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## CONNATURAL KNOWING IN JACQUES MARITAIN

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A couple of years ago, I had the distinct pleasure of being introduced to Fr. Krapiec's works and in particular, *I-Man. An Outline of Philosophical Anthropology and Metaphysics: An Outline of The History of Being*, by a former student of the Catholic University of Lublin, Hugh McDonald. In these works, it seems to me that Fr. Krapiec's ideas are quite similar to that of another preeminent philosopher, Jacques Maritain. Both offer an etiology for problems of the modern era, namely Cartesian philosophy, as well as an antidote that can be traced back to the ancient-medieval world. Fr. Krapiec is absolutely correct when he argues in his book *I-Man*, that Descartes is the terminal point in the history of philosophy or a „boundary figure“ that separates the ancient and mediaeval world from the modern world<sup>1</sup>. Unfortunately, it was this „boundary figure“ who inspired a worldview of disconnectedness that overflowed not only into his anthropology, as accentuated by Fr. Krapiec in *I-Man*, but into his understanding of nature, theology, and epistemology. While many post-moderns, including feminists<sup>2</sup>, have gone to great lengths to point out the problems of this disconnected-

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<sup>1</sup> M. K r a p i e c, *I-Man. An Outline of Philosophical Anthropology*, Mariel Publications, New Britain 1985, p. 20-27.

<sup>2</sup> C. B y n u m, *Why All the fuss about the Body?: A Medievalist's Perspective*, „Critical Inquiry“ 22 (Autumn 1995), p. 1-33.

ness especially in anthropology and epistemology, they have erroneously lumped Aristotle and Aquinas together with Descartes, especially when it comes to the issue of dualism. As the philosophical enterprise continues to break from the Cartesian patrimony, Thomistic works like *I-Man* will become invaluable for students of philosophy in restoring not only a sense of connectedness in anthropology, but avoiding other errors that would eventually have grave effects upon culture and society at large.

As way of honoring Fr. Krąpiec's on his 80th birthday, I would like to highlight another aspect in philosophy that was lost as the result of the onslaught of Modern thought. I would like to explore a particular branch of epistemology, called affective knowledge or connatural knowing. Unfortunately, Descartes' epistemology reduced all knowing into a kind of mathematical gnosticism, called *scientia mirabilis*. Hitherto, the plethora of sciences worked aristocratically in perfecting intelligence, but with Descartes there comes about a constricted way of knowing the world and being itself, especially extra-mental being<sup>3</sup>. Several Thomists in the 20th century have written on this topic including A. Gardeil, Y. Simmone, P. Rousselot, R. McInerny, B. Smith, T. Gilby, M-D Roland-Gosselin and J. Maritain. Maritain's treatment of this topic is the most comprehensive and offers a theory of affective knowledge that is analogously related to conceptual knowing. Furthermore, unlike some philosophers like Bergson who rebelled completely against the modern era by rejecting the intellect as that which knows being, Maritain roots all knowing, including affective knowing, within reason.

Although there are many reasons why Maritain is interested in exploring other vehicles for knowing, his original intent was to break out of the restrictive philosophical system of Positivism, which is a part of the Cartesian heritage. While Maritain's journey away from Positivism began in 1901 under the influence of Bergson, nonconceptual modes of reason did not become a major strand in his thought until the thirties when he began his formal investigation into mystical and aesthetic experiences. In 1932, with the publication of *Les Degrés du Savoir*, Maritain sets forth a formal treatise on mystical knowledge. Thereafter, all his subsequent publications will emphasize the subjective, practical, existential, and concrete over the objective, theoretical,

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<sup>3</sup> J. Maritain, *The Dream of Descartes*, trans. M. L. Anderson, Philosophical Library, New York 1944, p. 163-183.

essential, and abstract<sup>4</sup>. Henceforth, Maritain develops his idea of nonconceptual ways of knowing the world through emotion, habit, will, internal senses and external senses, which in conjunction with reason penetrate the world of being. Maritain refers to this kind of nonconceptual knowing or intuition by divination<sup>5</sup> as knowledge by "connaturality – that is, a kind of knowledge which is produced in the intellect but not by virtue of conceptual connections and by way of demonstration [...]"<sup>6</sup>.

