A THEOLOGY OF FANTASY IN SUPPORT OF FAITH IN GOD



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SHORT ABSTRACT

Fantasy can support faith in God. Fantasies can reflect external, objective reality even though lacking present sensibility. Therefore, a fantasy image is not necessarily precluded from having an external, objective correlate. God must be held in faith since he is neither perceivable nor conceivable under the conditions of this world, which can be deliberated through images generated by fantasy that can reflect the imperceivable and inconceivable. Fantasy can create images influenced by what a living person has experienced and learned in the world and from life, which Michel Henry radically asserts is not of the world. Life, Henry argues, has been shared with living persons by absolute Life, his expression for God. Fantasy can generate images potentially reflective of God because of the life that a living person shares through life's generation by God.

Phenomenology provides an articulation of the consciousness and a methodology of awareness in which fantasy can be explored theologically. This is made possible by the phenomenological psychology on the imaginary by Jean-Paul Sartre and the phenomenology of life by Michel Henry. Gabriel Marcel provides my theology of fantasy with an intersectional analysis of themes found in both Sartre and Henry, including affectivity, secondary reflection for faith, and incarnate intersubjectivity.

A Christian ethic and therapeutic for fantasy are needed to show how selfish attempts to objectify others and seek satisfaction interiorly can be overcome through constructive fantasy humbly recognising the incarnate intersubjectivity of shared life and hope for eternal life. Henry's concept of art as spiritual provides a constructive use of fantasy for spiritual formation through contemplative prayer that can reflect life in the world and support faith in God. Fantasy ideally supports faith in God through Jean-Yves Lacoste's liturgical coaffectivity to embrace a share of the life of the Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ.

LONG ABSTRACT

This thesis argues that fantasy supports faith in God by its power to generate images with sensibly absent external correlates that can be deliberated for truth. These images, fantasies, are a type of image in consciousness. Their generation can influence knowledge of objective truth as well as the experience of subjective life in its affectivity, transcendence, and intersubjectivity. Subjective life provides fantasy the freedom to create a multitude of images which may or may not reflect objective truth. While the existence of God is not a directly sensible reality, knowledge of God depends upon a living person holding faith in the objective truth of God through their share of subjective life. God is the origin of life and shares it with the living. Life is reflected and can be discerned in images of fantasy as a power of life's generativity. Therefore, fantasy supports the deliberation of the objective truth of the existence of God in the conscious of a living person. Due to its potential to comingle fact with fiction and to propose multiple, potentially contradictory, possibilities simultaneously in its generative freedom, fantasy is as able to obstruct faith in God as it is able to support it. The therapeutic difference for fantasy in favour of faith in God depends upon a living person's disposition of humility, which opens them to receive the theological gifts from the Holy Spirit. The grace of these gifts can influence fantasy to create and reflect images of eternal life. The spiritual discernment of these images of fantasy can support faith in God ideally through the art of prayer, especially in the Eucharistic liturgy.

The existential and phenomenological work of Jean-Paul Sartre, Gabriel Marcel, and Michel Henry are critical to demonstrate fantasy's support of faith in God. The 20th century's tools of phenomenology are ideal help to establish a theology of fantasy. Phenomenology's articulation of knowledge in imaging consciousness and existentialism's demand of radical

personal freedom afford my theology of fantasy grounds to assert fantasy's essential role as a radically free power of generation in consciousness to consider and support knowledge of the objective truth of the existence of God for faith.

In my first chapter, the historic negligence of fantasy is examined to demonstrate its long-suffered theological deference to imagination. Augustine's inconsistent appreciation of fantasy and his, at times, interchangeable use of it with 'imagination' primarily led to a trajectory of suspicion for and condemnation of fantasy in the Christian tradition. Fantasy's constructive reappraisal for literary usage in the modern period, especially in works by Thomas Hobbes, John Dryden, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, is analysed as sympathetic to its theological application. Faith itself is also historically analysed and finally an analysis of phenomenology's articulation of belief, absence, and time in terms of my theology of fantasy is proposed.

In my second chapter, I analyse Sartre's *The Imaginary*, which offers an original description of the types of images in the transcendent imaging consciousness, including memories, hallucinations, and hypnogogic images. The production of these images requires fantasy, which best clarifies what Sartre describes as images in irreality with uncertain external analogons. His phenomenological psychology of the imaginary allows for my assertion of fantasy as a power for generating images that can be deliberated in irreality for potential objective truth. Sartre's essential aspects of images as known in consciousness, of immanent transcendence, with present absence, and influence by desire and affectivity support the use of fantasy to support faith. His articulation of transcendence in the imaging consciousness shows how the images of fantasy can be deliberated for the reflection of the potential existence of the 'other' in image. This is critical as fantasy generates the possibility to reflect upon God, who is other, and can lead to faith. Sartre critically provides my theology of fantasy a framework of the imaginary that includes the role of belief required in an

analogon for the mental presence of a sensibly absent external correlate. Sartre's notion of belief in irreality provides the grounds to assert fantasy's ability to support faith in God.

In my third chapter, Marcel's concrete ontology offers a means of faith in God through secondary reflection, which recuperates images for reflection of objective truth in unity with experience as contrasted to the deconstructive parsing of experience in his concept of primary reflection. Marcel's assertion that fantasy is the faculty of creativity in the imagination supports my assertion of its necessary role in the act of faith in God since images of fantasy can be made for the discernment of objective external correlates. Building on his novel approach to reflection, Marcel's theology of faith observes the necessity of intersubjectivity and incarnation. Awareness of intersubjectivity and incarnation influences images generated by fantasy and must be reflected upon for faith in God. Marcel's contributions link the existential framework of the imaginary in the work of Sartre and the radical phenomenology of life in the work of Henry.

In my fourth chapter, Henry reverses the existential attention of phenomenology from looking for objective truth in the world to that which is found more primarily in subjective life. Henry proposes a highly original approach that articulates God as absolute Life, Jesus as the First Living, and living persons as sharing in the auto-affective embrace of life. Henry's phenomenology of life offers my theology of fantasy an elaboration of life as immanent, affective, intelligible, intersubjective, and expansive. Fantasy generates images that can reflect these aspects of life, which makes fantasy critical for knowing the truth of absolute Life in the life of the living. An image's reflection of a share of life, which Henry calls signification, asserts a theology of faith in his notion of life, which prioritises interiority over exteriority, affective flesh over the corporal body, and subjectivity over objectivity. His hamartiology and soteriology articulate sin as a state of forgetfulness and salvation as the rejoining of life. For salvation, a consubstantial substitution of culture, which manifests life

in the world's impressions, must be signified by fantasy and deliberated for faith in absolute Life.

In the final chapter, and on the basis of the foregoing analyses, my theology of fantasy proposes a Christian ethic and therapeutic for fantasy. In its ethic, fantasy is shown as obstructive to faith in God when truth is sought in what Henry terms the 'I can'. Fantasy images of the 'I can', that is the self's possibilities, lead to objectification of others and forgetfulness of God, which results in an obstruction to faith in God. At the extreme end of obstructive fantasy is autoeroticism, which seeks to exclusively satisfy the self by the self. As neither the source nor power of life, the autoerotic self will be perpetually anxious and dissatisfied. Alternatively, given the opportunity provided by the self's passibility to be influenced by intersubjectivity and incarnation as analysed in the work of Marcel and Henry, fantasy can be used constructively for faith in God as a means of recognising the opportunity to rejoin one's life with intersubjective life, which is better articulated as reconciliation in the Christian sense. A living person can recognise God and be reconciled with him by identifying and uniting their incarnate intersubjective life to life shared with others through faith as deliberated in the image consciousness using images of fantasy. Fantasy's power to make images of eternal life, a reflection of the one shared with absolute Life, makes it constitutive of faith in God. Finally, in terms of a Christian ethic for fantasy, Henry's concept of art as spiritual is explored to show how fantasy can support spiritual formation through contemplative prayer, which can reflect life in the world and support faith in God.

A therapeutic for fantasy considers the external influence of Christian testimony and the theological gifts of the Holy Spirit on fantasy's support of faith in God. A living person can use their fantasy to make images of Christian testimony and of the Holy Spirit's gifts of hope for eternal life and of love for life shared with other living persons and absolute Life for an increase in the gift of faith in God. While faith is a gift of the Holy Spirit, it can increase

and be purified, which can be supported by fantasy. Fantasy's support of faith in God happens through its images generated in contemplative prayer. Contemplative prayer can help the living person, with the support of fantasy, to discern and reconcile with absolute Life. Fantasy's ideal constructive potential for faith in God is shown in Jean-Yves Lacoste's articulation of contemplative prayer in liturgy. His elaboration of coaffectivity and presentiment in liturgy can build upon Henry's notion of the affectivity of life. Liturgy provides the ideal space and time for fantasy to generate images in contemplative prayer for deliberation of potential recognition and reconciliation with the Truth of Life. The liturgy allows for God to be fantasised about in contemplative prayer in a way that is supportive of faith, wherein a living person can accept the embrace of Life through fantasy supporting the deliberation of a share of the Eucharist, the transcendent flesh and body of the Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis argues that fantasy is used to support faith in God. While the concept of fantasy is thought to be familiar, it is regularly used in a confused manner, especially in respect to its potential role in supporting faith in God. Fantasy is not different than the imagination, but a more specific use of it. Fantasy is the power of the imagination to generate images of uncertain external, objective veracity. An image generated by fantasy is potentially reflective of external, objective reality even while partially lacking the influence of sensibility. A fantasy image is not necessarily precluded from reflecting an objective external correlate, such as God. Fantasy is the ability within the imagination to freely generate, that is, create, images. Fantasy should not be understood in contrast to the imagination but as a particular capacity of its imaginary activity. Fantasy images are inherently not entirely reflective of sensible experience but can be comingled with memory images of it.

Faith in God cannot be supported by sensible experience as God cannot be directly sensed under the conditions of the world in which humanity lives. Fantasy images, whose generation does not depend entirely on influence from sensible experience, nor is entirely free of it, can therefore support faith in God. Faith in God is supported by the creative capacity of the imagination, that is, fantasy. My argument seeks to revivify fantasy away from the sceptics and take its articulation and use back from the atheists.

A central concern for theology is to consider what is required for faith in God. Faith demands an object, God, and a subject, the one who has faith. Both need to be examined in the field of theology. Broadly, my concern regards the requirements for a

subject, a living person, to have faith in God under the conditions of the world in which they live. The existence and strength of the relationship of faith can vary between the two, the subject in the world and God beyond the world. Specifically, I argue that the relationship of faith depends on the living person's ability to consider the possibility of the existence of God, the author of life, using their imagination's power to fantasise images that reflect life. Fantasy creates images influenced not only from what a living person has experienced and learned in the world but also from life, which Michel Henry radically asserts is not of the world. Life, Henry argues, has been shared with living persons by the source of Life, who is absolute Life itself, which is Henry's typical articulation of God. Living persons share life as those who are made in God's image and likeness. Fantasy can generate images potentially reflective of God because of the life that a living person shares through life's generation by God.

This work of theological anthropology will propose a theology of fantasy. Recent developments in theology and phenomenology provide an opportune time to assert fantasy's necessary role in supporting faith in God. During the last two centuries, theology has increasingly turned its attention to the influence of the imagination on the possibility of holding faith, especially through the work of theologians such as John Henry Newman, but has failed to adequately define and articulate imagination's various powers in greater specificity. The imagination has many powers, and theology would do well to engage them individually. In particular, the imagination's power to fantasise by freely generating images not entirely implausible nor from the memories of sensible experience is fundamental for a person to have faith in God.

The question of the role of fantasy and its images in regard to their support of faith in God does not originate in 20th century French existentialism and phenomenology.

Similar considerations are also found in the earlier tradition of German Idealism, such as in the work of Friedrich Schleiermacher, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, and Ludwig Feuerbach. Among them, Feuerbach's theory of projection is particularly influential, especially in subsequent decades to the publication of his *The Essence of Christianity*, which supported an atheistic argument that portrayed God as a man-made fictive imaginary construct. Feuerbach's theory argues that projections of the mind, entirely independent of external influence, are solely responsible for creating the concept of God and religion. Faith in God, he argues, is more profoundly understand as faith in man's imaginary powers. My thesis will contest his rejection of external influence on the imaginary while respecting the freedom of the individual. Feuerbach disregards the possibility that image-makers, human individuals, have an external origin in God, who shares his image-making capacity with those he has created in his image and likeness. My thesis argues that fantasy's ability to support faith in God as a real external object depends upon the life that he has first shared with them.

Feuerbach's work was critically assessed by Karl Barth for its atheistic rejection of God, even while Barth agrees with him that fantasy is entirely fictive and created independently of God. Barth critiques Feuerbach for failing to see that his notion of 'man's essential being' may be as fictive as Feuerbach supposes God himself to be. Barth also critiques Feuerbach for confusing man in general with man as an individual in lived reality, which is an accusation that Barth leverages against all the great intellectuals of Feuerbach's time. 20th century French existentialists and phenomenologists will broadly bring a more developed consideration of the individual self to the question of the imaginary. Specific contributions of Jean-Paul Sartre, Gabriel Marcel, and Michel Henry will especially provide the ideal foundation for the creation of my theology of fantasy.

Beyond the scope of German Idealism, the question of fantasy's potential influence to support faith in God has also been considered in the more recent analytical work of J.R.R. Tolkien, Denys Turner, Douglas Hedley, and Judith Wolfe. Tolkien has an especially sympathetic concept of fantasy to the one that I will develop that transcends literary theory into metaphysics through the influence of his own Christian faith. He argues for the need of fantasy in life to fully recognise the truth of reality. For Tolkien, fantasy supports the individual self's ability to grasp life's reality and hold faith in God as its source and sustenance. Tolkien argues that fantasy reflects how man was made.[1] Fantasy is found in his concept of 'unreality', which is akin to irreality as will be articulated in the work of Sartre, and is a characteristic of Tolkien's sub-creative act, which can interact with his description of the sensible 'Primary World'. That which Tolkien describes as unreal does not indicate that it lacks reality or influence on knowledge, which is like my argument for fantasy's potential support of faith in God, although from a different tradition.

Phenomenology provides an ideal articulation of the consciousness and a methodology of awareness in which fantasy can be explored theologically. This is seen in the phenomenological psychology on the imaginary by Jean-Paul Sartre early in his academic career and in the phenomenology of life by Michel Henry throughout his works in the latter half of the 20th century. Sartre's work on the imaginary is not theological and appropriates Feuerbach's theory of projection. Henry's work contrasts that of Feuerbach and of Sartre as it asserts that faith in God, who is other than the self, is held through the recognition of the gift of life as shared in images. A constructive link for my theology of

[1] "Fantasy remains a human right: we make in our measure and in our derivative mode, because we are made: and not only made, but made in the image and likeness of a Maker." J. R. R. Tolkien, *Tolkien On Fairy-stories*, Expanded edition, with commentary and notes. ed., ed. Verlyn Flieger and Douglas A. Anderson (2014). Page 66.

fantasy between the work of Sartre and Henry is found in the work of Gabriel Marcel, which covers many fields, including existentialism, ontology, and theology. Marcel will provide my theology of fantasy with an intersectional analysis of themes found in both Sartre and Henry, which spans the existential framework of the imaginary in the work of Sartre and the phenomenology of life in the work of Henry.

Sartre, Marcel, and Henry share the 20th century French intellectual tradition. They were aware of each other's work and at times engaged each other in dialogue and critique, especially Sartre and Marcel. Henry was a generation later and by and large eschewed the demands and expectations of the Parisian intellectuals, finding that the freedom and distance of Marseille provided his work with the room to expand and develop. All three were exceptionally social; Sartre frequenting Parsian cafes popular with contemporaneous intellectuals, Marcel participating in Friday evening gatherings at Jacque Maritain's home before later hosting them himself, and Henry welcoming friends at his apartment or the spare apartment that he kept for his collection of artwork. Perhaps most importantly, as will be considered in their work that contributes to my theology of fantasy, none of the three can be neatly ascribed to a specific intellectual field. They all wrote fiction and non-fiction over a multitude of subjects from philosophy to politics. All three engaged their work in then-current political and cultural affairs. The theological consideration of fantasy benefits from the intellectual freedom which allowed them to test and assert their ideas across a broad spectrum. Their work is therefore accustomed to engaging with new ideas. The theology of fantasy that I seek to establish will be well served by their example, work, and methods.

In my first chapter, I will establish the historic theological negligence and abuse of the role of fantasy by examining Augustine's wavering appreciation and interchangeable use of it with 'imagination'. Augustine's broad shadow over the field of theology cannot

be overstated and his articulation of imagination and fantasy is still influential. As I will show, what is commonly thought of as Augustine's negative attitude towards fantasy is not entirely justified. Augustine speaks of the fantasy of the imagination in the *City of God*, which has great influence on its subsequent use throughout history, one which I will follow in my theology of fantasy. Further, in the modern period, I will examine fantasy's literary reappraisal, especially in works of Thomas Hobbes, John Dryden, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Moreover, in preparing to propose a theology of fantasy as a necessary means of supporting faith in God, the historical articulation of faith itself will be analysed. Finally, I will argue that the concepts of belief, absence, and time in the phenomenological method will help to articulate fantasy's support of faith.

In my second chapter, I will analyse how Sartre's *The Imaginary* offers an original description of the types of images in the transcendent imaging consciousness, including memories, hallucinations, and hypnogogic images. The production of these images requires the concept of fantasy, which best clarifies what Sartre describes as images in irreality with uncertain external analogons. He is credited with laying the intellectual foundation and providing the descriptive terminology of the imaginary that will support my assertion of fantasy as a power for generating images that can be deliberated in irreality for potential objective truth. Fantasy's ability to support faith will build upon the essential aspects Sartre asserts of images, as known in consciousness, of immanent transcendence, with present absence, and influence by desire and affectivity. The imaginary power of fantasy is more clearly defined in light of Sartre's articulation of transcendence in the imaging consciousness, which provides the opportunity to consider the potential existence of the 'other' in image. This is critical for a theology of fantasy as it articulates how fantasy can support the possibility of reflecting upon God, who is other to this world, and can lead to a living person having faith in God. Sartre's

phenomenological psychology will provide a framework of the imaginary that includes the role of belief required in an analogon for the mental presence of sensibly absent external correlates.

In my third chapter, I will primarily engage Marcel's articulation of faith in God. Faith, he argues, is the result of a secondary reflection, which deliberates images for reflection of objective truth in unity with experience. He contrasts this with primary reflection's deconstructive parsing of experience. Marcel's assertion that fantasy is a creative faculty of the imagination that does not require sensible experience supports my assertion of its necessary role in the act of faith in God. Faith requires the deliberation of that which has not been sensibly experienced, as God cannot be sensibly experienced, and therefore must have a power to be created without sensible experience of its source. Marcel's work also articulates the concepts of intersubjectivity and incarnation, the awareness of which influences the capability of secondary reflection upon the images made by fantasy which can support faith in God. Marcel describes faith in God as the awareness of incarnate intersubjectivity, which is reflected in images that are produced by fantasy for deliberation in consciousness.

In my fourth chapter, I will show how Henry's highly original approach to phenomenology, which describes God as absolute Life, Jesus as the First Living, and living persons as sharing in the auto-affective embrace of Life, offers my theology of fantasy a means for supporting faith in God as discerned in fantasy images of life manifest in the culture of the world. Henry phenomenology of life is far from Feuerbach's idealism and glorification of man, which, unlike Henry's work, has no acknowledgement of God as different or external to man, however man may be defined, whether as mind, body, heart, or sense, or any combination of these, as found throughout the various anthropological traditions. Henry describes life as immanent, affective, intelligible,

intersubjective, and expansive. Henry reverses the existential attention of phenomenology from looking for the objective truth in the world to that found more primarily in subjective life. Fantasy generates images that can reflect aspects of life as shared with each living person. This, I argue, makes fantasy critical to recognising the external source of life, which Henry terms 'absolute Life'. Henry argues that recognition of life must prioritise interiority over exteriority, affective flesh over the corporal body, and subjectivity over objectivity. These priorities are reflected in life's influence on the creation of fantasies that support faith in absolute Life. Henry's hamartiology and soteriology, which articulate sin as a state of forgetfulness and salvation as the recognition of life, will also be considered in terms of my theology of fantasy.

Building on the foregoing analyses, in my final chapter, I will propose a Christian ethic and a therapeutic for fantasy. In terms of an ethic, fantasy's potential obstructive and constructive influence on faith in God will be examined. Primarily, fantasy will be shown to be obstructive to faith in God when a living person operates in a mode described by Henry as the 'I can'. When fantasy generates images prioritising the 'I can', that is the self's possibilities, they objectify other living persons and obstruct faith in God. The ultimate result is autoeroticism, which seeks interiorly for the source and satisfaction of the self. Alternatively, fantasy will be shown as constructive for faith in God when it generates images of intersubjectivity and incarnation, which allow a living person to recognise the Truth of Life, including the absolute Life of God. Henry's concept of the spiritual in art will be analysed in terms of its use of fantasy and potential to support the spiritual formation of contemplative prayer.

A therapeutic for fantasy will examine the influence of Christian testimony and the Holy Spirit's gifts of the theological virtues on fantasy's potential to support faith in God. The Holy Spirit inspires fantasy to generate images of the hope of eternal life as an

embrace in the love of shared life, which requires a living person to be kenotic and humble. The work of current French theologian and encyclopaedist Jean-Yves Lacoste will provide my theology of fantasy an analysis of liturgy that offers an ideal framework for its support of faith in God. Lacoste articulates the liturgy as coaffective and provides a phenomenological articulation of liturgical space and time. Through the liturgy, fantasy has the potential to support the spiritual formation of contemplative prayer and the ideal opportunity to produce coaffective images for discernment of the hope to join eternal life, which ultimately supports faith in God. More specifically, contemplative prayer in the Eucharistic liturgy will be shown to be especially constructive for fantasy to support faith in God, wherein a living person can discern the hope of joining eternal life through the images fantasy makes of the Eucharist, the transcendent flesh and body of the Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ.

The work of Sartre, Marcel, and Henry was originally published in French, and I provide citations to the original language in each footnote. The quality of the standard translation varies, especially with the English translations of Henry. I provide better translations in some footnotes when the poor quality of the original translation negatively obscures nuances that impact my analysis. Henry used various typographical methods of distinguishing his ideas, such as italicisation and capitalisation. Effort was made to ensure that the English translations reflected these distinctions, and when they failed to do so, this is noted in the footnotes. A short but fruitful visit to the Henry archives at the Université Catholique de Louvain revealed how painstaking and thorough was the preparation that he gave to each of his books as shown in the ample amount of now well-catalogued handwritten notes that he prepared for each of them. It also contains his personal library, which is filled with the contemporaneous books of those with similar

interests and in which he emphasised what he considered important clauses. From this research and from conversations with those who knew him, I am sure that, if he were still alive, the development and use of his work that I undertake in my argument would have been thoroughly and carefully considered by him.

At the outset, as a guiding principle, it is worth noting how Dante Alighieri began the final stanza of the final canto of the *Paradiso* by surrendering: '*A l'alta fantasia qui mancò possa*'.[2] While fantasy ultimately failed him at the end of his long journey and love remained to carry him forward to God, the role that fantasy played up to this penultimate point deserves to be analysed and asserted as critical for supporting faith in God.

[2] Alighieri Dante, *Paradiso*, trans. Robert Hollander and Jean Hollander (New York ; London: Doubleday, 2007). Page 826. 'Beyond here, fantasy fails.' Translation my own.

CHAPTER I: FANTASY'S HISTORICAL PRECEDENCE AND ENGAGEMENT WITH FAITH

For the divine mysteries, by their very nature,
so far surpass the created understanding that,
even when a revelation has been given and accepted by faith,
they remain covered by the veil of that same faith and wrapped, as it were,
in a certain obscurity, as long as in this mortal life we are away from the Lord,
for we walk by faith, and not by sight.[3]

I. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I will provide an historical analysis of fantasy, articulate a premise of faith in God to examine fantasy's role in it, and establish phenomenology as a useful methodology for understanding fantasy's role in faith in God. I will provide an analysis of fantasy as a faculty of the imagination as well as provide a methodology for constructing a theology of fantasy.

To establish fantasy's constructive role in the act of faith, it is necessary to clarify the historical concept of fantasy, especially in relation to imagination. A challenge will be the lack of a singular, clear, prevailing use of the term 'fantasy'. The term 'fantasy' is currently used without consistency, either distinct from imagination in a variety of ways or used interchangeably with it. The primary source of this lack of clarity is found in the well-known writings of Augustine, whose work made inconsistent distinctions between fantasy and imagination, which have continued to progress and develop over the course of time. An explicit consideration of fantasy as distinct from imagination is found in the literary tradition of the modern era, especially in the work of Thomas Hobbes, John

[3] Norman P. Tanner, *Decrees of the ecumenical councils* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1990). *Dei Filius*, Ch. 4, cf. 2 Cor 5:6-7. Page 808.

Dryden, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Through elucidating fantasy's historical treatment, I will establish a concept of fantasy to strengthen its theological potential for faith in subsequent chapters.

After considering fantasy historically, I will examine faith and belief. Faith will be shown to be a response of a living person to God which integrates beliefs and has characteristics of obscurity, freedom, love, and humility. I will argue that the potential for faith in God in respect to these characteristics is supported by fantasy. I will primarily use the theological work of Henry de Lubac, Hans Urs von Balthasar, Avery Dulles, and Bernard of Clairvaux to provide this analysis.

I will finish the chapter by asserting the important role that phenomenology will play in building my theology of fantasy, which will be developed in subsequent chapters with the phenomenological work of Jean-Paul Sartre and Michel Henry. Phenomenology provides my theology of fantasy with the means to articulate belief, absence, and time, which will be shown in the phenomenological work of Robert Sokolowski and Dan Zahavi.

My goal is to analyse fantasy's role in the act of faith by showing that it has not been adequately or explicitly considered by theology and to construct a therapeutic for a theology of fantasy based on the premise of its constructive potential for faith in God. It is not possible to present an exhaustive critique or analysis of fantasy's absent or ambiguous role in all forms of metaphysics, ontologies, psychologies, literary sciences, or theologies of faith. My goal is to establish a worthy attention for and a constructive engagement with a theological use of fantasy. I will conclude that fantasy can constructively support a living person holding faith in God.

II. HISTORICAL FANTASY

In a project that seeks the clear and useful definition of an historically ambiguous term like fantasy, it is helpful to consider its adjacent terms and etymology. In English, the word 'fantasy' is usually used synonymously with or very closely associated to the word 'fancy', although this latter term has fallen out of popular usage.[4] In ancient Hebrew, fantasy and imagination are both expressed by דמיון. Likewise, in ancient Greek, fantasy and imagination are both conveyed by *φαντασία*. In the first century A.D., a distinction was introduced in some Latin writings between the older term 'fantasy' [*phantasia*] and the newer term 'imagination' [*imagination*].[5] A contemporary literary articulation of the meaning of imagination in Latin is seen in the work of Mircea Eliade, who observes that to "'have imagination' is to enjoy a richness of interior life, an uninterrupted and spontaneous flow of images. … Etymologically, 'imagination' is related to both *imago* - a representation or imitation - and *imitor*, to imitate or reproduce. … for the power and the mission of images is to show all that remains refractory to the concept."[6] Fantasy [*phantasia*] is distinct from phantasm [*phantasma*].[7] As I will show,

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[4] Tolkien observes: "Fancy (a reduced and depreciatory form of the older word Fantasy)." Tolkien, *Tolkien On Fairy-stories*. Page 59.

[5] The oldest recorded use of a form of imagination, *'imaginatur*' was used by Seneca around 55 A.D. in *De constantia sapientis*, "*Perdiderunt isti divites patrimonia, libidinosi amores suos et magno pudoris impendio dilecta scorta, ambitiosi curiam et forum et loca exercendis in publico vitiis destinata; feneratores perdiderunt tabellas, quibus avaritia falso laeta divitias* imaginatur*: ego quidem omnia integra illibata que habeo*." Emphasis mine. Recorded uses of forms of *imagination* in the first two centuries number only 10 in total, three of which were used in Pliny the Elder's *Naturalis Historia*, published in 77 A.D.

[6] Mircea Eliade, *Images and symbols : studies in religious symbolism*, trans. Philip Mairet (London: Harvill Press, 1961). Page 20.

[7] *Phantasia* is defined in its first entry as "an idea, notion, fancy" and in its second as "a phantom, apparition". *Phantasma* is defined in its first entry as "an apparition, spectre, phantom" and in its second "an image, appearance, phantasm." Charlton T. Lewis, Charles Short, and William Freund, *A Latin dictionary : founded on Andrews' edition of Freund's Latin dictionary*, revised, enlarged, and in great part rewritten / ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1879). Robert Sokolowski makes a closer association, "In Greek the suffix *-ma* added to a verb stem signifies the result or effect of the action expressed in the verb. Thus, *phantasma* signifies the object of fantasizing." Robert Sokolowski, *Introduction to phenomenology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). Page 61.

these distinctions and similarities continue to be nuanced across a variety of disciplines without common agreement or usage.

a. Augustine's use of fantasy and imagination

The extensive writings of Augustine of Hippo portray an early distinction between the meaning of fantasy and imagination in the Latin Patristic tradition. Fantasy [*phantasia*] and its derivatives are used 55 times throughout his writings while imagination [*imagination*] and its derivatives are used 51 times.[8] There is an inconsistency of distinction between fantasy and imagination throughout Augustine's writings that reveals ambiguity in his articulation of fantasy.

An example of Augustine's use of fantasy and imagination regarding knowledge of existence is found in *The City of God*, Book 11, Chapter 26, where he expresses the certainty of his existence based on potential mistakenness.[9] Augustine indicates that fantasies [*phantasiarum*] and phantoms [*phantasmatum*] are of the imagination [*imagination*].[10] While his distinction between fantasy and imagination will historically lead to further distinctions between the terms, it can be argued from this passage that Augustine's work supports my argument for fantasy's constructive theological potential as he asserts that the fantasies of the imagination can express the certainty of existence, at least of one's own existence. While Augustine does not explicitly apply the same logic for

[8] Todd Breyfogle observes that Augustine's "use of the rare Latin *imaginatio* alongside (and often distinct from) the Greek *phantasia* established the former term for most subsequent reflection on the subject." Allan Fitzgerald and John C. Cavadini, *Augustine through the ages : an encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub., 1999). Page 443.

[9] Faith is considered a 'mode of knowing' by 20th century French theologian, Henry de Lubac, as will be demonstrated in the next section.

[10] Cf. "… *sed sine ulla* phantasiarum vel phantasmatum imaginatione *ludificatoria mihi esse me idque nosse et amare certissimum est. Nulla in his veris Academicorum argumenta formido dicentium: Quid si falleris? Si enim fallor, sum.*" Augustine, *The City of God*, trans. David S. Wiesen, ed. E. H. Warmington, Loeb classical library no 413, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968). Page 532. Emphasis mine. In the following pages, I will compare a few recent English translations of this passage.

affirming God's existence, it demonstrates his use of fantasy as an activity of the imagination.

While the preceding passage demonstrates Augustine's association of fantasy as an activity of the imagination, recent English translations of it indicate a modern trend of exaggerating what is implied as Augustine's negative bias towards fantasy. Three prominent translations from the last century of this passage from Augustine can be compared to show the modern negative bias towards fantasy. R. V. G. Tasker's 1945 translation, based on John Healey's respected 1610 translation, reads: "I know without any fantastical imagination that I am myself, that this I know and love. I fear not the Academic arguments on these truths, that say: 'What if you err?' If I err, I am."[11] In Tasker's treatment, fantasy and phantoms are combined, reflecting an ambiguous synonymising of the two terms. David S. Wiesen's translation from 1968 reads: "But it is without any deceptive play of my imagination, with its real or unreal visions, that I am quite certain that I am, that I know that I am, and that I love this being and this knowing. Where these truths are concerned I need not quail before the Academicians when they say: 'What if you should be mistaken?' Well, if I am mistaken, I exist."[12] Wiesen retains a certain distinction between fantasy and phantoms, but subjugates them to 'deceptive play', which reflects contemporary derision for the terms. Henry Bettenson's translation from 1972 reads: "But the certainty that I exist, that I know it, and that I am glad of it, is independent of any imaginary and deceptive fantasies. In respect of those truths I have no fear of the arguments of the Academics. They say, 'Suppose you are mistaken? I reply, 'If I am mistaken, I exist.'"[13] Bettenson goes even further than Wiesen with ambiguity

[11] Augustine, *The City of God*, trans. R. V. G. Tasker, Everyman's Library, (London: Dent, 1945; repr., 1962). Series vol. 982. Vols. 2. Vol. 1. Page 335.
[12] Augustine, *The City of God*. Page 533.
[13] Augustine, *Concerning the City of God against the pagans*, trans. Henry Bettenson, ed. David Knowles (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1972). Pages 459-460.

between the terms by confusing the object '*imaginatio*' with its modifier '*phantasiarum*' and dropping altogether the reference to '*phantasmatum*', but qualifies fantasy with the word 'deceptive'. The use of a negative qualifier provides the possibility, at least in Bettenson's presentation, that fantasy does not necessarily have to be construed in a negative manner as imaginary fantasies are distinct from deceptive fantasies in his presentation of the passage.

What follows the passage of the previously compared translations is the development of two more expressions that Augustine argues support holding certainty for existence, not just based on the ability of being mistaken as in the first example, but also based on knowing that one knows and on loving and being loved, even if that which is known and loved is mistaken or false:

> But it is without any deceptive play of my *imagination*, with its *real or unreal visions* [*phantasiarum vel phantasmatum imaginatione*], that I am quite certain that I am, that I know that I am, and that I love this being and this knowing. Where these truths are concerned I need not quail before the Academicians when they say: "What if you should be mistaken?" Well, if I am mistaken, I exist. For a man who does not exist can surely not be mistaken either, and if I am mistaken, therefore I exist. So, since I am if I am mistaken, how can I be mistaken in believing that I am when it is certain that if I am mistaken I am. Therefore, from the fact that, if I were indeed mistaken, I should have to exist to be mistaken, it follows that I am undoubtedly not mistaken in knowing that I am. It follows also that in saying that I know that I know, I am not mistaken. For just as I know that I am, so it holds too that I know that I know. And when I love these two things, I add this same love as a third particular of no smaller value to these things that I know. Nor is my statement, that I love, a *mistake* [*fallor*], since I am not *mistaken* [*fallar*] in the things that I love; yet even if they were *illusions* [*falsa*], it would still be true that I love *illusions* [*falsa*]. For on what grounds could I rightly be blamed or prevented from *loving illusions* [*amore falsorum*], if it were a *mistaken* belief that I love them [*amare falsam*]? But since these things are themselves true and certain who can doubt that, when they are loved, the love itself is also true and certain?[14]

[14] "… *sed sine ulla* phantasiarum vel phantasmatum imaginatione *ludificatoria mihi esse me idque nosse et amare certissimum est. Nulla in his veris Academicorum argumenta formido dicentium: Quid si falleris? Si enim fallor, sum. Nam qui non est, utique nec falli potest; ac per hoc sum, si fallor. Quia ergo sum si fallor, quo modo esse me fallor, quando certum est me esse, si fallor? Quia igitur essem qui fallerer, etiamsi fallerer, procul dubio in eo, quod me novi esse, non fallor. Consequens est autem, ut etiam in eo, quod me novi nosse, non fallar. Sicut enim novi esse me, ita novi etiam hoc ipsum, nosse me. Eaque duo cum amo, eundem quoque amorem quiddam tertium nec inparis aestimationis eis quas novi rebus adiungo. Neque enim* fallor *amare me, cum in his quae amo non* fallar*; quamquam etsi illa* falsa *essent,* falsa *me amare*

Augustine significantly connects the notions of fantasy [*phantasia*] with mistakes [*fallor*] and illusions [*falsum*], thereby suggesting negativity in fantasy while leaving imagination as the broader, neutral faculty. Amidst his search for the certainty of existence, alongside mistakenness, knowing, and loving, Augustine includes the existence and love of illusions, which become for him further evidence for the certainty of his existence. It is remarkable that Wiesen's translation inserts the notion of illusions [*falsa*, *falsorum*, *falsam*], which connote images, into that which Augustine considers false or mistaken. His grounds for doing so are based on Augustine's premise that the imagination has fantasies and phantasms, which supports my use of fantasy as a faculty of the imagination.

Augustine offers a later, more constructive application of *phantasia* in *The City of God* while commenting on the book of Habakkuk. Loeb's English translation by Eva Matthews Sanford and William McAllen transliterates fantasy for imagination. "'The depths of her imagination [*phantasiae*]' is a sort of gloss on the preceding verse, for 'depths' means 'abyss.' Moreover, with the phrase 'of her imagination [*phantasiae*]' we must supply 'gave forth its voice,' which as we said, means 'declared what it thought good.' 'Imagination [*Phantasia*]' is surely a vision which the heart did not keep to itself, did not conceal, but blurted out in confession."[15] Imagination is used in this translation for '*phantasiae*' and connotes a positive and constructive way to convey an expression of

verum esset. Nam quo pacto recte reprehenderer et recte prohiberer ab amore falsorum*, si me illa* amare falsum *esset? Cum vero et illa vera atque certa sint, quis dubitet quod eorum,* cum amantur*, et* ipse amor verus et certus est*?*" Augustine, *The City of God*. trans. David S. Wiesen. Book 11, Chapter 26. Pages 532, 534. Emphases mine.

[15] Augustine, *The City of God*; Augustine, *The City of God*, trans. Eva Matthews Sanford and William McAllen Green, 7 vols., vol. 5, Loeb Classical Library, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press,, 1965). Book 18, Chapter 32. Pages 487. "Altitudo phantasiae suae *tamquam versus superioris est expositio; altitudo enim est abyssus. Quod autem ait:* Phantasiae suae*, subaudiendum est vocem dedit; hoc est, quod diximus, quid ei videretur expressit. Phantasia quippe visio est, quam non tenuit, non operuit, sed confitendo eructavit.*" *ibid*. Page 486. Emphasis the author's.

'what is thought good'. The translation of Matthews Sanford and McAllen find 'imagination' to be a more fitting word to reflect Augustine's constructive use of '*phantasia*' in this passage. A more literal English translation of this passage can be found in Tasker's translation: "The depth of man's heart expressed what it saw. 'The height of his fantasy.' That is, the deep gave out the voice, expressing (as I said) what it saw. This fantasy was a vision, which he concealed not, but proclaimed in full."[16] Tasker uses 'fantasy' as the preferred translation of '*phantasiae*', which supports my assertion of fantasy's constructive potential.

Augustine's distinction between fantasy and imagination, and his, at times, negative use of the former as shown in *The City of God* can also be seen in several of his other works. For example, Augustine explicitly discourages against the constructive use of fantasy for considering God in Sermon 360B/7:

> So there is then, as I started to say, dearly beloved, an inner eye which is wounded and disturbed by sins, by fleshly lusts and earthly desires, to such effect that the man himself who sinned heard the words, *Earth you are and into earth shall you go* (Gn 3:19). So if the proud, unruly man deserved to hear the words "Earth you are and into earth shall you go," why should not the humble, God-fearing man hear, "Heaven you are and into heaven shall you go?" It's by being humble, in fact, and God-fearing that he becomes God's throne. And when he has become God's throne, isn't he already heaven? It says in the scriptures, *Heaven is my throne, while the earth is the stool for my feet* (Is 66:1). So if heaven is God's throne, be heaven, in order to carry God. When you start carrying God, you will be heaven.
>
> But in order for you to carry him totally, he himself will clean you up when he starts living in you, until he brings that eye of the heart and mind to such a state of cleanliness that it can actually see the face of him in whom it believed while it couldn't see him. So then, believe before you actually see, in order that with your heart *cleansed by faith* (Acts 15:9), you may deserve to see what you have believed. A light, after all, is being promised you, which *neither has eye seen*, because it isn't a color, *nor ear heard*, because it isn't a sound, *nor has it come up into the heart of man* (1 Cor 2:9), because man who is properly called "man," fleshly, feeble, merely animated, can only think about what he has taken in through the senses of the body. Not of such a kind is that light. The soul must not presume to form any

[16] Augustine, *The City of God*. Series vol. 983. 2 Vols. Vol. 2. Page 205.

> idea about God as fancy [*phantasia*] may suggest. It must first learn to "unfind" the one it wishes to find.[17]

Augustine argues that no soul should seek to 'form any idea about God as fancy may suggest'. This passage could also be translated to indicate that the soul should not form *anything* about God. The term '*formare audeat'* could be translated as daring intention.[18] A consideration of phenomenology's articulation of intentionality will be addressed in the final section of this chapter, to show the influence and potentially constructive role of intentionality for the soul's awareness of God.

There are further disparities in translations of Augustine's *Confessions* such as when Carolyn Hammond uses 'fantasy' as a translation for illusion [*fabula*] and implies that it is a corrupting lie [*mendacium*]. "I loved what I loved in place of you, but it was all a great fantasy, a massive lie, corrupting our minds with their itching ears by the stimulus of heretical ideas. Yet that fantasy [*fabula*] of mine refused to die, no matter what friends of mine might perish."[19] Hammond, a recent Loeb translator of *Confessions*, equates fantasy with illusion, demonstrating the modern challenge to a theology of fantasy. This is

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[17] Augustine, *Essential sermons*, trans. Edmund Hill, ed. Daniel Edward Doyle, The works of Saint Augustine Part III, Homilies, (Hyde Park, N.Y.: New City Press, 2007). Page 370. Emphasis the author's. "*Est ergo, ut dicere coeperam, dilectissimi, oculus interior quem sauciunt perturbant que peccata, carnales concupiscentiae et terrena desideria, ita ut ipse homo peccans audierit: Terra es et in terram ibis. Si ergo superbus iniquus audire meruit: Terra es et in terram ibis, cur non humilis pius audiat: 'Caelum es et in caelum ibis'? Humilitate quippe atque pietate fit sedes dei. Iam cum factus fuerit sedes dei, nonne caelum est? Dictum est in scripturis: Caelum mihi sedes est, terra autem scabellum pedum meorum. Si ergo caelum sedes est dei, esto caelum ut portes deum. Cum portare coeperis deum, caelum eris. Ut autem plene eum portes, ipse te mundabit, cum coeperit habitare, donec perducat oculum illum cordis ad tantam munditiam ut possit uidere faciem eius, in quem non uisum credidit. Crede ergo antequam uideas, ut per fidem mundato corde etiam uidere quod credidisti merearis. Promittitur enim tibi lux, quam nec oculus uidit, quia non est color, nec auris audiuit, quia non est sonus, nec in cor hominis ascendit, quia homo qui proprie dicitur homo, carnalis, infirmus, animalis, cogitare non potest nisi quae corporis sensibus hauserit. Non est talis illa lux. Nihil sibi anima,* quasi in phantasia*, formare audeat de deo: quem uult inuenire, prius discat non inuenire.*" Emphasis mine.

[18] Cf. D. P. Simpson, *Cassell's Latin dictionary: Latin-English, English-Latin*, 5th ed. (New York: Wiley, 1968). Pages 66-67 for '*audĕo*' and page 253 for '*formo*'.

[19] Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Carolyn J. B. Hammond, The Loeb classical library 26-27, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2014). Page 155. "… *cum quibus amabam quod postea amabam; et hoc erat ingens* fabula *et longum mendacium, cuius adulterina confricatione corrumpebatur mens nostra, pruriens in auribus. Sed illa mihi fabula non moriebatur, si quis amicorum meorum moreretur.*" Augustine, *Confessions*. Page 154.

a development in thought from William Watts' 17th century translation: "with whom I did love, what afterwards I did love: and this was a great fable, and a long lie; by the impure tickling whereof, my soul, which lay itching in my ears, was wholly corrupted. But that fable would not yet die with me, so oft as any of my friends died."[20] Watts' earlier translation conveyed a more literal translation, without any reference to fantasy as is seen in Hammond's translation. Hammond's translation portrays the modern development towards a negative consideration of fantasy in the intervening centuries between the two translations. This development will be explored in the following section in respect to literary criticism.

By the time Augustine finishes *On the Trinity*, which dating to the mid-420s is among his last works, along with *The City of God*, he demonstrates a potentially constructive use of fantasy [*phantasia*]. He uses '*phantasia*' in his work *On the Trinity* on more occasions than in any of his other recorded works, 18 times as compared to only six times in *The City of God*. '*Imaginatio*' is used in *On the Trinity* only five times as compared to three times in *The City of God*.

The following is an example of what I argue is a constructive use of fantasy by Augustine. He writes that 'things' [*aliquid*] can be 'fabricated' without necessarily being experienced, without being fully known, and with some absent external correlate:

> [*T*]*he consciousness has the power* of fabricating not merely things that have been forgotten but even things that have never been sensed or experienced; it can compose them out of things that have not dropped out of the memory, by increasing, diminishing, altering, and putting them together as it pleases. Thus it often pictures [*imaginator*] something as if it were like what it knows it is not like, or at least what it does not know that it is like. Here one has to be careful neither to lie and so deceive others nor to make an assumption and so deceive oneself. But if you avoid these two evils, *there is no harm in such imaginative fancies* [*imaginata phantasmata*], just as there is no harm in experiencing sensible things and retaining them in the memory, provided you do not desire them covetously if

[20] Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. William Watts, 2 vols. (London; Cambridge, Mass: William Heinemann; Harvard University Press, 1912). Page 171, vol. 1.

> they are nice nor shirk them shamefully if they are nasty. But when the will forsakes better things and avidly wallows in these it becomes unclean, and in this way such things can be thought about disastrously when they are present and even more disastrously when they are absent.[21]

Augustine warns of an unhealthy excessiveness in this power of the consciousness but also provides for the possibility that it can be used with 'no harm', if done without covetous desire and with shame for the 'nasty'.

The writings of Augustine show an early theological distinction between fantasy [*phantasia*] and imagination [*imagination*] while leaving ambiguity that will increase over the following centuries. However, he offers a potentially constructive role for fantasy, which my thesis builds upon, especially in the fifth chapter in terms of a therapeutic for fantasy.

b. Fantasy as distinct from imagination in Hobbes, Dryden, and Coleridge

The distinction between imagination and fantasy has widely increased in modern usage farther than the original distinctions and ambiguity found in Augustine.[22] Thomas Hobbes observes in *Leviathan* while explaining his theory of perception the historical similarities between imagination and fantasy. "The Latines call *Imagination*, from the image made in seeing; and apply the same, though improperly, to all the other senses. But

[21] Augustine, *The Trinity*, trans. Edmund Hill, ed. John E. Rotelle (Brooklyn, N.Y.: New City Press, 1991). Book 11, Chapter 2, Paragraph 8. Page 310. Emphases mine. "*Sed quia praevalet animus, non solum oblita, verum etiam non sensa nec experta confingere, ea quae non exciderunt augendo, minuendo, commutando, et pro arbitrio componendo, saepe* imaginatur *quasi ita aliquid sit, quod aut scit non ita esse, aut nescit ita esse. In quo genere cavendum est, ne aut mentiatur ut decipiat, aut opinetur ut decipiatur. Quibus duobus malis evitatis, nihil ei obsunt* imaginata phantasmata *: sicut nihil obsunt experta sensibilia et retenta memoriter, si neque cupide appetantur si juvant, neque turpiter fugiantur si offendunt. Cum autem in his voluntas relictis melioribus avida volutatur, immunda fit atque ita et cum adsunt perniciose, et cum absunt perniciosius cogitantur.*" Augustine, *La Trinité*, trans. P. Agaësse, vol. 16, Bibliothèque augustinienne, (Paris: Institut d'études augustiniennes, 1991). Page 182. Emphases mine.

[22] One of the earliest distinctions, specifically towards a romantic connotation being applied to the meaning of fantasy as a qualifier of imagination, is found in 1530s French fictional literature. E.g. Jean Bouchet, *Les triūphes de la noble et amoureuse dame & lart de honnestement aymer, compose par le Trauerseur des voyes perilleuses [J. Bouchet]* (Par., 1539).

the Greeks call it *Fancy*; which signifies *apparence* and is as proper to one sense, as to another."[23] Further, for Hobbes, 'imagination', or 'fancy', is exclusively influenced by 'sense'.[24] The role of sense perception, whether limited to sight as with Hobbes or considered to be from all five of the senses, will influence modern efforts to define the source and potential distinction between imagination and fantasy.

Subsequently, and in debt to Hobbes, the *Essays* of John Dryden also acknowledge a close relationship of meaning between imagination and fantasy. Dryden while writing about poetic invention argues for three necessary steps of description including both imagination and fantasy. The close relationship of the two is different, as will be shown, from Coleridge's setting of the two terms in opposition.

> The composition of all poems is, or ought to be, of wit; and wit in the poet … is no other than the faculty of imagination in the writer, which, like a nimble spaniel, beats over and ranges through the field of memory, till it springs the quarry it hunted after; or, without metaphor, which searches over all the memory for the species or ideas of those things which it designs to represent. *Wit written* is that which is well defined, the happy result of thought, or product of imagination … It is some lively or apt description, dressed in such colours of speech, that it sets before your eyes the absent object, as perfectly, and more delightfully than nature. So then the first happiness of the poet's imagination is properly invention, or finding of the thought; the second is fancy, or the variation, driving, or moulding of that thought as the judgment represents it proper to the subject; the third is elocution, or the art of clothing and adorning that thought so found and varied, in apt, significant, and sounding words: the quickness of the imagination is seen in the invention, the fertility in the fancy, and the accuracy in the expression.[25]

Dryden articulates the close, but not synonymous, relationship between imagination and fantasy in literary usage. Fantasy elaborates that which imagination invents, with 'variation, driving, or moulding of that thought'. He demonstrates in the field of modern

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[23] Thomas Hobbes and W. G. Pogson Smith, *Hobbes's Leviathan : reprinted from the edition of 1651* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1909). Part I., Ch. 2., Page 23. Emphases the author's.

[24] "[I]maginations, have been before, either totally or by parcels, in the sense." Hobbes and Pogson Smith, *Hobbes's Leviathan : reprinted from the edition of 1651*. Page 25.

[25] John Dryden and W. P. Ker, *Essays of John Dryden* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1900). Vol. I., pages 14-15. Emphasis the author's. Dryden is accredited as the first to use 'imagination' in terms of literary criticism. Cf. George G. Watson, "Contributions to a Dictionary of Critical Terms : Imagination and Fancy," *Essays in criticism* III, no. 2 (1953). Page 203.

literature a cooperation between imagination and fantasy not as close as the earlier work of Hobbes and not as distinct as the subsequent work of Coleridge.

Before examining Coleridge's infamous cleaving of the functional relationship between imagination and fantasy, we should note the Augustan critical context in which Coleridge wrote. Literary critic George Watson colourfully argues in the mid-20th century that the 'Augustan critics' of the 18th and 19th century used imagination and fantasy "promiscuously, on the principle that a second barrel may be useful to make up for what one missed with the first."[26] While some asserted in the modern period a subtle distinction between imagination and fancy, these two terms were commonly used interchangeably or closely, as was shown in the work of Hobbes and Dryden. Watson observes, "Coleridge, in fact, inherited a very long if confused tradition. But the turn that the tradition takes between Dryden and Coleridge cannot be understood apart from the confusion of *imagination* with *fancy*, and this confusion must first be clarified. It is a cardinal fact in our understanding of the problem that in the beginning no essential difference in meaning existed between the two words."[27] Watson notes the lack of historical distinction, as well as the growing trend for desynonymisation of terms.[28]

Coleridge's strict distinction between imagination and fancy was much clearer than the terms' previous usage. He writes in his *Biographia Literaria* that "[r]epeated meditations led me first to suspect … that fancy and imagination were two distinct and widely different faculties, instead of being, according to the general belief, either two

[26] Watson, "Contributions to a Dictionary of Critical Terms : Imagination and Fancy." Page 209. Cf. *Spectator*, no. 411.
[27] Watson, "Contributions to a Dictionary of Critical Terms : Imagination and Fancy." Page 206. Emphasis the author's.
[28] 'Desynonymisation' is a term invented by Coleridge to note upon a trend in linguistics. "[I]t is equally true that in all societies there exists an instinct of growth, a certain collective, unconscious good sense working progressively to desynonymise those words originally of the same meaning." Samuel Taylor Coleridge, James Engell, and Walter Jackson Bate, *Biographia literaria, or, Biographical sketches of my literary life and opinions*, 2 vols., The Collected works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984). Pages 82-83.

names with one meaning, or at furthest, the lower and higher degree of one and the same power."[29] The essential distinction, for Coleridge, is that the imagination is generative while the fancy is combinative. Coleridge clarifies his distinction between imagination and fancy:

> The IMAGINATION then I consider either as primary, or secondary. The primary IMAGINATION I hold to be the living Power and prime Agent of all human Perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM. The secondary I consider as an echo of the former, co-existing with the conscious will, yet still as identical with the primary in the *kind* of its agency, and differing only in *degree*, and in the *mode* of its operation. It dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to re-create; or where this process is rendered impossible, yet still at all events it struggles to idealize and to unify. It is essentially *vital*, even as all objects (*as* objects) are essentially fixed and dead.
>
> FANCY, on the contrary, has no other counters to play with, but fixities and definites. The Fancy is indeed no other than a mode of Memory emancipated from the order of time and space; and blended with, and modified by that empirical phenomenon of the will, which we express by the word CHOICE. But equally with the ordinary memory it must receive all its materials ready made from the law of association.[30]

In the works of his contemporaries, Coleridge is also noted to have distinguished imagination and fancy. From *Specimens of the Table Talk of the Late Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, edited by his son H. N. Coleridge, Coleridge comments on 23 June 1834 that "[t]he fancy brings together images which have no connection natural or moral, but are yoked together by the poet by means of some accidental coincidence. … The imagination modifies images and gives unity to variety."[31] Referring to Coleridge's distinction in terms of 'excess', Henry Crabb Robinson sympathetically notes in his *Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson* that "[t]he excess of fancy is delirium, of imagination mania. … Fancy is the arbitrary bringing together of things that lie remote, and forming them into a unity. The materials lie ready for the fancy,

[29] Coleridge, Engell, and Bate, *Biographia literaria, or, Biographical sketches of my literary life and opinions*. Page 82.
[30] Coleridge, Engell, and Bate, *Biographia literaria, or, Biographical sketches of my literary life and opinions*. Pages 304-305. Emphases the author's.
[31] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ed. Coburn Kathleen and B. Winer, The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Volume 14, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990). Pages 489-490.

which acts by a sort of juxtaposition. On the other hand, the imagination under excitement generates and produces a form of its own."[32] In Coleridge's own work and in those with whom he interacted, a clear distinction between the imagination and fancy is demonstrated.

