

WALTER J. ONG, S.J., *Saint Louis University*

The Inward Morning: A Philosophical Exploration in Journal Form. By Henry G. Bugbee, Jr. With an introduction by Gabriel Marcel. State College, Pa.: Bald Eagle Press, 1958. Pp. 232. \$5.00.

It is not easy even to approximate the climate of humility and wonder from which the formal philosophies which we know today have grown. In the formal study of philosophy, we go to considerable pains to rehearse questions as they have been shaped by being passed on from others. We have often heard answers before we are effectively aware of the questions to which they correspond. The answer itself, rather than the not too articulate state of mind leading originally to formulation of the question, may be our starting point in philosophizing.

Although it may no longer be possible to establish ourselves in a pre-philosophical climate, Professor Bugbee has undertaken to do something very much like this in *The Inward Morning*. He wishes to take us back to the threshold of philosophizing—not the threshold as it was known to antiquity or to any age before our own, but to a kind of threshold within our American culture today. This book is not a book about philosophy, although it is by a philosopher. It is a deliberate dipping into experience. As a consequence it is strange, almost quaint, and may prove unattractive and even unnerving to those philosophers who could profit from it most.

Even in the case of philosophies with which we are familiar the initial starting points or grounds of philosophizing are often strange, unreal, and incomprehensible, if at all, only with extreme effort and attention. Thus, for example, in a work such as Joseph Owen's *The Doctrine of Being in the Aristotelian Metaphysics* (Toronto, Canada: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1951), we find the grounds of some of Aristotle's thinking laid out with profound perception and understanding; but the understanding is achieved only by the author's introducing himself and his readers into an entire culture—the ancient Greek culture which, despite our continuity with it, as a whole is to us quite bizarre. But its very bizarreness is our asset. It restores to us something of the sense of awe and bafflement with which early man encountered reality and with which sensitive persons still encounter it today.

A similar sense comes over us as we read Bugbee's work. In this case the sense has to do with the bizarreness of our own culture, conveyed by minute and scrupulous descriptions of the writer's relationship to things outside, descriptions which include vignettes of the effects produced on the author by such activities as rowing, building a dam, and "swamping"

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(boyhood exploration of swamps). Any description of "immediate" experience reveals the culture which has made possible this particular immediacy, and Bugbee is entirely conscious of the fact that his descriptions register many aspects of the particular culture of which he and we are heirs. Here is the transcendentalist vision (with perhaps some fresh increment of Eastern influence), the close attention to experience which derives in great part from desperately sincere Protestant religiosity, a somewhat related reflective aestheticism reminiscent of Santayana, a *joie-de-vivre* suggesting Saint-Exupéry (as Marcel himself notes in his introduction, p. 27), and much else besides.

But principally Bugbee reveals the intimate relationship between the grounds of experience known to Americans because of their particular place in history and certain currents in non-American philosophy which can be labeled existentialist. Bugbee's procedure through his work is not unlike Marcel's in his *Journal métaphysique*. An intermittent diary provides reflections and occasional quotations, after the fashion of a somewhat expanded old commonplace book. But Bugbee's concerns are not quite the same as Marcel's. Everywhere the warp and woof and seams of the past and contemporary American mind show through the fabric:

Moby Dick seems to me an articulate introduction into the presence of things in their finality: After all is said and done, after all attempt at final reckoning has run its course, and shipwreck places a seal on human lips, there is yet a word spoken: "Now small fowls flew screaming over the yet yawning gulf; a sullen white surf beat against its steep sides; then all collapsed, and the great shroud of the sea rolled on as it rolled five thousand years ago." Things exist in their own right; it is a lesson that escapes us except as they hold us in awe (pp. 163-164).

Bugbee's outlook has a great attraction for Marcel, and it is to the credit of the French philosopher that he recognizes the attraction at the very time when, as someone outside American culture, he protests his own limitations for assimilating all that Bugbee's sensibility has to offer. Bugbee's thought and Marcel's meet in that they are both exploratory, both attempts at communication deriving from facing honestly the isolation of the self, and both reverent in a way which makes them fruitful. However, Marcel's reverence tends to lodge in persons, Bugbee's in things; and thus the isolation of the American is—true to the American tradition—more complete. The various themes which weave through the discussion—the self, the meaning of man, God, meditation, prayer, critiques of or extrapolations from what this or that philosopher says—tend to focus on the person-thing mystery more, it seems, than on any one other subject. This

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is what gives Bugbee's thought its value, for the person-thing mystery is in great part America herself and could offer grounds for America's contribution to the development of philosophy. (Here and throughout, "America" and "American" refer specifically to the United States.) Bugbee catches this mystery in an inspired, if wraith-like, fashion through his concept of the "wilderness"—the exterior wilderness and its interior correlative in human consciousness. He devoted numerous passages to the wilderness theme, which Marcel with great discernment singles out in his introduction as crucial. The wilderness is America (the America of the United States). It is man alone on the frontier, man-against-things rather than man-against-man (the Old World).

In the polar attraction between Marcel's thought and Bugbee's thought there lies, I believe, great hope, not merely for Marcel's continuing better understanding of America but for some kind of philosophical development of major significance. Apart from the remarkable thinking of Père Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, S.J., I know of no serious full-scale attempts to interpret a personalist world with full and honest respect for the fact that such a world, as we now know, comes into being only after an incredibly long and elaborate evolution of a material universe which has for billions upon billions of years no persons in it at all, although all through this period it is building itself up by a progressive "interiorization" to the point where man becomes a cosmic possibility. A great weakness of personalist existentialism generally, as well as of almost all other philosophies to date, has been an inability or unwillingness to view the human person in the full perspectives in which we now know material creation really exists. From one point of view this means an inability or unwillingness to explore the full relationship of person and thing. Certainly, we shall never get quite to the bottom of this mysterious relationship. But in the tension between Marcel's personalist personalism and Bugbee's personalist objectivism some new thinking on the matter should be generated. The particularization of reflection in two somewhat different, if related, cultures is itself good, for one feels that in an evolving universe there is need for philosophy to pay more attention to contingency, to rootedness, environment, and history than was the case when the cosmos was supposed to be static in ways we know today are impossible. The humility and reverence which each thinker here shows gives us special reason for hope.

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