In order to understand connaturality, it would be helpful to situate it in the context of the other types of intuition that Maritain laid out in his early treatise, *Bergsonian Philosophy and Thomism* (BPT)<sup>7</sup>. In his treatise he attempts to reconcile some of the insights of Bergson and Aquinas. Maritain divides all intuitions into two genera: immediate intuition and divination. Immediate knowledge or perception is close to 'vision'. It is a type of knowledge in which a thing is known directly and not through an intermediary. There are three basic subdivisions here: 1) Sense perception is immediate knowledge of a concrete object – not its essence, but its accidents. All subsequent knowledge is contingent upon it; 2) Intuition of the self occurs not through the self's essence, but through the self's operations, a kind of reflecting back upon itself which results in immediate knowledge of itself; 3) Intellectual perception is an intuition in the broadest sense because while it allows for a subjective intermediary, a concept, there is no objective intermediary that stands between the mind and the thing. Intellectual perception is different from ananoetic knowledge or indirect knowledge because the latter lacks this immediate, direct contact with a particular object. This kind of knowledge, knowledge by analogy, is by definition not intuitive, since its formal object cannot be known directly; whereas intuition, including the types discussed above, have no objective interpositions.

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<sup>4</sup> D. Haggerty, *Jacques Maritain and the Notion of Connaturality: The Valid Role of Nonconceptual Moral Knowledge in the Existential Order*, Pontifica Universitas Lateranensis Academia Alfonsiana, Rome 1995, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Maritain uses the terms connaturality, intuition of the heart, knowledge by inclination, divination, affective knowledge, nonconceptual knowledge and non-rational knowledge synonymously.

<sup>6</sup> J. Maritain, *The Range of Reason*, trans. Brodin, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York 1952, p. 22.

<sup>7</sup> J. Maritain, *Bergsonian Philosophy and Thomism*, trans. M. L. Andison in collaboration with J. G. Andison, Greenwood Press, New York 1968.

Divination or inclination on the other hand, is not knowledge of immediacy, but rather of spontaneity, an intuition of the heart, a kind of spurting forth of the right idea without any prior discursive reasoning. This second type of intuition – referred to earlier as connaturality – while not philosophical or scholarly, is essentially common to all people in their everyday experiences. In BPT, Maritain does not subdivide this type of knowledge, but in *Range of Reason* (RR), he lays out and explains the basic types of connaturality: mystical, poetic, and moral. These three types of connaturality will be treated in separate sections later on in this paper.

Maritain builds his Thomistic foundation for connaturality with two key texts from the *Summa: S. th.*, II-II, q. 45, a. 2 and *S. th.*, I, q. 1, a. 6, ad 3. Here Aquinas resorts to Pseudo-Dionysius' *On Divine Names*, (Chapter II) and Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (Book X, Chapter V). Aquinas distinguishes between two types of knowing that can be found in moral virtue and in divine reality. Aquinas, whether in discussing moral virtue or aspects of the divine economy, differentiates between conceptual-rational knowing of virtue or divine things and knowing that is the result of reflection upon one's subjective inclination which may or may not be conceptually understood. The former is a science and the domain of a moral philosopher or theologian; whereas the latter, connatural knowing, while intellectual (as we discussed earlier), is entirely devoid of conceptual, logical and discursive activities of reason. It is obscure knowing, but as Maritain affirms, it offers a greater possibility of understanding the subject matter (virtue, divine things) than does conceptual knowing. To illustrate the difference between conceptual and connatural knowledge, one might consider the difference between a philosopher, who understands the virtue of temperance, but may or may not live it, and a common person who is temperate but cannot write a treatise on the subject. Similarly, a theologian's knowledge of the divine is different from that of a mystic. A temperate or mystical person might lack any scientific understanding of either virtue or mysticism, but has knowledge of moral virtue or divine things as a result of concrete action. This concrete action has created an obscure propensity to temperance or divine things that becomes recognizable via the affective aspect of the person. Succinctly, the advantage that the mystic or the virtuous person has over-and-above the moral philosopher or theologian who lacks this propensity is that they are utilizing more than one power of the soul. „In this knowledge through union or inclination, connaturality, conge-

