

V

Agapē

Let us turn our attention to Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians (I Corinthians 13). Let us now examine from this vantage point what we have argued thus far.

For the benefit of the layman, before proceeding to our point at hand, we interpolate here a preliminary, introductory definition of *agapē*.

Most literate adult persons have encountered, somewhere in their readings, or related encounters, a reference to a distinction between "sacred" and "profane" *love*. As a preliminary step, assume that the *love* (*agapē*, *caritas*, *charity*) referenced in I Corinthians 13, and other New Testament locations, is defined approximately as equivalent to "sacred love," the latter as opposed to "profane love."

"Sacred love" is exemplified by "love of God." We signify otherwise *love of truth*, *love of (classical forms of) beauty*,¹ and *love for mankind*. We signify the love of the parents and the grandparents for the development of the human potentials of the child.

We signify this set of *isochronic* relations, encompassing past, present, and future, defined always in terms of the individual creative reason's generation, transmission, and effective assimilation of valid, fundamental scientific discoveries. This is usually restated in terms of our proceeding section's discussion; these isochronic relations, encompassing past, present, and future, are defined always in terms of individual creative reason's perfection of individual creative reason, *by means of* the generation, transmission, and efficient assimilation of valid, fundamental scientific discoveries. This latter can be restated usefully in all the broader terms implied, respecting classical art forms, creative acts of love for mankind, and so on.

What is emphasized at this immediate juncture, is the agreement, the coextensive congruence of *agapē* and of universal acts of creative reason. The reaching out to the universality of mankind's past, present, and future, *for the love of God*, is *agapē* expressed practically, as a creative act directed toward perfection of the creative powers of mankind.

Without such *agapē*, there is no creative power, no creative act. It is by means of creative acts, as we have defined "creative" here and in other published locations,² that the emotional state associated with *agapē* is expressed and communicated.

To act, is implicitly, and efficiently, to prefer, to choose one way, among others, of using a portion of that pitifully finite resource which is the entirety of the allowed mortal existence of an individual person. It is the highest, true self-interest of that individual person, to prefer, to choose an act which is of the relatively greatest and most far-reaching benefit to future generations of all mankind. Such a choice is implicitly an act of *sacred love* toward mankind, on the condition that the chosen act is of appropriate quality, and is motivated by such a specific intention.

We have considered already some of the reasons the quality of that chosen act must express efficiently the individual's

sovereign power of creative reason. We have included among such universal acts, the development of the potential of moral character and creative reason in the individual child. However, we have also indicated, it is the higher development of the creative power of future generations, which, in itself, expresses the essential form of the true good, which expresses less imperfectly the choice of act which is consistent with one's true, deeper self-interest.

In his *Of Learned Ignorance (De Docta Ignorantia)* and other locations, Cardinal Nicolaus of Cusa develops a conception termed "minimum-maximum." This conception has

several subsumed significances for physical science; it has a more generally inclusive significance which we stress in connection with *agapē*.

We have defined the human individual engaged in use of developed powers of creative reason as a sovereign entity. This use of "sovereign" signifies, among related notions, that the process of constructing a single conception, a conception of the form of a valid revolutionary scientific discovery, or germ of a great artistic composition by Raphael or Beethoven, is a process which occurs entirely within the mind of the individual person. That also signifies, that whoever re-

'The greatest of these is love'

Chapter 13 of Paul the Apostle's First Epistle to the Corinthians, (the King James translation, in which the Greek word for divine love, agapē, is rendered as "charity"):

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

Charity suffereth long and is kind, charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in truth;

Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

Charity never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail;



Philip Ulanovsky

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whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

When I was a child, I spake as a child. I understood as a child, I

thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

lives that mental act of discovery—for example, as a student—in transmitting and assimilating that integral idea, is also acting in the same sovereign capacity.

In the case of such revolutionary discoveries in physical science, it is implicit that this sovereign creative process of the individual is engaged practically with the laws governing the universe as a whole. The latter represents the efficient Will of the Creator. The latter is the Maximum; the individual creative mind is the Minimum, which echoes the Maximum. To the degree this mirroring is in the process of being perfected, the Minimum is in *the Living Image of the Maximum (imago viva Dei)*.

The relationship so described between Maximum and Minimum is *agapic*, if it fulfills what we have pointed toward as requirements of both quality and intent. Also, this sort of relationship among two or more *minima* (Leibniz's *monads*), participates in the higher ordering, the higher, mirroring relationship to the Maximum. Thus, does *agapē* (*caritas, charity, sacred love*) permeate all; nothing is a true good unless it is so permeated with *agapē*.

The purpose of human existence, the truest self-interest

of both every individual person and every society, respectively and as one, is to order the proliferation and perfection of human existence in our universe, in this *agapic* way.

So, I Corinthians 13 may be read for the occasion of reflection upon this topic.

Notes

1. Classical philosophy divides beauty among two related forms, "natural," and "artistic." Natural beauty refers to harmonic compositions which are congruent with forms characteristic of healthy living processes as distinct from non-living ones. These natural forms all have harmonic orderings ultimately congruent with the golden section of geometry. All such living forms which have this harmonic ordering are physically (thermodynamically) negentropic. The mere imitation of nature is not considered artistic beauty. Artistic beauty consists in creating forms which are products of those creative aspects of the human mental processes otherwise responsible for valid, fundamental discoveries in physical science. The further requirement of artistic beauty is that artistic beauty be coherent with, although distinct from, natural beauty.

2. Herein, the definition of *creative* used is that supplied, for example, *inter alia*, in the author's short 1989 work, *In Defense of Common Sense*, and 1990 manuscript *Project A*, recently published in *EIR*, Vol. 17, No. 41, Oct. 26, 1990.