CASSIRER'S MIRANDOLA

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Introduction

In the Journal of the History of Ideas (1) Dr. Ernst Cassirer has an article entitled Giovanni Pico della Mirandola in which he attempts to show that Giovanni Pico della Mirandola's philosophy, properly understood, is not a mere eclectic system but is rather a unified and consistent philosophy which took its stand on major philosophical issues and thereby made genuine contributions to the progress of philosophical thought. Avery Dulles in his Princeps Concordiae, a work whose object is to place Mirandola definitely in the Scholastic tradition, decries the idealistic conception of history which has reigned supreme these many years, and accuses Cassirer of reading his own philosophy into Mirandola in accordance with this idealistic conception. We are inclined to agree fully with Dulles' evaluation of Cassirer's work on Mirandola. (2) In fact, it is because Cassirer has read his own philosophy into Mirandola that we are interested in his article, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola.

The present work purports to be a critical study of this article. The title, Cassirer's Mirandola, indicates at the very outset the fact that our interest is not so much in the Pico della Mirandola who lived in the fifteenth century as it is in the Pico who is
the creation of Dr. Ernst Cassirer. That there is
a distinction between these two Picos will be evid­
ent to one who compares the Pico of Cassirer with
the one found in Pico's works themselves. The rea­
son for this distinction will be found in Cassirer's
idealistic conception of history. Our interest is
specifically in Cassirer's creation of Pico because it is this Pico who manifests Cassirer's own doctrines.

Ernst Cassirer is one of the most outstanding of
contemporary philosophers. He considers himself a
"critical idealist." Ralph Barton Perry, in his
Philosophy of the Recent Past, characterized him as
the most eminent living representative (3) of the
"Marburg school" which was an attempt to purify
Kantianism of the influence of Lange. (4) A critical
study of the whole of Cassirer's philosophy from the
Scholastic viewpoint would be highly desirable, but
the present work makes no such pretentions.

In the present work we intend, as has already
been stated, merely to make a critical study of this
one article in the light of the teachings of St. Thomas.
We have chosen this particular article rather than a
work in which Cassirer ex professo states his own phil­
osophy because in this article Cassirer attributes his
ideas to a philosopher who Cassirer himself admits was
definitely in the Scholastic tradition (5) and thus
gives us a common ground for comparing what are two
very different conceptions of philosophy. The other writings of Cassirer we shall use only in so far as they are needed to clarify the matter treated in the article under consideration.

In the first place we shall consider a few ideas on history and poetry for the purpose of manifesting Cassirer's idea of history and thus substantiating our claim that in the article on Pico he has to a large extent given his own philosophy. We shall then proceed to consider the article itself. At the end of what we hope will be a more or less coherent treatment of the article we shall in a supplement list a number of Cassirer's references to Pico and others and shall compare Cassirer's interpretation of these with Pico's own works or with the traditional interpretation as the case may be.

Having explained the purpose of our work and the order we shall follow, we can now proceed to the consideration of poetry and history.
I.

Poetry and History

I.

What is and What Ought to be.

It is impossible for man to encompass the reason that governs the manifold of history. By history we mean the past of humanity and all that has concerned it in the past. This is and should always remain the measure of what is called historical knowledge. Even if our knowledge of the past were more than piecemeal, even if it covered all the facts, the unifying reason that lies behind these facts as their governing principle would still remain hidden in its essential features. Ultimately, the ways of this reason remain inscrutable. There remains ever a profound discrepancy between this reason and what is reasonable to us, between the reason that governs both necessity and contingency and the reason which remains confined to understanding in a more or less superficial manner what lies within the bounds of necessity or of probability which is an approximation or an appearance of necessity. In other words, there remains a profound discrepancy between the actual plan of history and any plan of it our reason might construct. For even if all events did happen by necessity, there is no assurance that human reason could discern the governing principles of history from the past which, after all, is only an indeterminable section of all history. This would seem to demand that the events of history form a series of the mathematical type in which the governing relation of the whole series
can be known from only a part. But, as a matter of fact, necessity and probability are far from covering even the main events and features of history. So many things might have been other than they were. And among the things that actually happen some are necessary, some probable, and some improbable. The role of improbability must never be underestimated. Highly important events, events entailing tremendous consequences, may come about in a purely fortuitous fashion. Such might be the accidental death of a strong leader during a national crisis. At times these improbable events fit into the scheme of what we think ought to be, as does "good fortune" in the Aristotelian sense of the term. Most of these improbable events, however, go against the grain of what ought to be.

Our life and all history abound with events and actions which, according to our reason alone, are irrational, i.e., with actions and events which our reason cannot dispose in an orderly and consistent whole under a unifying principle. What is is often not as it should be, and this "irrationality" weighs heavily upon all history as well as upon every individual. The government of all circumstance does not lie within the reach of man, since he does not enjoy the science of good and evil. From the viewpoint of what our reason can encompass, the irrational seems to reign supreme. As it is said in the Book of Ecclesiastes: Under the sun the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to
the strong, nor bread to the wise, nor riches to the learned, nor favor to the skillful; but time and chance in all. (1) There are just men to whom evils happen, as though they had done the works of the wicked; and there are wicked men who are as secure as though they had done the deeds of the just. (2) Things do not always happen as we think they should, and what is not as we think it should be is to us irrational. The resolution of this irrational element to the rational, i.e., to what ought to be is not realized within the confines of a human life, nor within the totality of history as we know it. In the face of this inability to discover a reasonable plan or scheme in the events that happened or happen reason experiences the humiliating pathos of frustration and is inclined to rebel against the stubborn factuality of what was and what is and to substitute what should have been and what ought to be.

Now, according to Aristotle, there are some purely human and, to a degree, legitimate means of lessening this pathos. They are poetry and the fine arts in general, by means of which a form more in accord with our reason is imposed on these apparently irrational elements of real life. In his Poetics he says:

"...The poet's function is to describe, not the
thing that has happened but a kind of thing that might happen, i.e., what is possible as being probable or necessary. The distinction between historian and poet is not in the one writing prose and the other verse—you might put the work of Herodotus into verse and it would still be a species of history; it consists in this, that the one describes the thing that has been, and the other a kind of thing that might be. Hence poetry is something more philosophic and of graver import than history, since its statements are of the nature rather of universals, whereas those of history are singulars. By a universal statement I mean one as to what such or such a kind of man will probably or necessarily say or do—which is the aim of poetry, though it affixes proper names to the characters; by a singular statement, one as to what say, Alcibiades did or had done to him." (3)

With respect to his work the poet enjoys a share, as it were, in the science of good and evil. (4) In tragedy, for example, he resolves human actions into what ought to be. The action takes place in conformity with our reason. The spectator witnesses, as it were, the triumph of what ought to be. Terror, misery, injustice, chance, are dominated by a reason akin to divine reason under whose guidance all things cooperate in their way to good. In tragedy, actions and events which might be are given a type of universality; they are given the form of what ought to be, in such a way that the parts and the whole lie within the encompassing grasp of human reason. In the experience of viewing the tragedy the audience is relieved of that burden of real life where reason is
constantly thwarted. Both epic poetry and tragedy are as temporary reliefs from the overbearing tragedy which is history and in which the final resolution into what ought to be never falls within the bounds of human experience.

The underlying idea of this cathartic function was expressed by Aristotle in the following passage:

"As for the poetry which merely narrates, or imitates by means of versified language (without action), it is evident that it has several points in common with Tragedy. The construction of its stories should clearly be like that in a drama; they should be based on a single action, one that is a complete whole in itself, with a beginning, middle, and end, so as to enable the work to produce its own proper pleasure with all the organic unity of a living creature. Nor should one suppose that there is anything like them in our usual histories. A history has to deal not with one action, but with one period and all that happened in that to one or more persons, however disconnected the several events may have been. Just as two events may take place at the same time, e.g. the sea-fight off Salamis and the battle with the Carthaginians in Sicily, without converging to the same end, so too of two consecutive events one may sometimes come after the other with no one end as their common issue. Nevertheless most of our epic poets, one may say, ignore the distinction." (5)

The cathartic function of Comedy has been well described by Cassirer in his Essay on Man:

"Comic art possesses in the highest degree that faculty shared by all art, sympathetic vision. By virtue of this faculty it can accept human life with all its defects and foibles, its follies and vices. Great comic art has always been a sort of encomium moriae, a praise of folly. In comic perspective all things begin to take on a new face. We are perhaps never nearer to our human world than in the works of a great comic writer—in Cervantes' Don Quixote, Stern's Tris-
tramp Shandy, or in Dickens' Pickwick Papers. We become observant of the minutest details; we see this world in all its narrowness, its pettiness, and silliness. We live in this restricted world, but we are no longer imprisoned by it. Such is the peculiar character of the comic catharsis. Things and events begin to lose their material weight; scorn is dissolved into laughter and laughter is liberation." (6)

When Aristotle says that poetry differs from history by its universality, this universality is obviously not to be identified with the universality of our science. The statements of poetry are more of the nature of universals, they have greater affinity with universality proper (mallon ta katholou), whereas those of history are singulars. This type of universality of course we encounter in all the fine arts. The statue of the disc-thrower is not that of a certain historic individual, but rather is it a representation of the disc-thrower. But we must add immediately that neither is the statue of the disc-thrower a mere sensible sign of the disc-thrower in vague generality. It is rather an image of the disc-thrower concretized in this particular object. It is, as it were, a concrete universal; it has both universality and particularity; it is as an intuited universal. It might be remotely compared with a separated substance where universality
is wholly realized in a single individual.

In poetry, a statement is called universal in the sense that it tells us what such a person will probably or necessarily do. What is probable or necessary has universality. But again, the universality is here concretized and intuited in a singular form. The universality of poetic concreteness Aristotle shows from Comedy:

"In Comedy this has become clear by this time; it is only when their plot is already made up of probable incidents that they give it a basis of proper names, choosing for the purpose any names that may occur to them, instead of writing like the old jambic poets about particular persons." (7)

When we show the difference between history and poetry by the greater universality of the latter, we might be inclined to infer that the perfection of poetry should be judged according to its approximation to scientific universality alone. Aristotle's doctrine of universality taken as a whole, however, precludes any such interpretation. In one of the texts already quoted, he said that "poetry is something more philosophic and of greater import than history, since its statements are of the nature rather of universals, whereas those of history are singulars." From this, we might be led to think that, though statements of poetry are of the nature of universals, the poetic universal is nevertheless still defective in so far as it still retains a mode of particularity. That is not the case however. Such an interpretation would be to confuse the imperfect universality of tentative generalisation with the intuited universality concretized in a work of fine art. These two
universalities lie, as it were, in opposite directions and are associated with contrary movements. The former tends away from the singular by abstraction toward pure universality which is achieved only when we see it in its formal independence from the singulars; whereas the latter moves rather from the universal toward the singular while retaining universality. The singular of fine art is not just an instance of some abstract nature. It is, as it were, the intuition of universality in the singular and of singularity in the universal. In this respect the singular of poetry is better than the singular of nature. And since the poet pursues that type of singular, his singulars do not have to be true to fact.

"If the poet's description be criticized as not true to fact, one may urge perhaps that the object ought to be as described—an answer like that of Sophocles, who said that he drew men as they ought to be, and Euripides as they were. If the description, however, be neither true nor of the thing as it ought to be, the answer must be then, that it is in accordance with opinion." (8)

At this point it should be remarked that in the poetic individual we recuperate somehow what we lose in the knowledge of universality by abstraction from singulars. Fine art tends to achieve an object which has both universality and particularity; an object having simultaneously and in its very oneness the perfection of both through the dominance of universal form in the singular. We might say that the fullness of universality emerges in particularity, as if the singular were an overflow of the abundance of universality. It is as if, when contemplating a work of
fine art, we intuited not merely the universal in the particular, but rather the particular in the universal. In this the fine arts offer us the most humanly complete object we can attain. They restore to us in simultaneous unison both what the intellect loses in the process of abstraction and what we miss when confined to sensation. Through imitation they intensify singularity just as they enrich universality by allaying its opposition to the concrete, opposition which was due to the process of abstraction from the singular.

We have already said that the work of fine art may be, at least remotely, compared to a separate substance in that it has universality and individuality. But in so far as it offers us a kind of intuition of the particular in the universal, we may compare it to the intelligible species of the separated substances, which is "universalis virtutis". The following two lengthy passages from St. Thomas will make clear what we mean when we say that the species of a separated substance is "universalis virtutis".

"Et ideo alii dixerunt quod angelus habet quidem cognitionem singularium, sed in causis universalibus, ad quas reducuntur particulares omnes effectus; sicut si astrologus judicet de aliqua eclipsi futura per dispositiones caelestium motuum. Sed haec positio praecipiit inconvertientia non evadit: quia sic cognoscere singularium in causis universalibus, non est cognoscere ipsum ut est singulare; hoc est, ut est hic et nunc. Astrol-
ogus enim cognoscens eclipsim futuram per computa-
tionem caelestium motuum, scit eam in universalis;
et non prout est hic et nunc, nisi per sensum accep-
tiat. Administratio autem et providentia et motus sunt singularium, prout sunt hic et nunc."
Et ideo aliter dicendum est, quod sicut homo
cognoscit diversis viribus cognitivis omnium
rerum genera, intellectu quidem universalis
et immaterialia, sensu autem singularia et
corporalia; ita angelus per unam intellectivam
virtutem utrique cognoscit. Hoc enim rerum
ordo habet quod quanto aliquid est superius,
tanto habeat virtutem magis unitam et ad plura
se extendentem; sicut in ipso homine patet, quod
sensus communis, qui est superior quam sensus
 proprius, licet sit unique potentia, omnia cognos-
scit quae quinque sensibus exterioribus cognos-
cuntur; et quaedam alia quae nullus sensus
exterior cognoscit, scilicet differentiam albi
et dulcis. Et simile etiam est in aliis con-
siderare. Unde cum angelus naturae ordine sit
supra hominem, inconveniens est dicere quod homo
quacumque sua potentia cognoscat aliquid quod
angelus per unam vim suam cognoscitivam, scilicet
intellectum, non cognoscat. Unde Aristoteles pro-
inconvenienti habet, ut litem quam nos scimus,
Deus ignoret, ut patet. Modus autem quo intellec-
tus angeli singularia cognoscit, ex hoc considerari
potest; quod sicut a Deo effluent res ut subsistant
in propriis naturis, ita etiam ut sint in cognitione
angelica. Manifestum est autem quod a Deo effluit
in rebus non solum illud quod ad naturam universalem
pertinet, sed etiam ea quae sunt individuationis
principia. Est enim causa totius substantiae rei,
et quantum ad materiam et quantum ad formam; et sec-
undum quod causat, sic et cognoscit, quia scientia
ejus est causa rei, ut ostensum est (quaeast. XIV,
art. 8). Sicut igitur Deus per essentiam suam, per
quam omnia causat, est similitudo omnium, et per
eam omnia cognoscit non solum quantum ad naturas
universales, sed etiam quantum ad singularitatem:
ita angelis per species a Deo inditas cognoscent
res non solum quantum ad naturam universalem, sed
etiam secundum earum singularitatem; inquantum
sunt quaedam represtationes multiplicatae illius
unicae et simplicis essentiae." (9)

"Quum enim species rerum in intellectu existentes
oporent esse immateriales, non poterunt secundum
quod sunt in intellectu nostro, esse principium
cognoscendi singularia, quae per materiam indivi-
duantur, eo quod species intellectus hostri in
tantum sunt contractae virtutis quod una dutit
solum in cognitionem unius; unde, sicut simili-
tudo naturae generis non postest deducere in
cognitionem principiorum speciei et individuan-
tium quae sunt principia materialia, ut per eam
individuum in sua singularitate cognoscatur.
Similitudo vero intellectus substantiae separatae,
quae sit universalis virtutis, una et immaterialis
existens, potest ducere in cognitionem principiorum
speciei et individuantium, quae sunt principia materialia; ita quod per eam substantia separata non solum materiam generis et speciei, sed etiam individui congnoscere possit per suum intellectum, Nec sequitur quod forma per quam congnoscit sit materialis vel quod sint infinitae secundum numerum individuorum.

