

A Correspondence
with Peter Geach
(1981 – 2009)

A Correspondence with Peter Geach (1981 – 2009):

*The Respondent's Commentary
and Elucidations*

By

Stephen Theron

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PART I

1981: STEPHEN THERON: “PROFESSOR GEACH ON THE SOUL”¹ TEXT WITH PTG’S COMMENTS

In “What Do We Think With?”² Professor Geach has this to say:

Even if Christians believe that there are “separate souls” the Christian hope is the glorious resurrection of the body, not the survival of a “separated soul.

This certainly needs saying, in view of habitual distortion of Christian teaching by those, Christian or other, who uncritically take over Platonic categories into their beliefs. Thus Geach has stressed the Thomistic teaching that *anima mea non est ego*, that if only my soul is “saved” then I am not saved, and he argues (which again can be drawn from Aquinas) that survival of the soul is not possible without its having at least a permanent capacity for resurrection.³

However, I would like to draw attention to another side of this question. For it seems to me that in the mind of Aquinas there can be no such capacity for resurrection without the survival of a separated soul and hence that mortalism, viz. the belief in a total corruption of all man’s being at death, to be followed by resurrection, is logically impossible.

Further, I am not at all sure that this idea arises from that element of residual Platonism in Aquinas which Geach regards negatively and strives to overcome, most interestingly in his fresh statement of the doctrine of original sin. Thinking this, I am a little uneasy about this and related matters being omitted from Professor Geach’s treatment here. It seems to me, for example, that if mortalism is logically impossible then an account which left one free to include it in one’s reasoning if one set aside the extrinsic disclaimer that orthodox Christians reject it (believe there are separated

¹ This paper, now chapter one here, has never previously been published.

² Peter Geach, “What Do We Think with?”, in **God and the Soul**, p. 40.

³ Cf. his article “Immortality” in **God and the Soul**.

souls) would be faulty. For a notion of resurrection would be being proposed which was compatible with a logical impossibility.

Rather, the notion does not enable us to prove that Socinian doctrine on this is logically impossible. But even if that doctrine is logically impossible, why have I got an obligation to prove it is? (PTG's written comment at this point, and so on throughout)

Now it is true that Geach's phrase "even if" does not of itself imply this compatibility, but merely that whatever is believed about the soul at death and whether or not it is necessary to believe one thing rather than another about it, the hope does not lie here. He is contrasting the Christian and the Platonic *hope*. But here I want to supplement this by arguing, following Aquinas, that the Christian hope presupposes that part of the Platonic hope which was for a survival of a subsistent soul, even though, as Geach shows, that hope only makes sense as part of a hope of resurrection.

I

I begin with a passage in the Supplement to the *Summa theologiae* which, I think, stands on its own merits. Aquinas is arguing the impossibility of resurrection for brute animals and plants, and the argument is based on the corruption of the form of these organisms when they die, so that, he thinks, no future, post-mortal form could be *eadem numero*.

It is to be noted that the Supplement is the work of a much younger Aquinas and contains some material (e.g. about the matter persisting in a living human body) that is quite incompatible with the views of the mature Aquinas. (PTG)

The above argument, nonetheless, seems to me quite decisive, as standing on its own merits, whatever St. Thomas's age or mine at this or any other time. It implies too that one would have to say with Professor Flew, confronted with a seeming Lazarus, that either he is not the same man or that he never was dead, *unless* the same form had persisted right through (cp. Geach, *The Virtues*, p. 63). Aquinas says of the brutes, to whom in this regard the mortalists assimilate men, that the contrary is not able to be said:

*Quod dici non potest, quia cum forma eorum in nihilum cedat, non potest eadem numero resumi ...*⁴

⁴ Aquinas, ST *suppl.* XCI, 5, *sed contra*.

This would mean, I note, that in assuming that one will see again a loved dog, say, in eternity one is positing non-corruption of his form, praying to him and so on, as people do. Can even St. Thomas really *know* that this is not so?⁵

St. Thomas, anyhow, seems to imply that if Lazarus just ceased to be in all respects, then the reappearing Lazarus would be a new creation miraculously given the same memories (cp. the dead girlchild of whom Christ said, before raising her to life, “She is not dead but asleep”, although the point there is that she *was* dead). Nor is it easy to see another way of thinking of it, as seems confirmed by a lot of what Geach says in the first chapter of his **God and the Soul**, “Reincarnation”.

For there he argues that continuity of memory would not be sufficient for the personal identity of a risen man to align with the man whose life he claimed to remember and who might, as his mad surgeon example shows, have hopelessly perished. At the same time, it seems clear off-hand that bodily continuity is not sufficient, that a different being could be built out of my dust.

But if neither of these continuities is separately sufficient for personal identity *why should both together be sufficient?*

I have nowhere said that together they are sufficient: your emphasis suggests that you so read me, but in that case you misread me. (PTG)

Thus the memories could still be as spurious when fed into a body built up out of my ashes. Although Geach writes that “there is the same person if and only if there is the same mind animating that body” (**God and the Soul**, p.2) his

⁵ One wants forgiveness from a loved dog one harmed. Or is one praying to the form of all dogs, to doghood? Or, analogies appearing, do we endow the pet as such with an individualised form, either immediately or in a gradual process? To concede this would be to take a giant step towards absolute idealism, all forms below the Absolute Idea being representations only unless assimilated in what is at once identity and cancellation into that Idea, “in whom”, i.e. and nowhere else, “we live and move and have our being”. Is not theology’s “state of grace” something like this? Thus, anyhow, in the dog one would meet with all dogs (and conversely) as (and yet not as) one meets with Christ in any *human* being. But then what exactly saves this from being an adopted way of speaking merely, i.e. an ideology? The reality of grace, for one thing. Yet we have also here a positing of a change of form (replacement of a lower by a higher) in an animal brought about by how *we* treat him, her or it. The “we” here, however, is gratuitously abstract, severed from that in which *we* “live and move” etc. So “we” are not absolutely we, either, as if standing *beside* the Idea, the Concept, the deity, beside whom, rather, outside of religious imagery, there is, or has to be, nothing, i.e. he is himself “the Idea”, be it all or nothing.

main conclusion is that “a man’s living again does involve some bodily as well as mental continuity with the man who lived formerly” (*Ibid.* p.28). His reference to mind implies no definite commitment to the idea of the mind as subsistent, as is shown by his strong denials, in “What Do We Think With?”, that a man “thinks with an immaterial part of himself” (*Ibid.* p.38), which at least *seems* to express more than a dissatisfaction with this use of the word “part”.