niality, the intellect is at play not alone, but together with the affective inclinations and the dispositions of the will"<sup>8</sup>.

## MYSTICAL KNOWING

To understand better Maritain's theory of mysticism, it will be helpful to see it in its larger context of wisdom. This will lay the groundwork for understanding Maritain's explanation of the connatural aspects of mysticism. Maritain defines wisdom as „supreme knowledge, having a universal object and judging things by first principles"<sup>9</sup>. Metaphysics, while having the lowest rank in the order of wisdom, is the supreme science in the natural and rational order. Metaphysics, unlike other disciplines in the natural order, is able to transcend the visible order and see, by ananoetic intuition, the existence and attributes of God amongst other things. Further, metaphysics, while rightly classified as a part of the wisdom family, is relegated to reason and lacks the potency that faith possesses in knowing. Jumping beyond the natural order and into the supernatural or supra-rational order, we have theology and mysticism which are the highest kinds of human wisdom in the ascending order of human knowledge. Theology „develops in a rational manner and according to the discursive mode [...] its proper light is the light of reason illumined by faith"<sup>10</sup> whose source is Divine revelation. Maritain, like Gilson, understands theology not as a science which reveals God through His effects and through the analogous attributes of creatures, but rather as a science going beyond the power of natural reason to behold – under the cloak of mystery – the uniqueness of the inner life and essence of God<sup>11</sup>. Faith allows us to have a taste of the Beatific vision, but unlike the Beatific vision where God is known „by and in his essence", faith borrows human language as an intermediary to attain the Deity. John of the Cross calls these intermediaries „silvered exteriors" due to their ability to allow the person to connect with the „pure gold of Divine reality"<sup>12</sup>. Mysticism,

<sup>8</sup> *Range of Reason*, p. 23.

<sup>9</sup> J. M a r i t a i n, *Degrees of Knowledge*, trans. from the fourth French edition under the supervision of Gerald B. Phelan, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York 1959, p. 247.

<sup>10</sup> *Degrees of Knowledge*, p. 249.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 249–250.

the apogee of human epistemology, while subordinate to the Beatific vision, goes beyond theology because it is no longer a matter of learning Divine things, but suffering them as the result of a direct infusion of God's love. Borrowing St. John of the Cross' definition, Maritain defines mysticism as „an experimental knowledge of the deep things of God, or suffering of divine things, an experience which leads the soul through a series of states and transformations until within the very depths of itself it feels the touch of divinity and experiences the life of God“<sup>13</sup>.

Maritain, nevertheless, went to great lengths to point out some of the misconceptions and errors that enveloped this obscure nonconceptual science. So, before unclocking the connatural aspects of mysticism, it will be helpful to delineate those errors or theories of mysticism that are inconsistent with a Thomistic-Aristotelian paradigm. First, just as Maritain eschewed Descartes' reduction of the plethora of sciences to the mathematical model, he also dismissed those who in his own day saw all rational sciences as entirely bankrupt, having virtually nothing to offer toward solving our contemporary problems. Maritain rejects this type of „mystical dogmatism“ and argues that while mysticism is more perfect because it simply penetrates ultimate reality in a deeper way, it respects the integrity of other sciences, including natural sciences, which have their „special noetic loci in the hierarchy of sciences“<sup>14</sup>. Secondly, he offers warnings to those who mistake other experiences or charisms like religious feeling, preternatural facts, and ecstasies for mystical knowing<sup>15</sup>. Thirdly, so as not to be confused with Plotinus and his followers like Pseudo-Dionysius, Eriugena, Eckhart and Nicholas of Cusa whose tenets of mystical union were very pantheistic and monistic, Maritain made it one of his goals to reconcile mystical knowledge with one of the central assumptions of theism by showing that mysticism effected a true union while keeping the ontological beings of God and the mystic separate<sup>16</sup>. Philosophically, Maritain argues that it is a union of *secundum intentionem* and not *secundum esse*. This respects the Christian para-

