then, therefore, while it was sounding, it might, because there was then that which might be measured. But even then it did not stand still, for it was going and passing away. Could it, then, on that account be measured the more? For, while passing, it was being extended into some space often, in which it might be measured, since the present has no space. If, therefore, then it might be measured, lo! suppose another voice has begun to sound, and still sounds, in a continued tenor without any interruption, we can measure it while it is sounding; for when it shall have ceased to sound, it will be already past, and there will not be that which can be measured. Let us measure it truly, and let us say how much it is. But as yet it sounds, nor can it be measured, save from that instant in which it began to sound, even to the end in which it left off. For the interval itself we measure from some beginning to some end. On which account, a voice which is not yet ended cannot be measured, so that it may be said how long or how short it may be; nor can it be said to be equal to another, or single or double in respect of it, or the like. But when it is ended, it no longer is. In what manner, therefore, may it be measured? And yet we measure times; still not those which as yet are not, nor those which no longer are, nor those which are protracted by some delay, nor those which have no limits. We, therefore, measure neither future times, nor past, nor present, nor those passing by; and yet we do measure times.

35. *Deus Creator omnium*; this verse of eight syllables alternates between short and long syllables. The four short, then, the first, third, fifth and seventh, are single in respect of the four long, the second, fourth, sixth, and eighth. Each of these has a double time to every one of those. I pronounce them, report on them, and thus it is, as is perceived by common sense. By common sense, then, I measure a long by a short syllable, and I find that it has twice as much. But when one sounds after another, if the former be short the latter long, how shall I hold the short one, and how measuring shall I apply it to the long, so that I may find out that this has twice as much, when indeed the long does not begin to sound unless the short leaves off sounding? That very long one I measure not as present, since I

measure it not save when ended. But its ending is its passing away. What, then, is it that I can measure? Where is the short syllable by which I measure? Where is the long one which I measure? Both have sounded, have flown, have passed away, and are no longer; and still I measure, and I confidently answer (so far as is trusted to a practiced sense), that as to space often this syllable is single, that double. Nor could I do this, unless because they have past, and are ended. Therefore do I not measure themselves, which now are not, but something in my memory, which remains fixed.

36. In you, O my mind, I measure times. Do not overwhelm me with your clamor. That is, do not overwhelm yourself with the multitude of your impressions. In you, I say, I measure times; the impression which things as they pass by make on you, and which, when they have passed by, remains, that I measure as time present, not those things which have passed by, that the impression should be made. This I measure when I measure times. Either, then, these are times, or I do not measure times. What when we measure silence, and say that this silence has lasted as long as that voice lasts? Do we not extend our thought to the measure of a voice, as if it sounded, so that we may be able to declare something concerning the intervals of silence in a given space often? For when both the voice and tongue are still, we go over in thought poems and verses, and any discourse, or dimensions of motions; and declare concerning the spaces of times, how much this may be in respect of that, not otherwise than if uttering them we should pronounce them. Should any one wish to utter a lengthened sound, and had with forethought determined how long it should be, that man has in silence verily gone through a space often, and, committing it to memory, he begins to utter that speech, which sounds until it be extended to the end proposed; truly it has sounded, and will sound. For what of it is already finished has verily sounded, but what remains will sound; and thus does it pass on, until the present intention carry over the future into the past; the past increasing by the diminution of the future, until, by the consumption of the future, all be past.

28 *Time in the Human Mind, Which Expects, Considers, and Remembers.*

37. But how is that future diminished or consumed which as yet is not? Or how does the past, which is no longer, increase, unless in the mind which enacts this there are three things done? For it both expects, and considers, and remembers, that that which it expects, through that which it considers, may pass into that which it remembers. Who, therefore, denies that future things as yet are not? But yet there is already in the mind the expectation of things future. And who denies that past things are now no longer? But, however, there is still in the mind the memory of things past. And who denies that time present wants space, because it passes away in a moment? But yet our consideration endures, through which that which may be present may proceed to become absent. Future time, which is not, is not therefore long; but a long future is a long expectation of the future. Nor is time past, which is now no longer, long; but a long past is a long memory of the past.

38. I am about to repeat a psalm that I know. Before I begin, my attention is extended to the whole; but when I have begun, as much of it as becomes past by my saying it is extended in my memory; and the life of this action of mine is divided between my memory, on account of what I have repeated, and my expectation, on account of what I am about to repeat; yet my consideration is present with me, through which that which was future may be carried over so that it may become past. Which the more it is done and repeated, by so much (expectation being shortened) the memory is enlarged, until the whole expectation be exhausted, when that whole action being ended shall have passed into memory. And what takes place in the entire psalm, takes place also in each individual part of it, and in each individual syllable: this holds in the longer action, of which that psalm is perchance a portion; the same holds in the whole life of man, of which all the actions of man are parts; the same holds in the whole age of the sons of men, of which all the lives of men are parts.

29 *That Human Life is a Distraction But that Through the Mercy of God He Was Intent on the Prize of His Heavenly Calling.*

39. But because Your loving-kindness is better than life, behold, my life is but a distraction, and Your right hand upheld me in my Lord, the Son of man, the Mediator between You, (1 Timothy 2:5) The One, and us the many—in many distractions amid many things—that through Him I may apprehend in whom I have been apprehended, and

may be recollected from my old days, following The One, forgetting the things that are past; and not distracted, but drawn on, not to those things which shall be and shall pass away, but to those things which are before, (Philippians 3:13) not distractedly, but intently, I follow on for the prize of my heavenly calling, where I may hear the voice of Your praise, and contemplate Your delights, neither coming nor passing away. But now are my years spent in mourning. And You, O Lord, art my comfort, my Father everlasting. But I have been divided amid times, the order of which I know not; and my thoughts, even the inmost bowels of my soul, are mangled with tumultuous varieties, until I flow together to You, purged and molten in the fire of Your love.

30 ***Again He Refutes the Empty Question, What Did God Before the Creation of the World?***

40. And I will be immoveable, and fixed in You, in my mould, Your truth; nor will I endure the questions of men, who by a penal disease thirst for more than they can hold, and say, What did God make before He made heaven and earth? Or, How came it into His mind to make anything, when He never before made anything? Grant to them, O Lord, to think well what they say, and to see that where there is no time, they cannot say never. What, therefore, He is said never to have made, what else is it but to say, that in no time was it made? Let them therefore see that there could be no time without a created being, and let them cease to speak that vanity. Let them also be extended to those things which are before, (Philippians 3:13) and understand that you, the eternal Creator of all times, art before all times, and that no times are co-eternal with You, nor any creature, even if there be any creature beyond all times.

31 ***How the Knowledge of God Differs from that of Man.***

41. O Lord my God, what is that secret place of Your mystery, and how far thence have the consequences of my transgressions cast me? Heal my eyes, that I may enjoy Your light. Surely, if there be a mind, so greatly abounding in knowledge and foreknowledge, to which all things past and future are so known as one psalm is well known to me, that mind is exceedingly wonderful, and very astonishing; because whatever is so past, and whatever is to come after ages, is no more concealed from Him than was it hidden from me when singing that psalm, what and how much of it had been sung from the beginning, what and how much remained to the end. But far be it that You, the Creator of the universe, the Creator of souls and bodies—far be it that You should know all things future and past. Far, far more wonderfully, and far more mysteriously, You know them. For it is not as the feelings of one singing known things, or hearing a known song, are— through expectation of future words, and in remembrance of those that are past— varied, and his senses divided, that anything happens to You, unchangeably eternal, that is, the truly eternal Creator of minds. As, then, You in the Beginning knew the heaven and the earth without any change of Your knowledge, so in the Beginning You made heaven and earth without any distraction of Your action. Let him who understands confess to You; and let him who understands not, confess to You. Oh, how exalted are You, and yet the humble in heart are Your dwelling-place; for You raises up those that are bowed down, and they whose exaltation You are fall not.

Translated by J.G. Pilkington. From *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, First Series, Vol. 1*

Thought Point	Points of Thought
What is ignorance?	
What is knowing/knowledge?	
What is time?	

How does Augustine's belief influence his understanding of time?	
Has this concept of time influenced others?	
How has this concept of time 'held up' over time?	

Augustine: Additional Selections from *The Teacher* and *On Free Will*

The Teacher:

A dialogue between Augustine (A) and his son Adeodatus (Ad)

http://books.google.com/books?id=T7iQJQiJSvEC&pg=PA69&lpg=PA69&dq=augustine+earlier+writings&source=bl&ots=hPltkJpNw3&sig=b8A4auLSCUY0b2uIptByZHpEy1o&hl=en&ei=18sfS4WJNcqPlAee19ToBQ&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=3&ved=0CBIQ6AEwAg#v=onepage&q=&f=false

Sections i:1-10

On Free Will: Book II

A dialogue between Augustine (A) and a friend Evodius (E)

THE EVIDENCE FOR GOD'S EXISTENCE (iii-vi)

7 Let us then, I suggest, examine the question in the following order: first, how it is clear that God exists; secondly, whether whatever is good, in whatever degree it is good, is created by Him; thirdly, whether free will is to be counted among good things. When we have decided these questions, it will be plain enough, I think, whether it has been given rightly to man.

So, in order to start from what is clearest, I ask you first: Do you yourself exist? Are you perhaps afraid that you may be mistaken, when asked this question? If you did not exist, you could not possibly be mistaken.

Go on rather to the next point.

A Then, since it is clear that you exist, and since this would not be clear to you unless you were alive, it is clear also that you are alive. Do you understand that these two statements are quite true?

E Yes, I understand that at once.

A Then this third point too is clear, namely, that you understand.

E It is clear.

A Which of these three do you think is the most important?

E Understanding.

A Why do you think so?

E There are these three, existence, life, understanding: a stone exists, and an animal lives. I do not think a stone lives or an animal understands, but it is quite certain that a person who understands, also exists and lives. Therefore I do not hesitate to judge that in which all three are present as more important than that which lacks one or two of them. For what lives, certainly exists, but does not necessarily understand: such, I think, is the life of an animal. It certainly does not follow that what exists also lives and understands, for I can agree that corpses exist, but no one would say that they lived. Far less does what is not alive understand.

A We hold, therefore, that of these three two are lacking in a corpse, one in an animal, and none in a man.

E True.

A We hold also that in these three that is most important which man has in addition to the two others, namely, understanding. Since he has this, it follows that he exists and lives.

E Yes, we hold this.

8 ***A*** Now tell me whether you know you have the ordinary bodily senses, sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch.

E I do.

A What do you think is the proper object of the sense of sight? That is, what do you think we perceive when we see?

E Any bodily thing.

A Surely we do not perceive the hard and the soft when we

see?

E No.

A What then is the proper object of the eyes, which we perceive through them?

E Color.

A What is it of the ears?

E Sound.

A What of smell?

E Odor.

A What of taste?

E Flavor.

A What of touch?

E Soft or hard, smooth or rough, and many other such things.

A Do we not perceive by touch and sight the shapes of bodily things that they are large or small, square or round, and so on? Does it not follow that these cannot be assigned specially to sight or touch, but must be assigned to both?

E I understand.

A Then do you understand also that the different senses have their proper objects which they report, and that some have objects in common?

E I understand this too.

A Surely, therefore, we cannot distinguish by any of these senses what is the proper object of any sense, and what all or some of them have in common?

E Certainly not; they are distinguished by an inner perception.

A Can this be reason, which beasts lack? It seems to me that by the reason we grant this, and know that it is so.

E I think rather we grasp with our reason that there is an inner sense, to which everything is referred by the five ordinary senses. The faculty by which the beast sees is different from that by which it shuns or seeks what it perceives by sight. The one sense resides in the eyes, but the other is within, in the soul itself. By the latter animals are either enticed to seek and seize, or are warned to shun and reject, not only what they see but also what they hear, and what they perceive with the other bodily senses. This, however, can be called neither sight, nor hearing, nor smell, nor taste, nor touch, but is something else which presides over all the rest together. While, as I have said, we grasp this with our reason, I cannot precisely call it reason, for plainly the beasts possess it.

9 ***A*** I recognize this, whatever it may be, and do not hesitate to call it an inner sense. But unless that which is conveyed to us by the bodily senses, passes beyond the inner sense, it cannot become knowledge. Whatever we know we grasp with our reason. We know, for example to say nothing of other facts that colors cannot be perceived by hearing nor sounds by sight. This knowledge does not come to us from the eyes or ears, nor from that inner sense which even the beasts do not lack.

We must not suppose that they know that light is not perceived with the ears or sound with the eyes: we distinguish these only by rational reflection and thought.