The recent work of Platonist and philosopher of religion, Douglas Hedley, asserts that Coleridge's distinction desires to establish that "the relatively unproblematic mechanical mental capacity of fancy should not be confused with the vastly more mysterious, vital and creative imagination, which endeavours to see reality as a whole."[33] Nuancing Coleridge's distinction between imagination and fancy, Hedley writes:

> Consider Coleridge's much-discussed distinction between fancy as 'an aggregative and associative power' and imagination as a 'shaping and modifying power'. The imagination is linked to the unconscious as well as to the will. The imagination is more primordial and inscrutable than fancy. Fancy is a 'mode of Memory emancipated from the order of time and space'. This is the capacity of the mind to represent and combine remembered images. As such the term 'fancy' is not meant pejoratively; fancy is not bad as such, and can have a perfectly respectable and indeed necessary function.[34]

Hedley opens the possibility for a constructive assessment of fantasy within the tradition of Coleridge, albeit one of subordination. Hedley suggests that the creation of "a tripartite division is useful. 'Imagination' can denote the creative *nisus* towards unity, 'fancy' the mechanical association of mental representation, and 'fantasy' the capacity for delusion and escapism."[35] I am unconvinced that distinguishing between fancy and fantasy is helpful in achieving greater understanding of the influence of fantasy, especially when 'fancy' and 'fantasy' have been historically synonymous and 'fancy' has fallen out of common usage. In doing so, Hedley unnecessarily attaches an inherent value system to the power of fantasy, rather than building a therapeutic to consider what influences

[32] Henry Crabb Robinson and Thomas Sadler, *Diary, reminiscences and correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1869). Vol.1, page 306. From the entry 14 November 1810.
[33] Douglas Hedley, *Living Forms of the imagination* (London ; New York: T & T Clark, 2008). Page 53.
[34] Hedley, *Living Forms of the imagination*. Page 52.
[35] Hedley, *Living Forms of the imagination*. Page 52.

fantasy as I will endeavour to do. Betraying his argument, Hedley relies on qualifiers throughout his work *Living Forms of the Imagination* to create negative connotations for fantasy, such as 'bogus fantasies', 'beguiling fantasies', and 'sterile fantasies'.[36] If fantasy was inherently delusional and escapist, then these qualifiers would be unnecessary.

With a broader historical view, Watson observes that, in terms of value, "[t]he medieval and Renaissance distinction had amounted to a value-judgment: the findings of the imagination are probably reliable, those of the fancy probably not."[37] Watson outlines the meaning of imagination and fancy as distinguishable in three periods. First, the 14th century to Dryden, "[t]he words, with no special connection with literary criticism, share the one primary sense, *fancy* being from the beginning of inferior associations." Secondly, from Dryden to Coleridge, when "Dryden introduces them into the critic's vocabulary, where they maintain their primary sense with special application to the problem of poetic creation. Fancy's inferiority in prestige remains, but without emphasis." Lastly, beginning with and since Coleridge, writers either follow Coleridge's distinction, which Watson argues is rare, or they "glorify imagination (still at the expense of fancy) as the prime poetic faculty. Both words tend to pass out of useful currency."[38] Watson adeptly summarises Coleridge's originality:

> Coleridge's distinction was revolutionary in this sense, that imagination and fancy no longer referred to the action of summoning up past experience to the mind, but to the manner in which the mind set about, for the purpose of making poetry, to use that experience. Dryden's definition (to which Coleridge nowhere refers) had so far foreshadowed it; but then it had embodied the theory that poetry is a matter of good composition, and was therefore no longer arguable in an age which had rejected this theory. In any case, it had been neglected by the Augustan critics themselves. And so if we set aside Dryden's distinction, as we may do, as an unfruitful and unremembered episode in a long story, we may pronounce Coleridge's as revolutionary in the fullest sense. But though revolutionary it was indebted to tradition in the respect that it embodied in a novel form the ancient

[36] Cf. Hedley, *Living Forms of the imagination*. Pages 12, 29, 46, respectively.
[37] Watson, "Contributions to a Dictionary of Critical Terms : Imagination and Fancy." Page 211.
[38] Watson, "Contributions to a Dictionary of Critical Terms : Imagination and Fancy." Page 214.

> conviction that the imagination, in some way or another, is a superior affair to the fancy.[39]

Watson adds the rejoinder, which supports my theological use of fantasy, when asserting that "neither word at any time has been the preserve of the literary critic, and that outside [literary] criticism their primary sense remains unimpaired."[40] The primary sense is that fantasy or fancy is a particular mode of imagination. Regardless of originality, Coleridge strongly influenced the opposition of fantasy and the imagination, which, I argue, was unnecessary and had the effect of hindering a potentially constructive use of fantasy, especially with respect to faith in God.

An growing subjugation of fantasy to the broader power of the imagination, as shown in the work of Augustine, and increasing distinctions between imagination and fantasy, as demonstrated in the work of Hobbes, Dryden, and Coleridge, will be further analysed in the next chapter by engaging the work of Sartre on the imaginary to provide a framework to assert fantasy as a necessary and constructive mental power of the imagination, which will provide my theology of fantasy the structure to build an argument for fantasy's potentially supportive role in supporting faith in God.

III. HISTORICAL FAITH

Faith, like fantasy, is a term that suffers from ambiguity, especially in relation to belief. Faith generally refers to a mental recognition of and trust in an uncertain external reality, an object beyond the horizon of sensible, material perception. Faith in an uncertain, external reality and its source and sustenance—God—is supported, I argue, by fantasy. Fantasy is required for faith in God as it is an inherent power used to generate an

[39] Watson, "Contributions to a Dictionary of Critical Terms : Imagination and Fancy." Page 211-212.
[40] Watson, "Contributions to a Dictionary of Critical Terms : Imagination and Fancy." Page 214.

image of God in a living person's mind. Amongst the images that it generates, it can generate one that is potentially reflective of God who is materially absent. The potential accuracy and sustained viability of a fantasy image of God depends upon a therapeutic for fantasy as will be constructed in the fifth chapter. This therapeutic will be shown to be optimally mediated by the grace of the Holy Spirit in the sacraments. The possibility for faith in God to be held by a living person as supported by fantasy is two-fold, in that they are made in God's image and likeness, in the shared likeness of image-creating ability, and in that God is fully revealed in Jesus Christ, making God knowable in the flesh.[41]

In this section, I will demonstrate the differences and similarities between faith and belief. I will then elaborate the concept of faith in terms of a theology of fantasy. Faith will be shown to be a response to God, with aspects of obscurity, freedom, love, and humility, all of which are supported by fantasy.

a. Faith and belief

The etymology of the root word is the same for both faith and belief in ancient Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.[42] In modern languages, faith and belief, while related, are considered more distinct than in ancient usage. There are numerous expositions that elaborate this modern distinction.[43] An excellent analysis of the distinct, but related,

[41] Cf. "Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness'." Gen. 1:26 NSRVCE. Cf. also "And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth." John 1:14 NRSVCE.
[42] Cf. Jean-Yves Lacoste, *Encyclopedia of Christian theology* (New York ; London: Routledge, 2005). Entry on 'Faith: Biblical Theology' by Albert Vanhoye. "The words of the Bible that we translate as 'faith' or 'fidelity' [*'èmunâh*, *'émèt*], and as 'believe' [*hé'èmîn*], come from the same Hebrew root [*'mn*]; Greek shows the same relationship in *pistis*, 'faith,' and *pisteuein*, 'believe.'" The Latin cognate for faith and belief is *fides*. Cf. Jan Frederik Niermeyer, C. van de Kieft, and G. S. M. M. Lake-Schoonebeek, *Mediae Latinitatis lexicon minus : lexique latin médiéval-français/anglais = a medieval Latin- French/English dictionary* (Leiden ; New York: E.J. Brill, 1993). Pages 424-425. Cf. G. W. H. Lampe, "A Patristic Greek lexicon," (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961). Entries on πίστις, pages 1083- 1088, and δόξα, pages 380-381.
[43] E.g. Jean Pouillon, "Remarks on the verb 'to believe'," *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 6, no. 3 (2016). Graham Ward, "The Weakness of Believing: A Dialogue with de Certeau," *Culture, Theory, and Critique* 52, no. 2-3 (2011). Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *Faith and belief* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979). Avery Dulles, *The assurance of things hoped for : a theology of Christian faith* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994). Especially pages 194-195.

concepts of faith and belief in a Christian theological context is found in the work of 20th century French theologian Henri de Lubac's *The Christian Faith*.

> In its fullest meaning, faith presents an ensemble of characteristics that distinguish it from simple belief. Of all modes of knowing, it is in itself, paradoxically, the firmest and most assured, even though it always remains free and threatened. Whereas a belief, whatever it be, can only possess a greater or lesser degree of firmness, faith which as such is firm is always capable of having very diverse degrees of depth.[44]

As a 'mode of knowing', de Lubac considers faith to be potentially firmer than 'basic beliefs', but still free and varying in firmness. The complexity of knowledge in faith is broader and more complex than in that of beliefs. De Lubac continues, adding a sense of singularity and plurality, to faith and belief, respectively:

> [I]f one can speak of beliefs in the plural, it is clear that one cannot speak of faith except in the singular. Finally, faith is essentially a response: the response, which cannot be divided, to the Word of God who reveals and who, in revealing, reveals himself. By an ordinary belief, we believe something about a man; by faith, we believe something about God … but also, and more deeply, more totally, by an act of an entirely different nature, we believe in God. Our faith is our response to his call.[45] Even if we consider it under its noetic aspect, it is an act not only of knowledge but of recognition.[46] *Fecisti nos ad te, Deus-credimus in te*. 'God, you have made us for yourself; we believe in you.' We give you our faith. [47]

While articulating the distinction between faith and beliefs, de Lubac clarifies the concept of faith itself, which will be further explored in the next section.

The difference between the singularity of faith and the plurality of beliefs is important, even though faith and belief continue to be in relationship, as articulated by de Lubac:

> The intimate union, in a single act, of what we designate as belief and as faith is essential to Christianity and indissoluble. As enlightening as the distinction between the two concepts is, the dissociation of the two things would be fatal. … To progress 'from beliefs to faith' may be a fine program if one means by this that it is not enough to entertain 'beliefs', to adhere to 'truths', in order to be a Christian,

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[44] Henri de Lubac, *The Christian faith : an essay on the structure of the Apostles' Creed* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986). Page 145. Cf. 2 Cor 10:15.
[45] Cf. M.D. Chenu, "Foi et religion," *Études philosophiques* July-September (1966).
[46] Cf. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *Esquisse d'une dialectique de l'espirit*, vol. 7, *Ouevres*, (Paris: Éd. du Seuil, 1964). Page 155.
[47] Lubac, *The Christian faith : an essay on the structure of the Apostles' Creed*. Page 147.

> that it is still necessary to enliven one's beliefs and to integrate them in an act which involves one's whole being.[48]

An integration of the beliefs of the revelation of God is what de Lubac considers to be faith in God. The Christian faith is a 'total synthesis' of beliefs based on God's testimony.[49] Integration of beliefs is within the ability of fantasy to generate images which may reflect external reality. It is critical to note that faith in God is a response to his activity and is itself a gift. Faith is not originally created by the one who holds faith but is received from God. Fantasy offers the possibility of a person to respond with faith in God through the fantasies that fantasy generates which may reflect divine revelation.

The distinction between faith and belief can be further demonstrated in their French linguistic structure, which will also be helpful to analyse as French is the original source language of the primary authors that I will engage in this thesis in the following chapters. The 20th century French ethnologist and anthropologist Jean Pouillon observes in his schema on belief:

> *Croire á* … is to state that something exists; *croire en* … is to have confidence; *croire que* … is for something to be represented in a certain way. Although the difference between the two indirect constructions may appear slight, it is undeniable, as the following example shows: a person believes in [*croire en*, "trusts in"] God, while one believes in [*croire á*] the Devil, that is, one recognizes that he exists without, by definition, putting one's faith in him: one cannot *croire en* the Devil. *Croyance en* ["belief in, trust in"] God does imply *croyance á* ["belief in"] his existence, but implication is not identity. On the other hand, this implication seems so obvious that it often goes unformulated: a believer believes in [*croire en*, "trusts in"] God, he feels no need to say that he believes in [*croire á*] it, one would say, implicitly.[50]

The confidence of '*croire en*' can be said to support faith, '*foi*', while beliefs are '*croire a*' or '*croire que*'. This is consistent with de Lubac's integrating act of faith and beliefs.

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[48] Lubac, *The Christian faith : an essay on the structure of the Apostles' Creed*. Page 149.
[49] This is observed by de Lubac in the work of Jean Mouroux. Also, de Lubac states it's in agreement with Maurice Nédoncelle's *Conscience et Logos*, "My faith is my total synthesis." Cf. Lubac, *The Christian faith : an essay on the structure of the Apostles' Creed*. Page 146. Footnote 39.
[50] Pouillon, "Remarks on the verb 'to believe'." Page 486. The text in the square brackets is found in the original text.

While not a theological work, Pouillon's etymological work supports the articulation of 'faith' and 'belief' in the modern French theological context.

Christian faith can be observed in the Trinitarian theology of the Nicene Creed where faith is a condition of possibility *in* the persons of God—Father, Son, and Spirit, while beliefs are held *that* the Church exists, *that* there exists a communion of saints, and *that* sins can be forgiven, etc.[51] The mysteries of divine revelation are considered 'conditions of possibility', which, I argue, are generated for deliberation by fantasy.[52]

Having distinguished faith from belief or beliefs, I will next focus on further establishing a definition of faith in God in respect to my theology of fantasy. It will be important to keep in mind the distinction between faith and belief, alongside their potential for integration.

b. Faith in God as supported by a theology of fantasy

Broadly, I seek to identify and clarify the factors within the human condition that support faith in God. Fantasy, I argue, is an inherent power of the human condition that

[51] Cf. Lubac, *The Christian faith : an essay on the structure of the Apostles' Creed*. Pages 136-137. De Lubac echoes Alexander of Halès, calling the last four beliefs proclaimed in the creed to be 'general effects' "after '*in Spiritum sanctum*', '*ponuntur autum effectus generales quatuor*', (4:1135)" or as Erasmus taught, attributed to the work of the Holy Spirit, "*Explicatio in Symbolum Apostolorum: 'Et congruenter Ecclesia sancta sancto Spiritui annectitur'* (25-26). *'Didicisti Spiritum omnia sanctificantem; nunc accipe Ecclesiam ab illo sanctificatam*.' ([Lugduni Batavorum, 1541], 151.)" There is a classic distinction between the act of faith and the contents of faith, often referred to as the *fides qua* and the *fides quae*, respectively. An excellent analysis of this distinction is found in Dulles, *The assurance of things hoped for : a theology of Christian faith*. Esp. Ch. 9 'Nature and Object of Faith'. See also Lacoste, *Encyclopedia of Christian theology*. 'Faith, B: Historical and Systematic Theology', pages 552-561.

[52] Hans Urs von Balthasar states that the contents of the faith are beliefs, or 'conditions of possibility', which, I argue, are evidence of fantasy's role in faith and its power to generate images that possibly reflect God. The individual 'mysteries', which are 'presented as things to be believed', are nothing more than *conditions of possibility* for the perception of love in Christ: the Father (as the Personal Other) is the one who sends, so that the kenotic and obediential character of the Son's love never be lost from view; the Spirit is the one who is breathed forth, so that not only the freedom and fruitfulness be revealed, but also the shared mutuality, the witness and glorification character, the pure in-itselfness *of the love beyond the Logos*; the essential identity of the three 'Persons' in the Godhead is alone what guarantees the absolute name of Love to God and definitively rescues love—to the joy of those who believe in love—from the clutches of prying reason, giving 'strength' to those 'in whose hearts Christ dwells … being rooted and grounded in love, … that they may know the love of Christ which far surpasses all knowledge' (Eph. 3:17-19). Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Love alone is credible* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004). Pages 105-106. Emphases mine.

can support faith in God as it generates images that can deliberate the revelation of God's son, Jesus Christ. The human condition, according to the Judeo-Christian tradition, is such that a living person shares God's image and likeness. I argue that this sharing includes the living person's inherent ability to fantasise.

The theological work on faith by Dulles and de Lubac, as well as Bernard of Clairvaux, will indicate aspects of faith that my theology of fantasy can help to clarify and support. Dulles cautions, "[t]here is no one thing 'out there' that demands to be called 'faith.'" Generally, he elaborates, faith refers to 'certain aspects' of 'religious life', designating a "saving relationship with God into which people enter by responding to God as he reveals", but further than this, "there is little agreement."[53] He makes a distinction between faith used philosophically, as to mean "the acceptance as true or real of anything that is not immediately evident or demonstrable … an ingredient in virtually all human knowledge and activity", and faith used theologically, as to mean "everything connecting with the secular meaning of the term … [with the addition of] a response to God as he acts and manifests himself in the world and in human consciousness."[54] This distinction is critical for my thesis, which considers a power of the human condition, a matter of philosophy, in its potential support of faith in God, a matter of theology.

The Catholic tradition, reflected in Dulles' recognition of faith as a response, maintains that "[t]he 'obedience of faith' (Rom 16:26; cf. 1:5; 2 Cor 10:5-6) must be given to God who reveals, an obedience by which one entrusts [*committit*] one's whole self freely to God, offering 'the full submission of intellect and will to God who reveals' … and freely assenting to the revelation given by him."[55] Classically, there are five

[53] Dulles, *The assurance of things hoped for : a theology of Christian faith*. Page 170.
[54] Dulles, *The assurance of things hoped for : a theology of Christian faith*. Page 185. This is like the distinction between belief and faith, respectively.
[55] Dulles, *The assurance of things hoped for : a theology of Christian faith*. Pages 185-186. Dulles cites Vatican I, *Dei Filius*, chap. 3, DS 3008 and *Dei Verbum* 5 in this passage.

properties of faith: reasonable, supernatural, free, certain, and obscure.[56] Of these, fantasy's supportive role for faith is most evident with respect to its shared properties of obscurity and freedom, as will be shown in the next chapter.

Faith is obscure as "the truth of the content is neither immediately evident nor capable of being stringently demonstrated by intrinsic arguments" and "its object or content, even when grasped, exceeds the comprehensive powers of the human mind."[57] The content of fantasy, like faith, is not 'capable of being stringently demonstrated' and 'exceeds the comprehensive powers of the human mind'. Fantasy is more than just 'obscure' content; it is also the power to generate original content, which is a God-like and God-given power.

Faith is free as it respects a person's inherent agency, which allows for the spontaneous action of response. Responding in faith to divine revelation requires freedom, which can accept a reciprocal relationship with faith's object. De Lubac observes that the act of faith has a necessary reciprocity within its receptivity.

> When I believe *in* God, when I give him my faith, when in answer to his initiative I turn myself over to him from the bottom of my being, there is established between him and me a bond of reciprocity of such a kind that the same word, faith, can be applied to each of the two partners: 'The faith of the two parties', writes St. John of the Cross with a certain audacity, speaking of the relationship of the believing soul with God.[58] For what we have here indeed is 'the encounter of two persons offering themselves to each other in a fullness of presence, a total engagement'.[59] In fact, 'in its primitive and natural sense, the word *faith* suggests the idea of "loyal fidelity"'[60] and calls to mind the reciprocal gift of spouses.[61] This is the analogy used by Scripture in inviting us to think of the encounter between man and God,[62] although the word 'faith' most often suggests as well that which can be said only

[56] Cf. Dulles, *The assurance of things hoped for : a theology of Christian faith*. Ch. 11, 'Properties of Faith', pages 224-238. This is the order of the properties as they are considered by Dulles.
[57] Dulles, *The assurance of things hoped for : a theology of Christian faith*. Page 234.
[58] *The Living Flame*, strophe I, no. 4: "The faith of the two parties is confirmed when the soul's faith in God is confirmed." Cf. Louis Cognet, *Histoire de la spiritualité moderne* (Paris: Aubier, 1967). Page 142.
[59] O.C.D. Paul-Marie de la Croix, *L'Évangile de Jean et son témoignage spirituel* (1959). Page 299.
[60] F. Mallet (= M. Blondel), "*La Foi et la science*", in *Revue du clergé français* (August 1, 1906). Page 3.
[61] Cf. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cinquième Catéchèse*, Ch. 1: "God is called faithful [πιστός]. … See the dignity to which thou art elevated, since thou art called by the same name as God himself." (PG, 33:505 A.) Gregory of Nazianzen, *Discours* 40, Ch. 8: Baptism is "a pact concluded with God for a new life." (PG, 36:368 B.)
[62] Cf. Augustine, *In ps.* 32, 2, *Sermo* 1, no. 9: "*Fidelis homo est credens promittenti Deo; fidelis Deus est exhibens quod promisit homini*." (CCL, 38:254).

> of man: submission, total confidence, expectation of God's help, reliance on the pledges he has given us of his love and fidelity; in a word: Amen to God.[63]

Freedom for reciprocal, loyal fidelity, as observed by de Lubac, echoes an observation made by Marcel a couple of decades before in his theology of faith, which will be explored in the next chapter.[64]

Fantasy supports the reciprocity of faith between God and the one who holds faith, even while God is not entirely 'exterior' to living persons. De Lubac attempts to articulate faith in respect to the interiority and exteriority of God:

> For God is not exterior to the being he has created; if in one sense he is indeed the 'wholly Other', by that very fact he is not 'purely other'. He is, said Abbé Monchanin, 'wholly other than the other'. His transcendence brings about an intimate presence.[65] 'The transcendent source of spirits, he is their immanent link; he is the Power to whom *alone* man can and must give absolute obedience, unlimited sacrifice of self; he is the Power who urges us to what is good *as such*.'[66] … The voice resounds both outside and inside of the one he calls to believe, and it is in this sense that one can say that the experience of God, which is a sacred experience, since it is the experience of the sacrosanct, is not a simple experience of otherness.[67]

The power of fantasy in living persons generates images that can reflect the 'Power' and 'voice', which is both immanent and transcendent. The phenomenological work of Henry will prove indispensable in further considering how fantasy is influenced and constructive for this seeming paradox.

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[63] Lubac, *The Christian faith : an essay on the structure of the Apostles' Creed*. Pages 147-148. Emphases the author's.

[64] Cf. "Each one of us is in a position to recognize that his own essence is a *gift*—that it is not a *datum*; that he himself is a gift, and that he has no existence at all through himself. On the other hand, however, it is on the basis of that gift that freedom can grow or expand—that freedom which coincides with the trial in the course of which each man will have to make his own decision." Gabriel Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality* (South Bend, Ind.: St. Augustine's Press, 2001). Page 173. Emphases the author's. N.B. The original Gifford Lectures were presented in English and then translated into French.

[65] Here de Lubac cites St. Augustine's *Confessions 3.6.11*: "*Deus, interior intimo meo et superior summo meo*." "You were more intimately present to me than my innermost being, and higher than the highest peak of my spirit." Augustine, *The confessions : with an introduction and contemporary criticism*, trans. Maria Boulding, ed. David Vincent Meconi, Ignatius critical editions, (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012). Page 61.

[66] Here de Lubac cites an unpublished lecture of George Tyrell called *Revelation as Experience*, dated March 26, 1909, given to him by Mrs. A. David. Emphases the author's.

[67] Lubac, *The Christian faith : an essay on the structure of the Apostles' Creed*. Page 146-147.

While humility is not one of the classic properties of faith, I argue that it is a fundamental condition of a person to have faith. Humility can also be influential on fantasy. Both faith and fantasy depend upon a living person recognising their lack of perfect knowledge, which can motivate desire for more knowledge. Bernard of Clairvaux writes about the importance of humility for faith in his first book, *On Humility and Pride*. While contemplating the Scripture passages where Jesus identifies himself as 'the way, the truth, and the life (Jn 14:6)', Bernard observes that Jesus instructs: 'Learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart (Mt 11:29)'. He concludes that "the fruit of the knowledge of truth is humility."[68] He defines humility as "the virtue by which a man recognizes his own unworthiness because he really knows himself."[69] Bernard writes that "the greatest of all is he who spurns the use of things which the senses can perceive (as far as human frailty can) and goes up not by steps but in great leaps beyond our imagining; he has learned to fly to the heights in contemplation at times."[70] Bernard's use of 'imagining' is a broader reference to the mental activity that I more specifically consider to be fantasy. It takes humility to 'spurn' perception, leaping beyond 'imagining', to contemplate God in faith, which I argue is supported by the power of fantasy. Humility will also be shown as essential for Marcel's theology of faith.[71]

In Bernard, we see humility at the intersection of faith and knowledge, driven by the desire to know what is unknown, which requires the use of fantasy to generate conditions of possibilities for knowledge reflective of reality to be held in faith.

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[68] Bernard of Clairvaux, *Bernard of Clairvaux : selected works*, trans. G. R. Evans, Classics of Western spirituality, (New York: Paulist Press, 1987). Pages 102-103.
[69] Clairvaux, *Bernard of Clairvaux : selected works*. Page 103.
[70] Clairvaux, *Bernard of Clairvaux : selected works*. Page 150.
[71] Cf. "[L]ove is the active refusal to treat itself as subjective, and it is in this refusal that it cannot be separated from faith; in fact it is faith." Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 62. Ultimately, he simply asserts, "true love is humble." Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 83. This will be analysed in chapter five. Another example of the role of humility in faith is found in Jonathan L. Kvanvig, *Faith and humility* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

By looking at the field of faith, in relation to belief, and its aspects of reciprocity, obscurity, freedom, and humility, a theology of fantasy in support of faith in God emerges. To elucidate how fantasy can support faith in God in consciousness, an analysis of phenomenology's treatment of belief, absence, and time in consciousness is needed.

IV. The use of Phenomenology for a Theology of Fantasy

To be able to constructively engage Sartre and Henry's use of phenomenology for a theology of fantasy, it is necessary to first identify helpful methodological tools within phenomenology. My scope is not to present an exhaustive explanation or defence of phenomenology, but to engage how its consideration of belief, absence, and time can support a theology of fantasy. I will look to the systematic analysis of phenomenology in the contemporary work of Robert Sokolowski and Dan Zahavi to offer insights on the usefulness of phenomenology for my theology of fantasy.

a. Phenomenological Belief

Phenomenology is helpful to further articulate the concept of belief, whether in the natural attitude or extrapolated to the religious attitude. In his *Introduction to Phenomenology*, Sokolowski phenomenologically concludes that the natural attitude, by which we perceive the world, requires belief.

> The manner in which we accept the things in the world, and the world itself, is one of *belief*. As we experience other people, trees, buildings, cats, stones, and the sun and stars, we experience them as being there, as true, as real. The basic character, the default mode of our acceptance of the world and things in it, is one of belief or, to use the Greek term, *doxa*.
>
> … Prominent among all our beliefs is the belief we have in the world as a whole. This belief, which we could call not just a *doxa* but the *Ur-doxa* … *World belief* is not subject to correction or refutation the way any particular belief is.[72]

[72] Sokolowski, *Introduction to phenomenology*. Page 45. Emphases the author's.

Even that which is perceived by sight, felt, touched, heard, and smelled, Sokolowski argues, must be held in belief of their respective mental projections. It is important to note that Sokolowski considers fantasy in the tradition of Coleridge by treating it as derisive of truth and reality, while arguing for the constructive potential of the imagination.[73] What Sokolowski generally attributes to the imagination should more specifically be considered fantasy. As I argue, fantasy should not be considered independent of the imagination, but a power of it.

I argue that belief depends upon the deliberation supported by fantasy, that is, the freeing of the external world from imaginary projections in the consciousness of the mind. This will be especially important as I consider in the fourth chapter my theology of fantasy in light of Henry's phenomenology of life. Life, he adamantly argues, is not of the world. Fantasies can be deliberated for potential reflection of external reality beyond the world. Belief is an assenting 'mode of knowledge', to use de Lubac's term, contingent upon the capacity of fantasy to generate possibilities for deliberation. What influences the image's potential to reflect external reality beyond the world depends on a therapeutic for fantasy, which will be proposed in the fifth chapter. Fantasy allows for belief after deliberation of the external reality of mental projections, regardless of their implausibility or uncertainty. The human condition contains a capacity, that is fantasy, for the consideration of the true amidst the implausible and immaterial, as will be demonstrated in the second chapter with the work of Sartre. Implausible and immaterial images can be

[73] Sokolowski treats fantasy with, at best, trite, if not bungling, care. At times, he bundles fantasy with dreaming, as in "[t]hat sort of imaginary projection is all right for dreams and fantasy, but it is not helpful in buying a house", and at other times denigrates it to simple falsity, as in "[t]o know that some experiences are truly past, to know that some are *just* fantasy, is not achieved by everyone." Sokolowski, *Introduction to phenomenology*. Pages 73 and 75, respectively. Emphasis mine. Like Sokolowski, Graham Ward also associates dreams and fantasies, and appeals to Augustine, observing that "Augustine was as wary of dreams as he was of imagination; both were far too close to fantasy and self-indulgence." Graham Ward, *Unimaginable : what we imagine and what we can't* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2018). Chapter 5, 'Imagination and Dreaming'. Page 133.

true and reflect the breadth of external reality. Fantasy allows a living person to come to know the truth of reality, the *Ur-doxa*.

The work of Zahavi further elaborates the role of belief in cognition. He alludes to aspects of what I consider to be fantasy when he observes that "I can think about the backside of the moon, about square circles, unicorns, next Christmas, or the principle of non-contradiction. But how are these *absent* objects, *impossible* objects, *fictive* objects, *future* objects, or *ideal* objects supposed to affect me causally?"[74] These adjectives, emphasised by Zahavi, all refer to traits of fantasy, that is, they consider the potential reality of objects not sensed. Zahavi defends the use of phenomenology for cognition by asserting that "if we want to understand the world we are living in, we need to factor in the role played by embodied, perceiving, thinking, and feeling agents, and here phenomenology has something important to offer."[75] Underlying the possibility of knowledge of the world by these 'agents' is their capacity for fantasy, their ability to create images of potential reality. Fantasy allows for the phenomenological cognition of the seemingly implausible, unembodied, unperceived, unthought, and unfelt.

Zahavi directly refers to fantasy when he lists forms of consciousness and encourages an analysis of their intending objects. "Regardless of whether we are talking about a perception, thought, judgment, *fantasy*, doubt, expectation, or recollection, all of these diverse forms of consciousness are characterized by intending objects and cannot be analysed properly without a look at their objective correlate, e.g. the perceived, doubted, or expected object."[76] Fantasy as a form of consciousness, I argue, has the possibility of supporting belief in an unsensed objective external correlate.

[74] Dan Zahavi, *Phenomenology : the basics*, The basics, (Abingdon, Oxon ; New York, NY: Routledge, 2019). Page 22. Emphases the author's.
[75] Zahavi, *Phenomenology : the basics*. Page 142.
[76] Zahavi, *Phenomenology : the basics*. Page 68. Emphasis mine.

Phenomenologically, fantasy can support belief by its operative intentionality as well as its act-intentionality. Yet, I would argue, fantasy also has the capacity to be *non-objectifying*. A scant reference to this power, albeit not described as fantasy, is cited by Zahavi when elaborating the work of Husserl and Merleau-Ponty.

> [T]here is also a more fundamental passive or *operative* form of non-objectifying intentionality, which Husserl analysed in detail in some of his later works. According to Merleau-Ponty, this original and basic world-relation cannot be explained or analysed further. All phenomenology can do is to call attention to it, and make us respect its irreducibility.[77]

Intentionality plays a constitutive role in phenomenology. Sartre will be careful to warn that "[o]ne must in no way confuse *intention*, in our sense of the term, and will. To say that there can be an image without will in no way implies that there can be an image without intention."[78] While images can be involuntary, they always have intentionality.[79]

To understand an image's intentionality, a phenomenological reduction is necessary.[80] To consider the role of the 'will' in the image is a separate consideration from that of an image's intentionality. The phenomenological *epochē* brackets beliefs, suspending doxic modalities. "We can know apodictically that an object is identified in blends of presence and absence, but we can still be *vague* about the full import of what is to be present and what is to be absent."[81] An image's pervasive vagueness is an aspect of fantasy, which can hold belief amidst vagueness while still having the potential for growth of knowledge in consciousness of external reality.

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[77] Zahavi, *Phenomenology : the basics*. Page 68. Emphasis the author's. Cf. Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Donald A. Landes, *Phenomenology of perception* (London: Routledge, 2012). Page 82. Fantasy is referenced throughout the decades of Husserl's work, yet he never settles on a clear articulation of it. Cf. Edmund Husserl and John B. Brough, *Phantasy, image consciousness, and memory (1898-1925)*, Collected works / Edmund Husserl, (Dordrecht: Springer, 2005).

[78] Jean-Paul Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination* (London: Routledge, 2004). Page 19. Emphasis the author's. Jean-Paul Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*, 1986 ed. (Barcelona: Gallimard, 2022, 1940). Page 43.

[79] "The image is defined by its intention." Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 57. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 116.

[80] One of the primary tools of phenomenology as developed by Husserl is to bracket off contextual and historical layers, which may skew the truth of the thing itself, called the *epochē* or phenomenological reduction.

[81] Sokolowski, *Introduction to phenomenology*. Page 58. Emphasis mine.

b. Phenomenological Absence

Fantasy can intend absence as a notion of empty intentionality. "An empty intention is an intention that targets something that is not there, something absent, something not present to the one who intends."[82] As will be extensively explored through Sartre's study of the imaginary, there is an aspect of absence or lack of fullness in images' noetic forms, which, I argue, should be understood as fantasy due to absence of an external sensible object being a necessary aspect of fantasy. Zahavi observes that the

> [A]bsent plays a role in our perception, even when absent. … Perceptual experience consequently involves an interplay of presence and absence. When we perceive an object, we always experience more than what is intuitively presented.[83]

Fantasy allows for the conceptualisation of the 'more'—objects held absently—through its ability to generate images of absent external correlates. Absence and excess are characteristics of fantasy.

The phenomenological consideration of absence provides the opportunity to further articulate the role of fantasy in support of faith in God. In phenomenological absence, like fantasy, there is also an element of the uncertain. Take the classic phenomenological example of a box, which has six sides, only three of which can be seen at any given moment. The other three sides remain unseen. A person has the freedom and power to generate images of the unseen sides even though they are absent and uncertain. Uncertainty is the result of absence, perceptions unsensed. Even if they have been seen before and are held within the memory, perhaps from the person having previously turned the box around to examine its other sides, it is still necessary, at any given moment, to fantasise the presently unsensed sides, which may have subsequently changed. The mental consideration of the absent and the possibility of change in its objects are aspects

[82] Sokolowski, *Introduction to phenomenology*. Page 33.
[83] Zahavi, *Phenomenology : the basics*. Page 10-11. Sokolowski also and succinctly asserts that, "[a]ll experience involves a blend of presence and absence." Sokolowski, *Introduction to phenomenology*. Page 18.

of fantasy. "The horizon of the potential and the absent surrounds the actual presences of things. The thing can always be presented in more ways than we already know; the thing will always hold more appearances in reserve."[84] Fantasy is more than just the power to change images; it has the capacity to generate them amidst absence of an external correlate.

c. Phenomenological Time

Fantasy's role in faith is supported by its ability to make images with absent external correlates outside of chronological time. Fantasy generates images in consciousness at the intersection of belief, absence, and time. This intersectionality becomes more apparent as Sokolowski distinguishes the memory from the imagination.

> The major difference between memory and imagination lies in the doxic modality proper to each. Memory operates with belief. The memories I call up, or that intrude on me, are of what really happened and what I did experience and do. It is not the case that I first have the memories and then add belief to them; rather, they originally come with belief (of how it was), just as my perceptions come with belief (of how it is). We have to make an effort to delete the belief in memory, or to change it into another modality, such as doubt or denial.
>
> Imagination, on the other hand, is pervaded by a kind of suspension of belief, a turn into the mode of 'as if'.
>
> … Imagination therefore works in a doxic modality different from that of perception and memory; it is unreal, only 'as if.' However, there is a *form of imagination that has to get realistic*, that has to move back into the mode of belief. It is the *kind of imagination* we engage in when we are planning something, when we imagine ourselves in some future condition that we can bring about through the choices that we make. This is an anticipatory form of imagination, and it brings us back to earth, so to speak, from the flights of pure fantasy.[85]

Despite Sokolowski's critical attitude towards the constructivity of fantasy for knowledge, his elaboration of the phenomenological belief, absence, and time, including time's effect on memories, is helpful.

[84] Sokolowski, *Introduction to phenomenology*. Page 28.
[85] Sokolowski, *Introduction to phenomenology*. Page 71-73. Emphases mine.

Fantasy generates images of absent external correlates with elasticity in time, whether in the past as memories or as other images, such as dreams and hallucinations. "An important constituent of our personal identity is found in the interplay of memories, imaginations, and perceptions, and in the flow of our awareness of interior time."[86] Life's 'memories, imaginations, and perceptions' can be generated as fantasies with 'interior time'. "We live constantly in the future and in the past, in the distant and the transcendent, in the unknown and the suspected; we do not live only in the world around us as it is given to the five senses."[87] What exists is beyond that which is simply remembered, imagined, or perceived in a now-moment. To extend awareness beyond the now-moment is to increase knowledge of what exists. Fantasy extends temporal awareness by generating images for the deliberation of potential knowledge.

While distinct from other various modalities, such as remembering, dreaming, and projecting, fantasy can also support them in generating fluidity and relationality between them. Memories can become dreams, hallucinations can become memories; fantasy facilitates this fluidity.[88] Fantasy is an inherent, always-potentially-in-use power to generate images of belief, with absent external correlates, in fluid time. Fantasy allows for consideration of potential truth in mental concepts that are initially undetermined, implausible, and yet-to-be-deliberated.

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[86] Sokolowski, *Introduction to phenomenology*. Page 32. A memory, in phenomenological terms, is a "noematic form that remembered objects take on, a form different from that of perceived objects, which are only here and now, not there and then." Sokolowski, *Introduction to phenomenology*. Page 68.
[87] Sokolowski, *Introduction to phenomenology*. Page 37.
[88] Hedley observes: "Even those images that are recalled from what Augustine calls the 'vast, immeasurable sanctuary' of memory are subject to imaginative revision." Hedley, *Living Forms of the imagination*. Page 47. Cf. Augustine, *Confessions*. X, 9. William Blake while commenting on a poem of Wordsworth asserts that "Imagination is the Divine Vision not of The World, or of Man, nor from Man as he is a Natural Man, but only as he is a Spiritual Man. Imagination has nothing to do with Memory." William Blake and Geoffrey Keynes, *Poetry and prose of William Blake* (London ; New York: The Nonesuch Press ; Random House, 1948). Page 822.

The phenomenological aspects of belief, absence, and time provide the groundwork to build a theology of fantasy in the imaginary as will be developed in the following chapters.

V. Conclusion

The work in this chapter prepares my thesis for a subsequent engagement with Jean-Paul Sartre, Gabriel Marcel, and Michel Henry, each of whom will contribute to a constructive understanding of fantasy in support of faith in God. Fantasy as an imaginative power and type of image supports the act of faith as a virtue and content. There is a cognitive relationship between the power and objects of fantasy and of faith.

A helpful metaphor, also found in the work of Dryden, compares the fundamental role of fantasy in faith to that of plant fertiliser. Fertiliser as a form of nitrogen exists on its own but does not affect much for itself, in that, it does not fulfil its potential on an external object. When it is added to a plant or seed, accelerated growth can happen, that is, the potential of the fertiliser is revealed if other conditions are right. Like fertiliser, a plant or seed's existence depends on the world, which is creation. There is unavoidable fertiliser in the soil of creation just as there is unavoidable fantasy in the consciousness of all living persons. Fantasy is a power in the mind and can be influenced externally, just as fertiliser can be added to various plants or seeds for a variety of effects. There is also an element of the unknown in what effects will be produced for the plant fertilised and the concepts of the mind 'fantasised'. Therapeutically, if too much fertiliser is added, it might kill the plant. Alternatively, if not enough fertiliser is added, the plant will fail to thrive. Fantasy can strengthen faith, along with hope and love, provided other contributions, such as grace and sacramentality, are present and can be revealed through fantasy's generative potential.

Fantasy prepares and points one towards that which is other, beyond what has been experienced or reasoned. Hedley, who quotes Clement of Alexandria when he concludes a chapter reflecting upon religion as either 'Fantasy or Legitimate Longing', which is a dichotomy that I reject, observes, "'Come, I will show you the Logos and the mysteries of the Logos; and I will show them to you in the images which are entrusted to you.' This is the faith that we can rise from the visible to the invisible and that the imagination, as the immediate source of our images, is a dim mirror and index of the boundless plenitude of the infinite I AM."[89] The imagination may be 'dim', but it can still generate images. These images are more accurately described as fantasy. Although using a term that is too broad, Hedley poignantly summarises the importance of imagination in apprehending God:

> The experience of God is neither to be construed in terms of a quasi-objective presence nor a purely figurative fiction. Imaginative apprehension of the Divine is pre-eminently the awareness of that reality which is pressing and proximate for the soul and yet hard to grasp or articulate in the categories appropriate for the physical domain. For human beings the tension between the material and the spiritual, between inward and outward worlds, is resolved in the imaginative vision of their underlying unity.[90]

The 'tension' of 'underlying unity' between the human being and God, the 'imaginative vision', that is faith, is better described as a theological use of fantasy.

This chapter has argued for a theology of fantasy by analysing the historical and contemporary meaning of fantasy in relation to imagination, concepts of faith and belief, and the methodology of phenomenology, especially in consideration of its aspects of belief, absence, and time. This field and methodology will continue to be developed in the subsequent chapters to further establish a theology of fantasy in support of faith in God.

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[89] Hedley, *Living Forms of the imagination*. Page 142. Cf. Clement de Alexandrie, *Le Protreptique*, trans. Claude Mondésert (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1976). Page 188.
[90] Hedley, *Living Forms of the imagination*. Page 37.

CHAPTER II: FANTASY IN JEAN-PAUL SARTRE'S *THE IMAGINARY*

Is it true that we confer reality*, which is to say a presence in flesh, on these objects that are given to a healthy consciousness as absent?*[91]

I. INTRODUCTION

Jean-Paul Sartre's articulation of the imaginary through his phenomenological psychology will provide my thesis a framework to clarify the potential of fantasy's support of faith in God and to provide the context to assert that fantasy generates images through spontaneity and freedom despite an absent external correlate. I will use Sartre's notion of the imaginary to elaborate how fantasy can support the deliberation of the truth of objective external correlates in consciousness for faith, which will allow for subsequent theological engagement.

While Sartre's early work in phenomenology may be an unusual starting point for a *theological* treatise on fantasy, it will be shown to be constructive as he provides an articulation of the imaginary wherein fantasy can be described as an inherent capacity and mental object in human consciousness that can support the possibility of faith in an imperceptible and nonconceptual object. Sartre's seminal book, *The Imaginary*, written in 1940, is an innovative exploration of the concept of 'image'. Considered by some as one of the greatest works on the imaginary in Western literature, *The Imaginary* will provide a critical framework to consider belief in imaging consciousness.[92]

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[91] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 149. Emphasis the author's. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 287.

[92] Sartre was particularly aware of the preceding and influential work of Edmund Husserl and Henri Bergson. Cf. 'Historical Introduction' by Arlette Elkaïm-Sartre, Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Pages viii-ix. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Pages iii-v. The work of Bergson and Husserl is regularly referenced and critiqued by Sartre throughout *The Imaginary*.

In this chapter, I will examine Sartre's claim that images are found in consciousness. Consciousness as a 'whole' world is constitutive of Sartre's treatment of images. Throughout *The Imaginary*, Sartre's central concern is to examine the image in all its aspects. His first part, 'The Certain', examines that which is perceived and held by the conscious as a perceptual image. His second part, 'The Probable', explores the external correlate, the mental analogon, and their distinction. His third part, 'The Role of the Image in Psychic Life', elaborates the role of the image regarding symbol, thought, and perception. His fourth part, 'The Imaginary Life', primarily deliberates upon the 'irreal'. Sartre's consideration of the irreal will be especially useful for my theological articulation of fantasy's role in supporting faith. The deliberation of truth in Sartrean irreality is, I argue, supported through the mental power of fantasy.

Fantasy is a power of the imagination that is necessary for the consideration of potential external correlates of images. Images in the mind may be an analogon to an unsensed external reality or may be pure fiction. Objective external reality is known by impressions manifesting intentionally in the conscious and considered by intuition in images. A major contribution by Sartre is the observation that perception and conception are dependent upon the imaging consciousness.[93] He argues that knowledge of the truth depends upon images in the imaging consciousness.

As a power of the imagination, I argue that fantasy will have an essential role in grasping the truth of external reality in images through Sartre's notion of irreality.[94] For

[93] Kate Kirkpatrick observes that this is one of Sartre's major contributions. In referencing Sartre's early works on phenomenology, *Imagination: A Psychological Critique*, *The Transcendence of the Ego*, and *The Imaginary*, as well as his engagement with Henri Bergson, she observes, "In these works we can see both Sartre's debt to and departure from Bergson, who also held that mental images are not weakened perceptions. … Despite its dangers the imaginary is valuable, for without 'imaging consciousness' there could be no 'realizing consciousness' that brings imagined things into existence." Kate Kirkpatrick, *Sartre and theology*, Philosophy and theology, (London: Bloomsbury, 2017). Page 26.

[94] The distinction between and historical precedence of the terms 'truth' and 'reality' is aptly considered in Olivier Boulnois, "L'invention de la réalité," *Quaestio (Turnhout)* 17 (2017). Truth and reality are distinct in precedence while being complementary. Truth is more foundational and concerns veracity. Reality is the experience of truth.

Sartre, irreality is the experience of images whose external correlate is not perceived or conceived. Fantasies are irreal images because they have an uncertain external reality. Fantasy allows for the deliberation of potential truth for the sake of knowledge of objective external reality through its creation of images with uncertain external correlates.

Sartre's phenomenology asserts that an image has an aspect of belief. He states: "to believe is to have confidence. Simply, in so far as it is consciousness of belief it is not consciousness of knowledge."[95] The deliberation of the reality of external objects can be constructively engaged for a theology of faith through Sartre's notion of belief in image with the support of fantasy. This will be demonstrated by analysing Sartre's articulation of the transcendent imaging consciousness, fantasy in irreality, and the role of belief in the fantasy image. I will finish by critiquing aspects of Sartre's analysis as I prepare to theologically engage the concept of fantasy in subsequent chapters, especially through the work of Gabriel Marcel and Michel Henry.

II. TRANSCENDENCE IN IMAGING CONSCIOUSNESS

When Sartre wrote *The Imaginary*, the imaginary was still broadly seen as part of the science of psychology. Since its publication, there has been a broader exploration of the imaginary in other fields, including theology.[96] Sartre's method of study is to

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[95] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 162. "*Elle est donc confiance aveugle puisque croire c'est avoir confiance. Simplement, en tant qu'elle est conscience de croire, elle n'est pas conscience de savoir.*" Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 313. It should be noted here that Sartre uses '*croire*' rather than *foi*.

[96] The imagination as an object of study for metaphysics and theology has become increasingly popular, with notable works such as William F. Lynch, *Christ and Apollo : the dimensions of the literary imagination* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975); Walter Brueggemann, *The prophetic imagination*, 40th Anniversary Edition. ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2018); James Engell, *The creative imagination : Enlightenment to Romanticism* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1981); David Tracy, *The analogical imagination : Christian theology and the culture of pluralism* (New York: Crossroad, 1981); Richard Kearney, *The wake of imagination : ideas of creativity in Western culture*, Problems of modern European thought, (London: Hutchinson, 1988); Hans Boersma, *Imagination and interpretation : Christian perspectives* (Vancouver: Regent College Pub., 2005); Nicolas Steeves, *Grâce à l'imagination intégrer l'imagination en théologie fondamentale*, Cogitatio fidei, (Paris: les Éditions du Cerf, 2016).

"produce images in ourselves, reflect on these images, [and] describe them, which is to say, try to determine and classify their distinctive characteristics."[97] His method is centred on the notion of 'image', which he defines as "an act that aims in its corporeality at an absent or nonexistent object, through a physical or psychic content that is given not as itself but in the capacity of 'analogical *representative*' of the object aimed at", in short, an 'analogon'.[98]

> In fact, the mental image aims at a *real thing*, which exists among others in the world of perception; but it aims at it through a psychic content. No doubt that content must fulfil certain conditions: in the image consciousness we apprehend an *object* as an 'analogon' for another object. Pictures, caricatures, impersonators, spots on the wall, and entoptic lights: all these *representatives* have the common character of being objects for consciousness. The purely psychic 'content' of the mental image cannot escape this law: a consciousness that faces the thing that it aims at is a perceptual consciousness; a consciousness that aims emptily [*vide*] at the thing is a pure sign consciousness [*une pure conscience de signification*].[99]

Sartre explores aspects of images in perceptual consciousness and sign consciousness, observing that both types of images are in consciousness and transcendent.

a. Imaging consciousness

A fundamental tenant of Sartre's approach is that the image is a 'function of consciousness'.[100] Throughout *The Imaginary*, he explores the relation between an external object and its image held in consciousness. He observes that this relation is never perfectly representative. When an external correlate appears in the imaging consciousness, 'at the very heart of perception', Sartre notes a 'fundamental

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[97] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 5. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 17.
[98] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 20. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 46.
[99] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Pages 52-53. Emphases the author's. My interlineal original language text. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 110. 'Signification' will be a central tenant of Henry's theology of faith. Henry also uses the term '*vide*', as will be shown in the fourth chapter.
[100] Cf. Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 20. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 47.

indeterminacy'.[101] The indeterminacy of an object does not preclude its existence, at least in the imaginary.

Sartre's treatment of the imaginary is especially notable for its consideration of the image as created in consciousness.[102] "In perception, all things are given as being what they are. It must be understood by this that the thing occupies a strictly defined position in time and space and that each of its qualities is strictly determined: this is the principle of individuation."[103] However, "[a]n imaging consciousness includes knowledge, intentions, and can include words and judgements."[104] Describing the imaginary as a function of consciousness, Sartre clarifies that "like knowledge, imaging consciousness aims at the external object and in its externality, which is to say in as much as it is made of juxtaposed parts; but in as much as it is affectivity, it gives the object as an undifferentiated whole."[105] The important role of affectivity in fantasy is central to my thesis and will be especially examined when considering Sartre's concept of irreality and later in the work of Michel Henry and Jean-Yves Lacoste.

Sartre distinguishes between perceptual consciousness and imaging consciousness. The former only ever considers parts, whereas the latter grasps the whole.

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[101] Cf. "So, for the first time in our description of imaging consciousness, we see appearing—and this at the very heart of perception—a fundamental indeterminacy." Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 27. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 61.

[102] Arlette Elkaïm-Sartre observes in her 'Historical Introduction' for the 1986 Éditions Gallimard of *The Imaginary* that "The image is, according to most classical psychologists, a material trace, and thus affected with a certain inertia, whereas for Sartre, as one can see, it is the product of an act of consciousness, and so his conception of the relation between image and thought can only be different." Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page xi. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page ix.

[103] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 89. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 177. In regard to perceptions of the past—memory—and anticipations of perception in the future—foresight, Sartre observes: "All real existence is given with present, past and future structures, therefore the past and the future as essential structures of the real are equally real, which is to say correlates of a realizing thesis." Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 182. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 350.

[104] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 97. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 187.

[105] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 88. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Pages 174-175.

"My consciousness is therefore consciousness of a world, I have projected all my knowledge, all my preoccupations, all my memories, and even that necessity of being-in-the-world that is imposed on being human, I have projected all this, but in the imaginary mode, on the image that I presently constitute."[106] Sartre asserts that the whole of consciousness is one's 'world'. To understand Sartre's major contribution to the study of the imagination, especially considering consciousness, it is essential to grasp the distinction he makes between the objects of perception and of imagination. "[I]f perception and image are not by nature distinct, if their objects are not given to consciousness as *sui generis*, there will not remain any means for us to distinguish these two ways in which objects are given; in a word, we have observed the insufficiency of external criteria of the image. … [T]he image, taken in itself, contains in its inner nature an element of radical distinction."[107] Not only are the objects of perception and image distinct, but Sartre gives precedence to the existence of the objects of the imagination over those of perception. The reality of the object of an image is distinct from the reality of an object of perception. Sartre does not deny the existence of the objects of perception but demands a distinction of precedence in favour of the objects of the imaginary. He asserts greater influence and priority of consideration to objects of the imaginary in consciousness.