Taught by Wittgenstein and warned by the awful example of McTaggart, I distrust arguments that treat “part” as a clear and univocal term. (PTG)

If man is “not a body *plus* an immaterial somewhat” then it seems that the form of man is no more than the “actual organisation” of the body and not subsistent as Aquinas argues, I think with reason, that it must be to satisfy the criteria for identity a resurrected man would require.

This implies, of course, that “mental continuity” would not be satisfied in the sense Geach requires unless by an abiding subsistent soul, and for all I can tell he might concur in this. The fact remains that in his argument against the sufficiency of mental continuity he implies an understanding of that phrase consistent with there being no substantial soul, one in terms of merely phenomenal consciousness, merely “ostensible” memories.

False. Read again the defence of the possibility of separated souls in “What do we think with?” and in the Aquinas article of **Three Philosophers**. In “Immortality” I spoke of physical continuity in the old sense (contrasted with “moral”). (PTG)

Otherwise one would have expected him to say that the Tichbourne claimant he cites had no real mental continuity with his dead friend, rather than that he had a mental continuity that was necessary but not sufficient for identity. Without commitment to an abiding subsistent form his doctrine, it seems to me, remains open to the objections of Flew and others. It seems plain we need a doctrine of an abiding subsistent form which itself, *eadem numero*, resumes its body.

II

In one place Geach expressly denies the subsistence of the soul:

Since the soul is not a separately subsisting and separately individuated entity, neither creationism nor traducianism is true as first stated (*The Virtues*, p. 31).

I shall argue that there are reasons for not denying the soul's subsistence besides what I have claimed is a consequent inability to justify as coherent the hope of resurrection. Plato was not wrong in this, but in his thinking his insight sufficient for a hope of salvation. I think the most fruitful procedure here will be to set out the reasoning of Aquinas on this and then see what there is to say about it *vis à vis* Geach's account.

The body of the article the *sed contra* of which we have already quoted runs as follows:

Homines vero corrumpuntur et secundum totum, et secundum partes: sed hoc est ex parte materiae, non ex parte formae, scilicet animae rationalis, quae post corruptionem hominis manet incorrupta: animalia vero bruta, et plantae, et mineralia, et omnia corpora mixta corrumpuntur et secundum totum et secundum partem, et ex parte materiae quae formam amittit, et ex parte formae quae actu non manet; et sic nullo modo habent ordinem ad incorruptionem.

To be ordered towards a life not subject to decay, that is, the form must remain *in actu*, operative, after death, Aquinas claims. If I die I may live again, but if my substance ceases to be, materially and formally, it cannot be reconstituted. A corrupted form leaves no residue. It cannot be re-animated (cp. also *Summa theol.: Supp.* LXXV, art. 1 & 2 and LXXIX, art. 2: *idem homo numero ... dum eadem anima numero eidem corpori numero conjungitur*).

I believe in the gap's being filled by the existence of a separated soul: I believe this because of the Church's *lex orandi*, which for me is *lex credendi*; I am not confident that I could not live again after a temporal gap, because the logic of intermittent existence is not so clear to me as you seem to find it. (PTG)⁶

What is involved here is a question of the being or *esse*, that first actuality of anything, of the form or soul:

⁶ I.e. I found it so then, c. 1982. Today (2022) my confidence for or against "intermittent existence" is no greater or less than Geach's then was, mainly because I incline, with McTaggart but perhaps unlike Geach, to deny the (absolute) reality of time. Hence I would take St. Peter's statement that "with the Lord a day is as a thousand years" as meaning any number of thousands thereof and not merely that God has "longer" time-spans generally. So nothing is absolutely "intermittent". I am not unaware that this makes of my statement here a kind of picture (*Vorstellung*, representation) only of the true situation, as does in fact any subject-predicate construction, as I have claimed elsewhere repeatedly now. "God has spoken only one Word" (John of the Cross).

Aliorum generabilium et corruptibilium forma non est per se subsistens, ut post compositi corruptionem remanere valeat, sicut est de anima rationali, quae esse quod sibi in corpore acquiritur, etiam post separationem a corpore retinet, et in participationem illius esse corpus per resurrectionem adducitur, cum non sit aliud esse corporis, et aliud animae in corpore: alias esset conjunction animae et corporis accidentalis; et sic interruption nulla facta est in esse substantiali hominis, ut non possit idem numero redire homo propter interruptionem essendi, sicut accidit in aliis rebus corruptis, quarum esse omnino interrumpitur, forma non remanente, materia autem sub alio esse remanente (Summa theol., Supp. LXXIX, 2, ad 1um).

This remarkable passage teaches

- a) The form of man is *per se* subsistent, even when in the body.
- b) The form or (rational) soul acquires its *esse* or its act of being (*sc.* of existing) in the body, i.e. was not somehow brought to it as having its own distinct *esse* beforehand.
- c) The soul has the same *esse* as the body to which it is united, so that this union is in no way accidental.
- d) Hence death makes no interruption in the substantial act of being (*esse*) of the man (if it did, it is clearly stated, the same man could not possibly return).
- e) At resurrection the material of the body, which has remained as taking part in other *esses*, viz. the being (existence) of other things, will be led to participate again in that *esse* which the soul has retained all along. It has retained it, moreover, as the form of that body it once had, so that *nulla forma substantialis corporis humanae cedit penitus in non ens* (*ibid. art. 1 ad 4um*). That material has all along belonged by right to that form which in time will actually resume it.

If this view were right, why should not the soul assume any old matter to make a human being? It would be the same human being because of his continuing *esse* and which matter it is might be of no concern – just as my identity in this life is not threatened by metabolic change – but surely this is wrong! (PTG)

There are three main points of difficulty here:

- 1. The soul's subsistence.
- 2. How the union of body with soul comes about.
- 3. How the substantial *esse* of the man can be said to continue when the man is dead.