Adhuc, Quod potest inferior virtus, potest et superior, sed eminentius; unde virtus inferior operatur per multa, ubi virtus superior per unum tantum operatur; virtus enim quanto est superior, tanto magis colligitur et unitur; e contrario vero virtus inferior dividitur et multiplicatur; unde videntis quod diversa genera sensibilium, quae quinque sensus exteriores percipiunt, una vis sensus communis apprehendit. Anima autem humana est inferior ordine naturae quam substantia separata; ipsa autem cognosciiva est universalium et singularium per duo principia, scilicet per sensum et intellectum. Substantia igitur separata, quae est altior, cognoscit utrumque altiori modo per unum principium, scilicet intellectum.

From these two texts, then, we see that since the knowing faculty of separated substances is not scattered in intellects and internal and external senses, they have a more intense and sharper view even of sensible reality than we have. We have likened the works of fine arts to the species of separated substances because in the works of fine arts we recover something of that unity which we lost in the manifold of our scattered knowing power. In an oblique manner the works of fine arts fill the gap between our universal of science and the singular of experience.

Cassirer's terminology is not to be identified with ours, but we may well subscribe to the underlying idea of the following passage from his Essay on Man:

"So long as we live in the world of sense impressions alone we merely touch the surface of reality. Awareness of the depth of things always requires an effort on the part of our active and constructive energies. But since these energies do not move in the same direction, and do not tend toward the same end,
they cannot give us the same aspect of reality. There is a conceptual depth as well as a purely visual depth. The first is discovered by science; the second is revealed in art. The first aids us in understanding the reasons of things; the second in seeing their forms. In science we try to trace phenomena back to their first causes, and to general laws and principles. In art we are absorbed in their immediate appearance, and we enjoy this appearance to the fullest extent in all its richness and variety. Here we are not concerned with the uniformity of laws but with the multiformity and diversity of intuitions. Even art may be described as knowledge, but art is knowledge of a peculiar and specific kind."

Now it might be said that the peculiar cooperation of intellect and sense which we have just referred to is actually common to all art, to that of the shoemaker as well as to that of the sculptor and the musician; for art is about singular contingent things and implies a movement from the universal to the particular since art, like prudence, although subjected in the intellect, is nevertheless terminatively in the sense. To this we answer that this common factor indeed explains how an intellectual virtue may produce a singular work, but it does not account for the universality of the particular that is a work of fine art, nor does it account specifically for the peculiar type of particularity, as we shall see in a moment. We all agree that the mind has the capacity of producing sensuous images concretely expressive of what ought to be. In this connection it should be noted that the principle of the work of art is in the artist as an intellectual agent who conceives and dominates the work produced.

"... Proprie utimur (nome factionis) in his quae fiunt per intellectum, in quibus intellectus agentis habet dominium super illud quod facit, ut possit sic vel aliter facere: quod in rebus naturalibus non con-
tingit." The artist has a complete understanding of the work that his mind deliberately and freely conceived. He has conceived the idea of the concrete "what ought to be" over and against what is not as it ought to be in reality as reality is presented to us in experience. The imitation that is the work of fine art is a sensuous expression of this "ought to be", an expression immediately derived from reason and exceeding the expressivity of nature itself. The "ought to be" thus expressed may legitimately be called "pure sensuous form." Reason through sense has the ability to organize matter into a sensuous image of what it conceives. When we call this image "form" we mean an image where the form, the universality, the "what ought to be" is concretely expressed.

Now an image is an expressive similitude of some other thing called the original. It is a similitude of that other thing either as regards the species (sometimes called form) or as regards some proper accident which is a sign of the species, such as figure. Obviously the works of art belong to the latter kind of image; hence they are symbols, since they must, through resemblance, convey the form of what is expressed. The form they express does not inhere in them absolutely, but procession from the original is essential to image. The image, then, is a dynamic conveyor of form, and the form that is the image is processive.
Since the work of art is an imitative symbol of what ought to be, and since what ought to be does not as such come to us from experience, the work of art is not empiric. This is clear enough in the case of the artist who produces the work. But neither is the work empiric to the contemplator. The latter does not properly contemplate the work of art as such unless he sees it as expressive of what lies beyond experience and as a dynamic form. In contemplating a statue, for example, the form that is empirically known is the figure of the stone, which is there in an absolute manner. The statue is seen as a work of fine art only when we see the figure as expressive of, and hence as proceeding from, what lies beyond and is prior to, empiric perception. Hence, the image in question is not there in the ordinary sense. From all this it is evident that "art gives us a new kind of truth--a truth not of empirical things but of pure forms." (13)

This consideration permits us to see better the difference between the natural singular and the peculiar singular of a work of fine art; it permits us to see that in a way the singular of fine art is better than the natural singular. For the singularity of which the artist is the cause, that is, the singularity of the universal in concretion, is not formally the singularity of this stone in this place, or of this line on this page of this book, which can be seen without being aesthetically understood. Empiric singularity is indeed necessary, but it cannot be more than instrumental to
what we shall call poetic singularity. The empiric singularity can be no more than a pure vehicle for a singularity of a higher type, that is, higher in the line of expression as conceived from the mind with universality. The work of fine art as such has no empiric individuality; nevertheless, its poetic individuality is more expressive of what ought to be than the empiric individual. Hence although it is not better entitatively, it is representatively better. If what ought to be were given full empirical existence it would be better than what is empirical but not as it ought to be.

In the light of what we have just said, it is evident that we may subscribe to the idea underlying the following passage from Cassirer:

"A great lyrical poet has the power to give definite shape to our most obscure feelings. This is possible only because his work, though dealing with a subject which is apparently irrational and ineffable, possesses a clear organization and articulation. Not even in the most extravagant creations of art do we ever find the ravishing confusions of fantasy, the original chaos of human nature. This definition of art, given by the romantic writers, is a contradiction in terms. Every work of art has an intuitive structure, and that means a character of rationality. Every single element must be felt as part of a comprehensive whole. If in a lyrical poem we change one of the words, an accent or a rhythm, we are in danger of destroying the specific tone and charm of the poem. Art is not fettered to the rationality of things or events. It may infringe all those laws of probability which classical aestheticians declared to be the constitutional laws of art. It may give us the most bizarre and grotesque vision, and yet retain a rationality of its own--rationality of form. We may in this way interpret a saying of Goethe's which at first sight looks paradoxical, 'Art; a second nature; mysterious too, but more understandable, for
What we have so far maintained concerning the peculiar perfection of the fine arts seems to be dangerously near the romantic theory of poetic imagination. This theory has been substantially stated by Cassier, though he does not agree with it:

"In romantic thought", he says, "the theory of poetic imagination had reached its climax. Imagination is no longer that special human activity which builds up the human world of art. It now has universal metaphysical value. Poetic imagination is the only clue to reality. Fichte's idealism declared in his System of Transcendental Idealism that art is the consummation of philosophy. In nature, in morality, in history we are still living in the propylaeum of philosophical wisdom; in art we enter into the sanctuary itself. Romantic writers in both verse and prose expressed themselves in the same vein. The distinction between poetry and philosophy was felt to be shallow and superficial. According to Friedrich Schlegel the highest task of modern poet is to strive after a new form of poetry which he describes as 'transcendental poetry.' No other poetic genre can give us the essence of the poetic spirit, the 'poetry of poetry.' To poeticize philosophy and to philosophize poetry—such was the highest aim of all romantic thinkers. The true poem is not the work of the individual artist; it is the universe itself, the one work of art which is forever perfecting itself. Hence all the deepest mysteries of all the arts and sciences appertain to poetry. 'Poetry,' says Novalis, 'is what is absolutely and genuinely real. This is the kernel of my philosophy.' The more poetic, the more true."

(15)

Obviously the romantics were misinterpreting a perfection we must concede to the production and to the contemplation of the works of fine art. Poetry still remains "infima doctrina", even when it is strictly religious. Nevertheless this does not prevent it from having a peculiar perfection nowhere else to be found by us. As Goethe said, art does not pretend to show the metaphysical depth of things; it merely sticks to the
surface of natural phenomena,—and Cassirer refers to Goethe approvingly. However, insofar as, apart from displaying and revealing so striking a realm, one which cannot be otherwise attained apart from being our noblest type of making, art furnishes us a close approximation of genuine intuition of concrete universality; it represents a mode of knowing in which, more than in any other, we imitate the perfection of knowing power complete and undivided in one single faculty. And this cannot be said of any strictly human science. It is a case, then, of "perfecta imperfecte, imperfecta perfecte."

It may appear inconsistent to disagree with the idea of the romanticists that poetry is the highest form of knowledge and still claim for art a perfection which cannot be claimed by any strictly human science. But as a matter of fact there are many instances in which a lower type of knowledge is better in some important respect than a higher type. Experience may be better than science; mathematics and prudence better than wisdom proper; opinion better than certitude; touch better than sight. (17)

As we just mentioned, quoting Goethe, art does not pretend to show the metaphysical depth of things. Its end is the enjoyment of form, an enjoyment which engages our powers of knowing in unison in the face of an object deeply penetrated insofar as it is a construction born from the human mind. It is with
respect to the real objects as we know them in experience that the imitations may be better in the line of representation. Again, the poetic action of a hero, for example, is not a real action and cannot lay claim to the depth of reality. A deeper claim to reality which the fine arts can make was indicated by Aristotle when he said that the incidents in a tragedy arousing pity and fear may accomplish its catharsis of such emotions. (16) Whereas on the one hand the aesthetic contemplation gives us a foreshadowing of the fullness of contemplation, a fullness we can experience only when our knowing faculties—sense and intellect—are engaged in unison, the subordination of tragedy on the other hand to moral catharsis must be most disconcerting to transcendental aesthetes.

2.
Poetry Filling the Gaps.

The universality and the particularity of poetry then have their difference. We must now go back even farther and bring to light the difference between the likeliness of poetic necessity and probability and that of science or dialectic.

As Aristotle mentions, both in the Physics (19) and in the Metaphysics (20), only in the order of
things which happen either always or for the most part can there be certain knowledge by inference, for they alone are in conformity with rule and reason. They alone belong to the realm of rational possibility. The poetic possibility which Aristotle continually refers to must lie at least within this genus: it must be a possibility which does not go against the grain of reason; reason must be at home with it; it must call for spontaneous assent. What is possible in this sense may be principle of a reasonable sequence; for example, given such and such a character, that he perform such an action is reasonable enough—and so forth. In this way an orderly whole may arise. Poetic possibility, however, is of a peculiar kind, just as poetic reason is different from scientific reason. We shall determine this idea gradually.

Now in one sense poetic possibility is narrower than scientific possibility, and in another sense it is far more extensive. A scientific possibility, as is evident, may be most unpoetic. Poetic possibility must be related to the narrower universe of man and of human reason, an order where reason itself is
principle. The rationally possible thus becomes what ought to be according to the principles of human reason, that is, in the realm in which we are active and productive. This realm, as we have already insinuated, is twofold: the one of reality, the one in which we live our real life, and the one of imitation. In the latter, however, reason has greater command, for it masters an order of what ought to be, as in tragedy. Poetic possibility, then, might be designated as sympathetic possibility in imitation.

Within this realm what ought to be has unity. What may be has infinity. In this, poetic possibility follows the general rule of the good, the true, and the beautiful. As Aristotle says:

"Again, it is possible to fail in many ways (for evil belongs to the class of the unlimited, as the Pythagoreans conjectured, and good to that of the limited), while to succeed is possible only in one way (for which reason also one is easy and the other difficult—to miss the mark easy, to hit it difficult); for these reasons also, then, excess and defect are characteristic of vice, and the mean of virtue; For men are good in but one way, but bad in many." (21)

And the same holds for truth as opposed to opinion and error, for the proper and true reason of a thing is one. A thing of beauty must be one in its proportion and order. And all this
holds, in general, of poetic possibility, truth and beauty. Cassirer has expressed this idea in a paragraph we have already quoted (cf. page 15) concerning the unity and "rationality of form" found in lyric poetry.

The contemplation of a work of fine art may, as we have already pointed out, be considered as having a value in itself insofar as it offers us a peculiarly unified mode of knowing. It may, under this aspect, be taken also as an imitation and a foreshadowing of a more divine way of knowing. But it may also be considered functionally, such as when it produces a catharsis or incites to greater perfection. It serves, in a way, to fill the gap between the diffused and humanly unreasonable world of reality and rationality as we may conceive it. It is for this reason, no doubt, that we tend to infuse poetic reason into reality.

As has already been said, poetic possibility or likeliness, narrow in one respect, encompasses, always in its own mode, a realm reaching far beyond objective possibility. Even the impossible, as well as the fortuitous, may be poetically likely. As Aristotle said:
"Speaking generally, one has to justify (1) the Impossible by reference to the requirements of poetry, or to the better, or to opinion. For the purpose of poetry a convincing impossibility is preferable to an unconvincing possibility; and if men such as Zeuxis depicted by impossible, the answer is that it is better they should be like that, as the artist ought to improve on his model. (2) The Improbable one has to justify either by showing it to be in accordance with opinion, or by urging that at times it is not improbable; for there is a probability of things happening also against probability."

Although the actual cause of the fortuitous is not a determinate cause in nature, although it is paralogon, it may be used as reasonable and reasonably marvelous in poetry, as Aristotle points out in the following passage:

"Tragedy, however, is an imitation not only of a complete action, but also of incidents arousing pity and fear. Such incidents have the very great effect on the mind when they occur unexpectedly and at the same time in consequence of one another; there is more of the marvelous in them than than if they happened of themselves or by mere chance. Even matters of chance seem most marvelous if there is an appearance of design as it were in them; as for instance the statue of Mity at Argos killed the author of Mity's death by falling down on him when a looker-on at a public spectacle; for incidents like that we thing to be not without a meaning. A Plot, therefore, of this sort is necessarily finer than the others."

The reason why poetry may use the fortuitous as reasonable and marvelous is presumably to be seen in the fact that what in reality happens from chance in things pertaining to human happiness is either a good or an evil. Thus we deem it reasonable that good fortune happens to a man deserving of the good, and that misfortune befalls a man deserving of great punishment. Moreover, this is considered all the more reasonable and marvelous when such an outcome could not be expected from the natural
course of events. However, the abuse (i.e. over use) of chance would be poetically unreasonable.