In contrast to objects of perceptual consciousness, Sartre observes that "an image is nothing other than a relation. … So, in the weave of the synthetic acts of consciousness

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[106] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 167. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 324. Historically, memory has been a source of truth and reality but given that it is the consequence of that which has previously been perceived or imagined is secondary as a source. Cf. Ward, *Unimaginable : what we imagine and what we can't*. Chapter 4 "Imagination and Memory". Ward observes that imagination since the Romantics has been characterised by 'spontaneity' and 'freedom'. Cf. Ward, *Unimaginable : what we imagine and what we can't*. Page 145.

[107] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 12. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 31. The English translation does not italicise '*sui generis*', but the French text does.

there appear at times certain structures that we call imaging consciousness."[108] The imaging consciousness is present alongside perceptual consciousness and conceptual consciousness. Since an image is necessarily relational for Sartre, he can further observe that "the image, intermediate between concept and perception, reveals [*livre*] to us the object under its sensible aspect but in a way that prevents it on principle from being perceptible."[109] Images are 'synthetic acts' that are given wholly. Sartre observes that "the image is a synthetic act that links a concrete, not imaged, knowledge to elements more properly representative. An image is not learned: it is organized exactly as the objects that are learned, but, in fact, it is given whole, for what it is, in its appearance."[110] Images are free to come and go but are always 'given whole'. Sartre frequently returns to this point that images are not learned.

Images have a relationship of representation with external objects while always remaining distinct from them.

> Imaging knowledge … is a consciousness that seeks to transcend itself, to posit the relation as an *outside*. Not, to tell the truth, by affirming its truth: we would have only a *judgement*. But in positing its content as existent *through* a certain density of the real that serves as its representative. This real, of course, is not given, even in the indifferent and very general form of 'something'. It is only aimed at. Imaging knowledge presents itself therefore as an effort to determine 'something', as a will to reach the intuitive, as a waiting for images.[111]

Images cannot be learnt even though they can mediate the truth of reality with degrees of clarity in terms of the intuition of the external object. "[K]nowledge in a pure state is presented as a consciousness of relations. Naturally, it is an empty consciousness, because

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[108] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 7. "[*Q*]'*un n'est rien autre qu'un rapport. … [D]ans la trame des actes synthétiques de la Conscience apparaissent par moments certaines structures que nous appellerons consciences imageantes*." Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 22. The translator fails to capitalise 'conscience' and thereby fails to carry the emphasis Sartre applies.

[109] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 92. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 181. '*Livre*', here translated as 'reveal', will later be translated as 'yield', which carries a sense of autonomous production.

[110] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 9. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 25.

[111] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 66. Emphases the author's. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 132.

sensible matter is thought of only as designated by the terms, as support of the relations."[112] Knowledge, for Sartre, is consciousness of relations between images. A consciousness of the relationality of images, including images of fantasy, is critical for increasing knowledge, including that of God.

There remains to be explored an aspect in the image of that which is not completely known, is vague, and beyond full consideration, which is termed the aspect of transcendence.

b. Transcendence

A fundamental tenant of Sartre's treatment of the imaginary is the aspect of transcendence. He departs from others' preceding work on the imaginary when he critically suggests it has been subject to the 'illusion of immanence'.[113] Sartre repeatedly decries the illusion of immanence as having a compromising effect on consciousness. To illustrate his criticism, Sartre reflects, "I can, at will, imagine a horse, a tree, a house. And yet if we accept the illusion of immanence, we are necessarily led to constitute the world of the mind from objects very similar to those of the external world and which, simply, obey different laws."[114] While it is possible to perceive concrete external objects, the images of them considered by the mind are not the same. "[T]he thesis of the imaging consciousness is radically different from the thesis of a realizing consciousness."[115] For

[112] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 58. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 117.
[113] In his 'Philosophical Introduction' to *The Imaginary*, Jonathon Webber observes, "The difference between perception and imagination, according to the illusion of immanence, consists in the reason the picture appeared, the relation between the picture and the world beyond the mind, and perhaps the vivacity of the picture." Rather, for Sartre, "His discussions of the relation between form and matter in aesthetic experiences are based on phenomenological description. … Sartre concludes that the matter involved in mental imagery is constructed out of purely subjective feelings." Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page xx and xxii, respectively.
[114] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 6. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 20.
[115] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 180. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 346.

Sartre, the notion of transcendence explains the potential for realizing consciousness to perceive external objects.

Transcendence articulates the relationship between impressions while at the same time considers nonsense, that which is not perceived or conceptual, in the variety of images that are in consciousness. Transcendence allows for a fuller understanding of images by its consideration of their relationality. In reference to 'transcendence', a term which Sartre equivocates at times to simply mean 'externality' although he denies doing so, he observes that the "illusion of immanence consists in transferring the externality, spatiality, and all the sensible qualities of the thing to the transcendent psychic content. It does not have these qualities: it represents them, but *in its own way*."[116] For Sartre, there is a clear distinction between an image and that which is external. He asserts that transcendence of an image is necessary for potential knowledge despite its lacking external representation.

Sartre cautions against any approach that would denigrate the role of consciousness to be only *of* something. He criticises the supposed role that signs play in the imaging consciousness as an example of the illusion of immanence. Rather, he prefers the notion of an analogon's 'relation of possession':

> [T]he theory of the image-sign proceeds directly from the illusion of imminence. One supposes that the mental image of a horse is a horse in miniature. Consequently, between the well-constituted little horse and the horse of flesh and blood, there can be only an external relation: the relation of sign to thing signified. I have tried, on the contrary, to show that there is an internal relation between the horse and its image, which I have called *a relation of possession*: through the analogon it is the horse itself that appears to consciousness. … [I]n the mental

[116] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 53. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 110. Broadly speaking, Sartre firmly places his understanding of consciousness as transcendent. "After the phenomenological reduction, we find ourselves in the presence of the transcendental consciousness that is disclosed to our reflective descriptions. … [T]he very structure of transcendental consciousness implies that this consciousness is constitutive of *a* world." Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 179. Emphasis the author's. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Pages 343-344.

> image, the function of the analogon has nothing in common with that of the *verbal* sign in the consciousness of the word.[117]

Sartre understands the image as a potential 'relation of possession' between it and its external correlate. The relationship of possession extends to images of perceptual and conceptual consciousnesses, including those of a 'verbal sign'.

Sartre also distinguishes between impressions that are either kinaesthetic or affective in regard to their consciousness of a transcendent external correlate.

> [There are] two analogical matters for an imaging consciousness: *the kinaesthetic impression*, with its cortège of protentions and retentions, *and the affective object*. … The affective substitute is transcendent but not external, it gives us the nature of the object in its fullest and inexpressible nature. The kinaesthetic substitute is at once transcendent and external: it yields nothing that is very deep, but it is through it that we apprehend the form of the object as differentiated quality, it is that which 'externalizes' the object as imaged, which situates it, which indicates its direction and, if there are any, its movements. These two types of analogon *can therefore very well exist concurrently* as correlates of the same act of consciousness.[118]

These two distinct impressions, kinaesthetic and affective, lead to two different types of analogons in the imaging consciousness. The distinction of their sources further develops Sartre's notion of the image with a framework to examine fantasy's potential role in the imaginary.

Ultimately, what is sought in consciousness is comprehension of reality, a combination of knowledge and feeling through a synthesis of perceptual, imaging, and conceptual consciousnesses. "Comprehension is a movement which is never-ending, it is the reaction of the mind to an image by another image, to this one by another image and so on, in principle to infinity."[119] The comprehension of the reaction and relation between images is what constitutes the life of consciousness.

> Things are given initially as presences. If we start from knowledge, we see the image born from an effort of thought to make contact with presences. This birth

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[117] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Pages 83-84. Emphases mine. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Pages 165-166.
[118] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 81. Emphases mine. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 161.
[119] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 116. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 223.

> coincides with a degradation of knowledge that no longer aims at relations as such but as substantial *qualities* of things. This empty imaging knowledge … is very frequent in the life of consciousness.[120]

Images are 'born' independent of the 'thing', but in relation to its presence. Images in consciousness elucidate various 'qualities' to comprehend the 'contact' and 'relation' with present things. The term 'fantasy' can clarify the 'empty' aspects of such imaging knowledge, making it supportive to comprehension and knowledge.

Sartre builds upon his assertion that the imaging consciousness is a form of consciousness alongside perceptual and conceptual consciousnesses, as well as his articulation of the possibility of knowledge through images in consciousness that are transcendent yet partially empty, with his notion of irreality in the imaging consciousness. Irreality, as proposed by Sartre, is the ideal place to assert aspects of fantasy that can support faith.

III. IRREALITY

While the first three parts of The Imaginary articulate the variety of forms that images can take, both in perceptual consciousness and image consciousness, Sartre progresses in his fourth part, called 'The Imaginary Life', to directly consider irreal images. In this final part, he repeats his major themes, especially that of the image in consciousness whose object is nothing.[121] He contrasts his shift in focus to the irreal with the sensible or even 'quasi-sensible'. "For the rest, the object as imaged is an irreality."[122]

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[120] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 67. Emphasis the author's. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Pages 134-135.
[121] One such example is when he observes that "essential *nothingness* of the imaged object, suffices to differentiate it from the objects of perception." Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 180. Emphasis mine. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 346.
[122] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 125. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 240.

Sartre identifies several aspects of irreal images, all of which support fantasy's role in assisting comprehension through irreal images. "At the time of the constitution of the irreal object, knowledge plays the role of perception: feeling is incorporated with it. Thus the irreal object is born. … [T]he irreal object exists, it exists as irreal, as inactive, of this there is no doubt; its existence is undeniable."[123] Especially of note for my articulation of fantasy, whose external object is absent from perception, Sartre outlines the necessary aspect of 'absence' in irreal images. Sartre also asserts that irreal images are in consciousness, spontaneous, free, creative, affective, and durable. An analysis of the aspects of irreal images will help to clarify the concept and potential influence of fantasy on comprehension of knowledge for faith.

Sartre declares that irreality is fundamentally the "essential condition for a consciousness to be able to image."[124] The irreal is held entirely in consciousness.

> There are therefore intentions, movements, knowledge, feelings that combine to form the image and intentions, movements, feelings, pieces of knowledge that represent our more or less spontaneous reaction to the irreal. The former are not *free*: they obey a directing form, a primary intention and are absorbed in the constitution of the irreal object. They are not aimed at in themselves, they do not all exist for themselves, but through them consciousness aims at the object as imaged.[125]

The spontaneous character of the irreal, in contrast to images with perceived external correlates, demands complete freedom of consciousness. Sartre critically determines that imagination is "not an empirical power added to consciousness, but is the whole of consciousness as it realizes its freedom; every concrete and real situation of consciousness in the world is pregnant with the imaginary in so far as it is always

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[123] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 140. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 268.
[124] Cf. Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 182. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 351.
[125] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 137. Emphasis the author's. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 263.

presented as a surpassing of the real."[126] With irreal objects, "[t]he feeble life that we breathe into them comes from us, from our spontaneity. … I spontaneously produce them, because I *think them* [*j'y songe*]."[127] Spontaneity is the key to understanding the irreal. The spontaneity and freedom of the irreal allow fantasy to generate images of potential comprehension which are not perceptual or conceptual.

Sartre determines that "the imaging consciousness orients itself in relation to its object as the perceptual consciousness in relation to the perceived object. In addition, it is spontaneous and creative; it supports, maintains by continuous creation, the sensible qualities of its object. … In the image, that element, in so far as it is primary and incommunicable, is the product of a conscious activity, is shot through with a creative will."[128] Spontaneity "produces and conserves the object as imaged" and provides a counterbalance to the absence of the image's object as it "appears to itself as creative, but without positing as object this creative character."[129] The traits of spontaneity and freedom allow for the creation of images by fantasy, including those with external correlates, which, in irreality, remain unsensed and absent, as well as those of pure fiction.

As previously noted, the aspect of absence is essential to the irreal image in consciousness.

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[126] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 186. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 358. Daniel O'Shiel remarks of this definition: "it makes little sense to speak of the real all on its own, for both, the real and irreal alike, are defined in contradistinction to each other, and they both ultimately arise out of the spontaneity of fundamental consciousness." Daniel O'Shiel, *Sartre and magic : being, emotion and philosophy* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019). Page 65.

[127] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 125. Emphasis the author's. Translator's interlineal original language text. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Pages 240-241. The phrase '*j'y songe*' is better defined as 'I dream it'.

[128] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 15. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 37.

[129] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 14. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Pages 35-36.

> The imaginary object can be posited as nonexistent or as absent or as existing elsewhere or not posited as existent. We notice that the common characteristic of these four theses is that they include the entire category of negation, though in different degrees. Thus the negative act is constitutive of the image.[130]

Sartre repeatedly goes back to the 'absenteeism' of the irreal, "*to not be here* is [Pierre's] essential quality."[131] Even though irreal images have presence in the irreal consciousness, there is no immediately perceptual external correlate. The irreal cannot be an analogon of an external correlate. Even though absent and not an analogon, the irreal image can bear resemblance to an external object, which reveals the possibility of a relationship between the irreal and external objects. Sartre observes that Pierre's irreal image "is given as absent; and at the same time its character is deeply modified since the external relation of contiguity that links it to Pierre is transformed into an internal relation of belonging."[132] The irreal's reality remains entirely within consciousness, even while potentially influencing knowledge of external objects. "[T]he production of the irreal object coincides with the consciousness of its reality."[133] Fantasy is a better description of this unnamed spontaneous power to 'modify' or create the irreal in freedom and absence, and, as will be shown, also as affective, durable, and unitive.

The notion of fantasy in imaging consciousness helps to clarify Sartre's observation that "[t]o have vague consciousness of an image is to have consciousness of a vague image. We are here a long way from Berkeley and Hume, who declared general images, indeterminate images, impossible."[134] Vagueness, indeterminacy, and ambiguity

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[130] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 183. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 351.
[131] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 126. Emphasis the author's. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Pages 242-243. Pierre is a friend of Sartre and his oft used example.
[132] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 129. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 248.
[133] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 151. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 292.
[134] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 15. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 38.

are common characteristics of Sartre's description of images, which I argue are traits of fantasy images.

> There is no image without an inner contradiction. It is in and by this very contradiction that the impression of evidence is constituted. Thus, the image carries in itself a spurious persuasive power, which comes from the ambiguity of its nature.[135]

The aspects of 'contradiction', 'spuriousness', and 'ambiguity' allude to fantasy and its power to generate images for deliberation of potential external reality despite their present absence.

Sartre repeatedly returns to the role of affectivity in image throughout the four parts of *The Imaginary*. He broadly asserts that an image's affect reveals desire. "In a word the *desire* is a blind effort to possess on the representative plane what is already given to me on the affective plane; through the affective synthesis, it aims at a *beyond* that it senses [*pressent*] without being able to know; it is directed at the affective 'something' that is now given to it and apprehends it as *representative* of the desired thing. So, the structure of an affective consciousness of desire is already that of an imaging consciousness, since, as in the image, a present synthesis functions as a substitute for an absent representative synthesis."[136] Absence in the image's representative synthesis of affect and desire allows for the image to aim beyond what it senses.[137] The

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[135] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 120. "*[Q]u'il n'y a pas d'image sans intime contradiction. C'est dans et par cette contradiction même que se constitue l'impression d'évidence. Ainsi l'image porte en elle un pouvoir persuasif de* mauvais *aloi, qui vient de l'ambiguïté de sa nature.*" Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 231. Emphasis mine. The term in French, '*mauvais*', carries a negative connotation, which reflects the historic negative treatment of fantasy.

[136] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 71. Emphases the author's. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 142. '[*P*]*ressent*' is a concept that will be applied to the liturgy as *pressentiment* by Jean-Yves Lacoste and analysed in the final chapter.

[137] "Let us recall *the essential characteristic of the mental image: it is a certain way that an object has of being absent within its very presence*." Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 72-73. Emphasis the author's. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Pages 144.

'essential characteristic' of absence in the present mental image constitutes its capacity for knowledge and affective consciousnesses.[138] I assert that fantasy is an affective consciousness of desire for knowledge which may be representative of external correlates despite present absence.

Akin to fantasy, Sartre asserts that "[t]here are in fact, for consciousness, many other ways to *surpass the real in order to make a world of it*: the surpassing can and should be made at first by affectivity or by action."[139] Consciousness is creative, that is, able to 'make' 'a world'. Fantasy, I argue, is the imaginary's generative power to create images with present absence of external correlates that can be deliberated for objective truth. Sartre argues that these images, fantasies, can 'surpass the real' according to the desire of their affectivity. To demonstrate this, Sartre uses the example of long, white, fine hands. "Desire posits an object, which is the affective equivalent of those hands: something transcendent, something that is not me is given as a correlate to my consciousness."[140] Here is where the irreal can produce a sense of satisfaction in response to the desire which informs it. Sartre gives another example,

> If I desire to see a friend, I make that friend appear irreally. It is a way of *playing* at satisfaction. … [I]t is limited and exacerbated at the same time. … It is but a mirage and the desire, in the imaging act, nourishes itself. More exactly, the object as imaged is a *definite lack*.[141]

[138] "A consciousness is always transparent to itself; it must therefore be, at the same time, entirely knowledge and entirely affectivity." Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 72. Emphasis the author's. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Pages 143.
[139] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 185. Emphasis the author's. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 355.
[140] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 72. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 143. Sartre regularly uses the example of 'beautiful, white hands' as the object of his desire.
[141] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 126. Emphases the author's. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Pages 241-242.

The irreal manifests images from desire to satisfy itself in an isolated solipsistic process. There is a tension within irreal objects, since they are both present, wholly themselves, as well as fully absent, without a perceptual external correlate and unable to truly satisfy.

Irreal images are influenced by affectivity in the same manner as other images.

> Feeling behaves therefore in the face of the irreal as in the face of the real. It seeks to merge into it, to embrace it, to feed off it. Only, this irreal, so well specified, so well defined, is *empty*; or, if one prefers, it is the simple reflection of the feeling. Feeling therefore feeds on its own reflection.[142]

Feeling forms desire and influences the generation of irreal images. Affectivity has the force of desire that demands reflective consciousness to transcend itself without excluding the possibility of external correlates. Desire to see a friend, following Sartre's example, can lead one to create an irreality of them without necessitating immediate perception. The irreal image may partially satisfy one's desire, such as when a friend is imagined, yet will always lack the friend's true objective external reality. Any emotional reckoning with the irreal object of the friend is entirely independent and therefore 'empty' of having any influence on one's actual friend. For example, one could fantasise a conversation with the irreal friend that has never occurred between you and your actual friend and then begin to think that it happened, which leads to a change in the relationship with the actual friend. This change with the actual friend, whose external existence is independent of the irreal friend in the irreal consciousness, exemplifies the potential influence of fantasy in the deliberation of objective external reality.

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[142] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 140. Emphasis the author's. "*Le sentiment se comporte donc en face de l'irréel comme en face du réel. Il cherche à se fondre à lui, à en épouser les contours, à s'y alimenter. Seulement cet irréel si bien précisé, si bien défini, c'est* du vide*; ou, si l'on veut c'est le simple reflet du sentiment. Ce sentiment, donc, s'alimente à son propre reflet.*" Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 268. In chapters four and five, Michel Henry will be shown to fundamentally assert life's *s'étreinte* in *affectivité*, as compared to Sartre's '*épouser*' in '*sentiment*'.

The concept of time in Sartre's notion of the irreal aligns with my identification of aspects of fantasy in his thought. His concept of irreal time articulates freedom for deliberation in image. An irreal image differs from other images in terms of durability.

> The objects [of irreality] flow *more slowly* than the real consciousness, since the consciousness really lives a few seconds while the irreal world endures several hours. A very rapid procession of images never gives the impression of a very long duration, if that procession is referred to the time of the consciousness. The error here comes from identifying image and consciousness.[143]

Sartre's description of an irreal object in terms of duration shows influence from Henri Bergson's metaphysics, who himself was influenced by the work of William James. Bergson reflects that "[f]rom the point of view taken by James, which is that of pure experience or of 'radical empiricism', reality no longer appears as finite or as infinite, but simply as indefinite. It flows without our being able to say whether it is in a single direction, or even whether it is always and throughout the same river flowing."[144] Sartre regularly references Bergson throughout *The Imaginary* while often pointing out Bergson's 'ambiguity' in regard to some of his arguments.[145]

The aspect of duration in the irreal, Sartre asserts, allows for a 'positional act', which, he makes explicitly clear, is a reference to belief in the imagination. "It is necessary therefore to admit here a phenomenon of *belief*; a positional act."[146] Further, in regard to the duration "of the imaging consciousness, it is evident that it can flow neither faster nor slower than it does flow: all that one can say is that it absolutely fills its

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[143] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 130. Emphasis the author's. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 250.
[144] Henri Bergson, *The creative mind : an introduction to metaphysics*, trans. Mabelle L. Andison (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, Incorporated, 2007). Page 179.
[145] Sartre warns that "one seeks in vain, in Bergson, a positive description of the intentionality that constitutes it. Such is indeed the constant ambiguity of Bergsonian dynamism: … Bergson has not taken enough trouble to describe his schema clearly." Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Pages 60-61. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Pages 121-122.
[146] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 131. Emphasis the author's. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 251.

duration and that it is this very fullness that measures this duration."[147] Belief, for Sartre, is influenced by time in that "the duration of the object as imaged is the transcendent correlate of a special positional act and consequently participates in the irreality of the object."[148] The durability of the image transcending irreality as constitutive of belief is critical for my theology of fantasy. The role of belief in irreal images will be further developed in the next section and later in subsequent chapters on the work of Marcel and Henry.

There are logical inconsistencies with Sartre's treatment of the irreal, especially where he describes irreality's possibility to maintain the "internal relation of belonging" with an external object.[149] He then contradicts his argument in his conclusion.

> Thus in the irreal object there is one sole power and it is negative. It is a force of passive resistance. The object is not individualized: here is a primary reason why the irreal does not constitute a world. In the second place, every irreal object carrying its time and space with it is presented without any solidarity with any other object. … [I]t is *without consequence* in the strong sense of the term.[150]

On one hand, for Sartre the irreal is 'not individualized' while on the other hand it is 'without any solidarity with any other object'. Despite this contradiction, Sartre recognises a mental object in the irreal consciousness like fantasy—a mental object without an externally perceived or conceived object: "[t]hus consciousness is constantly surrounded by a cortège of phantom-objects. These objects, although having at first sight a sensible aspect, are not the same as those of perception."[151] 'Phantom-objects' in

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[147] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 130. Translator's interlineal original language text. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 250.
[148] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 131. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 251.
[149] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 129. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 248.
[150] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 135. Emphasis the author's. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 260.
[151] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 135. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 260.

irreality are better described as fantasies, which can support the internal relation of belonging and that may be found to have an external correlate.

Earlier in *The Imaginary* while describing an image's movement in 'The Probable' part, Sartre similarly observed "on this side of clear image consciousness there exists a zone of semi-darkness where there glide around rapidly almost ungraspable states, empty pieces of imaging knowledge that are almost already images, symbolic apprehensions of movements."[152] These 'states', 'pieces', and 'movements' are similar to 'phantom-objects' that are 'almost ungraspable', 'almost already', and in 'semi-dark' state. While not naming the objects or the power behind these observations, I argue that they are best articulated as influenced by the mental power of fantasy.

While Sartre sometimes refers to fantasies, he does not explicitly classify them as a type of image, as he does mental images, hallucinations, hypnagogic visions, dreams, and signs. Sartre limits his use of fantasy to that of being a descriptor of aspects of images. For example, Sartre mentions fantasy as an image's aspect while describing hypnagogic visions.

> [T]he object is posited neither as appearing nor as already having appeared: one is suddenly aware of seeing a face. It is this characteristic of the positing above all that must give the hypnagogic vision its 'fantastic' [*fantastique*] aspect. It is given as an abrupt manifestation and disappears in the same way.[153]

Hypnagogic images typically have a stronger element and use of fantasy than many other images, such as signs and symbols.[154] He describes their 'fantastic' character as preventing them "from ever representing anything precisely."[155] His use of fantasy, or the

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[152] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Pages 82-83. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 164.
[153] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 40. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 85. There is an immediacy to the spontaneous freedom in hypnogogic images that lends to their sense of the fantastic.
[154] Sartre observes that the "function of the image is *symbolic*." Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 97. Emphasis the author's. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 189.
[155] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 38. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 82.

'fantastic', is not limited to his treatment of hypnagogic images but is also applied to hallucinations.[156]

Throughout his works, Sartre often appeals to the concept of 'magic'. I would argue that his use of magic is tangential to my articulation of fantasy. For example, Sartre appeals to the use of magic in his explanation of viewing a portrait, observing that "the relation that consciousness posits in the imaging attitude between the portrait and its subject is magical."[157] By doing so, he is explicitly connecting the imagination with magic. "The act of imagination … is a magical act. It is an incantation destined to make the object of one's thought, the thing one desires, appear in such a way that one can take possession of it."[158] There are an infinite number of images that can be made to take possession of that which is desired at any given moment, which Sartre calls a 'magical act'. A clearer articulation of the ability to imagine a desired object is described as an act of fantasy.

Sartre's analysis of irreality, of images with present absence, in consciousness, spontaneous, creative, affective, and durable, are better described as fantasy. In light of Sartre's framework for the imaging consciousness and aspects of what I consider fantasy in irreal images, the role that Sartre asserts of belief in the imaginary will demonstrate fantasy's potential support of faith.

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[156] Cf. "The object … retains [the character of irreality] in such a way that the coefficient of irreality, joined to the unforeseeability and the externality, as I have defined it, only helps to accentuate the contradictory and *fantastic* [*fantastique*] character of the hallucination." Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 159. Emphasis mine. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 306.

[157] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 23. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 53.

[158] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 125. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 239. An excellent study of 'magic' in Sartre is found in *Sartre and Magic* by Daniel O'Shiel, *Sartre and magic : being, emotion and philosophy*.

IV. THE CONCEPT OF BELIEF IN IRREAL IMAGES

Fantasy images in irreality can support the deliberation of an external reality, which is neither perceived nor conceived, and potentially lead to belief in such a reality. God, as beyond perception and conception, can be held in belief as an irreal image since it is possible that "the imaginary represents at each moment the implicit sense of the real."[159] God is not absent, yet cannot be fully perceived or conceived in the world, even in the Incarnation, when the Son of God became the Son of Man to share fully in the flesh and blood of humanity.[160] God's divinity was not perceived in Jesus Christ but believed through the signs that he performed and in the truth that he proclaimed. Only in rare supernatural moments, such as at Jesus' Transfiguration, was his divinity momentarily perceived and conceived.[161] Even in these moments, the capacity of the human consciousness to fully behold God was limited. The apostles' response to being shown his glory is sleepiness and terror. Belief is possible through the power of fantasy to support the deliberation of the potential external divine reality of God in irreality.

To complete Sartre's contributions to the framework of a theology of fantasy as seen especially in *The Imaginary*, the imaginative act, especially in irreality, will be further analysed in respect to an image's belief, relationality, absence, desire, and transcendence. Sartre suggests that quasi-observation, contemplation, and reflection help to reveal the affectivity of the image in the intuition.

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[159] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 188. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 360.

[160] This internal capacity for God makes belief in God possible for mankind. "Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things." Hebrews 2:14 NRSVCE

[161] Cf. "Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, 'Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah'—not knowing what he said. While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, 'This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!'" Luke 9:28b-35 NRSVCE

To have faith in God, one must have the desire to believe in God. While ordinarily God is not perceptively or conceptually present, God can be desirable. The capacity for fantasy to be influenced by desire in irreality provides the possibility of faith in God. What is desired, yet found first to be fantastic in the irreal, can turn out to be an analogon of an external divine reality. Sartre observes that the irreal "exists only as much as I know it and want it."[162] These two conditions, knowledge and desire, support faith in God through fantasy's ability to consider objects of desire and potential knowledge while they are externally absent in irreality. To have faith in the one, true, living God, an image of God must first be generated by fantasy in irreality.

Sartre's elaboration of the image consciousness can be constructive to a theology of faith. Faith in God depends upon holding as certain something which is unperceived and nonconceptual. The freedom of spontaneous creativity, which Sartre adamantly holds for the objects of the imaging consciousness, is the operative means for fantasy to support faith. Aspects of his articulation of image are useful for asserting that faith is supported by fantasy. Faith builds upon the aspect of belief in the fantasy image. Perception can only posit its objects cognitively, while the image holds the notion of a positional act or belief. The act of belief, according to Sartre, "can take four and only four forms: it can posit the object as nonexistent, or as absent, or as existing elsewhere; it can also 'neutralize' itself, which is to say not posit its object as existent."[163] While "perception posits the existence of its object, … concepts and knowledge posit the existence of *natures* (universal essences) constituted by relations and are indifferent to the 'flesh

[162] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 133. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 256.
[163] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 12. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 32. Sartre includes a footnote at the end of this sentence remarking that "[t]his suspension of belief remains a positional act". Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 197, footnote 10. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 32.

[*chair*] and blood' existence of objects."[164] Sartre makes the distinction that the positing of belief is proper to the imagination, while 'evidence' is held for objects of perception.

> [T]he *thesis* of the perceiving consciousness should not be confused with an affirmation. Affirmation arises from voluntary spontaneity, whereas the thesis represents a nuance peculiar to intentionality. It is what corresponds, on the side of the noesis, to the noematic presence of the object in person. The evidence peculiar to perception is therefore in no way a subjective impression that would be assimilable to a specification of belief: evidence is the presence for consciousness of the object in person; it is the 'fulfillment' [*Erfüllung*] of the intention.[165]

Thesis, which is the intentionality of evidence of an object, is in contrast with belief as an affirmation, which respects the voluntary spontaneity of the subjective impression. The aspect of fantasy in an image supports the possibility of belief in an external object as it can make possibilities for affirmation. A central concern for my theology of fantasy regards the possibility of having an image of God to deliberate for faith since God can be neither perceived nor conceived in the world.

Belief is necessarily relational as knowledge observes relation between images. A relation can be created between a potential believer and the object of their belief that is beyond the world. Sartre's work famously provides a way to show how it is possible to have belief in external objects that relate to images in the imaging consciousness as he repeatedly asserts that "[a]ll consciousness is consciousness *of* something. … [C]onsciousness goes out of itself, transcends itself."[166] It is crucial not to equate absence with nonexistence, as "consciousness itself can posit its object as nonexistent or simply

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[164] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 13. Emphasis the author's. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 32. 'Flesh' will become a major theme for my fantasy of theology, especially in light of Michel Henry's phenomenology of the flesh.

[165] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 163. Emphasis the author's. Translator includes Sartre's original insertion of the German word '*Erfüllung*', which he terms in French '*remplissement*'. ''Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 315. Sartre will build upon this point in *Being and Nothingness* to assert the precedence of existence before essence.

[166] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 11. Emphasis the author's. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 30.

neutralize the existential thesis."[167] It is also crucial not to conclude that the primacy of existence excludes subsequent essence. Perception is objective presence; image is subjective absence. Yet the image is held together and considered in a relationship of quasi-observation to that which is not present in consciousness, in other words, that which is externally absent yet still potentially externally real.

Sartre's elaboration of the 'quasi-observation' attitude towards an external object of an image further elaborates fantasy's potential to generate images with certainty, always delivered as a whole, without perception or conception.

> The object, in the image, is presented as having to be apprehended in a multiplicity of synthetic acts. Because of this fact, because its contents retain, like a phantom, a sensible opacity, because it involves neither essences nor generating laws but only an irrational quality, it seems to be the object of observation: from this point of view the image would be closer to perception than to the concept. But, in addition, the image does not teach anything, never gives the impression of novelty, never reveals an aspect of the object. It delivers it as a whole. No risk, no waiting: a certainty. My perception can mislead me, but not my image. Our attitude in relation to the object of the image could be called '*quasi-observation*'.[168]

A 'phantom' with 'sensible opacity' is an indirect reference to the power of fantasy in the imaging consciousness, which is in effect even when operating as a synthesis with perceived objects. While any given image cannot 'teach anything', give the impression of 'novelty', or reveal just an 'aspect', it can have a certain 'opacity'. Opacity is evidence of fantasy.

While images are always unique and whole, they can hold certain plausibility despite opacity of external objects in a relationship of belief. Belief is fundamental to the imaging consciousness:

> [O]ne of the essential factors of the imaging consciousness is belief. This belief aims at the object of the image. All imaging consciousness has a certain positional

[167] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 35. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 76.
[168] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 10. Emphasis the author's. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 28. Sartre repeatedly emphasises that "the mental image teaches nothing: that is the principle of quasi-observation." Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 84. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 167.

> quality in relation to its object. An imaging consciousness is, indeed, consciousness of an *object as imaged* and not consciousness *of an image*.[169]

Belief does not make the image present. Doing so would destroy the image and make it the object of perception. An image holds belief in the external object which is necessarily perceptually absent.

There is an interplay, without total synthesis, between the image in consciousness and the object imagined. The external object, imaged in consciousness, is not the same as the image of it imagined in consciousness.

> The image will naturally be the analogon. It *represented* the sensible qualities of the absent object without possessing them: one will say that it *had* them without being the absent object. Nothing is clearer, better constructed than this illusion: to *represent* this grey colour, which is to say, fulfil without satisfying this consciousness reaching toward the grey, is that not to present to it a lesser grey, a grey without externality, phantasmal and keeping of the sensible only its indefinable nature of grey?[170]

This notion of an image being 'without satisfying' and 'phantasmal' is the closest reference Sartre makes to fantasy in the sense that I intend, even though still expressed indirectly. Sartre conveys a sense of unsatisfied desire in image, desire that is present yet not fully sated for an external correlate still possible to find.

> [T]he object is not really constituted, it is there only 'as imaged', by consequence, it is given as itself absent. Correlatively the attitude of consciousness is not observation but quasi-observation, which is to say the presence of the object as imaged teaches nothing since the constitution of the object as imaged is already the comprehension. However the later thoughts will nonetheless be given as reactions of consciousness to the transcendent object, in brief as the results of contemplation, whereas they rise in the normal way from the original comprehension.[171]

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[169] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 86. Emphases the author's. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Pages 171-172.
[170] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 87. Emphases the author's. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 173.
[171] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 106. "*Toutefois les pensées ultérieures ne s'en donneront pas moins comme des réaction de la conscience à l'objet transcendant, bref comme des résultats de la contemplation, alors qu'elles* découlent *par voie normale de la compréhension originelle*." Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 205. Emphasis mine. '*Découlent'* could be translated even more weakly as 'follow' or 'flow', which indicates a disinterested or purposeless process towards awareness of the reality of external reality and an indication of Sartre's professed atheism and assertion of absolute freedom.

Comprehension of an already existing external object in 'the attitude of consciousness' may result from contemplation of an image and depends on intuition and the object's 'transcendence'.

Fantasy helps to describe a mental image, that is a representative, which may or may not be an analogon of an external object. As observed earlier, transcendence plays a critical part in comprehension. "This necessity for the matter of the mental image to be already constituted as an object for consciousness, I called the *transcendence* of the representative."[172] Sartre's notion of transcendence, which allows one to mentally aim at an external correlate while maintaining the possibility of aiming 'emptily' as at a 'sign consciousness', demands the use of belief and the transcendence of the object. Belief depends upon a potential relationship between one who holds an image in consciousness and a potential transcendent external correlate. The 'transcendence of the representative' relies upon belief and is operative in the image in the imaging consciousness. "[T]ranscendence does not mean externality: it is the represented thing that is external, not its mental 'analogon'. The illusion of immanence consists in transferring the externality, spatiality, and all the sensible qualities of the thing to the transcendent psychic content."[173] The relationship of noemata constitute the transcendence of images, the knowledge of which remains internal as noesis.

Sartre observes that "the real noetic elements of the imaging consciousness are knowledge, movement, affectivity."[174] Sartre maintains that there can be a relationship of representation to an external object. The 'illusion of immanence' occurs when one mistakes the image with the external object. Transcendence, not immanence, according to

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[172] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 53. Emphasis the author's. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 110.
[173] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 53. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 110.
[174] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 134. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 258.

Sartre, allows for an image to represent the exterior object. Transcendence is essential for the potential affirmation, that is belief, in an external correlate. Fantasy relies upon the possibility of transcendence and belief when contemplating external correlates. Sartre does not dwell sufficiently on the exercise of or requirements for contemplation but weakly uses the word 'rise' to indicate growing clarity or awareness through a process of contemplating external reality. In chapter five, I will propose a therapeutic for fantasy using contemplative prayer.

Like the concept of contemplation, Sartre uses the notion of 'reflection', which will also be central to the work of Marcel as analysed in the next chapter. For Sartre, awareness of an affective response follows an act of reflection. Like contemplation, "[r]eflection delivers us affective *consciousnesses*. Joy, anguish, melancholy are consciousnesses. … [F]eelings have special intentionalities, they represent a way—among others—of transcending [*se transcender*]."[175] A greater awareness in consciousness of external reality can develop through reflection on the feelings involved in the transcendence of representation. Feelings influence fantasy's creation of images and their potential to reflect an external correlate.

While not giving much attention to the elaboration of contemplation, Sartre focusses rather on the role of affectivity in the intuition. He observes that, "(1) All perception is accompanied by an affective reaction. (2) Every feeling is *about* something, which is to say it aims at its object in a certain manner and projects onto it a certain

[175] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 69. Emphasis the author's. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 137. The translator Webber did not emphasise 'transcending' as was done in the original, as in '*se* transcender'. Sartre reminds his reader of the great law that all consciousness is consciousness of something in the midst of his remarks on reflection. Not only does Sartre wish to emphasise transcending, it is used as a reflexive, showing that consciousness is not *just* for the sake of consciousness of something, but for consciousness to transcend itself through reflection upon feelings. Reflection and affectivity are major themes that will be central to the work of Marcel and Henry and central to my theology of fantasy.

quality."[176] Sartre recalls yet again what he terms the great law of consciousness, that consciousness is always consciousness *of* something, when asserting that inasmuch as feeling is consciousness, then it must be *feeling of* something.

> [T]he affective state, *being consciousness*, could not exist without a transcendent correlate. However, when feeling is directed on at a real thing, currently perceived, the thing sends back to it, like a screen, the light that it receives from it. And so, by a game of back and forth, the feeling is constantly enriched, at the same time that the object imbibes affective qualities. There follows, for the feeling, a particular depth and richness.[177]

While fantasy is not a feeling, it does allow feelings to be imaged while remaining vague and opaque with the durability to develop. Fantasy can be influenced by one's affectivity towards external objects. Affectivity is therefore influential on fantasy. For example, there are times that one might feel a certain way but is unaware of what is causing the feeling, such as with the feeling of 'weirdness' or 'eerie-ness'.[178] Feelings, like fantasies, can be generated spontaneously without external correlates, entirely in the imaginary.

Intuition plays a central role in Sartre's concept of belief. Intuition reveals the consciousness of the matter of an object as slowly taken over by knowledge, which "plays an increasingly important role, to the point of substituting for intuition on the very ground of intuition. At the same time the properly imaging intention is solicited less and less by the matter of the image."[179] Accordingly, external objects of belief may be increasingly clarified and knowledge gained through ever clearer, representative, and transcendent

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[176] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 28. Emphasis the author's. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 62.
[177] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 139. Emphasis the author's. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Pages 267-268. Sartre employs here a rare use of a footnote of his own, clarifying that 'affective qualities' are those "such as 'gracious', 'arousing', 'sympathetic', 'light', 'heavy', 'fine', 'worrying', 'horrible', 'repugnant', etc." Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 202, footnote 9.
[178] These feelings are explored at length, especially in regard to aesthetic manifestation, in the short, yet powerful work by Mark Fisher, *The Weird and the Eerie*. He defines, "the weird is constituted by a presence — the presence of *that which does not belong.* … The eerie, by contrast, is constituted by a *failure of absence* or by a *failure of presence*." Mark Fisher, *The weird and the eerie* (London: Repeater, 2016). Page 61. Both feelings, the weird and the eerie, allude to the presence of absence, which is felt as unsettling in each of their cases. Broadly speaking, fantasy is the ability to be unsettled by absence.
[179] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 51. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 107.

images of external correlates. As knowledge grows, intuition fades. This process of deliberation for the sake of knowledge happens in the imaging consciousness, which can reveal the reality of objects held in the perceptual and conceptual consciousnesses. The use of fantasy in intuition allows for greater belief in the external reality of an analogon.

In the final pages of *The Imaginary*, Sartre broadly asserts that "the imaginative act is at once *constituting*, *isolating*, and *annihilating*."[180] Sartre's work tends to overemphasise the imaginative act's 'annihilating' capacity at the cost of a diminished consideration for its 'constituting' and 'isolating' power. However, the imaginative act as constituting and isolating is critical for asserting the constructive role of fantasy for faith as it elaborates the possibility of creating and specifying in the imagination, which indicates the activity of fantasy.[181] A sympathetic interpretation of a potentially supportive role of an image for theological faith is found where Sartre's observes:

> [A] double condition for consciousness to be able to imagine: it must be able to posit the world in its synthetic totality and, at the same time, it must be able to posit the imagined object as out of reach in relation to that synthetic whole, which is to say posit the world as a nothingness in relation to the image. … For consciousness to be able to imagine, it must be able to escape from the world by its very nature,

[180] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 181. Emphasis the author's. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 348.

[181] Sartre also returns at the end of his work to strongly assert the necessity of freedom for the imaginative act. "Thus the critical analysis of *the conditions of possibility for all imagination* has led us to the following discoveries: in order to imagine, consciousness must be free [*libre par rapport*] from all particular reality and this freedom must be able to be defined by a 'being-in-the-world' that is at *once constitution and nihilation* of the world; the concrete *situation* of consciousness in the world must at each moment serve as the singular motivation for the constitution of the irreal. Thus the irreal—which is always double nothingness: nothingness of itself in relation to the world, nothingness of the world in relation to it—must always be constituted on the ground of the world that it denies, it being well understood, moreover, that the world is not delivered only to a representative intuition and that this synthetic ground simply demands to be lived [*vécu*] as *situation*." Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 186. Emphases mine. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Pages 356-357. It is important to note that Sartre explicitly says consciousness needs to be free *in relations*, '*libre par rapport*' from all particular reality as this will be complimented by Henry's assertion that consciousness in life is not in relation to objects in the world. Henry also uses the word '*vécu*' in his phenomenology of life, as will be shown. The term 'situation' is pivotal in the thought and work of Sartre, even to the point of his naming a late collection of his essays *Situations*.

> it must be able to stand back from the world by its own efforts. In a word, it must be free.[182]

The 'synthetic whole', like the 'synthetic ground', in tension with the nothingness made present in the image, is the constitution for the possibility of faith, in the world and, by extension, in its source and sustenance. The possibility to have faith in the source and sustenance of existence occurs through the constitution and isolation of images with absent external correlates. This power for faith is supported by fantasy in the imaginary.

Sartre's articulation of the role of belief in the imaginary is crucial for understanding the possibility of fantasy's support of faith in God. Sartre further supports and articulates variations in the strength of belief when he argues that "it is necessary to characterize the *degree* of belief of consciousness in the imaginary worlds, or if you prefer the '*weight*' of these worlds."[183] Sartre acknowledges both external influence and gradation in his concept of belief and seeks a "harmonious synthesis of enterprises in the external world."[184] Yet, the irreal can break this harmony. "At the unexpected and absurd appearance of the irreal object, a wave of surprise or horror should run through consciousness, an awakening occurs, a regrouping of forces, a little like a sudden noise abruptly awakening a sleeper."[185] The outside world, and indeed God, can break into one's imaging consciousness. From its disruption can come perceptual awareness and conceptual knowledge.

Faith in God, an external correlate, begins with belief in an irreal image as made by fantasy. Fantasy makes faith possible, however implausible, in the irreal images of God. This section has shown the necessary aspects of irreal images that make belief

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[182] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 184. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 353.
[183] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 168. Emphases mine. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 325.
[184] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 154. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Pages 297-298.
[185] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Page 158. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 305.

possible; as Sartre's imaginative act includes relationality, absence, desire, and transcendence for the contemplation of affectivity in the intuition of the image.

V. Conclusion

Sartre's groundbreaking treatment of the imaging consciousness is fundamental for my assertion that fantasy is the power of the imaginary that can support faith in God. Besides elaborating the imaging consciousness, Sartre's influential assertion of the role of belief in an image supports my thesis regarding the necessity of fantasy for faith in God. Furthermore, in this chapter, Sartre's articulation of the role of transcendence in imaging consciousness and irreality was analysed. Sartre's major contribution to a theology of fantasy was to provide a framework of the imaginary that included the role of belief and transcendence as conditions which make faith possible in absent external correlates. [186]

Among Sartre's other major contributions for my theology of fantasy in *The Imaginary* is the observation of the presence of 'nothingness' or 'absence' in the image. Sartre summarises, "We have tried … to describe the way that the object is given, when absent, through a presence. In the mental image the object is aimed at as a synthesis of perceptions, which is to say in corporeal and sensible form; but it appears through an affective analogon."[187] If faith in God is possible, then it must have an 'affective analogon' to contemplate, which requires fantasy's power of creating images without perception or conception. There may be a potential, yet absent, external correlate to that which fantasy images. The presence of absence in an image allows for the deliberation of

[186] Late in his life, Sartre softened his view on religious faith, even while remaining publicly an atheist. Cf. Sarah Bakewell, *At the existentialist café : freedom, being, and apricot cocktails with Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Albert Camus, Martin Heidegger, Edmund Husserl, Karl Jespers, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and others* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2016). Page 309. If he was to have acknowledged the existence of God, it would likely have been through understanding God as the totally free being.
[187] Sartre, *The imaginary : a phenomenological psychology of the imagination*. Pages 85-86. Sartre, *L'imaginaire psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*. Page 170.

the possibility of an absent external correlate. The possibility to reflect upon the potential external objective reality of an image in consciousness uses the capacity for belief despite absence as outlined by Sartre.

Sartre's study of the imaginary provides concepts and a framework for my theology of fantasy to articulate how faith in God is supported by images created by fantasy. Theology should not eschew the freedom upon which Sartre built his existentialism. Freedom is needed for faith in God as it is held in the imaging consciousness as a 'synthetic ground' of transcendence with images reflective of God. Freedom observes absence. Freedom also allows for the possibility of deliberation of potential objective external correlates of images made by fantasy. Deliberation of fantasies, which have uncertain external correlates, may lead to belief in an external correlate, including in a transcendent reality that is the source and sustenance of existence, who is revealed in the imaging consciousness, that is God.

Fantasy can support the deliberation of God for faith, that is the consideration of knowledge for the comprehension of external reality through reflection and contemplation. Fantasy is characterised as an image of a yet-to-be-determined external correlate in irreality. In terms of faith in God, he must be reflected upon in imaging consciousness with the support of fantasy. Fantasy generates the initial possibility for a judgement that might lead to faith in God as a representational relation. While God can be considered in the imaging consciousness, he cannot be perceived, that is directly held by immediate perception, nor is he wholly given as a concept. If faith in God is possible, its possibility must first be generated by fantasy for deliberation in the imaging consciousness.

Every image of God will be ultimately inadequate, even though an image, according to Sartre, is always just what it is and cannot be learned, in that it originates

from within and is wholly immediate. No image of God held in consciousness could ever limit or fully reveal God. Our faith in God must be supported by an analogon generated by fantasy. It will be critical in the following chapters to further explore the influences on fantasy for the possibility of faith in God.

CHAPTER III: GABRIEL MARCEL'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO A THEOLOGY OF FANTASY

Joy can only unfold beneath an open sky.[188]

I. INTRODUCTION

My primary concern is to clarify the role of the power of fantasy in the imaginary for the possibility of faith in God. Within the 20th century French existentialist tradition, Gabriel Marcel's articulation of faith—calling it a system would be to disregard his explicit intent and undermine his argument—provides an intellectual bridge between the work of Jean-Paul Sartre and the work of Michel Henry. In the previous chapter, the notion of fantasy was considered in the framework of Sartre's phenomenological psychology of the imaginary. Marcel's 'Christian existentialism' stands in contrast to Sartre's 'atheistic existentialism' and on several occasions Marcel directly critiqued Sartre's existentialist developments.[189]

As was explored in the first chapter, there has been an historical disregard for fantasy as potentially constructive for theology, even while various articulations of the

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[188] Gabriel Marcel, *Being and having*, trans. Katharine Farrer (Westminster, London: Dacre Press, 1949). Page 216. "*La joie ne se déploie qu'a ciel ouvert.*" Gabriel Marcel, *Être et avoir*, Philosophie de l'esprit, (Paris: Aubier, Éditions Montaigne, 1935). Page 318.

[189] Cf. Gabriel Marcel, *Homo viator : introduction to a metaphysic of hope*, trans. Emma Craufurd (London: Gollancz, 1951). See chapter entitled "Being and Nothingness", pages 166-184. Gabriel Marcel, *Homo viator : prolégomènes à une métaphysique de l'esperance*, Philosophie de l'esprit, (Paris: Aubier, Éditions Montaigne, 1944). Pages 233-256. Marcel is attributed with being the first French proponent of existentialism with his 'Christian existentialism' predating Sartre's 'atheistic existentialism' by more than a decade. Sartre's divergence led to regular written exchanges, e.g. Jean-Paul Sartre, "Lettre de Jean-Paul Sartre à Gabriel Marcel," *Revue de la Bibliothèque nationale de France (Paris, France : 1999)* 48, no. 3 (2014). See also Marcel's Gifford Lectures, where he discusses courageously facing death with hope and concludes that atheism is antithetical to courage, for in atheism courage "to face is in some way to deny, or more exactly to reduce to nothingness [*néantiser*], to use a neologism of Sartre's which has no precise equivalent: it means, in brief, to treat something actively as neither existing nor being of any account. Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 159. Gabriel Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*, Philosophie de l'esprit, (Paris: Aubier, Éditions Montaigne, 1951). Pages 159-160.

concept of fantasy have been indirectly and inadequately approached.[190] Then in the second chapter, Sartre's description of the imaginary demonstrated how fantasy can be considered as inherent and constructive in the imaging consciousness for belief in the existence of an absent external correlate. Sartre's concept of the imaginary allowed me to demonstrate how the power and content of fantasy is necessary and constructive for belief in consciousness. It was shown that the power of fantasy can generate a fantasy image freely within the mind, without full appeal to the sensible, and with a present absence. A fantasy image's fluid relation to time does not preclude it from having an objective external correlate. Fantasy, in this sense, can be said to be durable. The potential reality of an external correlate always remains yet to be fully known while deliberated with images of fantasy. If knowledge of an external correlate is acquired, then one no longer needs fantasies for deliberation. However, fantasy can be said to have an anticipatory role in coming to know the truth, which is critical for its supportive use in a theology of faith.

Having argued in the past two chapters for fantasy to be considered inherent and generative in consciousness and knowledge, which makes it a pertinent question for a theology of faith, I now turn to the work of Marcel, which brings an articulation of faith in God into dialogue with the existentialist field of Sartre while adding important nuances to the concept of fantasy as potentially supportive of faith in God. Gabriel Marcel occupies a pivotal place in the development of contemporary continental philosophy between modernism and the dramatic fragmentation of thought since the Second World War. Marcel was granted his *agrégation* in 1910 after presenting a thesis relating Coleridge's metaphysics to Schelling's philosophy and then was active in various philosophical, literary, musical, and dramatic pursuits for more than 60 years. He was

[190] As seen in the first chapter, the concept of fantasy in the work of Augustine was initially treated distrustfully, but by his late work in *De Trinitate*, he articulated its constructive potential for knowledge.

philosophically most prolific in the late 1920s through the 1940s. He converted to the Catholic faith in 1929. During these years, Marcel was at the hub of France's intellectual scene and hosted infamous 'Friday evenings', which mingled an intellectually diverse set of prominent thinkers from his own contemporaries, such as Jacques Maritain and Jean Wahl, with those of a younger generation, such as Emmanuel Levinas and Paul Ricoeur. He was a student of Léon Brunschvicg but distanced himself from his teacher's rationalist idealism. While Marcel was considered a neo-Thomist early in his career, he later preferred to be considered a philosopher of the concrete, that is one who explores the human condition through the experiences of life.

My primary interest is with Marcel's theology of faith, which is grounded in his primary and pressing theological question regarding the source of all things, simply asking 'is it?' or 'could it be?!'[191] Marcel succinctly connects belief to the broader term imagination, asserting that "to believe means to imagine that, to have an idea in your mind that."[192] I argue that the term 'fantasy', rather than 'idea', is a more accurate description for what supports faith in God in the mind, an argument supported by Cassell's Latin dictionary.[193] Belief requires fantasy since its object has not been sensed, perceived, or conceived. As such, I will first analyse Marcel's ontology and his use of two types of reflection in search of the source of existence. Marcel's ontology is based on a recognition of inherent freedom, which allows him to argue that faith is possible "when

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[191] It should be noted that I consider the work of Marcel 'theological' since it recognises and attempts to describe divine revelation. Avery Dulles describes Marcel's work on faith as 'Catholic Personalism', placing him alongside Jean Mouroux, August Brunner, and Carlos Cirne-Lima, cf. Dulles, *The assurance of things hoped for : a theology of Christian faith*. Pages 137-138.

[192] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 67. "*croire, c'est s'imaginer que … c'est s'être mis dans la tête que.*" Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 67. While Marcel uses the more general term '*croire*', which has been shown in chapter one to be related to but distinct from '*foi*', I will build upon Marcel's assertion that the imagination enables belief to become faith in God through examining imagination's more specific capacity for fantasy.

