# "BEYOND FREEDOM AND DIGNITY"? HOMO RELIGIOSUS IN MIRCEA ELIADE: CONCEPT, CONTENT, CONTEXT (PART 1. WHAT IS MAN?)

**Cristian POPESCU, PhD(c)**
*University of Bucharest*
*cristian.popescu@sciencespo.fr*

**Abstract:** Both human dignity and freedom of religion have come under attack in many countries over the past century, often including by their would-be champions. Moral relativism in democracies, Machiavellianism in dictatorships, and the New Man of totalitarianism seem desperately disparate threads. Their epochal condition of possibility however, weaving the fabric of modernity, obtains by contrast with the concept of homo religiosus, construed as body, soul, and spirit in dynamic dialogue, connecting Mircea Eliade to scientific, philosophical, and theological tradition. Reductionist-physicalist-atomist-behaviorist approaches jeopardize human dignity and freedom of religion. Theology, philosophy, and science should take concerted action in pursuit of truth.

**Keywords:** body, dignity, freedom, *homo religiosus*, Mircea Eliade, soul, spirit

"O Lord, our Lord, how awesome is your name through all the earth! I will sing of your majesty above the heavens with the mouths of babes and infants. You have established a bulwark against your foes, to silence enemy and avenger. When I see your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and stars that you set in place – what is man that you are mindful of him, and a son of man that you care for him? Yet you have made him little less than a god, crowned him with glory and honor. You have given him rule over the works of your hands, put all things at his feet: all sheep and oxen, even the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, the fish of the sea, and whatever swims the paths of the seas.O Lord, our Lord, how awesome is your name through all the earth!" (Psalm 8:2-10)[1]

1 Biblical references are given according to the New American Bible Revised Edition, a recent and reliable translation of the Bible ....

## 1. The desert a city

What is Man[2]? From Jerusalem walking down slowly along the steep slopes to the shore and sailing in the shining southern sun and through the storm that hides the sun across the sea and from the shore along the long walls slowly walking up to Athens, near Athens if one searches one can find the pair of long-lost still lastingly celebrated places where Plato and his pupil Aristotle both memorably theorized and practiced that lovely art of lofty arts that for lack of a better phrase that I can think of, I will but call here in this paper the ancient honourable art of definition[3]. And indeed, this need for definition after Plato and Aristotle and because of them has stayed with us up to this very day. To be sure, definition itself has variously been defined through its long history. In 1957, further west, further north, across the ocean and on the shore of a great lake, Father Professor Bernard Lonergan, SJ[4], suggested a conceptual distinction between *nominal*, and *explanatory*, and *implicit* definitions. This is a rather technical distinction, I confess, and during the discussion that will

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...(this translation being included, together with a very full critical apparatus, in D. Senior – J. J. Collins – M. A. Getty (ed.), *The Catholic Study Bible*, Oxford 20163). In the original Hebrew: "יְהוָה אֲדֹנֵינוּ מָה־אַדִּיר שִׁמְךָ בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר תְּנָה הוֹדְךָ עַל־הַשָּׁמָיִם: מִפִּי עוֹלְלִים וְיוֹנְקִים יִסַּדְתָּ עֹז לְמַעַן צוֹרְרֶיךָ לְהַשְׁבִּית אוֹיֵב וּמִתְנַקֵּם: כִּי־אֶרְאֶה שָׁמֶיךָ מַעֲשֵׂי אֶצְבְּעֹתֶיךָ יָרֵחַ וְכוֹכָבִים אֲשֶׁר כּוֹנָנְתָּה: מָה־אֱנוֹשׁ כִּי־תִזְכְּרֶנּוּ וּבֶן־אָדָם כִּי תִפְקְדֶנּוּ: וַתְּחַסְּרֵהוּ מְּעַט מֵאֱלֹהִים וְכָבוֹד וְהָדָר תְּעַטְּרֵהוּ: תַּמְשִׁילֵהוּ בְּמַעֲשֵׂי יָדֶיךָ כֹּל שַׁתָּה תַּחַת־רַגְלָיו: צֹנָה וַאֲלָפִים כֻּלָּם וְגַם בִּהֲמוֹת שָׂדָי: צִפּוֹר שָׁמַיִם וּדְגֵי הַיָּם עֹבֵר אָרְחוֹת יַמִּים: יְהוָה אֲדֹנֵינוּ מָה־אַדִּיר שִׁמְךָ בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ:". nevig era secnerefer lacilbiB werbeH

Hebrew Biblical references are given according to the Leningrad Codex B19A (L) (the authoritative edition of this codex being * * *, Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia, Stuttgart 19975).

2 My question obviously concerns *humans* in general rather than only *males*. In keeping with tradition, I will not however use here in this paper inclusive gender-neutral language anywhere that it would clash with Biblical language. (However, I will use it everywhere it does not.)

3 For basic orientation concerning the place of definition in Plato and Aristotle, see my paper published in the previous issue of this journal, C. Popescu, "Freedom from What? Freedom of Thought, Freedom of Conscience, and Freedom of Religion in the Context of Power", *Journal for Freedom of Conscience*, 6 (2018: 2) 493-554, here 499-500. I give there some information about the theory and practice of definition in Plato, and about the theory of definition in Aristotle. Now, about the practice of definition in Aristotle, suffice it to say here in this paper that its instances are simply too many to mention in any useful manner: definition being part and parcel of Aristotle's specific approach to about everything. And I should note in this connection that not only never before Aristotle, and never at the time of Aristotle, but also hardly ever after Aristotle had any other author been so deeply *systematic*.

4 Standard abbreviation for (a member of) the Society of Jesus, also known as the Jesuits (*Societas Iesu*), religious order of the Catholic Church.

follow both Lonergan's terse style and his sure taste for mathematical examples are not indeed so very likely to delight the casual reader far beyond her wildest ever dreams. And yet, I beg my kind reader to bear with me through the next few, brief paragraphs because I earnestly believe that Lonergan's threefold conceptual distinction has huge research potential once well understood:

> At any rate, there is a difference between nominal and explanatory definitions. Nominal definitions merely tell us about the correct usage of names. Explanatory definitions also include something further that, were it not included in the definition, would have to be added as a postulate.
>
> What constitutes the difference? It is not that explanatory definitions suppose an insight while nominal definitions do not. For a language is an enormously complicated tool with an almost endless variety of parts that admit a far greater number of significant combinations. If insight is needed to see how other tools are to be used properly and effectively, insight is similarly needed to use a language properly and effectively.
>
> Still, this yields, I think, the answer to our question. Both nominal and explanatory definitions suppose insights. But a nominal definition supposes no more than an insight into the proper use of language. An explanatory definition, on the other hand, supposes a further insight into the objects to which language refers. The name "circle" is defined as a perfectly round plane curve, as the name "straight line" is defined as a line lying evenly between its extremes. But when one goes on to affirm that all radii in a circle are equal or that all right angles are equal, one no longer is talking merely of names. One is making assertions about the objects which names denote[5].

And on the next page Lonergan develops what deeply is at stake in his conceptual distinction:

> D. Hilbert has worked out foundations of geometry that satisfy contemporary logicians. One of his important devices is known as implicit definition. Thus, the meaning of both point and straight line is fixed by the relation that two and only two points determine a straight line.
>
> In terms of the foregoing analysis, one may say that implicit definition consists in explanatory definition without nominal definition. It consists in explanatory definition, for the relation that two points determine a straight line is a postulational element such as the equality of all radii in a circle. It omits nominal definition, for one cannot restrict Hilbert's point to the Euclidean meaning of position without magnitude. An ordered pair of

5 B. J. F. Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan 3, Toronto, Buffalo, and London 1992[5, 35-36.]

> numbers satisfies Hilbert's implicit definition of a point, for two such pairs determine a straight line. Similarly, a first-degree equation satisfies Hilbert's implicit definition of a straight line, for such an equation is determined by two ordered pairs of numbers.
> The significance of implicit definition is its complete generality. The omission of nominal definitions is the omission of a restriction to the objects which, in the first instance, one happens to be thinking about. The exclusive use of explanatory or postulational elements concentrates attention upon the set of relationships in which the whole scientific significance is contained[6].