<sup>13</sup> *Degrees of Knowledge*, p. 247.

<sup>14</sup> C. H a n c o c k, „*Maritain on Mystical Contemplation*“. *Understanding Maritain, Philosopher and Friend*, ed. D. Hudson, M. Mancini, Mercer University Press, Georgia 1987, p. 261–262.

<sup>15</sup> J. M a r i t a i n, *Scholasticism and Politics*, translation ed. by M. J. Adler Macmillan, New York 1940, p. 188.

<sup>16</sup> H a n c o c k, *op. cit.*, p. 264.

dox that God is somehow ever-present, but at the same time eternally separate<sup>17</sup>. Lastly, Maritain points out that mysticism should not be confused with what he calls a natural mystical experience which he discovered in eastern mystics who mistake the experience of their own esse for a union with the totality of existence.

Upon personal reflection Christian contemplatives began to notice that conceptual knowing was not able to produce a fruitive experience of God because it was knowledge of God from a distance<sup>18</sup>. Conceptual means are inadequate to describe what Maritain sometimes refers to as an „embowellment of divine things“ within us. Theologically, this fruitive experience or „embowellment of divine things“ happens when the Holy Spirit through sanctifying grace invites the mystic, who is habituated with faith, hope and love, to supernatural contemplation. This contemplation of – or participation in – divine love is what connatures him with what he experiences. We know through the inclination of the will; and whereas, ordinarily concepts are the intentional means of knowing, here love or the intention or direction of volitional acts becomes the medium uniting – albeit in an obscure way – the intellect with what is known. To be clear, the mystic experiences God’s „love in its resonance within himself, that is, in its effects on him; and this experience becomes a means of knowing that which has touched him in it“<sup>19</sup>. Since the object of knowing is experienced in darkness, this divine experience in love goes beyond our ability to know, much less explain it. This is why Henry Bars, an expert in mysticism, highlights the fact that St. John of the Cross or any mystic is really incapable of handing on their personal mystical cognition. What the mystic is capable of transmitting are advice and rules that a novice needs in order to have mystical experiences<sup>20</sup>.

While Maritain uses St. John of the Cross to describe the phenomenon of mystical knowing, he turns to John of St. Thomas’ epistemology to explain intentionality within mystical experience. John of St. Thomas, who builds from Cajetan’s and Thomas Aquinas’s base, provides Maritain with a plethora of cognitional signs other than the concept. „Each sign with its own unique function will bring to the person an extra-mental reality in an essentially different way. The immediate act

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<sup>17</sup> See: H a n c o c k, op. cit., p. 264–265, *Degrees of Knowledge*, p. 368–375 for an extensive elaboration on this distinction.

<sup>18</sup> *Range of Reason*, p. 24.

<sup>19</sup> *Degrees of Knowledge*, p. 261.