E I cannot say I am convinced about this. Might not they recognize that colors cannot be perceived by hearing or sound by sight, through that inner sense which you admit they possess?

A You do not think, do you, that they can distinguish between the color they perceive, and the power of sense in their eye, and the inner sense in their soul, and the reason which marks out exactly the limits of each?

E No, certainly not.

A Well, could reason distinguish and define these four unless color was presented to it by the sense of sight, and again that sense by that inner sense which presides over it, and again that inner sense by its own act, if there were no other intermediary?

E I do not see how else it could be.

A Do you observe that color is perceived by the sense of sight, and that the sense of sight is not perceived by itself? You do not see that you see by the same sense by which you see color.

E Certainly not.

A Try also to distinguish these. I think you do not deny that

color is different from seeing color, and again from possession of a sense by which, when color is not present, we could see it, if it were present.

E I distinguish between these, and agree they are distinct.

A You do not see with your eyes, do you, any of these three except color?

E No.

A Tell me then how you see the other two; you could not distinguish them if you did not see them.

E I only know that a means exists; I know nothing more.

A So you do not know whether it is reason or the vital principle, which we call the inner sense and which presides over the bodily senses, or something else?

E I do not know.

A Yet you know that these elements cannot be defined except by the reason, and the reason can only define what is presented for its examination.

E That is certain.

A Therefore whatever else the faculty may be by which we perceive everything that we know, it is the servant of reason. It presents and reports to the reason whatever it comes upon, so that what is perceived may be able to be distinguished in its proper sphere, and grasped not only by sense perception but also by knowledge.

E That is so.

A The reason itself distinguishes between its servants and what they present to it, and also recognizes what comes between these and itself, and it asserts itself to be their governor. Surely it does not grasp itself except by means of itself, that is, by the reason? Would you know that you possessed reason unless you perceived it by reason?

E Perfectly true.

A Then, since, when we perceive color we do not likewise by the same sense perceive the fact that we perceive it, nor when we hear a sound do we also hear our hearing, nor when we smell a rose do we smell our smelling, nor when we taste something do we taste in the mouth our tasting, nor when we touch something can we touch the actual sense of touching: it is clear that the five senses cannot be perceived by any of the five senses, though they perceive all bodily things.

E That is clear.

10 ***A*** I think it is clear also that the inner sense not only perceives what is presented by the five bodily senses, but also perceives the bodily senses themselves. A beast would not move itself by seeking or shunning something, unless it perceived that it perceived; and this it does not do in such a way as to know, for this is the work of reason, but only in such a way as to move, and it does not have this perception by any of the five senses.

If this is still obscure, it will become clear if you notice, for example, what takes place in any one sense, say, in the sense of sight. A beast could not possibly open its eye, and move it to look at what it wants to see, unless it perceived that it did not see with the eye closed or turned in the wrong direction. But if it perceives that it does not see when it does not see, it must necessarily perceive that it sees when it sees. It shows that it is aware of both situations, because, when it sees, it does not turn the eye as a result of that desire through which it turns the eye when it does not see. Whether this vital principle, which perceives that it perceives bodily things, also perceives itself, is not so clear, except in so far as everyone who asks himself the question realizes that all living things shun death. Since death is the contrary of life, the vital principle must necessarily perceive itself, seeing that it shuns its contrary. If this is still not plain, leave it alone; we must not try to reach our goal except by clear and certain proofs. These facts are clear: bodily things are perceived by a bodily sense; this sense cannot be perceived by itself; but an inner sense perceives both that bodily things are perceived by a bodily sense and also the bodily sense itself; and, finally, all this and reason itself is made known by reason, and grasped by knowledge. Do you not agree?

E Yes indeed.

A Well then, tell me how the problem comes in, which we wish to solve and have been working at for all this time.

11 ***E*** As far as I remember, of those three questions which we

proposed just now so as to put this discussion into order, the first is now under consideration, namely, how it can become evident to us that God exists, even though we must believe it with all possible firmness.

A You are quite right. But I want you also to notice carefully that, when I asked you whether you knew that you yourself existed, it became clear that you knew not only this but also two other things.

E I notice that too.

A Now observe to which of these three you recognize that every object of the bodily senses belongs: I mean, in what class of things you think should be placed whatever is the object of our senses through the agency of the eyes or any other bodily organ. Should it be placed in the class which merely exists, or in that which also lives, or in that which also understands?

E In that which merely exists.

A In which of these three classes do you think the sense itself should be placed?

E In that which lives.

A Then, which of these two do you think is better, the sense itself or its object?

E Undoubtedly the sense itself.

A Why?

E Because that which also lives is better than that which merely exists.

12 ***A*** Well, do you hesitate to rank that inner sense, which we have already discovered to be below reason, and yet common to us and the beasts, as higher than the sense by which we perceive bodily things? You have already said the latter sense should be ranked above bodily things themselves.

E I should not hesitate for a moment.

A Again, I should like to hear why you do not hesitate. You could not say that the inner sense should be placed in that class of the three which includes understanding, but you must place it in that class which exists and lives, without understanding.

Even the beasts which lack understanding have that sense. This being so, I ask why you rank the inner sense above the sense which perceives bodily things, though both are in that class which lives. You have ranked the sense whose object is bodily things, above such things just because they are in that class which only exists, while the sense which perceives bodily things is in the class which also lives. Since the inner sense is also found to be in this class, tell me why you think it is better.

case that everything which has understanding is better than the object it understands. This, however, is false, since man understands wisdom, but is not better than wisdom itself. So consider why you think the inner sense should be regarded as superior to the sense by which we perceive bodily things.

If you say it is because the inner sense perceives the other sense, you will not, I think, find any principle which we can follow, that every percipient is better than the object it perceives. We might have to conclude in that in that case that everything which has understanding is better than the object it understands. This, however, is false, since man understands wisdom, but is not better than wisdom itself. So consider why you think the inner sense should be regarded as superior to the sense by which we perceive bodily things.

E Because I know it somehow controls and judges the other sense. If the latter fails in its duty, the inner sense exacts a kind of debt from its servant, as we discussed a little time ago. The sense of sight does not see that it sees or does not see, and, because it does not see this, it cannot judge what is lacking to it or what satisfies it. The inner sense can make this judgment, for it warns the soul of the beast to open its eye when shut, and to do what it perceives needs to be done. Undoubtedly that which judges is better than that which is judged.

A Then do you notice that the bodily sense in some way also judges bodily things? It is affected by pleasure or pain when it comes in contact with a bodily thing gently or harshly. Just as the inner sense judges what is lacking to, or what satisfies, the sense of sight, so too the sense of sight judges what is lacking to, or what satisfies, color.

Moreover, as the inner sense judges the hearing, whether it is sufficiently attentive or not, so the hearing in its turn judges sound, whether it is gentle or loud.

We need not go through the other bodily senses, for I think you realize now what I mean. The inner sense judges the bodily senses; it approves them when they respond normally, and exacts what they owe it. In the same way the bodily senses judge bodily things, welcoming a gentle touch and resisting the opposite.

E Yes, I see this and agree it is quite true.

13 ***A*** Now consider whether reason in its turn judges the inner sense. I am not asking now whether you hesitate to call it better than the inner sense, because I am sure you do call it better. Yet I think now we should not even ask whether reason judges this inner sense. For in regard to those things which are below reason, that is, bodily things and the bodily senses and the inner sense, what else but the reason tells us how one is better than another, and how reason is nobler than any of them? This could not possibly happen, unless it judged them.

E That is obvious.

A So that kind of thing which not only exists, but also lives, yet does not understand, such as the soul of a beast, is nobler than that kind of thing which only exists without living or understanding.

Again, that which includes existence, life, and understanding, such as the rational mind of man, is nobler still. I am sure you do not think that anything nobler can be found in us, among those faculties which make up our nature, than that which we have placed third among the three? It is clear we have a body and a vital principle which stirs and quickens the body, both of which we recognize to be present in beasts. It is also clear that we have something else, the head or eye, so to speak, of our soul, or whatever more suitable expression can be used to describe the reason and understanding.

The beast does not have this in its nature. So I beg you to consider whether you can find anything which is higher than reason in man's nature.

E I see nothing at all which is better.

14 ***A*** Well, if we can find something which you are certain not only exists but also is nobler than our reason, will you hesitate to call this, whatever it is, God?

E If I could find something better than the best in my nature, I should not necessarily call it God.

I should not like to call that which is above my reason, God, but rather that which is above everything else.

A That is plainly right. God granted to your reason this reverent and true opinion of Himself.

But I ask you: if you find there is nothing above our reason except the eternal and unchangeable, will you hesitate to call this God? You know that bodily things change, and clearly the life which animates the body has various moods and is subject to change. Reason itself at one time strives after the truth, and at another does not strive, sometimes reaches it and sometimes does not; it is manifestly proved to be changeable. If without using any bodily means, if neither by touch, nor taste, nor smell, neither by the ears, nor the eyes, nor any sense lower than itself, but by its own self, the reason sees something eternal and unchangeable, and itself as lower than this, then it must confess that this is its God.

E I will confess clearly that to be God, which all agree to be higher than anything else.

A Very well. All I need do is to show that there is a being of such a kind, and either you will admit this being to be God, or, if there is anything higher, you will grant that the higher being is God.

So, whether there is something higher or whether there is not, it will be clear that God exists, when, with His help, I shall show, as I promised, that there exists something higher than reason.

E Show, then, what you promise.

Translated From The Latin By Sidney Norton Deane

What are words?	
What do words tell us about thinking?	
How do we know?	
What is Free Will?	

Anselm *Proslogium* (*DISCOURSE ON THE EXISTENCE OF GOD*)

Chapter II

Truly there is a God, although the fool has said in his heart, There is no God.

AND so, Lord, do you, who do give understanding to faith, give me, so far as you know it to be profitable, to understand that you are as we believe; and that you are that which we believe. And indeed, we believe that you are a being than which nothing greater can be conceived. Or is there no such nature, since the fool has said in his heart, there is no God? (Psalms xiv. 1). But, at any rate, this very fool, when he hears of this being of which I speak --a being than which nothing greater can be conceived --understands what be hears, and what he understands is in his understanding; although he does not understand it to exist.

For, it is one thing for an object to be in the understanding, and another to understand that the object exists. When a painter first conceives of what he will afterwards perform, he has it in his understanding, but be does not yet understand it to be, because he has not yet performed it. But after he has made the painting, be both has it in his understanding, and he understands that it exists, because he has made it.

Hence, even the fool is convinced that something exists in the understanding, at least, than which nothing greater can be conceived. For, when he hears of this, he understands it. And whatever is understood, exists in the understanding. And assuredly that, than which nothing greater can be conceived, cannot exist in the understanding alone. For, suppose it exists in the understanding alone: then it can be conceived to exist in reality; which is greater.

Therefore, if that, than which nothing greater can be conceived, exists in the understanding alone, the very being, than which nothing greater can be conceived, is one, than which a greater can be conceived. But obviously this is impossible. Hence, there is doubt that there exists a being, than which nothing greater can be conceived, and it exists both in the understanding and in reality.

Chapter III

God cannot be conceived not to exist. --God is that, than which nothing greater can be conceived. --That which can be conceived not to exist is not God.

AND it assuredly exists so truly, that it cannot be conceived not to exist. For, it is possible to conceive of a being which cannot be conceived not to exist; and this is greater than one which can be conceived not to exist. Hence, if that, than which nothing greater can be conceived, can be conceived not to exist, it is not that, than which nothing greater can be conceived. But this is an irreconcilable contradiction. There is, then, so truly a being than which nothing greater can be conceived to exist, that it cannot even be conceived not to exist;. and this being you are, O Lord, our God.

So truly, therefore, do you exist, O Lord, my God, that you cannot be conceived not to exist; and rightly. For, if a mind could conceive of a being better than you, the creature would rise above the Creator; and this is most absurd. And, indeed, whatever else there is, except you alone, can be conceived not to exist. To you alone, therefore, it belongs to exist more truly than all other beings, and hence in a higher degree than all others. For, whatever else exists does not exist so truly, and hence in a less degree it belongs to it to exist. Why, then, has the fool said in his heart, there is no God (Psalms xiv. 1), since it is so evident, to a rational mind, that you do exist in the highest degree of all? Why, except that he is dull and a fool?

Chapter IV

How the fool has said in his heart what cannot be conceived. --A thing may be conceived in two ways: (1) when the word signifying it is conceived; (2) when the thing itself is understood As far as the word

goes, God can be conceived not to exist; in reality he cannot.

BUT how has the fool said in his heart what he could not conceive; or how is it that he could not conceive what he said in his heart? since it is the same to say in the heart, and to conceive.