So, in a nutshell, this is it. As scholars, we should all strive for *implicit* definitions, if I may in this way interpret Lonergan's insight. So will I also strive here in this paper. Please remember the age-old question of old questions that had us started on this journey of (self) disclosure and discovery, our single at that time and perhaps at all times simple question, *What is Man?* I will strive and contribute *not* a new answer to this question but, more modestly indeed and only realistically in the long run, may I say, a strategic stepping stone toward an answer that could hopefully be given some other time by someone better qualified. This stepping stone will, unsurprisingly perhaps, be an *implicit definition*. Still, before I can contribute (and indeed, *in order that* I can contribute) at the very least this modest definition that I wish to share with you as but a simple unsophisticated[7] tool that someone might perhaps someday find or invent some use to put to, we will now need to see together why and how this age-old question is simply deceptively a simple question – shall we start?

> Two hermits lived together for many years without a quarrel. One said to the other, "Let's have a quarrel with each other, as is the way of men". The other answered, "I don't know how a quarrel happens". The first said, "Look here, I put a brick between us, and I say, That's mine. Then you say, No, it's mine. That is how you begin a quarrel". So they put a brick between them, and one of them said, "That's mine". The other said, "No; it's mine". He answered, "Yes, it's yours. Take it away". They were unable to argue with each other[8].

6 *Ibid*., 37.

7 Not that I should indeed be necessarily apologetic for striving to stay unsophisticated in so far that I ever even can, *cf*. "the frivolous way of sophisticates" denounced in Ts. Yamamoto, *Hagakure: The Book of the Samurai*, Tokyo 1979, 23.

8 B. Ward (ed.), *The Desert Fathers: Sayings of the Early Christian Monks*, London 2003, 182.

We all who read these ancient words written on paper or on screen are modern women and men living in modern and sophisticated times. To modern eyes and modern ears these ancient unsophisticated words (and Sister Dr Benedicta Ward's, SLG[9], English translation given in the paragraph above is certainly to be commended) may come across as nearly meaningless, and figments of a long-lost world too hard to ever truly fathom. Yet they are *not* meaningless. May I say even that they are *anything but* meaningless. You may already sense how. We will soon together better see why[10]. For the time being suffice it but to listen to Professor Lane encapsulate some deeply distant taste of our innermost desert:

> But the desert experience of silence was the soil out of which everything else eventually grew. The *habitus* of the early desert Christians allowed them to read from the landscape itself a particular vision of God, a conception of the human self, and a discipline necessary for the joining of the two. Through subsequent development in the tradition, it came to be articulated as follows:
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> 1. God is a desert whose fullness of glory is hidden from human sight, known only in an unknowing and risking of love.

9 Standard abbreviation for (a member of) the Community of the Sisters of the Love of God, religious order of the Church of England.

10 Better still, let me quote in this connection at some great yet well-deserved length His Eminence Anthony of Sourozh: "*The Sayings of the Desert Fathers* has been for centuries an inspiration to those Christians who strove for an uncompromising obedience to the word and to the spirit of the Gospel; yet the modern reader, used to an intellectual, discursive way of exposition and also to greater emotional effusions in mystical literature may find this direct challenge difficult to face and even more difficult to assimilate and to apply to everyday life. This prompts me to give here a few explanations and to try to bring out some of the features which seem to me essential in the attitude to life of these giants of the spirit. The first thing that strikes a reader is the insistence in the stress laid on the ascetic endeavour. Modern man seeks mainly for 'experience' – putting himself at the centre of things he wishes to make them subservient to this aim; too often, even God becomes the source from which the highest experience flows, instead of being Him Whom we adore, worship, and are prepared to serve, whatever the cost to us. Such an attitude was unknown to the Desert, moreover, the Desert repudiated it as sacrilegious: the experiential knowledge which God in His infinite Love and condescension gives to those who seek Him with their whole heart is always a gift; its essential, abiding quality is its gratuity: it is an act of Divine Love and cannot therefore be deserved. The first Beatitude stands at the threshold of the Kingdom of God: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of God' – blessed are those who have understood that they are nothing in themselves, possess nothing which they dare call 'their own'. If they are 'something' it is because they are loved of God and because they know for certain that their worth in God's eyes can be measured by the humiliation of the Son of God, His life, the Agony of the Garden, the dereliction of the Cross – the Blood of Christ. To be, to be possessed of the gift of life and to be granted all that makes its richness means to be loved by God; and those who know this, free from any delusion that they can exist or possess apart from this mystery of love have entered into the Kingdom of God which is the Kingdom of Love. ...

2. The self is a desert that must be stripped and made empty before God can be found at its center.
3. The realization of God's love at the heart of one's being is inseparably related to ascetical and liturgical performances (which are themselves suggested by desert experience).

This "habit of being" outlines a model for growth in the spiritual life drawn from the desert itself, suggesting a pattern of behavior passed on in the community's history through its teachings on contemplative prayer[11].

As Father Thomas Merton, OCSO[12], arguably the world's most famous modern hermit, memorably puts it in the introduction to his translation of the Desert Fathers:

> Our time is in desperate need of this kind of simplicity. It needs to recapture something of the experience reflected in these lines. The word to emphasize is experience. The few short phrases collected in this volume have little or no value merely as information. It would be futile to skip through these pages and lightly take note of the fact that the Fathers said this and this. What good will it do us to know merely that such things were once said? The important thing is that they were lived. That they flow from an experience of the deeper levels of life. That they represent a discovery of man, at the term of an inner and spiritual journey that is far more crucial and infinitely more important than any journey to the moon.

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...10 What then shall be their response to this generous, self-effacing, sacrificial Love? An endeavour to respond to love for love, as there is no other way of acknowledging love. And this response is the ascetic endeavour, which can be summed up in the words of the Lord Jesus Christ: 'Renounce yourself, take up your Cross and follow Me'. To recognize one's own nonentity and discover the secret of the Kingdom is not enough: the King of Love must be enthroned in our mind and heart, take undivided possession of our will and make of our very bodies the Temples of the Holy Ghost. This small particle of the Cosmos, which is our soul and body must be conquered, freed by a lifelong struggle from enslavement to the world and to the devil, freed as if it were an occupied country and restored to its legitimate King. 'Render unto Cesar that which is Cesar's and to God that which is God's': the coins of the earthly kings bear their mark, Man bears the imprint of God's Image. He belongs to Him solely and totally; and nothing, no effort, no sacrifice is too great to render to God what is His. This is the very basis of an ascetic understanding of life" (Anthony of Sourozh, "Preface", in B. Ward (ed.), *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers: The Alphabetical Collection*, Cistercian Studies Series 59, Kalamazoo 19842, XIII-XVI, here XIII-XV).

11 B. C. Lane, *The Solace of Fierce Landscapes: Exploring Desert and Mountain Spirituality*, Oxford 1998, 11.

12 Standard abbreviation for (a member of) the Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance, also known as the Trappists (*Ordo Cisterciensis Strictioris Observantiae*), religious order of the Catholic Church.

> What can we gain by sailing to the moon if we are not able to cross the abyss that separates us from ourselves? This is the most important of all voyages of discovery, and without it all the rest are not only useless but disastrous. Proof: the great travellers and colonizers of the Renaissance were, for the most part, men who perhaps were capable of the things they did precisely because they were alienated from themselves. In subjugating primitive worlds they only imposed on them, with the force of cannons, their own confusion and their own alienation. Superb exceptions like Fray Bartolome de las Casas, St. Francis Xavier, or Father Matthew Ricci, only prove the rule[13].

I *did* nearly forget; for she who might still wonder at my choice of title for the present section of the present paper, *The desert a city*, I certainly lay no claim whatsoever to any trace of creativity – not only is this title but the very title of an important book about the Desert Fathers[14], but also, and endlessly most importantly, it is indeed a striking image that goes back at least as far as the landmark *Life of Antony* ("one of the most influential writings in Christian history")[15], *that very* Saint Antony ("the Father of Monks"[16], "the criterial Christian monastic saint during the long

13 Th. Merton (ed.), *The Wisdom of the Desert: Sayings from the Desert Fathers of the Fourth Century*, New York 1970, 11-12. (Let us but briefly note in this connection that the "discovery of man" in Merton brings unmistakably to mind the topic as well as the title of the Cordwainer Smith [a pseudonym of Professor Linebarger's] anthology, J. Mann (ed.), *The Rediscovery of Man: The Complete Short Science Fiction of Cordwainer Smith*, Framingham 1993; and also that: "Only about 1960 did he become a believer in any deep sense, and only then did the religious imagery and Christian message become strong in his SF works. The change in spiritual orientation that marks his later work is thus a genuine change, not merely a change of emphasis", J. J. Pierce, "Introduction", in *ibid*., VII- XIV, here X).

14 D. Chitty, *The Desert a City: An Introduction to the Study of Egyptian and Palestinian Monasticism under the Christian Empire*, Oxford 1966.

