



John Hittinger

University of St. Thomas, Houston, Texas, USA

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0660-9653>

The Sway of Evil on Culture: on *The Prince of This World*¹

Abstract: In this essay, the connections between philosophy and culture in John Paul II's *Fides et Ratio* and *Gaudium et Spes* are discussed. The orientation towards transcendence can be inhibited by cultural trends and intellectual attitudes. Faith purifies and elevates culture. The designation of Jacques Maritain as a model for the integration of faith and reason is also discussed here. In the light of this recommendation, we consider the argument of Jacques and Raïssa Maritain that culture is under the sway of evil especially through the ministrations of the prince of this world. The passage from *Ephesians* 6:10 is interpreted as the scriptural source for this view. The thought of John Henry Newman in *The Dream of Gerontius* is also brought into consideration in reference to the evil sway of the demons. We conclude with a look at the project of the Maritains as an apostolate to culture.

Key words: faith/culture, philosophy/culture, Maritain, John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, *The Prince of This World*, *The Dream of Gerontius*

Introduction

In his encyclical letter *Fides et Ratio* (*On the Relationship between Faith and Reason*) Pope John Paul II richly develops the theme of culture and the role of both faith and reason in advancing an authentically human culture.² The mystery of the cross plays

¹ A variation of this paper was presented at American Maritain Association Meeting in Notre Dame, Indiana, USA in 2007.

² John Paul II, *Faith and Reason: Encyclical Letter Fides Et Ratio, on the Relationship between Faith and Reason* (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1998). Some key references

a prominent role in the relationship between faith and reason. The cross is said to be a “reef” whose submerged mystery will either break up the relationship between faith and reason (actually he says that reason may come to grief on the shoals of its devising) or reason will be freed through the mystery of the cross to set forth upon a “boundless ocean of truth.” For John Paul II, the cross represents the mystery of love — a mystery which cannot be eliminated. Indeed, love provides the “ultimate answer” that reason seeks to the truth and meaning of human existence. The encounter of the philosopher with the word of God and the mysteries of faith provides access to a more comprehensive study of the true, the good and the beautiful. Philosophy serves as a “mirror” which reflects the culture.”³ By attenuating this search for transcendence by philosophizing about faith, the Catholic philosopher serves the evangelization of culture. Indeed, philosophy which, by its proper activity, is one of the “noblest of human tasks” should now “be seen as a fundamental and original contribution in service of the new evangelization.”⁴

Pope John Paul II commends Jacques Maritain and others, such as Edith Stein, St. John Henry Newman and Etienne Gilson for their efforts as philosophers to encounter the mysteries of faith.⁵ Each of them developed an authentic philosophy “consonant with the Word of God.”⁶ John Paul II expressed a particular interest in “the spiritual journey of these masters” as our appreciation of their journeys “gives greater momentum to both the search for truth and the effort to apply the results of that search to the service of humanity.”⁷ The service to humanity is found above all in their contribution to an integral humanism and the renewal of culture. Jacques and Raïssa Maritain were in the forefront of the apostolate to culture, or the new evangelization. Maritain and Wojtyła both looked “more deeply at man, whom

to culture may be found in sections 3–6 and 69–71. On the issue of culture, see John Hittinger, “John Paul II’s Core Teaching on Culture”, *Communio* 48 (Summer 2021): 247–279.

³ *Fides et Ratio* §103

⁴ *Fides et Ratio* §3, §103.

⁵ *Fides et Ratio* §104

⁶ *Fides et Ratio* §80–84. The first thing that philosophy must do is “recover its sapiential dimension as a search for the ultimate and overarching meaning of life.” “This sapiential dimension is all the more necessary today because the immense expansion of humanity’s technical capability demands a renewed and sharpened sense of ultimate values.” (§81) This leads to the second requirement, viz., “that philosophy verifies the human capacity to know the truth, to come to a knowledge which can reach objective truth by means of that *adaequatio rei et intellectus* to which the Scholastic Doctors referred.” (§82). The first two requirements entail the third one: “the need for a philosophy of genuinely metaphysical range, capable, that is, of transcending empirical data in order to attain something absolute, ultimate and foundational in its search for truth.” (FR §83) See John Hittinger, “St. Thomas Aquinas, Thomism, and a ‘Philosophy Consonant with the Word of God.’” *Seminary Journal* 11, no. 1 (2005): 47–55.

⁷ *Fides et Ratio* §74.

Christ has saved in the mystery of his love.”⁸ Their philosophies made manifest that freedom is fully realized in the truth of the good. Ultimately, the call to know and love God constitutes “the supreme realization of their true self.”⁹

Both philosophy and theology must give particular attention to culture, for it is through culture that we come to see “the human being’s characteristic openness to the universal and transcendent.”¹⁰ The very dynamic of culture “implicitly but authentically” points to the “manifestation of God in nature.”¹¹ John Paul II refers to the important passages on culture in *Gaudium et spes* (§53–59, footnote 94). Karol Wojtyła underlined the significance of the Christian’s responsibility for culture in *Sources of Renewal*.¹² One particular passage from *Gaudium et Spes* is worthy of being quoted here: “Furthermore, when man gives himself to the various disciplines of philosophy, history and of mathematical and natural science, and when he cultivates the arts, he can do very much to elevate the human family to a more sublime understanding of truth, goodness, and beauty, and to the formation of considered opinions which have universal value. Thus, mankind may be more clearly enlightened by that marvelous Wisdom which was with God from all eternity, composing all things with him, rejoicing in the earth, delighting in the sons of men. In this way, the human spirit, being less subjected to material things, can be more easily drawn to the worship and contemplation of the Creator. Moreover, by the impulse of grace, he is disposed to acknowledge the Word of God.”¹³ The role of culture in drawing the man to the worship and contemplation of the Creator and disposing the man to acknowledge the Word of God goes awry in the modern world because of many trends stemming from the rise of technology, the quest for power and domination, as well as the increased specialization and the oblivion to the whole truth about the man and the world.¹⁴

However, the fundamental source of the persistent and devastating degradation of culture lies in the disorder of the human person: “The truth is that the imbalances under which the modern world labors are linked with that more basic imbalance which is rooted in the heart of man. For in man himself many elements wrestle with one another. Thus, on the one hand, as a creature he

⁸ *Fides et Ratio* §107.

⁹ *Fides et Ratio* §107.

¹⁰ *Fides et Ratio* §70.

¹¹ *Fides et Ratio* §70

¹² Karol Wojtyła, *Sources of Renewal: the Implementation of the Second Vatican Council* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979), 297–300. The translation of *U Podstaw Odnowy* (1972).

¹³ *Gaudium et Spes* §57.