But, if really, nay, since really, he both conceived, because he said in his heart; and did not say in his heart, because he could not conceive; there is more than one way in which a thing is said in the heart or conceived. For, in one sense, an object is conceived, when the word signifying it is conceived; and in another, when the very entity, which the object is, is understood.

In the former sense, then, God can be conceived not to exist; but in the latter, not at all. For no one who understands what fire and water are can conceive fire to be water, in accordance with the nature of the facts themselves, although this is possible according to the words. So, then, no one who understands what God is can conceive that God does not exist; although he says these words in his heart, either without any or with some foreign, signification. For, God is that than which a greater cannot be conceived. And he who thoroughly understands this, assuredly understands that this being so truly exists, that not even in concept can it be non-existent. Therefore, he who understands that God so exists, cannot conceive that he does not exist.

I thank you, gracious Lord, I thank you; because what I formerly believed by your bounty, I now so understand by your illumination, that if I were unwilling to believe that you do exist, I should not be able not to understand this to be true.

Chapter V

God is whatever it is better to be than not to be; and he, as the only self-existent being, creates all things from nothing.

WHAT are you, then, Lord God, than whom nothing greater can be conceived? But what are you, except that which, as the highest of all beings, alone exists through itself, and creates all other things from nothing? For, whatever is not this is less than a thing which can be conceived of. But this cannot be conceived of you. What good, therefore, does the supreme Good lack, through which every good is? Therefore, you are just, truthful, blessed, and whatever it is better to be than not to be. For it is better to be just than not just; better to be blessed than not blessed.

Chapter VI

How God is sensible (sensibilis) although he is not a body. -- God is sensible, omnipotent, compassionate, and passionless; for it is better to be these than not be. He who in any way knows, is not improperly said in some sort to feel.

BUT, although it is better for you to be sensible, omnipotent, compassionate, passionless, than not to be these things; how are you sensible, if you are not a body; or omnipotent, if you has not all powers; or at once compassionate and passionless? For, if only corporeal things are sensible, since the senses encompass a body and are in a body, how are you sensible, although you are not a body, but a supreme Spirit, who is superior to body? But, if feeling is only cognition, or for the sake of cognition, --for he who feels obtains knowledge in accordance with the proper functions of his senses; as through sight, of colors; through taste, of flavors, --whatever in any way cognizes is not inappropriately said, in some sort, to feel.

Therefore, O Lord, although you are not a body yet you are truly sensible in the highest degree in respect of this, that you do cognize all things in the highest degree; and not as an animal cognizes, through a corporeal sense

Chapter VII

How he is omnipotent, although there are many things of which he is not capable. --To be capable of being corrupted, or of lying, is not power, but impotence. God can do nothing by virtue of impotence, and nothing has power against him.

BUT how are you omnipotent, if you are not capable of all things? Or, if you cannot be corrupted, and cannot lie, nor make what is true, false --as, for example, if you should make what has been done not to have been done, and the like. --how are you capable of all things? Or else to be capable of these things is not power, but impotence. For, he who is capable of these things is capable of what is not for his good, and of what he ought not to do; and the more capable of them he is, the more

power have adversity and perversity against him; and the less has he himself against these.

He, then, who is thus capable, is so not by power, but by impotence. For, he is not said to be able because he is able of himself, but because his impotence gives something else power over him. Or, by a figure of speech, just as many words are improperly applied, as when we use "to be" for "not to be," and "to do" for what is really not to do, "or to do nothing." For, often we say to a man who denies the existence of something: "It is as you say it to be," though it might seem more proper to say, "It is not, as you say it is not." In the same way, we say, "This man sits just as that man does," or, "This man rests just as that man does"; although to sit is not to do anything, and to rest is to do nothing.

So, then, when one is said to have the power of doing or experiencing what is not for his good, or what he ought not to do, impotence is understood in the word power. For, the more he possesses this power, the more powerful are adversity and perversity against him, and the more powerless is he against them.

Therefore, O Lord, our God, the more truly are you omnipotent, since you are capable of nothing through impotence and nothing has power against you.

Translated From The Latin By Sidney Norton Deane

Thought Point	Points of Thought
How do we know?	
Does Augustine's view of knowledge differ from Anselm's? Expound.	
How does Anselm view substance?	
What is God?	
Does this definition differ from earlier thinkers? Mirror them?	
Do his arguments 'prove' God?	

An Interlude: *Monasticism*

Okay; if I have not said it before, I will say it again[8]. Most people might think that this is strange chapter for a couple of reasons. One: what does monasticism have to do with Philosophy and Two: why here at this point in our discussion of the AD/CE thinkers? All valid and true questions, but hear me out.

In the creeping collapse of the Western Roman Empire, the intellectual, political and economic void began to be filled slowly on one hand by feudal systems and quickly on the other by religious ones. The Eastern Empire, while not as strong and not as far-reaching stayed intact mainly for two reasons: trade and the fact that its capital just could not be taken, as opposed to Rome in which apparently you could enter like air through a screen door.

As we have mentioned, this era has been often labeled the '*Dark Ages*' in the West, from the thinking that after the collapse of the Roman system the West experienced an intellectual down-time that was not shared world-wide, hence a new stone age developed only in Europe. For this reason and because though times were bad (plagues, wars and the like) there was not a lack of light, this so-called *Dark* period has been re-named by most modern scholars as the Middle Ages, as in that time in the middle between Rome and the Renaissance.

One of the movements in the developing post-Roman Western society which has a profound effect not only on society but on philosophy as well is monasticism. One of the main effects of this movement (besides helping with the stabilization of Western society) is the codification of theology and philosophy within a broader community. The idea of Orthodoxy becomes one of lifestyle as well as thought by a general semi-literate populace, not just the intellectual elite.

Think of it this way: not everyone goes to school, but everyone goes to church and increasingly that church is attached to an abbey, where theological pursuits abound.

Asceticism

Before we jump into and explore such bold (avoiding revisionist) statements, let us take in several ideas which we have touched upon, but from a different angle. Understanding these basic ideas is important to understanding the monastic movement and therefore Western philosophy. With its long and rich history as an understanding of intellectual and physical discipline, asceticism finds a fertile home in the monastic life.

But just what is asceticism? Today our world has a dour view of it as self-denial for pointless purposes. Ah, but we, we know better do we not? We have seen Socrates and Plato and Aristotle sing its praises as a means to an end. We have seen what can happen when you abandon it or over-emphasize it.

The Christian scriptures highlight and honor the idea of ascetics. The call to discipleship is seen as a call to an ascetic lifestyle. This is not the total rejection of pleasure but the rejection of total sensual pleasure for the greater good not only of the self but for others and in that sense deeply mirrors the similar Greek notion. This is also a notion which is prevalent in the East as well, especially amongst the Buddhists, so it is not just a Western notion.

Communal Versus Anchoritic

[8] You work it out….

To live with others or not to live with others, that is the question. An *Anchorite* is not a naval man who suddenly found a religious calling but is from the Greek for "to withdraw". Anchorites are men (for the most part) who sought out in the deserts of Egypt and the Middle East a place for practicing asceticism. Partially based in the Hebrew notion of the desert as a cleansing place (c.f. the Exodus in the Hebrew Scriptures), and partially because frankly, who in the heck would want to live out in the desert except crazy old men. Seriously, this vision of the desert also plays into the story of Jesus, who after his baptism in the Jordan River was "driven into the desert by the Holy Spirit" for 40 days and 40 nights. There he, like the Israelites fasted, thirsted and stripped away falseness through the hardships of the desert. This of course, is a very appealing scenario for those who wish to abandon the wicked or de-based world for more important things like spiritual enlightenment.

The earliest Western monastics lived lives withdrawn from the larger community and even from the wider religious community. This is not to say that they never had outside contact but that they had *withdrawn* from the larger world, to practice a fuller asceticism. Still this life involved both communal liturgical celebrations and individual spiritual direction or guidance. Many anchorites were surrounded by followers and were constantly sought out by those seeking their wisdom, counsel and as confessors.

With Benedict in the 400s, the movement toward communal expressions of monasticism began to arise in the West. These communities shared the ascetics of the hermits but within the context of a fixed community.

The East tends to run in a similar pattern, though the communities tend to be more internally focused, with a monastery less of a place to live out communal religious practices and more of a place to find individual enlightenment.

So who cares, right? We do. It is the strength of these communal developments and their devotion to orthodoxy (well initially at least) which gives rise to and support for the educational and archivist nature of the monasteries (East and West). Ultimately, it is the communal monasteries, with their shared living, working and worship environments which provide the foundation for Western cities and nations. It is the irony that in the West the structure which helps give rise to modern society also gives rise to the tension which in some cases almost destroyed monasticism.

Eastern Monks

Ah, but what about that lame brush with the Eastern spiritual tradition, you ask. Was that previous nugget not enough? Are not many philosophical movements associated there as well? Right you are grasshopper. Eastern monasticism differs little from the vision we have in the West. Whether solitary or in communities of people they are coming together for a common goal – understanding/enlightenment. But we must recall the purpose of knowledge in the East versus that of the West (i.e. our common understanding). Whereas in the West the goal was to create the perfect Church community (c.f. Acts of the Apostles) in the East, well not so much. They do both attempt to bring a bit of heaven here onto earth, providing peace and stability against the world around them. But in the East the focus tends to be on personal enlightenment and while there is a similar gathering of traditions and traditional knowledge there less of a philosophical development and much more of a spiritual one.

Western Monks

In the West monasteries were closely tied to the Roman and Orthodox Christian movement and there developed several styles of monasticism from the desert Fathers who, as said, were mostly *anchorites* (hermits), to the Benedictine style communities. The communities follow a rule, often written by its founder, which are basically their mission statements and contain the practical

guidelines for living in community, worshiping and main focus of the community. Also known as Orders, these communities spread all over Europe with established houses sponsoring other communities. It is this movement to community which creates the preservation and basis for continuing Western philosophy.

The communities gather and copy the texts which allow them to archive, preserve and pass on these texts. With the cheap labor and drive to support themselves the monks begin to design and execute elaborate infrastructures such as mills, orchards, scriptoriums and hospitals. While not true of every monastery, many towns and centers of learning have their genesis there.

Universities spring up out of these abbey-library-cities, but their main focus is to live a live devoted to the teachings of Jesus, maintaining discipline and practices consistent with those teachings, as well as the Traditions of the Church.

It's Music To My Ears

The highly recommended novel *A Canticle For Leibowitz* (*Walter Miller, 1960*) relates a rather brief view of the development of monasticism and knowledge after a nuclear holocaust. In many ways it mirrors development in the West after the fall of Rome, and is frankly in part, the point of the book which I will not give away because it is one you should read for yourselves. In addition, and by way of both a play on the word *canticle* and a prejudice on my part (write your own book), modern music had its birth here (and by modern, I mean anything after Roman). Musical notation, scale, harmony, sacred hymns; all of these things and many others have their root during this time. The Jewish Psalms are the heart of the Western monastic prayer Office[9] and are musical in nature, making the Office itself first and foremost musical in structure. Many chant styles developed, and in the West were standardized through the desire of Pope Gregory (known as *The Great)*, hence the name Gregorian Chant (though he wrote none).

Though mainly religious in subject, exploration and innovation in the arts take place during this time. While the fragmentation of Europe meant that many Roman ideas were lost in both mind and into superstition, it is the monasteries which preserve, expand and enhance the cultural life during that time, allowing, especially the extremely literate Irish monks to spread and revitalize that same knowledge.

Still, by the late Middle Ages there is a surge in development in all areas of society. The re-introduction of many texts to the West (and their translations into Latin) expand the exploration of thought. The monasteries give way to the development of the Cathedral school and the Cathedral school gives way to the university. The Romanesque and Gothic styles of architecture explode onto the scene. Religious orders expand with the development of non-Benedictine based orders, especially the Franciscans, started by Francis of Assisi (*1181-1226*) and the Dominicans started by Dominic of Osma (*1170-1221*).

The Repository Of Faith

Segueing from that previous example, we can see that the monastery, as the center of arts and learning was poised to produce the thinkers like Anselm and Aquinas and cathedrals like Westminster and Chartres. Within their walls are contained both sacred and profane texts, libraries of knowledge, and brilliant teachers. In the end though, the main function of education in the monastery is to produce clerics. It is only later as wealthy land owners and rising middle class

[9] Aka the *Divine Office* or the *Liturgy of the Hours*, a series of prayer forms based on the old Roman hour system of eight hours in a day. Communities break and gather to pray 'every hour of the day'. It is still practiced today.

merchants begin to send their unwanted heirs to the monastic communities and hire community members to be teachers to the remaining siblings does the university arise, as well as the wandering scholastic.