15 R. C. Gregg, "Introduction", in Athanasius, *The Life of Antony and The Letter to Marcellinus*, The Classics of Western Spirituality, Mahwah 1980, 1-26, here 3.

16 "With the texts and through them, but through a living tradition as well, the monastic Middle Ages received from the patristic age still other treasures. First of all, models: all these 'founders' of monastic life who were almost always, particularly the earliest ones, Easterners. The greatest had been St. Anthony, 'the Father of Monks'. He remained truly the Father of all monks; and so in all milieux and in every period of the Western Middle Ages they considered themselves as truly his sons. Everywhere they claimed his support, sometimes even against each other. During each monastic revival, they hark back to ancient Egypt; they want, they say, to revive Egypt, to inaugurate a new Egypt, and they call upon St. Anthony, his example and his writings. This is true in the Carolingian period; later also, in the eleventh century, at Monte Cassino, Cluny, Camaldoli, and in the twelfth century at Cîteaux and Tiron, in England as well as in France and in Italy. In all controversies between monks, as for example when the Cluniacs are in opposition to Cistercians, each party appeals to St. Anthony and does so legitimately because what is remembered of his discourses is not the attacks against the Arians which were borrowed from him by St. Athanasius...

era when the monks were the criterial Christians"[17]), of Saint Athanasius

...16 what is recalled of his life is neither its historical circumstances nor the details of his temptations and the diabolic imagery with which the biographer had adorned it; it is rather the spiritual themes and instructions which are valid for all monks, regardless of the observance under which they lived. St. Anthony represents for all an ideal whose essential characteristic is its potential for realization in different ways. St. Anthony's life, then, for the medieval monks is not simply an historical text, a source of information about a definitely dead past. It is a living text, a means of formation of monastic life" (J. Leclercq, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God: A Study of Monastic Culture*, New York 19823, 98-99). In the original French: "*Avec les textes, à travers eux, mais aussi par l'intermédiaire d'une tradition vivante, le moyen âge monastique a reçu de l'âge patristique d'autres trésors encore. C'était d'abord des modèles: tous ces 'instituteurs' de la vie monacale, qui, presque tous, et singulièrement les premiers, étaient orientaux. Le plus grand d'entre eux avait été S. Antoine, 'le Père des moines'. Il restait, réellement, le Père de tous les moines: aussi, dans tous les milieux et à toutes les époques du moyen âge occidental, se considéraient-ils comme ses vrais fils; partout ils ont revendiqué son patronage, parfois les uns contre les autres. A chaque renouveau monastique, on invoque l'ancienne Égypte: on veut, dit-on, faire revivre l'Égypte, instaurer une nouvelle Égypte; et on recourt à S. Antoine, à ses exemples, à ses écrits. Ceci se vérifie à l'époque carolingienne, puis, au XIe siècle, au Mont-Cassin, à Cluny, à Camaldoli, au XIIe siècle à Cîteaux, à Tiron, en Angleterre comme en France et en Italie. Dans toutes les controverses entre moines, par exemple lorsque s'opposent clunistes et cisterciens, chacun des deux partis en appelle à Antoine et peut le faire légitimement: car ce qu'on retient de ses discours, ce ne sont pas les attaques contre les Ariens que lui avait prêtées S. Athanase; ce que l'on retient de sa vie, ce ne sont ni les circonstances historiques, ni le détail des tentations et de l'imagerie diabolique dont le biographe l'avait agrémentée: ce sont les thèmes spirituels, les enseignements qui valent pour tous les moines, quelle que soit leur observance. S. Antoine représente pour tous un idéal, dont le propre est de pouvoir être réalisé diversement. La vie d'Antoine n'est donc pas, pour les moines du moyen âge, simplement un texte historique, une source d'information sur un passé définitivement mort: c'est un texte vivant, un moyen de formation à la vie monastique*" (J. Leclercq, *L'amour des lettres et le désir de Dieu: initiation aux auteurs monastiques du Moyen Âge*, Paris 19903, 97-98) It should be noted here that the translator misinterprets the clause "*ce ne sont pas les attaques contre les Ariens que lui avait prêtées S. Athanase*" as "is not the attacks against the Arians which were borrowed from him by St. Athanasius", which is exactly the opposite.

17 "Finally, without losing his personal identity as a man named Antony, the saint yet has changed undeniably but undefinably into, in some sense, a christ. Athanasius consistently took Christian salvation to mean deification – about the only way we can English his term *theopoiēsis* is 'deification' or 'being made divine'. And the evil that his deification remedied, to be sure in a general sense sin, was not the sin of personal guilt deserving divine punishment but rather the sin of personal passion and finitude requiring divine cure.As Antony's convertibility allowed him to be raised by the deity above passion, his body, purged of passion, became immaculate, and he himself became immortal (at least until he died; then the testimony ceases). Nobody after Athanasius more boldly told of the Christian transmutation of a mutable man or woman into immutable deity – more precisely, immutable, deified humanity. Many have come close, precisely because Athanasius's Antony has been a criterial Christian saint, indeed, *the* criterial Christian monastic saint during the long era when the monks were the criterial Christians. To be sure, Athanasius maintained a sharp distinction between the divine Logos as having become man in Jesus Christ and, on the other side, the convertible Christian man or woman as having been deified. The spirituality that Athanasius portrayed in Antony remained even at the end that of a man-god, not that of a god-man. For to have become man-god, Antony had to have been made so (*theopoiēsis*) by the god-man. In other words, what Antony embodied in this hagiography is exactly what Irenaeus decades before had written to epitomize salvation by Jesus Christ: 'He became as we are that we might become as He is'" (W. A. Clebsch, "Preface", in Athanasius, *The Life of Antony and The Letter to Marcellinus*, The Classics of Western Spirituality, Mahwah 1980, XIII-XXI, here XVI).

("'the Father of Orthodoxy' to the Greek ecclesiastical tradition"[18]): "and so, from then on, there were monasteries in the mountains and the desert was made a city by monks, who left their own people and registered themselves for the citizenship in heaven"[19].

## 2. Psychology meets Skinner

I should suspect that neither Antony, nor Athanasius, nor any other saint or monk or Christian, nor many other men or things that ordinary men

18 Athanasius, *The Life of Antony and The Letter to Marcellinus*, The Classics of Western Spirituality, Mahwah 1980, XII.

19 *Ibid*., 42-43. In the original Greek: "καὶ οὕτω λοιπὸν γέγονε καὶ ἐν τοῖς ὄρεσι μοναστήρια, καὶ ἡ ἔρημος ἐπολίσθη ὑπὸ μοναχῶν, ἐξελθόντων ἀπὸ τῶν ἰδίων, καὶ ἀπογραψαμένων τὴν ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς πολιτείαν" (Athanasius, *Vita Antonii*, 14). However, Ward's words to the effect that "by 400 A.D. Egypt was a land of hermits and monks" are obviously *not* meant to be read literally (B. Ward (ed.), *The Wisdom of the Desert Fathers:* Apophtegmata Patrum *from the Anonymous Series*, Oxford 1975, IX). Professor Brown, however, goes so far as to speak of a "myth of the desert": "The settlements of the fourth-century Egyptian ascetics combined geographical proximity to the settled land with a sense of measureless imaginative distance. Amun and his successors lived only a day and a half away from Alexandria, separated from the rich land of the Nile Delta by a mere strip of sand. Despite their physical closeness to the settled land, the monks of Egypt towered in the imagination of contemporaries because they stood against an ocean of sand that was thought to stretch from Nitria to the furthest edges of the known world. They were a new humanity, settled where no human beings should be found. In the well-known words of the *Life of Anthony*, Anthony and his emulators had 'made the desert a city'. The myth of the desert was one of the most abiding creations of late antiquity. It was, above all, a myth of liberating precision. It delimited the towering presence of 'the world', from which the Christian must be set free, by emphasizing a clear ecological frontier. It identified the process of disengagement from the world with a move from one ecological zone to another, from the settled land of Egypt to the desert. It was a brutally clear boundary, already heavy with immemorial associations" (P. Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity*, Lectures on the History of Religions (New Series) 13, New York 1988, 215-216). Brown's words should be usefully read against the three-millennia-long backdrop of Ancient Egyptian literature in its relation to geography, as painted by Professor Loprieno (A. Loprieno, "Toward a Geography of Egyptian Literature", *Cadmo*, 10 (2000) 41-56). For a sustained denunciation of the "myth of the desert" in the early Christian asceticism, see the study of Professor Goehring: "It has been argued here that ascetic practice had its beginnings in the cities. From there it encroached on the surrounding lands and then expanded into the deserts. It was in fact this final expansion into the desert that brought it literary fame, since the desert supplied the metaphor (the spatial image of renunciation) necessary for literary production. The literature's dependence on the desert, however, caused a 'literary' reversal of sorts in the expansion process. Whereas the location of ascetic practice had expanded to include the desert, in the literary model, the desert encroached more and more on the portrayal of ascetic space. A literary 'desertification' of Egyptian monasticism occurred. While monks in and near the cities and villages continued to thrive, they all but disappeared from the plane of history. The desert hermit became the symbolic center of Egyptian monasticism. The literary icon conquered history" (J. E. Goehring, "The Encroaching Desert: Literary Production and Ascetic Space in Early Christian Egypt", in *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, 1 (1993: 3) 281-296, here 295-296).