¹⁴ Wojtyła summarizes these points in *Sources of Renewal* 298 and elaborates on them in detail in *Fides et ratio* (§§ 5–6, 81–82).

experiences his limitations in a multitude of ways; on the other he feels himself to be boundless in his desires and summoned to a higher life. Pulled by manifold attractions he is constantly forced to choose among them and renounce some. Indeed, as a weak and sinful being, he often does what he would not, and fails to do what he would.”¹⁵ At the heart of the struggle is the reality of sin: “As a result, all of human life, whether individual or collective, shows itself to be a dramatic struggle between good and evil, between light and darkness. Indeed, man finds that by himself he is incapable of battling the assaults of evil successfully, so that everyone feels as though he is bound by chains. But the Lord Himself came to free and strengthen man, renewing him inwardly and casting out that ‘prince of this world’ (*John* 12:31) who held him in the bondage of sin. For sin has diminished man, blocking his path to fulfillment.”¹⁶ In the section on culture in *Gaudium et Spes*, the Council Fathers speak of the need to “purify and elevate the morality of peoples” and to “fortify, complete, and restore” the trajectory of culture towards transcendence.¹⁷

The new evangelization, especially the evangelization of culture, must acknowledge the full challenge of the distortions in culture originating in sin and the struggle with the powers of darkness. In *Lumen Gentium*, the apostolate to culture is described as follows: “Through her work, whatever good is in the minds and hearts of men, whatever good lies latent in the religious practices and cultures of diverse peoples, is not only saved from destruction but is also cleansed, raised up and perfected unto the glory of God, the confusion of the devil and the happiness of man.”¹⁸ The very mission of the Church is defined as the effort to enlighten and heal the very attempts of human beings as persons in community and culture to look for the good and true — “the leading strings towards God.”¹⁹ Thus, the mission of Church must work very closely with cultural signs and patterns so as to bring Christ to men and women in all nations. As a result, “whatever truth and grace are to be found among the nations, as a sort of secret presence of God, He frees from all taint of evil and restores to Christ its maker, who overthrows the devil’s domain and wards off the manifold malice of vice. And so, whatever good is found to be sown in the hearts and minds of men, or in the rites and cultures peculiar to various

¹⁵ *Gaudium et Spes* §10.

¹⁶ *Gaudium et Spes* §13. Cf. “For a monumental struggle against the powers of darkness pervades the whole history of man... Caught in this conflict, man is obliged to wrestle constantly if he is to cling to what is good, nor can he achieve his own integrity without great efforts and the help of God’s grace.” (*GS* §37).

¹⁷ *Gaudium et Spes* §58–59; *Sources of Renewal*, 300.

¹⁸ *Lumen Gentium* §17.

¹⁹ *Ad Gentes* §3.

peoples, not only is not lost, but is healed, uplifted, and perfected for the glory of God, the shame of the demon, and the bliss of men.”²⁰

The path and spiritual journey of Jacques and Raïssa Maritain to live the unity of faith and reason indicate many features of the apostolate to culture outlined by *Gaudium et Spes* and Pope John Paul II. Many accounts of faith and culture, and the new evangelization, may overlook the factor of *The Prince of the World* and the sway of evil over culture. For this reason, I wish to summarize and discuss a short work by Raïssa Maritain titled *The Prince of this World*, published in 1931 and translated by Gerald Phelan.²¹ Jacques Maritain acknowledges in the first chapter of *The Degrees of Knowledge* (“The Grandeur and Poverty of Metaphysics”) the sway of the prince of the world in the realm of metaphysical thinking: “it would be surprising if the metaphysical eros, wherever Christ does not dwell, did not call for some kind of collusion with superhuman intellectual natures, the *rectores huius mundi*.”²² Maritain alludes to *Ephesians* 6:12: “For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.”²³

Maritain uses the allusion to conclude an aside about Plotinus and the aspiration for metaphysical purity, which must finally elude the grasp of rational human understanding. Maritain seizes upon the story concerning Plotinus and his “daemon” as evidence that there is “collusion” with superhuman intellectual natures. Prior to the Christian era it was all but inevitable.²⁴ Augustine also proposed this view.²⁵ As I shall argue below, the allusion comes at the point of transition in the chapter concerning the two fundamental weaknesses or poverties of metaphysics, its abstractness on the one hand, and its dryness on the other hand. However, I shall suggest that this allusion to *Ephesians* 6 concerning the rulers of this world indicates the ultimate context of his work and his own self-understanding of his role as a Christian philosopher. His work in philosophy was understood to be an apostolic venture, or an apostolate to culture. The project of Jacques and Raïssa was to redeem the times.

²⁰ *Ad Gentes*, §9.

²¹ Raïssa Maritain, *The Prince of This World*, trans. Gerald Phelan. Toronto: Institute of Medieval Studies, 1931. Raïssa Maritain, *Le Prince De Ce Monde*, in *Œuvres Complètes: Volume 14 1921–1944*, 205–15. Fribourg/Suisse Paris: Editions Universitaires/Editions Saint-Paul, 1982.

²² Jacques Maritain, *Distinguish to Unite, or the Degrees of Knowledge*. Works, vol. 7. (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), 6.

²³ The revised standard version. “Quia non est nobis colluctatio adversus sanguinem et carnem sed adversus principatis, adversus postestates, adversus mundi rectores tenebrarum harum, adversus spiritalia nequitiae in caelestibus.” *New Vulgate*. Both found in *Captivity Epistles – The Navarre Bible* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1992), 97.

²⁴ In footnote 3, page 6, Maritain refers to the account in *Porphyry, Life of Plotinus*, II.5.

²⁵ *City of God*, X.2, 16, 23.

They took St Paul's words to heart, but the apostolate of culture meant a spiritual warfare. Apostolate is defined in the documents of Vatican II as follows: "The Church was founded to spread the kingdom of Christ over all the earth for the glory of God the Father, to make all men partakers in redemption and salvation, and through them to establish the right relationship of the entire world to Christ. Every activity of the Mystical Body with this in view goes by the name of 'apostolate.'"²⁶

Apostolate to culture, such as the Maritain's one, involves rigorous thinking and appreciation of what is authentic in contemporary art, science and philosophy. It involves friendship with the leading figures in the fields of culture. It is characterized by the dynamic unity of faith and reason. It is rooted in metaphysics with a profound grasp of the proper ordering of knowledge and wisdom. It is sustained through the prayer and the Eucharist, for it is animated by charity, "the soul of the apostolate."²⁷

In his introduction to the Notre Dame edition of *The Degrees of Knowledge*, Ralph McInerny mentions the book *Prayer and Intelligence*, co-authored by Jacques and Raïssa as exhibiting the "theme of the interdependence of the spiritual and intellectual lives. Philosophy was not a career for Jacques Maritain, it was not a profession, it was a vocation, his way of salvation."²⁸ Jacques often looked to Raïssa for a spiritual insight, which is clear due to his inclusion in "The Peasant of the Garonne — an essay on the Law and Love" derived from her journal that Jacques published in 1973.²⁹ I was intrigued to find the following passage in Jacques's foreword to Raïssa's *Journal*: "Looking back on our past, one thing stands out more clearly for me about our life during the period between the two wars, in particular during the years at Meudon. It is that the work naively undertaken by us consisted in reality (like all work which tries to open the world of profane culture, of art, poetry and philosophy, to the energies of the Christian ferment) in attacking the devil on his own territory. It was a matter of dislodging from their positions those whom St Paul calls *Principes et postestates, mundi rectores tenebrarum harum, and spiritualis nequitiae*, and against whom he tells us the Christian has to fight more than against flesh and blood. Raïssa was well aware of it — she wrote *The Prince of this World*."³⁰

²⁶ Apostolate of the Laity, §2. See Ferdinand Klostermann, "Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity," in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, vol. 3, ed. Herbert Vorgrimler (New York: Herder and Herder, 1969), 272–316.

²⁷ Allusion to Jean-Baptiste Chautard, OCSO, *Soul of the Apostolate* (New York: Tan Books, 1946).

²⁸ *The Degrees of Knowledge*, xix. See Jacques and Raïssa Maritain, *Prayer and Intelligence* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1928).