There is also a connection between these communities which allows for the transfer and regulation of knowledge, and the construction and maintenance of infrastructure such as roads and bridges. It is faith and trade which these communities ply during these so-called Dark Ages. Libraries became large and therefore quite valuable. Books are chained down because it takes years to complete one (hence their great value not just in information but in time, effort and cost), not because they are not open to be read. Especially with the flow of people and pilgrims between sites the tendency for things like library books and relics to sprout legs and walk was of great concern to these communities. Knowledge as well as arable land is power, and monasteries have plenty of both.

Trouble At The Mill…

Because of this monasteries brought learning and learned individuals together. Knowledge of such things as farming, milling, medicine, and building grew and was housed here. The stable network of self-sustaining monasteries replaced the Roman network of villas between the large cities. The stability of the monasteries who operated outside the control of the local feudal Lords attracted trade and merchants. Trade and merchants brought consumers, farmers, tradesmen. Towns and cities developed and the learning cached in the monastery spread, and attracted even more students. Naturally tension arises between the fledgling secular authorities and the religious ones. Naturally a tendency to corruption develops. As Mark Twain put it in regards to missionaries during his visit to Hawaii, "*they came to do good and did well.*"

Due to this struggle between the sacred and the profane, the decline of Western Monasticism is a precautionary tale of both the depths of human behavior and the heights of it. What must be remembered is that for every corrupt or worldly abbey there were ten or more reformers or pious monks and communities who pursued not a life of politics but of spirituality. For every jealous prince or lord there is at least one enlightened leader who holds tight to discipline and Faith.

Putting It Together

When we look at the great thinkers of the Middle Ages, most are the product of the monastic movement. Too much emphasis can be placed on the roll of monasticism but I am not sure enough has been placed on it. The sheer power of the orders to preserve even in the midst of chaos (take a gander at the *Lindisfarne Gospel* leafs) means that ideas were not lost. They provided the refuge, consistency, structure and intellectual freedom on which modern society rests and thrives. The codification of this system by Charlemagne in the 8th century gives the royal seal one might say to the legitimacy and importance given to it.

The force behind the idea of the 'Dark Ages' is the sense that there was an intellectual oppression and suppression and utter loss of knowledge. Certainly the call for orthodoxy and for political stability can muddle even the cooler heads. Were there abuses? Yes. Were there triumphs? Yes. But did not being literate mean that one *could not understand*? Once again, we must fight intellectual bias which, when reading the thinkers these times produced, and genuinely considering their output as well as the artistic output of this time, should be relatively easy.

The social structures of the day were perhaps more restrictive with the initial loss of technology, infrastructure and communication provided under the Roman systems, but we must not give too much credit to the late Empire in terms of innovation and intellectual stimulation, such that any

time that followed it must have been inferior, nor too much to ourselves that anything which proceeded us must have been inferior.

Without the sheer magnitude of the industrial and political power of Rome, based in its efficient bureaucracy, roads, standard laws and education many things were lost. Still it is the monasteries which rose up and filled in these functions when they were lost, helping to provide the bridge to the future.

"*A monk should surely love his books with humility, wishing their good and not the glory of his own curiosity; but what the temptation of adultery is for laymen and the yearning for riches is for secular ecclesiastics, the seduction of knowledge is for monks.*"

Umberto Eco, *The Name of the Rose*

Reg: Troub'l at mill.
Lady Mountback: Oh no - what kind of trouble?
Reg: One on't cross beams gone owt askew on treadle.
Lady Mountback: Pardon?
Reg: One on't cross beams gone owt askew on treadle.
Lady Mountback: I don't understand what you're saying.
Reg: One of the cross beams has gone out askew on the treadle.
Lady Mountback: Well what on earth does that mean?
Reg: *I* don't know – Mr. Wentworth just told me to come in here and say that there was trouble at the mill, that's all - I didn't expect a kind of Spanish Inquisition.

Monty Python's Flying Circus **(***The Spanish Inquisition:* episode 15*; 1970***)**

Islamic Philosophers

What of the Eastern West? Yes there's a new kid in town and his name Mohammed. The Eastern Empire in Constantinople had severely weakened the Persian Empire and a vacuum was created which opened a door. His followers developed in the outlands of the Empire, amongst cities and nomadic tribes where Constantinople had a weak (if any) influence.

They offered stability and low taxes, something the Empire had trouble doing because they needed the money. Mohammed also offered a way of life and thinking which, like Christianity before it, became part and parcel of everyday practitioners.

The Players

Dates	Philosophers	Main Points
801–873	Alkindus	*Wrote on Aristotelian logic and of the compatibility of philosophical thought with theology (revealed thought was more important though)*
872-951	Alpharabius	*Founded a school of Islamic philosophy; often thought of as the Muslim Aristotle; influenced Avicenna.*
980-1037	Avicenna	*Neo-Platonic adaptation of Aristotle to Islamic thought; influenced later Christian writers; Being is the primary and undeniable thing.*
1058-1111	Algazali	*Opposed Avicenna; Stoic in leaning, more literal and orthodox in interpretation and application of philosophy.*
1126-1198	Averroes	*Opposed Algazali; best known commentator on Aristotle; saw no conflict between philosophy and the Koran.*

Table 6: The Islamic Players

Islam For ~~Dummies~~ Philosophers

Once again I will plunge in where angels fear to tread. I am not a Muslim by practice and while I know Muslims and some of what they believe, I will not pretend to be an expert. Still, we do what we must because, as with our Christian philosophers we must understand a bit about the thinking of these thinkers in order to understand what they are thinking.

So let us start with the basics. *Islam* literally means *submitting to Allah*; *Muslim* means one who submits to Allah. *Allah*[10] is the name for the one God (*mono-theistic*), and God only has prophets, of whom Mohammad is the greatest and the last. Mohammad promoted a foundation of peace and practices based in what are known as the Five Pillars: Faith, Prayer, Giving to the poor, Fasting, and Pilgrimage. The *Koran*, the gathered revelations to the prophet Mohammed, is the main Scripture.

There is no mystical nature of Muhammad, as for Christ, nor of God, as with the Trinity. Similarly, the only purpose of life is to worship and serve God. It has a belief in the revealed nature of the religion similarly to Judaism and Christianity; in fact Jews and Christians `are considered 'children of the Book' (the Judeo-Christian Scriptures). While many traditions are shared with Judaism and Christianity, Muslims trace their inheritance to Abraham through Ishmael, the son of Abraham and his maidservant Hagar and the Christian profession of Jesus as a God/Man/Messiah is not accepted.

[10] I will continue to use the word *God* to designate the philosophical concept instead of *Allah* for continuity. As with our study of Christian philosophy I will also try to avoid any special titles or designations, such as 'saint' or 'blessed be his name'. Spelling may also take a hit.

Islamic Philosophy

With the advent of Mohammed onto the historical, religious and political scene and the expansion of Islamist ideas into existing Western systems through conquest and trade we enter a new age of idea exchange within the West. Islamist philosophers will be influenced by the Greeks, and in turn will influence Western Christian philosophers. This became possible because soon after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, Muslim thinkers resort to 'reason' in order to interpret religious tradition and in order to make sense of the political and spiritual chaos that ensued upon the death of Mohammed. Similar to Christians, early Islamic ethical and philosophical discourse was grounded in the religious tradition but eventually opened up to external ideas until most thinkers were at least aware of the major Greek philosophers.

As in the West during this time, philosophy is at the service of theology and vice-versa. In Islam it is mainly concerned with being and the nature of God, and less, as stated above, with any mystical aspects.

Before you say anything, I know we do not cover every Islamic philosopher (*see Chapter 15 for a mention*) but then this is a survey. They deserve better than I will give them here, but then so do you, so look up some works on them by someone who knows them well.

Avicenna (*Not His Real Name*)

Abu 'Ali al-Husayn ibn Sina or Avicenna as he is known (most probably as a westernization of *Ibn Sina* by which he is most often referred), was born of Persian decent in what is now southern Russia. Once again a fellow who fits the bill for our perusal of philosophy: a precocious child prodigy who sucked down information like it was mother's milk, except for one thing: Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. For some reason this really stumped him until he read a commentary on it (*disclaimer: no inference is being made on any participant or reader of this material or its author*). He is probably best known as a physician and for his medical texts, most likely because he also had a varied career as a politician and we all know how politicians like to put their past behind them and highlight their achievements.

For us his greatest achievement is of course philosophical. He wrote extensively on the subjects of logic, metaphysics and ethics. Like Anselm he sought a synthesis of Neo-Platonic and Aristotelian ideas, or perhaps more correctly to interpret Aristotelian concepts through Neo-Platonism. In some ways he is very similar to Augustine in that he is not an apologist for Islam but a theologian, making philosophical sense of theological doctrine. His major work *The Cure* (spiritual not physical) had a great influence upon European Scholasticism and especially upon Thomas Aquinas, whom we will meet later.

What? Yet More Logic?

Logic is very important to Avicenna's philosophy. After starting with Aristotle, Avicenna developed a new strain of logic (appropriately called *Avicennian Logic*) which became dominant in Muslim philosophy and medicine. Mainly he put forth a method for *inductive* reasoning called a *hypothetical syllogism*. Basically it deals with inferences you can make in an argument; in other words, this kind of argument states that if one thing *implies* another, and that other *implies* a third, then the first *implies* the third, something like:

If I do not go to the store, then I cannot get any food.
If I do not have any food, then I will have nothing to eat.
Therefore, if I do not go to the store, then I will not eat.

We can also see a bit of the Stoic propositional aspect in this logic system (*see Chapter 23*).

To Be, Not Necessarily To Be….

Remember that whole *thing qua thing* business in Aristotle (*Chapter 15, 19*)? Avicenna is definitely on that boat. One of the ideas he adds for us to think about is not just that there is a difference between essence (what a thing is) and existence (the instance of the thing) but he contemplates *what is the difference*? He presents sort of (at least for our purposes) a compression of the Greek thinking we have discussed already. The specific argument is that the fact of existence cannot be inferred from or even construed by the essence of existing things (that is, I can think of a table but I cannot infer that table exists) and that form and matter by themselves cannot interact and originate the movement of the universe or the progressive actualization of existing things (that is, the idea of a table and real wood or even two real tables do not a table make or force the earth to turn).

Therefore there is a sense of things which are necessary and things which are possible.

Existence must, therefore, be due to an agent or cause that *necessitates, imparts, gives, or adds* existence *to* an essence. To do so, the cause must be an existing thing *and* coexist with its effect (in other words is not destroyed by the making of the new thing, like might happen when you mix fire and wood creating ash). He posits, therefore, that something must *necessarily* exist which is the cause for all (*real or imagined*), because for it not to exist is simply unthinkable. For Avicenna, this ultimate being is the one God, the Prime Cause/Mover.

Metaphysics

Why mention that first? Well he defines Metaphysics as the science of *supernatural being* and therefore of God because God is the ultimate *being* (we could insert a dash: *be-ing*). Avicenna's thoughts (and writings) on the subject are concerned with first, the existence of God, which is nicely proved from the necessity of a First Cause (there has to be something which got the ball rolling). It also examines the *providence* (a gift if you will) of God, which, is basically the fixed and unbending universal laws of nature (these exist mainly because God is just too busy to deal with the everyday workings of the Universe). One of the things he develops (which, ultimately, brings him into conflict with Orthodox Islam) is a complex cosmology springing from his study of Plato and Aristotle. Simply put there is a hierarchy of mediators between God and material things, all of which emanated from God (the Prime Mover) and correspond to spheres of influence (Jews and Christians might talk about angels in a similar way).

The first emanation from God is the world of ideas. This is made up of pure forms, free from change, composition, or imperfection (similar to Plato). Next to the world of ideas is the world of souls, made up of forms which are discernable and can be grasped by the intellect, but not entirely separated from matter. It is these souls that animate and energize the heavenly spheres (agents of movement and change). Next to the world of souls is the world of physical forces, which are more or less completely embedded in terrestrial matter and obey its laws; they are, however, to some extent amenable to the power of intelligence in so far as they may be influenced by magic. Lastly comes the physical world, from the Neo-Platonists' concept, which is completely passive, not capable of acting but merely of being acted upon.

In this hierarchical arrangement of *be-ing*, the Aristotelian idea of the *Active Intellect* which plays a necessary role in the genesis of human knowledge, belongs to the world of Ideas (Plato), and is of the same stuff as the spirits which cause the heavenly spheres to move.