To say that poetically ordered incidents produce the greatest effect upon the mind when they occur unexpectedly and at the same time in consequence of one another seems to demand the union of two apparently incompatible elements. After all, it may be objected, what happens as a reasonable consequence of another event or action is expected, and what is expected is not astonishing, and the marvelous belongs to the genus of what astonishes. If in a Tragedy the sequence of events were so logical that the end could be foreseen from the beginning, an intelligent spectator could walk out on the first act. Similarly if in any work of fine art the whole could be fathomed from a part or any group of its parts, it would not have the order and proportion that pleases; it would not have that peculiar illumination/ clarity. The various actions in a tragedy continually raise problems, as it were, and wonder. These problems for which in ordinary life there is no likely solution—likely solutions on this level would as a rule be unlikely—are resolved by what ought to be. There is no tragedy without reference to real life and the problems of real life, just as there is no painting without reference to some real object as an original imitated. Thus, in the fine arts, what is irrational on one plane is engaged in a continuous process of rationalisation. This rationalisation is not just the rational outcome of the plane of reality.
The marvel consists in bringing the irrational to the level of what ought to be, each step being as an unforeseen liberation. Any work of art must be "marvelous" dynamism, as we have already insinuated when speaking of the dynamic form that is an imitation. That is why in aesthetic contemplation there is assent to the unforeseen as to what should be. Any work of art is a conquest of what should be, a conquest for form, by the creative power of reason as opposed to the irrational in the whole of the human universe in which we move and as we now hold it to be. Art remakes things in a manner to which we are innately attuned. The marvel consists in the very process of attuning which takes place not only in the making by the artist but also in the very contemplation insofar as the contemplator himself must continually confer the "what is" to the here intuitively concretized "what ought to be". As Cassirer says, criticizing Bergson:

"Our experience of beauty is not, however, of such a hypnotic character. By hypnosis we may prompt a man to certain actions or we may force upon him some sentiment. But beauty, in its genuine and specific sense, cannot be impressed upon our minds in this way. In order to feel it one must cooperate with the artist. One must not only sympathize with the artist's feelings but also enter into his creative activity. If the artist should succeed in putting to sleep the active powers of our personality he would paralyze our sense of beauty. The apprehension of beauty, the awareness of the dynamism of forms, cannot be communicated in this way. For beauty depends both on the feelings of a specific kind and on an act of judgement and contemplation."

As we have seen in the last quotation from the Poetics, that which is really improbable may be brought
within the realm of poetic probability. The range of the improbable which may be used in poetry is extremely broad, as Aristotle points out in another passage of the same work:

"The marvellous is certainly required in Tragedy. The Epic, however, affords more opening for the improbable, the chief factor in the marvellous, because in it the agents are not visibly before one. The scene of the pursuit of Hector would be ridiculous on the stage—the Greeks halting instead of pursuing him, and Achilles shaking his head to stop them; but in the poem the absurdity is overlooked. The marvellous, however, is a cause of pleasure, as is shown by the fact that we all tell a story with additions, in the belief that we are doing our hearers a pleasure." (25)

"A likely impossibility is always preferable to an unconvincing possibility. The story should never be made up of improbable incidents; there should be nothing of the sort in it. If, however, such incidents are unavoidable, they should be outside the piece, like the hero's ignorance in the Oedipus of the circumstances of Laius' death; not within it, like the report of the Pythian games in Electra, or the man's having come to Mycia from Tegea without uttering a word on the way, in The Mysians. So that it is ridiculous to say that one's Plot would have been spoilt without them, since it is fundamentally wrong to make up such Plots. If the poet has taken such a Plot, however, and one sees that he might have put it in a more probably form, he is guilty of absurdity as well as a fault of art. Even in the Odyssey the improbabilities in the setting-ashore of Ulysses would be clearly intolerable in the hands of an inferior poet. As it is, the poet conceals them, his other excellences veiling their absurdity." (26)

The fortuitous death of Mytis' assassin is made wholly visible. But some happenings and the manner in which they come about are so improbable that they cannot be brought into full view without destroying even the poetic probability. In such cases, Aristotle says, the poet must confine himself to insinuation; he must treat them from afar. Only on that condition will
the improbable be poetically reasonable and acceptable.

There remains one more point to be considered. The poet sometimes uses historical truth, not merely for the construction of a plot, but also for the sake of poetic persuasion. When Aristotle wanted to show that the statements of poetry are rather of the nature of universality, he used Comedy as an example.

"In Comedy this has become clear by this time; it is only when their plot is already made up of probable incidents that they give it a basis of proper names, choosing for the purpose any names that may occur to them, instead of writing like the old jambic poets about particular persons." (27)

But in some cases poetry must lean on history for the sake of rendering an event poetically likely. Some event essential to a Tragedy may be such that, if it were not known that something similar actually occurred in reality, it would fall short of poetic possibility.

"In Tragedy, however, they still adhere to the historic names; and for this reason: what convinces is the possible; now whereas we are not yet sure as to the possibility of that which has not happened, that which has happened is manifestly possible, else it would not have come to pass. Nevertheless even in Tragedy there are some plays with but one or two known names in them, the rest being inventions; and there are some without a single known name, e.g. Agathon's Antheus, in which both incidents and names are of the poet's invention; and it is no less delightful on that account. So that one must not aim at a rigid adherence to the traditional stories on which tragedies are based. It would be absurd, in fact, to do so, as even the known stories are known to a few, though they are a delight none the less to all." (28)

The historical truth, then, is used as a pure means to enhance poetic likeliness; in this role it is a pure
function of poetry. Hence, it should be noted that even in this case poetry is not given as a form of history. The intent is not to illuminate the person or action referred to. The name of a historical person or the reference to an action that really occurred is merely exploited for the sake of the drama. Any dramatization of history is for the sake of the drama, not for the sake of history.

Let us recall at this point the distinction we have made between the empiric individual and the poetic individual. Because Tragedy uses an historical name and an allusion to some historical event, it does not mean that in such a case the historical individual takes the place of the poetic individual. The two remain wholly distinct. The historical personage is a pure means to make the poetic "individual-universal" likely. What the tragedian wants is assent to his subject, the one of his creation, and not at all to the one, or to the event, that actually occurred. It is true, however, that the audience would be happy to believe that the two are identical insofar as we should like things to be what they ought to be and insofar as even poetic likeliness is enhanced by support from what is. Now while the dramatization of history for the sake of drama is legitimate, the dramatization of history for the sake of history is a fraud and creates an illusion in the pejorative sense of the word. It is contrary to poetic truth as well as to historical truth.

Nevertheless, it is easy to see how this process could
be reversed, that is, how poetry could be used as a function of history, how poetic reason could be diffused over and between our historical data for the purpose of filling the gaps and coordinating them into a likely whole attuned to our conditioned judgment of what ought to be. Human reason would thus attempt to fill the breach between the Reason that lies behind all history and our own reason. The gap would be filled in the mode of human reason, in fact, in the mode of that part of human reason where we enjoy the greatest creative freedom and mastery. The truth of art would become the truth of what is. The function of the historian of this type would be to infuse reason, fully human likeliness, into the irrational stuff of what was.

3.
The Dramatization of History.

In a special chapter devoted to History (An Essay on Man, chapt. X), Cassirer stresses the importance of empirical investigation:

"In his quest for truth the historian is bound by the same strict rules as the scientist. He has to utilize all the methods of empirical investigation. He had to collect all the available evidence and to compare and criticize all his sources. He is not permitted to forget or neglect any important fact." (29)

Now it appears that it is precisely in this that history differs from poetry. Nevertheless, all this, in the opinion of Cassirer, furnishes merely the matter
of history, and this matter of itself is not yet history in the modern and strict sense of the word. To the above quoted lines he immediately adds: "Nevertheless, the last and decisive act is always an act of the productive imagination." The insistence upon the necessity of empirical investigation and so forth was called for because he had just referred approvingly to Burckhardt and Mommsen who insist upon the poetic form of history. Mommsen defined his ideal of the historical method by saying that the historian belongs perhaps rather to the artists than to the scholars." (30)

From Burckhardt he had quoted:

"What I construct historically is not the result of criticism or speculation but of imagination seeking to fill the gaps in observation. To me history is still in a large measure poetry; it is a series of the most beautiful and picturesque compositions." (31)

We can readily understand why he had to mention the necessity of empirical investigation. "But even though we cannot deny that every great historical work contains and implies an artistic element, it does not thereby become a work of fiction." (32)

Nevertheless, if in history the last and decisive act is always an act of the productive imagination, if, although "it does not go beyond the empirical reality of things and events but molds this reality into a new shape, giving it the reality of recollection" (33) and if recollection "is a new intellectual synthesis—a constructive act" (34) it is difficult to see how what was ori-
ginally called history can be more than secondary and material, however necessary; it is difficult to see how history in Cassirer's conception could avoid being formally poetic. Avowedly the most important thing about history is what the historian has done about it, what he has constructed with the data. Hence, it still remains difficult to see how we might distinguish history from art. The architect too needs bricks and appropriately mixed mortar and he must construct in conformity with the law of gravitation. He too, then, is bound by the same strict rules as the scientist insofar as the material element and certain empirical laws are concerned. From thereon, however, like Cassirer's historian, he is free to construct and to fill the gaps as he poetically sees fit.

The very step made by the historian, Cassirer, points out, is an ideal reconstruction:

"To define historical truth as 'concordance with the facts'—adequatio res et intellectus—is however, no satisfactory solution of the problem. It begs the question instead of solving it. That history has to begin with facts and that, in a sense, these facts are not only the beginning but the end, the alpha and omega of our historical knowledge, is undeniable. But what is a historical fact? All factual truth implies a theoretical truth; when we speak of facts we do not simply refer to our immediate sense data. We are thinking of empirical, that is to say objective, facts; this objectivity is not given; it always implies an act and a complicated process of judgment. If we wish to know the difference between scientific facts—between the facts of physics, of biology, of history—we must therefore, always begin with an analysis of judgments. We must study the modes of knowledge by which these facts are accessible." (35)
"The historian, like the physicist, lives in a material world. Yet what he finds at the very beginning of his research is not a world of physical objects but a symbolic universe—a world of symbols. He must, first of all, learn to read these symbols. Any historical fact, however simple it may appear, can only be determined and understood by such a previous analysis of symbols. Not things or events but documents or monuments are the first and immediate objects of our historical knowledge. Only through the mediation and intervention of these symbolic data can we grasp the real historical data—the events and the men of the past." (36)

However, we must hold that the aim of the historian is to be in conformity with what has actually been. But since he cannot get at the past except by the devious ways indicated by Cassirer, he must be extremely cautious. A truly critical sense will prevent him from treating the past as if it were present. The indirectness and remoteness of the past allows for much free construction. What is the standard of this construction? This offers no difficulty for Cassirer. That is a matter of genius, of personal incommunicable intuition. Like the poet, says Cassirer quoting Mommsen, "the historian is not made, he is born." (37) The truth of history is not empirical; it is ideal.

"Pericles' great funeral oration is perhaps the best and most impressive description of Athenian life and Athenian culture in the fifth century. The style of all these speeches bears the personal and genuine mark of Thucydides. 'They are all distinctly Thucydidean in style, 'it has been said, 'just as the various characters in a play of Euripides all use similar diction,' Nevertheless they do not convey merely personal idiosyncrasies; they are representative of the epoch as a whole. In this sense they are objective, not subjective; they possess an ideal truth, if not an empirical truth. In modern times we have become much more susceptible
to the demands of empirical truth, but we are perhaps frequently in danger of losing sight of the ideal truth of things and personalities. The just balance between these two moments depends upon the individual tact of the historian; it cannot be reduced to a general rule; in the modern historical consciousness the proportion has changed but the elements have remained the same. With regard to the distribution and the strength of the two forces every historian has his personal equation.' (33)

The historian, then, has the right to understand the past, or whatever traces of it have been handed down to us, in his own way; and this understanding of it is history. "It is the keen sense for the empirical reality of things combined with the free gift of imagination upon which the true historical synthesis or synopsis depends." (39)

We all agree upon the inevitable shortcomings of the historian, but we had hitherto considered these inevitable shortcomings for what they are. Now, however, they become part and parcel of historical truth. Historical truth is in the new shape born of the creative present.

"History is the attempt to fuse together all these disjecta membra, the scattered limbs of the past and to synthetize them and mold them into a new shape." (40) "It is the gift of the great historians to reduce all mere facts to their fieri, all products to processes, all static things or institutions to their creative energies." (41)

One might now ask with reason how he could distinguish such a historian from a tragedian who, in order to render his drama more persuasive, would spice his work with references to recognized data. To this one might answer that the historian still differs from the poet because of the stubborn data with which the
historian must work. But this again does not satisfy our question. The historian would still no more than be a bad poet in the sense that he could not master his matter, that he could not successfully mold things and events into a new shape. Or we might put it otherwise: we might say that the historian is a poet with an alibi. He can always blame the facts for the defects in his poem.

Are we to understand that in Cassirer's conception of history, our ignorance of the true data is rewarded by the freedom we derive therefrom? It would not be enough to say that the historian may feel secure in his freedom; he knows that no datum can hamper his freedom, for he can never possess all the actual data. As Cassirer points out, the so-called facts of history allow sufficient freedom. The stuff of history comprises more than can be reached by the methods of science. Historical documents are about persons and peoples, characters and events, ideas and actions which can't be measured by science. The same "physical" data could still be interpreted in different ways, as is most clearly shown in our judgment of human actions. Cassirer himself has something to say on this question:

"...The description of particular facts, of a 'here' and 'now', is by no means a privilege of history. The uniqueness of historical events has often been thought to be the character distinguishing history from science. Yet this criterion is not sufficient. A geologist who gives us a description of the various states of the earth in different geological periods gives us a report on concrete and unique events. These events cannot be repeated; they will not occur in the same order a second time. In this respect the description of the geologist does not differ
from that of a historian who, for instance, like Gregorovius tells us the story of the city of Rome in the Middle Ages. But the historian does not merely give us a series of events in a definite chronological order. For him these events are only the husk beneath which he looks for a human and cultural life—a life of actions and passions, of questions and answers, of tensions and solutions. He cannot think or speak without using general terms. But he infuses into his concepts and words his own inner feelings, and thus gives them a new sound and a new color—the color of a personal life." (42)

"If the historian succeeded in effacing his personal life he would not thereby achieve a higher objectivity. He would on the contrary deprive himself of the very instrument of all historical thought. If I put out the light of my own personal experience I cannot see and I cannot judge of the experience of others. Without a rich personal experience in the field of art no one can write a history of art; no one but a systematic thinker can give us a history of philosophy. The seeming antithesis between the objectivity of historical truth and the subjectivity of the historian must be solved in a different way." (43)

We agree that when our judgment of human actions is concerned, then the principle "qualis unusquisque est talis ei finis videtur." It is impossible to get around the subject. We know that pride may be judged humility and vice versa. Cassirer, however, offers a solution to this problem which reminds us of Adam Smith's independent observer:

"Perhaps the best solution is to be found not in Ranke's words but in his works. Here we find the true explanation of what historical objectivity really means and what it does not mean...Ranke's sympathy, the sympathy of the true historian, is of a specific type. It does not imply friendship or partisanship. It embraces friends and opponents. This form of sympathy may best be compared to that of the great poets. Euripides does not sympathize with Medea; Shakespeare does not sympathize with Lady Macbeth or Richard III. Nevertheless they make us understand these characters; they enter into their passions and motives. The saying that tout comprendre est tout pardonner holds neither
for the works of the great artists nor for those of the great historians. Their sympathy implies no moral judgment, no approbation or disapproval of single acts. Of course the historian is entirely at liberty to judge, but before he judges he wishes to understand and interpret.

Schiller coined the dictum Die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht, a saying re-echoed by Hegel and made one of the keystones of his philosophy of history. "The lots and deeds of the particular states and of the particular minds, ' says Hegel, 'are the phenomenal dialectic of the finitude of these minds out of which arises the universal mind, the unlimited mind of the world. This mind yields its right—and its right is the highest—in them; in universal history, the judgment of the world. The history of the world is the judgment of the world, because it contains, in its self-dependent universality, all special forms—the family, civil society, and nation, reduced to ideality, i.e., to subordinates but organic members of itself. It is the task of the spirit to produce all these special forms." Even Ranke, however opposed to Hegel's fundamental views, could have subscribed to this one. But he conceived the mission of the historian in a less presumptuous way. He thought that in the great trail of the history of the world the historian had to prepare, not to pronounce, the judgment. This is very far from moral indifference; it is, on the contrary, a feeling of the highest responsibility. According to Ranke the historian is neither the prosecutor nor the counsel for the defendant. If he speaks as a judge, he speaks as the juge d'instruction. He has to collect all the documents in the case in order to submit them to the highest court of law, to the history of the world. If he fails in this task, if by party favoritism or hatred he suppresses or falsifies a single piece of testimony, then he neglects his supreme duty." (44)

In other words, Cassirer places the burden of historical objectivity on the ability to sympathize "objectively," without moral sympathy, without moral judgment. Let us note that this was precisely the problem. Can the sympathy and the moral judgment be separated? To substantiate his opinion on the sympathy of the true historian, which is of a specific type, he gave a remarkably interesting example, an example taken from
Tragedy. "Euripides does not sympathize with Medea; Shakespeare does not sympathize with Lady Macbeth or Richard III. Nevertheless they make us understand these characters; they enter into their passions and motives."