[193] Cassell's translates 'fancy', in the sense of a faculty, as '*inventio*, *cogitatio*'. Simpson, *Cassell's Latin dictionary: Latin-English, English-Latin*. Page 707. In the next chapter, Michel Henry analogously analyses '*cogitatio*' for what Marcel asserts is an 'idea'.

we are speaking of the free act of the soul, as she wills or refuses to acknowledge that higher principle which momentarily creates her and is the cause of her being, and as she makes herself penetrable or impenetrable to that transcendent yet inward action without which she is nothing."[194] In contrast to Marcel's concept of primary reflection's dissolution of the unity of experience, his assertion of secondary reflection as recuperative will support my argument that fantasy's generativity of images with paradoxical terms can allow for the recognition of the truth of absent external correlates.[195] Marcel's notion of secondary reflection articulates 'sympathetic mediation' of this paradox to conclude that "I am my body only in so far as I am a being that has feelings."[196] Secondary reflection is critical for faith and is the operative role of fantasy.

It is within Marcel's consideration of secondary reflection that he makes a rare use of the term fantasy. In his first Gifford Lecture, Marcel creates an example of the use of secondary reflection when feeling 'silly' while filling out a paper identity form with headings such as name, gender, and occupation. Marcel reflects that he is aware of his freedom to make up his own identity, an identity that is not his own. "I have not a consciousness of *being* the person who is entered under the various headings."[197] Yet, Marcel acknowledges a 'creative faculty', expressing that "for a single moment, I could

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[194] Marcel, *Being and having*. Page 216. Marcel, *Être et avoir*. Page 318. These are the ending remarks of a lecture given to the *Fédération des Étudiants Chrétiens* on February 28th, 1934.

[195] In the second volume of his Gifford Lectures, Marcel uses synonyms for the adjective 'secondary', such as 'positive' and 'recuperative' in one section and 'liberating' and 'speculative' in another section. Cf. Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Pages 138 and 143, respectively. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Pages 139 and 144.

[196] Gabriel Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 1: Reflection and Mystery*, vol. 1: Reflection and Mystery (South Bend, Ind.: St. Augustine's Press, 2001). Page 101. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 1. Réflexion et Mystére*. Page 117. 'Sympathetic mediation' originates, Marcel states, in his earlier work *Metaphysical Diary*. Michel Henry will explore affectivity at length on a metaphysical level.

[197] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 1: Reflection and Mystery*, 1: Reflection and Mystery. Page 84. Emphasis the author's. "*[J]e n'ai nullement conscience d'*être *ce que désignent ces différentes mentions." Marcel, Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 1. Réflexion et Mystére.* Page 99. It is important to note that Marcel is speaking ontologically about being, '*être*', and emphasises this by highlighting the word in his text.

use my *creative faculty* by inventing an identity of my choice."[198] Marcel then connects the faculty of creation to the concept of fantasy:

> The point I want to make now is that this *feeling* about identity forms that I have been talking about is no doubt completely foreign to many people: [but] why? Must we say that such people quite lack the *sense of fantasy*? I think we can go further and say that the absence of this uneasiness must be linked to a total deficiency as far as the *faculty of creation* is concerned. Later on, we shall see more clearly why this is so.
>
> Let us try to *imagine* … [199]

The 'faculty of creation' that Marcel uses to produce his potential alternative answers on an identity form demands the 'sense of fantasy'. Marcel uses the term 'fantasy' as Sartre's framework allows, as a type of mental faculty, which is creative of images influenced by feelings that can be freely disconnected from reflecting an external objective truth. As he continues in his next paragraph, Marcel uses the term 'imagine' as synonymous with 'fantasy' and creation. His syntax demonstrates that fantasy can be used as a noun, which is indicated by the action of the imagination when used as a verb, as in 'Let us try to imagine'.

Marcel articulates faith as a person's awareness of intersubjectivity and incarnation, which I argue is supported by fantasy as it generates free, potentially paradoxical images of feeling in consciousness. The concept of the 'other' is central to Marcel's articulation of intersubjectivity, which allows for the development of knowledge

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[198] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 1: Reflection and Mystery*, 1: Reflection and Mystery. Page 84. Emphasis mine. "*[D]ans l'instant de* pure création *où je me conférerais à moi-même une identité de mon choix."* Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 1. Réflexion et Mystére*. Page 99. 'Pure creation' is even stronger than 'creative faculty' and carries a sense that one's identity can be entirely created in their own right.

[199] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 1: Reflection and Mystery*, 1: Reflection and Mystery. Page 84-85. Emphases mine. "*Ce que je noterai seulement, c'est que le sentiment auquel je me réfère est peut-être et même sans doute complètement étranger à bien des gens : mais pour quel motif? Faut-il dire que c'est simplement pour autant que ces gens sont dépourvus de toute* fantaisie*? Je crois qu'il faut aller plus loin et dire que l'absence de ce sentiment doit être liée à une déficience totale sous le rapport de la créativité. Nous comprendrons mieux pourquoi par la suite. /* Imaginons *maintenant.*" Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 1. Réflexion et Mystére*. Pages 99-100. Emphases mine. It should be noted that '*créativité*' is written to indicate creativity itself, which is carried out and realised by the faculty of imagination.

through fantasy.[200] Marcel offers a necessary connection between Sartre and Henry by providing a constructive way to articulate how fantasy is necessary for faith in God.

II. MARCEL'S ONTOLOGY AND REFLECTION

Marcel's starting point is indicative not only of his approach to faith in God, but of his whole life's preoccupation, that is, sin in the world and the unavoidability of death. His philosophical reflection leads him to recognise the fact of having been created. His theological reflection on the necessity of an unseen origin, that is a creator, leads him to faith in God.[201] Despite his living through both world wars and, more significantly for him, the death of his mother as a young boy—the influence of which he claimed could not be overly exaggerated—he self-assessed that "my whole philosophical career has been devoted to the production—I dislike using this physical term—of currents whereby life can be reborn in regions of the mind which have yielded to apathy and are exposed to decomposition."[202] Unlike many of his nihilistic and atheistic contemporaries, Marcel hopes for goodness in this life and for blessing after death, which was inspired by his Christian faith. This leads him to write *Homo Viator: Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope*, where he clarifies that his primary concern "is only to know under what conditions

[200] "Marcel's understanding of otherness—illustrated by his image of 'constellations,' conglomerations of meaningfully connected but non-totalizable beings—is an explicit challenge to philosophers of absolute otherness including Emmanuel Levinas, Jacques Derrida, and John D. Caputo, and a valuable resource for philosophers with a chiastic understanding of otherness, including Ricoeur and Richard Kearney. In addition, Marcel's philosophy offers rich possibilities for dialogue with contemporary ontologies struggling to address the problem of 'being' without succumbing to ethical 'violence' or 'ontotheological' conceptions of God." Stanford University and Center for the Study of Language and Information (U.S.), *Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University, 1997). Page 34.

[201] "It is quite possible that the existence of the fundamental Christian data may be necessary in fact to enable the mind to conceive some of the notions which I have attempted to analyze; but these notions cannot be said to depend on the data of Christianity, and they do not presuppose it. … I have experienced [the development of these ideas] more than twenty years before I had the remotest thought of becoming a Catholic." Gabriel Marcel, *The Philosophy of Existence*, trans. Manya Harari (Providence, RI: Cluny Media, 2018). Pages 44-45. Cf. Brendan Sweetman, *The Vision of Gabriel Marcel* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam: BRILL, 2008). Page 156, footnote 28, page 395.

[202] Gabriel Marcel, *Creative fidelity*, trans. Robert Rosthal (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002). Page 12. Gabriel Marcel, *Du refus à l'invocation* (Paris: Gallimard, 1940). Page 20.

I become conscious of myself as a person."[203] I will assert that Marcel's theology of faith depends upon fantasy's supportive role. Marcel's existential ontology is grounded in realism and personalism and observes the limitations of awareness and the use of imaginative equipment. His theology of faith builds on his ontology by considering the possibility of awareness and affirmation of God through recuperative secondary reflection.

a. Ontology

Marcel's ontology, as an existentialist, asserts "the primacy of the existential over the ideal."[204] The existential is life, the awareness of which can be increased as 'living reality' is 'more alive' than one's own life. "[W]e must become aware that we are literally arched over *by a living* reality; it is certainly incomparably more alive than our own."[205] Marcel equates reality with life, as Michel Henry will also do. Henry, however, will take the notion of life and assert its precedence over that of the world. Henry will argue that life is not just arched over us, it is first and foremost shared with us by God. Marcel's ontology asserts that reality is living, 'more alive' than the shadows in which we live. For Marcel, we have faith in life and its source is held in shadows. "The same is true of fidelity; the shadow of another fidelity whose existence I am able to deny only because I had first a conception of it, casts itself over the proud affection which the I lavishes on itself; but if I can conceive it to begin with, isn't this because I have experienced it however dimly in myself or in the other person?"[206] In alignment with Sartre's articulation of existence as nonconceptual and in also noting the obscurity of knowing

[203] Marcel, *Homo viator : introduction to a metaphysic of hope*. Page 12. Marcel, *Homo viator : prolégomènes à une métaphysique de l'esperance*. Page 22.
[204] Marcel, *Creative fidelity*. Page 21. Marcel, *Du refus à l'invocation*. Page 33.
[205] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 186. Emphasis mine. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 187.
[206] Marcel, *Creative fidelity*. Pages 165-166. Marcel, *Du refus à l'invocation*. Page 215.

existence, Marcel asserts that "existence, strictly speaking, is not conceivable; what is incorrectly called conception in this context is really an imaginative and sympathetic extension of a datum, partly opaque to itself, which is the basis of all experience."[207] Like Sartre, Marcel argues that knowledge of existence occurs in the imaginary rather than through perceptual or conceptual consciousnesses. However, Marcel is critical of Sartre's limitation of knowledge as necessarily being grounded in a state of consciousness.[208]

> [I]t is hardly possible for me to understand how the idea of a real knowledge, i.e. one referring to being, can emerge in a world composed of pure states of consciousness. Hence I find a secret escape passage, so to speak, in the wall below the tall keep in which I claimed to immure myself. Shouldn't this force me to acknowledge henceforth, that this same idea is in a sense the indelible mark which another realm has left upon me?[209]

The idea of 'real knowledge' about 'being' demands faith, Marcel challenges, as he argues it cannot be found 'in the keep' of one's own consciousness. The power of fantasy in the imaging consciousness provides the way for Marcel's ontology to 'find a secret escape passage' by generating the possibility of 'awareness' or knowledge in the source

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[207] Marcel, *Creative fidelity*. Page 18. Marcel, *Du refus à l'invocation*. Pages 28-29.

[208] This criticism is shared by Josef Pieper in Josef Pieper, *Hinführung zu Thomas von Aquin : zwölf Vorlesungen* (München: Kösel-Verlag, 1958). Joseph Ratzinger summarises Pieper's criticism well, observing that Pieper "reminds us that, according to Sartre, human beings and things cannot have a nature. If they did, Sartre argues, there would have to be a God. If reality itself does not proceed from a creative consciousness, if it is not the realization of a design, of an idea, then it will always be a structure without firm contours, to be used as one will; but if there are meaningful forms in it that are antecedent to man, then there must also be a meaning that is responsible for their existence. For Sartre, the one unchanging certainty was that there is no God; therefore, there can be no nature." Joseph Ratzinger, *Credo for Today: What Christians Believe*, ed. Holger Zaborowski; Alwin Letzkus, trans. Henry Taylor Micheal J. Miller, Sister Mary Frances McCarthy, Adrian Walker, J. R. Foster, Graham Harrison, Matthew J. O'Connell (San Francsico: Ignatius Press, 2009, 2009). Page 26.

[209] Marcel, *Creative fidelity*. Page 165. Marcel, *Du refus à l'invocation*. Page 215. Marcel was regularly at odds with Sartre, and both publicly and directly challenged his atheism. Sartre acknowledges that Marcel wrote to him directly after the publication of *Being and Nothingness*. Sartre defended his atheism in a letter back to Marcel, "*Le point de divergence – et il est de taille – c'est le fait même de Dieu. En un mot votre critique revient à dire : sans Dieu, pas de philosophie. Et j'admets fort bien que vous ayez ce point de vue. Mais alors pourquoi échapperiez-vous plus que moi à la psychanalyse existentielle. Je m'y soumets et j'admets que « mon verdict sur l'idée de Dieu demande à être psychanalysé existentiellement ». Mais il faut que vous vous y soumettiez aussi et que vous acceptiez une enquête du type : « Quel choix de soi-même et du monde implique originellement la croyance en Dieu ». Ne le croyez-vous pas ? Ceci fait, on aura défini deux types de projets, le vôtre et le mien, mais le problème métaphysique de l'existence de Dieu, le problème ontologique de sa possibilité n'auront pas été touchés. Moi, psychanalysé, je puis par un choix personnel, même si Dieu existe m'aveugler sur son existence. C'est un fait indéniable. Mais n'en résulte-t-il pas que vous, même si Dieu n'existe pas, pouvez vous aveugler de son inexistence ? Restent les idées.*" Sartre, "Lettre de Jean-Paul Sartre à Gabriel Marcel." See also Marcel's chapter 'Being and Nothingness' in *Homo Viator*.

of life despite a lack of direct sensible perception of its object in consciousness.[210] Fantasy is a dynamic, necessary process of generativity of images in consciousness for potential awareness and affirmation of an external source of life. Michel Henry will counter Marcel's assertion that life is found externally by asserting a radical immanence of life within each living person, as will be shown in the next chapter.

Marcel expresses his metaphysic through terms such as 'dizziness' and 'void'. "For while *dizziness* is an obstacle to the climber, it is a *positive condition* of any metaphysical thought which is worthy of its name. Indeed, a certain awareness of, or attraction for, the *void* is perhaps necessary if being in all its plenitude is to be fully affirmed."[211] Marcel's positive assessment of the possibility of affirming being in its plenitude, that is faith, depends on fantasy in its ability to produce images that are not entirely clear, that are dizzy, and have absent external correlates, in that they have a void. Affirmation, which is Marcel's preferred term for holding 'being in all its plenitude', is an expression of faith as was also elaborated in the first chapter's consideration of faith. Descriptions like 'dizziness' and 'the void' are Marcel's articulation of 'shadow'. He also uses the terms 'opacity' and 'obscurity' to describe the object of faith.[212]

> At this point *opacity* and the conditions which cause it should become *the object of our reflections*. I have been increasingly compelled to adopt the *paradoxical thesis* that it is always the self which creates its own *obscurity*, its *opacity* deriving from the fact that the self places itself between the I and the other. "The obscurity of the external world is a function of my own obscurity; the world has no intrinsic obscurity."[213]

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[210] The notion of secrecy in naming and knowing is developed in the work of Jacques Derrida, *On the name*, ed. Thomas Dutoit, Meridian : Crossing Aesthetics, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995).
[211] Marcel, *Creative fidelity*. Page 72. Emphases mine. Marcel, *Du refus à l'invocation*. Page 100.
[212] These terms were analysed in the first chapter's final section on contemporary theological treatments of faith.
[213] Marcel, *Creative fidelity*. Page 66. Emphases mine. Marcel references here an earlier work of his: Marcel, *Being and having*. Page 13. "*Ici s'amorcerait une réflexion sur l'opacité et les conditions qui la déterminent. J'ai été amené progres-vement à adopter la thèse sans doute paradoxale d'après laquelle c'est toujours le moi qui se fait ombre à lui-même, l'opacité venant de ce que le moi s'interpose entre le Je et l'autre. « L'obscurité du monde extérieur est fonction de mon obscurité pour moi-même : aucune obscurité intrinsèque du monde ».*" Marcel, *Du refus à l'invocation*. Page 91. Cf. Marcel, *Être et avoir*. Page 13. There appears to be a typo in the original text (*progres-vement*) that the translator seems to correct and translate as 'increasingly'.

In other words, there are no shadows, obscurities, or opacities in the world, according to Marcel. These are evidence of fantasy in consciousness. Fantasy generates obscure, opaque images in consciousness. Marcel suggests that faith rests on the 'object of our reflections', which will be further explored in the next subsection. Increasing awareness for being in its plenitude, as an object of reflection, is held through fantasy despite dizziness, the void, opacity, and obscurity.

As was developed in the first and second chapters, fantasy is the generative use of the imagination to consider images in consciousness with opaque, obscure, absent external correlates. I argue that fantasy is operative when Marcel observes "a presence which is yet a mode of absence" to objectify another in order to consider their existence, an action which he claims necessitates absence.[214] Marcel's theology of faith supports my argument that fantasy is a mental power of the imaginary for the generation of images with potential external correlates that can articulate awareness and affirmation despite vague and shadowy content. Marcel, like Sartre, challenges 'the opposition between the real and the imaginary', stating that if this is allowed to stand, then he has failed in his explication of faith.[215] "[F]aith is infinitely more than a state of consciousness, and that it is impossible to reduce it in any instance to a very vague feeling, or to the even vaguer picture of it which the man may have who has been granted a share of it. In so far as he is a believer, he is perpetually beyond himself, and by *himself* must be understood what I shall call his imaginative equipment, which as a rule is after all very limited."[216] 'Imaginative equipment', Marcel argues, is needed for a believer to go beyond himself as

[214] Marcel, *Creative fidelity*. Page 33. "*Mais il y a une présence qui est encore un mode de l'absence.*" Marcel, *Du refus à l'invocation*. Page 48. This assertion that absence has presence aligns with the work of Sartre.
[215] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 153. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 154.
[216] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 150. Emphasis the author's. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 151.

one who holds faith in God, even though faith's object may not be reduced to a feeling or picture, that is an image.

Some operations of the 'imaginative equipment' can be more specifically understood as fantasy. Marcel continues his constructive use of imagery to support faith by identifying imagery's necessity:

> The extreme difficulty which we confront in such a matter arises from the fact that *we cannot do without the assistance of imagery*; or we can put it more accurately by saying that if we try to dispense with imagery, there's a danger of relapsing into abstraction. The relation between the philosopher and the man of religion which has to be established here is probably not that which Spinoza, for example, conceived; for Spinoza almost certainly under-estimated *the value of imagination as a concrete and positive stimulated power*. Must not the philosopher admit that we cannot really free ourselves from some key-images—for example that of heaven as the abode of the blessed—provided that he shows that these images are bound up with the conditions of existence which belong to a *wayfaring* creature, and they *cannot accordingly be considered as literally true*.[217]

Marcel asserts the constructive role of imagery in the act of faith. This imagery, I assert, is better described as fantasy, especially since it 'cannot accordingly be considered as literally true'. Fantasy generates images that combine original concepts with amalgamated pieces of perceptions to consider that which remains uncertain, unperceived, unsensed, and nonconceptual, although potentially true. For example, to consider the 'abode of the blessed' in the consciousness of this life requires the use of fantasy to analogically comprise affective experiences of satisfaction with trust in Scriptural accounts of the Beatific Vision, the miraculous witness of some persons to the Beatific Vision, and the accounts of persons who recall near-death experiences in which they beheld the Beatific Vision. Deliberation of these affective experiences requires fantasy as they can never be equivalent to that of the Beatific Vision. Unless one personally has a near-death experience, the Beatific Vision must be considered in fantasy. Even if one has personally had a near-death experience, once they return to the conditions

[217] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 182. Emphases mine. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Pages 182-183. The notion of 'wayfaring' will be returned to at the end of the next section.

of the world, the experience leaves memory images, which themselves demand faith. In the Beatific Vision, when God is perceived without fantasy, there will be no need for faith.

Marcel's ontology rests upon the experience of obscurity yet provides the potential for awareness, that is faith, in the plenitude of being. This happens through reflection on images, which demands fantasy's generative power. What makes the difference on whether faith in God results depends on the use of Marcel's concept of secondary reflection on life as made by God in the images generated by fantasy.

b. Reflection

Marcel's theology of faith gives a central role to reflection. His play *Le Palais de Sable* is based on this theme, where "the real core of the drama is the question of the relations between faith and reflection."[218] In his first Gifford Lecture, which bears the name 'Reflection and Mystery', he provides the following short definitions for two types of reflection: "[p]rimary reflection tends to dissolve the unity of experience which is first put before it, the function of secondary reflection is essentially recuperative; it reconquers that unity."[219] He explains the difference between the two types of reflection in terms of faith more fully in his second Gifford Lecture:

> [Primary] reflection will almost inevitably be seen to be an attempt at re-ordering or straightening. It is in this light that we must inevitably look at a negative criticism of faith. Fundamentally this criticism acts by reduction; it attempts, that is, to oppose a solid reality to the delusions which the power of the affections—desire, generally, and fear—substitute for reality. Such a criticism will invariably tend towards affirmations of the type, 'What you have thought to be *this* is in reality nothing but *that*'. The line of secondary reflection will have to be directed precisely against this reducing thought, for its proper function consists above all in asking

[218] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 65. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 66.
[219] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 1: Reflection and Mystery*, 1: Reflection and Mystery. Page 83. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 1. Réflexion et Mystére*. Pages 97-98. This is like Coleridge's two types of imagination, as shown in the first chapter.

> whether the idea of faith with which primary reflection was concerned may not be a corrupt or deformed experience of something of an entirely different order.[220]

In sum, Marcel's notion of secondary reflection is needed to recuperate the awareness of life that is inherent in a living person, which Henry will further elaborate. Primary reflection results in further separation while secondary reflection can re-establish a relationship of awareness.

Demonstrating his existential roots, Marcel connects the notions of freedom and reflection. Ontological freedom allows reflection to create an opportunity to recognise a paradoxical relation.

> We are here in the presence of the central mystery of our being. *Because we are identified with our freedom, our freedom sometimes seems unrealizable.* Yes, everything happens as though a narrow, yet unbridgeable chasm separated us from it, as though we could not reach it. It is plain that we again find here what I tried to point out with respect to belonging to oneself and the society of individuals of which I am composed. We touch now on the most intimate aspect of being and freedom. Reflection discloses the closest yet most paradoxical relation between the fact or act of being, on the one hand, and the permanent possibility of being separated or cut off from that which makes or constitutes us as beings, on the other hand.[221]

Freedom maintains an opening in the paradoxical relation that can allow one to have faith in 'that which makes or constitutes us as beings'. The use of secondary reflection supports faith in God as the source of being by joining together the paradoxical relation between the 'fact and act of being' and the freedom or 'permanent possibility' of being

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[220] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 67. Emphases the author's. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Pages 67-68.

[221] Marcel, *Creative fidelity*. Page 55. Emphasis the author's. "*Nous sommes ici en présence du mystère central de notre être.* Parce que notre liberté est nous-mêmes, elle peut nous paraître à certaines heures inaccessibles. *Oui, tout se passe alors comme si un abîme étroit mais infranchissable nous séparait d'elle, comme si nous ne pouvions la joindre. Vous le voyez distinctement, nous retrouvons ici ce que je tentais de marquer à propos de l'appartenance à soi-même et de la cité-cellule que je forme avec moi. Nous touchons ici à la plus secrète, à la plus intime articulation de l'être et de la liberté. La réflexion laisse en effet paraître ici la plus étroite et la plus paradoxale connexion entre le fait ou l'acte d'être d'une part, et la possibilité permanente d'être séparé, d'être coupé de ce qui nous fait êtres, de ce qui nous constitue comme êtres d'autre part*." Marcel, *Du refus à l'invocation*. Page 78. Including the word 'identitfied' in the English translation of the emphasised sentence is misleading in the context of French existentialism and specifically the work of Marcel, who treats a person's being and their identity separately. A better translation is "Because our freedom is we ourselves, it can seem inaccessible to us at certain times." This translation places freedom on the level of being, as well as conveys Marcel's sense of the somewhat inaccessible possibility of knowing our ontological freedom.

separated. Reflection depends upon the power of fantasy to generate images of absent external correlates and sustain a paradoxical relation to join two contradictory ontological disclosures.[222] Fantasy, as argued previously, is free to hold paradoxical images of lived reality, which allow for the deliberation of potential external correlates. Secondary reflection is Marcel's way of describing a unitive process of deliberation, of the free, living person with the source and fullness of lived reality.

The mental content recuperated by secondary reflection for unity despite paradox is supported by the power of fantasy. Marcel's work allows my assertion of the theological capacity of fantasy when he observes that, "reflection must confirm the legitimacy of a faith which it grasps at first in its most abstract essence."[223] Faith in this 'abstract essence' is enabled by fantasy's power to create and hold absent external objects in the imaginary that are seemingly paradoxical, such as "God is" and "God is not." Faith in God demands fantasy's power to provide the imaginary ontological possibilities for secondary reflection.

III. MARCEL'S THEOLOGY OF FAITH

Awareness of the incarnate other is the foundation of Marcel's theology of faith. Faith, which he says is better described as 'fidelity', is a theme that runs throughout Marcel's lectures, plays, and other major works.[224] He writes in *Creative Fidelity* that he expressed the 'essential truth' of faith in one of his earliest works, *Metaphysical Diary*.

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[222] This idea has been developed in recent decades by Robert Sokolowski, who has created a theology of disclosure. Cf. Robert Sokolowski, *Eucharistic presence : a study in the theology of disclosure* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1994).

[223] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 127. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 129.

[224] Cf. This is especially clear in 'Creative Fidelity', the eighth chapter of *Creative Fidelity*. "I will say that faith … became clear to me from the moment I thought directly about fidelity." Marcel, *Creative fidelity*. Page 149. "*[J]e dirai d'une part que la foi s'est éclairée pour moi à partir du moment où j'ai pensé directement la fidélité.*" Marcel, *Du refus à l'invocation*. Page 194. Marcel 'directly' connects faith [*foi*] and fidelity [*fidélité*].

"Faith, I maintained, cannot be transcended … but is an integral part of the realities in which it is suspended; … I called them mental realities."[225] Fantasy is the power to make 'mental realities'. Faith is held in God through images, mental realities, generated by fantasy.

Images generated by fantasy, supportive of faith, cannot be 'transcended', Marcel observes, while also noting the aspect of mystery in faith. "Mystery is … a certain plenitude, and what is more, as the expression of a will, of an exigence that is so profound that it is not aware of itself and constantly betrays itself in forging false certainties; a completely illusory kind of knowledge in which the will cannot find any satisfaction, however, and which it destroys by an extension of the very *élan* it had yielded to in order to establish that knowledge in the first place. This appetite to know, this *Trieb zum Wissen* which is at the root of our greatness as well as our misery, is transcended rather than satisfied in the apprehension of mystery."[226] The will for plenitude must transcend itself for the plenitude of knowledge, but faith remains in the mystery amidst illusion and false certainty. Mental realities that are 'false certainties' or an 'illusory kind of knowledge' are characteristic of fantasy, which has the power to generate false and illusory images amidst images reflective of God. The appetite to affirm the mystery of being in its plenitude must transcend false certainties and illusory kinds of knowledge. Fantasy provides the possibility to deliberate the mystery of being amidst images that are false and illusory through its generation of images with absent external correlates. The ability to distinguish between false and illusory fantasies and those which may be true and have an objective

[225] Marcel, *Creative fidelity*. Pages 148. "*La foi, disais-je, ne peut être transcendée … mais elle fait corps avec les réalités auxquelles elle se suspend; … Réalités idéales, disais-je alors.*" Marcel, *Du refus à l'invocation*. Page 193-194. Marcel further notes here that his earlier observations were precarious and needed to be developed. The English translation 'mental' is not the clearest translation for '*idéales*', which is defined in its first instance: "*Qui est conçu et représenté dans* l'esprit *sans être ou pouvoir être perçu par les sens.*" Paul Robert, *Dictionnaire alphabétique et analogique de la langue française* (Paris: Société du nouveau Littré, 1967). Page 864. Emphasis mine. While '*l'esprit*' can indicate the 'mental' realm, ''*réalités idéales*' is better translated 'ideal realities', which is a central contribution of Marcel's work.
[226] Marcel, *Creative fidelity*. Page 152. Marcel, *Du refus à l'invocation*. Page 198.

external correlate, although not contemporaneously perceived or conceived, will be further explored in the following two chapters in the context of Henry's phenomenology of life, in chapter four, and in consideration of a Christian ethic and therapeutic for fantasy, in chapter five.

A living person can remain open to knowledge of and recuperate unity with the transcendent God through deliberating fantasies in secondary reflection. "[T]he exigence of God is simply the exigence of transcendence disclosing its true face, a face that was shown to us before shrouded in veils."[227] The possibility of the revelation of the face of the transcendent God in the living person is provided in the image consciousness by fantasy. "To achieve that conversion of our outlook which is indispensable, and to reveal what seems an *infinite deficiency* as the *infinite plenitude* that it really is, consciousness must, by an act of decisive conversion, sacrifice itself to the One whom it must alone invoke as its Principle, End, and only Resort."[228] Marcel's framework elaborates how faith in God, 'infinite plenitude', is possible in the human condition, but fails to explicitly appreciate the role of fantasy. Through fantasy generating images with an ontological opening for the existence of the other to be secondarily reflected, faith in God becomes possible.

Indirectly referring to a trait of fantasy, Marcel also uses the notion of strangeness to describe an aspect of faith. "There are times when my own faith seems to me like a stranger: there is a gap between the believing or *praying me* and the *reflecting me*."[229] The notion that the object of secondary reflection is initially strange, abstract, or fluctuating, yet may lead to faith, indicates the power of fantasy. Marcel comments that,

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[227] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 3. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 7.
[228] Marcel, *Creative fidelity*. Page 37. Emphases mine. Marcel, *Du refus à l'invocation*. Page 54.
[229] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 126. Emphases the translator's. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 128.

> [T]he word believe is often used with the most fluctuating meanings; it sometimes means quite simply: 'I assume that,' or even, 'it seems to me that.' I do not believe we will succeed in extricating its essential characteristic unless we resolutely put to one side what is expressed by *believing that* (although there are some rare cases where this expression can be preserved). I shall concentrate first of all on what is implied in the act of belief *in* or *about* something or someone.[230]

Marcel articulates here the classic distinction between *fides qua* and *fides quae* and gives attention primarily to the former. He goes to some length to distinguish, as is common in the French tradition and was shown in the first chapter, the difference between faith and belief, and prefers to concentrate on explicating the former. His primary concern is for the recuperation of awareness of a relation between a person, amidst obscurity and strangeness, and the source of their creation.

Marcel summarises faith by observing that it "is always belief in a *thou*, i.e. in a reality, whether personal or supra-personal, which is able to be invoked, and which is as it were, situated beyond any judgment referring to an objective datum."[231] He further asserts faith on to an ontological level by summarising "Being as ground of fidelity."[232]

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[230] Marcel, *Creative fidelity*. Pages 133-134. Marcel, *Du refus à l'invocation*. Pages 175-176. The translator's emphasis is inconsistent with the original text. The original text shows that Marcel emphasises 'croire que', '*believing that*', but not '*en ou à*', as the translator did with '*in* or *about*'.

[231] Marcel, *Creative fidelity*. Page 169. Marcel, *Du refus à l'invocation*. Page 220. Marcel's notion of 'Thou' appears to echo the work of Martin Buber's *I and Thou*, but in fact predates it. Cf. Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Free Press, 2023). Buber's work was first published in 1922. Marcel cites an entry from 1918 that he made in his *Journal Métaphysique* in *Creative Fidelity*: "I meet someone I don't know on the train; … a unity is established in which the other person and myself become *we*, and this means that he ceases to be *him* and becomes *thou*; the words 'you too' in this context take on primary value. … The path leading from dialectic to love has now been opened." Marcel, *Creative fidelity*. Page 33. Emphasis the author's. Cf. Gabriel Marcel, *Journal métaphysique*, 4e , 5e éd ed., Bibliothèque des idées, (Paris: Gallimard, 1935). Pages 145-146, dated August 23, 1918. Marcel inconsistently capitalises 'Thou' without an explicit explanation for the difference. Marcel and Buber's concept of the I and Thou is substantially different than the treatment of the concept in Feuerbach. "The Word of God should be understood as the divinity of the human word, in so far as it is a true word, a self-imparting of the I to the Thou, and thus man's essential nature, and hence again the essence of God himself. … [I]t should certainly be useful for us at least to be aware that the doctrine of I and Thou was put forward as early as 1840 in the strongest possible form, with Luther as its authority, as the true *via regja* of faith and revelation. But it was put forward, be it noted, with this particular interpretation." Karl Barth, *Protestant Thought: from Rousseau to Ritschl* (New York: Harper & Row, 1959). Page 357, 359, respectively.

[232] Marcel, *Creative fidelity*. Page 170. "*De l'être comme lieu de la fidélité.*" Marcel, *Du refus à l'invocation*. Page 222. He adds a footnote to this and explains that he is quoting himself from an undated remark from pages 76-79 of *Etre et Avoir*. He further observe that "it implies an interrelationship between the philosophy of being and the philosophy of freedom which to my mind the metaphysician can never overstress." *Marcel, Creative fidelity.* Page 171. *Marcel, Du refus à l'invocation.* Page 222.

As will be shown, fidelity for Marcel is best appreciated through an intersubjective awareness of others, especially through their shared incarnation.

a. Intersubjectivity

Marcel's articulation of inherent ontological freedom enabling awareness through obscure images of other persons is the basis of his concept of intersubjectivity. Marcel's ontology invites awareness and acknowledgement of others who have likewise been created. Marcel observes that "the *affirmation* of God cannot be separated from the existence of free beings who have a reason to think of themselves as creatures."[233] Marcel observes aspects of 'obscurity' in the awareness of others. "[T]here is a region of fructifying obscurity transcending the closed systems in which thought imprisons us, where beings may communicate, where they *are* in and by the very act of communication."[234] Central to Marcel's overarching project is understanding that,

> … to philosophize *sub specie aeterni* may mean something very different from just wiping the slate clean. It may mean devoting myself to understanding my own life as fully as possible; and where I use the word 'life' in that connection, I could equally well use the word 'experience'. If I try to do so, I shall most likely be led to a strange and wonderful discovery—that the more I raise myself to a really concrete perception of my own experience, the more, by that very act, shall I be attuned to an effective *understanding of others, of the experience of others*. *Nothing indeed can be more important than to realize this fully*.[235]

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[233] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 74. Emphasis mine. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 75.

[234] Marcel, *Creative fidelity*. Page 35. Emphasis the author's. "*[C]'est, par delà les systèmes clos où le jugement nous enferme, une sorte d'indistinction féconde où les êtres communiquent, où ils* sont *dans et par l'acte même de communication.*" Marcel, *Du refus à l'invocation*. Page 52. The English translation does not convey the very complex and technical language employed by Marcel. The word '*jugement*' is much better translated as 'judgment', which indicates that a decision must result from reflection in the closed system [*les systèmes clos*] in which we are locked [*enferme*]. The English translation of '*d'indistinction féconde*' as 'fructifying obscurity' should be more accurately translated as fruitful indistinction. Marcel does use the French word for obscurity [*obscurité*] elsewhere, but chooses not to in this instance, so the translation should not be 'obscurity'. The use of indistinction relates to the argument of Descartes that to think is to make distinction. Marcel seeks to broaden the definition by asserting that thought and communication can be fruitful even while indistinction persists.

[235] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 6-7. Emphasis mine. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 10. Marcel acknowledges the dangers of egocentrism and argues for the necessity of intersubjectivity in self-knowledge. "*Mais philosopher* sub specie aeterni *peut vouloir dire que, bien loin de faire table rase, je m'applique à comprendre ma vie aussi complètement que possible; et là où j'emploie le mot* vie *je pourrais tout aussi bien user du terme d'expérience. Je serai amené à faire ainsi une*

The ‘lived reality’, which ‘arches over’ persons, invites acknowledgement of other persons through recognition of one’s own life’s experience. “[O]ntology is bound up with intersubjectivity,” Marcel concisely asserts .[236]

Marcel’s ontology is ‘personal’, in that “each man’s personal reality is itself intersubjective.”[237] He further elaborates, “I have laid such stress upon intersubjectivity precisely because I wish to emphasize the presence of an underlying reality that is felt, of a community which is deeply rooted in ontology; … *I concern myself with being only in so far as I have a more or less distinct consciousness of the underlying unity which ties me to other beings of whose reality I already have a preliminary notion*.”[238] This ‘preliminary notion’, I suggest, is manifest as an inherent capacity in consciousness for intersubjectivity to influence fantasy, which can generate images for the consideration of ‘underlying unity’, that is faith.

Marcel’s theology of faith builds on his understanding of intersubjectivity. Marcel argues that faith is in God who ‘can only be spirit’. “The living God, who is the God of faith when faith does not degenerate into opinion or superstition, can only be *spirit* [*esprit*]; though that does not mean that this formula should be interpreted in a strictly idealist sense. All things considered, it is towards a realism of mind [*l’esprit*] that all our line of thought is directed; and we should add that these words can attain their full significance only in the light of intersubjectivity, that is, of love.”[239] Intersubjectivity, for

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étrange et merveilleuse découverte : c’est que plus je m’élèverai à une aperception vraiment concrète de ma propre expérience, plus je serai par là même en mesure d’accéder à une compréhension effective d'autrui, de l’expérience d’autrui.” Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 10. Emphasis the author’s. The translator chose to not maintain the original emphasis given to the word life (*vie*).

[236] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 60. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 61.

[237] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 161. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 162.

[238] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 17. Emphasis the author’s. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 20.

[239] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 156. Emphases mine. “*Le Dieu vivant, qui est celui de la foi lorsqu’elle ne dégénère pas en opinion ou en superstition, ne peut-être* qu’esprit *— sans que d’ailleurs cette formule doive être interprétée en un sens proprement idéaliste. C’est, en dernière*

Marcel, is not dependent on matter, but rather the spirit. Recognition of intersubjectivity depends on love for life, which will be returned to in the fifth chapter in a therapeutic for fantasy. "[T]here is nothing which is more important to keep in view—that the knowledge of an individual being cannot be separated from the act of love or charity by which this being is accepted in all which makes of him a unique creature or, if you like, the image of God."[240] Marcel observes in several places the connection between faith and love. For example, in his second Gifford Lecture, he defines: "love is the active refusal to treat itself as subjective, and it is in this refusal that it cannot be separated from faith; in fact it is faith."[241] Faith and love can support a person's hope of recognising the source of their creation. For Marcel, "the indissolubility of hope, of faith, and of charity … [rests on] intersubjectivity, which it is increasingly evident is the cornerstone of a concrete ontology, [and] is after all nothing but charity itself."[242] At the most fundamental level, Marcel establishes his ontology on the theological virtues and subsumes them into one, charity.

Another person can be treated as a 'he' or a 'she' through primary reflection making distinctions. Alternatively, through secondary reflection, which is necessary for faith, one can relate to another person as a 'Thou' with whom one is connected in love.

> If I treat a 'Thou' as a 'He', I reduce the other to being only nature; an animated object which works in some ways and not in others. If, on the contrary, I treat the

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analyse, vers un réalisme de l'esprit *que toutes ces méditations sont orientées, et il faut ajouter que ces mots ne peuvent prendre leur pleine signification qu'à la lumière de l'inter-subjectivité, c'est-à-dire de l'amour.*" Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 157. The translator chooses to use 'mind' in the second instance of the French word '*l'esprit*', which loses Marcel's intended connection between the 'the God of faith' and 'our line of thought'. That faith can only 'be spirit' is critical to Marcel's theology of faith. The connection between '*l'esprit*' and '*idéales*' was noted earlier in this chapter.

[240] Marcel, *Homo viator : introduction to a metaphysic of hope*. Page 18. Marcel, *Homo viator : prolégomènes à une métaphysique de l'esperance*. Page 29.

[241] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 62. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 63. Henry will contradict this as he asserts the immanent subjectivity of life, which has value and is loved by its creator and other living persons with whom life is shared.

[242] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 170. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 171. Marcel further observes that "As soon as one loves or is loved by another being, an awesome solidarity comes into being between the two." Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 65. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 66.

> other as 'Thou', I treat him and apprehend him *qua* freedom. I apprehend him *qua* freedom because he is also freedom and not only nature.[243]

Apprehension of another person's freedom establishes a connection with them. "In the perspective of faith … which is at the same time that of freedom, it is this non-identifiable which is *experienced* or *apprehended* as the absolute Thou [*Toi*]. That may perhaps be too summary a way of expressing it, and it might be better to say that this non-identifiable is seen in a light which is *acknowledged* as a presence."[244] Freedom allows for an 'experience', 'apprehension', and 'acknowledgment'—Marcel's expressions of faith—of a Thou. I argue that fantasy, which is free, can recognise intersubjectivity, create 'non-identifiable' images, and allow for these expressions of faith to reflect another person in love of life. For the possibility of faith in God, the absolute Thou, fantasy is needed. Fantasies can hold absent external correlates but have the potential to reunite the one fantasising with the other person as a thou in secondary reflection.

Besides love of another person as a thou and recognition of their freedom, Marcel speaks of faith in terms of trust, as trust allows a person to have the confidence to see the other as a 'thou'. "One can only *trust* a 'thou', a reality capable of fulfilling the function of a 'thou', of being invoked, of becoming something I can fall back on. And it seems to me that this is of the utmost importance."[245] Ultimately, Marcel observes a form of discipleship grounded in the freedom and love of intersubjectivity that leads to faith, stating that "*to believe* is essentially *to follow*; … the most living belief, is that which absorbs most fully all the powers of your being."[246] Amongst the powers of being is the

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[243] Marcel, *Being and having*. Page 106-107. Marcel, *Être et avoir*. Page 154.
[244] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 126. Emphases mine. Translator's interlineal original language text. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 128.
[245] Marcel, *Creative fidelity*. Page 135. Emphasis mine. "*On ne peut avoir confiance qu'en un « toi », qu'en une réalité susceptible de faire fonction de « toi », d'être invoquée, de devenir un recours. Et ceci est de la plus grande importance, me semble-t-il.*" Marcel, *Du refus à l'invocation*. Page 177. Rather than employing italicisation, Marcel sets '*toi*' apart by using quotation marks. Elsewhere, to emphasise a term or phrase, he uses italicisation.
[246] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 78. Emphases the author's. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 79.

power of fantasy, the ability to make intersubjective images to support the discipleship of faith.

b. Incarnation

Marcel strongly asserts that faith in God, besides being grounded in intersubjectivity, must be in something concrete, which he describes as incarnate. Marcel, therefore, grounds his ontology of intersubjectivity in incarnation.

> Here, and indeed everywhere as I see it, the necessity for incarnation must be given an important place. What I have been trying to say is that the personality is only realised in the act by which it tends to become incarnate … but at the same time it is of its very essence never to fix itself or crystallise itself finally in this particular incarnation. Why? Because it participates in the inexhaustible fullness of the being from which it emanates.[247]

The incarnation of each person enables their intersubjective awareness of 'the inexhaustible fullness of the being from which it emanates'. Incarnation allows a person to recognise other persons who are also incarnate. The consideration of another person's incarnation is supported by the ability to fantasise images reflective of incarnation. Fantasy plays a critical role in recognising underlying incarnate unity with other persons. Fantasy can support underlying unity with 'the living God' through images of His Son's Incarnation deliberated in secondary reflection.[248] Underlying unity, that is faith, for Marcel, must first be created and deliberated as a fantasy.

Marcel further establishes his ontology of intersubjectivity in incarnation by summarising that "the existential must inevitably be related to incarnate being, i.e. to the fact of *being in the world*."[249] In a phenomenological tone, referring to both appearance

[247] Marcel, *Homo viator : introduction to a metaphysic of hope*. Page 20. Marcel, *Homo viator : prolégomènes à une métaphysique de l'esperance*. Page 32.
[248] Marcel develops an ecclesiology according to this argument. "If we are to think of it as a Church, as, that is, an *agape* or as an incarnate intersubjectivity, we must in some way at least be on the inside of it. I say 'in some way', because even if I am quite unconscious of belonging to the Church, I can have a sort of diviner's sympathy which detects a mode of intersubjective presence from which the Church derives her value and significance." Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 108. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Pages 109-110.
[249] Marcel, *Creative fidelity*. Page 21. Emphasis the author's. Marcel, *Du refus à l'invocation*. Page 33.

and time, Marcel observes that "to think of existence is ultimately to think of the impossibility of any opposition here between being and appearance: … the existential aspect is inextricably bound up with my own condition of being not only incarnate but also a wayfarer—*Homo Viator*."[250] The wayfarer's awareness of incarnate intersubjectivity is not fixed to a static point. Marcel notes the potential development of a person's faith in God over time in a manner parallel to his proposed awareness of the reality of incarnate intersubjectivity.

For faith in God, Marcel observes the necessity of divine revelation, as "it is only in so far as I somehow become gratefully conscious of this revelation [of the Word, the *Logos*] that I can come to apprehend life and my own life as a gift."[251] As will be developed later by Henry's concept of life as 'gift', Marcel anticipates Henry by observing that "[e]ach one of us is in a position to recognize that his own essence is a *gift*—that it is not a *datum*; that he himself is a gift, and that he has no existence at all through himself. On the other hand, however, it is on the basis of that gift that freedom can grow or expand—that freedom which coincides with the trial [*l'épreuve*] in the course of which each man will have to make his own decision."[252] The gratitude of the believer for this gift of life encourages their use of fantasy to expand their faith. Fantasy can grow

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[250] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 24. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 27.

[251] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 122. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 123. Marcel absolutizes this observation in *Homo Viator* by stating that "there is nothing in me which cannot or should not be regarded as a gift." Marcel, *Homo viator : introduction to a metaphysic of hope*. Page 13. Marcel, *Homo viator : prolégomènes à une métaphysique de l'esperance*. Page 23.

[252] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 173. Emphases the translator's. "*Mais c'est bien ici que les considérations développées précédemment sur l'indissoluble lien entre la liberté et la grâce prennent toute leur valeur. Chacun de nous est situé de façon à pouvoir reconnaître que son essence est don, et non pas donnée, qu'il est lui-même un don, et qu'en dernière analyse il n'est aucunement par soi ; mais d'autre part c'est à partir de ce don fondamental que peut se déployer cette liberté qui ne fait qu'un avec l'épreuve au cours de laquelle chacun aura à décider de lui-même.*" Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 174. The original does not emphasise '*don*' or '*donnée*'. Henry will use '*l'épreuve*' in the form of a reflexive verb to describe life, as will be shown in the next chapter.

in support of faith when one is aware of and grateful for incarnate intersubjectivity. This will be further explored in my fifth chapter, which proposes a Christian ethic and therapeutic for fantasy's support of faith in God.

Ultimately throughout his work, however, Marcel fails to substantially develop the possibility of faith in the Incarnation of the Son of God in a significant way. Marcel's approach to incarnation is generally broad. Even though he explicitly acknowledges the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, Marcel prefers to speak expansively of recognising His Incarnation as an abiding 'spirit', as referenced in the previous subsection. While Marcel provides a pivotal place for incarnate intersubjectivity in faith, his contributions will be substantially developed later in the work of Michel Henry, which will better show how incarnate intersubjectivity enables faith in God through fantasy's images of the living flesh and the body in the world.

IV. Conclusion

Marcel's ontology, secondary reflection, and theology of faith, which includes an essential articulation of intersubjectivity and incarnation, help to situate and equip my theology of fantasy to show its potential support of faith in God. As was analysed at the outset of this chapter, Marcel provides a pivotal articulation of the creative role of fantasy in the imagination for belief. He is cautious not to assert that all knowledge is imaginary, yet "see[s] in belief an imperfect and even impure mode of knowing (to believe is to imagine that)."[253] The imagination, including its power of fantasy, may not lead to pure

[253] Marcel, *Creative fidelity*. Page 170. Marcel, *Du refus à l'invocation*. Page 221. Paul Ricoeur argues that Marcel wanted to be univocal in terms of knowing God, suggesting that Marcel thought that "transcendence is God or it means nothing." Edward Baring, *Converts to the real : Catholicism and the making of continental philosophy* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2019). Page 170. Cf. also Paul Ricoeur '*Entre Gabriel Marcel et Jean Wahl*' in Emmanuel Levinas et al., *Jean Wahl et Gabriel*

knowledge, such as will be given in the Beatific Vision, but is still critically supportive of faith.

While the work of Gabriel Marcel is useful for bridging the work of Jean-Paul Sartre and Michel Henry, it still falls into the ontological monism that Henry will so vehemently reject.[254] Near the end of Marcel's Gifford Lectures, he clearly situates himself in the Platonic project of seeking knowledge of existence from the world, which Henry will explicitly oppose. Marcel observed of his own work, "The great service that philosophy should render us—and here, of course, I fall in line with one of the great Platonic themes—would be constantly to increase our awareness, even this side of death, of this reality which quite certainly surrounds us on all sides, but from which, thanks to our condition of free beings, we have the awful power systematically to withhold ourselves. Everything goes to show with increasing clarity that the power is given to us of in some way locking ourselves more firmly in the prison in which we elect to live."[255] My theology of fantasy has sought to articulate the role of fantasy as a supporting means of freedom to break from this 'prison' by welcoming the 'spirit', the radiance offered in the recognition of incarnate intersubjectivity, including its source, the living God. Marcel asserts that "we can hope one day to see the radiance of that eternal Light of which a reflection has continually shown us all the time we have been in this world—that Light without whose guidance we may be sure that we should never have started our journey."[256] While Marcel contributes much to an existentialist theology of faith,

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Marcel présentation de Jeanne Hersch, Bibliothèque des "Archives de philosophie" Nouvelle série, (Paris: Beauchesne, 1976). Pages 57-87.

[254] Henry's doctoral dissertation, *The essence of manifestation*, addresses ontological monism in its first section entitled 'The Clarification of the Concept of the Phenomenon: Ontological Monism' and is more explicitly critical of it in subsection 11, 'Ontological Monism and the Problem of its Being Surpassed: Philosophy of Consciousness and Philosophy of Being'. Cf. Michel Henry, *The essence of manifestation* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1973). Pages 74-96.

[255] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 186-187. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 187.

[256] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 188. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 188.

important issues remain to be developed. These will be taken up by Henry, especially that of the knowledge of life and flesh.

In the decades since Marcel's death, he has, by and large, fallen out of favour, especially in French intellectual circles. Marcel cautioned near the end of his life that the technology he saw quickly advancing in his time could lead to a catastrophic state of humanity's overconfidence in its own agency. He was all too prescient. It was during the decades after his death that Michel Henry would also confront the dangers of increasing human confidence, most explicitly in his work *Barbarism*. Marcel's death in 1973 was in many ways a turning point in Western society at large. Sartre would outlive him by more than six years.

Gabriel Marcel's ontology elaborates the potential for awareness of God through secondary reflection, which will be both built upon and radically challenged by Henry's method of breaking free from the prison of this world by recognising an imminent share of life in each living person, which, I will argue in the next chapter, is made possible through fantasy.

CHAPTER IV: MICHEL HENRY'S REVERSED PHENOMENOLOGY AND THEOLOGICAL ENGAGEMENT

Life is a perpetual dawn,
the eternal youth of the beginning.[257]

I. INTRODUCTION

Michel Henry's phenomenology of life reverses classic phenomenology and increasingly considers divine revelation, especially the Incarnation of the Word of God. I will analyse Henry's phenomenology of life and theology of faith to assert that a living person can use their mental capacity of fantasy to deliberate faith in the source and Truth of Life, God. The imaginary power of fantasy, I argue, supports faith in God as it generates images for deliberation of life's immanent, affective, intelligible, intersubjective, and expansive aspects.

The work of Jean-Paul Sartre in *The Imaginary* laid the foundation for my use of fantasy as a power of generating images for the deliberation of potential truth in irreality as shown in my second chapter. Sartre's essential aspects of images, as known in consciousness, of immanent transcendence, with a present absence, and influence by desire and affectivity support my assertion of fantasy as supportive of faith. In my third chapter, Gabriel Marcel's consideration of incarnate intersubjectivity and his theology of faith developed an existential framework in which to engage my theological use of

[257] Jean-Yves Lacoste, *Experience and the absolute : disputed questions on the humanity of man*, 1st ed., Perspectives in continental philosophy, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2004). Page 102. Jean-Yves Lacoste, *Expérience et absolu : questions disputées sur l'humanité de l'homme*, Épiméthée, (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1994). Page 124.

fantasy. While neither Sartre nor Marcel provide an explicit analysis of fantasy, their respective contributions are essential to my theology of fantasy.

Michel Henry seeks the fundamental necessities for the possibility of the knowledge of truth, which classic phenomenology sought in the appearance of worldly phenomena. Henry reverses phenomenology by arguing that the source of truth is not found in worldly phenomena but in the auto-affective, immanent embrace of life.[258] Steadily throughout his work over seven decades, Henry broadly criticised dualist Greek philosophy and the subsequent Western thought that developed out of it. It was a mistake, he asserts, to have appropriated Greek ontological monism when seeking to understand the truth, especially the precepts of the Christian faith, which he argues are better expressed in the Hebraic tradition of the apostles. Henry argues that the source of manifestation—the principle enabling perception and knowledge—is life, which is not found in the world. Rather, the source of life, originary Life, is fully revealed to the world in the Incarnation of the Word of God, Jesus Christ. Henry declares boldly: "*the Truth of Christianity differs in essence from the truth of the world.*"[259] The world and its material objects are created from Life but do not possess life nor are where life can be found.

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[258] Henry's project is succinctly summarised in an essay by Ruud Welton: "There are no traces of God outside of us. Life is not a trace of God because Life is fully present. Henry's philosophy of Christianity is a phenomenology of real presence." Peter Jonkers and Ruud Welten, *God in France : eight contemporary French thinkers on God*, Studies in philosophical theology ; 28., (Leuven: Peeters, 2005). Page 142.

