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One Hundred Years of Philosophy by the Catholic University of America

Jude P. Dougherty

Delivered on the occasion of the celebration of the centennial of the formal inauguration of the school of Philosophy, The Catholic University of America

I

Johns Hopkins University opened in 1876 to become the first institution of higher learning in the United States that could call itself a "university" in the European sense of the term. Eight years later The Third Plenary Council of Baltimore decreed the foundation of The Catholic University of America.

The inaugural ceremonies establishing The Catholic University of America took place in November 1889, one month after those establishing Clark University, making it the third graduate center to be erected in the United States.

The Catholic University was established for two different but compatible purposes.¹ The first purpose was the perceived need to make available in the United States education beyond the baccalaureate similar to that which could be found at Louvain and the German universities of the day. The second was the need on the

part of the Church to confront the intellectual challenge of the Enlightenment, seemingly reinforced in the 19th century by advances in the natural sciences. Ecclesiastical leaders were not alone in their assessment of the task. Of the same generation, the American philosopher, Josiah Royce, addressed the need for a philosophy which could serve as a rational preamble to the Christian faith and he attempted to provide one with his own version of a Hegelian inspired idealism. Leo XIII in his 1879 encyclical *Aeterni Patris* recommended, not Hegel, but the philosophy of St. Thomas.

II

By any measure, the 19th century was no less an intellectually tumultuous one for Europe than the 20th. Dominated in the intellectual order by the Enlightenment, Anglo-French and German, Europe underwent a systematic attempt on the part of its intelligentsia to replace the inherited, largely classical and Christian learning, by a purely secular ethos. The Napoleonic wars in their aftermath added materially to the destabilization of Europe eradicating many institutional structures, economic and social, as well as religious.

Startling advances in the physical sciences reinforced the Enlightenment's confidence in natural reason. The ideas which formed the secular outlook of the 19th century were the product of two major intellectual revolutions, one in biology and the other in physics. Kuhn would call them "paradigm shifts." One shift is associated with the biological investigations of the period and with the names of Spencer, Darwin, Wallace, Huxley and Haeckel. Their work employed the vocabulary of "evolution," "change," "growth" and "development" and led to the worship of progress. The effect of the new biological studies was to place man and his activity squarely in the setting of a natural environment, giving them a natural origin and a natural history. Man was transformed from a being with a spiritual component and a transcendent end, elevated above the rest of nature, into a purely material organism forced to interact within a natural environment like any other living species.

The second ideological shift resulted from advances in physics which were taken to be a reinforcement of the fundamental assumptions of a mechanistic interpretation of nature. Convinced that all natural phenomena can be explained by structural and efficient causes, the disciples of Locke and Hume discarded any explanation invoking the concept of "purpose" or of "final cause." The convergence of these trends in biology and physics made possible the resurgence of a purely materialistic concept of man and nature with no need for the hypothesis of a creative God or of a spiritual soul. The foremost symbol of the new outlook became Darwin's *Origin of the Species* (1859). For an intellectual class it codified a view which had been germinating since the preceding century. Darwin had confidently marshalled evidence and systematically formulated in a scientific vocabulary ideas already embraced. The spontaneous acceptance of his doctrine of evolutionary progress was possible only because of the philosophical groundwork laid by the Enlightenment Fathers.

On both sides of the Atlantic various philosophical idealisms were created in a defensive effort to maintain the credibility of religious witness. Challenged by purely naturalistic interpretations of faith, many found the rational support they needed as believers in a post-

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Kantian idealism. *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy* was founded at St. Louis, Missouri in 1867 for the dual purpose of making available the best of German philosophy and of providing the Americans with a philosophical forum. Its editor, William Torrey Harris, was also a charter member with fifty others of the society (1874) variously known as the St. Louis Philosophical Society or the Kant Club. The *Journal* and the society were devoted to the study of German philosophy, primarily German idealism. The influence of St. Louis eventually

extended to New England, where Harris helped to start the Concord Summer School of Philosophy in 1880.

In the first issue of *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, Harris gave three reasons for the pursuit of speculative philosophy. In his judgment, speculative philosophy provides, first, a philosophy of religion much needed at a time when traditional religious teaching and ecclesiastical authority are losing their influence. Secondly, it provides a social philosophy compatible with a communal outlook as opposed to a socially devastating individualism. Thirdly, while taking cognizance of the startling advances in the natural sciences, it provides an alternative to empiricism as a philosophy of knowledge. Speculative philosophy for Harris is the tradition beginning with Plato, a tradition which finds its full expression in the system of Hegel.