III

The third difficulty revolves around the senses in which the soul is and is not a part of the man. Again, Geach strongly objects to any use of the term “part” in this context:

“Part”, “Structure” etc. are too flexible to stand argumentative loads. See the **Philosophical Investigations**, on complexity and simplicity. (PTG)

Further, Geach writes:

If a man does not think with a material part of himself, we cannot infer that he does think with an immaterial part of himself; unless we first assume that in any event a man thinks with some part of himself, which may be material or immaterial. Indeed it is difficult to make sense of the expression “immaterial part”, even if you say “constituent” instead of “part”.⁷

Difficult, but not, I think, impossible:

My answer (*loc. cit.*) was to expound Aquinas in *Summa theol. Ia* as saying that this form can be a living thought of itself after death. But the soul does not perceive its own essence in this life, only its acts, says Aquinas. So this form of life is not clearly apprehensible by us. (PTG)

Due to failing eyesight and dependence upon a bulky rebound copy of the 1880s edition of the *Summa* I have so far not, even after much searching, succeeded in finding exactly this phrase “this form can be a living thought of itself after death”. Nonetheless it seems in exact conformity with, say, Hegel’s thought on this matter. Thus the Absolute Idea knows only itself, as in Aristotle, and this idea, just qua idea, is itself the Absolute, Hegel teaches. Nor do I consider this view un-Thomistic, however. The knowing itself only here amounts to its being (itself), as St. Thomas clearly teaches concerning God.

In the places where Geach considers the soul as surviving separately, and hence *then* subsisting, since he says both that the soul is not this man and, implicitly, that it is not something outside the man, we seem bound to infer from this that it is part of the man. The notion of part seems to bear no prior necessary connexion with what is material.

⁷ Geach, *God and the Soul*, p. 38.

“Part”, “structure”, etc. are too flexible to stand argumentation loads. See the **Phil. Investigations** on complexity and simplicity. (PTG)

Certainly the notion, like most of our notions, is drawn from matter and its divisibility, but the analogical application to whatever is seen as non-material seems to pose no *special* problem. Why be so strict about just this term? I say the hand is part of the body, or that it is part (and parcel!) of a certain man’s goodness not to notice a particular deception.

Geach would object, I think, that one nonetheless goes too far beyond the primary sense of “part” if one calls the form or actual organisation of an organized body a part of it, though it may be a true fact about it (part of its concept?) that it is so organized. But this is to bypass the claim of Aquinas and others that the “actual organization of the *human* body is itself subsistent, even when so organizing the body, and is thus an actual part even though its first act, its *esse* or act of existing, is the same as the *esse* of the whole. In any case in discussing the soul we are not referring to the organization of the body as a *fait accompli* but to the *principle* of its organization, “principle” being understood as “that from which something proceeds in any way whatever” (Aquinas’s definition), i.e. an active, shaping principle.

It is only because it so subsists while organizing the body, and not only when separated, that the soul later can be separated as subsistent. Professor Geach in fact is unable to explain this. “How can the individual life of an animal go on when the animal no longer is alive” (**Three Philosophers**, p.98). But we can say the *principle* of its life goes on.

Here he reports Aquinas, who “held that it *is* a man who thinks, but that this thinking is predicable only of his soul, not of his body” (which implies for Aquinas the soul’s subsistence, since it has an operation in which the body does not participate). It is only because of this, viz. that “the embodied soul of man can be a thinking subject” (*ibid.* p.99), that the explanation of how it can survive death goes through. Yet Geach raises difficulties about saying that thinking is predicable of the soul:

We must allow that the traditional way of speaking in which a man is said to consist of soul and body, does not fit in well with Aquinas’s thought, and that he creates obscurity by continuing to talk in this way. A man is an animal, and an animal is a body, so a man is a body, not a body *plus* something else. Again, for Aquinas, Socrates is a man, and is an animal, and is a body (sc. a *single* body) by virtue of one and the same individualised form that makes it a (single) body, Socrates’ soul, so we cannot reckon Socrates’ body and soul together as *parts* of Socrates, in any acceptable sense of “part”. (cf. Geach, in his **God and the Soul**)

This implies that talk of the soul is a dispensable way of speaking and hence radically unlike talk of my dog. If the soul is subsistent and separable, however, how can talk of it, which is less than the whole man and hence a part, be dispensable? As to its individualisation, why can't the soul be individuated as subsistent *in* becoming the soul of this body, both having the same *esse*? Why can't a subsistent form make something else to be a subsistent body, so that we have two distinguishable substances with one act of existing rather as an Ethiopian both is not white and is white with respect to his teeth? Socrates as a subsistent body does not think but he thinks with respect to his soul. My teeth exist (live) in and with my own act of existing or living, yet they are not me but a part of me and would be so even if they were at one and the same time my *principium vitae*, by a metaphysic not much grosser than that involved in comparing the soul to the source of a stream (*principium*). Geach commented here:

“*Principium*” has no etymological connexion with any word for source of a stream: it comes from “*primum*” and “*capere*” – two words as topic-neutral as can be.

He attempts, indeed, “to rephrase Aquinas’s account of what it is that thinks” but in that paragraph any explanation of *how* there can be thought with no bodily organ of it is just left out, though he shows that this must be the case. It is not convincing as an explanation to say that a man thinks in virtue of having a thinking sort of life. Thought is a real operation. If it is not an operation of some existing material agent, simple or composite, then there is an existing immaterial agent of it. *Operatio sequitur esse*.

*

[2022.03.11. I note Geach (cited above here) recalling Aquinas “as saying that this form can be a living thought of itself after death” (referring to the soul) “but the soul does not perceive its own essence in this life, only its act, says Aquinas. So this form of life is not clearly apprehended by us.”

As I have mentioned already above, I strongly suspect this to be a piece of crypto-Hegelianism on Geach’s part, unconscious or not. He seemed to feel it a point of honour almost to oppose or belittle Hegel, therefore needing to point out to the extent of over-stressing and hence possibly distorting how McTaggart broke free from him. For Hegel, on what is at least a plausible interpretation (though if it is not then it is an improvement derived from a study of Hegel), this Thomistic puzzle does not arise as quite the puzzle he, Geach, makes of it. The background is Aristotelian. God, for Aristotle, is *the thought that thinks itself and nothing else*, nor is God anything else for

the Christian, particularly if we read Hegel in the light of the Hegelian dialectic where, for example, cognition is inseparable from love (Cf. *Enc.* 159), for the reasons given. This *the Absolute Idea* is thus cognitive, volitional and, finally, Trinitarian (minus any stress there upon mere mathematical threeness as such, except perhaps as such a stress features in the syllogism, since, Hegel claims to show, “everything is a syllogism”).