Cassirer's solution would be valid if the appreciation of an imitation were the same as the appreciation of the original, if the characters and actions of history were the same as dramatic imitations. But as Aristotle has pointed out,

"though the objects themselves may be painful to see, we delight to view the most realistic representations of them in art, the form for example of the lowest animals and of dead bodies." (45)

The judgment of a dramatis persona is detached in the sense that one may understand and approve of the representation of the villain of a tragedy as well as of the hero, without approving or disapproving of the original. But Cassirer's position is logical enough. It does suppose the identity of history and poetry, or rather that the form of history is poetic. The historian is in reality a dramaturgist.

The dramaturgist is the author of the dramatis personae, of what they say and do, of the whole drama that is a miniature universe. They are his external work, and as an artist he pursues the good of his work, not his own personal good. Let us note however that particularly in the case of the drama this does not mean that the dramaturgist goes about creating his
characters without any reference to moral judgment. He would be indeed a poor dramaturgist if his imitations did not succeed in eliciting, on the part of the audience, moral condemnation of the villain and admiration for the hero. The forms of art are dynamic, as we have seen in the previous paragraphs. The originals are involved. Although the judgment bearing on the original and that bearing on its imitation are of a different order and without direct correspondence, nevertheless the imitation of an evil action can be good only if the evil action is known for what it is. If the dramaturgist did not know which moral actions are to be approved of and which are to be condemned, he could not possibly move his audience.

We can now see the preposterous consequences of Cassirer's conception of the true historian's specific type of sympathy. Given the historian's freedom, he may present the characters and actions in such a way that, knowing what actions the readers approve and disapprove of morally, he can make and predetermine moral judgments to bear upon what are thought to be the historical characters and actions.

"When Mommsen wrote his Roman History he spoke as a great political historian and in a new and modern tone. 'I wanted to bring down the ancients,' he said in a letter, 'from the fantastic pedestal on which they appear into the real world. That is why the consul had to become the burgomaster. Perhaps I have overdone it; but my intention was sound enough.'" (46)

From what we have said, then, regarding art and Cassirer's idea of history, it seems to be quite evident
that Cassirer's idea of history is a combination of art and history (both terms taken in the Aristotelian sense) with art playing the leading and determining role. The same basic principles which he expounds in his treatment of art (An Essay on Man, ch. IX) seem likewise to apply to history. It is true that Cassirer expressly says that the ideality of history is not the same as that of art, since art "turns our empirical life into the dynamic of pure forms", while history does not go beyond the empirical reality of things and events but gives this reality a new shape in the ideality of recollection. (47) It is true likewise that Cassirer insists that the historian is bound by the same strict rules as the scientist. "Nevertheless the last and decisive act is always an act of the productive imagination." (48) The artistic creativity and freedom of the artist appear to be limited in the historian only by the facts of the past; but the facts, according to Cassirer, already contain a theoretical element (49)—and that means free construction. And in all such construction the minds is the informing principle proper to the artist rather than the subject informed as is the Aristotelian knower. The creativity and freedom of the historian would differ from the artist's at most only by degree and not by any difference of kind. The relation of universality and particularity of the "individual" of history reminds one too of the same relationship which we have
described as belonging to the works of the fine arts.

"Art and history", says Cassirer, "are the most powerful instruments of our inquiry into human nature. What would we know of man without these two sources? We should be dependent on the data of our personal life... To complete the picture, we could make psychological experiments or collect statistical facts. But in spite of this our pictures of man would remain inert and colorless. We should only find the 'average' man—the man of our daily practical and social intercourse. In the great works of history and art we begin to see, behind this mask of the conventional man, the features of the real, individual man. In order to find him we must go to the great historians or to the poets... Poetry is not a mere imitation of nature; history is not a narration of dead facts and events. History as well as poetry is an organon of our self knowledge, an indispensable instrument for the building up of our human universe."

Furthermore, the effect of the knowledge of history is almost like the cathartic function of comic art. "Life in the light of history," says Cassirer, "remains a great realistic drama, with all its tensions and conflicts, its greatness and misery, its hopes and illusions, its display of energies and passions. This drama, however, is not only felt; it is intuited. Seeing this spectacle in the mirror of history while we are still living in our empirical world of emotions and passions, we become aware of an inner sense of clarity and calmness—of the lucidity and serenity of pure contemplation. Written and read in the right way history elevates us to this atmosphere of freedom amidst all the necessities of pure physical, political, social, and economic life." (51)

Cassirer, of course, would not deny that history contains an artistic element. He expressly demands that it have this element; he merely denies that history thus conceived is fiction. (52) In his Individuum und Kosmos in der Philosophie der Renaissance (53) he describes the union of exact and empiric research with art,
which he considers necessary for the advancement of scientific knowledge and which mapped out the road which philosophy was to follow in its progress to Cassirer's own form of idealism. In virtue of this union of the world of knowledge with that of artistic creation the way was opened for reducing metaphysical antinomies to logical correlations, and both art and science became more conscious of their essential freedom in their forming function. The object now becomes a combination of what was formerly object and ego, for it is that to which all the productive and creative powers of the ego are directed and in which they first find their verification. In the necessity of this object the ego recognizes the form which it placed there itself. Again it must be remarked that Cassirer makes no claim to belief in the Aristotelian idea of history, for he says that the Greek thinkers themselves were unable to offer a philosophical analysis of specifically historical thought and that such an analysis appeared only in the eighteenth century. (54) Finally it should be pointed out in fairness to Cassirer that his idea of history is no mere accidental trapping of his system; it is rather a particular application of his general principles, and is the only idea of history which is logically compatible with these general principles. In his general theory of knowledge the object of knowledge, i.e. what we are seeking to know, is not the "things that are", in the Aristotelian sense of this expression,
but rather the ideal logical order or plan of the total-
ity of our experience. That for him is the "real". "It
is thus", he says, "a logical differentiation of the con-
tenls of experience and their arrangement in an ordered
system of dependencies that constitute the real kernel
of the concept of reality." (55) And since this method
or mode of knowledge is the dialectic the result is that
all knowledge becomes symbolical and relative. In history
too the ideal element has predominance, for the task of
the historian is to give an event meaning, i.e., to locate
it in a rationally and freely constructed system (56) The
plan of the course of all events, rather than "what was"
seems to be the object of history. In forming this plan
the historian takes his point of departure from the pre-
sent and in the light of his present intellectual and
moral needs constructs the past in such a way that it
forms a complete systematic rational whole. Since this
interpretation is really an attempt to formulate a plan
of universal history, it naturally must remain in the
realm of the relative, for it is only an approximation
made by our reason of the plan according to which events
actually do take place. Since this is only an approxi-
mation, each generation has the right and the obligation
to appropriate the past in freedom and to understand it
according to its own principles. (57) Were any genera-
tion to arrive at the absolute plan of history, it would mean
at least that it was in possession of all the principles
of the total history of the universe—a state of affairs
which from the nature of the case is impossible, since history is forever in the making. But since the particular in a way manifests the general, though not completely, each succeeding generation is in a better position to make a relatively closer approximation of the structure of universal history; no generation, however, will ever reach it. The human mind must be content with the symbol it forms, for neither metaphysics nor dialectical thought can yield any higher form of knowledge. (58)

In the beginning of this chapter we pointed out the unbridgeable abyss which separated the divine reason which actually governs history from human reason which is, as it were, only a shadow of that reason. Although Cassirer would never admit it, for it would be very naive in relation to his system where metaphysics is reduced to logic and the transcendent is made immanent, he is actually attempting to bridge this abyss which separates the human from the divine reason. The limit to which this symbolic construct of history, the product of human reason, tends is the divine reason which governs both necessity and contingency and which remains ever infinitely separated from human reason.

It might now be asked where we fundamentally disagree with Cassirer's conception of history. We do not, of course, claim the same object for history; neither do we limit ourselves to the dialectical method, though we do freely admit its legitimacy and usefulness in its
proper place. We too maintain that the past is extremely difficult to reach, that the search for relevant facts is in most instances predetermined by theories and hypotheses, that much of what appears under the name of history is of the type advocated by Cassirer. But these are some of the very reasons because of which we think that the historian should be a prudent man, and by prudence we mean that intellectual virtue which is conditioned by the rectitude of the appetite. This is certainly no guarantee of pure "historical objectivity." "Pure objectivity" belongs to what actually was in the past as measured by ever present eternity. The historian tries to reach this "what was" the best he can, but he can scarcely lay claim to that "objective sympathy" advocated by Cassirer. The good historian should be aware of these limitations; but whether he be good or bad, he shall be judged according to what he seeks to discover in the past and according to what he actually sees in it.
II.

Cassirer's Presentation of Pico

Now that we have seen at least a general sketch of Cassirer's idea of history, it should be evident that the doctrines found in Cassirer's article are those of Cassirer himself rather than those of Pico. Bearing this in mind, we can proceed to a consideration of the article itself. For the benefit of the reader who may not have read Cassirer's article it will be advantageous first of all to give a summary of the article, using, in so far as possible, Cassirer's own words.

The article, bearing the title *Giovanni Pico della Mirandola* and the subtitle *A Study in the History of Renaissance Ideas*, is composed of an introduction (pp. 125-131) and three chapters: Chapter I, *The One and the Many — God and the World* (pp. 131-134); Chapter II, *The Idea of the Microcosm and the "Dignity of Man"* (pp. 319-338); and Chapter III, *the Natural Philosophy of Pico and His Polemic Against Astrology* (pp. 338-346). Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, we are told in the introduction, was one of the most remarkable figures of the Renaissance, but what is really significant in his thought is not bounded by the Renaissance, for he seems to announce and represent a decidedly new way of thinking. He himself held to the idea of a *philosophia perennis* and to the idea of an eternal and immutable Truth; hence what is characteristic in him is not the way in which he
creased philosophical truth, but the way in which he made it manifest. His nine hundred theses, treating of every kind of question and including the most incompatible elements, seem at first sight to form only a confused mass bounded by no intellectual form. A closer examination, however, reveals that it is precisely in this extravagance and excess that a new and distinctive way of thinking comes to light. He seems to have attempted to include all the intellectual forces which had cooperated in establishing religious, philosophical, and scientific knowledge. He knows no dogmatic restriction or limitation, for he was convinced that in the polyphony composed of all the great minds of the past could truth be seen.

Having studied all the great masters, he came to terms with all the important intellectual trends of his time but adhered to none in such a way as to exclude the others. Because of this comprehensiveness he has been designated an eclectic whose philosophy is devoid of any distinctive unifying principle or inner form. But this is an evaluation which might be formed only when, instead of judging Pico's thought by purely historical standards, we approach it with genuinely systematic claims. The purpose of the present article (Cassirer's) is to show that there is in Pico's philosophy a distinctive principle which unites all these apparently very divergent strains. This principle, it is true, is deeply concealed and can be brought out only by an analysis of the particular ideas and strains in Pico's thought.
The first of these is treated in the first chapter on the One and the Many — God and the World. The ideas of the One and the Many, Cassirer continues, form the two poles about which all philosophic and religious thinking revolves. Metaphysics and theology endeavor, in different ways and by different means, to grasp and clarify the relation between the Ultimate First Cause, which can be conceived only as absolutely One, and the multiplicity of things, their extension in space and their duration in time. Any attempt at a solution of this problem runs the danger of ending in a contradiction or of being left with only one of the two poles, as were the Eleatics.

Christian speculation rests on the assumptions and the ideas which the Greek thought worked out; but its aim is from the outset different from that of Greek dialectic and metaphysics for it does not inquire, in the same sense as the dialectic thinking, into the "Why" of the world and plurality. This "Why" cannot be grasped by pure thought. In the beginning was the "Deed", was the free act of the Divine Will by which the world came into being and reason cannot venture to deduce this free act from its own principles as something necessary. It is an absolutely unique event, "irrational", and is known only by revelation. But philosophic thought could not rest with this simple line of division between faith and reason, and all medieval philosophy is filled with attempts to solve the problem of the One and the Many, for although the content of revelation is not
derived from reason, it must not be absolutely inaccessible and impenetrable to reason. The genuinely Christian orthodox solution is determined by the category of creation. If this category is accepted, any real "dualism" between the One and the Many is avoided, for by creation God is in no way dissipated or lost in anything different from Himself.

Quite different from this conception is the relation of unity and plurality in all those systems which begin with the idea of emanation. In these the relation more closely approaches the rationally comprehensible, for emanation stands not in the sign of freedom, but in that of necessity. In these there is no free decree, but Being is simply following its own "nature", according to the necessity of its own essence, in passing beyond itself and allowing something else to arise out of itself. This is accomplished in a firmly ordered series in which no step can be passed over as it leads from the One to the Many.

The whole intellectual outlook of Pico is saturated with these Dionysian ideas but intermingled with them is Averroism. In Averroism the whole problem of unity and plurality ceases to exist. For Averroism there could be no question of a "cause" of nature in the transcendent sense, for nature as such has no beginning in time; and the only thing with which Averroism concerned itself was an insight into the strict determinism of all occurrences, which follows from the general determinations of matter and motion, which are eternal.
Those three positions are incompatible one with another, but we find the three of them in Pico's philosophy. Pico, however, was able to employ at the same time the idea of creation, the idea of emanation, and the ideas of Arabian rationalism and naturalism because he did not take them simply in their previously accepted meaning, but related them to a definite ideal center, and by thus relating them transformed and enriched them. For Pico no one of these was the complete or exclusive solution of the problem of God and the World; rather they are all significant as particular moments in the new solution he is seeking. And the distinctive category under which he subsumed his doctrine of God, of the world and of man, his theology and his psychology is the category of symbolic thought. Once we ascertain this central point of his thinking, all the different parts of his doctrine immediately coalesce into one whole.

The problem of unity and plurality now takes on a new significance. It is no longer a question of trying to show how unity contains plurality in a substantial sense, but rather to show the Many as expressions, as images, as symbols of the One. What Pico is trying to show is that only in this mediate and symbolic way can the absolutely One and absolutely unconditioned Being manifest itself to human knowledge. This idea of symbolism leads to distinctive and radical consequences. In the medium of this symbolic form of knowledge the fixed dogmatic content of the Church's teaching in a
sense becomes fluid. Whatever is substantial and sacramental is dissolved and becomes an intimation, an image of what is purely spiritual. These ideas had a marked effect on the transformation of doctrine, especially in Zwingli.

Although the central role which symbolic thinking plays in Pico's thought shows his close relationship to Cusanus, it is the difference between the two which is important here. While Cusanus always remained a strict apriorist, still the use of the principle of symbolic thinking and the principle of the coincidentia oppositorum transported him into the field of mathematical thinking which led him to the understanding of a new form of empirical knowledge. The use of these same principles took Pico in a different direction. It took him to the study of the human soul. According to Pico the soul has two fundamental forms of comprehending. The one "natural" way turns to the things of the external world and tries to represent them in images, by means of perceptions and phantasms; these phantasms are then compared by the discursive intellect and reduced to classes. But our knowledge of God and of our soul differs in principle from this natural way. Here rules a supersensible knowledge which is alone able to disclose the supersensible nature of the soul. Pico was convinced that the knowledge of God must be seized in the obscure depths of the human soul; and it was precisely here that he accomplished his peculiar achievement which carried him far beyond his mystical and Neo-Platonic sources and made of him
the herald of a new ideal of human freedom.