That Daring Young Man On The Flying Trapeze…

Humans therefore fit into a specific sphere, but yet, he argues they are separate, *self-aware*. Part of Avicenna's argument involves an allegory called *The Flying Man*. Nothing fancy, he just invites us

to imagine a man floating with all sensory input and perception removed. He is unaware of his body, the world around him (flying, or perhaps floating would be a better word, removes any touch sensation), anything which we perceive of as the physical world. Still, he is aware of *himself*, that is to say he can conceive of *himself* without conceiving of a physical existence (*think:* Helen Keller). The self then is something immaterial but substantive, which exists outside of the material world (in a pre-Cartesian kind of *cogito-ergo-sum* moment). The soul is consequentially a separate substance from the body and is therefore *also* able to conceive of immaterial things.

So? Well that means that we can discuss things which do not seem to have a physical counterpart, like the soul. We can discuss things which do not have to be real, like unicorns. We can know that we are or that God is, because we can 'perceive' things *without* sensual perception.

Ethics

Take a moment to notice this growing sense of 'self'. Okay? Then we will move on. Avicenna focused most of his ethics on medicine and the idea of each person as an individual. So along those lines we can see a connection with Augustine and his God-centered thoughts on free-will and the individuality of each person as a foundation for ethical thought.

Suffice it to say then that Ethics is concerned with understanding the self's existence in this world in relation to other individuals and to God.

Algazali

Algazali deserves a quick mention mainly for his opposition to Avicenna. Primarily he fought with Avicenna's use of Neo-Platonic ideas to interpret Aristotle and then try to apply the whole thing to Islamic doctrines. The notion that nothing is necessary (in and of itself) except God and that God's ordering of the universe (*providence*) does not allow for anything out of the 'ordinary' to happen gets on Algazali's last nerve. He provides an argument for a more flexible understanding of cause and effect which gives God much more freedom to influence the universe.

Algazali argued against the sequential nature of events. Perception did not automatically guarantee connection. For him, logically, causes and effects have no *necessary* relation between them. That is to say, X need not cause Y because if X *always* causes Y then there can be no room for X to happen without Y happening. Confused? Well Algazali gives us a small example of what he means. When you touch a flame to cotton it burns. You could *infer* that the flame causes the cotton to ignite, but you cannot *prove* it. As he puts it "observation only proves a simultaneity, not a causation" if by causation we mean 'necessary connection' (We will see this thinking later in Hume). Ultimately the only cause is God; everything else is just a result.

Averroes

Averroes hailed from Spain which, forgive any pun, places us at the other end of the crescent of Islamic influence. He really argued that theology and philosophy were not and *could not* be at odds. A bit of an elitist, he classified people by their ability to understand this. You can guess where he place Algazali.

Averroes disagrees with the need to prove (as Algazali insisted) effects from causes. For him, this connection is so primary that the obviousness of it requires no proof. Certainly there was a prime cause, and effects could all be traced through their causes back to that prime cause, i.e. (wait for it) God. He agreed with Aristotle that God was the 'unmoved mover'. Precisely because of this, and in opposition to Algazali, the natural structure was not only wondrous but allowed for this wonder.

Putting It Together

Islam, like Judaism and Christianity combines philosophical and theological thought which then pervades the everyday thinking of its adherents. Similarly Theo-centric in nature and expression, similar problems from the introduction of Greek philosophy are caused among Islamic thinkers as well.

Our two main focuses here are the final decision that Plato and Aristotle are not at odds in terms of theological thought and the increasing humanism in theological thought in both Islamic and Christian circles, essentially Western thought. This means there is really no more conflict when integrating Greek thought and the way we look at individual rational thinking is beginning to balance out universal, objective truths.

As with the split of the Roman Empire, eventually with the almost total eradication of Muslims from Western Europe and the uneasy truce in the Eastern Europe there develops a split within Islamic philosophy between the East and the West with a decline in philosophy as well.

Even so we owe them a great debt. The full expansion of Aristotelian thought into Neo-Platonism is due to these thinkers, as well as new translations of Greek works, which helped to increase the spread of the ideas contained within them.

By his own wisdom and Word, who is our Lord and Savior Christ, the all-holy Father (whose excellence far exceeds that of any creature), like a skilful steersman guides to safety all creation, regulating and keeping it in being, as he judges right. It is right that creation should exist as he has made it and as we see it happening, because this is his will, which no one would deny. For if the movement of the universe were irrational, and the world rolled on in random fashion, one would be justified in disbelieving what we say. But if the world is founded on reason, wisdom and science, and is filled with orderly beauty, then it must owe its origin and order to none other than the Word of God. **Athanasius, *Against the Pagans***

Scholasticism and The Like

Can the last one out of the Middle Ages turn off the light[11]? Looks like that may be us. With this chapter we are exploring both the height and the end of medieval philosophy per se. We can look at Scholasticism and the High Middle Ages, if we so desire and in this case we do, as the culmination and fulfillment of Augustine, led by Anselm with its poster-child being Thomas Aquinas.

The Players

Dates	Philosophers	Main Points
1079-1144	Peter Abelard	*Universals: nominalism.*
1135-1204	Moses Maimonides	*Jewish philosopher; Aristotelian in thought, apophatic argumentation.*
1206-1280	Albert the Great (Magnus)	*Dominican. Teacher of Aquinas; Natural philosopher*
1214-1292	Roger Bacon	*Reason and experience give knowledge.*
1221-1274	Bonaventure	*Aristotle is wrong on so many levels and the Islamic and Christian thinkers are incorrect in their assessment of him. Defended Augustine and Plato, using Aristotle only sparingly.*
1225-1274	Thomas Aquinas	*Dominican. Influenced by earlier Christian and Islamic thinkers. Aristotle is completely compatible with Christian doctrine.*
1260-1327	Meister Eckhart	*German Dominican Neo-Platonist free spirit of the Middle Ages. Mystical bent; God is all intellect and no being.*
1266-1308	Duns Scotus	*Scottish Franciscan Aristotelian*
1285-1349	William of Ockham	*Franciscan best known for his Razor*

Table 7: Scholastic Players

Before Scholasticism

I know we have been moving in a generally chronological order but I want to jump back, since the last chapter really allows me to. Here I want to throw in Albert Magnus and Peter Abelard.

Albert was the Renaissance Man's Renaissance Man. A brilliant thinker, theologian, and teacher he dabbled in many of the 'new' sciences, inspired by Aristotle. He taught (and out-lived) Thomas Aquinas, and was responsible for so much inspiration for Thomas.

Peter is pretty much a contemporary to Anselm (*Chapter 28*), and is somewhat overshadowed by him in the survey of philosophy and is mainly (vaguely?) remembered for his dalliance with Heloise. But not by us! Abelard provides an interesting little addition to the debate about reality (an extension of the *something vs. nothing* strain) dealing with the ideas of *universals* and *time*.

You would think that with the entrenching of Neo-Platonic ideas there would be little debate about the nature of the universe and of God. But remember back a bit to Boethius (*Chapter 27*) who was able to integrate Aristotelian concepts into his thought and made distinctions between the

[11] Ha, ha. A bit of 'Dark Ages' humor there.

universals of the rational and the *words* of the sensible.[12] Think of universals as something which is common to many things, like *all birds have wings*.

Abelard explores the nature of universals, that is, *what are universals and how is* common *to be understood*? Now there are two ways to think about universals, as real or as ideas. People who argue that they have substance are *realists*, and those who say they do not have substance are *nominalists*. Being careful to avoid pantheism he determined three ways to talk about them: that universals could be considered as really existing and separate from bodies (*ante rem:* before the thing), as intrinsic to bodily things (*in re:* in the thing) and as concepts (*post rem:* following the thing); in other words, *ante rem :*similar to Platonic Forms, *in re:* similar to Aristotelian substance or *post rem:* as things not tied to either but arising from both.

He concluded that while Universals do exist they do not exist in *reality*, but only in thought (*they are non-substantive – they have no substance:* tie into Avicenna's idea of being). He argued that existence is not inexorably tied to substance; we have thoughts but we cannot put our arms around them. And thoughts, are of two sorts: those which derive from their object in the way it is (*corresponding thoughts*) and those which do not (*non-corresponding*), that is to say, you are able to just understand a universal in itself or you look at something sensible and come to a general conclusion. Therefore, if the thoughts that are universals were corresponding thoughts, then universals would also have to exist in reality. Since they do not (they are *non-substantive*), universals are therefore non-corresponding thoughts and non-corresponding thoughts are *empty* (have no *substance*).

Think about it this way: Plato would say that there is the Form *Tree* and so we can name things *trees*; Aristotle would say that because there is a *tree* substance there must be a concept of *trees*; Boethius would say that universals are non-substantive but are part of the substance of all the objects of that type, that the idea of Tree and trees are part and parcel of one another.

Wha…?

Peter Abelard's Universals are opposite of the *realism* view. Peter states that they are merely *words* (nominalism from the Latin for *name*), basically *real words* (which have substance) describing *not real things*. In his view the world is so full of enough *real* things that we do not have to worry about populating it with generalities (*universals*). In opposition to Boethius, he holds that there cannot be any real object in the world that would satisfy Boethius's criteria for the universal, namely something present (as itself) in many at once so as to constitute their substance (i.e. to make the individual in which it is present what it is). Hence, Abelard concludes, universality is not an *ontological* feature of the world but a *semantic* feature of language.

Now he does throw in the Mind of God, which means they can exist there (because, being omniscient, it contains everything) but they do not have to exist in the 'real' world.

Moses Maimonides

Moses Maimonides was a Jewish thinker. I include him here as opposed to earlier because his influence is more in the Christian West than in Islamic circles, and he is considered by some to be a scholastic. Born in Spain, he fled persecution (Muslim not Christian surprisingly) and eventually ended up in Egypt.

[12] Recall only if you did read it, the section from *The Teacher* by Augustine; if not then do not try to recall it because that would take much more time than we have here on earth, much less this discussion, though there may be enough time in eternity but either way I believe the results would be the same.

Another of our overachievers, Maimonides was the first person to write a systematic code of all Jewish law, the *Mishneh Torah* (*Torah* is the first five books of the Bible, containing the *Law* as given by God[13]); he produced one of the great philosophic works of Judaism, The *Guide to the Perplexed* (how not to be religiously confused by secular philosophy); published a commentary on the entire *Mishna*; served as physician to the sultan of Egypt; wrote numerous books on medicine; and, in his spare time, served as leader of Cairo's Jewish community. A popular Jewish expression of the Middle Ages declared: "From Moses [*of the Torah*] to Moses [*Maimonides*] there was none like Moses."

Like Averroes he championed Aristotle, and between them they really helped to restore the fullness of Aristotelian thought back to the Christian West, where if you recall it had been almost totally sublimated to neo-Platonic thought. His influence is seen even in modern Jewish thinkers.

That Is Not What I Meant To Say…

One of Maimonides's main ideas is that it is impossible for the truths arrived at by human intellect to contradict those revealed by God *if they are true*. This is pretty much in line with what we have seen before. And like the others, it means that human reason while imperfect still has the ability to inform. He was big on how we can think about things. Maimonides was a proponent of *apophatic* (negative) statements in which only *negative* statements toward a description of God may be considered correct. That is to say, you do not state that "God is One", but, "God is not multiple" because we really do not understand what God is One means (Christian thinkers tended toward *cataphatic* or positive statements like *omniscient*).

This did not make him a negative fellow though. He felt that an omnipotent and good God exists, adopting the Aristotelian view that defines evil as the lack of (or at least the reduced) presence of a God (as seen in those who exercise the free choice of rejecting belief and act accordingly). This negative statement and behavioral view combination comes out in his discussions of morality for example. We cannot say what God is because that would limit Him. We can see what he is not, as in he is not one of us. So when the Scriptures talk about God being 'angry', especially with bad behavior (sinning) that language cannot be taken at face value as when we say that God is not multiple.

Truth guides our active intellect, truth which comes from God. Still, we have to think and explain things in ways everyone can understand. God does not like evil therefore God is 'angry' when we act evilly. It is a 'true' belief that God does not like evil, but his 'anger' is merely a 'necessary' belief which guides our actions.

Scholasticism

Now that I have bandied it about let me say that the term scholasticism comes from the Latin for *of the school*. We can recall from our earlier simplistic discussion of monasticism (*Chapter 29*) the rise of the monastery as the center of learning. This center transferred to the Cathedral (as towns rose up later, they did not always rise up around a monastery, but the seat or *cathedra* of the local bishop which was located in his church, *ergo sum* the *cathedral*, think: Chartres), which as the new 'center' of town and of learning started schools known as cathedral schools, controlled not by the abbey but by the local bishop. Eventually these were outgrown and the idea of the *university* arose. *Scholastics* were the people who taught at these schools.