What we need to drop, as Geach rather misses as regards any expository function being involved, is talk of “this life” as a separate, somehow competing feature of reality with the divine version. As images of God we too should partake of this quality, as being really our own ideas of ourselves, this being our “true self”, as we incline to say, the rest being, in Hamlet’s words, “madness”. This Hegel identifies as precisely the Pauline travail of nature, that it is not identical with its idea, with God as that would be. For so we find Aquinas presenting things in Ia15, the *quaestio* on “the divine ideas” in the *Summa*. There Aquinas says that each of the divine ideas, e.g. his idea of you or of me, is identical with the divine essence, necessarily, as he shows, and hence, in that respect, each idea is identical with any other of the ideas, as it were syllogistically. Thought can no other. It is this *thought*, too, that has brought forth creation while the necessity consequently involved, to our way of thinking at least, is none other than the expression, the utterance (in the Word) of absolute or divine *freedom*. That is the secret of my individual self-consciousness, that one can otherwise break one’s head over through a lifetime, that its being *means* that God knows and loves its subject and has never been without the thought of it, of him or her, while whether this is as individual, group or some universal man or man-woman, though closely related no doubt, is a separate question. “We know what we are but we know not what we shall be”, meaning, doubtless, what we really are, in the eternal (i.e. transcending any merely ephemeral human now) sight or knowledge of God. So the two planes of being, created and divine, are not really two aspects as if on one level, two in one. They are rather one in (what appears to be) two. The likeness is rather with zero and one, where there is really only one. We have to break free, grow up, cast away the ladder (that of language in great part), be actually absorbed or (in a Hegelian or New Testament sense) cancelled. Did Wittgenstein miss this? Did he apprehend it *in* refusing to speak of it? Hegel spoke of it. The Bible speaks of it. Herbert McCabe OP chides Wittgenstein for giving up too easily here as one can indeed see that Geach does not give up.⁸

⁸ Cf. His later *Truth and Hope* (Notre Dame 2001) and especially the fine review of it by Fergus Kerr OP in *New Blackfriars*, Oxford.

Thus far we might be reverting to mere pantheism, something Hegel hotly denied. The actual man, like actual nature, is indeed the very opposite of its or his idea. But this opposition is itself an idea, as, for infinite or true mind, Hegel claims, being and non-being are identified as, moreover, all predication exemplifies or, rather, proclaims, by use of, in some languages only implicitly however, “the soulless word ‘is’”, i.e. this is *not* a mere linguistic point. We are talking about relative, i.e. concrete identity.

So for infinity creation, i.e. *ex nihilo*, has to be not merely possible but, like everything infinite, necessary, like freedom itself. The whole drama of “the Fall” (of man, as of nature and all that is finite) lies there, signifying God’s truth and not the opposite, that “God is not God”, i.e. would not then be such (Hegel).]. Infinite mind embraces and must embrace both the idea of what is, as concrete, other than the or its idea and, in one act, this idea simply. This is, furthermore, the sense of the form’s having to be “a living thought of itself”, in Geach’s words taken from Aquinas, as is the Idea or God thinking only or absolutely himself such that “I and my father are one” for, Christ adds, “I do always what pleases him”. We switch there from the philosophical or absolutely spiritual to the religious. That is to say, the incarnation itself requires these premises, since it is itself a case of God’s choosing what is not to shame the things which are (St. Paul). That is, incarnation is the Cross (is sacrificial death of the divine person in agony) and conversely, one indissectable reality.

As being *ex nihilo* the creation remains *nihil* or, as in recent pronouncements by those having care of what is to be believed by believers in Christ, incommensurate being, i.e. it both is and is not “the true being”, which absolutely speaking is the Absolute Idea (of itself only). For Hegel this is one with the final method or “way to go” (*meta hodon*) of logic, of thought itself. In religious ceremony, e.g. in coronation of a new Pope, this incommensurateness, or “the glory of the world”, is, in a figure, equivalent to dust and ashes, though these themselves are but the representation, *Vorstellung*, of non-being in the world of poetry or in the poetry of the world. *Ratio*, recalls Aquinas, *est ad opposita*, is hence the negation in affirmation of nature as being *ad unum*. In a similar (or rather the opposite) way, in the practical sphere, we hurry to affirm *lex*, as, inevitably and abstractly *ad unum* when we should keep to *ius* or *jus* as the truly just or equitable, corresponding to the virtue of *epeicheia*. The similarity, however, is here too in difference or opposition, exemplifying the *ad opposita* of reasoning. That is, the law is to know when to break the law. *Lex est aliqualis ratio juris* or, as is often said, justice in its full truth is not legal justice. The same point is worked out by Aquinas in one place under the figure of the four kinds of law, viz. eternal, natural, legal and divine.

That is, the point is as such there to be flattened, the particular the universal, I the “universal of universals”, whatever “we” may wish to mean by it. The creation, then, adds nothing to God since it is God adding nothing to himself, of that necessity which God and nothing else is, and this we call freedom.

Divine creation, then, *stricto sensu*⁹, in no way finitises the divine infinity, the Absolute Idea.]

IV

The genius of Plato and Descartes has given this superstition an undeservedly long lease of life; it gained accidental support from Scriptural language, e.g. about flesh and spirit – accidental, because a Platonic-Cartesian reading of such passages is mistaken, as Scripture scholars now generally agree. In truth a man is a sort of body, not a body plus an immaterial somewhat, for a man is an animal, and an animal is one kind of living body, and thinking is a vital activity of a man, not of any part of him, material or immaterial. The only tenable conception of the soul is the Aristotelian conception of the soul as the form, or actual organization, of the living body, and thus you may say a man thinks with his soul, if you mean positively that thinking is a vital activity, an activity of a living being, and negatively that thinking is not performed by any bodily organ.¹⁰

I repeat my objection here that this account is only a negative rejection of a materialist theory of thought which not only gives no account of how after all thought is possible but rejects what I think can be shown to be the only possible account, viz. that thought, since it is an operation of a man in which no bodily part is an instrument, is only an operation of a man insofar as it is also an operation of his intellect or soul, which therefore must subsist as much as the man subsists, since a thing only operates in so far as it exists. Clearly the argument against organs of thought apply equally to the total sum of bodily organs and, as I have said, if a man does not think with the whole of himself then in this case he thinks with some part of himself which is not a bodily part.

Nego consequentiam et consequens. (PTG)

This argument is established prior to determining whether the soul is related to the body as its extrinsic mover or to the man as his form. It will be a

⁹ Cp. our “Creation *stricto sensu*”, *New Blackfriars*, March 2008, pp. 194-213.

¹⁰ Geach, *God and the Soul*, p.38.

condition for the truth of the latter view that it can be squared with this argument, rather than the reverse being the case.