In the second chapter, "The Idea of the Microcosm and the Dignity of Man", Cassirer tells us that Pico's new ideal of freedom is set forth in his *De hominis dignitate*. The image of man as a microcosm, there set forth, is not new; but Pico's genius lies in the fact that he gave this idea a new interpretation. Taken literally, the older interpretation would really destroy the distinctive nature of man by making him a *mixtum compositum* with nothing proper to his own nature. The important thing for Pico is not to prove man's similarity to the rest of nature, but rather his difference from it. The special privilege of man, distinguishing him from both the natural and spiritual world, consists in this that he owes his moral character to himself. He is what he makes of himself and he derives from himself the pattern he shall follow. This doctrine is to be found especially in his *De Dignitate Hominis*.

The expression "likeness to God" now receives a new meaning, for it isn't something given by God to man at his creation: it is an achievement to be brought about by man himself. Just the ability, rooted in his nature, to bring about this achievement, is the highest gift man owes to Divine grace. In the theory of creation, as in that of emanation, man appears either as the result of a free act of a Being outside and above him or as the link in a necessary process of development. Here, on the contrary, both kinds
of dependence are excluded; man owes his deepest being to his own acts. Pico now sees human freedom as something higher than every kind of natural necessity. This is the theme he treats again and again, especially in his work against astrology. The whole of his work is determined by that one underlying theme; his metaphysics, psychology, theology, and ethics are but the continuous and consistent unfolding of it. To see this clearly we need a thorough analysis which will follow this theme in all its variations.

We might first ask what is the relation of the principles of "docta ignorantia" and of "coincidentia oppositorum" (which govern the entire structure of Pico's philosophy) to his ethics and his idea of human freedom. Both these principles had long dominated theological thought; but what had been negative principles of theology, Nicholas of Cusa turned into positive principles of natural philosophy, cosmology, and epistemology. With them he made merely relative Aristotle's essential and radical distinction between motion in a straight line and motion in a curved line, and so forth. Pushed to infinity, straight and curved are only relatively distinct, since a circle with an infinite radius coincides with a straight line, and an infinitely small arc is indistinguishable from its cord. The principles Cusanus applied to nature, Pico applies to the specifically human world, to the world of history. Cusanus' underlying idea in a sense is transferred from the field of space to that of time so that the moments of time are equivalent to each other. Man's nature and
his specific dignity can be judged only when we dissolve the fixed
temporal distinctions, the now, the before, and the after, and see
all in a single vision. In this "seeing together" is first revealed
the full meaning of human freedom. And this same idea holds for
historical epochs. From each epoch to the next an intellectual
heritage is handed down in an uninterrupted chain. But just as God
did not give to man his greatest gift already made but expected him
to achieve it independently for himself, so history does not give man
goods already made. The intellectual heritage must be faithfully
guarded and handed down, but each epoch has the right and the duty
to appropriate it in independence - to understand it in its own way
and to increase it in its own way. Pico expressly states that no
other way of knowing truth is given to man. Indeed, he almost
anticipates the saying of Lessing that not the possession of truth
but the search after it is the vocation and the lot of man. Man
will not so much possess as endeavor to earn; he will not so much
know as inquire. Here we can see the influence of the Platonic
doctrine of Eros. This form of love which consists in seeking, not
in possessing, gives man that worth in which he need yield to no other
being, for nothing can be higher than that spiritual power of the will;
by it man can be what he chooses.

From this fundamental starting point a number
of important consequences follow. There is no longer any fixed body
of basic dogma which is to be defended under all circumstances. What
Pico is seeking is the free movement of dialectic thought. He claims
the right of free inquiry for himself as for every other thinker. The teachings of the Fathers are to be accepted with due respect, but they are not of such authority and immobility that they cannot be doubted or contradicted. Thus even in religious dogma there is no real infallibility or "immobility". Faith too, like knowledge, has its history, and only in its totality can its inner truth emerge. Pico manifests this same independence towards Humanism. He insists that no one epoch can claim to represent the whole of mankind. The whole is to be found only in the totality of its intellectual history.

In the quarrel between the Platonists and the Aristotelians Pico embraced neither side to the exclusion of the other. This attitude is deeper than mere toleration and follows immediately from his idea of human freedom which makes possible and demands a new form of individualism. Just as it holds for mankind as a whole, so the principle holds for the individual that he cannot be assigned to a fixed and determined place in a realm of spirit; each must seek his position independently. There are no intellectual heretics. The intellect can be moved to accept a proposition only when from determinate grounds it produces in itself the conviction of that proposition; and it is not in man's power to accept or reject even a proposition of faith on external grounds. Individual inquiry is therefore indispensable for the subsistence of every truth, whether philosophical or religious; and every individual who has sincerely sought for truth is worthy of respect because he is an intellectual
microcosm mirroring the entire world of ideas.

If we reexamine Pico's "Oratio" we see that what is really important in it lies less in what is immediately contains than in what is passed over in silence. That man was created a free being and that his likeness to God consists in this freedom is the universally accepted doctrine of theologians - but they immediately add that man lost this privilege by the Fall. Man is forever driven from the paradise of innocence and freedom, and by his own powers cannot get back. Only a supernatural work of Grace can raise him up again. For Pico man's sinfulness is not an indelible stain on his nature; it is only the counterpart to something higher: he must be capable of sin that he may be capable of good. He is never secure in good, nor is he ever a hopeless prey to evil; the way to both lies open to him, and the decision is in his own power. There can never be a termination of this process. Man's freedom consists in the uninterrupted creativity he exercises on himself and at no point can it come to a complete cessation.

The novelty of this idea of almost unlimited power of transformation is not so much its content as the value Pico places upon it. He completely reverses the conventional metaphysical and theological scale of values. In this scale the highest and indeed only true value belonged to what was eternal and immutable. Multiplicity, mutability and inconstancy in human activity were but signs of its vanity. For Pico, however, this inner unrest in man, impelling him from one goal to another, from one form to another, is no stigma or
weakness; it is really the mark of human greatness. This reversal of value is based on Pico's distinction between the realm of "Nature" and the realm of "Freedom", which must be measured by different standards. For natural things, for merely physical things, perpetual flux does mean a limitation and a privation of being, because they do not preserve their self-identity, and their change is brought about by an external power. But this manner of compulsion is transcended in human activity and production. Man is not merely a subject of passive becoming; he is the determiner of his own goal; he chooses the form he will bring forth, and then realizes it in free activity. This mutability, taken as the power of self-transformation, constitutes not man's weakness, but his greatness.

We can understand how such a view must have affected the aesthetics and the theory of art of the Renaisssance. It contains nothing less than a kind of theodicy of art. Art is no longer derived from the pleasure in the imitation of the varied multiplicity of things; it is the expression and the revelation of the primary "creative" nature of man, for in his capacity to produce for himself a new world of forms is expressed his innate freedom.

It is obvious that at the same time the temporal character and "historical nature" of man receives a new meaning and value. Renaissance philosophy had developed the idea that, instead of the soul being in time, time was in the soul, because the soul produced from itself not only the ideas of number and magnitude
but also that of time. For Pico history is not mere fate, nor is time the mere external framework in which this fate is worked out. History is the sum total of the intellectual forms man produces for himself. In history, therefore, man is not merely subject to the temporality and transitoriness of things; he is free, because, although his nature is mutable, it is he himself who changes it.

The transcendence of God also takes on a new meaning. The absolute transcendence of God Pico never contested. No predicate of the finite can be applied to God. But there is one form of understanding which escapes this criticism; there is one basic intellectual phenomenon by which we are not only related to God but are actually one with Him. Human freedom is of such a kind that any increase in its meaning or value is impossible. Thus, when Pico ascribes to man an independent and innate creative power, he has made him in this one fundamental respect equal to Divinity. There is now applicable to God a positive predicate which will change negative theology. Now the entire world of Neo-Platonic ideas falls into flux. Even "immanence" and "transcendence" are opposites which must be overcome and transcended according to the "coincidentia oppositorum". Man as a creative being has risen above this opposition. In the extent of his creation he is infinitely removed from God, but in the fact, in the quality of it, he feels himself most intimately related to God.

What Cusanus had done with the principle of
the "coincidentia oppositorum" in Cosmology and Physics, Pico does in the historical and intellectual world. This now appears as a unified whole—like an infinite circle whose center is everywhere and whose periphery is nowhere because it is being constantly extended. And even if the end is never reached, we are still at every point within truth. The real outcome of this movement is first presented in Leibniz.

In the third chapter, The Natural philosophy of Pico and his Polemic against Astrology, Cassirer says that Pico's conception of the world of intellectual history forms the real center of his thought and upon it rests what distinctive and novel ideas he bestowed on modern philosophy. His natural philosophy has only a subordinate role. Even in his celebrated *Adversus Astrologos* it was his doctrine of freedom, not any empirical observation, which accomplished the overthrow of false astrology. In this work Pico makes a distinction between the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom, each of which has its own laws. Everything physical is subject to strict necessity; everything spiritual rests on freedom. The world of men, the world of science, of art, of religion—everything created by man—must rely on symbolic interpretation and be expressed in pictures and symbols. The nature of the corporeal, however, is no sum of "meanings"; it is a connected chain of causes and effects, and to know them we must follow this chain link for link without introducing anything of a different order. As a natural being man is indeed a vanishing nothing, but as a thinking being he stands far above the
stars and heavens and cannot be influenced by them. His work is the result of his own free will, not the result of the stars or the gift of higher powers. Everything intellectual comes from God and must be attributed to Him immediately - even nature, even the heavens must be rejected as an intermediary. It is interesting to note that Pico's speculative doctrine of human freedom was more effective against magic and astrology than was Kepler's mathematical conception of nature.

In summing up his position on Pico, Cassirer maintains that Pico was no "modern" thinker, that he stands within scholasticism and that he not only clung to and defended the form of scholastic philosophy but also preserved its matter. But this did not hinder him from accomplishing in the whole of his thinking something that proved significant and pointed to the future. The great influence which Pico exerted on subsequent thought could be exercised only by a philosophy which, quite apart from its temporal limitations and its debt to the past, contained a new way of thinking and tried to make this way prevail.
III

The One and the Many

1.

The General Problem

In the first chapter of this article Cassirer discovers the peculiar principle which binds all the seemingly contradictory elements in Pico's philosophy. This binding principle is, according to Cassirer, the principle of symbolic thought. This deeply concealed principle becomes evident to Cassirer from a consideration of the problem of the One and the Many as found in Pico. Regarding this one problem Pico's philosophy embraces elements from the doctrines of creation, emanation and Averroism. Since these three doctrines, taken in their formerly accepted meaning, are absolutely incompatible, and since Pico was too keen a thinker not to recognize this incompatibility, it follows, since he did actually combine them in one explanation, that he did not accept these doctrines in their accepted meaning but only in their spiritualized form under which they issue forth from this homogenizing process of symbolic thought. The incompatibility of these three different explanations of the One and the Many, then, is Cassirer's chief reason for attributing to Pico a new way of knowledge.

In the following pages we shall examine
Cassirer's statement of this problem, for, by what we think is a misstatement of it, he has already predetermined the solution of it to his own position. This consideration of his presentation of the problem will be practically a running commentary on his text; and to avoid an excessive number of footnotes, the reference to the pages of the texts commented on will be given in the body of the text.

At the beginning of the first chapter (page)131 Cassirer says:

"The ideas of the One and the Many form the two poles about which all philosophical and religious thinking revolves. Metaphysics and theology endeavor, in different ways and by different means, to grasp and clarify the relation between the ultimate First Cause of things, which can be conceived only as absolutely One, and the multiplicity of things, their extension in space and their duration in time. But whenever thought attacks this problem, it is in danger of being caught in an antimony, in a final and insoluble contradiction. Instead of the intended reconciliation of opposites, on closer analysis one term of the opposition seems to disappear, and thus the whole problem appears to evaporate. If the "First Cause" is really to be conceived as such, i.e., if it is to mean not only the temporal origin of Being, but also its persisting and enduring "Principle", if it is to be that on which all continuance of reality depends and that which it requires at every moment for its existence and character; this means that we cannot effect any real detachment of the Many from the One. The Many must be not only externally dependent on the One. They must remain ever included within it; all the reality we attribute to them they must owe to the One. Hence the Many have scarcely come into being before they must in a sense be taken back once more into the bosom of the One Cause of the World. The latter can suffer nothing besides or outside itself. For any being different from itself, anything that is not itself, would mean a limitation; and this can and must not take place in the absolute and unconditioned Being, which is assumed to be the totality of all perfection, the ens realissimum et perfectissimum."

In the first sentence of the above passage Cassirer makes a very profound statement; but in all fairness to historical and theoretical truth we must immediately add that the
problem of the One and the Many is incomparably more profound and complex, from both the historical and theoretical point of view, than can possibly be gleaned from Cassirer's strange and disturbing over-simplification of it. Even if we confined ourselves to the problem of the One and the Many in Greek philosophy from Pythagoras to Aristotle, we should see that it could not possibly fit into Cassirer's formulation of it. The very statement of the problem is extremely varied, and the solutions arrived at are far from being answers to the same question. The complexity of the problem stands out clearly in Aristotle where he places strong emphasis on the distinction between the "one" which is convertible with being, the subject of first philosophy which is in turn divided into act and potency, substance and accidents, et cætera and the "one" which is the principle of number. This distinction is based in his discussions with the Platonists, and has remained crucial throughout the Middle Ages and even up to our own day in all discussions concerning the analogy or univocity of being. Furthermore, Aristotle's distinction is no less definite between the being that is the subject of first philosophy and the Being which is the extrinsic principle of that subject, namely, Pure Act, the self-thinking thought, the final cause of all things which attracts by its goodness. (1) Hence the "One" which is pure act and the "one" which is convertible with being raise and answer very different questions; and the former will obviously depend upon the latter.

Cassirer in his treatment of the One and
the Many has limited himself to the question of God and the World. Since his statements concerning the problem seem to be, in a general way at least, exhaustive of the subject, it is disconcerting to notice that he not only neglects Aristotle's distinction between potency and act as his answer to this natural problem of the one and the many, but that he does not even mention what we shall call the noetic problem which concerns the one and many in the means of knowing. However, since for Cassirer the so-called metaphysical oppositions are really only logical correlations, it is quite possible that he considers the problem of the One (God) and the Many (the world) as the naive explanation of what is actually the one and many in the noetic order. If he does this, he is identifying the "modus rei" with the "modus rei in intellectu", as the Platonists had done before him.

When he says "Metaphysics and theology endeavor, in different ways and by different means, to grasp and clarify the relation between the ultimate First Cause of things" etc., he does not make clear what he means by metaphysics—whether he means metaphysics in the primitive stage, or as we find it in Aristotle, or as the scholastics understood it. Neither does he make explicit what he understands by theology—whether it is the one which is a branch of metaphysics or the one whose principles are revealed truths.

(2) We might also ask why he has confined the multiplicity of things to those which have extension in time and place. The Ideas of Plato were not conceived as being in a place, and historically at least, they were related to the problem of the one and the many.
"Whenever thought attempts to solve this problem", he continues, "it is in danger of being caught in an antinomy, in a final and insoluble contradiction." It is true that there is a danger of being caught in an insoluble contradiction, but Cassirer fails to show that there is a contradiction involved even when these terms are taken in their substantial sense. He is content merely to suggest that there is one and treat it from afar -- like the hero's ignorance of the circumstances of Laius' death in Oedipus.