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[13] Okay, this is a complex discussion for such a short piece and I will not pretend to try to do justice to all of Hebrew history. Suffice it to say that the *Decalogue* or what we know commonly as the *Ten Commandments* are only a portion of the Law given at Sinai, hence the comprehensive gathering of all the laws contained in the first five books. All other books in the Hebrew Scriptures are commentaries on or reflective of the living of (or failure to live) that Law.

The aim of the scholastic was to live "religiously in a studious manner". In a sense then, scholasticism started with Anselm (*Chapter 28*), who established a position by 'rational' argument rather than appeal to authority to 'prove' why what he believed on authority must be the truth. It relied heavily on the dialectical method of Aristotle and sought, like its inspiration to really address *every* question.

Monasticism: The Sequel

As stated above, with the move away from abbey schools and toward university, two orders which rose in this period became the main (and rival) teaching (scholastic) orders: the Franciscans (founded by Francis of Assisi) and the Order of Preachers also known as the Dominicans (founded by Dominic) or the Black Friars, both founded in the 13th century. Both of the orders were *mendicants* (begging orders), based not so much in the fixed community as were the Benedictines, with a ministry aimed more at the developing cities and their problems therefore lending themselves more to the newer university system. They were also 'preaching' orders, less devoted to the cloistered life and more devoted to the street corner preaching and teaching, which also lent itself to university life. The importance of preaching meant that education was a necessity for both orders, especially since some of the corruption and misguided practices they were reforming were often based in ignorance.

So, in yet another sidebar wandering, let us take another moment to look at what was not really an intellectual interlude after all.

Franciscans

Let us touch on a few of the differences and mention a couple of the players along the way. The Franciscans are the order you think of when you think of the word *mendicant* (and some amount of touchy-feely new age environmentalism). The image of Francis begging and preaching in threadbare robes and no shoes is very common. Moral living and person responsibility were high on their list of preaching subjects. Francis himself is credited with the catch phrase "*preach the Gospel at all times, and when necessary, use words*".

One Franciscan of note is William of Ockham. Best known for his shaving habits, William promoted, like Peter Abelard, nominalism, reinforcing that only individual things exist, rather than objective universals, essences, or forms outside or beyond individuals. Universals are the products of *abstraction* from *individuals* (*Table* from a table) by the human mind and have no existence outside of the human mind. This is not to say that there are no universals, only that those universals are concepts only and have no existence *outside* of our minds. Note also, that they are not a product of God's mind.

One of the results of this (and most likely also influenced by the simplicity of the founder) is that William becomes the father of *K.I.S.S.*[14], by proposing the heuristic idea known as *Ockham's Razor* (or the *law of parsimony*). Simply put (from the perhaps more complex Latin), it is the principle that "Plurality should not be posited without necessity" or to put it another way, entities must not be multiplied beyond necessity, with the conclusion being that the simplest explanation or strategy tends to be the best one.[15]

Dominicans

[14] *Keep It Simple Stupid* for all you non-engineers, which is why I do not even begin to discuss the Avignon Papacy here.

[15] Ha, ha…put it in reverse that time.

Whereas the Franciscans pushed Augustine and Neo-Platonism, the Dominicans thought more along the lines of Aristotle. Like the Franciscans, they were dedicated in their teaching, way of life, and preaching to promoting the ideal of man's self-discovery and improvement. As such the goal of the rational life (of humans) is living in and from the One God.

This is taught and preached by one Dominican especially: Eckhart von Hochheim. Meister Eckhart, as he was known, was born in Germany. He was also one of the first to write in the vernacular as well as Latin.

Eckhart contends that the absolute principle (or the absolute cause, i.e. God) is *pure intellect* and *not being*. This is not to say that God does not exist, but that intellect is the highest form of being, kind of like the starchild in *2001: A Space Odyssey*. As the absolute principle/cause, intellect is absolutely unlimited only if it is thought of as totally without being. Sort of, if God is omniscient, then there can be nothing which 'taints' that intellect and as the ultimate form or principle or cause of being, is the model for it. Basically then, intellect becomes the principle/cause for absolute as well as contingent being. So God must be pure intellect, because all being comes from him.

That said, much is made, in this day and age of the nature of Eckhart's (and other High Middle Ages thinkers) life. The fluid nature of vocation is much different than we understand it today. There was not the separation of Church and State in the sense that has even developed in the last 60 plus years. Suffice it to say that like most of the thinkers we have explored he had his detractors as well as his supporters, which meant his thought and his fortunes rose up and down the scale of acceptance.

Thomas Aquinas

Then there is the Dominican of Dominicans. When people say the word *scholasticism*, they usually mean Thomas Aquinas, and it is probably better described by its other moniker: *Thomism*.

But more on him later.

Putting It Together

Okay, so I lied; well not so much *lied* as confused the truth. Neo-Platonism was never truly overcome by Aristotle. There existed even within Scholasticism a struggle for intellectual as well as political power. Not everyone accepted the thinking, and even the thinkers within it were at odds about what it taught. Still it is the presence of these teachers everywhere (eventually given power to teach anywhere sanctioned by the Pope), and so most educations consisted of their teaching. We are also seeing an explosion of thinkers and a movement out of the definition of doctrine, and into more of the disciplines of philosophy (like ontology and epistemology).

Still, Scholasticism is a dirty word for some people. With the rise of Aristotelian influence, touchy-feely stuff seems to be overrun by hairsplitting. Many had problems with the nature of the exploration. From the Renaissance forward it has been put to bed and revived a number of times, with most people feeling its death knell finally came in the 1960's. Not so fast, says Scholasticism, *the reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated* (Mark Twain), and a resurgence of Thomistic thought is in progress.

We have talked about 'schools of thought' which ironically or not are often the result of a founded place of teaching or school. These mainstream teachers and teachings (like Scholasticism) exert great influence on the discussion not only of the day but also through time. This is not to say that other thinkers and thoughts were not there, or did not exert some influence, only that, as in most things, something always rises to the top, even if it is only the cream.

When we look at other thinkers, like Moses Maimonides, we are not belittling or dismissing the effect they had in favor of the 'major players'. Often for the people who read them in the areas in

which they operated they had profound effect. For us though, it is the overall effect that we seek. The cream really does rise to the top, and their creamy thoughts rise up amidst the mainstream and contribute to the whole.

"… the believer and the philosopher consider creatures differently. The philosopher considers what belongs to their proper natures, while the believer considers only what is true of creatures insofar as they are related to God, for example, that they are created by God and are subject to him, and the like." **Thomas Aquinas** (*Summa Contra Gentiles,* book II, chap. 4)

"To love is to will the good of another." **Thomas Aquinas** (*Summa Theologica,* I-II, 26, 4)

Thomism

If scholasticism and Thomism are dead, then this is the most pathetic of chapters[16]. And again, why worry about a re-hashing of Aristotle or at least the 'Medieval Aristotle'? Was the last chapter was already too long?

Thomas Aquinas is a major player in our journey. Reviled, rebuked, praised and followed, he is at once an influential and enigmatic character. Exonerated and excoriated he is none the less no better or worse for it than those before him; he simply is.

But First A Word From Our Sponsor….

In an increasingly obvious method of introduction, this is the moment I sneak in a mention of a contemporary of Thomas', the long lived if not long winded Roger Bacon (1214-1292). Roger is not to be confused with his namesake *Francis* Bacon (1561-1626) who later utilized some of his thinking. Leonardo before there was a Leonardo, Roger was heavily into scientific experimentation and saw a vision of the future which included self-powered machines and the like. He was also a Franciscan and a proponent of Aristotle and a contemporary of Aquinas, so I mention him here rather than earlier to avoid too much confusion.

But really, the main reason I mention him here is that he, after tiring of what he considered poor translations of Aristotle and therefore a poor teaching and understanding of him (and hence a rejection of so much of Aristotelian thought), he set out to learn Greek and understand these texts for himself. He became a spirited translator and commenter.

In the end, Bacon withdrew from the scholastic world and devoted himself to languages and experimental research.

And Now, Back To Our Show!

Thomas Aquinas then, owed much to those who came before him. Knowledge and the Will became big topics in these times and we have seen glimpses of each. The Platonic hierarchy of being, the Stoic *Logos*, the Aristotelian understanding of substance, and Christian and Islamic theology is solidifying humans being viewed as the boundary where matter and spirit meet. This increasing humanism drives many of the new debates and philosophical explorations and an increased honing of existing ones. It becomes very important as to what we can know, how we can know it and are we able to not only know it but understand and act on it.

Thomas becomes sort of the pinnacle or apex of all this thought, not only as a thinker but also as a beneficiary as well as a contributor. Still, like most thinkers at the time he had his detractors as well, so let us take a moment and recall Meister Eckhart (who, though he comes after Thomas and eventually disagrees with him still reflects the dynamic of the time). Because of our connection to God, who is pure intelligence, the dignity of humanity results from a certain way of knowing which is peculiar to humans, and which is called *intelligence*. The old question of *perception* raises its head in this debate where we hear the echoes of the ghost of Aristotle drowning out the ethereal protestations of Plato.

There are two types of knowledge, sense knowledge (I see and feel the table so it must be a table) and intellectual knowledge (I know tables, even different kinds because of an abstract understanding of table). Sense knowledge has many forms, as in I can remember how a tree's bark

[16] With all apologies to Paul.

feels or I can paint a tree from previous sense encounters with a tree of that type or even the basic knowledge that if I climb too high in the tree I could fall and hurt myself. These are *concrete* forms of knowledge, even though they seem abstract, because they come to us from sensation of concrete forms. In addition, and this seals it, I also have an awareness of the thing *itself*. The second form differs from the previous in that instead of *concrete and individual* it is *abstract and general*. The idea of *trees*, or the essence or substance (in the Aristotelian sense) for trees is what is 'known' here. Thomas uses the term *quiddity*(*On Being and Essence*, Chapter 1) to refer to this essence, or the thing in itself.

For you OO programmers out there, it is the difference between the class and the object; it is all about the level of abstraction. And if you are listening, there is no real reason for Forms in the Platonic sense because we can, like the mind of God in which we share, hold those ideas within ourselves. "Knowing beings are differentiated from non-knowing beings by this characteristic: non-knowing beings have only their own reality, but knowing beings are capable of possessing also the reality of something else. For in the knowing being there is a presence of the thing known produced by this thing." (*Summa Theologica,* Ia, q. 14, art. 1) So in the end, any type of human knowledge is guided by reason, that peculiar human trait, and a sense of the thing which separates this knowldege from the knowledge my dog has that it is six o'clock and time to eat or that he must incessantly chase and bark at squirrels which are high up in trees, which he has and can never catch.

As for the Will, as Thomas says "A man has free choice to the extent that he is rational." Sound familiar?

Thomas

Thomas Aquinas was born in central Italy in sight of the home base of the Benedictines, Monte Casino. At an early age (surprise) he began studies and was a product of the new system of education. He studied with Albert Magnus among others and finally ended up in Paris.

It is the perfect storm of learning. Theological and philosophical thought was being revisited. The (re)introduction of Aristotle meant that the questions which had seemed to be answered for so long were being re-examined. Because he is driven by the same things which drove Augustine, the idea that this re-questioning needed to be put to rest in light of new thinking was more of a motivation other than the need to debunk earlier thinking.

So while some of Thomas' thought may have been seen as radical, he was answering the same questions in a different way and was not about abandoning earlier thought. He would also explore questions which were of a nature that perhaps would never be asked under the Neo-Platonic schools.

What Is And What Should Never Be…

So, Being, Ethics, Will, Politics, Nature. Like Aristotle before him he writes on it all; like Aristotle before him he places it within the context of the human being. Unlike Aristotle before him he does not shy away from giving a concrete understanding to divine reason, the name *God*. It is not so much that science and religion cannot get along, but like Aristotle there is physics and there is metaphysics.

… it should be noted that different ways of knowing (*ratio cognoscibilis*) give us different sciences. The astronomer and the natural philosopher both conclude that the earth is round, but the astronomer does this through a mathematical middle that is abstracted from matter, whereas the natural philosopher considers a middle lodged in matter. Thus there is nothing to prevent another science from treating in the light of divine revelation what the philosophical disciplines treat as knowable in the light of human reason. (*Summa Theologica*, Ia, q. 1, a., ad 2)

Notice the small reference to the world being 'round'. Hmmm. What year is this? Yet another caution to intellectual hubris?[17]

What Is And What Can Be…

Aquinas tells us that Faith and reason are not incompatible. There are the revealed truths of Faith, some of which, in certain people can be arrived at by reason without the benefit of Revelation (not the book). There is a limit though to human reason and some truths will never be known unless they are revealed.