[259] Michel Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*, Cultural memory in the present, (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2003). Page 23. Emphasis the author's. Michel Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme* (Paris: Éd. du Seuil, 1996). Page 34. Michael O'Sullivan summarises Henry's concept of the Christian God as "both an act and as being 'pathētik'". Michael O'Sullivan, *Michel Henry: incarnation, barbarism, and belief: an introduction to the work of Michel Henry* (Oxford England New York: Peter Lang, 2006). Page 180. He elaborates that Henry portrays "God as a movement of eternal self-generation within each individual, a movement that remains open to those that recognise life in terms of his conception of auto-affection." O'Sullivan, *Michel Henry: incarnation, barbarism, and belief: an introduction to the work of Michel Henry*. Page 180. In Henry's fourth tome of his phenomenology of life, he defines the Christian God as nothing but 'life, self-givenness' and that the "phenomenology of life and Christianity are congruent in the sense that the reality that plays itself out in them is the same, their problems are the same." Michel Henry, *Phénoménologie de la vie. IV, Sur l'éthique et la religion*, 1re édition. ed., Epiméthée, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2004). Page 103. Translated by Michael O'Sullivan for his work, *Michel Henry*. In delving into how this notion of God relates to human persons through shared affectivity, O'Sullivan observes, "the passage of the self-givenness of life through living's pathos, through need, hunger, and joy, reveals the central element of existence, or its 'pure phenomenological substance'. It is this 'pathētik flesh', that suffers all human

My thesis builds on Henry's phenomenology of life and theology of faith, which provide my theology of fantasy with a methodology to elaborate fantasy's potential support of faith in God. Henry's phenomenology of life will offer my theology of fantasy an elaboration of life as immanent, affective, intelligible, intersubjective, and expansive. Fantasy generates images that share these aspects of life, which, I argue, makes fantasy critical to knowing the truth of absolute Life in the life of the living. This fundamental recognition of an engendered share of life is built upon Henry's notion of life, wherein he asserts the priority of interiority over exteriority, the affective flesh over the corporal body, and subjectivity over objectivity. Ultimately, Henry asserts that "[e]verything falls back [*bascule*] into life and only has its *being* in it; everything is alive."[260] Henry's ontology equates being and life.

The transcendental self's dependence on the immanent affectivity of life for the knowledge of truth is central to Henry's argument. "Life undergoes experiencing itself in pathos; it is an originary and pure Affectivity, an Affectivity that we call transcendental because it is indeed what makes possible *experiencing undergoing itself* without distance; in the inexorable submission and the insurmountable passivity of a passion. Life's self-revelation takes place in Affectivity and as Affectivity."[261] This is a critical assertion for

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emotions and pains, that serves as the ultimate confirmation of 'the congruence between the phenomenology of life and Christianity'." O'Sullivan, *Michel Henry: incarnation, barbarism, and belief: an introduction to the work of Michel Henry*. Page 185. Cf. Henry, *Phénoménologie de la vie. IV, Sur l'éthique et la religion*. Page 103. Translated by Michael O'Sullivan.

[260] Michel Henry, *Material phenomenology*, trans. Scott Davidson, 1st ed. (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008). Emphasis mine. Page 6. "*Toute chose bascule dans la vie et n'a* d'être *qu'en elle, tout est vivant*." Michel Henry, *Phénoménologie matérielle*, 1re éd. ed., Epiméthée, (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1990). Page 11. 'Falls back' is a poor translation of '*bascule*', which is better translated as 'seesaw' or 'pivot'. N.B. I will cite the original French text whenever Henry uses particularly technical French or presents his argument using French in a particular way which can easily be lost in translation.

[261] Michel Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*, trans. Karl Hefty, Northwestern University studies in phenomenology and existential philosophy, (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2015). Page 61. Emphasis mine. "*La vie s'éprouve soi-même dans un pathos ; c'est une Affectivité que nous appelons transcendantale parce que c'est elle en effet qui rend possible le* s'éprouve soi-même *sans distance dans le subir inexorable et la passivité insurmontable d'une passion. C'est dans cette Affectivité et comme Affectivité que s'accomplit l'auto-révélation de la Vie.*" Michel Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 2000). Pages 89-90. '*S'éprouve soi-même*' translated as 'undergoes experiencing itself' does not convey the complex layers of this phrase. A more exact translation would be

Henry's overarching project and my theology of fantasy. Faith in God is recognition of absolute Life through awareness of the affective self-embrace in the self-revelation of the First Living, Jesus Christ. This recognition can be deliberated by fantasy in irreality. Henry argues that faith in God is through the recognition of life's affectivity within each living person as revealed in the Arch-Flesh of Jesus Christ. The affectivity of the flesh reveals and influences knowledge of truth. Fantasy can generate images capable of influence by affectivity, as asserted by Sartre, of life's affectivity. These images can reveal potential truth despite absent external correlates. A fantasy's external objectivity always remains uncertain during deliberation. God is not a fantasy, but in his absent perception and conception, the deliberation of his existence by a living person must be supported through fantasy's images which can reflect the life that he shares with the living, as will be shown.

Henry will ultimately define faith in God as recognition of the gift of a living person's share of life in a loving self-embrace.[262] This recognition is possible through a living person's power to fantasise the possibility of originary Life, which cannot be known through the world but only considered within life as reflected in each person, who

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'daring to try or challenge oneself'. Karl Hefty's 'Translator's Preface' to *Incarnation* observes the great nuances involved in translating Henry, especially in his central term of 'life'. "In a frequent and important formulation, Henry says that life *s'éprouve soi-même*. The verb *éprouver* means 'to feel' or 'to experience,' but also 'to suffer,' 'to sustain,' 'to test,' 'to put to the test,' and even 'to afflict' or 'to distress.' The dynamic tension between active and passive meanings is not accidental, and in Henry's construction the term is not merely reflexive, but exceedingly so, and no single English verb can do justice to the richness of the original French. Henry does not exactly mean that life 'experiences itself,' as if life were an object of experience, nor that life is the 'experience of oneself,' as if a substantial self were there prior to it that it would then experience. The sense is something more like what experiencing *it*self undergoes. So most often, we have chosen the still-inadequate but approximate locutions 'to undergo experiencing itself' or 'experiencing undergoing itself.'" Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page xvi. Both Jean-Yves Lacoste, who wrote the forward for the English translation of *Words of Christ*, and Scott Davidson, the English translator of Henry's *Phénoménologie matérielle*, agree that Henry does not mean a *biological* sense of life. Lacoste succinctly observes, "For Henry, the meaning of 'life' is not biological." Michel Henry, *Words of Christ*, Interventions, (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Pub., 2012). Page ix. Davidson wrote in the opening sentence of his Translator's Preface, "Michel Henry (1922-2002) was a prolific French philosopher and novelist whose work sought to articulate a nonbiological concept of life." Henry, *Material phenomenology*. Page ix.

[262] Henry has several ways to describe this self-embrace in French, but most typically uses '*s'étreindre soi-même*'.

is made in the image and likeness of God, who is described by Henry as 'absolute Life'. One must first fantasise about life to recognise its embrace. Faith in the immaterial and invisible—further aspects of life, according to Henry—depends upon the 'power' that fantasy provides to deliberate Life.[263] Fantasy is the power to generate images that reflect one's share of life by first positing originary Life as a fantasy image in irreality, which can be deliberated for potential truth. Henry's work can be built upon to show that the possibility of this recognition, faith, depends upon fantasy's power to generate images that reflect a share of absolute Life in the life of each living person.

My aim is not to exhaustively re-present Henry's radical new approach to phenomenology or his wide-reaching criticism for most of his intellectual predecessors.[264] I will show that the framework of Henry's phenomenology of life provides the best means to articulate how fantasy is essential and influential in the act of faith in God. I will first analyse Henry's reversed phenomenology and then his increasingly explicit consideration of divine revelation. This will allow my theology of fantasy to elaborate their intersection in Henry's theology of faith as signification of that which is affective, intersubjective, and generative in the context of his hamartiology and soteriology.

II. Reversal of phenomenology for a Phenomenology of Life

The overarching concern of Henry's work was to elucidate the concept of life. Contrasting life with the world, he observes that "life is the original auto-affection that knows nothing about Ek-stasis, if it is essentialized as a radical interiority which touches all points of its being and which it feels and experiences itself without distance, without

[263] Henry defines 'power' as '*a priori* possibility'. Cf. Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 143. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 205.

[264] For a broad and excellent summary of Henry's phenomenology of life, albeit written before Henry's final two major works, *Incarnation* and *Words of Christ*, see Dan Zahavi, "Michel Henry and the Phenomenology of the Invisible," *Continental philosophy review* 32, no. 3 (1999). Regular exceptions to his widespread criticism of predecessors include are Meister Eckhart, Maine de Biran, and Søren Kierkegaard.

the mediation of any separation, any front or any world."[265] Henry contrasts his notion of the primacy of life's subjectivity with what he critically considers the predominant Western focus on the world's objectivity. The manifestation of reality as considered by Henry's reversed phenomenology depends upon life. In this section, I will analyse Henry's phenomenology of life, especially in light of his articulation of the role of the imagination, which will allow me to assert my argument that fantasy, as a power of the imagination, is necessary to support faith in God.

Henry's work strives to articulate what is necessary for recognising life. The world, for Henry, is that which is exterior to life, where objectivity and objective bodies are found.[266] Life is that which is interior; the place of the affectivity of the flesh, wherein a living person is a subject, who has a share in life from originary, absolute Life. Henry definitively distinguishes life and its flesh from the world and its bodies.[267] Life "alone has the ability to unite with the power of the hands and to identify with them, to be what it is and to do what it does. It alone possesses *a knowledge that merges with this power because it is nothing other than its continual experience of itself—its radical subjectivity.*"[268] For Henry, sensation and images occur in subjectivity. "Subjectivity is the

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[265] Michel Henry, *Barbarism*, Continuum impacts, (London: Continuum, 2012). Page 63. Michel Henry, *La barbarie*, 3e ed., Quadrige, (Paris: Puf, 2023). Page 112.

[266] While not making the firm distinction between life and body that Henry will make, Sartre anticipated his work. "In *L'être et le néant* Sartre writes that the lived body is *invisibly* present in every action, exactly because it is lived and not known."[266] Zahavi, "Michel Henry and the Phenomenology of the Invisible." Page 236. Emphasis the author's. Sartre compliments Henry's subjugating the body to the life that it bears, or rather, the body that life bears. Cf. Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and nothingness : an essay in phenomenological ontology*, trans. Sarah Richmond and Richard Moran (New York: Routledge, 2018). As originally cited from Sartre, Jean-Paul. 1943/1976. *L'être et le néant*. Paris: Tel Gallimard, page 372.

[267] Emmanuel Falque, much of whose work is dedicated to increasing the appreciation for the role of the organicity of the body in contrast to the flesh, criticises Henry in several of his works for falling into a type of dualism with his counterposing of 'body' and 'flesh'. "Such oppositional thinking would merely translate the soul-body dichotomy into a new flesh-body split. In 'abandoning' Greek philosophy, Henry thereby preserves its original rationale, from which phenomenology since Husserl has tried to free itself: thinking in the form of opposition or separation." Emmanuel Falque, *The loving struggle: phenomenological and theological debates* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield International, 2018). Page 149. Henry explicitly rejects the risk of dualism by asserting a "unity in the absolute immanence of subjectivity." Michel Henry, *Philosophy and phenomenology of the body* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1975). Page 89. Michel Henry, *Philosophie et phénoménologie du corps; essai sur l'ontologie biranienne*, 1. ed. (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1965). Page 124.

[268] Henry, *Barbarism*. Page 12. Emphasis the author's. Henry, *La barbarie*. Page 26.

place where every sensation and image is formed, where they increase on their own and thereby support themselves, succumbing under the weight of their own being."[269] Since fantasy is the imaginary power of life for generating images not informed by the objectivity of sensation, perception, or conception, its image can reflect the subjectivity of life. "What characterizes the ordinary image is that it is sustained at each moment by the imaginative act of the consciousness that posits it, and it is only the end result of this activity. It does not suffer any passivity of the regard and collapses when the conscious act that produces it is interrupted."[270] This interruption can come from other images or the world's sensations, perceptions, and conceptions.

Henry declares "all the various powers of subjectivity (imagination, memory, etc.) … are the fulfilment of life, its self-realization and self-growth, its culture."[271] Images of the world are sensations that the imagination can turn into memories. Images of life are generated as fantasies in the imaging consciousness. Imagining, Henry asserts, becomes "the magical power of making something real. … [I]t gives a thing life, as a modality of life."[272] Fantasy, a better term for 'magical', a term which Sartre also employed, can generate an image of something externally real yet absent. Most poignantly for my theology of fantasy, Henry broadly observes that "[t]he movement of the imagination is thus nothing other than the movement of life, its internal becoming, the tireless process of its coming into itself, an arrival in which it is felt in ever more vast, differentiated and intense experiences."[273] To assert the term fantasy is to specify the movement of the imagination of its 'internal becoming'. As Sartre demonstrated, the imaginary has a variety of images. Without specifying which type of image, Henry summarises that

[269] Henry, *Barbarism*. Page 42. Henry, *La barbarie*. Page 76.
[270] Henry, *Barbarism*. Page 41. Henry, *La barbarie*. Page 75.
[271] Henry, *Barbarism*. Page 49. Henry, *La barbarie*. Page 89.
[272] Michel Henry, *Seeing the invisible : on Kandinsky* (London ; New York: Continuum, 2009). Page 108. Michel Henry, *Voir l'invisible sur Kandinsky*, Quadrige Grands textes, (Paris: PUF, 2005). Page 186.
[273] Henry, *Seeing the invisible : on Kandinsky*. Page 108. Henry, *Voir l'invisible sur Kandinsky*. Page 187.

"[i]mages are life in its ceaseless effort of internal self-differentiation."[274] I argue that the images in the imaginary that are subjective and entirely internal are best described as fantasy.

Henry's work, originally written in French, uses two different words that are both normally translated into English as 'life'. In French, he uses '*vie*' and sometimes, though less often, '*vécu*'.[275] These two words are sometimes capitalised and sometimes italicised, which carries subtle distinctions for Henry. For this thesis, as most translators agree, the English word 'life' suffices for both terms to carry Henry's generally intended meaning. Henry remarks in a rare footnote in *I Am the Truth* that he generally capitalises 'L' when Life refers to God and leaves it uncapitalised when it refers generally to the life of a living person yet emphasises that this is nuanced in each use and both words should maintain a sense of the commonality of life.

> If life is the essence of God, as it is of Christ and of man himself, the concept of life stands at the core of our search. The reader may perhaps be surprised to see the word sometimes spelled with a capital 'L', and sometimes with a lowercase one, occasionally in the same sentence. Let us simply say here that, written with a capital, the [word] refers to the Life of God; written with a small letter, it refers to our own life. Since life is one and the same, however, these terminological nuances are intended to refer to one condition or the other (divine or human). Taken in an as yet undifferentiated sense, the word is written with a small 'l'. But, of course, these are no more than general indications. It is only in the context of our analysis that an attempt is made to provide a radical elucidation of what is meant in each case by 'life'.[276]

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[274] Henry, *Seeing the invisible : on Kandinsky*. Page 110. Henry, *Voir l'invisible sur Kandinsky*. Pages 189-190.

[275] Davidson recognises that Henry's sense of *vécu* is especially difficult to translate into English. "[T]here is a semantic slippage that occurs from the German *Erlebnis* to the English 'mental process' that does not occur in the French equivalent, *vécu*. One option here would be to translate this term as 'lived experience,' as many English translators of the French *vécu* have done. Since Henry's work is an engagement with Husserl's texts, I chose to follow the accepted English translation of Husserl's *Erlebnisse* as 'mental processes' but have also indicated Henry's use of the term *vécu* in parenthesis wherever it occurs. This decision should be satisfactory as long as the reader is aware that for Husserl the term 'mental process' does not refer narrowly to a process of reasoning but broadly to all the various activities of conscious life, such as knowing, willing, desiring, feeling, and so forth." Henry, *Material phenomenology*. Page xvi.

[276] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 279. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 40. In typical French fashion, when referring to humanity, Henry often uses '*l'homme*', which is not intended to be exclusive of women. At times in examples, Henry will use the feminine pronoun. He also explicitly states that the human condition that he is describing applies to both men and women. As will be noted, which is especially unfortunate given the context of Henry's critique of ontological monism, some translators poorly translate '*l'homme*' as 'human being'. I will

Further, Henry sometimes refers to God as 'absolute Life' and sometimes as 'originary Life', especially in the context of a reference to God as the origin of life. Often though, he simply refers to God as 'Life'.

Henry succinctly clarifies 'life' and its generation in his final work, *Words of Christ*:

> *Life is uncreated. Stranger to creation, stranger to the world, any process imparting Life is a process of generation.* It is an imminent process in which Life remains in the Living One whom it generates and never places itself outside itself.[277]

Even though a living person has a material body in the world, that which makes them alive is their share of life from Life in generation. The world is the place where a living person senses and materially interacts, yet itself is not alive, although visible. The world is material, wherein bodies are sensed. Life is immaterial and invisible. Henry insists on the priority of life before the world.[278] "[T]he *prior* power of a transcendental Affectivity reigns in every power of our body, the power of Affectivity to be given to itself and thus to give to itself everything that is given to itself only in it—in that which is the essence of Life."[279] Henry's phenomenology of life permits no co-mingling in life with anything belonging to the world.

> [I]n itself life is alien to the world. First, the mode by which life phenomenalizes itself, or reveals itself to itself by experiencing itself in its *pathētik* embrace, does not consist of the opening up of a world. Second, in the *pathētik* flesh of life's experience of itself, no world shows itself either, nothing that takes on the aspect of an 'outside.' Neither the modes of life's giving as self-giving and as self-revelation nor the pure phenomenological substance of which this self-revelation is made, belongs to the world in any shape or form.[280]

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generally articulate '*l'homme*' as living person, or simply, a living, in line with Henry's argument, which uses '*vivant*' when referring to humanity.

[277] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 84. Emphasis the author's. Michel Henry, *Paroles du Christ*, Points Sagesses, (2002). Page 135.

[278] "Being comes into oneself outside of and independently from exteriority and from every exterior being." Henry, *Barbarism*. Page 108. Henry, *La barbarie*. Page 189.

[279] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 142. Emphasis mine. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 204.

[280] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 97. "*[E]st en soi étrangère au monde.* D'une part*, le mode selon lequel elle se phénoménalise, c'est-à-dire se révèle à elle-même en s'éprouvant soi-même dans son étreinte pathétique, ne consiste pas dans l'ouverture d'un monde.* D'autre

Henry argues that life 'shows' or 'reveals' itself through a '*pathētik* embrace', which is completely foreign to the world. This showing occurs in the '*pathētik* flesh'.

Henry asserts that pathos is not just a quality as in '*pathētik*' but equates it with a 'phenomenological mode of revelation'. The fundamental pathos of life as a self-embrace of joy and suffering is the flesh.

> Life reveals in such a way that what it reveals never takes place outside it—since it is never anything external to it, other, or different, but precisely itself. So that the revelation of life is a self-revelation, the original and pure '*experiencing undergoing itself*' in which what feels and what is felt are one and the same. But this is possible only because *the phenomenological mode of revelation in which life consists is a pathos, an embrace* without distance and without regard to a suffering and an enjoyment whose *phenomenological material is indeed pure affectivity, a pure impressionality*, the radically imminent self-affection that is nothing other than our *flesh*.[281]

Henry closely relates joy and suffering throughout his works, beginning with his doctoral thesis, *The Essence of Manifestation*. "The revelation of the absolute in suffering and by it, a revelation such that it signifies identically beatitude and joy, cannot be [simply] affirmed. Such a revelation, as the problematic has shown, is the revelation of suffering itself, its experiencing of self such that in this self-experiencing and by it, it reveals itself to be identically suffering and joy, it becomes joy, sweetness and the serenity of the absolute Being and its beatitude."[282] 'Revelation' is the term that Henry uses to refer to

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part*, dans la chair pathétique de cette épreuve de soi de la vie, aucun monde non plus ne se montre, rien que revête l'aspect d'un « au-dehors ». Ni le mode de donation de la vie comme auto-donation et comme auto-révélation est faite n'appartiennent au monde en aucun sens ni d'aucune façon.*" Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 123-124. Emphases mine. The translator loses the sense of a balanced inherent tension between 'self-giving' and 'self-revelation' by translating '*D'une part*' as 'first' and '*D'autre part*' as 'second' rather than the better respective translations: 'on the one hand' and 'on the other hand'.

[281] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 120. Emphases mine. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 173. Henry further defines: [E]verything that is flesh is flesh, there is not an ounce of matter in it: It is a pure phenomenological material, crystal of appearing, substance of suffering and joy, a bit of phenomenality that is foreign to light, invisible, and filled with pathos … sensible only in the secret of its affective tonalities and its invisible, pathos-filled determinations. And which is *intelligible* only in the empty, external appearance of a material determination." Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 257. Emphases mine. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 367.

[282] Henry, *The essence of manifestation*. Page 673. "*La révélation de l'absolu dans la souffrance et par elle, révélation telle qu'elle signifie identiquement béatitude et joie, ne saurait toutefois être affirmée* simplement*. Une telle révélation, la problématique la montré, est la révélation de la souffrance elle-même, son s'éprouver soi-même tel que, dans ce s'éprouver et par lui, elle se révèle être identiquement souffrance et joie, devient celle-ci, la douceur et la sérénité de l'être absolu et sa béatitude.*" Michel Henry, "L'essence

manifestation. This early reference from his doctoral work regarding the revelation of the absolute will culminate near the end of his life with an explicit treatment of divine revelation in his last three major works: *I am the Truth: Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*, *Incarnation: A Philosophy of Flesh*, and *Words of Christ*.

> Life as distinguished from the sensibility of the world is manifest in affectivity.
>
> > Sensibility and Affectivity have always been confused as if it were a question of one and the same essence, one and the same reality. Far from being identical, however, sensibility and Affectivity have a paradoxical relation, at once foundational and antinomic. … *Affectivity founds sensibility*.[283]

Henry argues that sensibility is something of the world, stating that "sensibility is the transcendental condition of everything that can take the form of a 'world'."[284] Affectivity, however, for Henry is "[p]rior to and independently from every regard, … the 'way' in which the Internal is revealed to itself, in which life lives itself, in which the impression immediately imprints itself and in which feeling affects itself."[285] He asserts that the power of affectivity enables transcendence within immanence, which makes life knowable by the living who share in it.

> [I]t is only on the basis of this radical immanence that something like transcendence is possible. Seeing is actualized only as a nonseeing, by not being related to itself in an act of seeing and by not revealing itself through this and thus as something unseen and invisible. This nonseeing, this unseen, this invisible, is not the unconscious. It is not the negation of phenomenality but its first phenomenalization. It is not a presupposition but rather our life in its non-ek-static but yet undeniable pathos. Only the affect in its passion is undeniable.[286]

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de la manifestation" (Thesis (doctoral), Université de Paris, 1962, 1963). Page 847. Emphasis mine. The translator mistranslates the word '*simplement*' as 'simple', which is grammatically incorrect.

[283] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 230. Emphasis the author's. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 328.

[284] Henry, *Barbarism*. Page 26. Henry, *La barbarie*. Page 49.

[285] Henry, *Seeing the invisible : on Kandinsky*. Page 7. Henry, *Voir l'invisible sur Kandinsky*. Page 18.

[286] Henry, *Material phenomenology*. Page 81. "*Et c'est sur le fond seulement de cette immanence radicale que quelque chose comme une transcendance est possible.* C'est seulement en tant que non-voir, en ne se rapportant pas à lui-même dans un voir, en ne se révélant pas grâce à lui, et ainsi en tant que non-vu, en tant qu'invisible*, que le voir s'effectue. Or ce non-voir et ce non-vu, cet invisible, n'est pas l'inconscient, la négation de la phénoménalité mais sa phénoménalisation première, non un présupposé mais notre vie même en son pathos inextatique et pourtant incontestable—cela seul qui est incontestable : l'affect en sa passion.*" Henry, *Phénoménologie matérielle*. Page 111. Emphasis the author's. Davidson chose not to include the author's original emphasis in the translation, which results in a loss of Henry's intended meaning.

That which is ‘unseen’ and ‘invisible’ is not nothing, but a thing’s first phenomenalization. The reality of life’s affective pathos is undeniable, for Henry, yet invisible and, as will be explored, forgettable. The ability for life to be forgotten is the foundation of Henry’s hamartiology, which will be analysed later in this chapter, and invites a therapeutic, which will be proposed in the next chapter using my theology of fantasy.

Fantasy can generate images of that which is unseen and invisible, yet internally phenomenalized, that is life. Fantasy images are capable of being deliberated for the potential reflection of Life. The ‘affect’ of life can be reflected in the images of fantasy, which is inherently affective.

> What is specific to life is, in effect, that it affects itself. This self-affection defines its living, the ‘experiencing-itself’ of which it consists. Affection generally implies manifestation.[287]

What is required for a living person to recognise the manifestation of the affect within life is the power to fantasise, the ability to think and feel something that the living person has not thought or felt before, which can generate potential recognition of the Truth of Life, which is paradoxically both an external objective correlate and realised within the subjectivity of a living person’s own share of life. Henry gives absolute priority to the immanent pathos of Life as the space from which a living person may recognise life. Fantasy supports this recognition through its power to generate images for the deliberation of a share of life and its source, absolute Life.

A theology of fantasy can help to elucidate the potential for faith in Henry’s reversed phenomenology, which he argues overcomes his criticisms of the irreconcilable essences of Husserl’s phenomenology. Henry’s reversal attempts to overcome a paradox, wherein “the object and method of phenomenology are opposed to one another

[287] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 105. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 133.

phenomenologically as two irreconcilable essences: as the non-ek-static and pathetic revelation of life, on one hand, and as the letting-be-seen internal to and presupposed by *logos*, on the other hand."[288] A resolution that reconciles the two is proposed by Henry and clarified by the addition of my theology of fantasy.

Fantasy supports the deliberation of the truth at the intersection of life and the world. The logos is manifested in the radical immanence of the pathos of life. Henry unwaveringly maintains the possibility of recognising the primacy of the non-ek-static and pathetic revelation of life in life. Faith is in life rather than in any object of the world yet can be influenced by the world and depends on the manifestations of the logos in life. For faith to be held in life, Henry argues that thoughts of the world must be distinguished from life's affectivity.[289] I argue that both the pathos of life and objects of the world are sources of influence on fantasy.

Building on Henry's concept of life, my theology of fantasy can assert that the deliberation of the Truth of Life occurs in the subjectivity of the consciousness rather than the materiality of the world. Fantasies are immaterial images that can be deliberated for a potential reflection of the Truth of Life. Influences on fantasy are from both the world and life and can be obstructive or constructive for recognising absolute Life, which will be explored in the next chapter. Henry's reversed phenomenology, which establishes life as the originary principle of truth in contrast to the world and asserts the role that the suffering and joy of affectivity have in the recognition of the Truth of Life and its source,

[288] Henry, *Material phenomenology*. Page 90. Henry, *Phénoménologie matérielle*. Page 123. Henry does not italicise 'logos' in the French text, as he does other foreign language texts.
[289] Gabriel Marcel work anticipates this later development of Henry as Marcel observed that "God cannot be thought of in any real way; or at least He can be thought of only as an idol and not as a spirit." Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 35. Page 37.

can be built upon to demonstrate that a living person's fantasy can support faith in God through their sharing the life of His Incarnate Word, the First Living.

III. The First Living and Living Persons

Henry's reversal of phenomenology for a phenomenology of life leads him to describe absolute Life as showing itself in what he terms the 'First Living', which refers to the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, the Word made Flesh. Henry distinguishes theology from philosophy by describing theology as the consideration of the way that God reveals himself to us, from within life, in contrast to philosophy's assertion that one can create their own aporia for knowledge of the world. Henry's approach to theology, especially in consideration of the revelation of Jesus Christ as the First Living, provides a structure to assert fantasy's role in faith as constructive for assenting to the truth of absolute Life. Fantasy can support deliberation of faith in God by a living person through their share of life with the First Living. In this section, I'll first analyse Henry's concept of the First Living, then that of living persons.

a. The First Living

For Henry, Life is recognised in the incarnate, enfleshed Word, identified in the Gospel of John as Jesus Christ.[290] Connecting the concepts of 'Word' and 'logos', Henry asserts in *Material Phenomenology* that "the originary essence of the truth is life, and the *logos* is nothing but life. The Word [*le Verbe*] that comes into this world is not the Greek *logos*, coming into the world as such. What comes into the world slips away from it in advance—it is the hidden life."[291] Henry argues that the Greek concept of logos is not the

[290] "And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth." John 1:14 NRSVCE

[291] Henry, *Material phenomenology*. Page 97. Translator's interlineal original language text. "*[L]'essence originelle de la Vérité est la Vie et que le logos n'est rien d'autre qu'elle. La Verbe qui vient en ce monde*

logos of Christianity. Henry continues developing the notion of *logos* as life from *Material Phenomenology* through to his final three works, especially in the last, *Words of Christ*. He concludes: "The Word [*Parole*] of Christ, inasmuch as it is that of the Word [*Verbe*], is the Word [*Parole*] of Life: in it this Arch-revelation is accomplished by which, embracing itself, Life engenders itself, makes itself Life. Word [*Parole*] of Life, self-revelation of Life, Word [*Verbe*] of Life, Logos of Life."[292] Generally, '*Parole*' refers to human words while '*Verbe*' refers to the Logos, God. For Henry, Christ is the Word and the Logos of Life, the one engendered by Life. Christ reveals Life in life's embrace of the living.

The relationship between Jesus Christ the First Living and absolute Life is of critical importance for explicating the possibility of a living person having faith in God—absolute Life. To build a theology of faith in God through Trinitarian theology, Henry relates interiority, affectivity, and generativity. "It is the reciprocal phenomenological relation of interiority between absolute Life and the First Living in as much as it puts itself to the test [*s'éprouve*] in the One who puts himself to the test [*s'éprouve*] in it. To undergo experiencing oneself, to enjoy oneself, is to love oneself in such a way that this *self-enjoyment is produced in absolute Life as its generation of the first Self in which it*

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n'est pas le logos grec, la venue au monde elle-même en tant que telle*. Ce qui vient dans le monde s'y dérobe bien plus tôt, est la vie cachée.*" Henry, *Phénoménologie matérielle*. Page 131. Emphasis the author's. The English translation of *Words of Christ* is generally poor, such as here when it does not follow the original text's italicisation and capitalisation. I will indicate in footnotes when a poor English translation impacts Henry's argument and my analysis of it. N.B. As a matter of presentation, I will cite the original language interlineally where a word or short phrase provides a particularly important contribution for my argument and Henry's presentation. As some translators also employ this technique, I will indicate in the citation when the interlineal word or phrase has been included by the translator or by me.

[292] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 115. Translator's interlineal original language text. "*La Parole du Christ, en tant qu'elle est celle du Verbe, est la Parole de la Vie : c'est en elle que s'accomplit cette Archi-révélation par laquelle, s'étreignant soi-même, la Vie s'engendre elle-même, de fait Vie. Parole de Vie, auto-révélation de la Vie, Verbe de Vie, Logos de Vie.*" Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 184. Henry works to compare and elaborate the subtle distinctions between '*verbe*'and '*parole*' through this work. Most succinctly, he elaborates near the beginning, "Is it possible for humans to hear in their own language a word [*parole*] which would speak in another language, namely that of God or more exactly of his Word [*Verbe*]?" Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 8. Translator's interlineal original language text. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 15.

feels itself [*s'éprouve*] *and thus loves itself*."[293] Henry's association of interiority, affectivity, and generativity establishes a reciprocal, phenomenological, immanent relation between absolute Life, that is, God the Father, who generates life, and the First Living, who is generated by Life in life and who Henry periodically refers to as the 'Arch-Son'.[294] Henry defines the Son in terms of interiority, affectivity, and generativity within the Trinity in order to maintain the immanence of the Trinity.

> Yet because in such a [self-generation] process where there is neither creation nor world, where nothing is placed outside of self, all remains in itself, all is immanent, one must thus say: just as Life remains in its Word [*Verbe*] in which it experiences itself, so the Word [*Verbe*] remains in this Life which it experiences in it and in which it experiences itself. Thus the Father (Life all-powerful which self-engenders itself) remains in his Son (the Word [*Verbe*] in which this Life engenders itself in experiencing itself and in revealing itself in this way to itself), just as the Son (this Son in whom Life experiences itself and loves itself infinitely) remains in this Life (which experiences itself in him in such a way that it experiences itself in it). Thus one is in the other in this way, the Father in his Son, the Son in his Father according to a reciprocal inwardness (each experiencing, living, loving one in the other), which is an interiority of love, which is their common Love, their Spirit.[295]

Although Henry rarely mentions the Spirit and a pneumatology is left broadly undeveloped, this is a rare example from his final work where he does explicitly refer to the Holy Spirit as 'an interiority of love, which is their common Love', which is the Life shared by the Father and the Son. The critical role of the Holy Spirit in the deliberation of

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[293] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Pages 245-246. Emphasis the author's. First two interlineal original language texts are the translator's, the last is mine. "*[C]'est la relation d'intériorité phénoménologique réciproque entre la Vie absolue et le Premier Vivant pour autant qu'elle s'éprouve en Lui qui s'éprouve en elle. S'éprouve soi-même, jouir de soi, c'est s'aimer soi-même de telle façon que* cette jouissance de soi se produisant dans la Vie absolue comme la génération par elle du premier Soi en lequel elle s'éprouve et s'aime ainsi elle-même." Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 350. Note that '*s'éprouve*' is inconsistently translated in this passage, as both 'test' and 'feel'.

[294] This is especially the case in 'The Phenomenology of Christ', the fifth chapter of *I Am the Truth.*

[295] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 85. Translator's interlineal original language text. "*Mais parce que dans un tel procès où il n'y a ni création ni monde, où rien n'est posé hors de soi, tout demeure en soi, tout est immanent, il faut alors dire: de même que la Vie demeure en son Verbe en lequel elle s'éprouve elle-même, de même le Verbe demeure en cette Vie qui s'éprouve en lui et en laquelle il s'éprouve lui-même. Ainsi le Père (la Vie toute-puissante qui s'auto-engendre) demeure-t-il en son Fils (le Verbe en lequel cette Vie s'engendre en s'éprouvant elle-même et en se révélant ainsi à soi), de même que le Fils (ce Fils en lequel la Vie s'éprouve et s'aime elle-même infiniment) demeure dans cette Vie (qui s'éprouve en lui en sorte qu'il s'éprouve en elle). Ainsi sont-ils l'un dans l'autre, le Père en son Fils, le Fils en son Père selon une intériorité réciproque (chacun s'éprouvant, vivant, s'aimant en l'autre) qui est une intériorité d'amour, qui est leur Amour commun, leur Esprit.*" Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 136. Note that the translation of '*s'éprouve*' as 'experience' is inconsistent in this text, being translated as 'test' and 'feel'.

fantasies for the support of faith in God will be further analysed in the next chapter's therapeutic for fantasy.

Henry returns to one of his core themes—joy and suffering—to identify the affective flesh of the Word as revealed in Jesus Christ. "It is according to this reciprocal interiority that the unity of the Father and the Son is that which it is, not an ecstatic and abstract unity, but the violence of an original love where each one finds in the other his reality and his joy. … It is this enjoyment [*jouissance*] of the self in the other that the final words of Christ express. It is enjoyment that defines the original relationship of Life and of the First Living Being."[296] Ultimately, Jesus Christ's "identity with the Father and his own divinity is accomplished in his total subordination to the Father, in his most extreme humility."[297] Jesus Christ perfectly reveals to the world the love generated in the joy and suffering of his immanent, affective flesh through the humility of total subordination to the Father.

Humility is central to understanding the relationship between the First Living and absolute Life for Henry.[298] I argue that fantasy requires the virtue of humility to recognise the joy and suffering of other living persons, including the First Living, Jesus Christ, as it provides potential awareness for the life of another living person, rather than the self-

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[296] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 89. Translator's interlineal original language text. "*C'est en vertu de cette intériorité réciproque que l'unité du Père et du Fils est ce qu'elle est, non une unité extatique et abstraite, mais la violence d'un amour originaire où chacun trouve dans l'autre sa réalité et sa joie. … C'est cette jouissance de soi dans l'autre qu'expriment les ultimes paroles du Christ, c'est elle qui définit la relation originaire de la Vie et du Premier Vivant.*" Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 143. This English translation is substantially misleading regarding a central tenant of Henry, which is that life must be considered distinct from ontological monism. '*Premier Vivant*' should be translated as 'First Living', not 'First Living Being'. Likewise, 'vivant' should be translated as 'a living', not 'a living being.'

[297] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 111. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 179.

[298] Marcel also connects humility with subjectivity and transcendence. "Hence this ground of fidelity which necessarily seems precarious to us as soon as we commit ourselves to another who is unknown, seems on the other hand unshakable when it is based not, to be sure, on a distinct apprehension of God as someone other, but on a certain appeal delivered from the depths of my own insufficiency *ad summam altitudinem*; I have sometimes called this the absolute resort. This appeal presupposes a radical humility in the subject; a humility which is polarized by the very transcendence of the one it invokes." Marcel, *Creative fidelity*. Page 167. Marcel, *Du refus à l'invocation*. Page 217.

focussed pride of one blinded and consumed by their own self. Fantasy allows a living person to recognise joy and suffering in other living persons' lives through reflection on images of shared affectivity. Fantasy's support of the deliberation of the joy and suffering of other living persons is necessary for faith in the divine generation of the First Living because absolute Life is obscured and hidden under the conditions of this world.[299] A shadowy distance remains between a living person's joy and suffering, although it will not be so in the Beatific Vision, when the blessed will be fully embraced in the 'violence of an original love', that of absolute Life. A living person can use fantasy to deliberate the joy and suffering of Christ's flesh as one with whom flesh is shared and so recognise and hold faith in the shared affective life in which they are embraced.

b. Living Persons in the First Living

Henry defines a living person as one who is generated in life and shares life as revealed in the Word made Flesh, the First Living. Henry elaborates that "Christ spoke of an invisible life, his own eternal Life, which is also shared with all living beings."[300] Sharing is according to "the power of Christ … [as] the inevitable mediation of the Word [*Verbe*] in any generation of a living being into life. Life only becomes itself in the Self of the First Living Being whom it generates in itself as its Word [*Verbe*]."[301] Life can be generated and given as a share without lessening itself. Two distinct living persons can each have a 'share' of life while each remaining a distinct living person. Henry argues that all living persons share life's generative, loving self-embrace, as sons in the Son.

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[299] Marcel anticipates this aspect of Henry's work, claiming that "the idea of life itself is ambiguous" with "incomprehensible unity of aspects." Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Pages 162-164. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Pages 163-164.

[300] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 92. "*[L]e Christ parlait d'une vie invisible, la Vie éternelle qui est la sienne, celle aussi qui* est donnée en partage *à tous les vivants*." Emphasis mine. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 148. The original French phrase '*est donnée en partage*' is better translated as 'is given in sharing', which carries an explicit sense of gift.

[301] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 110. Translator's interlineal original language text. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 177.

"*Life has the same meaning for God, for Christ, and for man.*"[302] Life is the same for all the living who share it.

The mediation of the Word occurs through the shared flesh of the First Living as manifest in Jesus Christ. "The Incarnation of the Word [*Verbe*] in the flesh of Christ is this coming of the Word [*Parole*] of Life into a flesh like ours. Henceforth, for this Word [*Parole*] of God to be actually received by us, the condition is that Christ give us his own flesh which is that of the Word [*Verbe*]—which he gives to us in his flesh, uniting his flesh to ours, in such a way that it would be in us and we in him—in the same way as he is in the Father and the Father is in him."[303] Christ reveals life's generation in a living person through life's flesh, not the body in the world.

> For Christianity, man is not, in effect, a Being-in-the-world, neither in the natural sense nor in the transcendental sense. … By defining man as son, Christianity rules out any form of thought—science, philosophy, or religion—that holds man to be a Being of the world, whether in a naïve or critical sense. In effect, there are sons only in life.[304]

Henry argues adamantly that mankind was not created, nor is an image, but is generated in Life.

> 'God created man in his image': that he gave man his own essence … in the sense that, his own essence being the self-engendering of Life in which is engendered the Ipseity of all the living, … To engender means everything except to create, if creation refers to the creation of the world, the phenomenological opening up of a first 'Outside' where the entire reign of the visible is revealed to us.
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> … The thesis that God created man in his image therefore signifies two things: first, man was in fact not created—and this is why he is not a Being-in-the-world; and second, that man is not an image, because in fact images exist only in the world, against the background of this original putting-into-image [*image originelle*] that is the horizon of the world in its ek-static phenomenalization. If man were an image, if he were created in the way that the world was created, he

[302] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Emphasis the author's. Page 101. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 128.
[303] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 123. Translator's interlineal original language text. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Pages 197-198.
[304] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Pages 96-97. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 123.

> would no longer be the 'image' of God and carry in him the same essence, the essence of Life: he would no longer be, and could no longer be, a living.[305]

Henry argues firmly and repeatedly that a living person is engendered, not created. Nor is a living person an image, as he considers images to 'exist only in the world'. Here he, in part, diverges from Sartre, who asserted the primacy of cognition through imaging consciousness in contrast to perceptual and conceptual consciousnesses. They agree in that they both assert that the truth of external realities must be observed interiorly but disagree as to the role that images play in cognition. As will be shown later in my analysis of Henry's hamartiology and soteriology, Henry does defend a constructive sense of 'aesthetic images' for cognition in his defence of culture. Despite their differences, the nuances of both Sartre and Henry will allow my theology of fantasy to assert fantasy's support of faith in an external reality of God as shared in the images reflected upon within the immanent, *pathētik*, self-embrace of shared life. The living inhabit the created world, which for Henry, "consists in the opening of [the] horizon of exteriority."[306] Henry does not deny the creation of the visible, material, objective world but distinguishes the life of living persons from it. Life creates the 'horizon of exteriority', but the relation between God and living persons exists outside of the world, in life.

The fact that living persons are engendered within life remains true even when considering Henry's concept of the 'Self'.

> Like God, man is nothing of the world, and nothing in him can ultimately be explained by the world. Like God, man is not the product of a process that sits outside itself in the form of an image. Man has never been posited outside God. Man is not an image we could see. Man is nothing visible. No one has ever seen God, but no one has ever seen a man—a man in his actual reality, a transcendental living Self.[307]

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[305] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 103. Translator's interlineal original language text. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Pages 130-131.
[306] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 84. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 135.
[307] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 229. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 327.

Henry's anthropology clarifies that there is immanent individuality in life. Life is engendered through 'Life's self-generation'.

> Life's immanence in every living being thus does not mean that the reality of the human being is dissolved at the same time as its individuality, while (in a phenomenological interpretation that is as decisive as it is novel) the immanent process of absolute Life generates in itself the Ipseity of an original Self as the internal condition of its self-revelation—as the internal condition of its own life and thus of every conceivable life. Thus a Self belongs to every living being; every living being is built up in the manner of an "individual." It is nothing by itself—neither a living being nor an individual—and lives only in this process of Life's self-generation, and *that is what, far from taking the effectiveness of a singular reality away from it, on the contrary endows it with reality*. Given to itself in the Ipseity of absolute Life, joined to itself and undergoing experiencing itself in it, in this absolute life's trial of itself and in the Ipseity of its original Self, it is itself generated as a Self, as the singular Self it forever is.[308]

Henry repeatedly emphasises as one of his most central arguments that a living person is 'generated' as a son of God, that is, undergoes experiencing themselves in the shared joy and suffering of life, even while maintaining their individuality. A living person is an individual, but 'nothing by itself'.

In a rare moment of softening the separation between the interiority of life and the exteriority of the world, Henry observes of living persons:

> Undoubtedly we appear in the light of this world, in what it calls its 'glory'. Furthermore, always in this light, we are open to it and to all that is found in it. But the visible universe does not exhibit our true reality, which resides in the 'secret' where God sees us. This is the reason why the teaching of Christ concerning the human condition has constantly substituted a divine genealogy for its worldly genealogy. According to it, the human being is a living being engendered in life, in the one and only life which exists, which is that of God. The human being is the son of God.[309]

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[308] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Pages 181-182. Emphasis the author's. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 260.

[309] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 73. "*Assurément, nous apparaissons dans la lumière de ce monde, dans ce qu'il appelle sa « gloire ». Ensuite, toujours dans cette lumière, nous sommes ouverts à lui et à tout ce qui se montre en lui. Mais cet univers du visible n'exhibe pas en lui notre réalité véritable, laquelle réside dans le « secret » où Dieu nous voit. C'est la raison pour laquelle l'enseignement du Christ concernant la condition humaine a constamment substitué à sa généalogie mondaine une généalogie divine. Selon celle-ci, l'homme est un vivant engendré dans la vie, dans la seule et unique vie qui existe et qui est celle de Dieu. L'homme est le Fils de Dieu.*" Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Pages 116-117. 'Human being' and 'living being' are poor English translations for '*l'homme*' and *vivant*', respectively.

Like Marcel, Henry employs the image of 'light', a symbol of 'glory', to describe the intersubjective relation between God and living persons. Henry appeals to Scripture to further articulate the generation of life in life by observing:

> Human beings are nothing other than sons of God. … Engendering humans as living beings, giving them a life which exists in himself, God has in this way given them the same nature as his own: that of life. It is in this way that God has made humanity in his own image and likeness (Gen. 1:26).[310]

The capacity of a living person to have faith in God rests on their generation in God's 'own image and likeness'. This capacity operates in consciousness through a living person's inherent power to fantasise images of life's shared generation.

Jesus Christ, divine and human, plays a fundamental role in revealing life to the living. Henry states: "man can be the 'Son of God' only as the 'Son within the Son.'"[311] Living persons are sons of God in that "they draw their condition of living from their birth in life. They are living beings in life, experiencing themselves in multiple impressions, emotions, actions, and thoughts, given to themselves in the self-revelation of absolute Life, that is to say in its Word [*Verbe*]."[312] A living person's 'birth in life' conveys all aspects of life, from life's affectivity to its immanent transcendence.[313]

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[310] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 42. "*L'homme n'est autre que le Fils de Dieu. … Engendrant l'homme comme un vivant, lui donnant une vie qui n'existe qu'en lui, Dieu lui a donné de cette façon la même nature que la sienne : celle de la vie. C'est ainsi que Dieu a fait l'homme à son image et à sa ressemblance (Genèse, 26).*" Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 68. The original says '*l'homme*' and 'mankind' or 'man' is a better translation. "*Engendrant l'homme comme un vivant*" is therefore better translated as: "Engendering man as a living."

[311] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 111. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 141.

[312] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 103. Translator's interlineal original language text. "*[Q]u'il tient de sa naissance dans la vie sa condition de vivant. Un vivant dans la vie, s'éprouvant en de multiples impressions, émotions, actions et pensées donnés à elles-mêmes dans l'auto-révélation de la Vie absolue, c'est-à-dire dans son Verbe.*" Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 166. Again, an inconsistency is evidenced in the translation between the author's original singular usage of '*un vivant*' and the translator's plural usage of 'living beings', which loses a personal and directed poignancy, besides its introduction of 'being' into the living, which as previously indicated, is contrary to Henry's argument.

[313] Henry clarifies the concept of 'transcendental birth' within the framework of Trinitarian theology. "The Christian concept of the transcendental birth subverts our customary idea of birth, in the same way that Christian concepts of Father and Son will overturn the current representations of 'father' and 'son.' This is the reason why we are introducing the philosophical concept '*transcendental*,' which does not refer to things such as we see them—a birth, a father, a son—but refers back to their most interior possibility, to their essence. But the possibility of birth, of something like a father or a son, is not seen, because this possibility resides precisely in Life, which is not seen either. This is why we also call this Life a

Henry further defines 'self' in terms of relationship with the 'first Self', as he also did with a living person in relation to the First Living. Every living person, he argues, is in the embrace of God through their share in the life of Jesus Christ, the First Living and the first Self.

> The *pathētik* flesh of this Ipseity, in which Life is joined to itself, is what joins me to myself such that I may be, and can be, this me that I am. Therefore, I cannot join me to myself except through Christ, since he has joined eternal Life to itself, creating in it [*se faisant*] the first Self. The relation to self that makes any me a me is what makes that me possible; in philosophical language, it is its transcendental condition.[314]

The consequence of this is "[t]hat man is the Son of God, Son of absolute Life … in the very movement by which life gives itself to itself in the process of its eternal self-revelation that also is born the Ipseity in which any conceivable Self is given to itself as this Self that it is."[315] Henry warns against defining the self according to 'thought', as was done by Descartes. A radically immanent Self is

> … as Self neither constituted by nor the object of thought, without an image of self, with nothing that might assume the aspect of its reality. It is a Self without a face, which never lets itself be envisaged. It is a Self in the absence of any perceptible Self, such that this absence of any perceptible Self or thought constitutes the Self's veritable Ipseity, as well as everything possible on the basis of it.[316]

Like life, the self is entirely invisible and without image, according to Henry.

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transcendental life. '*Transcendental'* life is not a fiction invented by philosophy but refers to the only life that exists." Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 52. Emphases mine. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 69-70.

[314] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 115. Translator's interlineal original language text. "*C'est la chair pathétique de cette Ipséité en laquelle la Vie* se joint *à elle-même, c'est elle qui me joint à moi-même de telle façon que je sois et puisse être ce moi que je suis. Je ne puis donc me joindre à moi-même qu'à travers le Christ, pur autant qu'il a joint à elle-même la Vie éternelle,* se faisant en elle le premier Soi*. Le rapport à soi qui fait de tout moi un moi, c'est ce qui le rend possible. C'est, en langage philosophique, sa condition transcendantale.*" Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 146. Emphases mine. Of life, Henry asserts that it joins itself [*se joint*], whereas elsewhere life 'embraces itself' [*s'étreignant*] and 'experiences itself' [*s'éprouve*]. The English translation of '*se faisant*' as 'creating in it' in '*se faisant en elle le premier Soi*' is poor. As a reflexive causative and in respect to Henry's distinction between creation and generation for Christ as the First Living, a better translation is '*having done it* in the first Self'.

[315] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 263. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Pages 329-330.

[316] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 149. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 188.

Henry's articulation of the divine revelation of the Trinity through its manifestation in Jesus Christ, the First Living, reveals to all living persons their generated, inherent life as sons within the Son. This 'Truth' can only be grasped by a living person in their flesh. "The 'Truth' is thus not initially something in front of which one must disappear, in order to allow being to be as it is in itself. Instead, one must give assistance to it, *give the gift of one's own flesh*, because every essential truth can only occur as this flesh of the Individual and as one's own life."[317] The 'gift of one's own flesh' demands humility, inspired by love for unity, as will be shown in Henry's theology of faith and will be used to build a therapeutic for fantasy.

The Incarnate Word made Flesh, Jesus Christ, is the First Living, who reveals life in living persons through enabling their recognition of it in the fantasies of shared affectivity. For a living person to be able to recognise absolute Life in the First Living, my theology of fantasy will need to engage not just Henry's phenomenology of life, but also his theology of faith.

IV. A THEOLOGY OF FANTASY ENGAGING HENRY'S THEOLOGY OF FAITH

A theology of fantasy is needed to clarify how a living person can recognise their share of life. The ability of a living person to have faith in Life depends on deliberation of images made by fantasy that reflect their share of life in the First Living, Jesus Christ. Fantasy generates images that can support the deliberation of the Truth of Life. Life is shared by God, absolute Life, through the generation of living persons but is hidden in the world.

My theology of fantasy will analyse Henry's theology of faith, which he articulates in terms of signification and substitution. Faith, according to Henry, is

[317] Henry, *Barbarism*. Page 69. Emphasis the author's. Henry, *La barbarie*. Page 124.

signification of the intelligible gift and share of life. Life is always already given in the sharing of life through each living person's generation in life. The recognition of the gift of life occurs in a living person as they deliberate images generated by fantasy of life as affective, intersubjective, and expansive. Faith, according to Henry, must overcome sin as the forgetfulness of one's filial condition. Salvation, the recognition of a living's share of life, is given to those who hear and do the Word of Christ.[318] My theology of fantasy will constructively engage Henry's hamartiology and soteriology, especially his elaboration of the possibility of deliberating faith in God amidst culture that reveals life and supports faith in its source.

a. '*Cogitatio*', transcendence, and fiction in the signification of life

A theology of fantasy asserts the possibility for faith in God because life is intelligible. Henry asserts that a '*cogitatio*', that is a thought, is manifest in irreality and known through signification.[319] Henry observes that "*[i]t is not thought that gives us access to life; it is life that allows thought to access itself*, to undergo experiencing itself and at last to be what it always is, the self-revelation of a '*cogitatio*'."[320] Fantasy supports the deliberation of the intelligible Truth of Life in irreality because life can be manifest as

[318] Sylvain Camilleri's essay 'Phenomenology and Soteriology in the "Christian Trilogy" of Michel Henry' provides an incisive account of Henry's soteriology. Jeffrey Hanson and Michael R. Kelly, *Michel Henry : the affects of thought*, Continuum studies in Continental philosophy, (New York: Continuum, 2012). Translated by W. Christian Hackett. Pages 111-134.

[319] Signification for the sake of knowledge of that which is not perceived is not a theme original to Henry, even though it takes a new perspective in his phenomenology of life. Signification is observed in others' earlier phenomenological and psychological work. For example, Christopher Want wrote that "Freud treats representation as an independent system of signification in which the signifier is arbitrary and without correspondence to the 'real'." Christopher Want, *Philosophers on art from Kant to the postmodernists : a critical reader* (New York ; Chichester: Columbia University Press, 2010). Page 184. Freud's treatment of that which is signified is like fantasy as I describe it, inasmuch as fantasy can be arbitrary and without direct correspondence to an external correlate.