When speaking of the proposed reconciliation between the one and the many, Cassirer does not specify what reconciliation was intended, nor why an opposition of contrariety should even call for any reconciliation. Even in his treatment of the One and the Many as limited to God and the World he does not demonstrate that on closer analysis one term of the opposition seems to disappear in so far as it loses its independence, its absolute giveness, the real being of itself. One of the reasons Cassirer gives for his statement that one of the terms seems to disappear is that if we really conceive the First Cause as such, there can be no real detachment of the many from the One. Certainly, if we conceive the First Cause as a First Cause, the Many of the World, while having their own being, cannot have it a se. But why should this imply that they are not distinct from the One? The burden seems to be in the meaning assigned to the word "distinction." If "distinct from" means "Wholly of and by oneself," then the Many and the One cannot be distinct from the One; nevertheless it would still be Cassirer's task to show that they would
be identical. Since he has posed the problem in terms of God and the World, he has avoided the general metaphysical problem, and it is difficult to see how he can discuss his own problem without having considered the more general problem. It is in terms of this more general problem that Aristotle and the scholastics solved the one in which Cassirer is interested.

As a further reason that we should be left with only one term of the contradiction, Cassirer continues:

"The Many must be not only externally dependent on the One. They must remain ever included within it; all the reality we attribute to them they must owe to the One. Hence the Many have scarcely come into being before they must in a sense be taken back once more into the bosom of the One Cause of the World."

Cassirer here seems to oversimplify in mere imaginative terms an extremely complex reality. Creatures are indeed externally dependent on the One as regards their whole being, for their very "esse in se" is "ab alicio." Their whole being is but a participation of the being of the One and has been produced out of nothing according to the divine exemplar. The One is in the many but not of the many. It is in the many by the fact that it is their universal cause; it is not there as a part of them but as the principle from which they have their total being. Furthermore, to say that the many must ever remain included in the One should not be taken to mean that they are a part of it. That would be a rather naive acceptation of the expression "to be included in". The word "scarcely" in the last sentence just quoted is also worthy of note. It seems to denote that there is an
interval between the coming into being and the being taken back
into the bosom of the One. This "coming into being from" here designates absolutely universal efficient causality and the negation of any
subject "from which". It requires no takingback-into. The many,
coming into being, are never separated from the One, although they are wholly distinct from it. Since the One is their absolutely universal
cause, it is more in them than they are in themselves. A return to
the One in this sense is meaningless; the many do not have to be taken back into the bosom of the One in this sense because they were never outside it. We can speak of a return to the One in the sense that the One is the final cause of the many. It would also be true to say that the many were never taken out of the One because they were never in it. This "coming from" and "being taken back" are not different movements, as Cassirer's imaginative presentation insinuates.

In the last part of the paragraph quoted above Cassirer explains that the One can suffer nothing outside itself, for that would mean a limitation - a thing which must not take place concerning the being which is assumed to be the totality of perfection. It is true that the First Cause can suffer nothing outside itself in the sense that there is no being which is not "from it" and wholly dependent on it. Furthermore, there could not be a being which did not have some likeness to the First Cause, for being is one in a sense which Cassirer has neglected to consider. If there were a being outside the scope of analogy, the one cause of the world would not be the universal exemplary cause. While Cassirer says that anything that is
not the one cause of the world would mean a limitation, the truth of
the matter is that the One would be seriously limited if it were made
up of the Many. When the absolute and unconditioned being is assumed
to be the totality of perfection, it is certainly not so in the simpl-
istic sense which Cassirer must suppose in order to set it forth as a
glaring contradiction.

On page 132 Cassirer continues his present-
ation of the problem:

"Hence for the 'One' to pass beyond itself, and for the many to
proceed out of the One, cannot be conceived in strictly rational terms.
Every such proceeding would be either a diminution of the One's own
nature, or a multiplying of this nature. And how would a multiplicat-
on be possible in what is assumed to be self-contained and perfect?
Greek philosophy from the days of Parmenides felt such a multiplication
to be contradictory and rejected it. 'It is the same, and it rests
in the self-same place.' Each of the great systems that have followed
the Eleatics has brought every resource to bear on freeing Being again
from this absolute uniformity and fixity, and on indicating in Being
the 'possibility' of plurality and change. But this 'gigantomachy'
of thought, as Plato described it in the Sophist, has led to no final
solution. None of the attempts at mediation between the opposite
poles of unity and plurality, of Being and Becoming, can resolve the
contradiction."

Here again, as we have already pointed out, to speak of the One's
passing beyond itself is an ambiguous statement and raises a false
problem. The same is true of the expression "to proceed out of the
One" if it is to be conceived as entailing a diminution of the One's
own nature or as a multiplying of this nature.

Cassirer appears to be considering this
whole problem in purely spatial imagery and to suppose that the ancients had done the same. There can be little doubt but that he is infusing into these words and concepts his own "inner feeling" with its consequent "new sound and new meaning." Since he claims, in accordance with his idea of history, the right to assume that this is the historically objective meaning and truth, we can have no quarrel with him from there on.

It is very true that the procession of the effects from the One First Cause, even as we conceive this procession, is unknowable to us as to the exact "how." We cannot visualize it; we know that we are compelled to conceive it by using the most inadequate comparisons; hence we do not expect to be able to "rationalize" this procession. This was already indicated by Dionysius and illuminatively commented on by St. Thomas. (3) If we want to conceive this procession in a manner more accessible to us, we cannot, as St. Thomas explains, conceive it but as a kind of movement. This representation becomes necessary because we wish to understand the procession as much as possible according to our own mode. The necessity of this movement is comparable to the case of someone who, being close to the objects, cannot see them all at the same time as the one who sees them from above, but must view their unity by means of a succession. The objects are all there, but he cannot be present to them all at the same time, i.e., he cannot see them all at the same time without motion. When we recur to such means of conceiving objects, we must not fail to note
those things which are due solely to the fact that they have been lowered to our rational mode. (4)

In the paragraph just quoted, Cassirer suddenly narrows down the problem of the One and Many to the problem as raised by Parmenides. He seems not to consider later solutions to this problem, and even Parmenides' position is not stated completely. In the fragments of Parmenides one observes that while he holds that alone to be being which "is" without qualification, he also recognizes another realm, the realm of becoming, the realm of doxa, in which there is no being in the first sense of the word, but in which there are multiplicity, difference, and contrariety.

Another item to be remarked in this same paragraph is that the step from the Being of Parmenides to the being of Aristotle, i.e., to being, the subject of metaphysics and to his being which is pure act and the self-thinking thought, is not so simple as Cassirer would have the reader understand. Being which is the subject of metaphysics, primarily substance, is by no means the Pure Act, the extrinsic principle of that subject. The Unmoved Mover has absolute fixity; while the possibility of plurality and change is on the part of predicamental being. As Aristotle pointed out against the Parmenideans in the second chapter of I Physics, "'one' itself, no less than 'being', is used in many senses, so we must consider in what sense the word is used when it is said that the All is one."

The rest of that chapter and the following chapter are concerned with
this problem. All this is apparently ignored by Cassirer; and we wonder why, unless the reason is that it would not form a harmonious part in the historical process toward his own ideas.

Once Cassirer has posed the problem, attributing to being, taken in the same sense, all the attributes which belong to it in the various senses distinguished by Aristotle, it is true that, as he says, there is no solution to it. However, it matters little that there is no solution to this conception of the problem, for it is quite clear that this is Cassirer's own idealistic construction of the problem which is intended to predetermine the solution in the direction he desires.
Faith and Creation.

After having stated to his own satisfaction the general problem of the One and Many, he begins his exposition of the doctrine of creation which is the first of the three solutions he is considering. As an introduction to this doctrine he says on page 152:

"Christian speculation rests on the assumptions and the ideas which Greek thought worked out; and at every point it must clothe its own distinctive problem in the language of Greek thought, in order to make it accessible and comprehensible to the mind. But its aim is from the outset different from that of Greek dialectic and metaphysics. For it does not inquire, in the same sense as dialectic thinking, into the 'Why' of the world and the 'Why' of plurality. This 'Why' cannot be grasped by pure thought. In the beginning was the deed—was the free act of the Divine Will, through which the world came into being. Human reason cannot venture to 'conceive' this free act, i.e., to deduce it as necessary from its own concepts and principles. It remains an absolutely unique event, unparalleled, 'irrational'; it can be explained or understood through no analogy, through no comparison we encounter in the sphere of our finite, empirical knowledge. But the certainty of God's creation and incarnation is not thereby shaken. For it is derived not from rational demonstration but from a fundamentally different source of truth. It is founded on revelation."

In passing it should be remarked that in the beginning of this paragraph Cassirer has already made critical idealists of the Greeks. It will be freely admitted that Christian speculation does not attempt to infer the existence of the world as flowing of necessity from the divine nature, but it does inquire into the 'why' of this non-necessity; and this is rational. What the world is has its necessity from God; that it is has its necessity from the divine will. It is likewise
true that human reason cannot infer what freely comes about as coming about necessarily; but neither does the divine intelligence do so. God has the goodness and the power to produce the world; He has all the knowledge requisite for its production; He knows what His freedom is whether He exercises it or not. But by "to conceive" Cassirer seems to mean "to conceive as necessary"; it means to deduce something as necessary from reason's own concepts and principles - from what Cassirer considers to be the principles of reason. Human reason can infer that God is necessarily free and that it is absolutely necessary that He does not of necessity produce the world. The very perfection of the goodness of God, which is the reason why He can produce the world, is the reason why this goodness does not necessarily communicate itself.

When Cassirer says that the free act of the divine will is an absolutely unique event, the term "event" is obviously understood in a grossly anthropomorphic sense, since any act of the divine will is measured by eternity. To call it unparalleled is somewhat ambiguous. Certainly it is unparalleled as a divine free act, but we can explain it in a way through an analogy with our own free acts, which we know.

Since Cassirer has limited the term "to conceive" to mean deduction of something as necessary from the principles and concepts of human reason, he calls "irrational" anything which cannot be so conceived. Thus with one sweep he throws out of the
"rational" world the whole practical order which is rooted in the good.

In the last part of the paragraph quoted and in the following paragraph of his article Cassirer sets the whole problem of knowledge and faith in a false perspective. The certainty of creation and the Incarnation, he says, is not diminished, for though they cannot be rationally demonstrated, they are founded on faith. Cassirer's use of the expression "rational demonstration" here is ambiguous, to say the least. If he means that in Christian speculation it cannot be deduced from the principles of reason that the world exists necessarily by the necessity of the divine nature, as it would no doubt have to be done in his system to be "rational", we may point out that this same revelation of which he speaks teaches us that the world does not exist necessarily, but from the free decision of God. However, the same revelation which tells us that the world was created by God also tells us in the first chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans that the fact of creation can be demonstrated by natural reason.

It is interesting to note that, while treating the Christian view, Cassirer places creation and the Incarnation in the same category as if the scholastics had considered them thus. Whether Cassirer thinks they should have considered them both as formally dependent on revelation is beside the point; the fact of
the matter is that the scholastics did not consider that the fact of creation was a truth formally dependent on revelation. In St. Thomas, for instance, the problem of the One and the Many, as Cassirer has stated it, is a problem that can be treated in a strictly metaphysical manner, as may be seen clearly from his De Aeternitate mundi contra murmantes. For St. Thomas, revelation enters only when it is asked whether the world did or did not exist from all eternity, whether God created from all eternity coincidentally with a created measure of duration. Specifically Christian and genuinely orthodox speculation never attempted to reach beyond that. Regarding the metaphysical problem, St. Thomas showed that the existence or non-existence of the world from all eternity is a matter of divine free will. From revelation we know that actually the world did not exist from all eternity; but this revelation, in so far as it concerns the mere fact of creation, has no supernatural content whatsoever. The revelation of the fact of creation is not a revelation concerning the supernatural order as such. Whether the world had or had not existed from all eternity, then, was to be pointed out by revelation; but not even the fact that it was to be thus pointed out was formally a problem of revelation, for metaphysics itself could show that it was incapable of determining this particular aspect of the question.

When Cassirer on page 133 says:

"Thus there are now repeated on another level all the great typical attempts to solve the problem of the 'One' and the 'Many' ....... The specifically and genuinely orthodox solution is determined by the category of creation, ..."
he is again identifying two different problems of the one and the many. We have just seen that St. Thomas, for example, did not treat creation on another level; he treated it as rationally demonstrable and not as a doctrine which is specifically Christian in the sense that it is formally dependent on revelation. There is a specifically Christian problem of the One and the Many, but Cassirer does not mention it. This problem is one of sacred theology and has nothing to do with the problem of reason and revelation as Cassirer has stated it. It fundamentally concerns the One and the Many of the Blessed Trinity and the possibility of a participation by the intellectual creature in the life proper to the absolutely One. It is at this point that Cassirer should have been reminded of the double problem of the One and Many which was mentioned at the beginning of this critical commentary, for the Christian problem concerns the possibility of knowing and loving God by the light and the love of the One. As a matter of fact, it is only in the Christian speculation on the elevation of the intellectual creature to the supernatural order that the problem of the One and Many is carried on another level. And this is certainly not merely a continuation in which are repeated all the great attempts to solve the problem Cassirer referred to in the previous paragraphs. The specifically and genuinely orthodox solution of the problem of the One and the Many which we have called typically Christian, i.e. the One and the Many of the supernatural order or the noetic One and Many, has nothing to do with creation as Cassirer has understood the problem. Rather
it has to do with the participation by an intellectual creature
in the life of God Himself.

In the following lines of his article
Cassirer admits that if the doctrine of creation is accepted, the
problem of God and the World is taken care of:

"If this category (creation) is accepted, any real dualism between
the One and the Many, between God and the World, is thereby avoided.
For creation is wholly transferred to the interior of the Divine
Being; it nowise means that this Being is in any respect dissipated,
or lost in anything different from itself.
The real and profound sense of 'creation ex nihilo' is this:
in it the Divine Power is not bound to any substratum that could in
any way condition or limit it. The world, plurality, has no
substratum of that sort. For were such a substratum admitted, it
would mean a kind of independence and self-sufficiency, by which the
absolute dependence on God which is here to be displayed would be
transformed into its opposite. If God is the content of all reality,
there can be no matter 'given' to Him. This 'givenness', this
material 'subject' for action, holds only for human art, which is
thereby once and for all distinguished from genuine and absolute
creation."

On the whole this explanation is true enough, but we must make two
qualifications. In the first place we must repeat that in St. Thomas
all this has nothing whatsoever to do with faith. He deduces creation
ex nihilo from purely metaphysical reasons. If creation were not ex
nihilo, God would not be Pure Act. Regardless of what Aristotle's
position on the matter be held to be, it is quite evident that St.
Thomas solves the problem in purely peripatetic terms. In the second
place, the term 'content' is used ambiguously, to say the least; for
if God is the content of creation in the sense that He is what is
created, then it might be asked what the creation is the creation of.
Certainly, nothing can be given God, for He posits all that there is in creation, but this does not make Him the content of it - except in a very broad sense of the word, i.e., in the sense that He is the universal exemplary cause of all that is created, that all the being which creatures have, they have from Him; or that by His immensity He is in beings more than they are in themselves.
Necessity and Emanation.