²⁹ Jacques Maritain, *The Peasant of the Garonne; an Old Layman Questions Himself About the Present Time* (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston), 1968.

³⁰ Raïssa Maritain, *Raïssa's Journal*, presented by Jacques Maritain (Albany, NY: Magi Books, 1974), 13–14.

Raïssa wrote this short work when Jacques was working on the *The Degrees of Knowledge*. It is a remarkable little work explaining the definition of culture and the essence of Christianity. I propose to use the argument set forth by Raïssa as a way to understand some aspects of *The Degrees of Knowledge*. It also opens us for a number of themes in Maritain's work, such as the relation of faith and reason, the importance of theoretical knowledge or contemplative knowledge, and the role of culture and tradition in human education. It also assists us in understanding how the trajectory of the Maritain's life and work leads to themes central in the documents of the Second Vatican Council and those that appeared in Pope John Paul II's writings. It allows us to look at philosophy as a vocation and a way of salvation.

The Argument of Raïssa Maritain's *The Prince of this World*

In her work, *The Prince of this World*, Raïssa asks the reader to entertain the following notion as a theological hypothesis. God placed angelic powers in authority over various parts of creation. Lucifer was assigned authority over the earth. She derives this idea from certain patristic sources, particularly John Damascene, but also Gregory of Nyssa and St Augustine. In addition, she appeals to Aquinas's notion of the hierarchy of beings according to which the overlapping of degrees of intelligence demands that the higher exercise be over the lower, hence the angelic influence on the human.³¹ Raïssa elaborates on these notions in the following way: "Had sin not touched him, he would have governed this universe in the gaiety of love. He would have made beauty grow as a flower of praise, under the hands of men. Amid the chant of hymns and canticles he would have led innocent festivities, the liturgy of unfallen nature."³² However, he refused to give God his due glory as he refused to serve him — "non serviam."

Because principality, she says, beseems the nature of Satan, he seeks to regain his rule over the man through an affinity between his sin and the sin of the man. He uses his "presiding power" to turn men away from God and to join his refusal and disobedience. Thus, "he holds sway over peoples and their civilizations."³³

³¹ *The Prince of this World*, 8–9. *Le Prince De Ce Monde*, 208.

³² *The Prince of this World*, 9. *Le Prince De Ce Monde*, 208.

³³ *The Prince of this World*, 12. *Le Prince De Ce Monde*, 209.

He does this, according to Raïssa's account, through his very affinity between the man and his creative powers, particularly the cultural dimension of human existence. In other words, he does this not in the manner portrayed by Hollywood, as the vile possessor of William Blatty's *Exorcist*, or as the pale leering presence of Mel Gibson's *Passion*, but through his urbanity and his appeal to the humanity of cultural achievement. As Raïssa states, "The predestined friend of man, his eldest brother, as it were, becomes his seducer. He displays to him a charming countenance. He knows all the secrets of his feelings and imagination, all the re-sources of intoxicating rapture in this world — a double keyboard upon which he combines the stops of voluptuousness and art, of knowledge and power."³⁴

Art and the knowledge, the hallmarks of culture, are his special field. Rather than seeking the praise and glory of God, voluptuousness and power are the ends in themselves to which he appeals. He uses this art and knowledge to draw men away from God and, therefore, he is a "prince of illusory independence." He casts a "strong though invisible net of illusion upon us."³⁵ He leads one to "choose the finite present rather than the infinite to come." "He makes one love the passing moment above eternity, uncertainty above truth." He detaches love from its transcendent reference and aspiration — "he persuades us that we can only love creatures by making Gods of them."³⁶ Again, it is in the field of culture that the temptation is so great. Raïssa believes that "not the least of the devil's victories is to have convinced artists and poets that he is their necessary, inevitable collaborator and the guardian of their greatness."³⁷ He pretends to be the guardian of art because he enshrines the beauty of the moment, the power of freedom, and the authenticity of the search. The result of this independence, of course, is despair and death, for the passing moment cannot sustain itself. A single being cannot sustain itself without the creative power of God. We cannot rise without the grace of God.

You can hear the sadness of her poetic and artistic soul when Raïssa laments: "in truth it seems that all belongs to him and that all must be wrested from him."³⁸ But in faith she finds her hope. Through the cross of Christ all has been redeemed. The meaning of the passion is the "epiphany of love, a voluntary sacrifice of filial and fraternal affection, offered to the uncreated holiness by Holiness incarnate."³⁹

³⁴ *The Prince of this World*, 13–14. *Le Prince De Ce Monde*, 210.

³⁵ *The Prince of this World*, 19. *Le Prince De Ce Monde*, 213. Raïssa refers to St. Paul II's *Thessalonians*, 2.10: "Satan acts with wicked deception for those who are to perish because they refuse to love the truth." *The Prince of this World*, footnotes 23 and 24.

³⁶ *The Prince of this World*, 19. *Le Prince De Ce Monde*, 213.

³⁷ *The Prince of this World*, 19. *Le Prince De Ce Monde*, 213.

³⁸ *The Prince of this World*, 19. *Le Prince De Ce Monde*, 213.

³⁹ *The Prince of this World*, 14. *Le Prince De Ce Monde*, 211.

Raïssa says that Christ did not dispute Satan his claim to offer him a kingdom. Satan did not foresee that humiliation and pain were the better part. Raïssa speaks of the “lust of the saints” as poverty, contempt and suffering — they are the weapons against “the prince of lusts.”⁴⁰ Saint Paul said: “redeem the time, for the days are evil.”⁴¹ The Maritains took this phrase to heart. Redemption must come, she says, “point by point” and “moment by moment” by the participation in the one sacrifice of the Mass and by the prayer of the saints. “The usurper holds sway wherever that Blood has not yet touched.”⁴² Through the apostolate of friendship and cultural engagement, the Maritains sought to redeem the time. Under the sign of the cross, the Maritains wrested what they could from the prince of this world. Raïssa came to the following conclusion: “Let [the blood of Christ] be received and all will be reborn. All that now is but the magic and the fruit of death, — art lost in lewdness, knowledge frenzied with pride, power consumed with avarice — all that can be reborn like man himself. New births like these have come to light along the track of all the saints and men of good-will.”⁴³

The understanding of the influence of the devil in cultural affairs is not used by the Maritains as an excuse for puritanical denunciations of art or pious excoriations of science. We know their story well — they sought to be “at the crossroads of culture” and they befriended many of the top writers, scientists, and artists of their day. But neither were they naifs nor Pelagians who uncritically embraced modern movements or praised great talents in these fields. Theirs was an openness to the world, especially the world of culture, to free its true achievement from distortion and to win souls for Christ.

It is also worth briefly mentioning the important essay in Raïssa’s *Journal* titled “On Poetry as Spiritual Experience,” written in 1941.⁴⁴ In this essay she speaks about the spiritual dimensions of creativity. She discusses the connection between the search for poetic creation and the life of the spirit and a connection to God. She again laments over the fact that “more often than not poets and artists deem the demands of God and poetry to be in mutual opposition.”⁴⁵ She ends with a hopeful note that creativity and the creation of beauty are brought into existence with love. So she alludes again to the work of redemption against the prince of this world: “Somewhere a weight of love and sanctity is found which adds, to a temporal good, a good of eternal value, which saves the beauty of this world that passes, which

⁴⁰ *The Prince of this World*, 14. *Le Prince De Ce Monde*, 211.