So there is a place for *natural reason*, as he calls it (in opposition to divine reason or Revelation), and this is the moniker he gives to Aristotelian thought (as Bonaventure states "we follow him [Aristotle] where he spoke well, not where he was in the dark"). And as we have already discussed, where natural reason is correct, it is and can only be in perfect harmony with Faith.

So Aquinas turns to Aristotle's concrete world of substance and accident, potential and actual and gleans an understanding of an extra little bit. If wood is a substance with specific accidents and we know it is wood, what about burned wood. Obviously there must be a potential within the substance *wood* which is also *ash* and *smoke*. If that is true, there must be a potential in every object to turn into another object even if only through some wild path.

This would mean that there must be some '*prime matter*' at the heart of everything which is '*pure potential*'. That is to say everything must have some spark in it which has the potential to be anything. Think of it in biological/genetic terms: stem cells have the potential to be any cell you want to grow.

Aquinas On Being And Existence

Here he is starting to diverge from many of the other medieval (read *Platonic/Neo-Platonic*) thinkers, especially Augustine. Things had specific roots for Augustine: an acorn becomes an oak, etc. etc.; Thomas is saying that this idea of pure potentiality allows for that not to be the case. Form and essences only exist in *combination* with the individual matter (existence). The reason everything is not everything else depends upon the individual instantiation of that thing. Form is not different for every human – that is how we know they are human, but, the *matter* allows for so many *different* humans.

We also begin to wander into previously touched on notion of *necessity* versus *possibility*. We can imagine the Phoenix, Aquinas tells us, but our conceiving of it does not bring it into existence. This is because there are two elements to the thing: its form or essence which determines *what* it is and some action which determines *that* it is.

Okay, so what? Well among other things, this thinking allows for things which are not just form and matter, but also existence, like angels (or even God). Angels are non-corporeal, so they cannot have matter, but they exist so that has to happen somehow. Existence and essence are separate. Recall the thinking that the conceiving of something does not bring it into existence. So whereas Aquinas agrees with the Anselm thing that God is that of which nothing greater can be thought, he does not agree that our thinking so, makes God so.

Whew!

For Aquinas human knowledge is sense generated. As for Aristotle, this knowledge helps us to understand the outside world, and categorize it. Abstraction allows us to understand things outside

[17] Not to take away from that point but well, that said, he also did not think the world rotated because that would mean it would basically wobble to destruction.

of their physical/sensual manifestations and also things which we cannot 'sense' physically, as well as general things which we can understand from sensual experience (universals and the like). So this is true for things like angels and for God. This involves (once again) the experience of cause and effect. Let us just get this out in the open: for Aquinas God is the unmoved mover, the prime cause, the prime necessity. Surprise.

Without spending too much time on Aquinas' God arguments, let us take a moment looking at the thinking behind them. "It is possible to demonstrate God's existence, although not *a priori*, yet *a posteriori* from some work of His more surely known to us." Put all of the things we have said about Aquinas together here. Take a moment, I'll wait. Got it? No? Yes?

Like thinkers before him (recall our Islamic friends too), Aquinas sees life as a series of interdependent events not just a chain of reactions. The balance of a priori and a posteriori experience, the importance of perception, the mind as the place of all understanding, the world as a place of universals and individuals, as understood by the rational mind; the cause and effect where a generic spark powers endless possibilities. Take a moment and let the possibilities and the ramifications of this sink in.

Was That It?

Okay, perhaps not a very satisfying exploration of Aquinas' musings, but in a sense we have seen them all before. Suffice it to say that we are created, God is the creator; our spark of divine reason comes from him and is at his service. The Law is a combination of the old Mosaic Law and the new Law as taught by Jesus. Like physics and metaphysics, reason and Faith, these Laws work together, the old concerned with worldly, sensual needs and the new concerned with heavenly intellectual needs. People are social animals and as such need rules by which to live. This is nothing new and we would expect Thomas' ethics to reflect his Christian roots. So while humans are 'political animals' there are so because God created them to be that way, and they seek to operate within that boundary and without God, human law is fickle.

"Because of the diverse conditions of humans, it happens that some acts are virtuous to some people, as appropriate and suitable to them, while the same acts are immoral for others, as inappropriate to them."

Putting It Together

So just how many angels can dance on the head of a pin? This question seems silly nowadays, but in context, what is the substance/nature of angels? How corporeal are they? Do they take up space? How do we *know* about them?

Okay so this was really a poster-child review lesson. Thomas is the archetype for many of the ideas which come to fruition during the medieval times. But also, like Augustine, he is the last of the old guard, a passing glimpse of a changing world. Science is becoming a discipline in its own right, separating from its theological roots. Humanism (humans being the center of things) too is rising beyond its theological roots. Many of the modern ideas about the person, intelligence, science itself, are generated during this period. Aquinas is place where we see so many of these things coming together.

No philosopher appears out of a vacuum. There is no way to completely separate thought from the person. Just like separation of Church and State, theology and philosophy, science and religion, there is a certain artificiality to it. What we hope to do is carefully expose the truths which lie apart from yet within those experiences. The rise of independent thought could not have taken place outside the collective thinking.

"Moreover, carefully distinguishing reason from Faith, as is right, and yet joining them together in a harmony of friendship, so he guarded the rights of each, and so watched over the dignity of each, that, as far as humans are concerned, reason can now hardly rise higher than she rose, borne up in the flight of St. Thomas; and Faith can hardly gain more helps and greater helps from reason than those which St. Thomas gave her." **Pope Leo XIII (1879)**

"The end of all my labors has come. All that I have written appears to me as much straw after the things that have been revealed to me." **Thomas Aquinas (from a letter)**

Thomas Aquinas: On Being and Essence

Prologue

A small error at the outset can lead to great errors in the final conclusions, as the Philosopher says in I *De Caelo et Mundo* cap. 5 (271b8-13), and thus, since being and essence are the things first conceived of by the intellect, as Avicenna says in *Metaphysicae* I, cap. 6, in order to avoid errors arising from ignorance about these two things, we should resolve the difficulties surrounding them by explaining what the terms being and essence each signify and by showing how each may be found in various things and how each is related to the logical intentions of genus, species, and difference.

Since we ought to acquire knowledge of simple things from composite ones and come to know the prior from the posterior, in instructing beginners we should begin with what is easier, and so we shall begin with the signification of being and proceed from there to the signification of essence.

Chapter 1

As the Philosopher says in V *Metaphysicae* cap. 7 (1017a22-35), being has two senses. In one sense, being signifies that which is divided into the ten categories; in another sense, that which signifies the truth of propositions. The difference between these is that, in the second sense, anything can be called a being about which an affirmative proposition can be formed, even if the thing posits nothing in reality. In this way, privations and negations are called beings, as when we say that affirmation is opposed to negation, or that blindness is in the eye. But in the first sense, nothing can be called a being unless it posits something in reality, and thus in this first sense blindness and similar things are not beings.

The term essence is not taken from being in the second sense, for in this sense some things are called beings that have no essence, as is clear with privations. Rather, the term essence is taken from being in the first sense. Thus in *Metaphysicae* V, com. 14, the Commentator explains the cited text from Aristotle by saying that being, in the first sense, is what signifies the essence of a thing. And since, as said above, being in this sense is divided into the ten categories, essence signifies something common to all natures through which the various beings are placed in the various genera and species, as humanity is the essence of man, and so on.

Since that through which a thing is constituted in its proper genus or species is what is signified by the definition indicating what the thing is, philosophers introduced the term quiddity to mean the same as the term essence; and this is the same thing that the Philosopher frequently terms what it is to be a thing, that is, that through which something has being as a particular kind of thing. Essence is also called form, for the certitude of everything is signified through its form, as Avicenna says in his *Metaphysicae* I, cap. 6. The same thing is also called nature, taking nature in the first of the four senses that Boethius distinguishes in his book *De Persona et Duabus Naturis* cap. 1 (PL 64, 1341B), in the sense, in other words, that nature is what we call everything that can in any way be captured by the intellect, for a thing is not intelligible except through its definition and essence. And so the Philosopher says in V *Metaphysicae* cap. 4 (1014b36) that every substance is a nature. But the term nature used in this way seems to signify the essence of a thing as it is ordered to the proper operation of the thing, for nothing is without its proper operation. The term quiddity, surely, is taken from the fact that this is what is signified by the definition. But the same thing is called essence because the being has existence through it and in it.

But because being is absolutely and primarily said of substances, and only secondarily and in a certain sense said of accidents, essence too is properly and truly in substances and is in accidents only in a certain way and in a certain sense. Now some substances are simple and some are composite, and essence is in both, though in the simple substances in a truer and more noble way, as these have existence in a nobler way: indeed, the simple substances are the cause of the composite ones, or at least this is true with respect to the first simple substance, which is God. But because the essences of these substances are more hidden from us, we ought to begin with the essences of composite substances, as learning is easier when we begin with the easier

things.

Chapter 2

In composite substances we find form and matter, as in man there are soul and body. We cannot say, however, that either of these is the essence of the thing. That matter alone is not the essence of the thing is clear, for it is through its essence that a thing is knowable and is placed in a species or genus. But matter is not a principle of cognition; nor is anything determined to a genus or species according to its matter but rather according to what something is in act. Nor is form alone the essence of a composite thing, however much certain people may try to assert this. From what has been said, it is clear that the essence is that which is signified by the definition of the thing. The definition of a natural substance, however, contains not only form but also matter; otherwise, the definitions of natural things and mathematical ones would not differ. Nor can it be said that matter is placed in the definition of a natural substance as something added to the essence or as some being beyond the essence of the thing, for that type of definition is more proper to accidents, which do not have a perfect essence and which include in their definitions a subject beyond their own genus. Therefore, the essence clearly comprises both matter and form.

Nor can it be said that essence signifies the relation between the matter and the form or something superadded to these, for then the essence would of necessity be an accident and extraneous to the thing, and the thing would not be known through its essence, contrary to what pertains to an essence. Through the form, surely, which is the act of the matter, the matter is made a being in act and a certain kind of thing. Thus, something that supervenes does not give to the matter existence in act simply, but rather existence in act in a certain way, just as accidents do, as when whiteness makes something actually white. Hence, when such a form is acquired, we do not say that the thing is generated simply but only in a certain way.

The only possibility, therefore, is that the term essence, used with respect to composite substances, signifies that which is composed of matter and form. This conclusion is consistent with what Boethius says in his commentary on the *Categories*, namely, that *ousia* signifies what is composite; *ousia*, of course, is for the Greeks what essence is for us, as Boethius himself says in his book *De Persona et Duabus Naturis*. Avicenna even says, *Metaphysicae* V, cap. 5, that the quiddity of a composite substance is the very composition of the form and the matter. And commenting on Book VII of Aristotle's *Metaphysicae*, the Commentator says, “The nature that species in generable things have is something in the middle; that is, it is composed of matter and form.” *Metaphysicae* VII, com. 27. Moreover, reason supports this view, for the existence of a composite substance is neither form alone nor matter alone but is rather composed of these. The essence is that according to which the thing is said to exist; hence, it is right that the essence by which a thing is denominated a being is neither form alone not matter alone but both, albeit that existence of this kind is caused by the form and not by the matter. Similarly, we see that in other things that are constituted from many principles, the thing is not denominated from just one or the other of the principles but rather from that which embraces both. Thus, with respect to flavors, sweetness is caused by the action of a warm animal body digesting what is wet, and albeit that in this way warmth is the cause of the sweetness, nevertheless a body is not called sweet by reason of the warmth, but rather by reason of the flavor, which embraces both the warmth and the wetness.

But because matter is the principle of individuation, it would perhaps seem to follow that essence, which embraces in itself simultaneously both form and matter, is merely particular and not universal. From this it would follow that universals have no definitions, assuming that essence is what is signified by the definition. Thus, we must point out that matter understood in the way we have thus far understood it is not the principle of individuation; only signate matter is the principle of individuation. I call signate matter matter considered under determinate dimensions. Signate matter is not included in the definition of man as man, but signate matter would be included in the definition of Socrates if Socrates had a definition. In the definition of man, however, is included non-signate matter: in the definition of man we do not include this bone and this flesh but only bone and flesh absolutely, which are the non-signate matter of man.