Of American idealists, Josiah Royce (1855-1916) became the most prominent. After earning a baccalaureate degree at the University of California, Royce spent two years in Germany, where he read Schelling and Schopenhauer. He studied under Lotze at Göttingen but returned to the United States to take his doctorate in 1876 at the newly-founded Johns Hopkins University. His Gifford Lectures, 1900-1901, published as *The World and the Individual*, attempted to provide a rational basis for religion and morality. In those lectures Royce defended the possibility of truth against the skeptic and the reality of the divine against the agnostic. Royce had little respect for blind faith. The problem created by Kant's destruction of metaphysics he regarded as fundamental. In 1881, Royce wrote, "We all live, philosophically speaking, in a Kantian atmosphere." Eschewing the outright voluntarism of

Schopenhauer, Royce sought a metaphysics that would permit him to rationally embrace his Christian heritage. Whereas William James was convinced that every demonstrative rational approach to God must fail, Royce was convinced that speculative reason gives one access to God. The code words of the day, “evolution,” “progress,” “illusion,” “higher criticism,” “communism,” “socialism,” he thought, evoked a mental outlook which reduces Christianity to metaphor and Christian organizations to welfare dispensaries.

The problem for Royce was not simply a philosophical problem. The philosophers also tutored the architects of the new biblical criticism, the *Redaktionsgeschichte* movement. David Friedrich Strauss, in his *Das Leben Jesu*, under the influence of Hegel, examined the Gospels and the life of Jesus from the standpoint of the higher criticism and concluded that Christ was not God but a supremely good man whose moral imperative deserved to be followed. This Royce could not accept; there was no philosophically compelling reason to embrace a purely naturalistic interpretation of the sacred scriptures. Philosophy must be fought by philosophy.

At approximately the same time that the young Josiah Royce entered the intellectual arena, Leo XIII in an effort to combat the emerging materialisms and skepticisms then dominating Europe urged in his *Aetemi Patris* the philosophical realism of Aquinas. St. Thomas was recommended both as a philosopher and as a theologian. Leo recognized that some philosophies opened out to the faith, just as some philosophies closed it off as an intellectual option.

Immanuel Kant may have been the perfect philosopher for a fideistic form of Protestantism, but he could never become an adequate guide for the Catholic mind. With his dictum, “I have therefore found it necessary to deny knowledge in order to make room for faith,”² he reflects the tradition of Luther and Calvin, whose doctrine of original sin held that with “the fall” the human intellect was so darkened that it cannot unaided conclude to the existence of God. Catholic thought, by contrast, is essentially and historically a system of intellectualism, of objectivism grounded in a philosophical realism embraced for the most part by the Fathers of the Church. The basic principle of Catholic thought asserts the reliability of intelligence, i.e., that we are equipped with intellects that are able to ferret out the secrets of an intelligible nature, that is, we are able to achieve objective truth.

Upon our objective knowledge depends our practical decisions, our conduct. We can only do what is right on the condition that we know what is right. We can only live Catholic lives on the condition that we know what Catholic doctrine is.

III

Some members of the American hierarchy no doubt shared Leo XIII’s analysis of the current intellectual situation, but others were motivated primarily by the need for post-baccalaureate education in America. At the middle of the 19th century there were numerous colleges in the United States, two of them dating from the 17th century, a few others from the 18th. Some of them were called “universities,” but, in fact, none were. At most they were colleges with one or more professional schools attached. Harvard, Yale and others gave honorary degrees, such as the M.A., but not as a result of a program of studies until late in the 19th century. The first Harvard M.A. for work accomplished in course was awarded in 1876.