After explaining creation in the manner we have just seen, Cassirer proceeds to a consideration of the theory of emanation which he displays as the second answer to the problem of the One and the Many as he has stated it. On page 134 he continues:

"Quite different from this conception is the relation of unity and plurality, of God and the world, in all those systems which start from the idea of emanation rather than of creation. Here the relation in a certain sense approaches more closely to the rationally comprehensible. For 'emanation' stands not in the sign of freedom, but in that of necessity.... Being is simply following its own 'nature' in passing beyond itself, in allowing something else to arise out of itself.... There is here a firmly ordered series, based on an intelligible principle: a scale of beings leading down from the One and the Many, in which no step can be passed over. To set up and establish this scale of being is the core of Neoplatonic speculation. This speculation, as it appears above all in the pseudo-Dionysian writings, in the work on the celestial hierarchy an on the hierarchy of the church, puts its stamp on all medieval thinking as well as on the thought of the Renaissance. The work of Pico della Mirandola and his whole intellectual development is completely saturated with the fundamental ideas and presuppositions of the Dionysian writings. The picture of the celestial choirs surrounding the highest Divine Being; the arrangement of the world in accordance with the different celestial spheres and the transmission of the effects from the above to the 'sublunar' earthy sphere: all this forms the basic framework of his metaphysics, his theology and cosmology."

A passage from Cassirer's _Individuum und Kosmos in der Philosophie der Renaissance_ will throw light on this paragraph. Speaking of Dionysius the Areopagite's _Divine Names_ and Celestial Hierarchy, he says:

"The importance of these works consists in the fact that here the two fundamental spiritual powers are motives on which the faith and science of the Middle Ages rest meet each other and coalesce, -- that here the peculiar concrescence of the Christian doctrine of salvation with Hellenic speculation is accomplished. What this
speculation, what, above all, Neo-platonism offered Christianity was the concept and the general picture of a graduated kosmos. The world was divided into a lower and a higher, a sensual and an intelligible world, which not only stood in opposition, but whose essence consisted in their mutual negation, in their polar opposition. But above this abyss of negation there existed between them a spiritual bond. From one pole to the other, from super esse ad super unum, from the realm of absolute form down to the material as the absolute formless, there led a continuous connecting road. By this road the infinite goes over to the finite; the finite returns to the infinite. The entire process of redemption is contained here in; it is the incarnation of God as it is the deification of man. But there always remains a "between" to overcome. There remains a separating medium which cannot be jumped across but which must be walked step by step in a strictly regulated sequence." (5)

There is a third highly significant Dionysian book which has not come down to us but whose general idea is known and which Cassirer does not even mention. In the previous paragraphs Cassirer had completely obscured the problem of faith and reason; here, as in his other works, the true issues of Christianity are discarded into a poetic background as if they are too improbable and unbecoming to be brought to the fore. We shall not here take issue with his attempt to interpret historical positions in the light of his own philosophy, but we must reproach him for not having shown how his philosophy accounts for what Christian speculation really held. In fact, nowhere have we found proof that Cassirer really understands this speculation. For reasons we shall mention later, he now refers to the idea of emanation as a solution to the same problem of which creation is a solution. This particular presentation of the idea of emanation, i.e., as the ideal origin of the universe, historically has been confused with the actual, with the existential
origin of the universe.

The distinction between the ideal and the existential origin of the universe is a distinction which Dionysius certainly presupposes, though he does not explicitly develop it. Because he does not explicitly develop it, it is possible for those who prescind from the fact that Dionysius was an orthodox Christian to interpret his works as being incompatible with Christian orthodoxy. But why should the other interpretation be favored as more historical than the orthodox one? Just here Cassirer's conception of history comes into play, for this is the interpretation which can be ideally reconstructed to suit the progress of ideas leading up to his own comprehensive rationalism which will be historically significant. Cassirer needs this "possible" interpretation; he wants this possible interpretation to be the historical one. The dynamism of history calls for conflict. Hence, Cassirer will be interested in the doctrines of creation and emanation only in those aspects which, either because of some conflict in their primitive form in which there was much confusion, or because of some particular later interpretation which is far from having been either the logically or historically preponderant one, will bring the two in irreconcilable conflict. In the case of Dionysius the most striking example of "ideal reconstruction" may be seen in Cassirer's tacit introduction of Avicenna's conception of emanation as the explanation of the Dionysian conception.
There is no evidence in the works of Dionysius that his presentation of the orderly emanation of things from God is intended as a solution to the problem which Cassirer has so far presented. On the contrary, it is evident both from the extant works of Dionysius and from those works whose description has come down to us that he firmly adhered to the idea of creation in its strictly orthodox sense. What is more important is that he presents us with another view of the world — one of which his great medieval commentators were certainly aware — one which is in no way detrimental to the doctrine of creation.

Here we shall briefly expose this idea and come back to it in the next chapter. The order of the universe is not merely in what it has most perfect of formal order, i.e., an order of graduated perfections, an order which goes up gradually and gradually descends, an order in conformity with wisdom (sapientis est ordinare) as the Greeks held it. This very order does, however, furnish us with the foundation of a formally epistemological view. It offers us the subject for a mode of knowing which historically takes from Platonism and Neo-platonism certain elements usually considered to be absolutely opposed to Aristotelianism. As St. Thomas points out, the Platonic mode is a logical one. Plato, he says, interpreting Aristotle, confuses the modus rei in intellectu. The Platonists logice procedunt in naturalibus. In short, they confine themselves to a purely logical outlook on things. We shall not here concern ourselves with this historical problem, for we are interested
rather in what happens to the Platonic mode in question when we claim for it no more than a logical view of reality, an outlook which claims no more for itself than it can offer.

For the sake of clarifying our meaning, let us suppose that this logical view remains completely subordinated to a more directly real one and that reality is its term—not a term it claims to reach, but a term it tends to approach dialectically in an extrinsic mode. It will then be evident that just as the formal orderliness, the graduated inequality, the great multiplicity of things, is for the sake of imitating the unity and the intense and infinitely perfect simplicity of the First Cause, so too not only may this unity be used for the purpose of making known to us, by graduated ascent ever in an extrinsic and very indirect manner, the perfection of which this gradated multiplicity is only a degradation as it were—this has been most emphatically brought out in the commentaries of St. Albert and St. Thomas—but this whole hierarchy, including both unity and multiplicity, can be viewed with a more deliberately epistemological intention, with an intention whose purpose is expressed by Dionysius himself. Just as the universe is but an imitation and vestige of God; so in like manner the greatest assimilation which can be achieved even by the intellectual knowers of the universe, i.e., those beings which tend toward the inner possession of the all, is not an entitative assimilation. No creature
tends toward substantial otherness, nor does it tend toward the possession, for example, of an intellect of a higher degree as its knowing faculty. But it does tend toward an ever higher cognitive assimilation by operation. (6) By conferring Grace God Himself has incited the intellectual creature toward this ever greater assimilation. Now a knower tends toward an assimilation with a higher not by a mere intensification of its own proper mode of knowing, but also by an imitation of the higher mode of knowing. This statement may indeed involve a paradox, a paradox which has been pointed out by both Dionysius and St. Thomas. What is highest in the lower is contiguous with the lowest in the higher. On the other hand, what is highest in the lower, is not that which is most proportioned to it, for as St. Thomas points out, the contemplative life is best but it is not the one most proportioned to man. Now the intellectual operation in man in which he most intensely imitates a higher mode of knowing will in what respect be the best. Now just what is that higher mode of knowing which man attempts to imitate once he is firmly enough established in his own most connatural mode of knowing? (7)
The higher intellect differs from the lower in that the higher in fewer means of knowing, i.e., in fewer concepts, knows more things and knows them more distinctly than does the lower intellect through many means. This type of knowing many things in one concept is characterized by St. Thomas in Chapters 98-100 of II Contra Gentes as universalis virtutis in contradistinction to universality in praedicando tantum. When a universal is in praedicando tantum its universality is due to abstraction from differences so that he who knows man as animal has of man only confused, hence imperfect, knowledge. If, however, the concept of animal were universal virtutis, it would in its very unity distinctly represent to us both brute and man even as regards what each one has proper to itself. The latter type of universality belongs to a type of intellect higher than that of man. However, although we can never achieve that type of universality, we can imitate it. And it is in mathematics that we find the most perfect, not to say, the very exemplary type of imitation of this unity. We find this especially in the method of limits where we attempt to reach formal difference through a single means of knowing, as when from the very concept of polygon we attempt to reach the circle by means of a graduated increase in the number of sides of a regular inscribed polygon. In other words the formal difference between the two presents itself as an irrational gap which we attempt to fill and breach without having to accept the givenness of one of the two terms in question. In fact, the ideal of mathematics may be envisaged as an attempt to breach all
formal differences in this manner so that at the limit all the mathematics would be seen by means of a single concept. This consideration will allow us to define rationality as Cassirer understands it.

This breaching of the formal differences by way of infinite interpolation, this attempt to reach the differences in identity, shows us what Cassirer means by rationality. We accept this method for what it is worth. We see in it a very tenuous and incomparably remote imitation of the divine mode of knowing. There is in it no actual accomplishment of even the lowest type of superhuman knowledge.

In many respects the works of Dionysius are in this mode. In them there is not only an attempt to visualize the order of the universe; there is also a constant attempt to see this order as a series converging as it were, toward a limit. There is an attempt to fill the gaps logically, i.e., an attempt to see the "All" in so far as it is accessible to us both through faith and through reason in a higher mode. There is an attempt at what Cassirer would call rational conception, but this attempt is far from having in all its fundamental aspects the meaning that Cassirer would attribute to it; for as his writings show, Cassirer has not brought out the fundamental distinction between what we have called the natural problem of the One and the Many and the noetic problem. This is all the more to be wondered at, since this distinction was clearly indicated in the medieval literature which grew up around the works of Dionysius.

We refer to all those questions and articles in the works of St. Thomas,
for example, which treat of the intelligible species of the speerated substances. Cassirer has interpreted Dionysius as well as the Dionysian literature partly in the mode of Plotinus where the logical is given a realistic status and definitely in the mode of Avicenna. (8) Now, if the aim of the attempt to breach the gaps were not merely an attempt at a deeper and more rigorous insight into the formal manifold of things but rather an attempt to reduce the things themselves, the very intelligible natures, one to the other, at the limit we should have a universe of the type described by Meyerson, i.e., a purely sterile amorphous, infinitely vacuous tautology — too non-existent to suggest even the possibility of a contradiction. Not even the mathematical universe, however, can be without gaps.

We can now see the meaning of the first part of the paragraph in question. Cassirer sees in the Dionysian graduated scale between God and what is most removed from Him in the order of the many an attempt at the assimilation of the being of the higher and the being of the lower order.

We shall see later why it is so important that Cassirer's Pico at least be completely saturated with the fundamental ideas and presuppositions of the Dionysian writings.


For the time being we shall take leave of this Dionysian idea and consider the third incompatible element Cassirer finds in Pico. In the paragraph following the last one quoted from his article Cassirer says:
"But with this Neoplatonic influence there is joined another which affected Pico from the very beginning of his intellectual development... the Averroistic teaching. To it he remained faithful in his later years.... But if we place ourselves on the level of this teaching, at one stroke the problem of unity and plurality, of God and the world, assumes a completely different form.... The whole question resolves itself into nothing, into a purely dialectical pseudo-problem. ... The problem only arises and can only continue to exist, if reason makes no use of its basic right, the right of independent critical examination, but surrenders itself to dogma. Within the limits prescribed by the medieval picture of the world, Averroism is the attempt at a rational explanation of nature. It seeks to carry this explanation of nature without the admixture of any dogmatic theological position. What it is looking for is insight into the strict determinism of all occurrences, which follows from the general determinations of matter and motion. What we can know clearly and with certainty is the connection that itself obtains under these determinations, and the way in which they mutually condition each other. But there can be no question of a 'cause' of nature in the transcendent sense. For nature as such, the whole of matter and motion, has no beginning in time. To the theological category of creation and to the metaphysical category of emanation there is here opposed the doctrine of the eternality of the world, as it had been established by Aristotle...."

In the preceding paragraphs Cassirer had presented creation ex nihilo as a Christian and genuinely orthodox solution to the problem of the One and the Many as he had formulated it. He mentions it here again as theological in opposition to metaphysical. From what we have seen it is clear enough that the metaphysical doctrine of creation, far from being a solution to the problem in question, is actually a conclusion, or, to be more exact, a corollary, rigorously deduced from the general solution of a particular aspect of the problem of the One and Many found in Aristotle. If God is Pure Act, He must be, whether Aristotle himself says it or not, the absolutely universal cause of all things. It follows then that every being has all that it is from
God; hence, the Mary which involves potency and act has all that it is from the One that is Pure Act.

Cassirer now proceeds to make Averroism center around this same problem of the One and Many as he has formulated it. From all this it is equally clear that the problem of the One first cause and the Many can be made to center around the problem of creation, just as the very problem of creation could be made the center on a problem of faith. As we have already shown, the fundamental problem of creation is not one merely of faith. That God is the absolutely transcendental cause of the universe can be demonstrated in metaphysics. It can be demonstrated too that God is free to create or not, that in His very freedom to create He can create a universe from all eternity and He can create one that has a beginning according to time. What God actually did was told us in revelation. Only the latter point is a matter of faith to us. Now it is very easy to make the metaphysical problem itself "apparently" depend on faith with the consequence that the whole problem of the transcendent One and Many will hinge on faith. For if we deny that the world actually had a beginning according to time, we can do so only for a cogent natural reason. And if the world had to exist from all eternity, we should deny the absolute transcendence of the First Cause, hence of the One which finally brought about the correlary of creation. But even this reasoning backwards is much more an attack on human reason than upon faith. As Cassirer himself had attempted to show, the transcendence of the First Cause raised the
problem. It was not faith which had raised it. It was the transcendence of the One which entailed the necessity of creation and of free creation. It was the necessity of creation's being free that entailed the possibility of creation ab aeterno and creation in tempore. In all this, reason had made use of its basic right. It is still making use of its basic right when it shows us that revelation must tell us what is actually the case. Hence, to deny faith in this matter is to deny the basic right of reason and, we might say, the capacity of reason.

One thing should stand out clearly in Cassirer's treatment of Averroism: Averroism is definitely an assertion of naturalistic dogmatism over and above all reason. There is in Latin Averroism not merely absolute dualism of supernatural faith and natural knowledge; there is a much more subtle dualism, subordinate in one sense, transcendent in another, within the very realm of the natural — a dualism between a purely natural dogmatic faith in reason and reason as we know it in operation. Cassirer himself points this out when he says that we must distinguish between the empirical content of knowledge in Averroism and the conceptual form and the basic theoretical conviction it stood for. The full meaning of this dualism Cassirer has already brought to the fore in his treatment of Giordanus Bruno in Individuum und Kosmos in der Philosophie der Renaissance. He there shows how ultimately the "heroic emotion" is at the root of otherwise speculative problems. But let us get back to the problem in question.
The problem of the eternality of the world is a particularly interesting one since it is one to which philosophy could give no definite answer as to what was actually the case. It is one of those problems in which, either for theoretical or for purely historical reasons, reason following its own path encounters faith which has to answer a particular problem raised by reason itself. Philosophy itself could not answer the question whether the world did or did not actually exist from all eternity -- except in a dialectical way as Aristotle himself had put it. The fact that faith gives a very definite answer to a question which reason cannot definitely settle for itself shows the limits of reason. And according to the sentiment we held about the capacity of reason, or, as Cassirer has put it, about the basic right of reason, we may indeed feel humiliated.

The Averroists themselves did not have reasons for maintaining the eternality of the world which could resist this basic right of reason, as St. Thomas has ably demonstrated. As Cassirer so aptly puts it, it was a question of basic theoretical conviction rather than of empirical content. Instead setting forth reasons in matters otherwise philosophical they appealed to the authority of Aristotle and to Averroes' particular brand of Aristotelianism. Obviously, human authority is preferable to the best of reasons which threaten to lead man to what is better than himself. Nevertheless, Averroism is one philosophical attitude for which there was no need of Cassirer's idealization.
History itself gave it in ideal form, just as sometimes human events or actions may meet the requirements of the poetic "ought to be". Cassirer may in all security view it as leading to his own thought. But the right of free inquiry in the proper domain of the intellect and the rights of the senses were not limited to Averroism, as Cassirer seems to imply.