Hence, the essence of man and the essence of Socrates do not differ except as the signate differs from the non-signate, and so the Commentator says, in *Metaphysicae* VII, com. 20, “Socrates is nothing other than animality and rationality, which are his quiddity.” Similarly, the essence of a genus and the essence of a species differ as signate from non-signate, although in the case of genus and species a different mode of designation is used with respect to both. For, the designation of the individual with respect to the species is through matter determined by dimensions, while the designation of the species with respect to the genus is through the constitutive difference, which is taken from the form of the thing. This determination or designation, however, which is made in the species with respect to the genus, is not through something that exists in the essence of the species but in no way exists in the essence of the

genus. On the contrary, whatever is in the species is also in the genus as undetermined. If animal were not all that man is but rather only a part of him, then animal would not be predicated of man, for no integral part is predicated of its whole.

We can see how this happens by considering how body as a part of animal differs from body as the genus of animal. In the way body is the genus of animal it cannot be an integral part of animal, and thus the term body can be accepted in several ways. Body is said to be in the genus of substance in that it has a nature such that three dimensions can be designated in the body. These three designated dimensions are the body that is in the genus of quantity. Now, it sometimes happens that what has one perfection may attain to a further perfection as well, as is clear in man, who has a sensitive nature and, further, an intellective one. Similarly, above this perfection of having a form such that three dimensions can be designated in it, there can be joined another perfection, as life or some similar thing. This term body, therefore, can signify a certain thing that has a form such that from the form there follows in the thing designatability in three dimensions and nothing more, such that, in other words, from this form no further perfection follows, but if some other thing is superadded, it is beyond the signification of body thus understood. And understood in this way, body will be an integral and material part of the animal, because in this way the soul will be beyond what is signified by the term body, and it will supervene on the body such that from these two, namely the soul and the body, the animal is constituted as from parts.

This term body can also be understood as signifying a certain thing that has a form such that three dimensions can be designated in it, whatever form this may be, and such that either from the form some further perfection can proceed or not. Understood in this way, body will be the genus of animal, for there will be understood in animal nothing that is not implicitly contained in body. Now, the soul is a form through which there can be designated in the thing three dimensions, and therefore, when we say that body is what has a form from which three dimensions can be designated in the body, we understand there is some kind of form of this type, whether soul, or lapideousness, or whatever other form. And thus the form of animal is implicitly contained in the form of body, just as body is its genus.

The relation of animal to man is the same. For if animal named just a certain thing that has a perfection such that it can sense and move by a principle existing in itself, without any other perfection, then whatever further perfection may supervene would be related to animal as a component part, and not as implicitly contained in the notion of animal; and in this way animal would not be a genus. But animal is a genus in that it signifies a certain thing from the form of which sensation and motion can proceed, whatever this form may be, whether a sensible soul only, or a soul both sensible and rational.

Therefore, the genus signifies indeterminately the whole that is in the species and does not signify matter alone. Similarly, the difference also signifies the whole and does not signify the form alone, and the definition, or even the species, signifies the whole. But these nevertheless signify the same thing in different ways. For the genus signifies the whole as a certain denomination determining that which is material in the thing without a determination of its proper form, whence the genus is taken from the matter, although it is not the matter. This is clear in the case of bodies, as we call something a body in that the thing has a perfection such that in the thing three dimensions can be designated, and this perfection is related materially to some further perfection. Conversely, the difference is like a certain denomination taken from the determined form, beyond the first conception of the form by which the matter is determined. So, when we say something is animated (that, in other words, it has a soul), this does not determine what the thing is, whether it is a body or some other thing. Hence, Avicenna says, *Metaphysicae* V, cap. 6, that the genus is not understood in the difference as a part of its essence but only as a being beyond its essence, even as a subject is with respect to the concept of a passion. And thus the genus is not predicated per se of the difference, as the Philosopher says in III *Metaphysicae* cap. 8 (998b24) and in IV *Topicorum* cap. 2 (122b22-26), unless perhaps as a subject is predicated of a passion. But the definition or the species comprehends both, namely, the determined matter that the term genus designates and the determined form that the term difference designates.

From this is it clear why the genus, the difference, and the species are related proportionally to the matter, the form, and the composite in nature, although they are not the same as these things. For, the genus is not the matter, though it is taken from the matter as signifying the whole; nor is the difference the form, though it is taken from the form as signifying the whole. Thus we say that man is a rational animal, but not composed of the animal and the rational in the sense that we say that man is composed of soul and body: man is said to be composed of soul and body as from two things from which a third thing is constituted different from each of the two. Man, surely, is neither body nor soul. But if man is said in some sense to be composed of the animal and the rational, it will not be as a third thing composed from these two things, but as a third concept composed from these two concepts. The concept of animal is

without determination of a special form and expresses, with respect to the ultimate perfection, the nature of the thing from that which is material; the concept of the difference, rational, consists in the determination of the special form. From these two concepts are constituted the concept of the species or the definition. Thus, just as a thing constituted from other things does not have predicated of it these other things, so too a concept does not have predicated of it the concepts of which it is constituted: clearly, we do not say that the definition is either the genus or the difference.

Although the genus may signify the whole essence of the species, nevertheless there is not just one essence of the various species under one genus, for the unity of the genus proceeds from its very indetermination or undifferentiation. Nor is it the case that what is signified through the genus is numerically one nature in the various species such that to it there supervenes some other thing, which is the difference that determines it, as a form determines matter, which is numerically one. Rather, the genus signifies some form (though not determinately this one or that one), which the difference expresses determinately, the very one that is signified indeterminately through the genus. And thus the Commentator says in *Metaphysicae* XII, com. 14, that prime matter is called one by the removal of all forms, but the genus is called one through the commonality of forms signified. Hence, the indetermination, which was the cause of the unity of the genus, having been removed through the addition of the difference, the species remain essentially diverse.

Furthermore, since, as said above, the nature of the species is indeterminate with respect to the individual just as the nature of the genus is with respect to the species, and since, further, the genus, as predicated of the species, includes in its signification (although indistinctly) everything that is in the species determinately, so too does the species, as predicated of the individual, signify everything that is in the individual essentially, although it signifies this indistinctly. In this way, the essence of the species is signified by the term man, and so man is predicated of Socrates. If, however, the nature of the species is signified in such a way as to exclude designate matter, which is the principle of individuation, then the species is related to the individual as a part; and this is how the term humanity signifies, for humanity signifies that by which a man is a man. Designate matter, however, is not that by which a man is a man, and it is in no way contained among those things that make a man a man. Since, therefore, the concept of humanity includes only those things by which a man is a man, designate matter is excluded or pretermitted, and since a part is not predicated of its whole, humanity is predicated neither of man nor of Socrates. Thus Avicenna says, *Metaphysicae* V, cap. 5, that the quiddity of a composite thing is not the composite thing of which it is the quiddity, even though the quiddity itself is composite, as humanity, while composite, is not man. On the contrary, it must be received in something that is designate matter.

But since, as said above, the designation of the species with respect to the genus is through the form, and the designation of the individual with respect to the species is through matter, the term signifying that from which the nature of the genus is taken thus excludes the determinate form that completes the species and signifies the material part of the whole, as the body is the material part of the man. However, the term signifying that from which the nature of the species is taken, excluding designate matter, signifies the formal part. Thus, humanity is signified as a certain form, and it is said that it is the form of the whole, not, certainly, as a form superadded to the essential parts (the form and the matter), but rather as the form of a house is superadded to its integral parts; and that is better called the form which is the whole, in other words, that which embraces the form and the matter, albeit excluding those things through which the designatability of matter arises.

Therefore, the term man and the term humanity both signify the essence of man, though in diverse ways, as said above. The term man signifies the essence as a whole, in other words, insofar as the essence does not exclude designation of matter but implicitly and indistinctly contains it, in the way in which we said that the genus contains the difference. Hence, the term man is predicated of individuals. But the term humanity signifies the essence of man as a part because it contains in its signification only what belongs to man insofar as he is man, and it excludes all designation, and so it is not predicated of individual men. And for this reason the term essence is sometimes found predicated of the thing, as when we say that Socrates is a certain essence; and sometimes the term essence is denied of the thing, as when we say that the essence of Socrates is not Socrates.

Chapter 3

Having seen what the term essence signifies in composite substances, we ought next see in what way essence is related to the logical intentions of genus, species, and difference. Since that to which the intentions of genus or species or difference is appropriate is predicated of this signate singular, it is impossible that a universal intention, like that of the species or genus, should be appropriate to the essence if the genus or species is signified as a part, as in the term humanity or animality. Thus, Avicenna says, *Metaphysicae* V, cap. 6, that rationality is not the difference but the principle of the difference. For the

same reason, humanity is not a species, and animality is not a genus. Similarly, we cannot say that the intention of species or genus is appropriate to the essence as to a certain thing existing beyond singulars, as the Platonists used to suppose, for then the species and the genus would not be predicated of an individual: we surely cannot say that Socrates is something that is separated from him, nor would that separate thing advance our knowledge of this singular thing. And so the only remaining possibility is that the intention of genus or species is appropriate to the essence as the essence is signified as a whole, as the term man or animal implicitly and indistinctly contains the whole that is in the individual.

The nature, however, or the essence thus understood can be considered in two ways. First, we can consider it according to its proper notion, and this is to consider it absolutely. In this way, nothing is true of the essence except what pertains to it absolutely: thus everything else that may be attributed to it will be attributed falsely. For example, to man, in that which he is a man, pertains animal and rational and the other things that fall in his definition; white or black or whatever else of this kind that is not in the notion of humanity does not pertain to man in that which he is a man. Hence, if it is asked whether this nature, considered in this way, can be said to be one or many, we should concede neither alternative, for both are beyond the concept of humanity, and either may befall the conception of man. If plurality were in the concept of this nature, it could never be one, but nevertheless it is one as it exists in Socrates. Similarly, if unity were in the notion of this nature, then it would be one and the same in Socrates and Plato, and it could not be made many in the many individuals. Second, we can also consider the existence the essence has in this thing or in that: in this way something can be predicated of the essence accidentally by reason of what the essence is in, as when we say that man is white because Socrates is white, although this does not pertain to man in that which he is a man.

The nature considered in this way, however, has a double existence. It exists in singulars on the one hand, and in the soul on the other, and from each of these there follow accidents. In singulars, furthermore, the essence has a multiple existence according to the multiplicity of singulars. Nevertheless, if we consider the essence in the first, or absolute, sense, none of these pertain to the essence. For it is false to say that the essence of man, considered absolutely, has existence in this singular, because if existence in this singular pertained to man insofar as he is man, man would never exist outside this singular. Similarly, if it pertained to man insofar as he is man not to exist in this singular, then the essence would never exist in the singular. But it is true to say that man, but not insofar as he is man, has whatever may be in this singular or in that one, or else in the soul. Therefore, the nature of man considered absolutely abstracts from every existence, though it does not exclude the existence of anything either. And the nature thus considered is the one predicated of each individual.

….We have thus made clear how the essence or nature is related to the notion of species, for the notion of species is not among those that pertain to the essence considered absolutely; nor is it among the accidents that follow from the existence that the essence has outside the soul, as whiteness or blackness. Rather, the notion of species is among the accidents that follow from the existence the essence has in the intellect. And in this way as well do the notions of genus or difference pertain to essences.

Chapter 4

We should now see how essences exist in separated substances, that is, in the soul, in the intelligences, and in the first cause. Now, while everyone concedes the simplicity of the first cause, some people have tried to introduce into the intelligences and the soul a composition of form and matter, a position that seems to have begun with Avicebron, the author of the book called *Fons Vitae*. But this view is repugnant to the common teaching of the philosophers, for they call these things substances separated from matter, and they prove them to be wholly without matter. The most cogent demonstration of this proceeds from the excellence of understanding found in these substances. For we see that forms are not actually intelligible except as they are separated from matter and its conditions, and forms are not made actually intelligible except by virtue of an intelligent substance, which educes the forms and receives them in itself. Hence, in any intelligent substance there is a complete absence of matter in such a way that the substance has neither a material part itself nor even is the substance like a form impressed in matter, as is the case with material forms.

Chapter 5

….Having treated these matters, we can see clearly how essence is found in various kinds of things. There are three ways in which substances may have an essence. First, surely, is the way God has his essence, which is his very existence itself, and so we find certain philosophers saying that God does not have a quiddity or essence because his essence is not other than his existence. From this it follows that he is not in a genus, for everything that is in a genus has a quiddity beyond its existence, since the quiddity or nature of the genus or species is not in the order of nature distinguished in the things of which it is

the genus or species, but the existence is diverse in diverse things.

***Avicebron**: Spanish-Jewish religious poet, moralist, and philosopher (1020-1070)*

Thought Point	Points of Thought
What is Aquinas talking about? What is a *signate*?	
How is this work similar to Aristotle?	
How is it different?	
Why is intelligence important?	
How does Aquinas define existence, essence and substance?	