At this point something needs to be said about Geach's interpretations of philosophy and Scripture. I take the latter first. It is of course true and important to make known that the antithesis between flesh and spirit in Scripture was utilised by St. Paul and others to contrast unregenerate and regenerate man but there is no doubt that the original and primary meaning of the terms represents a dualism, by no means confined to Plato, as between the "matter of which the body is made" (Note *d* to *Romans* 7 in the larger Jerusalem Bible) and the spirit as "the highest element in a human being", with the result that "there are many texts where it is hard to tell whether it is the natural or supernatural spirit that is referred to" (*Ibid.*, note *g* to *Romans* 7).

What the Jerusalem Bible notes say is not evidence (To my mind they are often heretical). (PTG)

What would be wrong, as we said, would be to make the Christian hope to be just that natural immortality secured by freeing the soul from the body (and implied even by the account of the witch of Endor calling up Samuel, who says "Why have you disturbed my rest?").

The story of the witch (better translated "medium" in some modern versions) is parallel to ever so many modern stories of fraudulent mediumship (Saul was an unusually tall man and doubtless known by sight to most Israelites: observe then how the medium pretends to know his identity preternaturally and the poor God-abandoned fool is convinced!). There is no need to believe Samuel's soul returned at the behest of this ungodly person. Could she get God to co-operate? (PTG)

Nonetheless the doctrine of the separable soul plays a fuller role in Christian and Biblical teaching than Geach is willing to allow. The *Book of Wisdom*, for example, envisages a post-mortal reward for the just, who only *seem*, "in the eyes of the unwise" (*Wisdom* 3, 2), to have died, without reference to resurrection, unlike the *Maccabees* text to which Geach refers.

The passage in Wisdom iii, 7(?) is parallel to the passages in Malachi iv, 1-3, Daniel xii, 3, which certainly refer to the lot of the saints in light. So I deny that the passage in Wisdom prescinds from the hope of resurrection. (PTG)

How can this be? Scripture abounds in proof texts. St. Paul writes of himself as among those who "actually want to be exiled from the body and make

our home with the Lord” (2 Cor. 5, 8). He says that “I want to be gone and be with Christ, which would be very much the better, but for me to stay alive in this body is more urgent for your sake” (Phil. 1, 2) and that “whether we are living in the body or exiled from it we are intent on pleasing him” (2 Cor. 5, 8). Elsewhere he speaks of a man in Christ, “whether in the body or out of it I know not” (2 Cor. 12).

If you are arguing with a Socinian or other mortalist, it is proper to say thus insistently that on the face of it the Scripture teaches an intermediate disembodied state of the soul. But I do not know what you are at when you cite them to me, a believing Catholic Christian, who prays to the Saints and for the dead as the Church does. Are you forgetting my anti-Socinian word about the Socinians’ impoverishing the doctrine of the Communion of Saints (The Virtues, p.62)?

What St. Paul hoped for at the time of his martyrdom (see II Timothy) was to be crowned with glory by his Lord in that day along with all those who have “loved his Appearing”. (PTG)

So even if *anima mea non est ego* and if, in Aquinas’s words, *anima Abrahae non est, proprie loquendo, ipse Abraham, sed est pars eius ... unde vita animae Abrahae non sufficeret ad hoc quod Abraham sit vivens* (Supp. 75, 1 ad 2um), yet St. Paul did not shrink from speaking thus improperly in canonical texts, and of course Aquinas himself, in using the phrase “*proprie loquendo*”, indicates to my mind that something of a technical or theoretical point is at stake, rather than the difference between a true and a false hope as Geach would have it.

And was St. Peter making a technical philosophical point when he said on the day of Pentecost “David is dead and buried and his sepulchre is with us unto this day ... David is not ascended into the heavens”?? (Acts ii, 29. 34). (PTG)

Whence Aquinas says, most devastatingly of all:

Gloria corporis non pertinet ad beatitudinem sicut in quo principaliter beatitudo consistat, sed per quandam redundantiam a gloria animae, ut in Secunda Parte dictum est (Ia-IIae 4, 6). Unde spes, secundum quod est virtus theologica, non respicit beatitudinem corporis, sed beatitudinem animae, quae in divina fruitione consistit. (Summa theol. IIIa 7, 4 ad 2).

I take this to be orthodox doctrine, though Geach’s language might lead one to assimilate it to Platonic or Cartesian “superstition” that he wishes to

distinguish from this doctrine, for which indeed there is full Dominical authority.

The essential glory of the Blessed in the Kingdom is certainly not the same thing as the glory of having agilitas and other gifts. It does not follow that the proper subject of glory is not a human being, who is a rational animal. "In my flesh I shall see God" is the doctrine of faith whether or not it is a correct translation of the text of Job. (PTG)

For the Lord spoke thus improperly (improper from the viewpoint of "anthropology" but from that of hope) when he said to the dying thief, whose body was doubtless interred a few hours later not far from Golgotha, "Indeed I promise you, today you will be with me in Paradise" (Luke xxiii, 43), or when he spoke of the poor *man* being "carried away by the angels to the bosom of Abraham" (Luke xvi, 22), identified by Aquinas with the *limbo patrum*.

*There is no need, as I said in **Providence and Evil**, to believe in the details of this parable (manifestly couched in the Pharisees' style of story-telling) as theological truth. A parable is a parable. If we have to take the eschatology of this parable literally, immaterial souls have tongues that can be moistened with water! (PTG)*

Geach's point here, I note in passing, seems applicable to our use of language, also an affair of the tongue, as such. For Hegel, this consideration meant that all speech or, even or especially, thought is false before or when not assimilated in what is both transfiguration and cancellation (*Aufhebung*) to the Absolute Idea, viewable, as we noted a while back, as thought's thought of itself. In view of this, Hegel specifies further that the Absolute Idea is itself the Absolute, or that "the Idea, as unity of the Subjective and Objective, is the notion of the Idea ... This unity is consequently the absolute and all truth, the Idea which thinks itself ... It is its own content, in so far as it ideally distinguishes itself from itself" (Hegel, *Enc.* 236, 237).

The acted parable, *so to say*, of the raising of Lazarus, indeed, supports this doctrine. In it the late Jewish hope of resurrection at the last day is shown, by the miraculous sign, coupled with Christ's words, viz. "whoever lives and believes in me will never die", spoken just after Martha's alluding to this latter-day resurrection, to be less than what Christ offers, viz. an eternal life which death does not interrupt.

A more natural interpretation is: I am the Resurrection and the Life: those who have died believing in me will live by me at the Last Day: living

believers found on that day upon earth will never die at all (St. Paul clearly has this doctrine: I Thess: 14-16). (PTG)

But this is not St. Paul but the fourth evangelist. Cf. the discriminations between the inspired writers or between the same writer, in the case of St. Paul, at different periods, in, for example, E. Schillebeeckx OP: *Christ*, Holland 1977; English translation, SCM 1980. On Geach's "more natural" interpretation Christ's reply to Martha would simply be echoing her own pre-Christian view, which is or seems *inconveniens*.