may ordinarily think of as men or things of much importance, would have made very much by way of an impression on Harvard Professor [Burrhus Frederic] Skinner:

> Matson has argued that "the empirical behavioral scientist . . . denies, if only by implication, that a unique being, called Man, exists". "What is now under attack", said Maslow, "is the 'being' of man". C. S. Lewis put it quite bluntly: Man is being abolished.
>
> There is clearly some difficulty in identifying the man to whom these expressions refer. Lewis cannot have meant the human species, for not only is it not being abolished, it is filling the earth. (As a result it may eventually abolish itself through disease, famine, pollution, or a nuclear holocaust, but that is not what Lewis meant.) Nor are individual men growing less effective or productive. We are told that what is threatened is "man *qua* man", or "man in his humanity", or "man as Thou not It", or "man as a person not a thing". These are not very helpful expressions, but they supply a clue. What is being abolished is autonomous man – the inner man, the homunculus, the possessing demon, the man defended by the literatures of freedom and dignity.
>
> His abolition has long been overdue. Autonomous man is a device used to explain what we cannot explain in any other way. He has been constructed from our ignorance, and as our understanding increases, the very stuff of which he is composed vanishes. Science does not dehumanize man, it de-homunculizes him, and it must do so if it is to prevent the abolition of the human species. To man *qua* man we readily say good riddance. Only by dispossessing him can we turn to the real causes of human behaviour. Only then can we turn from the inferred to the observed, from the miraculous to the natural, from the inaccessible to the manipulable.
>
> It is often said that in doing so we must treat the man who survives as a mere animal. "Animal" is a pejorative term, but only because "man" has been made spuriously honorific. Krutch has argued that whereas the traditional view supports Hamlet's exclamation, "How like a god"!, Pavlov, the behavioural scientist, emphasized "How like a dog"! But that was a step forward. A god is the archetypal pattern of an explanatory fiction, of a miracle-working mind, of the metaphysical. Man is much more than a dog, but like a dog he is within range of a scientific analysis[20].

"But that was a step forward", writes Skinner and thus pacifies his readers. "That's one small step for a man, a giant leap for mankind", had

20 B. F. Skinner, *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*, Harmondsworth 1971, 195-196.

said one but two years before; and said another shortly after, "Magnificent desolation"[21]…

> In the 1960s, Skinner gave an interview to biographer Richard I. Evans in which he openly admitted that his efforts at social engineering had implications for fascism and might be used for totalitarian ends. Such a man it would be better to ignore, but we can't. In 1971, *Time* magazine named him the most influential living psychologist. And a 1975 survey identified him as the best-known scientist in the United States. His experiments are still held in the highest esteem by our contemporary Nobel laureates, our neurophysiologists. He discovered something that has stayed. What is it?[22]

Let us but briefly note in this connection that Skinner actually was also chosen by his fellow psychologists in 2002 "the most eminent psychologist of the twentieth century"[23]; we owe him all already as much as to have him here conclude himself his book, *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*, in his own wise words full of almost too much hope: "we have not yet seen what man can make of man"[24] (although, may I say, we Romanians have in this respect seen quite a little bit of quite a lot of things, and so have by the way around the world through the last century our literally billions of comrades in communism and in other 20th – and 21st century – all too "scientific" delicacies[25]).

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21 "There were the ghostly television pictures we all saw of Aldrin and Armstrong on the Moon. Armstrong's first words, 'That's one small step for a man, a giant leap for mankind'. And Aldrin's two-word description, 'Magnificent desolation'… And left behind, a plaque with the words: 'Here Man from Planet Earth First Set Foot Upon the Moon. July 1969 A.D. We Came in Peace for All Mankind'" (J. R. Hansen, *First Man: The Life of Neil A. Armstrong*, New York, London, Toronto, Sidney, and New Delhi 2012, 545).

22 L. Slater, *Opening Skinner's Box: Great Psychological Experiments of the Twentieth Century*, New York & London 2004, 7-8. "But then he often wrote he felt like god and 'a sort of savior to humanity'" (*ibid*., 9).

23 S. J. Haggbloom *et al*., "The One Hundred Most Eminent Psychologists of the 20th Century", *Review of General Psychology*, 6 (2002: 2) 139-152, here 146.

24 "A scientific view of man offers exciting possibilities. We have not yet seen what man can make of man" (Skinner, *Beyond Dignity and Freedom*, 210).

25 "Apart from such considerations – which as predictions are of little avail and less consolation – there remains the fact that the crisis of our time and its central experience have brought forth an entirely new form of government which as a potentiality and an ever-present danger is only too likely to stay with us from now on, just as other forms of government which came about at different historical moments and rested on different fundamental **experiences** have stayed with mankind regardless of temporary defeats – monarchies, and republics, tyrannies, dictatorships and despotism" (H. Arendt, "Ideology and Terror: A Novel Form of Government", *Review of Politics* 3 (1953, 15) 303-327, here 327). That "novel form of government" is, as you already know it, *totalitarianism*.

## 3. History meets Skinner

And was it "all so beautifully done"[26].

We should not think however that the problem (in so far as there *is* a problem in Skinner's solution) is indeed a problem with psychology. Not all psychologists would think along with Skinner. And also, from without psychology and from within philosophy, consider please the clear and clean case of Professor Ryle talking about Cartesian dualism (between body and mind):

> Such in outline is the official theory. I shall often speak of it, with deliberate abusiveness, as 'the dogma of the Ghost in the Machine'. I hope to prove that it is entirely false, and false not in detail but in principle. It is not merely an assemblage of particular mistakes. It is one big mistake and a mistake of a special kind. It is, namely, a category-mistake. It represents the facts of mental life as if they belonged to one logical type or category (or range of types or categories), when they actually belong to another. The dogma is therefore a philosopher's myth. In attempting to explode the myth I shall probably be taken to be denying well-known facts about the mental life of human beings, and my plea that I aim at doing nothing more than rectify the logic of mental-conduct concepts will probably be disallowed as mere subterfuge.
>
> I must first indicate what is meant by the phrase 'Category-mistake'. This I do in a series of illustrations.
>
> A foreigner visiting Oxford or Cambridge for the first time is shown a number of colleges, libraries, playing fields, museums, scientific departments and administrative offices. He then asks 'But where is the University? I have seen where the members of the Colleges live, where the Registrar works, where the scientists experiment and the rest. But I have not yet seen the University in which reside and work the members of your University'. It has then to be explained to him that the University is not another collateral institution, some ulterior counterpart to the colleges, laboratories and offices which he has seen. The University is just the way in which all that he has already seen is organized. When they are seen and when their co-ordination is understood, the University has been seen. His mistake lay in his innocent assumption that it was correct to speak of Christ Church, the Bodleian Library, the Ashmolean

26 "If I had stated these ideas to the leaders of the 'realist' school, they would have said, as I have heard them say a hundred times, 'you don't mean that; what you mean is'… and then would have followed a caricature of my ideas in terms of 'realist' principles, with sandbags for arms and legs; all so beautifully done that I could hardly have restrained my impulse to cheer" (R. G. Collingwood, *An Autobiography*, Oxford 1939, 73).

> Museum *and* the University, to speak, that is, as if 'the University' stood for an extra member of the class of which these other units are members. He was mistakenly allocating the University to the same category as that to which the other institutions belong[27].