⁴¹ *Ephesians*, 5:16. See Jacques Maritain, *Redeeming the Time* (New York: Scribners, 1946).

⁴² *Ephesians*, 5:16. See Jacques Maritain, *Redeeming the Time* (New York: Scribners, 1946).

⁴³ *The Prince of this World*, 20–21. *Le Prince De Ce Monde*, 214.

⁴⁴ *Raïssa’s Journal*, presented by Jacques Maritain (Albany, NY: Magi Books, 1974), pp. 373–377.

⁴⁵ Raïssa Maritain, *Journal*, 375.

redeems the beauty created by poets and snatches it away from him who claims he has rights over all created beauty because he is the Prince of this world.”⁴⁶ The work is done not by self-righteous preaching, but by ranging ourselves “in the ranks of sinners” and recognizing ourselves as “responsible for the blood of Christ and for the martyrdom of the saints.”⁴⁷

We can now better understand Jacques’s preface to the journal about their work and attacking the devil on his own territory, which is the field of culture because that is where the “two fold keyboard” with the stops of voluptuousness and power are found. Jacques and Raïssa Maritain’s apostolate involved friendship with the men and women of art and culture, the appreciation of their work, the philosophical arguments concerning their meaning and the understanding of this work, and finally the apostolate of friendship. In his brief preface to the life of Father Lamy, Jacques recounts the story of running through the streets of Paris to find a priest to bring to the sickbed of Eric Satie.⁴⁸

The “Grandeur and Poverty of Metaphysics” and the “*Rectores huius mundi*”

If we now return to the opening chapter of *The Degrees of Knowledge* on the Grandeur and Poverty of Metaphysics we may use the notion of Maritain’s apostolate of culture to illuminate our argument. It is easier to see how Raïssa would use the case of poetry to worry about the sway of the prince of this world. How do metaphysics and the life of the mind come into play so well? Why is there an allusion to the *rectores huius mundi* in this chapter? If the Prince of this world is as Raïssa describes him, why would he not take an interest in metaphysics, the height of human wisdom with the office of ordering? “For that truth is the food of the spirit. Useless metaphysics puts order in the speculative and practical intellect. It gives back to man his balance and his motion ... [it] reveals to him authentic values and their hierarchy. It provides a center for ethics. It binds together in justice the whole universe of his knowledge.”⁴⁹ The distortion or destruction of metaphysics is vital to

⁴⁶ Raïssa Maritain, *On Poetry as a Spiritual Experience*, p. 377.

⁴⁷ Raïssa Maritain, *On Poetry as a Spiritual Experience*, p. 377.

⁴⁸ Jacques Maritain, “Introduction” to Comte Paul Biver, *Père Lamy 1855–1931* (Rockford: Tan, (1951), 7–12.

⁴⁹ *The Degrees of Knowledge*, 5–9.

the life of culture. Therefore, apostolate to culture requires an education in metaphysics and it is a field for the spiritual battle. The distortion and destruction of metaphysics are related and result in a failure to appreciate the grandeur and poverty of metaphysics, hence this chapter serves as a preface to “an apostolate to culture” which *The Degrees of Knowledge* serves.

The majesty of metaphysics is two-fold: the knowledge of God, a divine science, which in turn serves to order all knowledge. Following the path of Aristotle, particularly the first two chapters of *Metaphysics I*, Maritain praises metaphysics for its uselessness. The uselessness of metaphysics does not detract from its worth as a contemplative knowledge. It serves as the ordering science. It also plays a role in establishing and defending the hierarchy of goods. Its poverty, on the other hand, is also two-fold. First, it is wisdom, a divine science, but it is, nevertheless, a human science and a rational discourse relying upon abstraction and discursive movement of the mind. It must always be partial and incomplete. It must be given to a great dialectical skill and construction. Because of the great dialectical skill and rational argumentation required by philosophy and metaphysics, it opens the temptation to self-sufficiency. It engenders a pride that seeks to complete its own comprehensive grasp of the whole reality. Maritain singles out Plotinus as one who most evinces the struggle with the poverty of metaphysics as he sought to mount beyond the dialectical play and behold a simple and unitary vision of the one. His disciple Porphyry claimed that Plotinus was inspired by a “higher daemon” or spirit and that the spirit showed itself as a serpent upon the death of Plotinus.⁵⁰

Maritain sees the temptation to seek in intellectual sufficiency alone the call for contemplation, which in fact requires revelation, faith and love. So it is with reference to Plotinus that Maritain speaks of the “collusion” with superhuman intelligences or the *rectores huius mundi*. When it comes to Plotinus, it is a case of the extreme self-sufficiency of mind in its quest for the absolute. For the modern people, the distortion follows similar, yet different paths. Sufficiency today is found in scientific explanation and its mastery over nature, or in various sorts of ideologies about the man and the political order. The second danger is that metaphysics arouses a desire which it cannot satisfy. Thus, Maritain claims that it needs a complement. The life of the mind must issue in desire and we face the problem of Faust: “if human wisdom does not spill upwards into the love of God, it will downwards towards Marguerite.”⁵¹ We know from personal experience that the forms in our head fail to fully transform our hearts. Socrates and Plato propounded the vain

⁵⁰ *The Degrees of Knowledge*, 5–9 6; see Porphyry’s “Life of Plotinus” found in *Works of Plotinus*, Loeb Library Vol. 1 (Cambridge/Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1889), 6–7.

⁵¹ *The Degrees of Knowledge*, 7.

hope that intellectual virtue is a virtue and that the philosopher king will be self-ruled and well-ruled. However, the experience of a moral disorder in the professoriate and among philosophers is the reason for greater humility and an acknowledgement of the lack of self-sufficiency in the life of the mind. Some philosophers can baptize their own disordered desires and call it deconstruction. Metaphysics becomes transformed or deconstructed to will and desire. Maritain spends the second half of the chapter elaborating upon the true nature of mystical contemplation against its counterfeits. He assumes that the chapters on the highest type of wisdom, the infused contemplation of faith, are the very reason for the book.

In his book on *Thomas Aquinas*, Maritain considers Aquinas to be “The Apostle of Our Time” because he provides the means for addressing the “The disease afflicting the modern world [which] is in the first place a disease of the mind.”⁵² Just as at the moment when the original sin was committed, all the harmony of the human being was shattered because the order insisting that the reason would be subject to God had first been violated. Therefore, the root of all our disorders is apparent. In the first place and above all, it is a rupture in the supreme ordinations of the mind. The responsibility of philosophers in this respect is enormous. In the sixteenth century, and more particularly in the age of Descartes, the interior hierarchies of the virtue of reason were shattered. Philosophy abandoned theology to assert its own claim to be considered the supreme science — the mathematical science of the sensible world and its phenomena taking precedence at the same time over metaphysic. The human mind began to profess independence from God and being. Independence from God, that is from the supreme Object of all intelligence, whom it had accepted only half-heartedly until it finally rejected the intimate knowledge of Him supernaturally procured by grace and revelation, comes first. Independence from being, that is independence from the connatural object of the mind as such, against which it ceased to measure itself humbly, comes second. It can be finally deduced from the seeds of geometrical clarity which it conceived to be innate in itself.⁵³

Jacques Maritain elaborates upon this root disease in three manifestations. The first is “agnosticism” by which “the mind imagines that it is giving proof of its own native strength by denying and rejecting as science first theology and then metaphysics, [and] by abandoning any attempt to know the primary Cause and immaterial realities.”⁵⁴ The second is “naturalism” by which the “mind at the same

⁵² Jacques Maritain, *St. Thomas Aquinas* (New York: Meridian Books, 1958), chapter 3. See John Hittinger, “On the Catholic Audience of Leo Strauss,” in *Leo Strauss and his Catholic Readers*, ed. Geoffrey M. Vaughn (Washington, D.C.: CUA Press, 2018), 167–189.