It is anyhow, then, to this expectation that we must add the arguments of Geach and Aquinas that there must be a resurrection, that the soul can't survive indefinitely on its own but can only by its survival, and still more by its glorification if such should occur, point to resurrection, seen nonetheless as non-essential to present happiness of the redeemed:

Gloria corporis non est ita essentialis, sicut gloria animae (Summa theol., Supp. 69, 2 ad 3).

Gloria corporis, cum redundet ex anima, tota consistit in anima quasi originaliter (Ibid. 7 ad 10).

Again:

Corpore resumpto, beatitudo crescit non intensive sed extensive (Summa theol. Ia-IIae 4, 5 ad 5).

Finally:

Beatitudo principaliter et proprie consistit in anima secundum mentem, secundario tamen, et quasi instrumentaliter requiruntur ad beatitudinem corporis bona (Ibid. IIIa, 15, 10 ad 2).

Now these texts merely harmonise with the Scriptural texts I have cited, and so whatever hand Plato had in the inspiration of either is neither here nor there. It seems to me they give more than an accidental support to at least some of his, Plato's doctrine and that was the point at issue in this section. Geach sums up:

The vision of God is not corporis bonum, even if the subject enjoying that vision is a man and therefore a living body. So the text does nothing against my view. PTG

*

[For what it may be worth I recall Aquinas remarking in an Aristotelian commentary that "body" is a term not properly belonging to metaphysics,

having proper place only in logic. Implied would be that “a living body” is not quite kosher as a term, i.e. it would not properly analyse what man (or perhaps even an animal or plant?) essentially is. Saying that man, i.e. the whole man, is “a living body” might rather recall the living dead of zombie-lore! “Life”, that is to say, tends to conceptually swallow up “body” as closer to the Absolute Idea, to speak in Hegelian terms concerning what perhaps no one else has so closely analysed. One must add, however, that Hegel also relativises hylomorphism as a whole in the course of his development of what he has as much right as anyone else, e.g. Aristotle, to develop, although it is in fact on Aristotle that he most heavily relies, e.g. in his acceptance and endorsement of syllogism (concluding that “everything is a syllogism”, in marked contrast to Quine or Frege, say, if one recall his logic specifically, although the point of this Hegelian logic is that it is not specific, is thought itself as being itself is, he says, its “method”, or can be so seen at a certain stage of his thinking.

The Absolute Idea ... is its own content. This content is the system of Logic. All that is at this stage left as form for the idea is the Method of this content, - the specific consciousness of the value and currency of the ‘moments’ in its development (*Enc.* 237: Cf. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, 1816, final page: *Die Methode ist der reine Begriff, der sich nur zu sich selbst verhält, sie ist daher die einfache Beziehung auf sich, welche Sein ist).*

So here, to say that man is a living body is to leave man, divinised in Christ, suspended between the truth of spirit, i.e. thought or mind, and the representation, *Vorstellung*, which is flesh or, in McTaggart’s phraseology, systematic misperception.

Now according to Hegel, religion and even theology needs this type of pictorial expression as part of what language, something of the tongue after all, essentially is, ever marked by the imperfections of its beginnings and thus something we need to “escape from” (Herbert McCabe OP). It is our normal way of speaking and so taken on by Christ as essential to his “incarnation”, his enfleshment, even though “the flesh profiteth nothing”. So “this is my body, this is my blood” indeed, inaugurates in very truth a new type of being, the sacramental. This is so even granted that in a wider sense nature as a whole is a sacrament¹¹, so our own body and blood is already a sign (sacrament) of the Word of God as a whole, as indeed is the whole system of nature. Yet *this* sacrament (of the altar) takes up into God, into the Absolute Idea “which is itself the Absolute”, body and blood indeed, but as being indeed divine as is for ever the flesh and blood assumed

¹¹ Cf. Aquinas, *Summa theol.* III, where this is stated.

by the Word and hence the “taking up” is unique and hence distinct from the ordinary processes of thought referred to here (cf. the text, “my thoughts are not your thoughts”). The bread and wine are taken up into the being of the Word incarnate. This is so even though such things, bread, wine, have no true being in themselves already but only “in” God, i.e. in the divine thought or self-knowing, as this can only mean. Thus Thomas Aquinas also states that God has no real relation to created things as outside of himself, i.e. they *are not* thus outside, though it is thus that *we* first perceive them and hence this remains the basis of the language wherein we refer to them, as if they began where God left off. What Scripture says, however, is that *in the beginning* God created heaven and earth. The thought that they add nothing to Him is thus very natural. The Infinite can absorb all that is not itself as being itself, otherwise it is not infinite. This involves Hegel in a complex dialectical treatment of evil such, however, as St. Thomas’s texts on the subject already invite to. That is the meaning of Hegel’s saying that “if it must be said that good and evil in this their conception, i.e. so far as they are *not* good and evil, are the same, just as certainly it must be said that they are not the same, but absolutely different; ... It is only these two propositions that make the whole complete, and when the first is asserted and asseverated, it must be met and opposed by insisting on the other with immovable obstinacy” (*Phen. of Mind*, pp. 776-7). I.e. this is not a mere and very uncharacteristic loss of nerve on Hegel’s part. A whole (negative) philosophy of language is implied.

The fact that Hegel himself, ensconced in the Lutheran denial, may have missed these eucharistic implications is neither here nor there. The mouths of babes and sucklings is only one of truth’s surprising, even paradoxical, choices of doors of entry. Here, however, I merely point to a merit of his method as part of a theological reservation concerning the phrase “a living body” as *sufficiently* denoting¹² what a man is. That need not entail that I myself can sufficiently denote it. “What is man? What is God?” asked or explained Karol Wojtyła, not there and then (or anywhere?) giving an answer, while as touching the eucharist, and surely too the incarnation, we are dealing with a *mysterium fidei*. “God has chosen what is nothing in order to bring to nought the things which are” (St. Paul). There is no call not to

¹² I.e. it might suffice for religious or confessional purposes, it being left to contemplative men and women of faith and prayer to unpack the true significance of these terms as they are used without any taint of disloyalty to Church teaching. Thus whereas the Apostles’ Creed, as it is called, speaks of “the resurrection of the body” as an article of faith, that of Nicaea, three centuries on, simply refers, in expectation, to the *resurrectio mortuorum*, - “*et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum*”. In both cases the first person singular, the “I” namely, is used.

take this as primarily comment on the incarnation, from which the mystery of the Cross is inseparable and conversely. The mystery of Being and Nothing, namely, is a deep one.