What was needed in the United States were universities in the Prussian sense, places of learning that presumed and went beyond the college. Certain leaders in higher education, Daniel Coit Gilman, president of the University of California and later the first head of the Johns Hopkins University, G. Stanley Hall of Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts, and some members of the Catholic hierarchy, were advocates of the Prussian model in the post-Civil War decades. Bishop Thomas L. Grace, O.P., of St. Paul was one of the first members of the episcopate to call for a Catholic university in America. Archbishop John Ireland and Bishop John Lancaster Spalding strongly supported him. The model envisaged for emulation was clearly the Catholic University of Louvain. Louvain, it may be noted, had been ruthlessly closed by the French revolutionary forces in 1797 and was not reopened until 1834. The Belgium University was not alone in losing out to the French revolution. Twenty-two French universities, the glory of the medieval past, had existed before 1789. The Revolution swept them all away. Over the next century the very idea of institutions devoted to an inquiry into the whole of human knowledge was abandoned. Not until 1896 did France have genuine universities again.³ The precariousness of Catholic higher education in Europe made a deep

impression on the organizers of The Catholic University of America and by establishing a university under their own jurisdiction they sought to avoid complete reliance on European centers.

With ample ceremony Johns Hopkins opened in February 1876, Clark University in October 1889, The Catholic University of America a month later in November 1889. These institutions following the Germanic model were designed primarily for graduate work. The German university was a scholarly institution concerned entirely with investigation and the training of investigators. It did not prepare its students for the practice of the professions but for the advancement of the professions, both in science and the humanities. Vocationalism was beneath it; beneath it, too, was everything that the American thought of as college life. Worthy of note is that for every hundred students that affluent America was sending to American colleges, European austerity would send one to a European university.

Interestingly, the Papal Constitution for The Catholic University in America used the words "seminarium principale" to designate The Catholic University of America. A university was thought to be a place where specialized "seminaries" were conducted. An early issue of the University announcements boasted that all of the seminaries were well established with libraries and with the latest in scientific equipment. It was not until the administration of Bishop Corrigan (1936-43), just before World War II, that Catholic University had a seminary for the training of future priests in the now customary sense of the term.

In conferring its charter, Leo XIII hoped that The Catholic University of America would be an alma mater not only of a learned clergy, but also of an equally learned laity, the bulwark and hope of religion in the future. He recognized that the clergy were often regarded as representatives of a worn-out tradition, although he could point to many a priest who could be numbered among world class scientists. Leo's aim was the creation of a body of thinkers, professional men, scientific men, men of the world in all departments of life, profoundly and thoroughly learned and, at the same time, profoundly and thoroughly Christian too.

Leo XIII had become Pope in 1878. In the second year of his pontificate, he issued his famous encyclical endorsing a fledgling Thomistic movement which was to enlist some of the best minds of the following generation. St. Thomas was recommended because of the perceived value of his philosophy in meeting "the critical state of the times in which we live." Leo saw that the regnant philosophies of his day not only undercut the faith but were beginning to have disastrous effects on personal and communal life. Succinctly he says, "Erroneous theories respecting our duty to God and our responsibilities as men, originally propounded in philosophical schools, have gradually permeated all ranks of society and secured acceptance among the majority of men."

Aeterni Patris fostered a widespread study of St. Thomas and led to the establishment of the Leonine Commission designed to provide critical editions of the texts of Aquinas. Some of that work has been done under the auspices of The Catholic University of America and the neighboring Dominican House of Studies.

Leo's influence was clearly present as the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore met in November-December, 1884. In spite of the opposition of some members, the Council decreed the foundation of a national Catholic university. In 1866 there were seven Catholic institutions with "university" charters and sixty Catholic colleges. By 1875, the number had increased to seventy-four institutions of higher leaning. Most were small, some barely more than academies; none were universities in the European sense of the term.

The proposed Catholic university was to be exclusively a graduate institution, presupposing for admission a baccalaureate or other professional degree. It opened its doors under the leadership of John Joseph Keane who had spent the months of August to October 1889 at the University of Notre Dame drafting what was to become the first constitution of the Washington D.C. university. Comprised first of the faculty of the Divinity School, the fledgling institution soon added schools of philosophy and social sciences.

The School of Philosophy and the School of the Social Sciences of The Catholic University of America

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were formally inaugurated October 1, 1895, six years after the opening of the Divinity School. On that day, in the presence of the Apostolic Delegate, who represented Leo XIII, in the presence of the Trustees and Directors of the University and of a large assemblage of bishops, James Cardinal Gibbons, Chancellor of the University, solemnly dedicated the McMahon Hall of Philosophy.