I spare you both Ryle's other "illustrations", as they are similar enough to the first one (given above). Suffice it rather to retain the catchy label that would stand the test of time of "Ghost in the Machine" (the machine is the body is "a number of colleges, libraries, playing fields, museums, scientific departments and administrative offices"; the ghost is the mind is the "University"; they are actually but one and the same *thing*). And said Professor Brodbeck, in his Presidential Address (delivered on 5 May 1972 before the 70th annual Western meeting of the American Philosophical Association in Saint Louis):

> The intellectual scene can present no more engaging spectacle to the layman than the sight and sound of philosophers earnestly propounding the thesis that consciousness does not exist. To say and mean that minds do exist is redundant. To say and mean that minds do not exist is – well, what is it to have the thought that there are no thoughts? A philosopher's folly. Yet materialism has dominated recent philosophy of mind. For a time, philosophical behaviorism was dominant. More recently, identity theories are all the rage. The particles of micro physics have supplanted overt behavioral dispositions as the real stuff of the world and our consciousness of it.
>
> Philosophers in the grip of doctrine will say and believe, or persuade themselves that they believe, some very odd things[28].

Let us then rather change the topic and choose ourselves now a historian – and this will better be Cambridge Professor [Quentin Robert Duthie] Skinner (so, a British Skinner versus the American Skinner from the preceding section of the present paper):

> My main conclusion however, is that the critique I have mounted already serves to suggest a much more obvious and less remote point about the philosophical value of studying the history of ideas. On the one hand, it has I think become clear that any attempt to justify the study of the subject in terms of the 'perennial problems' and 'universal truths' to be learned from the classic texts must amount to the purchase of justification at the expense of making the subject itself foolishly and needlessly naive. Any

27 G. Ryle, *The Concept of Mind*, London and New York 2009, 5-6.

28 M. Brodbeck, "Mind: From within and from without", *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association*, 45 (1971-1972) 42-55, here 42.

> statement, as I have sought to show, is inescapably the embodiment of a particular intention, on a particular occasion, addressed to the solution of a particular problem, and thus specific to its situation in a way that it can only be naive to try to transcend. The vital implication here is not merely that the classic texts cannot be concerned with our questions and answers, but only with their own. There is also the further implication that – to revive Collingwood's way of putting it – there simply are no perennial problems in philosophy: there are only individual answers to individual questions, and as many different questions as there are questioners. There is in consequence simply no hope of seeking the point of studying the history of ideas in the attempt to learn directly from the classic authors by focusing on their attempted answers to supposedly timeless questions[29].

Professor Dunn essentially agrees[30].

29 Q. Skinner, "Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas", in J. Tully (ed.), *Meaning and Context: Quentin Skinner and His Critics*, Cambridge 1988, 29-67, here 64-65.

30 "The point, in essence, is simple enough. Apart from odd examples in the history of religious development or scientific discovery, few branches of the history of ideas have been written as the history of an *activity*. Complicated structures of ideas, arranged in a manner approximating as closely as may be (frequently closer than the evidence permits) to deductive systems have been examined at different points in time or their morphology traced over the centuries. Reified reconstructions of a great man's more accessible notions have been compared with those of other great men; hence the weird tendency of much writing, in the history of political thought more especially, to be made up of what propositions in what great books remind the author of what propositions in what other great books. Key principles of the explanatory thought-systems of social groups, of communities, and of whole countries have been pursued through the centuries. As a make-weight to this type of analysis, we have biographies of great thinkers which identify the central arguments of their more important works, sketch in their social background in some detail and expatiate upon their merits or moral relevance to the present day. Finally we have formal philosophical analyses of the works of great philosophers or scientists which tell us what Hobbes's theory of obligation or Plato's theory of justice or Galileo's theory of motion is and how far we should accept it. All of these enterprises are recognised, and properly recognised, as forming part of a pursuit which can be labelled as the 'history of ideas'. Yet none of them is necessarily bound to (and few ever in fact do) provide any sort of historical account of an activity which we would recognise, in common sense terms, as 'thinking'. The history of thought as it is characteristically written is not a history of men battling to achieve a coherent ordering of their experience. It is, rather, a history of fictions – of rationalist constructs out of the thought processes of individuals, not of plausible abridgments of these thought processes. It consists not of representations, but in the most literal sense, of reconstructions, not of plausible accounts of how men thought, but of more or less painful attempts to elaborate their ideas to a degree of formal intellectual articulation which there is no evidence that they ever attained. Because of these features, it is often extremely unclear whether the history of ideas is the history of anything which ever did actually exist in the past, whether it is not habitually conducted in a manner in which the relationship of evidence to conclusion is so tenuous that it provides no grounds at all for assent. For there are certain banal truths which the customary approaches appear to neglect; that thinking is an effortful activity on the part of human beings, not simply a unitary performance; that incompleteness, incoherence, instability and the effort to overcome these are its persistent characteristics; that it is not an activity which takes its meaning from a set of finished

So does Professor Pocock[31].

What about Professor Collingwood, cited by Skinner in support of his position?

> By degrees I found that there was no recognized branch of philosophy to which the principle did not apply that its problems, as well as the solutions proposed for them, had their own history. The conception of 'eternal problems' disappeared entirely, except so far as any historical fact could be called eternal because it had happened once for all, and accordingly any problem could be called eternal because it had arisen once for all and once for all been solved. I found (and it required a good deal of hard detailed work in the history of thought) that most of the conceptions round which revolve the controversies of modern philosophy, conceptions designated by words like 'state', 'ought', 'matter', 'cause', had appeared on the horizon of human thought at ascertainable times in the past, often not very distant times, and that the philosophical controversies of other ages had revolved round other conceptions, not indeed unrelated to ours, but not, except by a person quite blind to historical truth, indistinguishable from them[32].

Which *does* support Skinner's position. And yet. Do not forget please that Collingwood's paragraph also comes with a footnote:

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...30 performances which have been set up in type and preserved in libraries, but an activity which is conducted more or less incompetently for most of their waking life by a substantial proportion of the human race, which generates conflicts and which is used to resolve these, which is directed towards problem-solving and not towards the construction of closed formal games; that the works in which at a single point in time a set of problems issue in an attempt at a coherent rational ordering of the relevant experience are in some sense unintelligible except in terms of this context; that language is not, as the seventeenth-century savants mocked, a repository of formal truths donated by God to Adam but simply the tool which human beings use in their struggle to make sense of their experiences. Once talking and thinking are considered seriously as social activities, it will be apparent that intellectual discussions will only be fully understood if they are seen as complicated instances of these social activities" (J. Dunn, *Political Obligation in Its Historical Context: Essays in Political Theory*, Cambridge 1980, 15-16).

31 "If the historian attempts to explain thought only by endowing it with the highest attainable rational coherence, he is condemned to study it only at the highest attainable level of abstraction from the traditions, or transmitted experience, of the society in which it went on; he is not well placed to study the actual process of abstraction which produced it. In short, if thought be defined as a series of abstractions from experience, or from a tradition, thinking may be defined as the activity of producing and using those abstractions, and it is this activity of thinking which the historian who confuses himself with the philosopher is disqualifying himself from studying properly. To put it in another way, he is disqualifying himself from studying the relations between thinking and experience" (J. G. A. Pocock, "The History of Political Thought: A Methodological Enquiry", in P. Laslett – W. G. Runciman (ed.), *Philosophy, Politics and Society (Second Series)*, Oxford 1962, 183-202, here 190-191).

32 Collingwood, *Autobiography*, 67-68.

> If 'eternal' is used in its vulgar and inaccurate sense, as equivalent to 'lasting for a considerable time', the phrase 'eternal problem' may be used to designate collectively a series of problems connected by a process of historical change, such that their continuity is discernible even by the presumably rather unintelligent eye of the person who thus misuses the word, but the differences between them not so discernible[33].

Which does *far less* support Skinner's position. So finally it would seem that there are both similarities and differences between historical treatments of any given perennial problem, and that they should be studied diachronically, as a process, in their progression, as an organism that slowly grows… Please feel free to pick your favourite phrase among these, or any other, if indeed any at all. You might still fail to feel why this comparatively academic (as compared to Skinner the psychologist's) discussion of perennial problems is even relevant for the relation between dignity and freedom, the actual topic of the present paper; but trust me, all too soon, you will. And also, although most certainly a celebrated historian, both on methodological and on substantive grounds, I personally doubt that British Skinner would be chosen by his fellow historians (as American Skinner was by his fellow psychologists) "the most eminent historian of the twentieth century". But then again, I may all very well be wrong about this, since I do have in mind a few candidates of my own for this prestigious position, and so I *am* obviously biased. We owe him all, to British Skinner, already as much as to have him here conclude himself by turning to his book chapter, "A Reply to My Critics":

> I have certainly claimed that, when we say of a given belief that we hold it true, what we are saying is that we find it acceptable. But this is not to claim, as the conceptual relativist docs, that there is nothing more to truth than acceptability. Unlike the relativist, I am not trying to offer a definition of truth at all. I am not in general talking about truth; I am talking about what people at different times may have had good reasons by their light for holding true, regardless of whether we ourselves believe that what they held true was in fact the truth. I have not even suggested that the reasons people give for their beliefs have to be such that an historian who recovers them need find them so much as recognizable as reasons for holding true the beliefs concerned.
>
> Historians frequently study what Hollis calls ritual beliefs, cases in which the contents of the beliefs under investigation may remain unintelligible. The most we can hope to do in such circumstances is to place the

33 *Ibid.*, 68, n. 1.