⁵³ Jacques Maritain, *St. Thomas Aquinas* (New York: Meridian Books, 1958), 89.

⁵⁴ Maritain, *St. Thomas Aquinas*, p. 91.

time refuses to recognize the rights of primary Truth and repudiates the supernatural order.”⁵⁵ These are the modern manifestations of self-sufficiency, which the plan of *The Degrees of Knowledge* seeks to overcome and restore the wholeness of knowledge and wisdom. The movement of independence of mind is that which is used by the Prince of this world to shut the thinker off from God. The third manifestation he names variously is individualism or angelism. It endorses the fallen human nature as perfect or complete, needing no cultivating through virtue or religious discipline.⁵⁶

One may find a poetic confirmation of the Maritain’s allusions to the Prince of this world as it pertains to cultural ideas and attitudes in the work of John Henry Newman. He used the terms “liberalism” and “rationalism” to describe a movement of mind and culture. It withdraws the human from God and denies the supernatural and the certitudes of faith: “When Newman received the Red Hat, he summed up his life’s work in a single phrase, when he said he had always fought against liberalism. What he meant by that term was the claim of man to do without God, to act by himself and for himself, whether it be a matter of comprehending the Universe or ordering his own life. The ‘reason’ which, in the *University Sermons*, is contrasted in so definite a manner with ‘faith,’ is reason in which self-reliance amounts to pride, and which refuses, on principle, to rely on any power external to itself.”⁵⁷ In his *Apologia*, he describes the drift towards liberalism as a preference for intellectual excellence to moral excellence.⁵⁸ He refers to a long appendix/“note A,” which contains an analysis of liberalism, including seventeen points that constitute this complex notion of the rationalist’s pride. It forces the truths of God to conform to his own mind, to his own mental capacity, and ultimately, in the form of liberalism, to whatever one desires.

The Rationalist makes himself his own centre. He does not go to God, but he implies that God must come to him. This is the spirit in which multitudes of us act at the present day. Instead of looking out of ourselves, trying to catch a glimpses of God’s workings, or throwing ourselves forward upon Him and waiting for Him, we sit at home bringing everything to ourselves, enthroning ourselves

⁵⁵ Maritain, *St. Thomas Aquinas*, p. 91.

⁵⁶ Maritain, *St. Thomas Aquinas*, p. 91.

⁵⁷ Louis Bouyer, *Cardinal Newman: His Life and Spirituality* (Notre Dame: Private printing, 1960), 17, 71, 311. On Newman and Liberalism, see Marvin R. O’Connell, “Newman and Liberalism,” in *Newman Today*, ed. Stanley L. Jaki (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989), 79–94; Francis McGrath, “The Challenge of Liberal Anglicanism,” in John Henry Newman, *Universal Revelation* (Kent: Burns and Oates, 1997), 51–68.

⁵⁸ John Henry Newman, “Note A – On Liberalism,” in *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, ed. Ian Ker (London/New York: Penguin Books, 1994), 253–262.

in our own views, and refusing to believe anything that does not force itself upon us as true.⁵⁹

Newman considers Rationalism and Liberalism in religion as a “pernicious scourge on the world” because they attack God by way of indifference to truth. Rationalism attacks the Church by a denial of the importance of truth, sometimes with a scoff or a sneer. Rationalism seeks to reduce all things to scientific causation in the form of material/mechanical causes. Similarly in the realm of morals, it reduces to either the calculation of utility or “respectability.” It was most appropriate that Saint John Paul II lifted up Newman as one who properly related faith and reason, and who developed a philosophy consonant with the word of God through his recovery from the sapiential dimension and his humble respect for what exists. He dared to think about being, God and the good.

Through his poetry, Newman rendered this vision of proud opposition to mystery and truth through powerful set of images. In his poetic account of death and the journey to God in the after-life, *The Dream of Gerontius*, the soul is attacked by three demons as it is *en route* to the throne of God.⁶⁰ The three demons seem to track the diseases of the mind described by Maritain. The first demon exhibits great Pride in mind:

As if aught
 Could stand in place
 Of the high thought,
 And the glance of fire
 Of the great spirits,
 The powers blest,
 The lords by right,
 The primal owners,
 Of the proud dwelling
 And realm of light,—⁶¹

The Prince of this World claims the “realm of light” or intelligence itself, seeking to influence the centers of academia and culture with this appeal to pride of accomplishment (the place of high thought) and innate superiority (lords by right and

⁵⁹ Newman, *Essays Critical and Historical*, 33–34. See Avery Cardinal Dulles, SJ, *Newman* (New York/London: Continuum, 2002) 34–37, 142–144.

⁶⁰ John Henry Newman, *The Dream of Gerontius*. “Introduction” by Rev. Gregory Winterton (New York: Alba House, 2001), *Section IV*, 44–53. See Michael Sharkey, “Newman’s Search for Holiness in His Search for Truth,” in *Newman Today*, 184–185.

⁶¹ *The Dream of Gerontius*, 45–46.

the primal owners of knowledge). A Catholic thinker faces today many distortions, such as the appeal to the excellence or autonomy of mind and reason over and against fidelity to the Church.⁶² The exclusion of faith and theology by academia as a whole is mirrored in these words. The second demon exhibits a reductive spirit, which affirms only the realm of matter, and refuses to acknowledge the realm of the spirit. Both Marxism and Positivism adopt a systematic materialism which excludes the existence of the soul and God. Since matter is all that exists, death and degradation are the common lot of all human beings, even saints. Clearly materialism is characterized by the refusal of faith in God and the resurrection of the body:

What's a saint?
One whose breath
Doth the air taint
Before his death;
A bundle of bones, Which fools adore,
Ha! ha!
When life is o'er,
Which rattle and stink, E'en in the flesh⁶³

The third demon expresses a position of relativism about virtue and cynicism about love:

VIRTUE and vice,
A knave's pretence,
'Tis all the same;
Dread of hell-fire,
Of the venomous flame,
A coward's plea.
Give him his price,
Saint though he be,
For shrewd good sense
He'll slave for hire;
And does but aspire
To the heaven above

⁶² Frank O'Malley, "The Thinker in the Church: the Spirit of Newman," *Review of Politics* 21 (1959) 5–23.

⁶³ *The Dream of Gerontius*, 46–47.

With sordid aim,
And not for love.⁶⁴

Cynicism and relativism promote the rationalization of the moral life and the joy in discharge of intellectual power alone.