<sup>20</sup> *Degrees of Knowledge*, p. 310.

of awareness through which the human knower grasps his own reality makes him aware of extra-mental objects intentionally identified with his cognitive faculties through the multitude of diverse formal signs"<sup>21</sup>. So in many speculative sciences the cognitional sign is the concept, in natural mysticism it is the void, in art and poetry it is emotion, but in mystical knowing it is love. Maritain, borrowing from John of St. Thomas, argues that in mystical experience, „love grows into an objective means of knowing, transit in conditionem objecti, and replaces the concept as an intentional instrument“. Love, according to Maritain, „obscurely [unites] the intellect with the thing known, in such a way that man not only experiences his love, but, through his love, that precisely which is still hidden in faith, the still more to be loved, and to be tasted in love, which is the hidden substance of faith“<sup>22</sup>. This, of course, resonates with Aquinas, when he states that „at the summit of our knowledge we know God as unknown“, *tanquam ignotus cognoscitur*, that is, He is known through love, as infinitely transcending any human knowledge, or precisely as God; and as a result *connaturalitas* occurs between the mystic and God<sup>23</sup>.

## MORAL KNOWING

Maritain places himself in the cosmic-realist tradition which he traces back to the greatest ancient philosophers like Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. This tradition comes to an abrupt halt in the modern era, particularly with Immanuel Kant. Maritain refers to his ethical system as cosmic because of the unique situation that the person has in the universe, and as realistic – because his philosophy is rooted in extra-mental realities, namely in that which is known through metaphysics and the philosophy of nature. Thus, the cosmic-realist tradition is both empirical and normative, whereas idealism rejects the empirical component due to its inability to penetrate the noumenal realm, and Positivism relinquishes the normative element because it is steeped in the world of phenomena. Maritain grounds moral goodness in God, nature, and law. Human reason, while it is ruled or measured by the above, becomes the „yardstick“ for the morality of human actions.

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<sup>21</sup> A. G. M c C o o l, *From Unity To Pluralism: The Internal Evolution of Thomism*, Fordham University Press, New York 1989, p. 122.

<sup>22</sup> *Range of Reason*, p. 24.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 24.

Hence all moral objects are intrinsically good when they conform to reason because reason is insured by God as the Eternal Law. However, as we saw with mystical knowledge, reason is not limited to the realm of conceptual-logical thinking. Building on Aquinas' notion that the temperate person knows what temperance is not through conceptual-scientific knowing but through virtuous inclinations, Maritain shows that humans are able to know (whether or not they are virtuous) certain moral values or laws through inclination. In short, certain inclinations (finalities of human nature) are embedded within us and are not known directly by rational-conceptual knowing (moral philosophy) but by intelligible feelings or a propensity that offers us the means to happiness.

When Kant enters the scene, he radically changes the direction of thinking about morality from a cosmic-realistic worldview, which we just touched upon, to an acosmic-idealistic worldview. The latter not only severs humankind's link to God through metaphysics (not to mention theology or mystical knowing), but also is incapable of seeing any the study of the human nature, whether empirical or philosophical, can contribute to the moral well-being of the person. Kant cuts off reason from reality and nature and proposes an ethical system that is confined within pure reason and based upon duty. An action, for Kant is moral only if it can be universalized for all humans and is not contingent upon the goodness of the object. The source is not natural law or God, but its own ability to be universalized. The content of moral action is then deduced conceptually from these universal forms.

Maritain emphatically rebukes this system and other highly rationalistic systems, including certain natural law systems<sup>24</sup> that act as if natural law and moral values were known solely through conceptual and rational analysis. It is uncreated Reason, the Reason of the Principle of Nature, that not only establishes Natural Law (or moral values) by creating human nature, but also makes Natural Law known, „through the inclinations of this very nature, to which human reason listens when it knows natural law”<sup>25</sup>. The binding force comes not from its universality, or from its being rooted in pure reason, but because it is sanctioned by Divine Reason<sup>26</sup> as it is expressed in human inclinations or certain „ends” that are perceived in a „nonconceptual

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<sup>24</sup> J. Maritain, *Man and the State*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1951, p. 80–83. See also Haggerty, p. 241–246.