With the simultaneous establishment of the two new schools the University opened its doors for the first time to lay students. What began in 1889 as a post-graduate school of religious studies was now expanded to full university status "with homes for all the sciences."

As erected, the School of Philosophy consisted of six departments, the Department of Philosophy proper, plus the Departments of Letters, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and the Biological Sciences. In 1906 a separate school of science was created and in 1930 the several faculties were reorganized into a graduate school of arts and sciences. In 1936 the faculty of philosophy was reconstituted as a separate school.

Edward A. Pace, in his inaugural discourse as the first dean of the multidisciplinary School of Philosophy, was to say,⁴ "The School of Philosophy comprises those branches of knowledge which have had their greatest development within a century and which seems to have no limit of fruitfulness. It is here chiefly that nature gives up her secrets to man, that man penetrates the mystery of his own being, and from this deeper knowledge of the inner world and this closer scrutiny of the world without, can rise to that Being who is the author of both. It is here, more perhaps than in any other field of research, that men coming from opposite extremes of thought can labor side by side with a common object in view."

Early members of the faculty were to share Leo's enthusiasm for St. Thomas, but they had other interests as well. Pace, whose training included ecclesiastical studies in Rome, also studied psychology and physiology at Paris, Louvain and Leipzig, taking a Ph.D. in experimental psychology under Wilhelm Maximilien Wundt and Karl Friedrich Wilhelm Ludwig at the German university. Serving the Catholic University for 41 years, Pace was at three different periods dean of the School of Philosophy. In 1899, merely twenty years after the pioneer Wundt had opened his laboratory at Leipzig, Pace founded a psychological laboratory, the second in the United States after Hall's laboratory at

Johns Hopkins (1884).

One of the early lecturers on the philosophy of St. Thomas was Archbishop (later, Cardinal) Francesco Satolli, then about to become in 1892 the first Apostolic Delegate to the United States. The University *Announcements* for 1895 listed Pace, Edmund T. Shanahan, William J. Kerby and Frederick Z. Rooker as members of the Department of Philosophy proper. Not all assumed their intended posts. Shanahan, a Boston priest educated in Rome and Louvain, was early appointed to teach metaphysics but became instead a professor of dogmatic theology in the School of Divinity. Rooker taught ethics. Kerby became a professor of sociology and later dean of the multi-disciplined School of Philosophy.

The *Announcements* of 1904-1905 listed two professors of philosophy, Pace and Thomas E. Shields. By 1907 the *Announcements* listed three departments of philosophy, i.e. the Department of Scholastic Philosophy, the Department of Modern Philosophy and the Department of History of Philosophy. The historian of philosophy, William Turner, had by this time been added to the faculty. His textbook on the history of philosophy was used for many years.

Two decades later in 1927 *The New Scholasticism*, now the *A C P A Quarterly*, was founded by Dean Pace in collaboration with James H. Ryan, later the 5th rector of the University and still later first Bishop and then Archbishop of Omaha. Surveying early issues of *The New Scholasticism* one finds that its articles spanned a range of systematic disciplines. In its book review section most of the books reviewed were by German or French authors, some by Italian; American publications were a minority. At the time *The New Scholasticism* was founded, a sister periodical the *Journal of Philosophy* (Columbia University) annually carried a bibliography of works published in philosophy. A 1935 issue listed forty works (books and articles) on Thomas Aquinas, eight on Albert, eleven on Augustine and another 35 on medieval philosophy.

The first dissertation accepted by the School of Philosophy was approved in 1895, the year of the School's formal inauguration. Courses had been offered since 1891. The dissertation, written by George Lucas was entitled, "An Analysis of Spencer's Religion of the Unknowable." The second Ph.D. in philosophy was not conferred until eight years later. Early dissertations took as topics: "the knowableness of God," "the status of physical dispositions," "the problem of evil," "sensa-

tion in St. Augustine and St. Thomas,” “the ontological basis of realism,” and “the classification of desires in St. Thomas and in modern sociology.” Most were analyses of the thought of Aquinas, but, as one might expect, there were studies of St. Augustine, Albertus Magnus, St. Bonaventure, and Dante (Scotus had to wait until 1947). In the early years there were also dissertations on Orestes Brownson, Irving Babbitt, George Santayana, Alfred North Whitehead, and Karl Marx. To date 337 dissertations have been accepted by the faculty of philosophy. They cover every major figure in the history of philosophy and treat of issues confronted in every major philosophical discipline. Today the School chooses to be known for its work in classical and medieval philosophy, for its contribution to the study of 19th century German philosophy and for its advancement of the phenomenological movement.