> beliefs in question within an appropriate explanatory context of other beliefs. We can certainly hope as a result to indicate why someone operating from within that context might have come to assent to the propositions we ourselves find unintelligible. But we cannot hope to do more. In such cases we discharge our task as interpreters if we can explain why, say, Aquinas believed that God is at once three persons and an indivisible Being. We need not suppose that we have to be able in addition to perform what may be the impossible feat of explaining what exactly it was that Aquinas believed. To paraphrase Hollis, the aim of the historian is to produce as much understanding as possible, a task not to be confused with producing converts.
> I am convinced, in short, that the importance of truth for the kind of historical enquiries I am considering has been exaggerated[34].

## 4. Anthropology meets Goodall

And was it "all so beautifully done"[35].
We should not think however that the problem (in so far as there *is* a problem in Skinner's solution) is indeed a problem with history. Not all historians would think along with Skinner. And also, from without history and from within philosophy, consider please the clear and clean case of Professor DeRose, talking about the paradox of knowledge (as a shapeshifter):

> So, as promised, the story of Thelma and Louise illustrates how, at least according to the contextualist, one speaker can truthfully say 'S knows that p', while another speaker, in a different context where higher standards are in place, can truthfully say 'S doesn't know that p', though both speakers are talking about the same S and the same p at the same time[36].

Brodbeck, that we have met in the preceding section of the present paper, resumes his charge:

> Philosophers in the grip of doctrine will say and believe, or persuade themselves that they believe, some very odd things. One such doctrine, fertile ground for generating absurdity, has been the view that to know means to know for certain and, logical truths apart, we only know for

34 Q. Skinner, "A Reply to My Critics", in J. Tully (ed.), *Meaning and Context*: *Quentin Skinner and His Critics*, Cambridge 1988, 231-288, here 256.

35 Collingwood, *Autobiography*, 73.

36 K. DeRose, *Knowledge, Skepticism, and Context* (2 vol.), Oxford 2009-2017, vol. 1, 6.

> certain what we are presented with, either by sensory perception or, if needed, "intuition". Accordingly, the skeptic, acknowledging that we are never presented with other people's conscious states, had concluded that we do not really know that they exist. At best, we have only surmise, a weak analogy from our own case[37].

Let us then rather change again the topic and choose ourselves now an anthropologist – and this will better be Dame Jane Goodall, DBE[38]:

> Many theologians and philosophers argue that only humans have "souls". My years in the forest with the chimpanzees have led me to question this assumption. Day after day I was alone in the wilderness, my companions the animals and the trees and the gurgling streams, the mountains and the awesome electrical storms and the star-studded night skies. I became one with a world in which, apart from the change from day to night, from wet season to dry, time was no longer important. And there were moments of perception that seemed almost mystical so that I became ever more attuned to the great Spiritual Power that I felt around me – the Power that is worshipped as God, Allah, Tao, Brahma, the Great Spirit, the Creator, and so on. I came to believe that all living things possess a spark of that Spiritual Power. We humans, with our uniquely sophisticated minds and our spoken language that enables us to share and discuss ideas, call that spark, in ourselves, a "soul". Is not the same true for a chimpanzee? Or any other sentient, sapient being? It is most unlikely, however, that any animals other than ourselves care – or are capable of caring – as to whether or not they possess immortal souls!
>
> Often I am asked if the chimpanzees show any signs of religious behavior. I think perhaps their "elemental" displays are precursors of religious ritual. Deep in the forest are some spectacular waterfalls. Sometimes as a chimpanzee – most often an adult male – approaches one of these falls his hair bristles slightly, a sign of heightened arousal. As he gets closer, and the roar of falling water gets louder, his pace quickens, his hair becomes fully erect, and upon reaching the stream he may perform a magnificent display close to the foot of the falls. Standing upright, he sways rhythmically from foot to foot, stamping in the shallow, rushing water, picking up and hurling great rocks. Sometimes he climbs up the slender vines that hang down from the trees high above and swings out into the spray of the falling water. This "waterfall dance" may last for ten or fifteen minutes.

37 Brodbeck, *ibid*.

38 Standard abbreviation for Dame Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, a grade within the British order of chivalry.

> It is not only waterfalls that can trigger displays of this sort. Chimpanzees "dance" at the onset of a very heavy rain, reaching up to sway saplings or low branches rhythmically back and forth, back and forth, then moving forward in slow motion loudly slapping the ground with their hands, stamping with their feet, and hurling rock after rock. Twice I have seen them perform thus during the first violent gusts of wind, presaging a storm. And sometimes a chimpanzee charges slowly along a stream-bed, picking up and throwing rocks as he goes.
> Is it not possible that these performances are stimulated by feelings akin to wonder and awe? After a waterfall display the performer may sit on a rock, his eyes following the falling water. What is it, this water? It is always coming, always going – yet always there. What unseen strength suddenly produces the great claps of thunder, the torrential downpour, the savage gusts of wind that bend and sway the chimpanzees clinging to their nests at night? If the chimpanzees had a spoken language, if they could discuss these feelings among themselves, might not they lead to an animistic, pagan worship of the elements?
> When I arrived at Gombe I had no scientific training beyond A-level biology. Louis Leakey, who had proposed the study, wanted someone whose mind was "unbiased by the reductionist thinking of most ethnologists" of the early 1960s. Thus it was not until I was admitted to a Ph.D. program at Cambridge University that I learned that one could only attribute personalities, minds and emotions to *human* animals. It was acceptable to study similarities in the *biology* of humans and other animals, but comparisons should stop there. How fortunate that I had been taught otherwise, throughout my childhood, by my dog, Rusty! The challenge was to express my findings in ways that would, eventually, change the view of human uniqueness that was held not only by scientists, but also by Western philosophers, theologians – and a vast percentage of the general public[39].

So it appears that chimpanzees are already able to do philosophy ("What is it, this water? It is always coming, always going – yet always there. What unseen strength suddenly produces the great claps of thunder, the torrential downpour, the savage gusts of wind that bend and sway the chimpanzees clinging to their nests at night"?) and, as soon as they take the time to speak a little bit some language, they will in no time be able to do theology as well ("If the chimpanzees had a spoken language, if they could discuss these feelings among themselves, might not they lead to an animistic, pagan worship of the elements"?). That good old Rusty really

39 J. Goodall, "Primate Spirituality", in B. Taylor, *Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature*, London and New York 2005, 1303-1306, here 1303-1304.

taught Goodall some very valuable insights. My only personal regret remains in this connection that Goodall does not give us the needed clues that I had all so eagerly expected as to whether these meritorious chimpanzees will any time soon grow into some learned apes of science, too. But as the saying goes, indeed nobody, but really nobody, is perfect. Therefore, must we but wholeheartedly give them chimpanzees due credit for their heartbreaking philosophical achievements, and lovingly encourage them and help them and advise them on their royal road to theology. Science can wait.