[320] Page 90. Emphasis the author's. "Ce n'est pas la pensée qui nous donne accès à la vie, c'est la vie qui permet à la pensée d'accéder à soi*, de s'éprouver soi-même et enfin d'être ce qu'elle est chaque fois : l'auto-révélation d'une '*cogitatio'." Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 129. Henry explicitly and critically addresses Descartes's stark consequences of defining personhood as thought in his declarative '*cogito ergo sum*'. Descartes describes the individual as a *cogitatio*, whose mind considers cogitations. Descartes's work heavily informs the modern concept of personhood, which Henry explicitly challenges.

thought 'accessing itself' in the immanence of life. In this subsection, I will analyse Henry's articulation of '*cogitatio*' in light of his assertion of transcendence and fiction in the possibility of signifying life, which I argue is supported by fantasy.

First though, it is critical to note Henry's assertion of life's intelligibility as manifest in thoughts of the world because of life's Arch-intelligibility. He describes thoughts of the world as 'opaque and incomprehensible'. "It is an intelligibility that allows us truly to understand things—not just because these things simply show themselves in it in their opaque and incomprehensible facticity."[321] Thoughts of 'things' can be known because of life's Arch-intelligibility.

> [I]n the Arch-intelligibility in which absolute life arrives in itself, we arrived in ourselves in our living condition, *in possession of the life that has put us in possession of ourselves, thus knowing it in the way it knows itself* (in the Arch-intelligibility of its pathos) we can then form a re-presentation of it, throwing the image or 'essence' outside us, in such a way that in them real life in the reality of its pathos is never given to us, but only its double, a copy, or an image—some objective equivalent indeed, but empty [*vide*], fragile, and *as incapable of living as of subsisting by itself*. And this is in fact why we call it an image. For what is proper to every image is that it cannot exist unless supported by a performance of life, the act of imagination that forms it and keeps it in front of its gaze, without which it would immediately collapse into nothingness.[322]

A thought, that is a '*cogitatio'*, is expressed from life in images manifest in the world but are 'empty' [*vide*]. These images, better articulated as fantasies, have the possibility to lead one back to life, since life is the origin of 'thought'. "Before thought, before the opening of the world and the unfolding of its intelligibility, absolute Life's Arch-intelligibility fulgurates, the Parousia of the Word [*Verbe*] in which it is embraced."[323] Henry, connecting life's Arch-intelligibility and the Word, further establishes this groundwork in Christ. "[O]ne and the same principle of intelligibility or rather Arch-

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[321] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 86. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 124.
[322] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Author's emphases. Pages 91-92. My interlineal original language text. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Pages 131-132. '*Vide*' echoes Sartre's concept of the imaging consciousness that 'aims emptily', as cited in the second chapter.
[323] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 255. My interlineal original language text. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 364.

intelligibility runs through the Word [*Verbe*] and man in order to unite them in the Christ. This Arch-intelligibility is absolute Life's self-revelation."[324] While images and thoughts are 'absolute Life's self-revelation' in the world, they can lead back to life, and ultimately to faith in Christ.

For faith in Christ, the Arch-Son of absolute Life, thoughts and images, made by fantasy, must be deliberated in irreality. Henry observes that Husserl acknowledged irreality as the place of the appearing of the intentional correlate joined with intentionality in transcendence.

> The most remarkable feature of Husserlian phenomenology, as we have seen, is that it always refers to the intentional correlate—the noema—as an irreality. This position is all the more significant in that it is affirmed at the very time when the *power of making something manifest* tends to be joined with intentionality. When appearing is conferred to transcendence, and when the phenomenological presupposition is that being is founded on appearing, the transcendent being is marked by an essential irreality. This fact attests to the invincible power of an intuition of life.[325]

The 'power of making something manifest' in irreality is fantasy. Yet, after this, he then continues to include even 'God' within 'all possible reality' as 'situated in Life'.

> Moreover, if the noematic correlate is irreal inasmuch as in its transcendence it is placed outside of life, this thesis would flow back into life and center all of reality in life. This claim would have an immense philosophical scope. Life is not said to be real as a particular reality, which in this way would constitute a specific ontological region. To the contrary, *all possible reality, including the reality of nature, the cosmos, the other* [*d'Autrui*]*, the absolute and even God* [*de Dieu lui-même*]*, only becomes actual* [*reçoit son effectivité*] *by being situated in Life*.[326]

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[324] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 236. My interlineal original language text. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 338.

[325] Henry, *Material phenomenology*. Page 94. Emphasis mine. Henry, *Phénoménologie matérielle*. Page 127.

[326] Henry, *Material phenomenology*. Page 94. Emphasis mine. Henry, *Phénoménologie matérielle*. Page 127. The translator fails to capitalise 'other', as the author does, as in '*d'Autrui*'. It is important to note that Henry emphasises the culmination of his argument of asserting all reality in life, including God *himself* [*de Dieu lui-même*]. 'Becomes actual' is a weak translation for '*reçoit son effectivité*', which is better translated as 'receives his effectiveness' from being situated in life, which clarifies that life is the primary force which enables 'effectiveness', that is possibility, in that in which it is given.

Henry radically observes Life as the 'center' of all reality. In other words, life is not a part or 'region' of reality but transcends it totally, and likewise God. Knowledge of this is possible in consideration of intentional correlates in irreality that are fantasies.

Henry reaffirms and emphasises how faith comes from signification of life as revelation of a *cogitatio* in the irreal.

> This primal knowledge of life is living itself. It is taken in and through living, in the phenomenological actualization of its self-revelation in pathos. Since each real property of real mental processes is revealed originally to itself and thus carries the initial knowledge of what it is within itself, a regard is able to arise on the basis of this knowledge. This regard casts the content of this knowledge—immanence and pathos—before itself. They are determined according to the modality of this mental process so that they can be seen as the irreal features that comprise the noematic essence of this *cogitatio*. … *Instead of pure seeing allowing the absent or lost reality of life to be known in terms of its noematic essence, it is the immanent revelation of life in the* cogitatio *which allows seeing to see and know everything about life, to the extent that life can be known*.[327]

In irreality, the 'immanent revelation of life' can be known through noematic essences. Fantasy generates immanent, affective images of these noematic essences in irreality, thereby playing a critical role in knowing the reality of life, including absolute Life, God.

Henry considers irreality as facilitating the signification of life throughout his works, including one about the abstract art of Wassily Kandinsky, *Seeing the Invisible*. His phenomenology observes Kandinsky's appropriation of the work of Nils Bohr, which he argues demonstrates that "physical reality has no substance and in some way no reality; quanta of energy move in leaps without crossing through it. In physics as well, matter is broken down into the dust of the dubious, virtual particles; it dissolves into irreality and a sort of immaterialism."[328] Fantasy, as an ongoing mental capacity for generating a variety of images in irreality, supports deliberation of reality between the images that reflect a real external correlate and those images that do not. The power of

[327] Henry, *Material phenomenology*. Page 94-95. Emphasis the author's. Henry, *Phénoménologie matérielle*. Page 128-129.
[328] Henry, *Seeing the invisible : on Kandinsky*. Page 15. Henry, *Voir l'invisible sur Kandinsky*. Page 32.

fantasy lies in its support for the deliberation of external objective truth in a person's consciousness. Irreality cannot contain nor determine external objective truth but provides fantasy the freedom to generate images for the deliberation of that which may be externally true or entirely fictive.

Henry invokes the term 'fiction' to articulate a concept like fantasy while critiquing the work of Edmund Husserl. "[F]iction [*La fiction*] marks the dividing line between those [particular givens] that are necessary to the internal constitution of the 'thing' and those without which it is still possible, that is, between the essential characteristics and the accidental or contingent ones. The eidetic in phenomenology—notably the theory of eidetic analysis as resting on *free fantasy* [*la libre fiction*]—is the palliative conceived by Husserl to confront a difficulty that determines his thought from the outset."[329] Despite a misleading English translation, which translates the second usage of '*fiction*' as 'fantasy', an argument can still be made that Henry interprets Husserl as using something like free fantasy or fiction to facilitate a 'palliative' for making a distinction between the essential and accidental characteristics of the eidetic.

Henry emphasises the importance of signification when he articulates the distinction between perceiving living beings in the world and 'grasping' them in life.

> [*W*]e *see living beings but never their life*. If we reflect a bit more on the perception that we have of such beings, we realize that a signification is inherent in that perception—the signification 'living being'—and it is that signification, coupled with an intuitive grasp of their objective bodies, that make of these bodies living bodies and make of these beings what they are for us: living beings. But grasping this signification is by no means equivalent to the perception of life itself. To signify means to aim 'into the void' in such a way that no intuition of reality yet corresponds with this target.[330]

[329] Henry, *Material phenomenology*. Page 73. Emphasis mine. My interlineal original language text. Henry, *Phénoménologie matérielle*. Page 100. '*La libre fiction*' translated as 'free fantasy' demonstrates the modern bias towards synonymising fantasy and fiction but also alludes to the presence of freedom '*libre*' in fantasy, as is commonly understood in its contemporary usage.
[330] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 40. Emphasis the author's. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 55.

Without specifically naming 'it', Henry alludes to what I argue is the essential power of fantasy to signify, that is, generate images of living beings who share hidden life. 'Yet corresponds' indicates that 'it', fantasy, holds the possibility to aim despite the 'void'. I argue that the ability 'to signify' or 'aim into the void' of life is better ascribed to the power of fantasy. 'Yet corresponds' does not preclude the future possibility of the perception of the Truth of Life but indicates that fantasy is first required to support its deliberation for faith in life.

A persistent concern for Henry is the recognition of life in living person, which is the focus of his theology of faith. He argues that the pathos of life is immanent within a living person and "can only adopt a visible appearance on the condition of setting aside its own reality; it thus only appears in an irreal form. In the noematic essence of the *cogitatio*, pathos is nothing but an empty signification."[331] While it is empty, the pathos of life is not powerless, as "it itself carries out revelation."[332] The emptiness that appears is the absence of objectivity in life, which is entirely subjective. A living person is immanently capable of recognising life through the empty signification of their pathos. The empty signification of the pathos of life, faith, occurs in irreality when fantasy generates an image reflective of its own life's origin in originary Life, that is God. It depends on the willingness to see the invisible and to substitute the seemingly objective with a noematic essence. "Inasmuch as one is confined to seeing, wants to see, and is directed toward what one sees, one must substitute the invisible *cogitatio* that resides there with an objective equivalent. This substitute is the noematic essence that the [phenomenological] method laboriously constitutes and that is its own necessary condition."[333] Substitution enables signification in life and perception in the world. The

[331] Henry, *Material phenomenology*. Page 93. Henry, *Phénoménologie matérielle*. Page 126.
[332] Henry, *Material phenomenology*. Page 93. Henry, *Phénoménologie matérielle*. Page 126.
[333] Henry, *Material phenomenology*. Page 99. Henry, *Phénoménologie matérielle*. Page 134.

role of signification and substitution, especially in the context of Trinitarian faith, will be further explored in the next subsection while considering Henry's concept of life as immanent, affective, intelligible, intersubjective, and expansive.

b. Signification and substitution for Christian faith

Henry poignantly summarises the greatest concern of his work by asserting the necessity of Christ for salvation. "The only thing that matters is the salvation of all mankind as defined not by means of thought but by Life. And this salvation consists exactly of 'believing' what Christ says about himself, that is to say—and as the problematic of Faith will show—not of accepting it as 'true' as thought defines truth and thus as the world defines it, but rather of rendering it *consubstantial* with the Truth of Life, in its phenomenological embodiment and in its enjoyment."[334] Henry argues that faith is in the Truth of Life, 'consubstantial' in thoughts of the world. Faith, for him, is a 'rediscovery' of life shared in generation. "*To rediscover in one's own life the absolute Life is something that is only possible in life itself and in the Truth that belongs to it.*"[335] Life is always prior to the world. The Truth of Life as revealed by the First Living, Jesus Christ, is rediscovered by and belongs to life. In this subsection, I will analyse how Christian faith is held in Life as revealed and given by Jesus Christ through the consubstantial signification and substitution of life as immanent, affective, intelligible, intersubjective, and expansive to demonstrate fantasy's support of faith.

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[334] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 62. Emphasis mine. Translator's interlineal original language text. "*La seule chose qui importe, c'est le salut de tous les hommes définis non plus par la pensée mais par la Vie. Et ce salut consiste précisément à « croire » ce que le Christ dit sur lui-même, c'est-à-dire, ainsi que le montrera la problématique de la Foi, non à l'admettre comme « vrai » dans la vérité de la pensée et ainsi du monde mais à se le rendre consubstantiel dans la Vérité de la Vie, dans sa* chair phénoménologique *et dans sa jouissance.*" Emphasis mine. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 82. The English translation 'embodiment' is a misleading translation of '*chair*', given Henry's distinction between flesh and body; '*chair phénoménologique*' would be much better if translated as 'phenomenological flesh'.

[335] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 153. Emphasis the author's. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 193.

Henry observes that belief works in a paradoxical way in Christianity. Belief is held for that which 'is already present' yet 'incapable of making visible that which matters', the Word of Life. Henry asserts that the possibility of belief rests upon the relationship of the persons in the Trinity being manifest through substitution.

> Linked to seeing the Father transformed into the reciprocal phenomenological interiority between Father and Son, and to this interiority, whose radical nature we have demonstrated, is the concept of belief—and here is what gives belief the hitherto unforeseen meaning [*signification*] that it will receive throughout Christianity. To believe does not imply a lesser knowledge, homogeneous with the world's but still incomplete or imperfect, so that what one believes in would still have to prove its reality or its truth by showing itself once and for all. To believe is not a substitute for a still-absent seeing. To believe does not refer to a waiting, a waiting for something not yet seen but that will be seen someday, in a specific sight, within the world's truth. To believe, *when what is seen is already present, already visible while remaining incapable of making visible that which matters*, that is to say, the Word [*Verbe*] in its state as Word [*Verbe*], precisely because the latter is in itself invisible and no kind of seeing will ever behold it—'to believe' can, then, refer only to the substitution, for a mode of manifestation that is fundamentally inadequate, of a more essential revelation belonging to another order, that of the Word [*Verbe*] itself, of Life itself, since Life reveals itself in this Word [*Verbe*] and in the form of it.[336]

Life is that which can only be held as a substitution by belief in the living. The aim of belief is at the substitute. The paradox requires 'substitution, for a mode of manifestation' alongside a fundamental 'inadequacy'. Fantasy has the power to create a substitute of Life as a fantasy image from an inadequate mode of manifestation. Yet, through the support of fantasy, a living person can deliberate a more essential revelation of Life as revealed and formed by the Word [*Verbe*] in life.

Henry progresses from considering belief [*croire*] to Faith [*la Foi*] in *I am the truth* while noting how faith occurs as a determination and certitude in and of the pathos of life.

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[336] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 84. Emphasis the author's. My interlineal original language text. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 108. As indicated, '*signification*' isn't always translated into English as 'signification', but also as 'meaning'.

> [Faith] must also be understood in the light of the founding intuitions of Christianity, not as a form of thought but *as a determination of Life*. As we have observed, Faith is not produced in the field of knowledge, as a sort of knowledge of inferior degree, whose object is presumed without being truly seen, and perhaps without ever being visible—a knowledge that is not only inferior, then, but illusory. Faith is not a signifying consciousness that is still empty, incapable of producing its content by itself. Faith is not the realm of consciousness, but rather *of feeling.* It comes from the fact that nobody ever gave himself life, but rather that life gives itself, and gives itself to the living, as what submerges him—from the fact that in life he is totally living, as long as life gives him to himself. *Faith is the living's certitude of living*, a certitude that can come to him ultimately only from absolute Life's own certitude of living absolutely, from its self-revelation, without reservation, in the invincible force of its Second Coming.[337]

Henry clarifies that faith is not 'produced in the field of knowledge', 'a signifying consciousness', or 'of the realm of consciousness'. Rather, faith is 'of feeling', in the affective sense. Faith, in short, for Henry, is a 'determination of Life' with 'the living's certitude of living'.

Here again we see Henry diverge from Sartre's elaboration of the imaginary. To maintain the immanence of the *pathos*, or feeling, in faith, he excessively distances the 'field of knowledge' and consciousness. Even if according to Henry 'life gives him to himself' and faith is possible through signification of one's share of originary Life in substitution, a living person can come to have a certitude of living through fantasy's support of the deliberation of life that is shared with them through the Word of Life and other living persons in the imaging consciousness, as well as through thoughts that are consubstantial with life. Henry was excessively cautious of elaborating the potential of consubstantial images. Fantasy enables 'living's certitude of living', that is faith, in consciousness for knowledge of life's affectivity.

[337] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 193. Emphases mine. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Pages 242-243.

Henry aligns his work with the Christian tradition when he claims that the gift of faith is necessary for the sake of salvation.[338] Recognising the essential aspects of joy and suffering in the shared affectivity of the flesh of Jesus Christ offers salvation, he claims, "*which consists in sharing unending joy with all living beings, arising from the reciprocal interiority of Life and the First Living One*."[339] Henry declares "the truth of Christianity is that the One who called himself the Messiah was truly that Messiah, the Christ, the Son of God, born before Abraham and before time, the bearer in himself of Eternal Life, which he communicated to whomever he wanted, making that which is be no longer, or else that which is dead come alive."[340] He does not elaborate the embodiment of the Son of God, but maintains the First Living's eternal nature.

Henry also describes faith as an 'effect', asking: "How can the mysterious Life of God, set forth in a series of 'dogmas,' be capable of producing in us such an effect? How can we penetrate it in order to share in its Revelation and find ourselves transformed by it?"[341] This penetration occurs in the images fantasy makes that reflect life and leads to the effect of faith in its source and sustenance, God.

Like Marcel, Henry argues that life is necessarily relational, that is intersubjective. Henry employs the term 'intersubjectivity' when describing the 'content' of the Christian faith. "[T]he 'content' of Christianity consists in the network of transcendental (therefore acosmic and invisible) relationships that we can formulate as follows: the relationship between absolute Life and the First Living—between the Father and the Son, between God and Christ; the relationship of absolute Life to all living things—of the Father to his

[338] Cf. "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God." Ephesians 2:8 NRSVCE
[339] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 112. Emphasis mine. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 180.
[340] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 6. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 13.
[341] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 53. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Pages 71-72.

sons, of God to 'men'; the relationship between the Son and sons, between Christ and living people; the relationships among sons, living people, and mankind—what is called in philosophy intersubjectivity."[342] Faith can be the effect of fantasy generating images that reflect the intersubjective relationships of affective life.

Henry asserts that "every society is based on intersubjectivity, … Life implies a constant and ever-acting relationship among the subjectivities that comprise it."[343] Individuals comprise relationships in the world while sharing life and, in that sense, are transcendental, a concept that was analysed earlier.

> [I]n its auto-affection, life 'exists' only as ipseity and thus as a transcendental Individual, and this Parousia of Being is continually repeated, and thus each one of these lives (each of these absolute subjectivities) exists in a relation of radical exteriority with all the others. The phenomenal form of this exteriority is the world. In the world, each life is related to others, to itself, and finally to nature as an other in this world.[344]

There is an expanded feeling of life when one becomes aware of others, that is growth is the awareness of shared life. Henry's notion of the transcendent immanence of the auto-affectivity of life in each living person demonstrates the intersubjective bond between all the living.

The central question Henry poses in his material phenomenology is: "When everything has been stripped away, what is left of life that cannot be reduced?" to which he answers 'growth'. "[G]rowth [*l'accroissement*] is the movement of life that is realized out in life in virtue of what it is—its own *subjectivity*."[345] The ability of life to grow demonstrates its subjectivity. Henry identifies the inherent necessity of subjectivity for relationality by succinctly summarising that "subjectivity is entirely need."[346] Life has a

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[342] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 61. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Pages 80-81.
[343] Henry, *Barbarism*. Page 140. Henry, *La barbarie*. Page 242-243.
[344] Henry, *Barbarism*. Page 87. Henry, *La barbarie*. Page 152.
[345] Henry, *Material phenomenology*. Page 39. Emphasis the author's. My interlineal original language text. Henry, *Phénoménologie matérielle*. Page 54-55. The original word in French, '*l'accroissement*', which is translated as 'growth', carries further notions of increase, growth, expansion, improvement, and gain.
[346] Henry, *Barbarism*. Page 19. Henry, *La barbarie*. Page 39.

need to grow and expand. Life's need to expand shows a living person's ability and motivation to recognise life in other living subjects.

The feeling and intersubjectivity of the life of other living persons can be recognised in the deliberation supported by fantasy. The 'fantasy' of coming from somewhere, of having a father, a mother, and potential siblings, and of other living persons who share affectivity—the pathos of joy and suffering in life—can support one's own faith in life. Not every potential deliberation of the Truth of Life as supported by fantasy needs to be hard wrought, some more easily reflect life, such as with the typically unchallenging fantasy of having a father and a mother. As immediate and reasonable as a parent's objective presence may be in the world, their life is not the same as their child's but shared. The consideration of the possibility of shared life—even between parents and their child—rests on the power of fantasy to deliberate another living person's life.

For Henry, faith is ultimately a recognition of life's embrace. This is effected through Jesus Christ, who is "a Life originally ipseized [and] is able to make living the livings that we are—livings who are transcendental me's capable of *growing* in their own flesh, of *expanding* at each moment of their being, in this Self that they received at the same time as Life."[347] Fantasy is critical for faith in God by its power to generate images of life's potential growth and expansion within each living subjective 'transcendental me'. "[N]o living being, no particle of life, can embrace itself anywhere other than where life embraces itself in the living, arriving in itself, endlessly becoming and never coming undone."[348] Fantasy allows a living person to deliberate the truth of the embrace of the revealed Life of the Son of God before it is fully sensed, perceived, and conceived in the

[347] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 125. Emphasis mine. My interlineal original language text. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 158.
[348] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 63. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 91.

Beatific Vision. Fantasy generates possibility, which, when influenced by divine revelation and intersubjective affectivity, supports a living person to hold faith in absolute Life with a living's certitude of living. It is by a living person's share of the gift of life that they have the possibility to recognise the source of life's expanse in the affective, intersubjective self-embrace of life. The gift of life is a reciprocal relation.

The gift of life recognised in fantasy is one of a perpetual embrace in the joy and suffering of the life of the Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ. Henry notes a powerlessness that is observed when a living person recognises their share of life as a gift. "This powerlessness of humans, even within the actual exercise of their 'I can,' signifies their condition of sonship—the fact that each of their powers, that their self, that their lives are only given to themselves in the self-givenness of absolute Life. Yet this *gift* is not the simulacrum of a gift; it is a genuine gift, that of an actual life, a real self, of real powers."[349] Among these powers is the power to generate affective possibilities, to fantasise. The power of fantasy is a gift from God that is inherent in life and can be used to recognise him, to have faith in him.

> No living being has the power to bring him- or her-self forth into life; nor does a living being know how to sustain this life from another living being like it, as powerless as itself, equally incapable of giving itself life. Only an all-powerful Life holding the capacity for bringing itself into life—this unique and absolute Life which is that of God—can communicate its breath to those it has made to live and who are from then on, in a real and itself absolute sense, 'sons'.[350]

A living person who realises that they cannot give themselves life and that their life depends upon another recognises this form of powerlessness, a form of Christian humility.

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[349] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 96. Emphasis mine. *Henry, Paroles du Christ.* Page 155. 'I can' is a concept of Henry's that will be further elaborated upon in the next chapter. For an excellent articulation of 'simulacra', cf. Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and simulation*, trans. Sheila Faria Glaser, The body, in theory, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994).

[350] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 35. Translator's interlineal original language text. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 57.

It is critical to note that Henry's emphasis on affectivity's role in faith must be understood in the context of his fundamental assertion that feeling, that is pathos or affectivity, is of life. Fantasy generates the possibility of recognising the origin of life in the shared affectivity of life. Living's certitude of living, faith, "is within the life of each transcendental me as the feeling it has of absolute Life. … It is the Revelation to [*en*] man of his condition of Son, the grasping of man in Life's self-grasping."[351] Faith is always possible, inherent in each living person's share of life. "The Son's generation co-belongs to Life's self-generation as what this self-generation accomplishes, as the essential Ipseity in which Life, in its self-embrace, becomes Life. Thus there is no way of reaching the Son other than in the course of Life's self-embrace, in the same way as there is no other way for life to embrace itself except in this essential Ipseity of the First Living—no other way for it to reveal itself except in the Word."[352] Henry asserts that there is 'no other way' to reach the Son except through life's self-embrace by the First Living, the Word made Flesh.

> Humans have a completely different possibility of hearing the Word of God if it resides in their status as sons of God or, as we still say, in their timeless birth. It means that coming into the condition of experiencing oneself and of being revealed to oneself is accomplished in the self-revelation of absolute Life in its Word [*Verbe*]. In other words, the possibility that humans have to hear the Word [*Parole*] of God is consubstantial with them.[353]

The ability to hear the Word is consubstantial with the living person, just as substitution can make signification consubstantial. "The possibility for humans to hear the Word of

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[351] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 193. My interlineal original language text. "*[E]st dans la vie de chaque moi transcendantal l'épreuve qu'il fait de la Vie absolue. … Elle est la Révélation en l'homme de sa condition de Fils, le saisissement du vivant dans l'auto-saisissement de la Vie*." Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 243. This is a poor translation, especially when wrongly implying that the Revelation happens to man externally, rather than from 'within'. Henry's central concern is life as shared in [*en*] living persons.

[352] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 88. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 113.

[353] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 104. Translator's interlineal original language text. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 168.

God resides in their status as sons, open to this word in its timeless birth."[354] The hearing of the Word inspires the power of fantasy to make images reflective of the Life from which the Word came.

Henry reflects about hearing the Word in light of his phenomenology of life:

> This word speaks in us; it speaks its own life to each one of us. Each one of us hears it. We hear it not as one hears the noise of the world. We hear it in the silence where no noise is possible, no gaze—in the secret of the heart where God sees, where his Word speaks. Each of us hears it in our suffering and in our joy, in our ennui as much as through our Desire which has no object on earth. This Word is not itself our suffering or our joy, but the embrace in which we experience them. In them we suddenly experience this embrace, stronger than ourselves, the limitless power which continually wells up in us and gives us to ourselves. It is, then, the Word of God which we hear.[355]

We hear life silently in life and its manifestations, in the embrace of joy and suffering that transcends the world, which fully reveals the Word of God. Fantasy generates images influenced by what it hears and feels even though they are silent, vague, invisible, and abstract.

> For the human being [*l'homme être*], belonging to the truth means to be born of Life, of the only Life that exists: the all-powerful Life which engenders itself. … [T]he hearing of the Word [*Parole*] is identical with the generation of the human [*l'homme*]. There, in the self-revelation of Life in its Word [*Verbe*], the self-revelation is accomplished which makes the human being [*l'homme*] truly human [*humaine*].[356]

What is spoke and felt by the Word of God influences fantasy to support the deliberation of the Word's revelation as the self-revelation of humanity, which reveals the Truth of Life.

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[354] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 113. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 181.
[355] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 118. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 189.
[356] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 116. My interlineal original language text, except for '*Verbe*', which was the translator's. The Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Pages 186-187. This passage especially shows the inconsistency of this English translation of *Words of Christ* in terms of the translation for '*l'homme*' and '*l'homme être*'. Henry went to painstaking effort for specific language, as evidenced in his archival notes for the preparation of each work, effort not made by the translator. This passage echoes Henry's previous treatment of generation when he observed that "[t]he generation of this singular Self that I myself am—the living transcendental Me, in the self-generation of absolute Life: this is my transcendental birth, the one that makes me a true man, the transcendental Christian man." Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 104. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 133.

Henry's theology of faith proposed the signification and substitution of life, which is immanent, affective, intelligible, intersubjective, and expansive. This occurs in fantasy as it hears the Word, Jesus Christ. In the next subsection, Henry's theology of faith will be analysed to show the constructive potential of a theology of fantasy through culture, as a worldly means of supporting faith in absolute Life. A theology of fantasy can facilitate understanding how the creation of healthy, life-expanding culture can support faith in God.

c. The role of 'culture' in Henry's hamartiology and soteriology

Culture plays a pivotal role in Henry's hamartiology and soteriology. Henry articulates sin as a condition or state of forgetfulness rather than as a list of morally offensive acts. Henry uses his phenomenology of life to develop a soteriology for the recognition of life.[357] The living, according to Henry, have the inherent ability to recognise and know life.[358] My theology of fantasy shows that fantasy can support faith in God as a recognition of life in culture despite life being previously forgotten.

Henry's notion of 'culture' is developed through many of his works and is especially central to *Barbarism*, written in the middle of his career, two years before *Material Phenomenology*. In it, he condemns science, technology, money, and media as signs of the 'monstrous development' that destroys culture and life.[359] Culture, he argues, is the antidote to the sinful condition of forgotten life. The recognition of the manifestation of life in the world is found in culture.

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[357] Henry's Christian soteriology is explicitly treated in the third part of *Incarnation*, 'Phenomenology of Incarnation: Salvation in the Christian Sense'. Pages 168-252.

[358] Cf. Marcel similarly and optimistically observes that "all life holds within itself a promise of resurrection." Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 164. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 164.

[359] Cf. Chapter 3, 'Science Alone: Technology'. Henry, *Barbarism*. Pages 39-55. '*La science seule: la technique*', Henry, *La barbarie*. Pages 71-100. Henry's hamartiology is also explicitly treated in the eighth chapter, 'Forgetting the Condition of Son: "Me, I" / "Me, Ego"' of *I am the Truth*.

> Culture is the great hunt in which life gives itself to the truth so that it can be the place of its arrival, its only manifestation and its only possible fulfillment. That is, culture is the set of all experiences in the sense of all the experiments through which life leads to the reality of a 'presence' in it, in its undeniable phenomenological effectuation. It is all the virtualities, 'desires' and 'needs' that are contained in it and that express its original nature.
>
> … This is why each fact of culture is nothing for life other than the experience of oneself and of one's own Basis, to abandon oneself to the higher power that carries each of one's powers to its highest point. This total passivity of every true action, this letting life come into the self as the growth of one's various powers, is experienced in each authentic step of culture.[360]

Examples of culture are found in the plastic arts, literature, and poetry, where "in its subjectivity, the aesthetic image is only the self-growth of subjectivity. It is thus the essence of life in its accomplishment: culture."[361] Culture, for Henry, is a process, which flows from the burden of the excess of life and its tendency towards growth. "Culture is the set of enterprises and practices in which the overflowing of life is expressed. All of them are motivated by the 'burden', the 'too much' that prepares living subjectivity internally as a force ready to be dispensed and required to act under this burden."[362] The 'burden' of life's self-growth leads to the production of culture in the world. "[T]he powers of life … sensing, understanding, and loving … have been discovered and preserved in the sacrificial history of culture."[363] These powers are exercised in the world through culture for the sake of the manifestation and fulfilment of life. I argue, along with Sartre, that consciousness of sense, knowledge, and love rests upon powers of the imaginary. Specifically, fantasy is the power to generate images in consciousness of culture 'sensing, understanding, and loving' for deliberation of the Truth of Life. Fantasy images can be influenced by culture and lead to the deliberation of their origin in life and ultimately the origin of life, God.

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[360] Henry, *Barbarism*. Page 70. Henry, *La barbarie*. Pages 125-126.
[361] Henry, *Barbarism*. Page 109. Henry, *La barbarie*. Page 190.
[362] Henry, *Barbarism*. Page 99. Henry, *La barbarie*. Page 172.
[363] Henry, *Barbarism*. Pages 113-114. Henry, *La barbarie*. Page 199.

The inherent expansiveness of life, when infringed upon or forgotten, leads to an ethic. Succinctly, Henry defines that "'good' or 'bad' for the human being [depends on] conformity or not with the self-growth of life."[364] When life is allowed to grow, it is 'good', while when life's growth is stifled, it is 'bad'. In terms of a Christian ethic, "if ends and norms can be prescribed to life … these ends, norms or values can only come from life itself. … This determination consists in the fact that one experiences oneself constantly and knows oneself at every moment."[365] However, as Henry observes in his hamartiology, the living person can forget life, their life's experience and knowledge. The living person's forgetfulness of life occurs inevitably.

> [T]he powers of life must be turned against themselves, in the phenomena of hate and resentment. This happens because life, in a suffering that is coextensive with its being and that it can no longer bear, attempts to get rid of itself. Barbarism cannot exist without the emergence of Evil, which is a mad but wholly intelligible desire for self-destruction. … [I]n every state of social regression, it is possible to discover, underneath the evidence of the features of stagnation and decline, the violence of the deliberate refusal of life to be itself.[366]

The inability to adequately express the burden of life's need to expand and the refusal to bear the suffering of life leads to sin and evil.

> The inability of a civilization to give itself tasks that are equal to its means—the means of Life—entails the release of its uncontrolled energies and, as always, this sluggishness engenders violence.
>
> … [I]t is the growth of life and its excess that, without being assumed by the individual, produces the sequence of transfers and violence. Evil always comes from the Good and is not a principle external to it.[367]

A lack of adequate 'tasks' while being of ample means creates tension that leads to violence, that is Evil. Henry's articulation of evil is in keeping with the traditional teaching of Christianity, which rejects dualism and the ascribing of being to evil.

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[364] Henry, *Barbarism*. Page 107. Henry, *La barbarie*. Page 188.
[365] Henry, *Barbarism*. Page 96. Henry, *La barbarie*. Pages 167-168.
[366] Henry, *Barbarism*. Page 139. Henry, *La barbarie*. Pages 241-242.
[367] Henry, *Barbarism*. Page 105. Henry, *La barbarie*. Pages 183-184. Henry asserts this in the context of commenting on Pierre Janet.

Concisely, in terms of his phenomenology of life, Henry defines sin as "the illusion of possessing life", a rejection of life's immanent transcendence.[368] Life can be forgotten, especially in the sinful conditions of a world which lies about the possibility of possession and agency. Sin leads to despair and anxiety. "Such despair is possible only if, one way or another, man has forgotten the splendour of his initial condition, his condition as Son of God—his condition as 'Son within the Son.'"[369] Despair, in response to the squalid effects of having forgotten life, further drives the desire to 'flee' one's own life.

> *The weakness of life* consists of its desire to flee itself. That is a permanent temptation, but the true weakness—*what makes it a weakness*—is the impossibility to which this project leads: life runs up against an insurmountable failure in its desire to get rid of oneself. The impossibility of breaking the link that joins life to itself, that is to say, the impossibility of escaping its suffering, redoubles this. At the same time, it exasperates the will to escape it and the feeling of its powerlessness, the feeling that one is unable to escape from oneself. That feeling culminates in and is resolved in anxiety.[370]

Yet one can never flee their own life or the state of its weakness when forgotten, which fosters anxiety. Anxiety is the result of the cyclical 'weakness of life', which never finds satisfaction. A living person forgetful of his or her condition as 'Son within the Son' is ultimately deaf and blind to life in their "*transcendental illusion of the ego, whereby this ego takes itself as the ground of its Being*."[371] Henry describes this as the birth of "the transcendental illusion of the ego, whereby this ego takes itself as the ground of its Being."[372] However, the weakness of life forgotten can be contrasted with the strength of

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[368] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 177. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 255.
[369] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 132. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 167.
[370] Henry, *Barbarism*. Page 71. Emphases the author's. Henry, *La barbarie*. Page 128.
[371] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 140. Emphasis the author's. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 177. Being is here defined by Henry as "effective and acting". *Ibid.* Marcel's work anticipates Henry's hamartiology, describing sin as the "spiritual denial of self … an impious and demoniac affirmation of self which amounts to a radical rejection of being." Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 173. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 174.
[372] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 140. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 177.

recognised life shared. A practical recovery, salvation, must overcome the cyclical self-idolatry, despair, and anxiety that led to it and results from it.[373]

The world does not and cannot offer salvation. Salvation is possible only through recognising the embrace of shared affective life in each Self. This is "the Christian paradox: The site of salvation is also the site of sin, their reality is cut from the same cloth—This is precisely our flesh, our finite flesh."[374] Sin of forgotten life, the illusion of possessing life, betrays life itself, yet can lead to humility. "By showing him the nothingness of his own condition, sin at the same time shows the sinner that no living being could live from a life that is nothing; that, silently, always, this Life streams forth in him and makes him live, despite his nothingness; and that the possibility of salvation, for the sinner himself and for him more than anyone else, rests on this unique and absolute life."[375] It is in the power of life's flesh, which fantasy can reflect in its images, that one can recognise life or be forgetful of it. "[L]ife's immanence in every flesh, which also explains why each phenomenological structure of flesh, each of its powers—each 'member of the body'—is capable of bearing within it idolatrous aims as well as the possibility of salvation."[376] Henry is careful to clarify that the flesh itself is not to blame, as "[a]ll flesh is innocent."[377]

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[373] Henry states that "he has the power to love himself doubly in this pretend power and its pleasures. It is this love of self that leads to death because what is loved—this pretend power or the sensation it procures—precisely does not have the power to give itself to itself, to give itself life." Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 234. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 334.
[374] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 233. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 333.
[375] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 177. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 254.
[376] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 171. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 246.
[377] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 191. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 275.

It is possible, however, even in this state, to recognise life through a Christian ethic. "If in Christianity salvation rests upon the Filial condition, which is originally the condition of transcendental man, and if this condition has been lost (forgotten, but more precisely broken, in the sin of idolatry that has substituted the idolatrous relation for the original relation to Life), then salvation undoubtedly consists in recovering such a condition practically and not merely theoretically."[378] Henry's prepondering soteriological claim is that "the religious problem consists principally of knowing how man, thus distanced from God, is capable of finding him again, and so of saving himself."[379] His suggestion that a living person can 'save himself' by finding or rediscovering God "is for us a matter of recovering our original condition which has been denatured, forgotten, but never abolished."[380] The agency of salvation is found in both a living person and God since life is a shared gift, yet needs to be recognised as such by a living person for salvation.

Critically for my theology of fantasy, Henry refers to unhealthy imagination as a symptom of the 'sickness of life'. Christianity, he observes "has to do only with reality, not with the imagination or with symbols. … [I]maginary deviations derive from the fevered representations of illness, especially the *sickness of life* in which each individual turns against himself and no longer wants to be what he is, identifying with another, if necessary to accomplish this."[381] While Henry observes various uses of the imagination

[378] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 231. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 330.
[379] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Pages 94-95. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 121.
[380] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 34. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 56.
[381] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 117. Emphasis mine. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 148. Henry asserts that a bad form of gnosis (in contrast to the 'Arch-gnosis' found the Johannine Arch-intelligibility) is the result of "dangerous, imaginary, extravagant, speculative constructions, the product of mere fantasies." Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 261. "*[D]es constructions spéculatives hasardeuses, imaginaires, extravagantes, le produit de simples* fantasmes." Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 372. Emphasis

that can lead to a deviation from recognising life, that is 'sickness' or, in Christian terms, sinfulness, he fails to appreciate a potentially healthy use of the imagination that can support faith in God. The essence of Christianity has ultimately to do with reality and its source, that is God, in whom faith can be held. God is not in the imagination, either in fantasy or symbol. Yet, the imagination, and specifically fantasy, can be used to deliberate manifestations of life through culture in the imaging consciousness. Culture can influence fantasy—and be influenced by fantasy—to reveal its consubstantial manifestations for the signification of its origin in life. As will be asserted in the next chapter, fantasy can be used to 'show the sinner' a different way, a healthy, constructive way, through grace and the Holy Spirit, especially in the culture of contemplative prayer in the Eucharistic liturgy.

d. Soteriological passibility and self-enjoyment

In this final subsection of analysing Henry's theology of faith as grounds to build my theology of fantasy, it remains to engage Henry's soteriology through passibility and self-enjoyment. In a rare appeal to the soteriological aspect of the Cross, which conceals the Beatific Vision of the Parousia, Henry connects the passibility of life and the 'impressional'.

> Always and already the pathos-filled trial of absolute Life's self-givenness is at work, so that his flux, which in itself is foreign to every intentionality, is neither linear nor undetermined: As impressional, it is first carnal [*charnel*], by the authority of Life's Arch-passibility; next, it obeys an evident affective dichotomy, in as much as this Arch-passibility becomes phenomenal in the original phenomenological tonalities of pure Suffering and of pure Enjoyment born of this Suffering. Thus, finally, this flux, this seemingly absurd parade of modest pleasures and oppressive thoughts, is secretly oriented toward an agony, for the ultimate

mine. The translation is poor by failing to recognise the French distinction between '*fantaisie'* and '*fantasme'*.

> transition from the ultimate suffering of despair to the eruption of an unlimited joy, as evidenced by the Parousia concealed on the wood of the Cross.[382]

Henry asserts that Life's Arch-passibility can mediate the interaction of life and cultural manifestations in the world. Impressions and thoughts of the world can influence fantasy. Using fantasy, one can consider the possibility of worldly suffering transitioning into living joy through faith in the sacrificial death and joyful Parousia of the First Living. Fantasy's images can manifest the 'pleasures' and 'thoughts' of the 'flux' to allow deliberation in the living person's conscious of "what occurs in the Outside of ek-stasis, the 'human' content of the human phenomenon, [which] is a simple representation of this transcendental life and thus its irreal double."[383] Fantasy creates the irreal double of the conditions of the world to be represented and deliberated in life.

Henry's expression of the role of representation of the impressional in the Arch-passibility of Life allows for a constructive development of his work by my theology of fantasy in the next chapter. My theology of fantasy seeks to show how fantasy can support the goal of salvation. Henry defines "[i]n and through life, [salvation] is the conversion of desire into its satisfaction and of suffering into joy. … For, what life wants in history, understood as a fundamental value of culture, is to rejoin itself beyond the separation of the world and time."[384] Rejoining the world and life is the goal of life's inherent expansive impulse. This rejoining leads to unity, which is ideally enshrined in culture.

> The *media* of culture—mosaics, frescoes, engravings, books, music—usually had a sacred theme; in any case, their theme was the growth of life's powers up to the exalted discovery of its own essence. The *medium* was art, namely, the awakening of these powers with the aid of the sensibility that carries all the other ones. The ideal aesthetic image—whether visual or sonorous—was the object of contemplation. It was that which remained and that to which one always returned in the repetition of transcendental processes that led to its creation. To become their

[382] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 250. My interlineal original language text. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Pages 357-358. '*Charnel'*, translated as 'carnal', is meant to convey a sense of bodiliness, that is worldliness.
[383] Henry, *Barbarism*. Page 81. Henry, *La barbarie*. Page 142.
[384] Henry, *Barbarism*. Page 80. Henry, *La barbarie*. Page 141.

> contemporary is precisely to reproduce these acts and increased powers of life within oneself. It is to reach them in and through the exultation of the Basis [*Fonds*]. Culture was the set of brilliant works that enabled and gave rise to this repetition—culture was the set of signs that human beings gave to one another through the centuries in order to surpass themselves.[385]

Culture invites contemplation to overcome the forgetfulness of life. The theme of contemplation will be critical in the next chapter's therapeutic for fantasy.

Contemplation is supported by fantasy and possible for a living person because God has made manifest the Incarnate Word in the world. By doing so, God, as absolute Life, has offered the same love he shares with the First Living to all the living, each of whom he considers a 'son', for the unity of life. The filial condition of the living enables faith in absolute Life, as a response of faith.

> The condition of 'son' calls for an action on our part, a difficult action because it runs counter to an instinctive spontaneity. Such an action nevertheless does not derive its merit from its difficulty, from the *enigmatic* obstacle that is necessary to surmount. It is prefigured by the manner in which God acts toward us, he who ignores the pettiness of reciprocity, who is good to the ungrateful and the wicked.[386]

Fantasy images can be 'enigmatic', an obstacle for some but still capable of reflecting the Truth of Life for others. Regardless of 'the ungrateful and the wicked' living, God offers all living persons the possibility of recognising life, which cultivates the unity of life.

For the Christian, the certainty of life and its source is held in faith by a living person who recognises their share of life in the 'self-enjoyment' of God. The self-enjoyment of God is the self-revelation of life as Love.

> The self-revelation of life is in its enjoyment, the primordial self-enjoyment that defines the essence of Living and thus of God himself. According to Christianity, God is Love. Love is nothing other than the self-revelation of God understood in its *pathētik* phenomenological essence, specifically, the self-enjoyment of absolute Life.[387]

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[385] Henry, *Barbarism*. Pages 140-141. Emphases the author's. Translator's interlineal original language text, which is mistakenly plural. The original is '*Fond*'. Henry, *La barbarie*. Pages 243-244.
[386] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 34. Emphasis mine. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 55.
[387] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 31. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 44. Henry concludes succinctly in his final work, *Words of Christ*: "Love, in fact, is just another name for life and our own love functions like our own life." Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 38. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 61.

Fantasy can support faith in God through the Love of absolute Life's 'self-enjoyment'. The power of fantasy allows the living to hear and deliberate the words that Christ speaks, the Incarnate Word of Love. "It is this enjoyment of the self in the other that the final words of Christ express. It is enjoyment that defines the original relationship of Life and of the First Living Being."[388] Faith in the enjoyment of Life is supported through the power of fantasy.

In this section, Henry's role of a '*cogitatio'* in the signification of images was demonstrated, especially in consideration of images of life as immanent, affective, intelligible, intersubjective, and expansive. Henry's concept of life was then analysed for its potential to manifest culture, which led to an elaboration of Henry's hamartiology and soteriology. The articulation of life's Arch-passibility and self-enjoyment further elucidated Henry's theology of faith, which my theology of fantasy used to demonstrate fantasy's capacity for the recognition of life in the imaging consciousness of each living person.

V. Conclusion

My theology of fantasy engaged Michel Henry's reversal of phenomenology and theology of faith to show fantasy's potential support for a living person to be able to recognise the immanent pathos of life and its source, God. Absolute Life can be recognised in the embrace of life that living persons share with life, which is fully revealed through the Incarnation of the Word of Flesh, the Son of God, Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ, the First Living, reveals to the world the Arch-Flesh of absolute Life. Those with whom life is shared—all living persons—can recognise life when contemplating images

[388] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 89. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 143.

reflective of their own flesh's joy and suffering. Henry's articulation of life in a living person is revealed through signification consubstantially substituting culture's manifestations of immanent life's intelligibility, affectivity, intersubjectivity, and expansiveness. Fantasy can make images that have traces of the pathos of life for deliberation of faith in God.

The next chapter will constructively develop a positive theology of fantasy to assert an ethic and therapeutic for fantasy to support Christian faith. Henry's unrelenting focus on the immanent pathos of life does not satisfactorily facilitate the role of God's activity in the world for the sake of a living person to receive and hold faith. Henry's underdeveloped themes of sacramentality and pneumatology leave him open to criticisms of Gnosticism.[389] However, Henry observes in his phenomenology of life that a living person is inherently capable of recognising life and coming to faith. "All effort and all abandon is always already given to oneself on the Basis of being-given-to-oneself in the absolute passivity of the radical imminence of life."[390] This inherent capacity relies on fantasy to generate images of life in consciousness for the deliberation of life.

[389] Kevin Hart's essay 'Inward Life' finishes an otherwise excellent presentation and analysis of Henry's central theme with an unanswered concern that Henry can ultimately be characterised as Gnostic. Cf. Hanson and Kelly, *Michel Henry : the affects of thought*. Pages 87-110.
[390] Henry, *Barbarism*. Page 98. Henry, *La barbarie*. Page 171.

CHAPTER V: AN ETHIC AND A THERAPEUTIC FOR FANTASY

Our lamps flicker amid the winds and temptations of this life;
but only let our flame burn strongly,
that the wind of temptation may increase the fire, rather than put it out.[391]

I. INTRODUCTION

The widespread decrease in persons holding faith in God can partially be attributed to the ignorance and abuse of fantasy's role in supporting faith in God. Fantasy's role in the secular domain has increasingly been given attention while its theological potential has been ignored.[392] Inasmuch as secular entertainment media is an expression of the human condition and portrays a potentially empathetic means towards increasing knowledge of the self and the truth of reality, fantasy's increasing proliferation in literature and film at the dawn of the postmodern period demonstrates a sustained human capacity for and interest in fantasy.[393] In this final chapter, I will propose a Christian ethic and therapeutic for fantasy and conclude by demonstrating its ideal support of faith in God through the spiritual formation of the Eucharistic liturgy.

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[391] Augustine, Sermon 43 on the New Testament, paragraph 17.

[392] Notable examples of secular analysis which demonstrate my articulation of fantasy come from a variety of intellectual traditions and perspectives: Benedict XVI, Jürgen Habermas, and Florian Schuller, *Dialectics of secularization : on reason and religion* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006); Judith Butler, Eduardo Mendieta, and Jonathan VanAntwerpen, *The power of religion in the public sphere* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011); Avery Dulles, *The survival of dogma : faith, authority, and dogma in a changing world*, Crossroad paperback, (New York: Crossroad, 1982); Byung-Chul Han, *The disappearance of rituals : a topology of the present* (Cambridge, UK ; Medford, MA: Polity Press, 2020); Jean-François Lyotard, *The postmodern condition : a report on knowledge* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984); Charles Taylor, *A secular age* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007).

[393] Examples of fantasy in the secular media are manifold. Notable examples from literature are George MacDonald's genre-seminal *Phantastes* and Ursula Le Guin's *Earthsea* series. Fantasy in film has wide representation, from Hayao Miyazaki's *Spirited Away* to Jim Hensen's *Labyrinth.*

As shown in the first chapter, fantasy's definition and use have greatly developed since the term's inception two millennia ago. Fantasy's original meaning has been subtly replaced by the slightly more contemporaneous term 'imagination'. Additionally, fantasy has been used at times as a contrast to the imagination. Given its historical developments and disparate usage, I have argued that fantasy should be understood as one of the powers of the imaginary but not synonymous with the imagination. This was demonstrated in the second chapter's analysis of Jean-Paul Sartre's groundbreaking work on the imaginary. My work builds upon Sartre's use of the imaginary as a noun and as synonymous with the imagination. Fundamental to my argument has been the assertion that knowledge can be increased through the imagination's power to fantasise, including knowledge of God that is potentially reflected in fantasised images. Faith seeking understanding, theology, bears the task of exploring the capacities of the human condition that support a systematic understanding of God. One of these capacities is the fantasy of the imagination.

To further my work of analysing fantasy's role in supporting faith in God, in my third chapter, I analysed Gabriel Marcel's theology of faith and ontology of incarnate intersubjectivity to specifically situate the concept of faith in my theology of fantasy. Marcel's secondary reflection is critical to my theology of fantasy as it articulates the process of generating a new image from a combination of images for discernment of faith in God. His theology of faith asserts the necessity of reflecting upon the Incarnation of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, through intersubjectivity in image. Fantasy can reflect the incarnate intersubjectivity of life, revealed by the Incarnation of Jesus Christ's own flesh and body, for faith in God. Fantasy's ability to reflect incarnate intersubjective life and the Incarnation of the Son of God for the possibility of faith in God provides my theology of fantasy the structure to propose, in this final chapter, fantasy's primary influences and potential to support faith in God.

Intersubjective life and the Incarnation of Jesus Christ are also themes developed in the work of Michel Henry, as was analysed in the fourth chapter. While Henry's work does not explicitly address fantasy, he does analyse the role of the imagination. Examples of my articulation of fantasy can also be found analogously in his articulation of intersubjectivity and the Incarnation of the Word in his phenomenology of life. Henry's phenomenological work recognises and analyses the divine revelation of the Incarnation of the Word, Jesus Christ, as asserted in the Johannine tradition. Henry's phenomenology of life refers to Jesus Christ as the Incarnate One, the Living Word, the First Self, and the First Living. Life is revealed to living persons through the Incarnation of Jesus Christ as intersubjective sons within the Son, the Incarnate One. I assert that fantasy is used by a living person to generate images of common sonship for the consideration and recognition of shared affective life within Life. Henry asserts a novel distinction between life and the world as well as between life's flesh and the world's bodies. Unique amongst the powers of the imaginary and critical for its theology, fantasy can make images reflective of a combination of immanent subjective life and the objective world. These images offer a living person awareness of presence beyond what is sensed to be reflected upon for faith. Fantasy offers presence to that which is obscure and invisible, such as God. What Henry persistently underappreciates is the necessity of the body in the world for the perception of the invisibility of life's immanent auto-affectivity. However, Henry's phenomenology provides the best structure and terminology to demonstrate fantasy's essential role in supporting faith in the invisible source of life, God.

The term ‘fantasy’ has been used in a variety of modes, applied varyingly from literature and toys to art and desserts.[394] Underlying these modes is a mental capacity that is inherent in the condition of every living person and provides the possibility for them to expand their knowledge of life. This mental capacity, fantasy, is the condition of possibility to generate images in irreality that have not been fully sensed for the deliberation of the truth of reality. My central concern regards the possibility of faith in God who is not fully sensible in this world.[395] Fantasy as a power of the human condition to generate images that have not been sensed is therefore necessary for faith in God. Faith in God is held through irreal images of Him in shared life that a living person can generate in fantasy for deliberation of the Truth of Life. I have endeavoured to attend to and clarify the mental capacity of fantasy, which by its nature evades objectification and considers that which is inherently subjective, continuously developing, and often ambiguous. Fantasy’s power to make images for deliberation of that which is subjective and partially unsensed, unclear, and continually evolving—all of which are aspects of faith in God under the conditions of this world—demands an analysis in respect to its potential to support faith in God.