Our thrust here, anyhow, is away from clinging dualisms to the one divine reality, in which or in whom we rise again or, equivalently, rise from the dead. This means, I at least suggest, a passing from *Vorstellung* to divine reality, the “absolute idea” indeed, knowing or thinking only itself, of which our passage from infancy to adulthood is the first *figure*, as posited by St. Paul. “When I became a man I *put away* childish things”, echoing the sapiential injunction to the bride to “forget also thy father’s house; so shall the King delight in thy beauty”. Here too, “the Absolute Idea is the Absolute”. It is in this connection that we can see the point of the principle noted by Geach (see above) that the soul, *forma corporis*, can, “after death ... be a living thought of itself”. I take this to mean that it is *not* itself but precisely this *idea* of itself in a way (how else can we think it?) such that flesh as such is nought but the merest shadow of the soul, of spirit as it therefore or thereby becomes. It is this shadow, namely the created manhood materially viewed, that Christ, God the Son, took on, hence calling himself rather or in the first place the “son of man”. This view fits in perfectly with Christ’s speaking of himself as saying to the wicked “I never knew you”. There was, from a divine viewpoint, nothing to know, namely, until and unless they “put on Christ” who is indeed the Idea Absolute, as it were in disguise (the transfiguration is the Biblical expression of this, though what is there transfigured is still a figure, of “glistening white” and so on: it sufficed for the purpose of enlightening the three future apostles). This, or who does this, is no doubt known only to God but it is what Christ looked for in all his dealings with men, namely the reflection of himself, the one true Man as “second Adam”. May God correct whatever may be faulty in this presentation of a or the *mysterium fidei*.

Regarding the expression “after death”, which so revolted Nietzsche, we should note that there is really no “after” death, that this is a temporal figure. “You *sit* with Christ in the heavenly places”, writes St. Paul, hence your “citizenship” is not elsewhere or here, as we might want to say. Thus indeed it is not that the resurrection has “already” occurred, as the same St. Paul, or whoever, elsewhere states and condemns as error and/or heresy but that time itself is transcended, removed, overcome, sublated, just as is set forth and entered into, though rather it takes us up into it, indeed by faith, since it is faith’s mystery, at every eucharist or Mass. So here too it might, for all I know, be said that “You know not of what spirit you are”.

Soul and body then are not two halves of men, of “human nature”, as it were on the same level.

A living being has a body; the soul takes possession of it and without intermediary has objectified itself in it. The human soul has much to do, before it makes its corporeal nature into a means. Man must, as it were, take possession of his body, so that it may be the instrument of his soul. (Hegel, *Enc.* 208, *Zus.*)

Only so does God lack nothing in not being “embodied”. Whether it is true, as Hegel suggests, that his embodiment in Christ is God’s coming to perfection (he means surely the *idea* of God, which by his reasoning is truly God, as it comes to perfection “*in*” *us*) in any acceptable sense I must leave open here as not being sure of truly finding such a sense or one that overcomes ambiguity, given that, or if it is given, that “the method” is the true being as the Absolute Idea is the Absolute. I hope, though, that no such ambiguity remains in what I have otherwise set forth here while, if so, I am ready at once to correct it. The difference is that while Geach and the tradition prefer to say that man is finally an animal absolute idealism avers that man is finally spirit or “a living spirit”. “It is sown a natural body, it will rise a spiritual body. If there is an animal body, there is also a spiritual” (St. Paul; cf. *I Cor.* 15, 35-58)

Ambiguity remains, however, as to a true view of creation. We know that there can be no change in God. Yet, or thus, it is in God that the creation, or nature, inclusive of we ourselves as natural beings, i.e. before or separately from our being taken up by grace into divine friendship, exists. This has to be explained, or so Hegel explains it, as the capacity, or rather the logical necessity, of infinity’s including *in itself* the finite and hence, in a sense, annihilating it as anything independent. *Deus meus et omnia*, this Franciscan explanation, whether or not “in ecstasy”, said once or repeated through a whole night, expresses just this. So the fishes Francis preached to themselves preached to him, in their nothingness, concerning the divine infinity, as might the smallest speck of dust. This might seem like a relative sense of the term “nothing”. But could it ever bear an absolute sense? Is it not, rather, essentially connected to being? In so far as it were not this it would, as nothing, be no *thing* at all, nor could anything come of or from it. The true nothing is rather the creation as considered in separation from God. “I never knew you”, he, the all-knowing, will say to such. Lord save us indeed! Or, as Hegel puts it, the End is as such realised.¹³ [ST 2022]

¹³ Cf. *Enc.* 210, 211, especially the *Zusatz* to the latter.

V

Regarding the second difficulty I mentioned at the end of Section III, as to how the union of body with soul comes about, Geach might seem here to be on stronger ground in stressing the soul's essential connection with the body, to use an open phrase which, I think, begs less questions than the assertion that "the soul is not a separately subsisting and separately individuated entity" (Geach, *The Virtues*, p. 31). Are the divine ideas separately individuated if each is one with the divine essence? How, though, does this differ from our personal union with Christ as yet being "members one of another". That is, does soul lack something necessarily in not being, supposing this might be so, "separately individuated"? Or do I not wish to discover my selfhood in a total union with the one body (of Christ)? In this sense it would be not only the Pope who could say, as did Pio Nono, doubtless provoked, *L'eglise c'est moi!* Thus Catherine of Siena described her consciousness of holding the whole Church with its cares in her time upon her back. So, also, "we, being many, are one bread". *Sumit unus, sumunt mille*. Still, it is as individuals that we must begin, the body, again, being made into a means (of becoming a "spiritual body").

The view of Aquinas seems to be that it, the soul, all the time subsists, even while "informing" the "body" of the man, who also subsists, both with the same *esse* (cp. here Geach in *Three Philosophers*, p.90. There is one *esse* of the soul and of the man, though there being a soul is different from there being a man). It is individuated by being the soul of this body, or of this matter, as is the body without the soul or without form of some kind, in which case it would be not even a "this" but pure potentiality rather. As individuating the form, that is, the matter does not have to be itself as it were previously individuated. This would defeat the whole process, line of thought rather. So what, if anything, is the sense, the meaning, of "*this* matter"? Matter is just the state of mutual separation, of the atoms anciently or of "extension", itself not anything at all. Individuation thus belongs to this figmentary or "natural" vision of things, of what makes nature, fallen nature as we say, only analogously true Being. Or, if Adam named the animals we can have no idea of the language which it seems claimed he used. Or what else might naming be, placed somehow midway between the dilemma, "This also is thou; neither is this thou".