<sup>25</sup> *Range of Reason*, p. 28.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*.

or preconscious way"<sup>27</sup>. So these basic inclinations that are found in Natural Law are not only devoid of any conceptual mediation, but are in a sense the voice of Divine Reason, which is why they have a „more than human rationality"<sup>28</sup>. This fundamental link between the person and God is going to be severed in the modern era. While Natural Law is fundamentally rooted in these spontaneous nonconceptual inclinations, Maritain leaves it to philosophers to „supervene in order to explain and justify, through concepts and reasoning, what, from the time of the cave-man, [humans] have progressively known through inclination and connaturality"<sup>29</sup>.

The Positivists, on the other hand, while agreeing with Kant that it is futile to try to ground an ethical system in anything like metaphysics or philosophy of nature, disagree with Kant for not grounding his ethics in the phenomena of nature or in that which is studied by empirical sciences. As a result of this break from the universe or „the way things are", the Positivists argue that Kant's idealistic system becomes meaningless and his universal maxims become purely artificial and arbitrary, if not despotic.

Unfortunately, the coup d'état of the Positivists on the Categorical Imperative, which was the preeminent ethical system of time, in most philosophical circles led to the rejection of any that absolutist, normative ethical systems. Kant created an atmosphere that would eventually perpetuate an ethics rooted not in values, where actions are either evil or good and binding on conscience, but in social phenomena, where one finds a kind of „science of mores" as Lévy-Bruhl describes it<sup>30</sup>. Consequently and unfortunately, Maritain states, all value judgments have now come to be perceived as neutral and not binding on conscience; moral maxims are viewed not as rational statements but as simple emotional coefficients, social in origin and entirely lacking objective content. While Maritain would agree that value judgments have subjective and emotional components and are pre-philosophical or non-conceptual, he would nevertheless say that they can be normative if they are rooted in the rational inclinations of the person.

In order to understand better this fact of normativity, Maritain distinguishes between animal inclinations which are rooted in the Freudian unconscious and rational inclinations which are rooted in the spiri-

<sup>27</sup> *An Introduction to the Basic Problems of Moral Philosophy*, p. 54.

<sup>28</sup> *Range of Reason*, p. 28.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>30</sup> *An Introduction to the Basic Problems of Moral Philosophy*, p. 10-11.

tual unconscious or that part of the intellect that is pre-conceptual. This distinction will serve as the medium to see how moral values can have an emotional or affective component, but have been recasted or recreated by the intellect. These „animal inclinations are essentially human“ because they are „reason-permeated inclinations; they are inclinations refracted through the crystal of reason in its unconscious or pre-conscious life“<sup>31</sup>. An example that Maritain often uses to distinguish between animal and rational inclinations is the distinction between the urge „to procreate for the survival of the species“<sup>32</sup> (animal instinct) and the inclination to provide education and moral formation for our offspring (rational instinct). The rational instinct presupposes and engulfs the animal instinct. Another example would be the tendency to herd which is rooted in our animal instincts, and as the result of this transmutation or recasting, leads to concern for personal and social justice<sup>33</sup>. Analogously this transmutation is similar to what the illuminating intellect does to the phantasm from the sensible order when it elevates it and „carries“ it over into the intelligible order during ideogenesis.

The genesis of natural moral knowledge is usually in a concrete situation (or a reflection back upon a concrete experience) which affects both the internal and external senses. Say, for example, that a person sees their employer treating an employee justly or giving him a fair wage or avoiding even the appearance of injustice, the observer feels happy or satisfied or specifically, there is a feeling that „such conduct is in accords with something that we carry within ourselves“<sup>34</sup>, namely reason. However it is not conceptual reason, but rather pre-conscious reason that fundamentally remains „engaged, immersed, embodied in the situation itself, embodied in images and inseparable from sensory experience“<sup>35</sup>. Hence while the moral philosopher will draw upon this concrete experience to conceptualize it as „give to each his due“ or „treat others as human beings and not as things“, the non-philosopher will always remain in this embodied experience at a pre-conceptual level. Instead of reason serving as the vehicle of concept formation, it acts as a „point of convergence for the forces of man’s emotion and propensities. It is a fixed point which sets

<sup>31</sup> *Range of Reason*, p. 27

<sup>32</sup> *An Introduction to the Basic Problems of Moral Philosophy*, p. 53–54.