So it appears that we already have some strong contenders in, how should I go about and call them – is it perhaps, our fellow *chimpanzees* (if Man according to Professor Diamond is but *The Third Chimpanzee*: that is, the first chimpanzee is the common chimpanzee, the second chimpanzee is the bonobo, and the third chimpanzee would be, well, Man; and then us all together celebrating our overdue reunion in one big happy family[40])? We should indeed be pleased and proud of our strong competition, and may the best man (I am sorry, I wrote that out of force of habit), the best man or the best ape or the best whatever else cares to contend, win. I strongly doubt that Goodall would ever be chosen by anthropologists (as Skinner was by his fellow psychologists) "the most eminent anthropologist of the twentieth century". Frequently labeled albeit somewhat misleadingly an anthropologist, she actually is more of an ethologist, and I should rather like to think that she is essentially a primatologist. The website of her eponymous Jane Goodall Institute

40 "Thus, for practical and legal purposes, humans are not animals. When Darwin intimated in 1859 that we had evolved from apes, it is no wonder that most people initially regarded his theory as absurd and continued to insist that we had been separately created by God. Many people, including a quarter of all American college graduates, still hold to that belief today. On the other hand, we obviously are animals, with the usual animal body parts, molecules, and genes. It is even clear what particular type of animal we are. Externally, we are so similar to chimpanzees that eighteenth-century anatomists who believed in divine creation could already recognize our affinities. Just imagine taking some normal people, stripping off their clothes, taking away all their other possessions, depriving them of the power of speech, and reducing them to grunting, without changing their anatomy at all. Put them in a cage in the zoo next to the chimp cages, and let the rest of us clothed and talking people visit the zoo. Those speechless caged people would be seen for what we all really are: a chimp that has little hair and walks upright. A zoologist from outer space would immediately classify us as just a third species of chimpanzee, along with the pygmy chimp of Zaire and the common chimp of the rest of tropical Africa" ( J. Diamond, *The Third Chimpanzee: The Evolution and Future of the Human Animal*, New York, London, Toronto, and Sydney, 2006[3, 2)]. So much for human dignity and freedom. The image of the human zoo had already but come full circle with P. Boule, *La planète des singes*, Paris 1963, where apes cage humans.

suggests that she is "the world's leading primatologist"[41], and in this they are certainly *not* wide off the mark. And yet, I do believe that words like those quoted above from Goodall's encyclopedia entry, "Primate Spirituality", are far more relevant for anthropology than primatology, in so far as anthropomorphism indeed is (*pace* good old Rusty) far more relevant for anthropology than primatology. Explains Professor McGrew:

> In *anthropomorphism,* the abilities and motives of other species are over-estimated by interpreting them in human terms. Thus, superficial resemblances are typically endowed with the complex feelings and thoughts that humans have in similar situations. Other species may well have capacities as complex as ours, but this is often impossible to divine with current methods of science. How could we *know* if a chimpanzee was praying? Anthropomorphism often means accepting complicated interpretations when simpler ones will do. Such rich inferences are readily dismissed by invoking the law of *parsimony* (also called Occam's razor, or Lloyd Morgan's canon)[42].

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, as the saying goes, and so is "primate spirituality", I should suggest. Is then Goodall *The Woman that Redefined Man*, as quips the title[43] of "the long-awaited, definitive biography of (arguably) the world's leading figure in primatology"[44])? We owe her all already as much as to have her conclude herself this section of the present paper: "Clearly, then, there is no sharp line dividing

41 "About Jane", https://www.janegoodall.org/our-story/about-jane/ (consulted on 16 September 2019).

42 W. C. McGrew, *Chimpanzee Material Cultures: Implications for Human Evolution*, Cambridge 1992, 216. McGrew actually charges Goodall with another fallacy, "chimpocentrism" rather than "anthropomorphism", but then again, I guess that one can have it both ways if one so likes (see *ibid*.). Indeed, I even go so far as to suggest that good old-fashioned anthropomorphism when applied to chimpanzees facilitates chimpocentrism.

43 D. Peterson, *Jane Goodall: The Woman Who Redefined Man*, Boston 2006. "When I first began to read about human evolution I learned that one of the hallmarks of our own species was that we, and only we, are capable of making tools. I well remember writing to Louis Leakey about my first observations of the chimpanzees of Gombe, describing how David Greybeard not only used bits of straw to fish for termites but how he actually stripped leaves from a stem, and thus made a tool. And I remember, too, receiving the now oft-quoted telegram that Leakey sent in response to my letter: 'Now we must redefine tool, redefine Man, or accept chimpanzees as humans'. By and large, people were fascinated by this information and by the subsequent observations of other contexts in which the Gombe chimpanzees used objects as tools" (J. Goodall, "Learning from the Chimpanzees: A Message Humans Can Understand", *Science*, 282 (18 December 1998: 5397) 2184-2185, here 2184).

44 W. C. McGrew, "The Hero of Gombe", *Nature*, 443 (25 October 2006) 915.

humans from the rest of the animal kingdom. It is a very blurred line, and differences are of degree rather than kind"[45].

## 5. The city a desert

And was it "all so beautifully done"[46].

We should not think however that the problem (in so far as there *is* a problem in Goodall's solution) is indeed a problem with anthropology. Not all anthropologists would think along with Goodall. And also, from without anthropology and from within philosophy, consider please the clear and clean case of Professor Dougherty:

> In this section, I will pull together many strands of thought from above into an explicit argument for the conclusion that in the face of animal suffering, theism entails animal deification.
>
> 1. The Transcendental Argument for Animal Deification (TAAD):
> 2. Animals have sentience. (From Chapter 5.)
> 3. Animals are made in the image of God. (From 1 and Genesis (see next chapter).)
> 4. Animals have moral standing. (From 2 and from 1, independently.)
> 5. God is all-powerful and perfectly loving, overflowing with love and concern for everything with moral standing. (Assumption.)
> 6. God will do justly and lovingly by animals. That is, he will not allow harm to come to them that is not somehow compensated for, he will see to it that their existences are on the whole quite good (more than just better than on balance good) and that any suffering can be defeated within the context of their lives. (From 3 and 4 and what it means to be loving.)
> 7. The only way God could do justly and lovingly by animals is to enfold their suffering in a greater good that organically defeats their evil. (Established above.)
> 8. The only way God could enfold animal suffering into some greater good that organically defeats it is either (i) via their relation to cosmic order, (ii) this-worldly soul-making, or (iii) other-worldly soul-making. (Provisional assumption.)
> 9. The argument from cosmic order is almost completely unsuccessful as it stands. (From the fact that no aesthetic good can justify horrendous evil.)

45 Goodall, "Primate Spirituality", 1303.

46 Collingwood, *ibid*.

10. This-worldly soul-making cannot occur to a significant degree due to current lack of TTPU and other cognitive capacities. (Assumption.)
11. The only way God could enfold animal suffering into some greater good is via future soul-making. (From 7, 8, and 9.)
12. The only way God could do justly and lovingly by animals is via future soul-making. (From 6 and 10.)
13. Future soul-making requires both animal resurrection and deification. (Seemingly obvious assumption.)
14. The only way God could do justly and lovingly by animals involves both animal resurrection and deification. (From 11 and 12.)
15. If God exists, then animals will be resurrected and deified. (From 5 and 13.)[47]

I fear I feel I fail to follow Dougherty on this ambitious trail he blazes: "If God exists, then animals will be resurrected and deified". I have to leave my kind reader to her own critical and creative resources. I am of no help whatsoever in this matter as here I simply stand in silence contemplating Dougherty's breadth and depth and intensity of vision. I should perhaps rather return to something even I can understand:

> The tradition of the Desert Fathers is central in Christianity and I am certain that the Sayings of the Fathers have a great deal to teach us today. They should not be read, however, in an unrealistic or romantic way. It is not the desert that makes a desert father any more than it is the lion that makes the martyr. The desert is present everywhere and the spirituality of the desert can be found everywhere. We often make a mistake about the desert fathers and look for the wrong thing in their lives. It can sound as if the monks went around the desert trying to outdo each other in asceticism while their disciples sat around scoring points. But this is not at all what it is about. Man can derive his life either from God or from the earth and one way in which the lives of the desert saints can convey to us how much they depended on God, is to show us how little they depended upon earth. Ultimately, for the desert fathers, it is not a question of more and more asceticism for its own sake, but they become more and more free because of it, until in the end they are like the mystical tree of China which grows with its roots heavenwards, uprooted here, rooted there.
>
> The true spirituality of the desert is radical. Its essence is absolute simplicity, that consciousness that a man stands before God, establishing a relatedness between the two which is all-embracing because there

47 T. Dougherty, *The Problem of Animal Pain: A Theodicy for All Creatures Great and Small*, Palgrave Frontiers in Philosophy of Religion, Houndmills 2014, 145-146.

> is nothing that is outside it. Then the whole desert blossoms with meaning, the whole cosmos is guarded round. This is the essence of these Sayings and this belongs to our time as much as to any[48].