Prominent early graduates included Ignatius Smith, later dean of the School of Philosophy, Leo Ward, who for more than four decades, added distinction to the faculty of the University of Notre Dame, Charles A. Hart, and John K. Ryan (successor to Ignatius Smith as dean). Others such as Owen Bennett, James Collins, Allan Wolter, Vincent Smith, Rocco Porreco, Jesse Mann, Miriam Theresa Rooney and John Noonan were to join the ranks of noted scholars and educators. Many additional names could be mentioned, some prominent in religious orders, some known as able college and university administrators and some as jurists. The great majority gave their life to teaching within colleges and seminaries and did not rise to national prominence. One academic gem of the University, the Basselin Fellowship Program, a three year pre-theology program leading to the B.A. and M.A. degrees in philosophy, produced many bishops and scholars who often took their final degrees elsewhere. Priest-scholars such as Robert Sokolowski and John Wippel matriculated in that program. So did laymen like James Ross, Robert Kreyche, Frederick Ugast, Francis McQuade, and William May. The late Humberto Cardinal Medeiros and Archbishop Philip Hannan are graduates of the Basselin Program. Bishop Donald Wuerl, Bishop Raymond Burke and Bishop

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Sam Jacobs are three younger members of the episcopacy who completed the Basselin program before studying theology.

Later members of the faculty, not acknowledging present members, included scholars such as Fulton J. Sheen, Rudolph Allers, Vincent Smith, Allan Wolter and William A. Wallace. Ignatius Smith's attractiveness to students was sufficient to secure for him a popular press including a laudatory article in *Time* magazine. Sheen left the faculty to become an Auxiliary Bishop of New York and director of the Association for the Propagation of the Faith, later

achieving national television fame as an engaging homilist. Many living graduates remember the metaphysical depth of Charles A. Hart and Felix Alluntis, the demanding course work of John J. Rolbiecki and the remarkably wide learning of John K. Ryan. The entire Catholic philosophical community profited from their efforts as they produced textbooks, translations, original interpretations and significant speculative work.

Through the 19th century and through most of the twentieth, the value of philosophy as a component in the education of all was uncontested. European trained scholars took it for granted. Many, whether their field be physics or anthropology, could philosophize at a level comparable to their professional colleagues. Rudolph Allers's sister-in-law, Lise Meitner, no stranger to philosophy, served during his tenure as a visiting professor of physics at Catholic University. Meitner had achieved world fame for her discovery with Otto Frisch that the uranium atom indeed had been split. Karl Herzfelt, head of the department of physics at the time, enjoyed the same philosophical curiosity that led his one-time student assistant, Werner Heisenberg, to renown. As graduate education in America became more specialized in the Post World War II period, philosophy did too, perhaps diminishing its value. The tendency to specialize had its negative as well as positive aspects.

At the turn of this century William James could speak of his Harvard colleagues' "deep appreciation of one another" and of the department's cooperative effort to convey basic philosophical truths to its students.

Josiah Royce was writing books with titles such as, *The Religious Aspect of Philosophy*, *The World and the Individual* and *The Problem of Christianity*; and George Santayana, *The Life of Reason*, *The Realms of Being*, *The Sense of Beauty*. James' own *Varieties of Religious Experience* was what we today would call a best seller. Until the second half of this century, at least in the U.S.A., philosophy was studied in more or less a traditional manner. One was expected to know in a cursory way the major figures and movements in the history of Western philosophy. In certain programs, one was also expected to have more than an elementary knowledge of mathematics, physics, chemistry, and biology.

Then modernity caught up with the curriculum. It is not merely that philosophy became so specialized that members of the same faculty sometimes find it difficult to communicate. That is one problem to be sure. Specialization, it must be acknowledged, reflects a deeper fragmentation of a once integrated discipline in which the parts were clearly understood in relation to the whole. That fragmentation has resulted in many a careful and valuable study, but it has also resulted in a kind of trivialization which permits whole careers to be spent on isolated problems or in the study of a single philosopher of little consequence, or worse still, on the youthful efforts of a philosopher whose mature work repudiated his early efforts.