Fantasy can be obstructive or constructive for faith in God, as will be proposed by a Christian ethic for fantasy in this chapter. An ethic for fantasy will build upon my prior analysis of Augustine, Gabriel Marcel, and Michel Henry in terms of the historical development of fantasy and its potential support of faith in God. Graham Ward’s work on

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[394] While the use of fantasy in various psychologies of the last century are beyond the scope of this thesis, it is worth noting that psychologist Jacques Lacan argued that “there is no possible ‘naked’ view of the real unmediated by fantasy.” Gautam Basu Thakur and Jonathan Michael Dickstein, *Reading Lacan's Seminar VIII : Transference*, Transference, (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020). Page 73. Footnote 39. See also: Gregory A. Trotter, "The Fantastic Structure of Freedom: Sartre, Freud, and Lacan" (ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2019); Slavoj Žižek, *The plague of fantasies*, New ed., Essential Žižek, (London: Verso, 2008).

[395] St. Paul describes God as ‘invisible’ while describing Christ to the Colossians: “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him.” Colossians 1:15-16 NRSVCE

fantasy's obstructive potential and on the concept of difference will also be analysed in terms of an ethic for fantasy. "The entire Christian ethic," Henry broadly observes, "assumes that it is not a matter of *speaking* (in the sense of ordinary language), but of *doing*."[396] The role and priority of the action of doing and living over hearing and speaking will be asserted for a constructive use of fantasy for faith in God. First, fantasy's obstructive potential will be analysed. One can forget God, according to Henry's hamartiology, that is forget one's own life's generation within life and thereby forget oneself. [397] Next, this will be contrasted with fantasy's constructive possibility of recognising transcendence in life through its images. Finally, Henry's concept of art as spiritual will demonstrate how fantasy can support spiritual formation. Art builds spiritual formation when fantasy makes images for contemplative prayer that are reflective of life.

Fantasy's therapeutic potential is observed in Henry's soteriology, which asserts a surmounting of the original forgetting of Life.

> Christianity asserts the possibility that someone may surmount this radical Forgetting and rejoin the absolute Life of God—this Life that preceded the world and its time, eternal Life. Such a possibility signifies nothing other than salvation. To rejoin this absolute Life, which has neither beginning nor end, would be to unite [*s'unir*] with it, identify [*s'identifier*] with it, live anew this Life that is not born and does not die—to live like it does, in the way that it lives, and not to die.[398]

Rejoining absolute Life demands a therapeutic for fantasy. Rejoining is better understood as reconciliation in the Christian sense. Leaving behind the 'radical Forgetting' reconciles a living person to the hope of eternal life by reflexively uniting and identifying their self

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[396] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 122. Emphases the author's. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 195.

[397] Henry dedicates a whole chapter to forgetting in *I am the truth : toward a philosophy of Christianity*. Cf. Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Chapter '8. Forgetting the Condition of Son: "Me, I" / "Me, Ego"' Pages 133-151. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. '*8. L'oubli par l'homme de sa condition de Fils : « Moi, je » ; « Moi, ego »*' Pages 168-191. Forgetting is also in the title theme of §36 and §37 of *Incarnation.*

[398] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 151. My interlineal original language text. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 190. The translator fails to convey the reflexive tense of the verbs '*s'unir*' and '*s'identifier*', as in 'unites oneself' and 'identifies oneself', which lessens the impact of Henry's intended immanence of life.

with life through faith. Fantasy's power to generate images that reflect the path to eternal life offered by absolute Life makes it constitutive of faith.

A therapeutic for fantasy will be proposed to consider the external influence of Christian testimony and the Holy Spirit on fantasy's support of faith in God. For faith in God, a living person must be open to receive the testimony of Christians to the life they share with the Living Word and be receptive to the gifts of the Holy Spirit to be able to not only fantasise hope for eternal Life but also love for the life of other living persons and Life itself. Christian testimony and the Holy Spirit influence fantasy for the support of faith in God through its images generated for the spiritual formation of contemplative prayer in a living person who is humble. Contemplative prayer can form the living person, with the support of fantasy, to be reconciled with absolute Life in the recognition and acceptance of the Holy Spirit's gift of faith, as well as hope and love.

Finally, for the sake of illuminating the very theoretical and technical theological work that has been done on the concept of fantasy, I will examine its ideal use through the work of Jean-Yves Lacoste's concept of liturgy. His work develops Henry's notion of the affectivity of Life into coaffectivity in liturgy. Liturgy provides the ideal space and time for fantasy to generate images for contemplative prayer that can be deliberated and lead to reconciliation with Life. The liturgy allows for God to be fantasised about in a way that is ideally supportive of faith, wherein a living person can recognise and accept the embrace of Life through images of fantasy reflecting the Eucharist, the transcendent flesh and body of the Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ.

II. A Christian Ethic for Fantasy

The generative power of fantasy can make images reflective of life shared with God. The images of fantasy, however, may obstruct knowledge of life and sustain or

revert to ignorance of the self and its source. I'll first analyse how fantasy can obstruct the recognition of life. The work of Marcel, Henry, and Ward will demonstrate fantasy's obstructive potential to objectify another living person's body—eroticism—and ultimately one's own body—autoeroticism.[399] This obstruction blinds a living person to the joy and suffering of intersubjective life and leads them to ignorance of life. Fantasy obstructively generates images when it objectifies living persons, including one's self, which is obstructive to faith in God who is the sole source and sustenance of Life. I will then analyse fantasy's constructive potential to recognise and reconcile life, that is, to support faith in God. Specifically, Henry's analysis of art will provide an opportunity for my theology of fantasy to explore the spiritual aspect of culture and its potential to constructively influence fantasy to support faith in God.

a. Obstructive Fantasy, objectifying and autoeroticising

A living person is born ignorant and forgetful of life, which is what is traditionally called original sin. Sin, for Henry, is the ignorance or rejection of life.[400] Henry observes the capacity for sin in the gift of freedom. The obstructive possibility of a sinful act "proceeds from a radical freedom conferred on the individual in the very process of its

[399] Sartre's concept of sin, while underdeveloped, is described as an objectification of the other, which is similar to the concept of sin in the work of Marcel and Henry and which John Casey connects to Augustine's hamartiology. "Augustine's account of concupiscence also finds echoes in modern philosophy. Sartre finds sexual love to be a locus of conflict, a source of impossibly self-contradictory desires. In desiring another, I want to reduce him to his flesh, to abrogate his freedom, convert his subjectivity into an object of my own will. My means of achieving this is to evoke in the Other sexual desire for myself. If the Other gave himself freely, and not through dissolving into erotic desire, I would feel cheated of the response I need. Yet at the same time, contradictorily, if the Other did not give himself freely, then also I would not feel genuinely loved. For Sartre the problem is that our relations with others as persons are compromised in sexual love by the very fact that the erotic involves physical (and emotional) responses that escape rational control and seem to have a will of their own. This has analogies with what Augustine says of concupiscence, and why he finds in the involuntary movement of the sexual parts in erotic love a deformity, a product of original sin." John Casey, *After lives : a guide to heaven, hell, and purgatory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). Page 186. Casey references in these lines Sartre's *Being and Nothingness*, Part 3, Chapter 3.

[400] Henry provides a succinct definition of the state of sin as being under 'the illusion of possessing life', as explored in the previous chapter's section on Henry's hamartiology. Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 177. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 255. As was also shown, Henry also describes the original state of sin as the 'transcendental illusion of the ego'.

generation in absolute Life, as the transcendental Self whose freedom is thus consubstantial with it."[401] The radical freedom of a living person provides the possibility for them to remain forgetful of originary life. Sin is a response to the anxiety of living in the world that fearfully suggests that "the world itself seems to be its provenance."[402] The potential to recognise life is obstructed by anxiety's effect on the self to obstructively cling to false solutions of self-sufficiency and personal authority, which deny a living person's generation and pathos in life. The forgetfulness maintained by an obstructive influence on fantasy provides the possibility for a living person to refer "all reality back to itself, and seeking in all things only its own pleasure, it is really itself that it idolizes."[403] A living person idolising themself and their pleasure, a form of autoeroticism, denies the potential satisfaction and knowledge of shared pathos in life's transcendent intersubjectivity.

Marcel argues that the recognition and acceptance of intersubjectivity requires love of the other, which is ignored by self-satisfying eroticism. When fantasy is used obstructively there is an autoerotic "degradation for the person himself who adopts the attitude [of denying the liberty and uniqueness of the loved being, which] lies in that the specialist as such ceases to behave as one being open to another being; to benefit a technique he betrays intersubjective reality."[404] The specialist focussed on solipsistically satisfying one of their own specific desires is one who ignores the intersubjective life of others with whom they share life and with whom they will find meaning. As was noted at

[401] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 193. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 277.
[402] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 194. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 279.
[403] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 98. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Pages 157-158. This fundamental sin characterises the trespass of the first commandment, wherein the Israelites are commanded to have no idols before God. Cf. Exodus 20:3-4 and Deuteronomy 5:7-10 NRSVCE
[404] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 83. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 84.

the end of the third chapter, Marcel observes that "the power is given to us of in some way locking ourselves more firmly in the prison in which we elect to live. That is the terrible price we have to pay for the incomprehensible power we have been given, or which, still more, makes us to be 'ourselves'."[405] Among the powers of life is fantasy, which can be used by a living person to keep themself locked in the prison of their own powers when ignoring the life of others.

Fantasy can be obstructively used to build that prison, rejecting the life of others and failing to recognise the gift of shared life in oneself as experienced through intersubjectivity. For Marcel, "all authentic sin is sin against the light; in other words, against the universal. At root, it is the act of shutting oneself in on oneself or of taking one's own self as the centre."[406] Sin is ultimately a refusal to testify to the light and life with which we have been given a share.[407] Testimony is a type of kenosis that will be shown is a constructive means for recognising a share of intersubjective life. Once one is locked in the prison of their own autoerotic desire, a therapeutic will be required for fantasy to be used constructively, rather than obstructively, to generate images of shared life for the possibility to reflect upon testimony that breaks down the walls of one's own prison, as will be shown in the next subsection.

Henry's work demonstrates how fantasy is used to obstructively prolong and deepen the forgotten self-embrace of the pathos of life. Living persons are free to assert their own autonomy, thereby forgetting life. Fantasy can sustain ignorance of life and its

[405] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 187. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 187.
[406] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 181. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 182.
[407] Cf. Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Pages 131-132. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Pages 133-134. Sin is a refusal to testify to the nations as was commanded by Jesus Christ at the Great Commissioning. Cf. "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you." Mattew 28:19-20 NRSVCE

origin. Fantasy is obstructive when it reflects what Henry describes as its 'I can' possibility in opposition to life's intersubjectivity.[408] The 'I can' leads to erotic engagements with others and ultimately becomes autoerotic as it asserts its own power for autonomy and the idolisation of the self, which makes life's reciprocity an illusion.[409] Reciprocity is needed for fantasy to be open to growth and constructive of images that support faith in God. Fantasy is used obstructively to reject the life of other living persons by objectifying them in its images for the satisfaction of selfish desires and the relief of personal anxiety, that is, by asserting the pleasure of the body over the pathos of the flesh.[410]

Henry asserts that the Self's power to consider possibility depends on freedom.[411] "This 'me'—generated passively in life but becoming in this generation the center of a multitude of powers that it exercises freely, becoming in the first place one who can exercise them, this fundamental 'I can' so brilliantly described by Maine de Biran—is the ego. … [P]ossibility belongs to the ego as its very being."[412] Inasmuch as possibility belongs to the being of the Self and possibilities are generated by fantasy in image, fantasy belongs to the constitution of the Self, which reflects Sartre's earlier work, as was shown in the second chapter.

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[408] Henry describes: "The organic body is designated as our own, as belonging to us, when it submits to the powers that together make up our carnal 'I can' [*je peux*]." Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 149. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 213.

[409] Cf. "Everywhere reciprocity is an illusion—as, for example, in eroticism, which becomes merely an auto-eroticism for two." Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 98. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 158. While Henry hyphenates '*auto-érotisme*', I use the more modern form that omits the hyphen.

[410] William Desmond frames the concern well in terms of the erotic rupturing immanence: "I do not think that the nothingness evident in infinite restlessness and erotic perplexity is just an immanent negativity that drives a process of self-determination. It is rather the *rupture of immanence*, especially in its proclivity to closure into the falsity of complete self-determination."[410] William Desmond, *Being and the between*, SUNY series in philosophy, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995). Page 190. This rupture leads to a kenotic opening to humility and reliance on an other, and may ultimately lead to reliance, that is faith in God.

[411] Cf. Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 139. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 175.

[412] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 139. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 175. 'Ego' is carefully defined by Henry given that it problematically invokes Sigmund Freud's psychological work, which is not Henry's intention.

While assessing the broad development of the state of the human condition, Henry observes objectification and destruction of the living person as grounded in humanism, observing that "in the accomplishment of that murder, humanism is born in which humans make the world and themselves their own possession, manipulating everything, including themselves, according to multiple *possibilities* offered to them in the world and within themselves."[413] Fantasy enables the living person to obstructively generate 'multiple possibilities' that can be contradictory and characterises humanism's assertion of alternative sources of life to that of absolute Life. Fantasy is used in an obstructive way for faith in God when a living person believes themself to be their own source and capable of providing their own fulfilment.[414] Henry warns of the obstructive capacity of imaginative powers, observing: "the I which constantly lives the extraordinary capacity of putting each of these powers into play whenever it wants, easily imagines itself to be their source."[415] Fantasy is used obstructively when it generates a false autonomy for living persons and allows them to remain forgetful and ignorant of their share of life.

Self-autonomy is supported by fantasy obstructively making lies. Henry asserts that a living person is 'lying' when they ignore the source of life and the life of other living persons lies. "In its powerlessness to establish the reality about which it speaks, yet one power remains to it, namely that of affirming this reality when it does not exist: that

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[413] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 61. Emphasis mine. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 98.
[414] The constructive alternative for Henry is the primacy of the subjective 'me/*moi*'. "The fact that action is of life and belongs to it leads, by contrast, to relating phenomenological analysis of the former to the latter, with decisive consequences for the ethic, which will be apparent to us. Among these consequences, the most important is to transform a naturalistic or humanistic ethic into a general conceptualization of action, on the basis of the interpretation of a person as the transcendental 'me' born of God—a conceptualization that is consequently only intelligible on the basis of God himself, and not of 'man' or 'nature'. … If absolute Life's self-givenness is God's self-revelation, then the latter is implicated in the life of the transcendental 'me,' which is only self-revealed in this absolute Life's self-revelation—that of God himself." Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 174. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Pages 219-220.
[415] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 96. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 155. Desmond connects life's intelligibility and freedom in a sympathetic way, which recognizes life's source. "[I]ntelligibility as contingent, as gratuitous, is a giving of the source. The contingency of creation does not mean we negate intelligibility, hence give ourselves over to a contingency that as indigent of absolute necessity, is marked as inherently absurd." Desmond, *Being and the between*. Page 340.

of lying."[416] Lying is the generation of false images by fantasy and is the act of one who refuses to recognise the other while asserting the self-sufficient 'I can' possibilities generated by obstructive fantasy. When this occurs, Henry concludes that "the ego is no more than a phantom, an illusion."[417] When used obstructively, fantasy is illusionary.

Henry's distinction between body and flesh can also demonstrate fantasy's obstructive potential when it is used to generate images of an autonomous condition of self-satisfying objectification, that is autoeroticism. Autoeroticism is a distorted love and objectification of self at the cost of the rejection of others. "[O]ur flesh is marked by a lack, decimated by needs and desires which perpetually recur."[418] This 'lack' provides fantasy the space to generate images of potential satisfaction of these needs, whether constructive or obstructive to the Truth of Life, that is the one source of true satisfaction. When used to ignore life through obstructively generated images of isolation and solipsism, the result will be autoerotic. A living person cannot provide themself what he or she lacks or a relief from anxiety. Obstructive fantasy generates images of self-sourced satisfactions of the body and flesh. Henry argues that "the flesh really does open the dimension where, producing upon himself in the touching/touched relation the sensations of his desire, man has the power (which he attributes to himself) to become and to make of himself what he wants."[419] Obstructive fantasy objectifies the body and generates false possibilities of satisfaction for the flesh, working in a mode that subjugates the body to the flesh. Henry observes:

> Just as with desire, for the same reason, and at the same time, anxiety arises from a body shot through with sensuality, and thus a primordial capacity to sin—from a

[416] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 75. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 120.
[417] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 150. "*l'ego n'est plus qu'un fantôme, une illusion*." Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 189. Henry uses the term 'phantom' as synonymous with 'illusion', which unnecessarily and confusingly excludes the possibility of fantasy to reflect the real in irreality.
[418] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 82. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 132.
[419] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 234. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 334. An incisive analysis of touch is found in Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Adam Frank, *Touching feeling : affect, pedagogy, performativity* (Durham ; London: Duke University Press, 2003).

> body that a flesh inhabits. Except the flesh that makes the thingly body an anguishing, desiring, desirable, and sensual body is not an unreal noematic signification. There is one circle of reality. Only real flesh, a living flesh, is capable of giving birth to a real desire, a real anxiety. *A real and living flesh that reveals itself in life's auto-impressionality, never in the outside itself of a world*.[420]

Flesh can 'make' desire and anxiety, which can be reflected in the images made by fantasy. These images are used obstructively to respond to desire and anxiety when considered autonomous and self-satisfying.

Ward's work can be used to build on my analysis of Henry's argument by showing fantasy's obstructive power in the erotic process. He strongly states, "the body is effaced and there is no experience of 'touching myself touching', for a distance is opened up by *fantasy*, erotic scenarios into which the body is inserted; not the physical body but one of the many *fantasised bodies* we live with. *Fantasy* consumes the body's perceptions."[421] Fantasy can obstructively create 'fantasised bodies' when a living person generates an image of their body at an imaginary distance from their actual body. A fantasised body becomes obstructive to faith in God when it is idolised. Ward continues:

> It has to manufacture a distance, an exteriority, for itself such that touching and being touched can take place.
>
> If then the body comes to a sense of itself as different, as singular, as a unity through touch, the economy of that response is governed by desire. Desire issues in a play of nearness and separation, availability and inaccessibility, masking and revealing. If desire can only be desire through an economy of distance, then the economy of response is intertwined with an unfolding of distances, differences, exteriorities that pass in and out of interiorities. This movement in and out, separation and penetration, is not only the heartbeat of the economy of response; it is an exchange, a giving and reception, and a communication.[422]

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[420] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 217. Emphasis the author's. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 310.

[421] Graham Ward, *Christ and culture* (Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing, 2005). Page 72. Emphases mine. Ward defines erotic as "the desire to acquire in order to satisfy a particular demand" in contrast to the kenotic as "the lavish outpouring of a self-giving love." Graham Ward, *Cities of God*, Radical orthodoxy series, (London: Routledge, 2000). Page 199.

[422] Ward, *Christ and culture*. Page 72. He references Merleau-Ponty in footnote 27 on the same page. "Desire arrives late in the economy of perception for Merleau-Ponty. … [H]e views desire as a mode of affectivity, not, as I suggest, the condition of affectivity itself." While Henry continues in the tradition of Merleau-Ponty in terms of the primacy of affectivity as a condition for desire, Ward associates them.

The erotic distance manufactured by fantasy is obstructive of the auto-affective share of life that has no distance. The distinction between living persons and their economy of response does not require a manufactured distance as fantasy can work constructively to generate potential images of life's subjectivity found in the flesh of bodies, rather than obstructively as when objectifying other living persons' bodies erotically or in the case of their own fantasised body, autoerotically.

Ward observes difference without distance as reflective of the Trinitarian God in creation, which is a use of constructive fantasy, as seen in the sexual difference of living persons.

> Difference remains fundamental, and cannot be transcended. Sexual difference, in its endorsement of both separation and relation, constitutes human creatures as *imago dei*. In attraction-in-difference is reflected the difference-in-relation in the trinitarian God. In the character of that reflection lies a whole doctrine of analogy. There can be no analogical world-view without difference. It is a world-view constituted from above – we reflect, we are not the prototype. It is the expression of the difference-in-relation of the Incarnate Christ, the revelation of God, the Man-God.[423]

Sexual difference in living persons reflects analogically the 'difference-in-relation' of God through the *imago dei* of the living person. Difference is obstructive in fantasy when driven by autoerotic desire and anxiety yet can be constructive when it recognises the 'attraction-in-difference' without distance. Fantasy can be used to constructively generate images that reflect intersubjective life reconciled to the Incarnate *imago dei* of absolute Life.

Fantasy's capacity to obstruct faith in God has been articulated through a rejection of intersubjectivity by the power of the 'I can'—the erotic objectification of other living persons and the autoerotic objectification of the self, which was demonstrated in the

[423] Ward, *Cities of God*. Pages 187-188.

analysis of the generation of fantasised bodies for objectifying distance. However, fantasy also has a constructive potential for faith in God, as will now be shown.

b. Constructive Fantasy, recognising Life

An ethic for constructive fantasy, which recognises life and supports faith in God, builds upon the mental capacity of fantasy in irreality as drawn out of Sartre's description of the imaginary, Marcel's articulation of incarnate intersubjectivity that underpins his theology of faith, which uses secondary reflection on the shared testimony of believers, and Henry's Christian ethic as a philosophy of action, especially with its articulation of Life's Arch-passibility. An ethic for constructive fantasy will demonstrate how a living person can recognise absolute Life. While a living person is born ignorant of life's origin, fantasy can support the recognition of life through its constructive potential to support the deliberation of every living person's share of the immanent pathos of subjective life. Fantasy's constructive potential must build upon a living person's kenotic response to anxiety while deliberating their share of intersubjective life. Life forgotten can be rejoined in kenotic humility. A living person's share of life in the affective self-embrace of Life is recognised in life when constructively deliberated with the support of fantasy. Fantasy's support for the deliberation of life for faith in its source, God, is manifest as the 'spiritual' in cultural art, which will be argued in the next subsection. The creation of cultural art can be a form of contemplative prayer and will find its ideal manifestation in the Eucharistic liturgy.

Michel Henry's Christian ethic explores the Incarnation of the Word and the sharing of its flesh through the passibility of life. He describes his Christian ethic as a a

self-transformation, that is a second birth from within Life.[424] "The action of the Christian ethic places the living person into the absolute Life that was before him and, giving him to himself, gave him life in his condition as Son. How that action allows the recovery of that condition remains to be specified."[425] The 'how' of the action happens with the support of constructive fantasy. From within Life, fantasy can generate images that reflect life. Words do not reveal life, as Henry asserts that "language is foreign to life." [426] Rather, to undergo the self-transformation for salvation, action within life requires fantasy. The action taken by the living person does not enact their salvation, in a Jansenist fashion, but reveals from within life that which has always been present for faith. This action must be kenotic, that is, forgetful of oneself in a phenomenological *epochē*. "In such a transmutation, the ego forgets itself, so that in and through this forgetting an essential Ipseity is revealed—not its own Self but precisely what gives this self to itself by making it a Self, absolute Life's self-giving in the Ipseity of which this life gives itself. It is no longer me who acts, it is the Arch-Son who acts in me."[427] To be forgetful of one's self is not to deny one's self. The opposite is true. One finds their self in the momentary *epochē*. In the kenotic moment, fantasy can generate images of the Arch-Son and the self's share of the Son's gift of life to constructively support faith in absolute Life.

Henry's work explores the conditions of life that allow a living person to constructively use fantasy for faith in God. A Christian ethic for fantasy clarifies how

[424] In chapter nine, 'The Second Birth', of *I Am the Truth*, Henry asserts that "*[t]he self-transformation of life that it wills, consisting of an action and leading it back to its true essence, is the Christian ethic*." Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 165. Emphasis the author's. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 209.
[425] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 167. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Pages 210-211.
[426] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 167. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 211.
[427] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 169. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 213.

fantasy may constructively support faith in God through a recognition of the gift of life. Henry asserts that the powers of the flesh are foundational for the body.

> *The point of departure is our flesh, the primitive self-givenness from which each of these powers draws its ability to act.*
>
> Because these powers are different, a particular way of being deployed between its fleshly 'point of departure' and the moving term of its effort corresponds to each of them. Thus *pure phenomenological systems* are constructed, spans of resistance that immediately obey our movements and of which each of them is an organ. Our organic body is the whole of our organs *thus extended*.[428]

Here again, Henry prioritises the flesh as distinct and prior to the body. The flesh of a living person shares the flesh of the Incarnate Word of God, Jesus Christ, and thereby is capable of constructively fantasising its share and origin for faith because of its shared flesh and the power to act expansively.

In his Christian ethic, Henry maintains the possibility of recognising 'a real and living flesh' 'in life's auto-impressionality', as shown in the last subsection.

> The Christian ethic thus rigorously follows the fundamental presuppositions of Christianity and is their application. The presuppositions are that God is Life; that access to God is access to Life in itself, its self-revelation; that man takes the means of reaching God from his condition as Son, as living in Life. He has within himself the self's relation to Life, a relation that joins him to himself and alone can join him to God. To do the Heavenly Father's Will is to let the relation to the self that joins the singular Self to itself be accomplished, just like the relation to itself of absolute Life—for the living man it is to let life be accomplished in himself like the very Life of God.[429]

The self inherently has the possibility to 'let' his 'self' be rejoined or reconciled to the Life of God. A living person, with their share of flesh in life, can constructively fantasise about life and its shared pathos to overcome the initial forgetting and recognise life through faith in God.

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[428] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 150. Emphases the author's. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Pages 214-215. Earlier in this section from *Incarnation*, Henry defines that the "organic body is designated as our own, as belonging to us, when it submits to the powers that together make up our carnal 'I can'." Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 149. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 213.

[429] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 166. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Pages 209-210.

On the basis that 'living man' shares in the 'very Life of God', it is possible for Henry to create an ethic that considers the process and role of creation in the world through objectification. Fantasy as a power of the flesh in life exercises this potential to create images that reflect objectivity in the world. Henry argues that his Christian ethic is a new philosophy of action for recognising life.

> As for the action that led to this objective result, it consists of the very *process* that leads in general to something objective: a process of objectification. It is the very movement by which what did not yet exist except in *internal virtuality* finds itself *brought outside*, placed within sight, and henceforth perceived by that sight, become visible and thus objective and real. Action consists literally of this passage from interior to exterior, from what is not seen to what is seen, from what is still only a simple subjective intention, in itself deprived of reality, to what, from having emerged into exteriority and become visible as such, now finds itself real. In action more clearly than in any other phenomenon, it appears that phenomenality consists precisely in this coming outside into the world's light: action is like making, it is a making-come-outside.[430]

His philosophy of action uses an unnamed 'process'. I argue that the power of fantasy best describes the process that generates images or 'irreal representations' for the consideration of objective reality from that which was generated from 'internal virtuality'. In the case of faith in God, deliberation is possible because an image of Life can be generated by fantasy of the objective reality of God's Word becoming flesh in a body.

In *Barbarism*, Henry alludes to a 'power' of 'irreal representations' that are transcendent. Henry does this to demonstrate the possibility of subjugating the objectivity of the thoughts of the world, as sensed by the 'natural body', to the underlying immanent subjectivity of life. Henry succinctly asserts that "*One does not gain access to life … by means of the senses*."[431] Henry describes bodily senses:

> The eye, for example, does not see; the hand as a natural and properly 'objective' feature does not feel or touch anything, just as the ear does not hear; it is the mind

[430] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 172. Emphases mine. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Page 217.
[431] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 107. Emphasis the author's. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 172. As noted in the previous chapter, '*[a]ffectivity founds sensibility*'. Cf. Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 230. Emphasis the author's. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 328.

> that does this. If, as a part of the objective body, the hand is put against a solid in order to touch it and to feel it, if the eye sees and the ear hears, it is only to the degree that they are always given as the objectification of the transcendental power of moving and feeling, seeing, hearing and touching. These define the subjective being of the original Body and are appresented with the *natural body* in order to make it a human body. They contain within themselves the *irreal representations* of each one of these powers which are replicated in objectivity.[432]

The irreal representations of subjectivity are 'replicated' in objectivity by fantasy generating images that reveal the Truth of Life which precedes the world.

As originary Life, God is the source of life and creator of the world. Living persons are those with whom God shares life. Recognition of this, faith, is possible because of Life's 'Arch-passibility', as explored in the last chapter. Passibility allows for a kenotic moment. The possibility of salvation rests on the flesh of life's passibility. "It is only this reference of all flesh to the Arch-passibility of Life's Arch-flesh that can say whether it is possible for a flesh to constitute the site of perdition or salvation."[433] Fantasy as a power of the flesh can generate images that can be used to deliberate that which is not of life, obstructive sites of 'perdition', as well as life itself, constructive sites of 'salvation'. That which is generated by fantasy depends on the original passibility of life's flesh.

For faith, an image of the suffering, kenotic Incarnate Word must first be generated by a living person using constructive fantasy or 'irreal representations' for deliberation of faith. Fantasy generates images for the constructive deliberation of that which is ek-statically given in the pathos. Henry uses the term 'ek-stasis', standing outside of oneself, rather than the more Christian equivalent, 'kenosis', to empty oneself. Henry sweepingly summarises in *Material Phenomenology* that "[e]verything that is and

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[432] Henry, *Barbarism*. Page 81. Emphases mine. Henry, *La barbarie*. Pages 142-143.
[433] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 223. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 318. While not rejecting the existence or role of the world, Henry adamantly argues that "[t]he presupposition of philosophical questioning is always thought, intentionality, and ultimately the distance of a world, which life escapes by reason of its own phenomenological presupposition, and this is nothing but life: its Arch-revelation in the Arch-passibility of an invisible pathos." Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 237. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 339.

can possibly be must be given where the ek-stasis is originally given to itself, that is, in the pathos of its auto-impression and in its impressionality."[434] A person must use ek-statically in life their fantasy to generate images that support faith in God, life deliberated from life. Henry observes that "it is humans themselves, in an *effort of thought* [*pensée*] which is specific to them, who manage to unblock illusions of naive objectivism or materialism, in order to *understand themselves in truth*."[435] Although Henry does not explicitly make the connection of fantasy to thought [*pensée*], 'effort of thought' can be more clearly articulated as the process of fantasy. Fantasies deliberated ek-statically in the flesh of life can be influenced by thoughts of the world but ultimately reveal life in the flesh of life for faith in absolute Life. They can be deliberated to 'unblock' illusions, obstructive fantasies, which do not reveal life due to 'naive objectivism or materialism'.

[434] Henry, *Material phenomenology*. Page 23. Henry, *Phénoménologie matérielle*. Page 33-34.
[435] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 26. Emphases mine. My interlineal original language text. "*[C]'est l'homme lui-même, dans un effort de pensée qui lui est propre, qui parvient à se dégager des illusions de l'objectivisme naïf ou du matérialisme, pour se comprendre dans sa vérité.*" Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 43. It is critical to note the technical and intentional use by Henry of the word 'thought' [*pensée*]. In this passage from his final work, he clearly indicates the role of the living person using the 'effort of thought' to 'understand themselves in truth'. Yet in previous work, especially *Incarnation*, §11 'The Question of Originary Appearing and Descartes's Cogito. Three Fundamental Questions It Involves' and §12 'Husserl's Misinterpretation of Descartes's Cogito and Its Consequences: Denigrating Singular Life and Replacing It with Life's "Essence" in the Phenomenological Method's Thematic Turn', pages 64-76, Henry asserts that thought is of the world and does not contain or represent life. This is especially evident as Henry reflects that "Descartes calls this life *cogitatio*. When the term we translate as '*thought'* [*pensée*] denotes the appearing from which all thought, all seeing, and all evidence is excluded in principle, and which for this reason no thought, no seeing, and no evidence can give us to see, or make known to us in some way however slight it may be, this is a textual difficulty that philosophy must resolve." Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 67. Emphasis mine. My interlineal original language text. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Pages 97-98. As noted in the previous chapter, Henry confronts the work of Descartes and Husserl with his fundamental reversal of phenomenology, thus asserting his own phenomenology of life. "Now, if life slips away from intentionality's vision in principle, then the phenomenological method will amount to a complete failure, to the extent that it claims to be founded on such a vision, taken as an 'an ultimate'. The method and object of phenomenology have become heterogeneous again, irreducible to one another, because their phenomenality differs to the point of being mutually exclusive, because life comes in itself, sheltered from every gaze, and in the absence of 'world'. From now on, in reflection (whether it's a matter of transcendental, phenomenological reflection, or of simple natural reflection), whenever thought turns to life, in an attempt to grasp it and know it in its vision (in the *sehen und fassen* that belongs to it in principle), thought [*pensée*] does not uncover the reality of life in its 'originary presence', but only the empty place of its absence—its blackout, its disappearance." Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 72. Emphasis mine. My interlineal original language text. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 105.

Before proceeding from analysing the constructive potential of fantasy to demonstrate Henry's notion of cultural art as the ideal use of fantasy for revealing life, it is worth analysing the Scriptural example of the Parable of the Prodigal Son, used by both Marcel and Henry. Their analyses show that a living person's potential for 'power', which should be more specifically understood as the power of fantasy, can be used to imagine a love that exceeds the natural expectations of relationships between living persons.[436]

Henry evokes the parable of the Prodigal Son when he asserts that a 'power' within each living person remains despite life having been forgotten. This constructive 'power' provides the opportunity for a living person to recognise their original share of life.

> The possibility of being reborn to this absolute Life, which he had forgotten by losing himself in the world and becoming concerned only with things and himself, subsists in man, who derives it from his transcendental birth and carries it inside as what constantly gives him to himself—this is still only a possibility. In its imminent temporality, absolute Life has in vain joined to itself someone who, coming after it, is not thereby separated from it—any more than separated from himself. Although Life indeed remains in each Son as the interior presupposition of his condition, from which he cannot separate himself, the prodigal son has nonetheless forgotten this. The power, closer to man than himself, that gives him to himself, can continue to work within him without his knowing it; but for him things don't seem that way. *Phenomenologically*, someone who lives only for himself, who cares only about his own feelings and pleasures (as if he gave them to himself and as if the power that really gives them did not exist), who believes he leads an autonomous life and is not the beneficiary or debtor of any heritage or any promise—is that person not the prodigal Son? And why would he come back, guilty and ashamed, to his Father, someone who no longer even knows he has a Father, who no longer knows he is a Son?
>
> There is no access to God in the world (any 'proof' of God's existence, any rational theology is ruled out), but only in life.[437]

While Henry broadly credits the power of recognition to life, it should be more specifically understood as the power of fantasy used by a free, living person, made in

[436] The parable of the Prodigal Son is found in the Gospel of Luke, 15:11-32.
[437] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 164. Emphasis the author's. The translation reflects Henry's capitalisation of 'Father' and 'Son'. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Pages 207-208.

God's image and likeness, to constructively deliberate the testimony it receives from its immanent pathos and externally from Christian witnesses to support faith in God.

Marcel also uses the parable of the Prodigal Son to highlight the potential that a living person has for recognising God as creator and father. He contrasts the notion of fatherhood in the Christian faith to the notion of fatherhood as seen in the Roman concept of *paterfamilias*. Fatherhood in worldly terms can have a 'pretentious self-sufficiency', but in Christian terms,

> … *fatherhood in its purity* [shows] the relation between the living God and the faithful … [W]e have only to compare the father in the parable of the prodigal son with the Roman *paterfamilias*. In the parable fatherhood appears in what I may call its supra-juridical fulness, and that is precisely why we can see it as being divine instead of consisting in simple relations of power and right, or in a mere bodily belonging as considered from the sociological point of view. We may add that even if we were to find in pre-christian or extra-christian history some example of paternal love as it shines through the parable, we should have to see in it only glimmerings through space and time of the pure light which lies at the heart of the gospel.[438]

Marcel aptly recognises the essential 'supra-juridical' role of love in the consideration of faith in God, which must be generated by the power of fantasy for constructive reflection. Fantasy enables storytelling to generate images like that of the Prodigal Son being loved by the Father, the living God, that can reveal the Truth of Life and lead to faith in God.

A constructive use of fantasy for faith in God has shown the necessity of a self-kenotic deliberation of images of the flesh of other transcendent living persons and absolute Life, images which are generated by the fantasy of a living person in their shared passible flesh in 'irreal representations'.

[438] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Pages 140-141. Emphasis the author's. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Pages 141-142.

c. Cultural art: fantasy manifesting life in the world

Fantasy's inherent and constructive potential to support faith in God in a living person is manifest in cultural art. Cultural art, as a manifestation of fantasy's constructive support of faith in God, will be analysed before proceeding in the next section to a therapeutic for fantasy.

Art is a manifestation in the world of fantasy. It demonstrates a living person's power to generate the subjectivity of life in the world. Henry poignantly draws 'art' and 'imagination' together in his phenomenology of life.

> [T]he work of art proceeds from the imagination. To imagine is to posit something other than what is and what is there right in front of us—something other than the world. To imagine is to posit life. … The imagination belongs to life; it develops there entirely and does not leave it. It does not produce a world before itself with luminous images and phenomena that shine—nor does it produce images that would be the reproduction of these phenomena, copies serving to replace them. *The imagination is immanent*, because life experiences itself in an immediacy that is never broken and never separates from itself; it is a pathos and the plenitude of an overflowing experience lacking nothing.[439]

As a power of the imagination to 'posit', that is generate, imagery, fantasy is necessary in the generation of art. Images, as shown in the previous chapter, are of the world, according to Henry.

Henry asserts in *Barbarism* that art causes 'the self-growth of subjectivity' and is an 'operation of subjectivity'. "There is a work of art, in its apparent objectivity, each time that the perception of it, which exists in the imagination, ultimately consists of the self-growth of subjectivity and makes it possible. … [T]he work of art and works of culture in general are creations in the sense stated above, that is to say, as an operation of subjectivity conforming to its essence and its accomplishment."[440] Art is a worldly

[439] Henry, *Seeing the invisible : on Kandinsky*. Pages 107-108. Emphasis mine. Henry, *Voir l'invisible sur Kandinsky*. Pages 185-186.
[440] Henry, *Barbarism*. Page 100. Henry, *La barbarie*. Page 175. The art of poetry was recognised by Samuel Johnson as a constructive use of fantasy to comprehend that which is greater than what is objectively perceived in the world. "Poetry pleases by exhibiting an idea more grateful to the mind than things themselves afford. … From poetry the reader justly expects, and from good poetry always obtains,

manifestation of fantasy's power to generate immanent subjectivity in objectivity. Fantasy can support the 'self-growth of subjectivity' as a power of the imagination since art is objectively manifest in the world. Art produced in the world is an objective expression of what originated subjectively as fantasy. "Every culture has the need to grow," according to Henry, "[i]n a cultural world, [worldly constructions] are necessarily organized as elements that allow life, in each of the human senses and more broadly in each power of subjectivity, to realize its essence. They allow one to see more, to feel more, to love more, to act more, even if it is only through an *imaginary exercise of the powers of organic subjectivity*—and thereby to realize the essence of subjectivity itself."[441] Fantasising is the 'imaginary exercise of the powers of organic subjectivity' helping a living person to realise itself and its source, that is, to know life, 'subjectivity itself'.

The year after publishing *Barbarism*, Henry published *Seeing the Invisible*, which builds its argument on the art and writing of Wassily Kandinsky, whom Henry considered to be the father of abstract art.[442] Henry's central argument is that art has the power to bring the Truth of Life back into focus.

> Art is not only a theoretical proof of this invisible and essential reality of our being: it does not give it as something to be seen as an object; instead, it makes use of it: it is the exercise and development of it. We experience its *certainty* as something that must be, much like one experiences love. This certainty is absolutely identical to our life.[443]

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the enlargement of his comprehension and elevation of his fancy." Samuel Johnson, *The Lives of the English Poets* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968). Page 180.

[441] Henry, *Barbarism*. Pages 102-103. Emphasis mine. Henry, *La barbarie*. Page 179. Sokolowski connects one's 'imaginary exercise of the powers' to their subjective affectivity, when observing that the "[i]magination and memory involve ourselves as also imagined or remembered, as engaged in what we bring to mind; we represent ourselves as intervening in what is going on or as perceiving it with 'taken as' pleasure or pain. This is a still further level at which things can be something or other." Robert Sokolowski, *Presence and absence : a philosophical investigation of language and being*, Studies in phenomenology and existential philosophy, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978). Page 42.

[442] In *Seeing the Invisible*, Henry engages his phenomenology of life with Kandinsky's notion of the 'spiritual' in *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*.

[443] Henry, *Seeing the invisible : on Kandinsky*. Page 20. Emphasis mine. Henry, *Voir l'invisible sur Kandinsky*. Page 41.

The experience of life as art can be held with 'certainty'. Fantasy's role in the creation of art can lead to the certainty of faith in the invisible, essential Truth of Life. The certainty of absolute Life—faith in God—is supported by a living person's fantasy generating images that can be deliberated for their share of the gift of life's affective self-embrace.

Art reveals life's inherent self-growth and spiritual potential through its ability to manifest contemplative prayer. Henry asserts that

> … art is situated within a process of becoming. It belongs to and coincides with the drive at Being within us. … Because the truth of art is a transformation of the individual's life, aesthetic experience contracts an indissoluble link with ethics. It is itself an ethics, a 'practice', a mode of actualizing life. This internal connection between the invisible aesthetic life and the ethical life is what Kandinsky calls the 'spiritual'.[444]

The spiritual capacity of art is crucial for a theology of fantasy to be able to articulate its potential to support spiritual formation through fantasy. Henry observes that "the true dimension of art is the 'spiritual', that is, the invisible life with which art is identified to the extent that it coincides with its process of self-expansion, constantly sustaining and stimulating it. In its very existence, art is thus the demonstration of the invisible life."[445] I would also argue that this is what makes art potentially cultural, a connection not found explicitly in Henry's work but sympathetic to it. Fantasy's role in the creation of cultural art, which manifests the spiritual, allows it to hold certainty in life, the source of the spiritual in art.

> [T]he liberation of the 'spiritual'—this invisible reality that we are at the core of our being and that is true Being—once again becomes the metaphysical knowledge that art provided in the past. Art accomplishes a discovery, an extraordinary rediscovery: it places before our wondering eyes an unexplored domain of new phenomena that have been forgotten, if not hidden or denied. These are the phenomena in fact that open our access to what alone matters in the end: ourselves.[446]

[444] Henry, *Seeing the invisible : on Kandinsky*. Page 19. Henry, *Voir l'invisible sur Kandinsky*. Pages 38-39.
[445] Henry, *Seeing the invisible : on Kandinsky*. Page 19. Henry, *Voir l'invisible sur Kandinsky*. Page 39.
[446] Henry, *Seeing the invisible : on Kandinsky*. Page 20. Henry, *Voir l'invisible sur Kandinsky*. Pages 40-41.

For a Christian ethic for fantasy, cultural art is exemplary of the spiritual formation that opens a living person to the possibility of salvation. As "art accomplishes the revelation of the invisible reality in us with an absolute certainty, it is a salvation."[447] Art supported by fantasy supports certainty in living persons for the Truth of Life. "This truth is that the true reality is invisible, that our radical subjectivity is this reality, that this reality constitutes the sole content of art and that art seeks to express this abstract content."[448] Discovering the invisible Truth of Life through art is the salvation at the heart of a Christian ethic for the one who constructively engages their fantasy to support faith in God.

Art generated by fantasy can further support spiritual formation as it can transgress the space and time of this world. "The vision sought by art and what it gives us to contemplate or rather to feel within ourselves is precisely this *magical vision of another world*—which is no longer the world, because it always remains on this side of the spectacle and never shows itself in the world. The vision of the invisible is the invisible becoming conscious of itself in us, exalting itself, and communicating its joy to us."[449] Besides leading living persons to contemplate the 'magical vision of another world', a space beyond perception, art can transgress time as experienced in this world. An aesthetic image is "immobilized above time, in the omni-temporality of the cultural object that delivers it to contemplation. … [Life] would be fulfilled by it, that is to say, by itself."[450] Cultural art produced by fantasy recognises the invisible self-growth of life through the spiritual formation of contemplative prayer. This will be returned to and

[447] Henry, *Seeing the invisible : on Kandinsky*. Page 20. Henry, *Voir l'invisible sur Kandinsky*.Page 41.
[448] Henry, *Seeing the invisible : on Kandinsky*. Page 21. Henry, *Voir l'invisible sur Kandinsky*. Page 42.
[449] Henry, *Seeing the invisible : on Kandinsky*. Page 43. Emphasis mine. Henry, *Voir l'invisible sur Kandinsky*. Pages 78-79. This is another example of Henry employing the term 'magical', as noted earlier.
[450] Henry, *Barbarism*. Page 111. Henry, *La barbarie*. Page 194.

further developed in the final section in consideration of the space and time of the Eucharistic liturgy.

A Christian ethic for fantasy has shown how it is obstructive to assert one's own possibilities through a primary 'I can', which results in deception and isolation. Obstructive fantasy rejects the incarnate intersubjective life of others and treats them erotically as objects. At its worst, obstructive fantasy treats the self as an autoerotic object. However, fantasy has the potential to constructively support the recognition of the value of the subjective other and their own immanent share of life and come to faith in the source of Life, absolute Life, through self-kenotic deliberation. The potential for spiritual formation in the contemplative prayer of cultural art, whose creation is supported by fantasy, can reveal the Truth of Life.

III. A Theological Therapeutic for Fantasy

My theological therapeutic for fantasy will propose and analyse the fundamental influences on fantasy's support of faith in God. It will demonstrate that recognition of absolute Life requires an internal disposition of kenotic humility to receive the gifts of faith, hope, and love from the Holy Spirit. Fantasy can be influenced to better support faith in God when a living person is open to the Holy Spirit inspiring hope for eternal life. Humility disposes a living person to love life as shared with other living persons. The Holy Spirit's gifts of hope and love influence fantasy to make images that reflect the desirability of life shared with God. This can lead to and increase faith in God. Faith is

the assurance of things hoped for, supported by fantasy's humble disposition for the Holy Spirit's gifts of hope for eternal life shared lovingly.[451]

To construct a therapeutic for my theology of fantasy, I will primarily use the theological work of Marcel, Augustine, and Henry. Henry summarises well the concern addressed by my theological therapeutic for fantasy: "the issue is perceiving how the Sons who are all Sons of God's absolute Life, living only in and through it, can actually lose this condition. And how, having lost it, they can find it again and be reborn in this unique and absolute Life that, from affecting itself and giving itself, does not know death."[452] My theological therapeutic for fantasy will assert the necessity of Christian testimony and the Holy Spirit's gifts of faith, hope, and love. Then, I will establish humility as the necessary therapeutic disposition for fantasy to support faith in God.

a. The influence of Christian testimony

Fantasy is constructively influenced to support faith in God by Christian testimony that speaks of the Word become flesh. Marcel and Henry both assert the possibility of faith through the testimony of the Incarnation of the Word, Jesus Christ. Marcel observes that "we are led to ask ourselves whether the living God is not inevitably a God who has become incarnate, and whether it is not to this same incarnation that the testimony is in the first place directed."[453] Christian testimony of the Incarnation can be reflected in the images made by fantasy so that a living person can deliberate faith in the Incarnate Word. "The effect of the Incarnation is in fact to spread radiance, and it is just

[451] Cf. "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." Hebrews 11:1 NRSVCE

[452] Henry, *I Am the Truth : Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*. Page 163. Henry, *C'est moi la vérité: Pour une philosophie du christianisme*. Pages 205-206. This spiritual starting point is much like the one described by Teresa of Avila in her spiritual classic, *Interior Castles*, where the soul is initially blind and deaf to God.

[453] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 131. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 133.

for that reason that today there can still be witnesses of Christ."[454] The continuing radiance of the Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, continues through the testimony of successive generations to influence the fantasy of living persons to generate images that reflect life and support faith in God. Life has shown itself in the Incarnation of his Word, Jesus Christ. The testimony of this was promised by the spoken words of the same Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, and was conveyed through the ages by the disciples inspired by the Holy Spirit.[455]

As noted in the third chapter, Marcel's theology of faith demands reflection on testimony for the 'purification' of faith through 'its most abstract essence', that is, images made by fantasy.

> We may say that to the believer it appears that he must so purify his faith that it can the better resist the attack of [primary] reflection, the latter thus becoming the medium, the stimulus which makes this *purification* possible. In addition, [secondary] reflection must confirm the legitimacy of a faith which it grasps at first in its most *abstract essence*. It is on the basis of this double recognition that the *modus vivendi* can be built.[456]

Fantasy supports secondary reflection by generating images of Christian testimony. Marcel expresses concern that the testimony reflected upon may be taken as 'purely imaginary', which he rejects. While for faith it is necessary to accept the external, objective Truth of Life contained in Christian testimony, it does not follow that the imaginary, which operates internally in consciousness and creatively in its power of fantasy, cannot support faith. To emphasise the Truth of Life conveyed in Christian testimony, Marcel asserts the necessity of 'active receptivity' for 'creative', but not productive, testimony:

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[454] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 132. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 134. 'Radiance' should be understood as 'grace' in the Christian context.
[455] The Holy Spirit testifies to the promise made by Jesus Christ, who extends his testimony to his disciples through the Holy Spirit. "When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf. You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning." John 15:26-27 NRSVCE
[456] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 127. Emphases mine. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 129.

> The Christian idea of an indwelling of Christ in the man who is completely faithful to Him, an idea which corresponds exactly in the religious order to the position which I am trying to define on the philosophical plane, involves a categorical rejection of the purely imaginary way of picturing it. Just as I spoke in my first series of lectures of creative fidelity, so now we are concerned with creative testifying. But we must repeat once more that creation is never a production; it implies an active receptivity, and in this connection any idealist interpretation must be resolutely rejected.[457]

Marcel resolutely places himself in a realist approach to the faith and is correct to reject faith based on a 'purely imaginary way' by asserting 'creative testifying' as active receptivity of the testimony of Jesus Christ yet fails to recognise the supporting role of the imagination, and more specifically fantasy, as a part of the process of a living person deliberating faith in God. The Incarnation of the Word and the testimony offered by believers, especially those inspired by the Holy Spirit to write their testimony as the Word of God in the Holy Scriptures, can influence the fantasy of a living person. This influence is used by fantasy to generate images for secondary reflection and can lead to a purified faith.

b. The influence of the Holy Spirit

For fantasy to be therapeutically influenced to constructively support faith in God, the testimony it receives to make images for deliberation must be motivated by the Holy Spirit's gifts of faith, hope, and love.[458] The Holy Spirit's gift of hope is especially therapeutic for fantasy to support faith in God, as it offers a living person a share of eternal life.

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[457] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 139. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 140. Marcel's concern that 'creation is never a production' echoes Henry's concern as analysed in the preceding chapter about the distinction between creation and generation. Cf. Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 84. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 135.

[458] St. Paul observes that the theological virtues are given in abstraction yet motivated by hope for clarity. "For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love." 1 Corinthians 13:12-13. NRSVCE

Augustine's *The Harmony of the Gospels* demonstrates the Holy Spirit's essential role in the Christian virtue of hope. Augustine also recognises the role of the Holy Spirit in Christian testimony even while showing his periodic opposition to the use of fantasy in support of faith in God, as was noted in the first chapter.

> But if any one supposes that with man, living, as he still does, in this mortal life, it may be possible for a person to dispel and clear off every obscurity induced by *corporeal and carnal fancies*, and to attain to the serenest light of changeless truth, and to cleave constantly and unswervingly to that with a mind thoroughly estranged from the course of this present life, that man understands neither what he asks, nor who he is that put such a supposition. Let such an individual rather *accept the authority*, at once lofty and free from all deceitfulness, which tells us that, as long as we are in the body, we are absent from the Lord, and that we *walk by faith* and not by sight. And thus, with all perseverance keeping and guarding his faith and hope and charity, let him *look forward to the sight which is promised*, in accordance with that earnest which *we have received of the Holy Ghost*, who shall teach us all truth, when God, who raised up Jesus Christ from the dead, shall also quicken our mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in us.[459]

Augustine emphasises the teaching role of the Holy Spirit, who brings the testimony of the Word to dwell in receptive living persons for the increase of their faith, hope, and love. He summarises the steps of faith by directing one 'to accept the authority' of the Holy Spirit, to 'walk by faith', and to 'look forward' to eternal life. Augustine expresses concern for the mental activity of living persons who search for appearance. While, on one hand, he correctly argues that the mind must be enlightened by an external source not found in the world and that the truth of God is received by the Holy Spirit, he fails to elaborate the preliminary role of the imaginary's fantasy, whereby images of that which is

[459] Augustine, *The Harmony of the Gospels*, trans. S. D. F. Salmond (Aeterna Press, 2014). Pages 296-297. Emphases mine. "*[Q]uisquis autem arbitratur homini uitam istam mortalem adhuc agenti posse contingere, ut dimoto adque discusso omni nubilo phantasiarum corporalium adque carnalium serenissima incommutabilis ueritatis luce potiatur et mente penitus a consuetudine uitae huius alienata illi constanter et indeclinabiliter haereat, nec quid quaerat nec quis quaerat intellegit. [C]redat ergo potius sublimi auctoritati minime que fallaci, quamdiu sumus in corpore, peregrinari nos a domino et ambulare per fidem, nondum per speciem; ac sic perseueranter retinens adque custodiens fidem, spem et caritatem intendat in speciem ex pignore, quod accepimus, sancti spiritus, qui nos docebit omnem ueritatem, cum deus, qui suscitauit iesum christum a mortuis, uiuificabit et mortalia corpora nostra per inhabitantem spiritum eius in nobis.*" *De consensu euangelistarum* (CPL 0273) lib. : 4, cap. : 10, par. : 20, page 416. Augustine's wording '*phantasiarum corporalium adque carnalium*' demonstrates that he considers fantasies [*phantasiarum*] as of bodies [*corporalium*] and flesh [*carnalium*]. This also demonstrates an Augustinian distinction between body and flesh, both of which can be of fantasy.

sensibly obscure in the world can be generated for a living person to deliberate faith in God.