If Cassirer's Averroism had merely wanted an autonomous physics, if it had merely insisted on the right of reason in its own field, if when faced with evident truth it had merely claimed the right for any intellect to enter into disputation with God Himself as Job had done, Averroism would have found ample support in Albert and Thomas who vigorously defended the capacity and the achievement of human reason over those who were, in the words of St. Albert, "tamquam bruta animalia blasphemantes in his quae ignorant". (9) In his commentary on the Book of Job, St. Thomas himself had explained: "Videbatur autem disputatio hominis ad Deum esse indebita propter excellentiam qua Deus hominem exsellit. Sed considerandum est quod veritas ex diversitate personarum non variatur. Unde cum aliquis veritatem loquitur, vinc non potest, cum quocumque disputet". (10)

Averroism would not have suited Cassirer's history if it had been merely a reaction against that ever present tendency in scholasticism toward universal indoctrination to the point of contempt for matters which, instead of being handed down to us by way of doctrine, should be acquired by way of personal experience. That too might still have been completely orthodox, for as St. Thomas had
said: "Dignius est accipere scientiam per creaturas sensibles quam per hominis doctrinam." (11)

As a matter of fact, this dignity of experience as opposed to indoctrination by man might be considered as an insult to the Averroists, since they themselves appealed so often to the authority of Averroes.

We should be the last to underestimate the consummate art with which Cassirer has composed the trilogy of Creation, emanation, and Averroism. The thread he has sought in history is somehow actually there. It follows a logic of its own, none the less intelligible when we reason backwards toward Averroism, starting from Cassirer's own contemporary thought and when we consider the historian an "einen ruchwarts gekehrten propheten", a "retrospective prophet". (12)
Cassirer's Solution of the Antinomy.

As we pointed out at the beginning of this commentary, however, Cassirer's chief purpose in here offering the doctrines of creation, emanation and Averroism as attempted solutions of the problem of the One and the Many was to establish his thesis that Pico adhered to what is actually Cassirer's idea of symbolism in knowledge. After having emphasized the fact on page 136 that Pico embraces all three of these incompatible doctrines in his system, Cassirer draws his conclusion on the following pages:

"...He was able to employ at the same time the idea of creation, the idea of emanation, and the ideas of Arabian rationalism and naturalism, only because he did not take them simply in their previous meaning, but related them to a definite ideal center, and by thus relating them transformed and enriched their content. No one of these ideas appears with Pico as the complete and exclusive solution to the problem of God and the world. For him they are significant rather as particular moments in the new solution he is seeking.

The distinctive category under which he subsumed his doctrine of God, of the world and of man, his theology and his psychology, is the category of symbolic thought.... The basic metaphysical problem of unity and plurality now takes on a specifically different significance... Pico is no longer trying to exhibit the Many as the effect of the One, or to deduce them as such from their cause, with the aid of rational concepts. He sees the Many rather as expressions, as images, as symbols of the One. And what he is trying to show is that only in this mediate and symbolic way can the absolutely One and absolutely unconditioned Being manifest itself to human knowledge. Metaphysics as well as dialectic or physics can yield no higher truth. They are only different symbols and different interpretations of one and the same meaning, which is the foundation of them all, but which is not capable of being grasped by us as it is in itself, without any symbolic intermediary."

Regarding Cassirer's conclusion that Pico embraced these three doctrines under the category of symbolic thought we should like to remark in the first place that there in absolutely no need of the category of symbolic
thought to reconcile these doctrines as they are found in Pico for the simple reason that they are not opposed. It is true that they are incompatible as Cassirer has stated them. But we have already shown when treating of his statement of the Dionysian position that this particular view can be understood in a sense in which it is in no way opposed to the doctrine of creation. And Cassirer himself admits on page 335 that Pico did not in any way embrace the determinism of Averroism which would be contrary to the doctrine of creation. There he says:

"The Averroists have been characterized as the 'freethinkers of the Middle Ages,' They treat the doctrines of the positive religions as myths, what they are seeking is a doctrine of God that shall remain within the bounds of mere reason. In this underlying aim of rationalism, Pico could and must feel himself related to them; for he too constantly defended the 'libertas credendi,' and for the sake of this defense he too fell under the ban of the Church. But the relationship extends no further; for if Pico granted the rationalistic assumptions of Averroism, he rejected all the more sharply the naturalistic conclusions it had drawn from them."

The only important element of Averroism, then, found in Pico is a certain sympathy for the rationalism of the Averroists, "for he too constantly defended the 'libertas credendi.'" Cassirer is not too definite in his statement of this rationalism with which Pico sympathized. There is certainly no evidence in Pico's works to lead one to say that he considered the doctrines of the Church as myths. Neither is there any reason for saying that Pico felt himself related to the Averroists in their seeking a doctrine of God which would remain within the bounds of mere reason, if by the expression "within the bounds of mere reason" is meant the naturalism of the Averroists. Cassirer himself has excluded
that. If this "rationalism" refers to the desire to allow reason a free rein in its own domain, then St. Thomas too, no less than Pico, must feel himself related to this aim of the Averroists, for, as we have seen in the preceding pages, he too defended the basic rights of reason.

Pico's defense of the libertas credendi is alleged by Cassirer as the proof that Pico defended the Averroistic idea of the freedom of reason even against the Church. On page 137 Cassirer says of this libertas credendi:

"Even against the Church Pico boldly defends this basic thesis of the libertas credendi; he is certain that no one can or ought to be forced to believe."

And on page 328 he says:

"For it is not in man's power to accept or reject a proposition of faith on external command".

If Cassirer means by this that Pico considered human reason to be of such a nature that it could not give its assent to a doctrine for which it could not find evidence in its own domain - a blatant misunderstanding of the term, he is contradicting the express words of Pico; and if he does not mean this, the very mention of the libertas credendi in relation to Averroism is meaningless. In Quaestio octava de libertate credendi of the Apologia Pico does say: "Non est in libera potestate hominis credere articulum fidei esse verum quando sibi placet, et non esse verum quando sibi placet," as Cassirer quotes on page 328. In this particular question Pico is discussing the power of the will to force the assent of the intellect to a doubtful proposition when there are no rational grounds for assenting to either part of the contradiction and when there is no
other reason brought to bear. In such a case, he says, the will cannot
force the assent of the intellect. If an assent is to be given, some
other motive must influence the intellect:

"... donee ei nova supervenerit apparentia vel per syllogis-
ticam rationem vel per intuitivam notitiam, vel per testimonium multo-
rum, vel per auctoritatem dicentis, vel aliud similii." (13)

Far from rejecting all external reasons as sufficient motives for as-
sent to propositions of faith, Pico considers certain of these external
motives to be intellectual reasons. Among the valid motives usually
accepted by theologians for the Gospel, for example, are "pronunciatio
prophetica, scripturarum concordia, auctoritas scribentium, rationabi-
ritis contentorum,.... irrationabilitas singulorum errorum, ecclesiae
stabilitas, miraculorum claritas." (14)

Furthermore, when Pico says that the teachings of the Fathers of the
Church are to be accepted with due respect but not in such a way that
they cannot be doubted, in the same sentence he excludes from this cate-
gory the Sacred Scriptures and any doctrine definitely determined by the
authority of the Church. (15) In the following sentence he speaks of
an infallible authority which he attributes explicitly to the Sacred
Scriptures and implicitly to the Church. It is difficult to find in
the text of Pico any convincing evidence for the belief that he was
very closely related to the Averroistic "free-thinkers of the Middle
Ages."

By way of a slight digression we should like
to display another of Cassirer's reasons for placing the category of
symbolic thought in Pico. The symbolic thought of which Cassirer speaks in this article demands that man be ever changing without any possibility of his coming to a state of rest either in knowledge or in the activity of his will. On pages 29 and 30 Cassirer says that Pico did not believe in an eternal hell, for that would be contrary to the conception of man and human freedom as they must be in the system of symbolic thought. "An eternity of punishment, he says, "would imply a form of finality which according to Pico's basis conception would contradict the real meaning of human existence." As proof that Pico did not believe in an eternal punishment he quotes from the Conclusiones in theologiae following: "Peccato mortali finiti temporis non debetur poena infinita secundum temporis, sed finita tantum." It is true enough that Plotinus defended this thesis, but in this same Apologia, which Cassirer quotes, he makes very explicit what he means by this particular thesis. First he distinguishes between what he calls temporal and eternal sins. The former is one which has been forgiven, while the latter is a sin which was never forgiven. The theological implications of his division do not interest us here; we are concerned only with the fact that Pico definitely held that there was an eternal punishment for the eternal sin. "Ruditas autem maxime," he says, "erat credere quod ex praeclara conclusione ego intendebam negare poenam aeternam." And the ninth conclusion listed at the end of the Apologia is the following: "Peccatum mortale est demeritoriae dignum poenam aeternam." It is also interesting to see that in the Praemium of the seventh book of the Heptaplus Pico, speaking of happiness, says that man's happiness consists in the knowledge and
possession of God where he rests, but for the attainment of which he needs God's help. (18) If an eternity of punishment, as Cassirer claims, would imply a form of finality which according to Pico's basic conception would contradict the real meaning of human existence, then the only logical conclusion from the works of Pico seems to be that he did not advocate this category of symbolic thought which Cassirer ascribes to him.

"It should be noted that in his citations from Pico Cassirer has chosen passages which Pico himself considered to be in need of elucidation, and with poetic license he has given to their indetermination a "new form and meaning" which is opposed to the one given them by Pico himself in his later explanations. One might be almost tempted at times to think that Cassirer has violated those "strict rules" by which the historian as well as the scientist in bound in the collection and evaluation of his "matter". (19)

We could continue comparing Cassirer's interpretation of Pico with Pico's own words, but the comparisons we have already made are sufficient to bring to light in a concrete way Cassirer's Poetic construction of history, and that was our purpose in this present work.

In a latter section we hope to consider the symbolism itself advocated by Cassirer and the doctrine of freedom consequent upon it. Cassirer, when he traces these ideas to Nicolas of Cusa, has already indicated the direction a criticism must follow.
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Nicolas of Cusa, *De docta ignorantia*.

----- *De doctae ignorantiae apologia*.

----- *De beryllo*.


St. Thomas, *Omnia Opera*.


References to the Introduction:

1. Volume III, numbers 2 and 3, 1942; City College of New York, N.Y.

2. In passing we should like to point out two misstatements in Avery Dulles' work, Principes Concordiae; Pico della Mirandola, (Cambridge, Mass., 1941.) On page 56 he wrongly attributes to Scotus the opinion that the Persons of the Trinity are only formally distinct from one another. Scotus, like all orthodox Catholics, held a real distinction between the Persons. Cf. Ox. L. I, d. 26, n. 8 (Tome 10, p. 298) Vives edition.


3. Dr. Cassirer died within the past year.


5. Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, p. 124, Journal of the History of Ideas, Volume III. In the future all references to this article will mention only the title and the page.

References to Chapter I:

1. Ecclesiastes, IX, 11.

3. Poetics, c.9, 1451a36. Unless otherwise indicated, all references to Aristotle will refer to the translation found in Richard McKeon's *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, Random House, New York, 1941.


5. Poetics, c.23, 1459a16.


7. Poetics, c.9, 1451b11.


9. Ia, q.57, a.2, c.

10. II Contra Gentes, c.100, Cf. also c.98.


17. For instance, in the Metaphysics (Book I, c.1, 981 a10) Aristotle shows that with respect to the end of medicine, experience without theory is better than theory without experience. We shall quote the text at length. We must note, however, that in one respect the Philosopher is using the term art in a broad sense, and in another he takes it in a very restricted sense. In a broad sense, insofar as it comprises medicine and shoemaking as well as the fine arts; in a restricted sense, insofar as he opposes art and experience, whereas art as an intellectual virtue implies the proximate faculty of production. (VI Ethics, c.5) In the Metaphysics we read:

"With a view to action experience seems in no respect inferior to art, and men of experience succeed even better than those who have theory without experience. (The reason is that experience is knowledge of individuals, art of universals, and actions and productions are all concerned with the individual; for the physician does not cure man, except in an accidental way, but Callias or Socrates or some other called by some such individual name, who happens to be a man. If, then a man has the theory without the experience, and recognizes the universal but does not know the individual included in this, he will often fail to cure; for it is the individual that is to be cured.)"
But yet we think that knowledge and understanding belong to art rather than to experience, and we suppose artists to be wiser than men of experience (which implies that wisdom depends in all cases rather in knowledge): and this because the former know the cause, but the latter do not. For men of experience know that the thing is so, but do not know why, while the others know the 'why' and the cause. Hence we think also that the master-workers in each craft are more honourable and know in a truer sense and are wiser than the manual workers, because they know the causes of the things that are done (we think manual workers are like certain lifeless things which act indeed, but act without knowing what they do, as fire burns — but while the lifeless things perform each of their functions by a natural tendency, the labourers perform them through habit); thus we view them as being wiser not in virtue of being able to act, but of having the theory for themselves and knowing the causes. And in general it is a sign of the man who knows and of the man who does not know, that the former can teach, and therefore we can thing art more truly knowledge than experience is; for artists can teach, and men of mere experience cannot." (Aristotle: Metaphysics, Book I, c.1, 98a10.

Again, although metaphysics is wisdom proper and the noblest and most divine of purely human sciences, nevertheless prudence, which is not wisdom proper, is the wisdom for man and more necessary. (Ia-IIae, q.57, a.5) Mathematics too, with respect to formal certitude, is better than metaphysics. "...Mathematica sunt abstracta a materia, et tamen non sunt suadentia intellectum nostrum; et ideo in eis est requirenda certissima ratio." (In II Metaph., c.3, lect.5, m.336.) "Cum enim mathematica sit media inter naturalem (scientiam) et divisam, ipsa est utraque certior." (In de Trin. Boet., q.6, a.1, ad 2 q.)

According to the de Partibus Animalium (B. I, c.5, 645a22-
645a10) (and in several places, e.g., In I de Anima, lect.1, n.5, St. Thomas refers to this passage with approval), scanty and uncertain knowledge of things divine is better than copious and certain knowledge of things within closer reach. And although the sense of touch is the lowest of our knowing powers, nevertheless it is the most necessary and the most certain, for which reason it is called the sense of the intellect. (In I Metaph., lect.1, nn.6-9 and II de Anima, lect.19, mn.482-486)

18. Poetics, c.6, 1449b27.
19. II Physics, c.5, 197a.
20. VI Metaphysics, c.2, 1027a19.
21. II Ethics, c.6, 1106b28.
25. Poetics, c. 24, 1460a11.
27. Epit. cit., c. 9, 1451b11.
28. Ibid., b15.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.
38. Ibid.
45. Poetics, c. 4, 1448b10.


References to Chapter III:

1. Cf. St. Thomas, Ia,q.1,a.7.

2. Cf. St. Thomas, Ia,q.1,a.1 ad 2.

3. Commentaria in lib. de divinis nominibus.


7. Cf. De coelesti hierarchia, c.10 and Proclus' Liber de causis, c.10 (Lesson X of St. Thomas' commentary).


9. Prologue to his commentary on Aristotle's Poetica.

10. Comment. in Job, c.13, lect.2.

11. III,q.12,a.3,ad 2.


13. Pico della Mirandola, Omnia Opera, Strassburg,1504, fdl.LVI.

14. Ibid.