<sup>33</sup> *An Introduction to the Basic Problems of Moral Philosophy*, p. 53–57

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 56.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*.

in motion proportionate inclinations and emotions; for example, kindness and sympathy in the [above case]"<sup>36</sup>. From this, Maritain comes up with a principle that states: „that which is in tune, in harmony with reason, pleases the rational animal, that which is out tune with reason displeases him"<sup>37</sup>. However, in the final analysis it is up to moral philosophy, due to its scientific character, to discern between genuine and spurious values<sup>38</sup>.

So, while the Positivists simply relegated all moral experience to brute emotions determined by social laws, Maritain goes to great lengths to show that while an ordinary person may not be able to explain or justify his moral values and has to turn to a philosopher for his explanation, values are nonetheless fundamentally rooted in reason. Secondly, as indicated at the beginning of this section, Modernism, or more specifically Positivism, has fundamentally misjudged the domain of reason by reducing all knowledge to empirical, whereas in the cosmic-realist worldview, people like Maritain who view the role of the intellect as much more expansive, are able to see the role that the intellect plays in moral connatural knowledge.

## POETIC INTUITION

As a way to introduce a reader to the nonconceptual world of poetic intuition, Maritain makes a contradistinction in the philosophy of poetry between Surrealism and Platonism. As a result of the examination of what he calls the two extreme positions on poetic intuition, Maritain offers a Thomistic synthesis and the foundations for his theory of connaturality applied to poetic intuition. On the one hand we have Surrealism, a school of thought founded by André Breton who in his own words defines poetry as the „absence of any control exercised by reason"<sup>39</sup>. At the heart of Surrealism it lies an absolute disconnection from the light that reason could offer. Far more than merely breaking from the conceptual and rational mode, Surrealism entails a complete disdain for all facets of reason in the end creates a complete gushing forth of raw images.

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<sup>36</sup> *An Introduction to the Basic Problems of Moral Philosophy*, p. 56–57.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 57.

<sup>38</sup> *An Introduction to the Basic Problems of Moral Philosophy*, p. 63.

<sup>39</sup> *Creative Intuition*, p. 58.

On the other hand, while Maritain criticizes Surrealists for assigning creative intuition to the sensuous unconscious, a realm below reason, he is also critical of placing this intuition above reason as Plato did. Similar to Surrealism, the Platonic notion of poetic intuition is not rooted in conceptual or rational reason, but, unlike Surrealism, it emerges from a source superior to human reason, namely the Muses<sup>40</sup>. While Maritain agrees with Plato's notion of aesthetics to the extent that it is above conceptual reason, he does not want to go so far as suggesting – as the idea of the Muse does – that poetic inspiration originates in the fatherland of subsisting ideas or analogously, suggesting an equivalent of the Averroistic separate intellect that operates as the breeder of all mortal intuitions. So while Surrealism falls below reason and Platonism goes above reason, they both disconnect poetic intuition from reason and hence relegate it to unreason<sup>41</sup>.

In his synthesis of the poetic intuition of the Surrealists and the Platonists, Maritain attempts to place the Platonic Muse in the soul of man, „where she is no longer Muse but creative intuition”<sup>42</sup> united and intertwined with the intellect and the imagination, so that it is no longer intuition above or below reason, but above conceptual reason<sup>43</sup>. Hence poetic intuition, while spiritual in origin, is not extrinsic to the person as in the Platonic notion or a mere „ventilation of the Freudian id” as in the Surrealist notion, but rather comprises both bodily and intellectual aspects, such as the illuminating intellect, emotion and imagination<sup>44</sup>. By touching upon both the material and spiritual aspects of the person, Maritain's intuition or aesthetic knowing avoids both angelism and materialism and hence is truly a human art<sup>45</sup>.