Newman and Maritain have a similar proposal for overcoming the demons of pride and skepticism, and thereby resist the allure of the Prince of this world. Men and women of culture must discover the life of prayer and pursue holiness.⁶⁵ Maritain provides a brief explanation of this cultural imperative in *The Degrees of Knowledge*.⁶⁶ The failure of Plotinus and the Neo-Platonists to achieve union with the divine testifies to the insufficiency and ultimate barrenness of the intellectualist approach to God. The search for truth, as well as the appreciation of the other transcendentals such as goodness and beauty, arouse the desire for the absolute but all human conceptions of the divine are limited by their derivation from the finitude of all created reality.⁶⁷ Maritain cites the passage from St. John of the Cross that inspired the doctoral dissertation of Karol Wojtyła – “no creature can serve the intellect as a proportionate means to the attainment of God,” and consequently, faith is the only “proximate and proportionate means to union with God.”⁶⁸ The contemplation leads to union with God under the aegis and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Humanity must transcend itself and go beyond reason to find its true source in the truth of faith and charity. Maritain acknowledges that the age of faith and the cultural mediation of Christendom are gone. Indeed, he claims that “the trend of modern times is set under the sign of a disjunction between flesh and spirit, or a progressive dislocation of the shape of human things.”⁶⁹ The radical dualism installed by Descartes has proceeded apace such that the intellect and the culture is progressively

⁶⁴ *The Dream of Gerontius*, 49.

⁶⁵ See John Henry Newman, “Holiness Necessary for Future Blessedness,” in *Parochial and Plain Sermons* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1997), 5–13; Stanley L. Jaki, “Assent to Truth: Natural and Supernatural,” in *Newman’s Challenge* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Press, 2000), 197–228. Jacques and Raïssa Maritain, *Liturgy and Contemplation* (New York: P. J. Kennedy, 1960) and Jacques Maritain, “Contemplation in the World,” in *Peasant of the Garonne* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968), 194–256.

⁶⁶ “The Majesty and Poverty of Metaphysics,” *The Degrees of Knowledge*, 1–19.

⁶⁷ Maritain cites Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I.13.5: “When the name wise is said of man, it describes and envelops the thing signified: but not so when said of God, for it leaves the reality signified uncontained and uncircumscribed.” *Degrees of Knowledge*, 14.

⁶⁸ John of the Cross, *The Ascent of Mount Carmel: Book Two*, chapters 8 and 9, in *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross* (Washington, D.C.: ICS Publications, 1991), 174, 177. Cited in Maritain, *Degrees of Knowledge*, 12. See also Karol Wojtyła, *Faith According to Saint John of the Cross* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1981), 33–45.

⁶⁹ Maritain, *Degrees of Knowledge*, 15.

reduced to the mechanical and materialized and spirituality has become disincarnate and free of material constraints. The result is a loss of a true human measure, the for the human measure must respect the substantial unity of body and soul, or flesh and spirit.

Maritain believes that a “decisive choice” must be made concerning this crisis of humanism: “the stake must be either set above reason and still on its side, or below reason and against it.”⁷⁰ The quotation touches upon a decision about the relation of faith and reason and as to whether reason is open to supernatural revelation and willing to proceed in harmony with the greater truth, or seeks a radical autonomy and a control of the earth. The world has made itself to be delivered from “the *forma rationis*” (or the full human measure) and from God and the eternal law.⁷¹ The presumed antinomy of God and divine law versus human freedom and creativity, entice many to revolt in a form of “metaphysical suicide” will lead to a spiritual fall “like the Devil of old when he fell from heaven like lightning.” The “great mass of men” will follow the downward course without will or courage. On the other side, grace is at work in a “secret and invincible” movement stirring the “blessed awakening of souls under the sign of the Virgin and the Spirit.”⁷² However, there springs from this piety the hard edge of reason and metaphysics. Where there is faith, philosophy will be saved. Jacques asserts at the end of the chapter: “wherever the living faith has taken root, we shall see that adherence to what is truly beyond reason, to uncreated Truth, to the wisdom of the saints, will bring in its train a restoration of the very order of, reason itself – a restoration implied by supernatural life as a condition of its existence. Thus, do the Gospel and philosophy, mysticism and metaphysics, the Divine and the human, go hand in hand?”⁷³ The same argument is proposed by Pope John Paul II in *Fides et Ratio*. John Paul II talked about the need for a renewal of metaphysics, particularly in establishing a philosophy consonant with the word of God. He set forth the three-fold task: to recover the sapiential dimension and vocation of philosophy, to elaborate upon realism connecting mind and being, and to rediscover the full range of being, including the knowledge of the human soul and the knowledge of God.⁷⁴ *The Degrees of Knowledge* certainly represents one of the best works accomplishing the task put forth by John Paul II.

⁷⁰ *Degrees of Knowledge*, 16–17.

⁷¹ *The Degrees of Knowledge*, 17.

⁷² *The Degrees of Knowledge*, 17.

⁷³ *The Degrees of Knowledge*, 18.

⁷⁴ *Fides et Ratio*, §81. See John Hittinger, “St. Thomas Aquinas, Thomism, and a ‘Philosophy Consonant with the Word of God.’” *Seminary Journal* 11, no. 1 (205): 47–55.

The spirit of Newman's search for truth is captured well with the phrase "I have not sinned against the light."⁷⁵ Newman emphasizes the importance of mystery as an experience in our everyday lives, in love, in the appreciation of beauty, in the contemplation of nature and the order of causation, and in personal encounter. Revealed religion builds on this predisposition to acknowledge a mystery and order beyond our reason. God wills to reveal Himself to human beings in veiled ways, and thereby he humbles the proud and lifts up the lowly. The visible world is said by Newman to be but a veil beyond which stands Almighty God.⁷⁶ In the visible world each human being acts and is acted on by other persons. Aware of the interactions between substances in the visible world, the human person — a knower and an actor — often fails to perceive that in each moment he lives as if with one foot standing also in the invisible world, among Angels and God Himself.

In the realm of conscience, we often do grasp the fact of our subordination to a truth, which is like the voice of God in our heart. Just like Augustine on the restless heart, Newman said that "the earth that we see does not satisfy us; it is but a beginning; it is but a promise of something beyond it." The world is "the outward shell of an eternal kingdom: and on that kingdom we fix the eyes of our faith." Things in creation "speak of heaven, but they are not heaven . . . , they are but crumbs from the table."⁷⁷ The man cannot know the whole God, for the man is finite and God is beyond limits. Nevertheless, rather than being the cause for dismissal or despair, the truth that the human condition betrays our "absolute incapacity to contemplate things as they really are"⁷⁸ is a call for the human person to wait for the Lord and to listen at his feet. The encounter with the mysteries of faith is a reason for joy and humility. We come to realize that we are in the presence of God and cultivate an attitude of thankfulness: "wonder and awe must always mingle whith the thankfulness which the revealed dispensation of mercy raised in our minds."⁷⁹

Newman would not consider "the truths of the Gospel as a burden, because they are beyond our understanding, [and] we shall rather welcome them and exult in them, nay, and feel an antecedent stirring of the heart towards them, for the very

⁷⁵ *Apologia*, chapter 1, 30. I would like to acknowledge the work of Rev. Pieter van Rooyen, Assistant Professor at Sacred Heart Seminary, Detroit Michigan, who as a seminarian wrote two papers on Newman and mystery for an independent study course with me in 2005. We chose the following Newman sermons, all from *Parochial and Plain Sermons* for exploration of the theme of rationalism and mystery: in *Sermons*, set I, §1 "Holiness Necessary for Future Blessedness," §15 "Religious Faith Rational," §16 "The Christian Mysteries," §24 "The Religion of the Day"; Set II, §18 "Mysteries in Religion,"; set IV, §13 "The Invisible World," §19 "The Mysteriousness of Our Present Being."

⁷⁶ "The Invisible World," set VIII, §13, in *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, 867.