Philosophy's dismemberment is also reflected in the overwhelming variety of professional associations and journals. In the United States alone there are at least 120 philosophical societies, twenty-three of which claim over 500 members each.⁵

One can subscribe to 175 journals of philosophy. In North America over 4000 books and articles are published each year in the field. Needless to say, the tendency to specialize is paid for by a loss of common vocabulary and to some extent by a loss of communal interest.

A second trend typical in Anglo-American circles is the adoption of an ahistorical attitude, often coupled with a monoligualism which cuts one off from primary sources both historical and continental. The converse tendency can also be noticed in a radical historicism which barely conceals a philosophical nihilism.

Perhaps most debilitating is the skepticism inherited from the early

modern period which not only casts into doubt the value of an inherited culture, but even of the intellect's ability to achieve truth. This is most pronounced in those circles which have, in effect, severed the connection between words and things, where knowledge of observation sentences replaces knowledge of being. It is also found in those quarters which reduce philosophy to a kind of evangelism on behalf of social causes, equating philosophy with "edifying discourse" or with an ongoing conversation where certainty is forever an elusive goal.

When G.E. Moore was asked, "What is the function of philosophy?" he could answer: "To give a general description of the whole of the *Universe*, mentioning all the most important kinds of things which we *know* to be in it." C.S. Peirce in his day wanted to be regarded as a laborer in the common enterprise of intellectual enquiry. Peirce is not to be faulted; the division of labor is not the fundamental problem. Given the task of *Dame Philosophy*, some labor is bound to be subservient. To shift metaphors, the master need not complete every canvass. All profit from the careful analysis and exposition of obscure texts or the production of critical editions of ancient or medieval sources. There is no substitute for taking on an issue and studying it to its greatest depth.

Yet if one made an empirical survey of the leading North American journals and major university presses, it would be difficult to determine from the texts examined the literal meaning of the term, "philosophy." Much discourse seems unrelated to the pursuit of wisdom. It is not surprising that the bulk of philosophical work will be unintelligible even to the educated laymen, but some work targets an audience no greater than that provided by a handful of university faculties. If one takes the trouble to cut through the sometimes idiosyncratic jargon, one finds that the Greeks or the

scholastics said it much more simply. Solutions presumed to be original are offered in ignorance of centuries old discussion and resolution of the same problem. How many know the difference between a "fallibilistic meliorism" and a "weak version of universal pragmatics?"

It may be that only in our day are we experiencing the full effects of a turn that took place three centuries ago. Etienne Gilson once remarked

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that if one starts with the mind, one ends there. "History" says Gilson, "is there to remind us that no one ever regains the whole of reality after locking himself in one of its parts." Tutored by Descartes and others, modern philosophy, in repudiating classical metaphysics, put the epistemological problem first. Of course, classical philosophy was not all that was left behind in the transition to modernity.

When in 1877 Leo recommended to the Catholic world the study of St. Thomas, he did so because of the perceived value of his philosophy in meeting "the critical state of the times in which we live." In doing so, he won the admiration of the American philosopher, Josiah Royce. Writing in the late 19th century Royce was convinced that the neo-scholastic movement endorsed by Leo XIII was an important one, in Royce's words, "for the general intellectual progress of our time." The use of St. Thomas, he says, entails growth, development and change. Royce even uses the word "progress" in assessing the impact of the Thomistic movement. "Pope Leo, after all, 'let loose a thinker' amongst his people — a thinker to be sure, of unquestioned orthodoxy, but after all a genuine thinker whom the textbooks had long tried, as it were to keep lifeless, and who, when once revived, proves to be full of the suggestion of new problems, and of an effort towards new solutions."⁶ But Royce was also fearful that a resurgent Thomism might give way to the Kantian legions and their demand that the epistemological issue he settled first.