In one of his insightful homilies delivered earlier this year, Father Professor Dancă, my Professor, briefly mentioned (I quote from memory) the fundamental fact that Man is not only body, but rather body and soul, and also, according to Saint Irenaeus, that he is indeed *body, soul, and spirit. This is a fundamental topic that Dancă had already broached as far back as 2007*[49]. I truly hope he will agree that his is, may I say, a bold and brave move to recover an integral part of early Patristic legacy. This is not only about Irenaeus, although it is perhaps most clearly about Irenaeus, but also about other early Fathers, and even about later Fathers, and even later leading theologians. The present paper soon must be concluded, so I will not go into any detail now. Suffice it but to say here in this paper that these three, that is, body and soul and spirit, are indeed the three terms of the essential relation holding together the development(s) of our discussion. Let me please briefly explain:

I should suggest that it is actually because they truly live this innermost relation that the Desert Fathers (and the Desert Mothers) were, are, and will be models of Man in his (and in her) dignity and freedom. I should suggest that Goodall misses the whole point of the

48 Archbishop Anthony Bloom, "Foreword", in B. Ward (ed.), *The Wisdom of the Desert Fathers:* Apophtegmata Patrum *from the Anonymous Series*, Oxford 1975, VII.

49 *"Într-adevăr, problema este foarte veche. Gnosticii spuneau că spiritual, adică plin de Duhul Sfânt, este cel care a atins o cunoaştere superioară unui simplu credincios. Sfântul Ioan evanghelistul – unul dintre adversarii lor cei mai îndârjiţi – dar, şi mai târziu, sfântul Irineu din Lyon, care a scris împotriva lor faimoasa lucrare* Contra ereziilor *– spun că omul nu devine spiritual pentru că şi-ar însuşi mari şi misterioase cunoştinţe, ci numai întrucât îl are pe Duhul Sfânt, acel Duh pe care Cristos îl trimite tuturor creştinilor, după ce s-a înălţat la ceruri. Pe urmele lor, spunem şi noi că persoana spirituală e alcătuită din trei elemente: trupul, sufletul şi Duhul Sfânt. Fiecare din ele are o activitate specifică: trupul mănâncă, respiră, se mişcă şi îndeplineşte alte funcţii trupeşti. Sufletul gândeşte, hotărăşte, cunoaşte lumea. Duhul Sfânt strigă în inima noastră: 'Abba, Tată', adică se roagă, se înalţă la Tatăl prin mijlocirea Fiului. În sensul acesta se poate spune că sunt mult mai spirituali simplii credincioşi care se roagă decât cei care ştiu să alcătuiască discursuri frumoase ori docte reflecţii intelectuale asupra problemelor religioase. Da, pacea adevărată este în noi, dacă suntem templul lui Dumnezeu şi dacă Duhul lui Dumnezeu locuieşte în noi (1Cor 3,16). Totuşi, omul care a primit pe Duhul lui sfânt nu e egal cu Dumnezeu, ci devine sălaş al lui Dumnezeu. Trupurile şi sufletele noastre au fost sfinţite în timpul botezului, de aceea să fim atenţi să nu desacralizăm aceste temple vii, să ne păstrăm neprihănirea inimii şi a trupului, pentru ca ele să fie demne de sălaşul lui Dumnezeu, al Dumnezeului care e prezent în noi"* (W. Dancă, "Predici la Liturghia transmisă la Radio Iaşi: Anul C: Duminica a 6-a a Paştelui", 13 May 2007, http://www.ercis.ro/biblioteca/pradiois.asp?zi=ps07c06, consulted on 16 September 2019).

human body and the human soul as integral parts of this relation and would stick only with the spirit (to the effect that chimpanzees would be spiritual); that historian Skinner misses the whole point of the human body and the human spirit as integral parts of this relation and would stick only with the soul (to the effect that truth is not what matters); and that psychologist Skinner misses the whole point of the human soul and human spirit as integral parts of this relation and would stick only with the body (to the effect that he would take us "beyond freedom and dignity"). And there is more.

## 6. Now and next

This will be but the crudest of descriptions of Christian theological tradition that I can offer as the present paper nears completion. Models of man as body, soul, and spirit, are very significant with early Fathers.[50] Models of man as body and soul/ spirit are very significant with later Fathers, and theologians. Models of man as body/ soul/ spirit become significant with recent theologians. Which model should we choose among these various models? The question begs its answer. But, why choose?

You certainly remember Lonergan's description of the "implicit definition", from the first section of the present paper. And an *implicit definition* is again all that I can in this connection offer here and now. Perhaps *has* Man a body, soul, and spirit. Perhaps *is* Man a body, soul, and spirit. I do not know that much. But I most humbly offer that, perhaps, at the heart of hearts of Man there is *the relation* between body, soul, and spirit. And that it actually, perhaps, is this relation that defines Man.

> It is unfortunate that we do not have at our disposal a more precise word than "religion" to denote the experience of the sacred. This term carries with it a long, although culturally rather limited, history. One wonders how it can be indiscriminately applied to the ancient Near East, to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, or to Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism as well as to the so-called primitive peoples. But perhaps it is too late to search for another word, and "religion" may still be a useful term provided we keep in mind that it does not necessarily imply belief in God, gods, or ghosts, but refers to the experience of the sacred, and, consequently, is related to the ideas of *being*, *meaning*, and *truth*.

50 Ioan-Gheorghe Rotaru, *Aspecte antropologice în gândirea patristică şi a primelor secole creştine*, Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj-Napoca, 2005, 93-163.

> Indeed, it is difficult to imagine how the human mind could function without the conviction that there is something irreducibly *real* in the world, and it is impossible to imagine how consciousness could arise without conferring *meaning* on man's drives and experiences. The awareness of a real and meaningful world is intimately related to the discovery of the sacred. Through the experience of the sacred, the human mind grasped the difference between that which reveals itself as real, powerful, rich, and meaningful, and that which does not – *i.e.*, the chaotic and dangerous flux of things, their fortuitous, meaningless appearances and disappearances.
>
> I have discussed the dialectics of the sacred and its morphology in previous publications, and I do not need to take it up again. It suffices to say that the "sacred" is an element in the structure of consciousness, not a stage in the history of consciousness. A meaningful world – and man cannot live in "chaos" – is the result of a dialectical process which may be called the manifestation of the sacred. Human life becomes meaningful by imitating the paradigmatic models revealed by supernatural beings. The imitation of transhuman models constitutes one of the primary characteristics of "religious" life, a structural characteristic which is indifferent to culture and epoch. From the most archaic religious documents that are accessible to Christianity and Islam, *imitatio dei* as a norm and guideline of human existence was never interrupted; as a matter of fact, it could not have been otherwise. On the most archaic levels of culture, *living as a human being* is in itself a *religious act*, for alimentation, sexual life, and work have a sacramental value. In other words, to be – or, rather, to become – a man means to be "religious"[51].

Indeed, Man is *homo religiosus*, according to Professor Eliade, and also to various other authors, Church Fathers, and medieval theologians, and modern scholars of religion.

So, now, let me please wrap up. The present paper actually is but the first part of a much larger project of research, whose contents are: 1. Man: how much less than a god? (1.1. What is Man? 1.2. Hypothesis; 1.3. Source; 1.4. Method; 1.5. *Homo religiosus*); 2. Body (2.1. Body and *homo religiosus*; 2.2. Body and science; 2.3. Body and philosophy; 2.4. Body and theology; 2.5. Body and soul); 3. Soul (3.1. Soul and *homo religiosus*; 3.2. Soul and science; 3.3. Soul and philosophy; 3.4. Soul and theology; 3.5. Soul and spirit); 4. Spirit (4.1. Spirit and *homo religiosus*; 4.2. Spirit and science; 4.3. Spirit and philosophy; 4.4. Spirit and theology; 4.5.

51 M. Eliade, *The Quest: History and Meaning in Religion*, Chicago 1969, V-VI.

Spirit and body); 5. God: how much more than a man? (5.1. *Aliud valde*; 5.2. Nature; 5.3. Culture; 5.4. Cult; 5.5. Who is God?).

> It was said that a monk who had made baskets was putting handles on them, when he heard another monk saying nearby, "What shall I do? The trader is coming soon and I haven't got any handles to put on my baskets". So he took off the handles he had put on his own baskets, and took them to the nearby monk, and said, "I don't need these; take them and put them on your baskets". He helped the brother to finish his baskets, but left his own unfinished[52].

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52 Ward, *The Desert Fathers*, 180. In the original Latin: "*Dicebant de quodam fratre quia cum fecisset sportas et posuisset eis ansas, audivit etiam vicinum suum alium monachum dicentem: Quid facio, quia proximum est mercatum, et non habeo ansas quas imponam sportellis meis? Ille vero resolvit ansas quas imposuerat sportellis, et fratri illi vicino attulit, dicens: Ecce istas superfluas habeo, tolle, impone in sportas tuas. Et fecit opus fratre sui perficere ad quod opus erat, proprium autem opus reliquit imperfectum*" (*Verba Seniorum*, V, 17, 16).

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