That the soul, then, is individuated as subsistent seems anyhow accidental to its simply being individuated (or conversely). As far as that goes the soul of a dog is individuated in just the same way. For all one can see, then, creationism does not require assumption that the soul is first created, then "infused" in any literal sense. Creationism only postulates

negatively that the human soul does not come to be in the natural order of things by human generation.

This does not of course entail that we conceive of an act of human generation apart from creation of the intellectual soul which would fall short of the soul-producing powers of other animals, even though it must be true that the specially created soul, being the person's one soul, has also its "sensitive" and "vegetative" functions. It is sufficient to remember that God is creator both ways, i.e. by *fiat* or through secondary causes,

It is most un-Thomistic, and to my mind most false, to speak of secondary causes of creation. Creation is only a direct act of God, with neither material nor instrumental cause. PTG

so that if what is created either way is in each person an identity (i.e. with respect to these natural functions) it follows just from knowledge of that fact that the soul which truly comes to be through generation is, just as and when it comes to be, miraculously made to be intellectual as well and this miraculousness with respect to terrestrial or rather material nature is as natural to the human species as is the creation of angels to them.

This is fine and true. PTG

This is just to say that the human person is, as such, a place where nature and something else intersect. This is a conclusion from the fact of intellect plus the negative premise mentioned above.

So when we come to consider Aquinas's "inconsistent pentad" (*The Virtues*, p. 25), as Geach claims it to be,

Again a misreading. I say explicitly that we seem to be able to find an inconsistent pentad, that this is so on the face of it; not that it is so. PTG

we cannot restore consistency by rejecting proposition 3, as he would do. Instead I would reject proposition 5 (cf. *The Virtues*, *loc. cit.*), which I think is in fact *not* taught by Aquinas and which contradicts his teaching, rather, that the soul *does* contract sin through descent from sinful ancestors.

Geach does not give the reference there to Aquinas's express acceptance of Ezekiel's teaching, but if it is at Ia-IIae, 81, 1 *ad* 1, of the *Summa theologiae* then there we find Aquinas replying that Ezekiel says that the son who does not participate in his father's guilt will not bear his sins but that the guilt of *original sin* is shared by the offspring, since such guilt is derived *per originem*, just as the guilt of actual, non-original sin is derived through imitation. Through generation, the proper act of a nature as such,

What does this mean? PTG (The identification is Aquinas's. I think it means that natures typically or properly reproduce themselves, hence the *act of reproduction* is nature's proper act, though quite how or when such an act is identifiable in plant's as opposed to animals, including humans, might seem difficult to pinpoint, while some micro-organisms seem just to divide. ST 2022).

human nature is handed on together with the infection of that nature: *Ex hoc enim fit iste qui nascitur consors culpae primi parentis (eodem loco, ad 2um)*.

As to how original sin is a matter of the soul's will, Aquinas asserts that it is voluntary by the will of the first parent. Since he argues here that by solidarity

Not a translation of Aquinas! PTG

(Geach's banyan tree) we *do* share in that guilt, then we are not being punished for the sins of our fathers in the way that Ezekiel disapproved. Original sin is not personal but *peccatum naturae*. For Ezekiel does not say "nobody incurs guilt from the sins of his father, except by choosing to follow in his father's footsteps" (Geach), which would imply a denial of possible real participation in an ancestor's sin by solidarity,

This is a bad modern word. It is false that men inherit the sins of any ancestors except our first parents, with whom on the face of it we have much less "solidarity" than with our immediate parents or our neighbours. I think the word is obfuscating. PTG

But rather "to the upright man his integrity will be credited, to the wicked man his wickedness" (*Ezekiel* 18, 20, Jerusalem version). This applies to actual sins. If it is applied to original sin, then according to Christian teaching the only upright ones are the Christ and His mother. The rest, children of wrath, require a cleansing at some point in their lives, whether in the womb like John the Baptist or later on.

Later Aquinas stresses that original sin, handed on in this way, with the semen or "whatever enters into carnal generation" (editor's note in the Blackfriars 1965 edition and translation of the *Summa*, vol. XXVI, p. 10) as instrumental cause, can in no way be in the flesh but only in the soul, because it is handed to posterity from the will of the first parents "by a certain generative movement" (cp. *Summa theol.* Ia 83, 1), and Aquinas offers an explanation of the seeming paradox that original sin can be in the soul without being voluntary which we need not go further into here.

But just this is what needs to be gone into: cf. The Virtues, pp. 28-33. PTG

We need only note that the particular inconsistency alleged is not in Aquinas or in the traditional doctrine of the soul.

Geach almost seems to favour

Quite right. I do favour it! PTG

just that part of Aquinas's theory which is most questionable, viz. infusion of the soul *after* conception. He speaks of the teleology of an embryo "at a certain stage of development – recognizable at the latest by the appearance of a central nervous system", being "all set to produce a new human being, a rational animal" (*The Virtues*, p.30). But if he is prepared to see rationality as "a capacity for *acquiring* capacities for specific rational activities" then why not stick to the creationist account, which leaves no loopholes for fishy stipulations as to just when an embryo is or is not a human being. *Of course* ova or sperm or cells in transfused blood are not human beings. This throws no doubt at all upon the humanity of the zygote (one particular zygote, according to Catholic dogma, was preserved free from the stain of original sin from the first moment of her conception).

No. no! The decrees of the Church say nothing about zygotes! PTG

Geach seems to see the fact that the fertilized ovum may develop into two or more individuals as an argument against "immediate animation". But surely, since the form is the active principle, *forming* the body, such a development would merely be proof that there were two souls forming the matter and causing it soon to split into two.

Suppose the villainous Edwards split a zygote in two? The "two" infused rational souls would have nothing to say to that! But Edwards might implant them to make two human beings in two wombs!

Similarly the development of a mole, as Geach describes it, would indicate that no rational soul had been created .and that just for that reason the ovum grew into the shapeless lump. Or we might suppose a soul had been created but that death had then ensued, though then we should expect decomposition rather than deformity.

But in any event we must avoid imagining that creationism is a matter of God's following according to rule the vagaries of human coupling, pouring in a soul whenever the conditions for conception are met. This is the crude occasionalist view. If God directly creates human souls we can be quite sure He prepares both the matter and the preparation of the matter *via*