⁷⁷ All previous quotes are from "The Invisible World."

⁷⁸ "Mysteries in Religion," *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, 359.

⁷⁹ "Mysteries in Religion," 358.

reason that they are above us.”⁸⁰ Newman would argue that the scholar should be on his knees along with the humblest worker manifesting piety and gratitude: “Mystery in religion is a high invisible grace lodged in an outward form, a precious possession to be piously and thankfully guarded for the sake of the heavenly reality contained in it [...], the pledge of a doctrine which reason cannot understand.”⁸¹ Faith is an act that is quite similar to the process of assent in ordinary human activities. Human assent involves some measure of trust. It depends upon external proofs and evidence, as well as upon the disposition of the believer.

The human person must develop and cultivate antecedent prepossessions to see God: “None but the holy can look upon the Holy One. There are bodily dispositions that affect the taste, so that the sweetest flavors become ungrateful to the palate [...] in like manner, there is a moral malady which disorders the inward sight and taste.”⁸² Raïssa Maritain agrees that the pursuit of truth must be in the context of the pursuit of holiness lest we succumb to the illusion proposed by the prince of this world. We should not love the passing moment above eternity and uncertainty above truth.⁸³ She celebrates “poverty, contempt, suffering — these are the lust of saints. They must be skilled in them. Truly fair weapons against the prince of lusts. Wielded by grace, they are weapons full of grace.”⁸⁴ We can appreciate why St. John Paul II selects the Maritains and Newman as exemplars of the dynamic unity of faith and reason.

Pope John Paul II on Vatican II and Cultural Renewal

It is interesting to note that Pope John Paul II makes use of the very notion of “the Prince of this world” in a key encyclical. His third encyclical is on the Holy Spirit, *Dominum et Vivicantem*. We find in this encyclical, as well as in many others, a certain amplification of the Maritains’ pioneering efforts to redeem the modern times, and also a vindication of their work. Although Maritain was rebuffed for his criticism in *The Peasant of the Garonne* of the implementation and interpretation of

⁸⁰ “Mysteries in Religion,” 358–359.

⁸¹ “Mysteries in Religion,” 361.

⁸² “Holiness Necessary for Future Blessedness,” *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, 8.

⁸³ *The Prince of this World*, 19.

⁸⁴ *The Prince of this World*, 16.

Vatican II, John Paul II cautions the Church to discern the “fruits of the council” so as to recognize what may come from “the prince of this world.” Because the church opened itself widely to the contemporary world, such discernment is necessary.

John Paul II expounds *John* 16:7 and the idea that the Holy Spirit will convince the world about sins, righteousness and judgment. A sin is a rejection of the mission of Christ and it is a refusal of faith. Righteousness is the filial oblation of the son on the cross. Judgment pertains to the claim of the prince of this world. The Prince of this world is judged according to the Pope’s formulation because he “exploits the work of creation against salvation, against the covenant, and the union of man with God.”⁸⁵ This sounds much like Raïssa’s account of 1931, but the Polish Pope further states that this influence of the Prince of the World not only has a subjective dimension, i.e. a personal temptation we may undergo, but it also has “an external dimension” in concrete form as “the content of culture.”⁸⁶ This includes philosophical systems, especially forms of materialism and systems which exclude the presence and action of God. Modern culture tends towards the complete falsification of truth about God: “God the creator is placed in a state of suspicion, indeed accusation.”⁸⁷ Raïssa remarked in her article that the “spirit of darkness” shows God as “an enemy of his own creature [...] a source of danger and a threat to man.”⁸⁸ We are led to see God as a limitation of our being and not the source of our freedom and fullness of good.⁸⁹ The root of the heart of sin is disobedience and refusal of the gift of God.

According to John Paul II, we are engaged in a dramatic struggle between good and evil and that Christ came to “break the stranglehold of personified evil.”⁹⁰ John Paul II’s long elaboration of *John* 16:7 culminates in a statement of hope for renewal by the action of the Holy Spirit. The ideologies, determinisms, and falsifications of culture have been erected into “dominating structures and mechanisms in various spheres of society” and such social factors, he says, subject the human spirit to “the prince of this world.”⁹¹ “In the ordinary conditions of society, Christians, as witnesses to man’s authentic dignity, by their obedience to the Holy Spirit contribute to the manifold ‘renewal of the face of the earth’, working together with their

⁸⁵ John Paul II, Pope, *The Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church and the World: Dominum et Vivificantem: Encyclical Letter of John Paul II* (Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 1986), §27.

⁸⁶ *The Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church and the World: Dominum Et Vivificantem: Encyclical Letter of John Paul II*, §60.

⁸⁷ John Paul II wrote about the attempt “to place in doubt the truth about God who is Love and leaving man only with a sense of the master-slave relationship.” *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, 228.

⁸⁸ *The Prince of This World*, 12.

⁸⁹ *Dominum et Vivificantem*, §38.

⁹⁰ *Gaudium et Spes*, §2; *Dominum et Vivificantem*, §29.

⁹¹ *Gaudium et Spes*, §2; *Dominum et Vivificantem*, §60.

brothers and sisters in order to achieve and put to good use everything that is good, noble and beautiful in the modern progress of civilization, culture, science, technology and the other areas of thought and human activity.”⁹²

Jacques and Raïssa Maritain were pioneers in the Catholic apostolate to culture. Their work is reflected in the documents of *Vatican II*. They were engaged in the evangelization of key sectors of modern culture, as Pope John Paul II explains in *Mission of the Redeemer*.⁹³ They enjoyed many successes, but they warn us that any territory gained is not gained for long: “For where the prince of this world has his kingdom, the Christian cannot establish his permanent dwelling as on definitely conquered soil.”⁹⁴ The Maritains cast the Lord’s fire on earth and ignited a cultural blaze. But what matters, Jacques continues, is less the “result that can be expected of the blaze than the work of the flame while the blaze lasts.” Their work is not that of a founder, for a founder “dreams of founding for eternity.” The Maritains did not seek to make a durable thing to last for centuries, but rather to set out on a venture which may “vanish overnight and must always start afresh.” Such is the apostolate to culture. However, even if one must see “everything go up in smoke,” Jacques states that “one’s pains are repaid by what is best in this world, the marvel of those friendships which God induces and the pure loyalties he inspires, which are like a mirror of the gratuitousness and generosity of his love.”⁹⁵ The flame of Jacques and Raïssa Maritain allows us to appreciate their life and the apostolic work.

Bibliography

- Barth, Markus. *Ephesians 4–6. The Anchor Bible 34A*. New York: Doubleday, 1974.
- Bouyer, Louis. *Cardinal Newman: His Life and Spirituality*. Notre Dame: Private printing, 1960.
- Flannery, Austin. *Vatican II: the Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*. Liturgical Press, 1996.
- Dulles, S. J., Avery Cardinal. *Newman*. New York/London: Continuum, 2002.
- Hittinger, John. *The Vocation of the Catholic Philosopher: from Maritain to John Paul II*. Washington, D.C.: American Maritain Association, 2010.

⁹² *Gaudium et Spes*, §2; *Dominum et Vivificantem*, §60; *Gaudium et Spes*, §§ 53–59.

⁹³ John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio*, “The Mission of Christ the Redeemer” (1990). §37.

⁹⁴ “Forward” to Raïssa’s *Journal* (New York: Magi Press, 1974), 14.