In *The Neo-Thomists*, (1994) Gerald McCool, S.J., has chronicled that movement in much of its complexity.⁷ The temptation which Royce feared, McCool shows, was experienced by Pierre Rousset, S.J. and Joseph Marechal, S.J. and gave rise to the movement known as transcendental Thomism, one that was to have considerable influence in theological circles. McCool is convinced that the organized neo-Thomistic movement came to an end with the advent of the post-conciliar philosophies inspired by the Second Vatican Council. Nicholas Lobkowitz says as much in an article published in the current issue of the *ACPA Quarterly*.⁸

With respect to the future of Thomism, I am much more optimistic. While it must be acknowledged that Thomism is not the only philosophy compatible with Catholicism, it will forever remain an important intellectual option, at once compatible with pre-scientific knowledge (call it common sense, if you will), with

contemporary natural science, and with the Catholic faith.

The issues which confronted the late 19th century intellectual world remain. As the deep-rooted, tragic state of our culture becomes more widely acknowledged, one can detect a renewed interest in Aquinas. The materialisms confronting Leo have not gone away; if anything they have become more sophisticated and bold. They have not remained in the academy as abstract positions. In the last decade they have entered the market place (or should I say major media) as Christianity has come under attack in ways never experienced before in this country. The lesson to be learned is that faith can not simply be offered in opposition to philosophy: philosophy can be engaged only by philosophy. The philosophical works of Aquinas provide an important arsenal for those who are prepared to defend what Russell Kirk called "the permanent things."

Allow me to bring these reflections to a close with two judgments, relevant to be sure in their own day, but surprisingly apropos our own philosophical condition. Seventy years ago George Santayana spoke appreciatively of what he called "Scholasticism."

1. The dryness of Scholasticism, the absence from it of eloquence, passion, and personal humors, has come to seem a merit to those who would welcome an accurate, sober philosophy, and are tired of romanticism, of views which being brand new will tomorrow be obsolete, and of popular appeals to fancy or prejudice.

2. The fixity and clearness of the Scholastic vocabulary are also a relief from the Babel of figurative terms and perverse categories confusing modern philosophy and making the despair of any one who wishes to think cogently and not be misunderstood.

3. In technical philosophy, especially in England and America, there is a lively movement towards realism, both in the epistemological and in the logical sense of this term; so that the gibes about Scholastic trifling and quibbling have ceased, or have become a sign of ignorance.

4. In its association with Christian faith Scholasticism is also more welcome than it was: many have abandoned the attempt to minimize, modernize, or explain away the historical and religious dogmas of Christianity; in Scholasticism these persons hear for the first time the sound of an honest note; and they are, in more than one Church, the young, the spiritual, and the growing party.⁹

Dean Pace, in defending for his own time the necessity of a philosophical education, wrote at the turn

of the century, 1901, "...the current objections against theological truth are advanced, for the most part, in the name and in the language of philosophy. One can imagine a student who knows little or nothing of agnosticism and pantheism serenely contemplating the marvels of creation, grace and predestination; but one does not envy him. Nor is he in much better plight if he takes up the study of moral theology without a suspicion that its fundamental concepts are discussed and its principles criticized from every possible point of view. In a word, the habit of taking things for granted is one that should be cured before the treatment in philosophy ceases."¹⁰

Need I say more! The more things change, the more they remain the same. ☩

Jude P. Dougherty has been dean of the School of Philosophy at the Catholic University for more than a quarter of a century.

¹ For a detailed account of the University's founding and its history, see C. Joseph Nuesse *The Catholic University of America: A Centennial History*, Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1990. This presentation draws heavily on Nuesse's research.

² *Critique of Pure Reason*, "Preface to Second Edition," B. xxx.

³ Marvin O'Connell. *Critics on Trial: An Introduction to the Catholic Modernist Crisis*. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1994, p. 16.

⁴ *Inauguration of The School of Philosophy and the Social Sciences and Dedication of McMahon Hall, Catholic University of America, October 1, 1895*. "Discourse of Dr. Pace," p. 21.

⁵ For a statistical and interpretive account of the status of American philosophy see Nicholas Rescher, "American Philosophy Today," *Review of Metaphysics*, vol. XLVI, no. 4, June 1993, pp. 717-745.

⁶ Royce, *Fugitive Essays*, "Pope Leo's Philosophical Movement and Its Relation to Modern Thought." Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1925, pp. 408-429.

⁷ Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1994.

⁸ Volume LXIX, Summer 1995, no. 3, pp. 397-423.

⁹ *Present Day Thinkers and the New Scholasticism*, ed. John S. Zybura. B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, Mo, 1927.

¹⁰ Collected papers of Edward A. Pace, The Catholic University of America Archives.