However, despite initially suggesting that fantasies lead to further obscurity, Augustine shortly thereafter recognises the necessity of 'large hope' [*magnae spei*] while looking 'through a glass darkly' at an 'illumination far superior to every corporeal similitude.'

> And if the mind of a man has as yet had no such experience in which mind nevertheless Christ dwells by faith—he ought to strive earnestly to diminish the lusts of this world, and to make an end of them by the exercise of moral virtue, walking, as it were, in the company of these three evangelists with Christ the Mediator. And, with the joy of *large hope*, let him in faith hold Him who is always the Son of God, but who, for our sakes, became the Son of man, in order that His eternal power and Godhead might be united with our weakness and mortality, and, on the basis of what is ours, make a way for us in Himself and to Himself … nurtured in the exercise of a good conversation and life, and borne out of the atmosphere of earth on the wings of a twofold love, as on a pair of strong pinions, so may he be enlightened by the same Christ, who is also the Word, the Word who was in the beginning, the Word who was with God, and the Word who was God; and although that will still be *through a glass darkly*, it will be a sublime kind of *illumination far superior to every corporeal similitude*.[460]

Hope allows for the perseverance of faith despite looking 'through a glass darkly' in a living person who uses their fantasy to generate images for the deliberation of that which is received by the Holy Spirit, which is 'far superior to every corporeal similitude'. Foreshadowing Henry's work on the precedence of the flesh of life rather than the body in the world, Augustine argues that while in the body, the Lord is absent. "But all, as long as they are in the body, are absent from the Lord. And for all believers living in the *good hope*, whose names are written in the book of life, there is still in reserve that which is

[460] Augustine, *The Harmony of the Gospels*. Emphases mine. Page 297. "… *si autem nihil adhuc tale mens hominis experta est, in qua tamen habitat christus per fidem, instare debet minuendis finiendis que cupiditatibus huius saeculi moralis uirtutis actione tamquam in comitatu trium illorum euangelistarum cum mediatore christo ambulans. eum qui filius dei semper est propter nos filium hominis factum, ut sempiterna uirtus eius et diuinitas nostrae infirmitati et mortalitati contemperata de nostro nobis in se adque ad se faceret uiam, cum* magnae spei *laetitia fideliter teneat … adque ita in actione bonae conuersationis et uitae nutritis pinnis geminae dilectionis tamquam duabus alis ualidis euectus a terris ab eodem ipso christo uerbo inluminetur, uerbo, quod in principio erat et uerbum aput deum erat et uerbum deus erat,* etsi per speculum et in enigmate*, longe tamen sublimius ab omni similitudine corporali." De consensu euangelistarum* (CPL 0273) lib. : 4, cap. : 10, par. : 20, page 417.

referred to in the words, 'And I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him.'"[461] The Holy Spirit continues to testify, motivated by divine love, to the hope that all living persons can have for eternal life, which can be deliberated in the images generated by fantasy and lead to faith in God.

Fantasy allows a living person to make images in response to hearing a word [*parole*], a word [*parole*] of the Word [*Verbe*]. Fantasy images are influenced by the hope received from the testimony of the Incarnate Word's Holy Spirit. "The phenomenon of religious experience," Henry observes, "comes to humans each time that, hearing the Word and surrendering themselves to it, they do the will of God."[462] Marcel asserts of this receptive deliberation that "in so far as we allow ourselves to give ear to the solicitations—countless in number even if slight in substance—which come to us from the invisible world [*monde invisible*], then the whole outlook undergoes a change: and by that I mean that the transformation takes place *here below*, for earthly life itself is at the same time transfigured, it clothes itself in a dignity which cannot be allowed to it if it is looked at as some sort of excrescence which has budded erratically on a world which is in itself foreign to the spirit and to all its demands."[463] A living person is given opportunities 'countless in number' to deliberate the testimony of the Holy Spirit, which is transformative of the world and influences fantasy to generate images of and support faith in the source and dignity of life.

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[461] Augustine, *The Harmony of the Gospels*. Page 298. Emphasis mine. "*Omnes tamen, quamdiu sunt in corpore, peregrinantur a domino et omnibus* bonae spei *fidelibus in libro uitae scriptis seruatur quod dictum est: et ego diligam eum et ostendam me ipsum illi." De consensu euangelistarum* (CPL 0273) lib. : 4, cap. : 10, par. : 20, page 417.

[462] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Pages 122-123. "[L]e phénomène de l'expérience religieuse*, … lui expérience lui advient chaque fois que, écoutant la Parole et s'abandonnant à elle, il fait la volonté de Dieu*."Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 196. Emphasis the author's. N.B. The translator does not include the emphasis that Henry places on 'the phenomenon of religious experience'.

[463] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 187. Emphasis the author's. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Pages 187-188. 'Invisible world' [*monde invisible*] is like the concept of 'life' in Henry's phenomenology.

In his final section of *Incarnation*, Henry describes those who have the assurance of faith: "each of them who, given to themselves in the self-givenness of the Word, will live only from the infinite Life that is put to the test in this Word, *to those who love one another in Him in such a way that it is Him they love in them, Him and all those who are in Him*, eternal Life will be given, so that in this Life that has become theirs, they are saved."[464] The Holy Spirit's gift of hope can influence fantasy to make images not only reflective of eternal life but also reflective of the gift of love that originally motivated the sharing of the testimony by the Holy Spirit and which continues to motivate believers to testify to their faith in God.

c. Humility, a theologically therapeutic disposition

Fantasy's support of faith in God requires a therapeutic disposition of humility. The Holy Spirit's gift of hope helps a living person to be humble and to use fantasy to generate images of intersubjectivity for the deliberation of other individual selves and their common origin of life in which all living persons share. Humility allows a living person to therapeutically deliberate a fantasy of an origin other than their self. Humility allows a living person to use their fantasy to support the recognition of other living persons and love the life they share.

Marcel succinctly states that "true love is humble."[465] He describes humility as "the recognition of our own *nothingness*."[466] When a living person recognises their individual nothingness, fantasy can then generate the possibility of recognising incarnate

[464] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 252. Emphasis the author's. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 359.
[465] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 83. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 84.
[466] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 85. Emphasis mine. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 86.

intersubjectivity in an image of other living persons' shared life. The recognition of incarnate intersubjectivity, as has been demonstrated, is critical for faith.

Henry balances the necessity of humility with respect for the individual transcendental self. "*Maintaining each one, the most humble, and the most insignificant, in its own irreducibly singular individuality, in its condition as a transcendental Self that is by essence this one and that one forever—far from needing or being able to overcome or abolished anywhere, this alone can snatch humankind from nothingness*."[467] The therapeutic disposition of humility allows fantasy to support faith in God as a living person recognises other transcendental selves, that is intersubjectivity. Henry poignantly asserts that "[i]n life, no individual is possible."[468] While a living person has value individually, to know that value demands faith in shared intersubjective life. Fantasy can constructively generate images of a self's transcendent intersubjectivity to support faith in life when they humbly recognise their individual 'nothingness'.

Henry connects humility to the recognition of the Trinitarian God.

> Because I who live did not bring myself into life myself (nor into the Self I am, nor into my flesh, being given to myself only in flesh), this living being, this Self, and this flesh do not arrive in themselves except in the proceeding of absolute Life, which arrives in itself in its Word, and experiences itself in this Word, which experiences itself in it, in the reciprocal phenomenological interiority of their common Spirit. Thus in contrast to the formal God of monotheism, the trinitarian God of Christianity is the real God who lives in each living Self, without which no living being would live, and to which every living being bears witness in its very condition as living.[469]

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[467] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 248. Emphasis the author's. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 354. Henry references (but does not cite) Lacan while appealing to the importance of humility. "'A fool who takes himself for a king is a fool', Lacan said. 'A king who takes himself for a king is too.'" Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 173. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 249.

[468] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 179. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 257. Henry asserts three necessary aspects of communities, that they are 'by essence religious', 'by essence invisible', and open 'a field of paradoxical relations' across space and time. Cf. Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Pages 244-245. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Pages 349-350.

[469] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Pages 170-171. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Page 245.

The possibility of rejoining the Trinitarian relationship of God is deliberated using images made by fantasy in a living person with a humble disposition. This deliberation can free them from their solipsism and therapeutically lead to faith in the Truth of Life. The share of life that each living person has been gifted can itself become a testimony to support faith in God.

In *Barbarism*, Henry uses the notion of 'Energy' in regard to the process of life's cultivation, that is, the ability to grow in recognition of life. Energy, I argue, is better understood in a theological context as the power of the Holy Spirit. He does not intend 'Energy' in the physical sense of the word, but as a reference to an invisible force that can support the increased awareness of the pathos of life.[470] The process of life's cultivation shows

> … its eternal coming into oneself in the growth of oneself. … It is pathos and entirely pathos—its temporality is nothing other than the movement of this pathos, that is, the history of the Absolute in the unbroken plenitude and continuity of its suffering and enjoyment. This indefeasible plenitude is Energy. It is the overpowering Presence of life to itself that lets its force be felt at every moment. 'At every moment' means that there is never, in one's pure experiencing of oneself, a way for it not to exist; there is never a no longer or a not yet of this force.[471]

The always-present plenitude of energy, the Holy Spirit, never overwhelms or compromises a living person's inherent freedom, rather it always supports the possibility for them to use fantasy to generate images for the deliberation of the pathos of life.[472] 'Energy' disposes a living person towards contemplative prayer, which reconciles the growth of faith with their immanent, intersubjective share of life.

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[470] The influence of Henri Bergson is pervasive in the 20th century French phenomenological tradition. According to the translator with whom Bergson worked directly, his collection of essays in *L'Energie spirituelle*, translated into English as *Mind-Energy*, demonstrates that 'the view of illustrating his concept of reality is fundamentally a spiritual activity'. Cf. Henri Bergson et al., *Mind-energy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007). Page xlix.

[471] Henry, *Barbarism*. Page 109. Henry, *La barbarie*. Page 191-192.

[472] Marcel observes that "salvation here lies only in reflection, but it must be understood at the same time that this reflection is not separable from the freedom it embodies." Marcel, *Creative fidelity*. Page 54. Marcel, *Du refus à l'invocation*. Page 77.

Marcel asserts the necessity of recognising intersubjectivity in prayer.[473] Prayer, Marcel defines, "is nothing if not a certain very humble and fervent way of *uniting oneself with*."[474] Marcel's theology of faith shows the potential power of prayer, which fantasy can support when it generates images of incarnate intersubjective life. Fantasy can support the prayer of hope of uniting oneself with eternal life. Ultimately, Marcel concludes, "hope is akin to life, when life is *looked at*, not in its manifestations, but in its essence."[475] Life is humbly 'looked at' and held in faith as supported by fantasy when it's influenced by the testimony of hope in eternal life out of recognition of love for others.

My theological therapeutic for fantasy has proposed the necessary influence of Christian testimony and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which can be received by a living person who is humble. Fantasy supports the deliberation of faith in God through images of hope for a share in eternal Life. Fantasy's images of hope, grounded in incarnate intersubjectivity and humility, can form contemplative prayer to support faith in God.

IV. EUCHARISTIC LITURGY: FANTASY MOST SUPPORTIVE OF FAITH IN GOD

Fantasy's support of faith in God through the cultural art of contemplative prayer is most ideal in the Eucharistic liturgy. Through the hope and love given by the Holy Spirit, life can be a continual process of growth in relationship with absolute Life. A process of growth in relationship is essential to faith in God. This is experienced ideally through participation in the Eucharistic liturgy. While neither Sartre, Marcel, nor Henry

[473] "Prayer is possible only when intersubjectivity is recognized, where it is operative." Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 106. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 106.
[474] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 103. Emphasis the author's. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 103.
[475] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being-Vol. 2: Faith and Reality*. Page 164. Emphasis mine. Marcel, *Le mystère de l'être-Vol. 2. Foi et Réalité*. Page 165.

work explicitly on the liturgy, I will engage the themes of their work used by my theology of fantasy in conversation with Jean-Yves Lacoste's articulation of liturgy, especially his concepts of coaffectivity and presentiment.[476]

Lacoste's work on the liturgy uses similar themes to the methodology of my theology of fantasy—affectivity, the Incarnation of the Word, subjectivity and objectivity, intersubjectivity, kenotic humility, testimony, hope, and prayer.[477] For Lacoste, a living person in liturgy is grounded in humility and at the disposal of God, which enables them to receive God in body and spirit.[478] God reveals the truth of being, which is an imitation of the Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ. Ultimately, the flesh and body of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, generated by the fantasy of a living person as an image in the liturgy, allows for the deliberation of faith in God and is the culmination of a theology of fantasy.

There is an excess in liturgical action in relation to God beyond the words that are said or the actions that are accomplished. Fantasy allows a living person to enter the expansiveness of the liturgy through the generation of imagery. In a rare moment of

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[476] Similar work on the liturgy is seen in: Louis Bouyer, *Life and liturgy* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1956). Louis-Marie Chauvet, *Symbol and sacrament : a sacramental reinterpretation of Christian existence* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1995). Christina M. Gschwandtner, "Mystery manifested: Toward a phenomenology of the eucharist in its liturgical context," *Religions (Basel, Switzerland)* 10, no. 5 (2019); Bruce T. Morrill, *Practical sacramental theology : at the intersection of liturgy and ethics* (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2021); Sokolowski, *Eucharistic presence : a study in the theology of disclosure*.

[477] Joeri Schrijvers summarises Lacoste's project: "We are exposed to God and the other in our corporeality and not primarily as a 'thinking thing'. This is the essence of the liturgical experience: liturgy is putting oneself at the disposal of God (EA, 182), a consenting to deliver my being into God's hands (EA, 188). Lacoste conceives of the being of the religious person as a being that neither desires nor acts and thereby is forced into a 'position' where (s)he can only receive. What is given, in prayer and in the Eucharist, is the *confirmation* of my project to be at God's disposal. … Indeed, in praying and celebrating the believer embodies a passivity that precedes every conscious act; liturgy is the recognition of our status as *creatures*. … The truth of our being is our kenotic emptying of ourselves for an other. Only an other can speak words of confirmation over our being. In this way, the liturgy is a conversion, an *imitatio Christi*." Jonkers and Welten, *God in France : eight contemporary French thinkers on God*. Page 213. Emphases the author's. Here the author interlineally cites the page numbers of Lacoste, *Experience and the absolute : disputed questions on the humanity of man*. (EA)

[478] Schrijvers contextualises passivity in Lacoste's work: "Over and against the autonomy and the activity of the modern project Lacoste posits the radical passivity of the liturgical experience." Jonkers and Welten, *God in France : eight contemporary French thinkers on God*. Page 212. Examples of Lacoste's work is especially evidenced in Jean-Yves Lacoste, *Présence et parousie* (Genève: Ad Solem, 2006); Lacoste, *Experience and the absolute : disputed questions on the humanity of man*.

reference to liturgy, Henry proposes liturgy as the relation between living persons and absolute Life, apart from the world, which is an assertion that Lacoste will also make.

> It is this relation to the absolute Other Self who is God that is constantly actualized in the liturgical and sacramental practices brought by the new religion. … [A] relation of this kind must be grasped where it occurs: apart from the world, before it. What happens before the world? We know the answer: It is the reciprocal phenomenological relation of interiority between absolute Life and the First Living in as much as it puts itself to the test [*s'éprouve*] in the One who puts himself to the test [*s'éprouve*] in it. To undergo experiencing oneself, to enjoy oneself, is to love oneself in such a way that this *self-enjoyment is produced in absolute Life as its generation of the first Self in which it feels itself and thus loves itself*—for the one who undergoes experiencing himself in this absolute Life that loves itself in Him, it happens that *each one loves himself in the 'other' who (with every exteriority here out of play) is never external to him, but on the contrary internal and consubstantial*.[479]

This liturgical 'actualisation' of one 'who undergoes experiencing himself in this absolute Life that loves itself in Him' happens through the power of fantasy to make images of truth that can be deliberated for the love they reveal. Liturgy manifests the whole economy of salvation, wherein a living person who has forgotten life can be reminded of it by Christian testimony and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Lacoste's notion of the liturgy builds on John of the Cross's concept of 'night', which articulates kenotic suffering experienced alongside immanent joy.[480] Lacoste labels the mixture of joy and suffering the 'chiaroscuro'. Henry would call this 'pathos'. "[T]he world is not the field of theophany but that of the chiaroscuro, the field of a 'kenotic' presence or of the sacraments."[481] Lacoste further identifies the expanse of liturgical participation. "We do not participate in the liturgical game without involving everything we are: without involving a memory, a body, an affectivity."[482] Fully engaged with our

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[479] Henry, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*. Page 245-246. Emphases the author's. Translator's interlineal original language text. Henry, *Incarnation : une philosophie de la chair*. Pages 350-351.
[480] Lacoste indicates his indebtedness in the 'Introduction' of *Experience and the absolute : disputed questions on the humanity of man*.
[481] Lacoste, *Experience and the absolute : disputed questions on the humanity of man*. Page 36. Lacoste, *Expérience et absolu : questions disputées sur l'humanité de l'homme*. Page 44.
[482] "*Nous ne participons pas au jeu liturgique sans y faire participer tout ce que nous sommes : sans y faire participer une mémoire, un corps, une affectivité.*" Lacoste, *Présence et parousie*. Page 55. A published English translation of this work does not exist. Translations are mine. The original French text will be provided when cited. Louis-Marie Chauvet in *Symbol and sacrament* contributes an articulation of memory

memory, body, and affect, our will, knowledge, and feeling can be 'mobilized' by the images of God generated by fantasy. "The liturgy *mobilizes* us first as bearers of a will (we want to transgress the measures of being-in-the-world and of all related phenomena) and as rich in knowledge (we know that the Absolute has a face), it also *mobilizes* us as beings of feeling."[483] Lacoste also asserts the importance of the body and flesh of a living person present in liturgy. "We are not present there as a consciousness in an act of representation, but carnally there as much as spiritually there, bodies as much as spirits in prayer."[484] Fantasy is able to make images of the bodies and flesh of others to be reflected upon, which liturgically includes the image of the body and flesh of the Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, as will be analysed at the end of this section in a Eucharistic context.

Lacoste identifies 'coexistence' in the liturgy as he builds his argument for coaffectivity in the liturgy. "The liturgy thus offers us a pure case of existence as coexistence, of being-there as co-being-there."[485] The role of fantasy in the liturgy is to propose images as an anticipation of a 'with'. "On the other hand, it is not as a pure case of *Mitmenschlichkeit* that the liturgical assembly proposes itself, but as an image or anticipation of a 'with' which considerably overflows the modest requests inscribed in the

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in liturgy that is connected to the virtue of hope. Pointedly, he argues that "humanity has a future only because it has a memory." Chauvet, *Symbol and sacrament : a sacramental reinterpretation of Christian existence*. Page 234. Further, he states, within liturgy "there is also the memory that is a living act of *commemoration*. It is in this act of *communal* memory a people or a group regenerates itself. The past of its origins is snatched out of its 'pastness' to become the living genesis of today. This today is thus perceived as 'present', as 'a gift of grace'. It is thus a process of revivification, where the memory of sufferings experienced, of oppression undergone, and of the fight undertaken to liberate oneself play an essential role: tomorrow will be better than yesterday; and the present is full of this living hope." Chauvet, *Symbol and sacrament : a sacramental reinterpretation of Christian existence*. Page 233. Emphases the author's.

[483] "*La liturgie nous mobilise d'abord comme porteurs d'un vouloir (nous voulons y transgresser les mesures de l'être-dans-le-monde et de tous les phénomènes apparentés) et comme riches d'une connaissance (nous savons que l'Absolu a un visage), elle nous mobilise aussi comme êtres de sentir.*" Lacoste, *Présence et parousie*. Page 57. Emphases mine.

[484] "*Nous n'y sommes pas présents à titre de conscience en acte de représentation, mais charnellement là autant que spirituellement là, corps autant qu'esprits en prière.*" Lacoste, *Présence et parousie*. Page 51.

[485] "*La liturgie nous offre ainsi un cas pur de l'existence comme coexistence, de l'être-là comme co-être-là.*" Lacoste, *Présence et parousie*. Page 52.

'fact' of coexistence and concern for others."[486] Fantasy is required to propose an image that can articulate prayer with and for others in liturgical action. "The 'we' of the liturgy, on the other hand, is superlatively inclusive. With no temporal or spatial limits, prayer gives itself to be understood as an act that is always performed in the plural, involving all those who can and have been able to pray."[487] Prayer in the liturgy is an incarnate intersubjective action.

In coexistence, growth in knowledge of others, including God, happens contemporaneously with growth in knowledge of one's affects. "Man appears to himself in the life of affects, he always 'finds himself' in an affective situation. *Affirmation* of coexistence, *affirmation* of the inevitability of affective situations, both call for a question: that of the affective style according to which the experience of the 'we' is made. To pose this question, Heidegger provides a word, and not much more: *coaffection* (*Mitbefindlichkeit*)."[488] The notion of coaffection invites consideration of the 'affirmation' of coexistence and affectivity. Affirmation is a form of faith, which is shown here as held through coaffection. Lacoste develops Heidegger's concept of coaffection to include a liturgical sense. "But it is not self-evident that the existence of this 'we' is translated in an indubitable way into the life of affects. What we want to do liturgically, in fact, clearly

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[486] "*D'autre part, ce n'est pas comme cas pur de* Mitmenschlichkeit *que l'assemblée liturgique se propose, mais comme image ou anticipation d'un « avec » qui déborde considérablement les modestes requêtes inscrites dans le « fait » de la coexistence et du souci d'autrui.*" Lacoste, *Présence et parousie*. Page 52. *Mitmenschlichkeit* means 'fellow' or 'joint' [*mit*] 'human nature', 'humanity', or 'humaneness' [*Menschlichkeit*]. Helmut W. Ziefle and Helmut W. Ziefle, *Modern theological German : a reader and dictionary* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1997). Pages 202 and 197, respectively.

[487] "*Le « nous » de la liturgie, en revanche, est superlativement inclusif. Ni limite temporelle, ni limite spatiale, la prière se donne à comprendre comme un acte toujours posé au pluriel, et impliquant tous ceux qui peuvent et ont pu prier.*" Lacoste, *Présence et parousie*. Page 54.

[488] "*L'homme s'apparaît à lui-même dans la vie des affects, il « se trouve » toujours en situation affective. Affirmation de la coexistence, affirmation du caractère inévitable des situations affectives, toutes deux appellent une question : celle du style affectif selon lequel se fait l'expérience du « nous ». Pour poser cette question, Heidegger fournit un mot, et pas beaucoup plus : coaffection (Mitbefindlichkeit).*" Lacoste, *Présence et parousie*. Page 56. Emphases mine.

overflows everything we feel."[489] Liturgy provides the space for the expansion needed for fantasy to generate images that support faith in God as they 'overflow everything we feel'.

The coaffective potential of fantasy in the liturgy to support faith in God demands 'presentiment'.

> But the liturgical reality of the 'with' exceeds its common appearance. The other man, who has always appeared to me to play the role of the alter ego, of the *Mitmensch*, appears here as a brother or sister, to be loved without delay. He would certainly not appear to me as a brother if he had not always been with me: the logic of presentiment confirms that of co-being-there.[490]

In 'presentiment', there is a humble recognition of our creatureliness that reveals an origin that lies outside of oneself. Fantasy can make images for the deliberation of life's origin in God, as well as hope for communion with God. "The present of the liturgy can shelter more than the experience of co-being-there. We can form the ambition of 'perfect communion' (of being as being-towards, of existence fully lived as 'relationship', etc.)."[491] 'Being as being-towards' is the potential of faith in shared eternal Life as supported by the generative capacity of fantasy.

Coexistence within the affective sharing of life is coaffection. There are affective tones specific to the liturgical experience that influence fantasy's potential to support faith in God. These affective tones arise from the memorial of liturgy, from remembered suffering to hope for the joy of eternal Life. The emotions we have from our memories,

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[489] "*Or il ne va pas pour autant de soi que l'existence de ce « nous » se traduise de manière indubitable dans la vie des affects. Ce que nous voulons faire liturgiquement, en effet, déborde clairement tout ce que nous sentons.*" Lacoste, *Présence et parousie*. Page 56.

[490] "*Or la réalité liturgique de l'« avec » excède son apparition commune. L'autre homme, qui m'apparaît depuis toujours pour tenir face à moi le rôle de l'alter ego, du* Mitmensch*, apparaît ici comme frère ou sœur, à aimer sans délai. Il ne m'apparaîtrait assurément pas comme frère s'il n'était depuis toujours avec moi : la logique du pressentiment confirme celle du co-être-là.*" Lacoste, *Présence et parousie*. Page 59.

[491] "*Le présent de la liturgie peut abriter plus que l'expérience du co-être-là. Nous pouvons former l'ambition de la « communion parfaite » (de l'être comme être-vers, de l'existence intégralement vécue comme « relation », etc.).*" Lacoste, *Présence et parousie*. Page 59.

especially religious ones experienced in liturgy, can influence further images made by fantasy. These liturgical memories occur in the world.

> We exist in the world, but we do not simply belong to the world. And when the 'with' takes for us, liturgically, the form of being-at-peace, or of shared joy, etc., what we then sense is a use of the self, of affection, of the 'with', etc., which signifies the definitive in the midst of the provisional. (But which certainly does not institute it.)[492]

Living persons, that is 'we', belong to the affectivity of life. Fantasy generates images, ideally in the liturgy, in the provisional that may lead to the definitive, that is firm, faith in coaffective life. The coaffective reality of 'we' [*nous*] / 'with' [*avec*] reflects the hope for eternal peace and joy in the liturgy. The growth of the recognition of coaffectivity leads to the love of the other and the self, that is the love of 'we' / 'with' in the liturgy, which necessarily includes God.

The coaffective liturgy happens in space and time, yet space and time cannot be fully perceived under the limits of the world. Fantasy makes images that reflect the expansive growth of the liturgy that exceeds the world and reveals Life.

> The liturgy forces us to want a properly parousiac presence of man to man, and to want this presence to be felt, to be a coaffective experience - but such a presence and such a coaffection can only be outlined in the time of the world. Coaffection, the name is that of a task to be accomplished as much as it is that of a reality to be described. It is in the in-between of this reality and this task that the liturgical experience is lived.[493]

The space of the liturgy extends beyond this world into the 'in-between' of the world and eternal Life. "The liturgical experience is the precarious experience of a way of being that

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[492] "*Nous existons dans le monde, mais nous n'appartenons pas sans plus au monde. Et lorsque l'« avec » prend pour nous, liturgiquement, la tournure de l'être-en-paix, ou de la joie partagée, etc., ce que nous pressentons alors est un usage du soi, de l'affection, de l'« avec », etc., qui signifie le définitif au milieu du provisoire. (Mais qui ne l'institue certainement pas.)*" Lacoste, *Présence et parousie*. Page 58. Schrijvers observes that for Lacoste, "[l]iturgy manifests the margins of being-in-the-world." Jonkers and Welten, *God in France : eight contemporary French thinkers on God*. Page 213.

[493] "*La liturgie nous contraint à vouloir une présence proprement parousiaque de l'homme à l'homme, et à vouloir que cette présence soit sentie, qu'elle soit expérience coaffective - mais une telle présence et une telle coaffection ne peuvent qu'être esquissées dans le temps du monde. Coaffection, le nom est celui d'une tâche à accomplir autant qu'il est celui d'une réalité à décrire. C'est dans l'entre-deux de cette réalité et de cette tâche que se vit l'expérience liturgique.*" Lacoste, *Présence et parousie*. Pages 59-60.

is not 'in fact' as coexistence or intersubjectivity are 'in fact': a way of being that is not given with being-in-the-world, whether as a possibility or as a reality, and that cannot make the world forgettable for us."[494] Rather, faith in God is deliberated by an image of fantasy generated with the intersubjectivity liturgically experienced by a living person in a specific space and time. Yet liturgy is transgressive. "[L]iturgy provides an experiential refutation because it presents itself as the experience in which the laws governing the constitution of the world are transgressed, in which world and earth do not interpose themselves between man and God, in which action (the self taking a stance [*la position de soi*]) finds itself absolutely subordinated to passivity (being given a self [*la réception de soi*]), and in which the creation ceases to be erased."[495] In a manner reflective of Henry's work, passivity is key to the liturgical transgression of the self in creation, that is in the world. Fantasy can generate affective and transgressive images of the world and life for the liturgical reception of a self, which can support their faith in God.

Lacoste critically asserts, though, that the transgressive space and time of the liturgy is penultimate.[496]

> [W]e can only understand the liturgy by recognizing the existence of an order of penultimate things. The penultimate is not the ultimate: so it must be said that the Absolute is beyond all affective grasp, so it must be said symmetrically that the 'we' of the liturgy is not necessarily the fact of a 'feeling together' and a communion of hearts, and that it is enough for us, for there to be a liturgy, that we pronounce common words and make certain gestures in common. But the penultimate is not the historical either: we have also observed that the liturgical experience exceeds the common treatment of the question of 'being-with', or the interpretation conducted in terms of 'intersubjectivity' - that the liturgy knows neither the existence of the 'object' nor that of the 'subject'. An affectivity that does not only serve the manifestation of being-in-the-world, or the manifestation of 'life' to itself, but which presides over the encounter with God and that of the other men

[494] "*L'expérience liturgique est l'expérience précaire d'une manière d'être qui n'est pas « de fait » comme la coexistence ou l'intersubjectivité sont « de fait »: une manière d'être qui n'est pas donnée avec l'être-dans-le-monde, que ce soit à titre de possibilité ou à titre de réalité, et qui ne peut nous rendre le monde oubliable.*" Lacoste, *Présence et parousie*. Page 55.
[495] Lacoste, *Experience and the absolute : disputed questions on the humanity of man*. Page 159. Translator's interlineal original language text. Lacoste, *Expérience et absolu : questions disputées sur l'humanité de l'homme*. Page 192.
[496] Lacoste credits this idea to Dietrich Bonhoeffer in the Introduction to *Experience and the Absolute*. Cf. Lacoste, *Experience and the absolute : disputed questions on the humanity of man*. Pages 2-3. Lacoste, *Expérience et absolu : questions disputées sur l'humanité de l'homme*. Page 3.

> and women who pray with me, the liturgical logic of presentiment tells us that this is not unthinkable. But for this to become reality, this world must still pass away. Or at least be put in parentheses.[497]

For faith in God, the world 'passes away' or is exceeded, which I argue is supported by fantasy making images reflective of coaffective life, ideally in the liturgy. In the liturgy, images reflective of coaffective life are generated by fantasy and exceed the objective categorisations to 'preside over the encounter' between God and a living person in the liturgical experience. "Neither subjects nor objects, this means first of all that there are many 'things' (in the strong sense of the term) to populate the space opened by the liturgy, and that these things appear to us while refusing any objectification."[498] 'Things' are better described as fantasies, which 'populate the space opened by the liturgy' and are a product of fantasy's non-objectifying power to generate affective, subjective images. "There is, however, more than objectivity here, and it is on condition of perceiving that we are not dealing here with objects that we allow these things to manifest what is at play,

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[497] "*[N]ous ne pouvons comprendre la liturgie qu'en reconnaissant l'existence d'un ordre des choses pénultièmes. Le pénultième n'est pas l'ultime : aussi faut-il dire que l'Absolu est au-delà de toute saisie affective, aussi faut-il dire symétriquement que le « nous » de la liturgie n'est pas nécessairement le fait d'un « sentir ensemble » et d'une communion des cœurs, et qu'il nous suffît, pour que liturgie il y ait, que nous prononcions des mots communs et posions certains gestes en commun. Mais le pénultième n'est pas non plus l'historial : aussi avons-nous observé que l'expérience liturgique excède le traitement commun de la question de l'« être-avec », ou l'interprétation menée en termes d'« intersubjectivité » - que la liturgie ne connaît ni l'existence de l'« objet » ni celle du « sujet ». Une affectivité qui ne serve pas seulement à la manifestation de l'être dans-le-monde, ou à la manifestation de la « vie » à elle-même, mais qui préside à la rencontre de Dieu et à celle des autres hommes qui prient avec moi, la logique liturgique du pressentiment nous dit que cela n'est pas impensable. Mais pour que cela devienne réalité, encore faut-il que ce monde passe. Ou au moins qu'il soit mis entre parenthèses.*" Lacoste, *Présence et parousie*. Pages 60-61.

[498] "*Ni sujets ni objets, cela veut dire en premier lieu qu'il y a beaucoup de « choses » (au sens prégnant du terme) pour peupler l'espace ouvert par la liturgie, et que ces choses nous apparaissent en refusant toute objectivation.*" Lacoste, *Présence et parousie*. Page 50. Schrijvers comments that Lacoste's "project, be it liturgical or otherwise, resembles modern, autonomous subjectivity. As divertissement, it refuses to open itself to that which gives itself, it is no longer aware of its precarious nature and understands itself as an autonomous affair. The project of modern subjectivity consists in the refusal to see signification as a gift or as given. This subjectivity, Lacoste contends in *Experience and the Absolute*, undergoes a *decentering* only in the liturgy, since only in the encounter with the Absolute the autonomy of the subject is interrupted." Jonkers and Welten, *God in France : eight contemporary French thinkers on God*. Page 212. He concludes of Lacoste contribution that "the liturgical experience turns out to be a simple inversion of the terms that constitute this subjectivity. Instead of encountering and exercising my power over objects, I discover myself as a powerless object in relation to God, conceived of as (supreme?) Subject." Jonkers and Welten, *God in France : eight contemporary French thinkers on God*. Page 214.

or what is tied up, around their presence."[499] Fantasies, as has been argued, are influenced by experiences in the world and the coaffectivity of life. As such, they are neither entirely objective nor subjective.

> It would be easy for us to think the relation of the I to the world as a relation between the subjective and the objective. Accordingly, the world would represent the other to consciousness—the capacity to relate itself to this other or to take cognizance of every contact between the I and the not-I. This theory could be clarified, in terms of Husserlian phenomenology, by discerning in consciousness a radical sphere of activity where intentionality governs the relation of self to self as the relation of self to world. … [T]he world is not a being [*un étant*] but the condition under which being [*l'étant*] is given: I am not present to it as a 'subject' is to an 'object'.[500]

Lacoste argues that the self can exceed objectivity and subjectivity in liturgy. Fantasy is liturgical when used to reconcile a living person to life and support faith in originary Life and hope of eternal Life.

Lacoste argues that the liturgy 'decenters' the ego, which is a form of kenosis and provides my theology of fantasy the grounds to reaffirm the necessity of kenosis for fantasy to make images of shared life.[501] The liturgy's kenotic effect influences fantasy to make images of coaffectivity. The liturgy, which decenters and displaces, rejects the ego's primary authority and helps a living person to deliberate faith in God.

> Now, it is precisely liturgical (in)experience that provides the exemplary case of a decentering or marginalization of the ego. Powerless to bear apodeictic witness to the presence of God, and capable of proving only its own presence, consciousness cannot bear the meaning of liturgy (it can only know the reasons for it). This

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[499] "*Il y a toutefois là plus qu'objectivité, et c'est à condition de percevoir que nous ne traitons pas là avec des objets que nous permettons à ces choses de manifester ce qui se joue, ou se noue, autour de leur présence.*" Lacoste, *Présence et parousie*. Page 51.

[500] Lacoste, *Experience and the absolute : disputed questions on the humanity of man*. Page 10. Translator's interlineal original language text. Lacoste, *Expérience et absolu : questions disputées sur l'humanité de l'homme*. Page 11.

[501] Barnabas Aspray observes while citing the *Metaphysical Journal* of Marcel, "[I]n one sense, liturgy is 'for us' in the sense that its purpose has to do with us. However, in another sense, the very purpose of liturgy is to divest us of our self-centred way of living in which we are only interested in what can be of value 'for us'. The experience of liturgy is one in which everything, including liturgy, is seen as 'for God'. 'One's centre must not be in oneself but in God,' writes Marcel, 'outside of that there is no religion' (Marcel [1927] 1952, p. 237). The ultimate goal of liturgy is to displace us from being the centre of our own concerns, and to allow God to take up his rightful place at the centre. This does not mean a total annihilation of the self, but rather a reorientation that restores us to our rightful place, the only place where we may truly find peace and flourish as who we were created to be." Barnabas Aspray, "How Can Phenomenology Address Classic Objections to Liturgy?," *Religions (Basel, Switzerland)* 12, no. 4 (2021), https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12040236. Page 19.

> implies that if liturgy should be a reality distinct from possessing a knowledge of God and of man, this reality will reside in a transgression of every capacity for experience that consciousness can avail itself of, and will not be a function of the I.[502]

Fantasy uses liturgical (in)experience to transgress the world, consciousness, and the I in its generation of images for deliberation of faith in God. Decentering for faith occurs ideally in the liturgy wherein one encounters absolute Life.[503] Fantasy can generate images of 'affective inexperience' that can constructively be reflected upon for faith in God. "To exist before God, *coram Deo*, is not equivalent to feeling God; it is as affective inexperience that the relationship of man to God is most often accomplished."[504] Lacoste articulates the liturgy as a kenotic, coaffective (in)experience of God. Absolute Life can be considered and confirmed, that is held in faith, by fantasy supporting the deliberation of the Truth of Life in coaffective liturgical (in)experience.

The pinnacle of faith in the liturgy as coaffective sharing in Life is most fully realised in the Eucharistic liturgy, which requires fantasy to reconcile an image of the flesh and body of Jesus Christ as a revelation of God's absolute Life. In the final weeks before his death, Henry finished his last work, *The Words of Christ*, with his most poignant and theological argument. He asserted his hope of eternal communion with God, observing: "The Incarnation of the Word [*Verbe*] in the flesh of Christ is the coming of the Word [*Parole*] of Life into a flesh like ours. Henceforth, for this Word [*Parole*] of

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[502] Lacoste, *Experience and the absolute : disputed questions on the humanity of man*. Page 152. Lacoste, *Expérience et absolu : questions disputées sur l'humanité de l'homme*. Page 183.

[503] Lacoste's work on the liturgy has been noted by Schrijvers to demand a transgression of the expectation for knowledge of God. "In the same way that I can decide to prepare a meal for my friends, I can decide to direct my attention to God in prayer or in the Eucharist. However, for Lacoste, as a project, distinct from the Heideggerian care, liturgy involves a *transgression* of our being-in-the-world. Liturgy is a desire to see and experience God and to anticipate the future already prepared for us; liturgy is thus an anticipation of the Kingdom of God. Just as the project of preparing a meal is, here and now, experienced as a 'realised anticipation' of that future, liturgy anticipates our absolute future: it is *as if* God is present in prayer." Jonkers and Welten, *God in France : eight contemporary French thinkers on God*. Page 209. Emphases the author's.

[504] "*Exister face à Dieu, coram Deo, n'équivaut pas à sentir Dieu ; c'est comme inexpérience affective que s'accomplit le plus souvent la relation de l'homme à Dieu.*" Lacoste, *Présence et parousie*. Page 60.

God to be actually received by us, the condition is that Christ give us his own flesh which is that of the Word [*Verbe*]—which he gives to us in his flesh, uniting his flesh to ours, in such a way that it would be in us and we in him—in the same way as he is in the Father and the Father is in him."[505] Henry fantasised even more explicitly about the Eucharistic, as an eternal sharing in the 'unbroken memorial' through faith and hope in Christ's flesh:

> [T]he omnipotence of the divine Word [*Parole*] is that of absolute Life. The institution of the Eucharist which the Synoptic Gospels report exhibits this power: 'This is my body'. During the *unbroken memorial* of this institution across the centuries, Christ's sovereign word [*parole*], repeated by the priest, consecrates the offering.[506]

The Eucharist of the liturgical memorial is the Christian testimony of eternal Life. Coaffectively (in)experienced using fantasy to support faith in the testimony of the Word (*Parole*), a living person can hope in liturgy for eternal Life as a share in the flesh and body of Jesus Christ. The liturgy, engaged by fantasy, is salvific as it enables faith in the identification of the Word and eternal Life. Henry ends his final work with this observation:

> The economy of salvation is shown in all clarity in Capernaum. The omnipotence of the Word [*Parole*] is the invincible coming into itself of absolute Life, revealing itself in its Word [*Verbe*]. Because the Word [*Verbe*] has become incarnate in Christ's flesh, the identification with this flesh is identification with the Word [*Verbe*]—to eternal Life. "Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day" (John 6:54).[507]

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[505] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 123. Translator's interlineal original language text. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Pages 197-198. The translator removes Henry's sense of insistence through interrogative: '*L'Incarnation du Verbe en la chair du Christ est cette venue de la Parole de la Vie dans une chair semblable à la nôtre. Dès lors, pour que cette Parole de Dieu soit effectivement reçue par nous, la condition n'est-elle pas que le Christ nous donne sa propre chair qui est celle du Verbe—qu'il se donne à nous dans sa chair, unissant sa chair à la nôtre, de façon qu'il soit en nous en nous en lui—de même qu'il est dans la Père et que le Père est en lui ?*"

[506] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 124. Emphasis mine. My interlineal original language text. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 199.

[507] Henry, *Words of Christ*. Page 124. Translator's interlineal original language text. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*. Page 199.

Fantasy supports faith through images reflecting the Eucharist of Christ's flesh. The Word [*Verbe*] is the flesh of God's eternal Life, generated as an image by fantasy in a living person for faith in God.

An analysis of Lacoste's articulation of liturgical (in)experience as coaffective provides the space and time for a theology of fantasy to ideally support faith in God through fantasy's images of the Eucharist, the Incarnate Word of Jesus Christ, in the cultural art of contemplative prayer.

V. Conclusion

A theology of fantasy has shown that fantasy can be supportive of faith in God. In a Christian ethic for fantasy, the work of Marcel, Henry, and Ward was analysed to contrast fantasy's obstructive and constructive potential to support faith. Forgotten Life is sustained through an obstructive use of fantasy to assert 'I can' possibilities, which rejects incarnate intersubjectivity and leads to the objectifying eroticisation of others and the autoeroticisation of the self. However, while a living person is born forgetful of Life due to the presence of sin in the world and others' obstructive use of fantasy, a living person can recognise Life when reflecting upon fantasy's images of incarnate intersubjectivity. Henry's concept of art as spiritual was analysed to show how fantasy can support spiritual formation through contemplative prayer reflective of life in the world, which leads to faith in God. A therapeutic for fantasy primarily used contributions from Marcel, Augustine, and Henry to demonstrate that a living person must be externally influenced by Christian testimony and the Holy Spirit's gifts of hope for eternal life and of love for the life of other living persons and Life itself for increased faith in God. For fantasy to be so influenced, a living person must have a humble disposition. Finally, Lacoste's work on

the liturgy as coaffective and kenotic allowed for the assertion of fantasy's ideal support of faith in God. Ultimately, the Eucharist, the flesh and body of the Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, is held in faith supported by fantasy reflecting in its images the culmination of the spiritual formation of contemplative prayer in the cultural art of the liturgy.

With the historical context of fantasy provided by the first chapter, the analysis of fantasy in the phenomenology and theology of Sartre, Marcel, and Henry, and my own theology and therapeutic for fantasy, it is possible to assert fantasy's ideal support of faith in God through its images reflecting the Eucharistic liturgy.

CONCLUSION

Fantasy supports faith in God by its power to generate images with sensibly absent external correlates that can be deliberated for truth. These images, fantasies, are a type of image in consciousness. Their generation is influenced by knowledge of objective truth as well as the experience of subjective life in its affectivity, transcendence, and intersubjectivity. Subjectivity provides fantasy the freedom to create a multitude of images which may or may not be reflective of objective truth. As the existence of God is not a directly sensible reality, a living person must hold faith in the objective truth of God through their share of subjective life. Subjective life is reflected and discerned in images of fantasy. Fantasy supports the deliberation of the objective truth of the existence of God in the conscious of a living person. Due to its potential to comingle fact with fiction and to consider multiple possibilities simultaneously in its generative freedom, fantasy is as equally able to detract from faith in God as it is to support it. The therapeutic difference in favour of faith in God depends upon a living person's disposition of humility, which opens them to receive hope from the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit offers grace to reflect upon the possibility of eternal life with God. This grace can influence fantasy to create images of eternal life. The spiritual discernment of these fantasy images can lead to a firmly held faith in God ideally through the art of prayer, especially prayer in the Eucharistic liturgy.

To make this argument, I have engaged the 20th century's tools of phenomenology in the context of existentialism. In particular, the work of Jean-Paul Sartre, Gabriel Marcel, and Michel Henry have been critical to demonstrate fantasy's necessary support of faith in God. Given phenomenology's articulation of knowledge in imaging consciousness with respect to existentialism's demand of radical personal freedom,

fantasy can be analysed as a radically free power of generation in consciousness with the potential to consider knowledge of the objective truth of the existence of God.

In my first chapter, the historical negligence and abuse of fantasy was examined to demonstrate its long-suffered theological ambiguity. Augustine's wavering appreciation of fantasy and his interchangeable use of it with 'imagination' primarily led to this trajectory in the Christian tradition. In the modern period, fantasy was reappraised for its literary usage, especially in works by Thomas Hobbes, John Dryden, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. In preparing to propose a theology of fantasy as a necessary means of supporting faith in God, faith itself was historically analysed and engaged with phenomenology's articulation of belief, absence, and time.

In my second chapter, Sartre's original description of the types of images in the transcendent imaging consciousness, including memories, hallucinations, and hypnogogic images was analysed in terms a potential articulation of fantasy. The production of these images requires fantasy, which best clarifies what Sartre describes as images in irreality with uncertain external analogons. He laid the intellectual foundation and descriptive terminology for my assertion of fantasy as a power for generating images that can be deliberated in irreality for potential objective truth. Sartre's essential aspects of images as known in consciousness, of immanent transcendence, with present absence, and influence by desire and affectivity support my constructive-for-faith use of fantasy. His articulation of transcendence in the imaging consciousness provided fantasy the opportunity to consider the potential existence of the 'other' in image. This is critical as fantasy generates the possibility to reflect upon God, who is other, and can lead to faith. Sartre's notion of belief in irreality was essential for demonstrating fantasy's support of faith in God. Sartre's major contribution to my theology of fantasy was to provide a framework of

the imaginary that included the role of belief required in an analogon for the mental presence of sensibly absent external correlates.

In my third chapter, Marcel's concrete ontology offered a means of faith in God through what he described as a secondary reflection, which recuperates images for knowledge of objective truth in unity with experience as contrasted to the deconstructive parsing of experience in his concept of primary reflection. Marcel's assertion that fantasy is the faculty of creativity in the imagination supported my assertion of its necessary role in the act of faith in God as fantasy creates images which can be discerned for objective external correlates. Building on his original approach to reflection, Marcel's theology of faith observes the necessity of intersubjectivity and incarnation. Awareness of intersubjectivity and incarnation can influence images generated by fantasy and must be reflected upon for potential faith in God. Marcel's concept of faith in God is based on the awareness of incarnate intersubjectivity, images of which are generated by fantasy for deliberation in consciousness. Marcel's contributions provided a necessary bridge for a theology of fantasy between the existential framework of the imaginary in the work of Sartre and the radical phenomenology of life in the work of Henry.

In my fourth chapter, Henry reverses the existential attention of phenomenology from looking for objective truth in the world to that which is found more primarily in subjective life. Through an extensive and rigorous examination of life over the course of his prolific career, from art and culture to the body and politics, Henry concludes his intellectual work with a trilogy of books that stretch the limits of philosophy into the terrain of theology with *I am the truth: toward a philosophy of Christianity*, *Incarnation: a philosophy of flesh*, and *Words of Christ*. In these works, Henry proposes a highly original approach to articulating God as absolute Life, Jesus as the First Living, and living persons as sharing in the auto-affective embrace of Life. Henry's phenomenology

of life offered my theology of fantasy an elaboration of life as immanent, affective, intelligible, intersubjective, and expansive. Fantasy generates images that can reflect aspects of life, which, I argued, makes fantasy critical to knowing the truth of absolute Life in the life of the living. An image's reflection of a share of life, which Henry calls signification, builds a theology of faith upon his notion that life prioritises interiority over exteriority, affective flesh over the corporal body, and subjectivity over objectivity. His work also exhibits a hamartiology and soteriology, which articulates sin as a state of forgetfulness and salvation as the rejoining of life. For salvation, a consubstantial substitution of culture, which manifests life in the world's impressions, must be signified by fantasy and deliberated for faith in absolute Life.

In the final chapter, and on the basis of the foregoing examinations, my theology of fantasy proposed a Christian ethic and therapeutic for fantasy. In its ethic, fantasy's obstructive potential to faith in God was outlined. Primarily, fantasy is obstructive to faith in God when truth is sought in what Henry terms the 'I can'. When fantasy generates images of the 'I can', that is the self's possibilities, objectification of others and forgetfulness of God results. At the extreme end of obstructive fantasy is autoeroticism, which seeks to exclusively satisfy the self by the self. As neither the source nor the power of life, the autoerotic self will be perpetually anxious and dissatisfied. Alternatively, given the opportunity provided by the self's passibility to be influenced by intersubjectivity and incarnation as analysed in the work of Marcel and Henry, fantasy can be used constructively for faith in God as a means of recognising the opportunity to rejoin one's life with intersubjective life. Reconciliation is the more traditional Christian term for Henry's concept of rejoining. A living person can be reconciled by identifying and uniting their incarnate intersubjective life to life shared with others through faith as deliberated in the image consciousness using fantasy. Fantasy's power to make images of eternal life, a

reflection of the one offered by absolute Life, makes it constitutive of faith in God. Henry's concept of art as spiritual was explored to show how fantasy can support spiritual formation through contemplative prayer reflective of life in the world, which leads to faith in God.

A therapeutic for fantasy considered the external influence of Christian testimony and the theological gifts of the Holy Spirit on fantasy's support of faith in God. A living person can use their fantasy to reflect upon images of the testimony of Christian witnesses and the Holy Spirit's gifts of hope for eternal life and of love for life shared with other living persons and absolute Life for an increase in the gift of faith in God. A living person's disposition of kenotic humility is needed to be open to these external influences. While faith is a gift of the Holy Spirit, it can increase and be purified, which can be supported by fantasy. Fantasy's support of faith in God happens through its images generated in contemplative prayer. Contemplative prayer can help the living person, with the support of fantasy, to discern and reconcile with absolute Life. Fantasy's ideal constructive potential for faith in God was shown in Jean-Yves Lacoste's articulation of the prayer of liturgy. His recognition of coaffectivity in liturgy can build upon Henry's notion of the affectivity of life. Liturgy provides the ideal space and time for fantasy to generate images in contemplative prayer for deliberation of potential reconciliation with the Truth of Life. The liturgy allows for God to be fantasised about in a way that is supportive of faith, wherein a living person can recognise and accept the embrace of life through fantasy constructing the possibility of deliberating a share of the Eucharist, the transcendent flesh and body of the Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ.

Since this thesis proposes the construction of a new theology, there are no preceding theologies of fantasy to critique or compare. However, there are studies of

fantasy in other intellectual fields and limitedly within other traditions, such as was noted of Feuerbach's theory of projection in 19th century German Idealism. It is also worth noting the technical consideration of fantasy in the field of literary criticism in Tzvetan Todorov's *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre*. The intense and widespread global interest of fantasy literature is exemplified in recent works such as J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series and George R. R. Martin's *Game of Thrones* series, both of which began in print and were developed for screen. Analysis of fantasy literature is beyond the scope of my project but is a clear example of the enduring power and influence of fantasy. From the analytic tradition, works of J. R. R. Tolkien offer earlier examples of fantasy literature, such as with his *Lord of the Rings* series, and a technical articulation of fantasy in *On Fairy-Stories*, but this, too, is beyond the scope of my project.

Another field which has explicitly considered fantasy is psychology. This is especially exemplified in the work of Sigmund Freud, such as in *The Interpretation of Dreams* and *Der Dichter und das Phantasieren*, and later in the work of Jacques Lacan, who dedicated a seminar to the topic, *The Logic of Fantasy*. Lacan regularly referred to fantasy throughout his lectures and publications.[508] Tangentially, current philosopher and cultural anthropologist Slavoj Žižek has engaged the concept of fantasy, such as in *The Plague of Fantasies.*

Proposing a new theology inevitably invites a new conversation, and this dialogue may be enriched by disagreement. There may be those who are unconvinced that a theology of fantasy is needed or that the 20th century French continental tradition

[508] An excellent analysis of fantasy in the psychological field is found in Kirk Turner, *Lacanian fantasy : the image, language and uncertainty*, 1st ed., Lacanian fantasy : the image, language and uncertainty, (London: Routledge, 2022).

provides the best foundation and tools. Other theologies of fantasy may be proposed, and a theology of fantasy could be developed in the analytic tradition. The work of Douglas Hedley, as seen in *Living Forms of the Imagination*, could provide an analytic framework to explore the question of fantasy theologically. Future theological dialogue should include more precise arguments of the theological role that fantasy plays.

My theology of fantasy has proposed a systematic analysis of fantasy's power to support faith in God. There are many directions in which this theology of fantasy could continue to develop, such as a more extensive analysis of its potential therapeutic for faith in respect to literature, psychology, and prayer. Additionally, fantasy's role in the prayer of the Eucharistic liturgy could be considered in respect to the influence of ecclesial architectural design. The design characteristics of the liturgical space could support fantasy's ability to generate images for discernment of life.

Fantasy creates images of life from the broadest spectrum of knowledge and experience, as well as its share of life, to support a living person's faith in the source of life, God. To reach beyond the faith in God that is supported by fantasy, as Dante wisely wrote, is to behold love, '*l'amor che move il sole e l'altre stelle*'.[509]

[509] Dante, *Paradiso*. Page 826. '[T]he Love that moves the sun and all the other stars.' *Ibid.* Page 827.

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