⁹⁵ “Forward” to Raïssa’s *Journal*, 15.

- Hittinger, John. "Ethos, Person and Spirit – Principles of Social and Cultural Renewal." *Człowiek w Kulturze: Pismo Poświęcone Filozofii i Kulturze* 26 (2016): 161–172.
- Hittinger, John. "The Springs of Religious Freedom: Conscience and the Search for Truth." *Journal of Disciplinary Studies* 29, noes 1–2 (2017): 4–24.
- Hittinger, John. "An Account of Human Rights in Light of Culture and the Gospel." In *Religion und Politik in Der Freiheitlichen Demokratie*, vol. 25, edited by Klaus Stüwe, 113–126. Berlin: Duncker and Humblot, 2018.
- Hittinger, John. "John Paul II's Core Teaching on Culture." *Communio* 48 (Summer 2021): 247–279.
- Hittinger, John. "The Three Formative Phases of the Spiritual Journey of Jacques Maritain." *The Saint Anselm Journal* 19 (2023): 1–28.
- Hittinger, John P. "St. Thomas Aquinas, Thomism, and a 'Philosophy Consonant with the Word of God.'" *Seminary Journal* 11, no. 1 (2005): 47–55.
- Hittinger, John P. "The Vocation of Philosophy According to John Paul II." In *The Thomistic Legacy in Blessed John Paul II and His Refounding of the Pontifical Academy of St Thomas Aquinas*, edited by Marcello Sanches Sorondo, 110–120. Vatican City: Pontifical Academy of St Thomas, 2013.
- John Paul II, Pope. *The Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church and the World. Dominum Et Vivificantem: Encyclical Letter of John Paul II*. Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 1986.
- John Paul II, Pope. *Faith and Reason: Encyclical Letter Fides Et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship between Faith and Reason*. Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1998.
- Maritain, Jacques. *Some Reflections on Culture and Liberty*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1933.
- Maritain, Jacques. *Religion Et Culture*. Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1946.
- Maritain, Jacques. *Art and Scholasticism, and the Frontiers of Poetry*. New York: Scribner, 1962.
- Maritain, Jacques. *The Peasant of the Garonne: an Old Layman Questions Himself About the Present Time*. New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1968.
- Maritain, Jacques. *Distinguish to Unite, or the Degrees of Knowledge. Works*, v. 7. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995.
- Maritain, Jacques. "Introduction." In Comte Paul Biver. *Père Lamy 1855–1931*, 7–12. Rockford: Tan, 1951.
- Maritain, Jacques. *St. Thomas Aquinas*. New York: Meridian Books, 1958.
- Maritain, Raïssa. *Le Prince De Ce Monde*. In *Œuvres Complètes, vol. 14, 1921–1944*, 205–215. Fribourg/Suisse Paris: Editions Universitaires and Editions Saint-Paul. 1982.
- Maritain, Raïssa. *The Prince of This World*. Translated by Gerard Phelan. Toronto: Institute of Medieval Studies, 1931.
- Maritain, Raïssa. *Le Prince De Ce Monde*, 2. éd. Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1963.

- Maritain, Raïssa. *We Have Been Friends Together*. Translated by Julie Kernan. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1942.
- Maritain, Raïssa. *Adventures in Grace*. Translated by Julie Kernan. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1945.
- Maritain, Jacques and Raïssa. *Prayer and Intelligence*. London: Sheed and Ward, 1928.
- Maritain, Raïssa. *Raïssa's Journal* presented by Jacques Maritain. Albany, NY: Magi Books, 1974.
- McGrath, Francis. "The Challenge of Liberal Anglicanism." In *John Henry Newman: Universal Revelation*, 51–68. Kent: Burns and Oates, 1997.
- Newman, John Henry. *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, edited by Ian Ker. London/New York: Penguin Books, 1994.
- Newman, John Henry. *The Dream of Gerontius*. Introduction by Rev Gregory Winteron. New York: Alba House, 2001.
- Newman, John. *Essays Critical and Historical*. London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1891.
- Newman, John. *Parochial and Plain Sermons*. San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1997.
- O'Connell, Marvin R. "Newman and Liberalism." In *Newman Today*, edited by Stanley L. Jaki. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989.
- O'Malley, Frank. "The Thinker in the Church: The Spirit of Newman," *Review of Politics* 21 (1959): 5–23.
- Sharkey, Michael. "Newman's Search for Holiness in His Search for Truth." In *Newman Today*, edited by Stanley L. Jaki. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989.
- Wojtyła, Karol. "Praxis and Constitution of Culture." *Person and Community*.
- Wojtyła, Karol. *Sources of Renewal: the Implementation of the Second Vatican Council*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1980.

John Hittinger

L'emprise du mal sur la culture : à propos du *Prince De Ce Monde*⁹⁶

Résumé

Cet essai examine les liens entre philosophie et culture dans les documents *Fides et Ratio* et *Gaudium et Spes* de Jean-Paul II. L'orientation vers la transcendance peut être entravée par les tendances culturelles et les attitudes intellectuelles. La foi purifie et élève la culture. La désignation de Jacques Maritain comme modèle d'intégration de la foi et de la raison est également abordée ici. À la lumière de cette recommandation, nous examinons l'argument de Jacques et Raïssa Maritain selon lequel la culture

⁹⁶ Une version de cet article a été présentée lors du congrès de l'American Maritain Association à Notre Dame, dans l'Indiana, États-Unis, en 2007.

est sous l'emprise du mal, notamment par l'intermédiaire du prince de ce monde. Le passage d'*Éphésiens* 6:10 est interprété comme la source scripturale de ce point de vue. La pensée de John Henry Newman dans *Le Rêve de Gerontius* est également prise en considération en référence à l'emprise maléfique des démons. Nous concluons par un examen du projet des Maritain en tant qu'apostolat de la culture.

M o t s - c l é s : foi/culture, philosophie/culture, Maritain, Jean-Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, *Le Prince De Ce Monde*, *Le Rêve de Gerontius*

John Hittinger

L'influenza del male sulla cultura: sul *Principe di Questo Mondo*⁹⁷

Sommario

In questo saggio vengono analizzati i legami tra filosofia e cultura nelle encicliche *Fides et Ratio* e *Gaudium et Spes* di Giovanni Paolo II. L'orientamento verso la trascendenza può essere ostacolato dalle tendenze culturali e dagli atteggiamenti intellettuali. La fede purifica ed eleva la cultura. Viene inoltre esaminata la figura di Jacques Maritain come modello per l'integrazione tra fede e ragione. Alla luce di questa raccomandazione, prendiamo in esame l'argomentazione di Jacques e Raïssa Maritain secondo cui la cultura è sotto l'influenza del male, in particolare attraverso l'opera del principe di questo mondo. Il passo di *Efesini* 6:10 viene interpretato come fonte scritturale di questa visione. Viene inoltre preso in considerazione il pensiero di John Henry Newman in *Il Sogno di Gerontius* in riferimento all'influenza malvagia dei demoni. Concludiamo con uno sguardo al progetto dei Maritain come apostolato della cultura.

Parole chiave: fede/cultura, filosofia/cultura, Maritain, Giovanni Paolo II, *Fides et Ratio*, *Il Principe di Questo Mondo*, *Il Sogno di Gerontius*

⁹⁷ Una versione di questo articolo è stata presentata al convegno dell'American Maritain Association tenutosi a Notre Dame, nell'Indiana, Stati Uniti, nel 2007.