In order to explain the role that the intellect, plays in poetic intuition, Maritain digs deep into the human unconscious to explore the advent of conceptual knowing where it is still unformulated, a kind of „trembling inchoation” but priceless nonetheless. As classically taught, the illuminating intellect as Maritain calls it, shines upon the phantasm

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<sup>40</sup> See Part 1, chapter 1, with reference to Plato in P. J a r o s z y ń s k i, *Metafizyka i sztuka (Metaphysics and Art)*, Warszawa 1996.

<sup>41</sup> *Creative Intuition*, p. 63–64.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 66.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>44</sup> M. V a s k e S J, *A Philosophy of the Beautiful*, Ann Arbor, Edwards Brothers, 1976, p. 140.

<sup>45</sup> *A Philosophy of the Beautiful*, p. 140.

in order to demarcate the „spiritual germ“ or the impressed species from the conditions of matter. However, actual knowing will not happen until the „spiritual germ“ is stamped upon the passive intellect through the power of the illuminating intellect. While the expressed species is consciously known indirectly when the intellect turns back upon itself, both the illuminating intellect and the impressed species are not consciously known at all – directly or indirectly, but surface to our attention by the result of logical necessity or deduction.

Now in the case of poetic intuition, Maritain sees emotion in the spiritual unconscious taking on the role of the impressed species and the art to-be-produced taking on the role of expressed species. Emotion, like the sense image, becomes spiritualized and is made intentional so that it conveys things other than itself<sup>46</sup>. This emotion, which Maritain refers to as form, is the objective world resounding in the subjective artist who is not aware of it until he sees it completed in the work-to-be-made, the analogue of the expressed species<sup>47</sup>. While it is true that ideogenesis is cognitive because it is interested in the universal, poetic intuition is also cognitive because, while focused on the particular existent, it goes far beyond that particular existent:

„Precisely because it has no conceptualized object, it tends and extends to the infinite, it tends toward all reality, the infinite reality which is engaged in any singular existing thing, either the secret properties of being involved in its identity and its existential relations with other things, or the other realities, all the other aspects or fructifications of being, scattered in the entire world, which have in themselves the wherewithal to found some ideal relation with this singular existing thing, and which it conveys to the mind, by the very fact that it is grasped through its union with, and resonance in, subjectivity spiritually awakened“<sup>48</sup>.

By synthesizing Surrealism and Platonism, Maritain gives poetic intuition the proper emphasis that it needs in order to be connatural and truly human. Also, through his broad sense of the intellect, Maritain transformed ideogenesis into a process that relies heavily upon imagination, emotion and will when the intellect is in the poetic mode. As indicated earlier, connaturality is a kind of knowledge that involves the totality of who we are with all of our faculties working in unison – a gestalt. These faculties or inclinations do not just provide

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<sup>46</sup> *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry*, Pantheon, New York 1953, p. 88–89.

<sup>47</sup> V a s k e, op. cit., p. 147.

<sup>48</sup> *Creative Intuition*, p. 91–92.

knowledge of the extra-mental world, but knowledge of the effects that the world has upon these inclinations just as emotion carries not only the world, but the effects that the world has upon the subjectivity of the poet. As in the case of mystical and moral knowing, here again Maritain preserves the role of reason in knowing while also recognizing the importance of the affective component.

In conclusion, Maritain's explication of connatural knowledge helps restore a balanced and holistic view of reason and its role in knowing. Just as Fr. Krapiec returned to Aquinas to find the proper antidote to anthropological questions of the day, so also Maritain sees within St. Thomas the answers to current epistemic problems. Only within Aquinas does one avoid the extreme of both hyper-rationalism and relativism in ethics, irrationalism and supra-rationalism in aesthetics and pantheism, among other things, in mysticism. In the era where philosophers are rejecting reductionism of Descartes and his long lineage, Thomistic philosophers may once again have an opportunity to be heard and heeded in the larger intellectual community.