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[Lingham]

A MEDIEVAL THINKER CONFRONTS
MODERN PERPLEXITIES:
ENGELBERT,
ABBOT OF ADMONT, O.S.B., (c. 1250-1331)*

The Occident of the later twentieth century with its materialistic, profane, anti-traditional civilization is in trouble, and it appears doomed to self-destruction unless it takes itself in hand and does something about it. An outstanding critic¹ of our day goes so far as to say that "modern civilization lives by that for which previous civilizations had no use." Change, rapid change, even revolutionary change has been especially characteristic of the last 200 years. Very rarely does it occur to denizens of the West that the non-occidental world is not willing to discard its intellectual and spiritual traditions without considering the long-range consequences.

Universal history recognizes only a few societies in which the desire for change was offset by built-in stabilities (= traditions): Egypt to the Muslim conquest of A. H. 19 of the Hegira (= 641 A.D.); China to the end of the Ta Ch'ing (Manchu) Dynasty (in 1911 A.D.); Rome to

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¹ René Guénon, *The Crisis of the Modern World* (London, 1942), p. 29.

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the death of the Emperor Justinian (565 A.D.); India to the death of Harsha (c. 650 A.D.); Japan to the Meiji Restoration (of 1868 A.D.), and Byzantium to 1453 A.D. Few historians of the late twentieth century have begun *sympathetically* to explore the intellectual and spiritual aspects of the great durable cultural traditions.² There are, of course, many who in this hour of crisis express confidence in the modern civilization because they have faith in what they consider its major characteristic, i.e., its capacity to adapt to new conditions and problems.³ Fortunately, there are also a few — and these are names to conjure with — like Alfred North Whitehead, Arnold J. Toynbee, Albert Schweitzer, Frithjof Schuon, René Guénon, Ananda Coomaraswamy — who have voiced alarm at what they call “the murderous machine”⁴ of our industrial and engineering civilization with no conscience and no ideals, which, utterly divorced from any principle, they consider adrift on a chartless sea.

The thousand-year European Middle Ages (500 to 1500 A.D.) are the nearest occidental equivalent to the innumerable cycles of Egyptian, Indian and Chinese experience with the task of maintaining a constructive balance between change and habit.⁵ And here it is necessary to state, once and for all, that I am not one of those for whom the Middle Ages has been reduced to a chronological convenience.⁶ Instead, I would maintain with Professor Heimpel (Göttingen)⁷ that this millenium had certain traits that distinguish it from other ages: indeed, the effort to show such traits and to compare them with other times and conditions should be one of the principal aims of scholars. Specifically, I agree with those who assert that Western Europe (500-

² A brilliant attempt along comparative and pluralistic lines is William H. McNeill, *A World History*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1971).

³ E.g., Herbert Grundmann, “Ueber die Welt des Mittelalters,” *Propyläen-Weltgeschichte*, ed. G. Mann, A. Heuss, A. Nitschke (Berlin, Frankfurt, Wien, 1965), XI (Summa Historica), 363-446. Grundmann’s essay is perhaps the best I have read on this topic.

⁴ George La Piana in *Harvard Divinity School Bulletin*, XXVII, p. 27, as cited by A. K. Coomaraswamy, *Am I My Brother’s Keeper?* (New York, 1947), p. 1.

⁵ See Arnold J. Toynbee, *Change and Habit: The Challenge of our Time* (New York and London, 1966).

⁶ See H. Aubin, “Die Frage nach der Scheide zwischen Altertum und Mittelalter,” *Historische Zeitschrift*, 172 (1951), 245-263.

⁷ Hermann Heimpel, “Ueber die Epochen der mittelalterlichen Geschichte,” *Der Mensch in seiner Geschichte*, 2. erweiterte Auflage (Göttingen, 1957), pp. 42-66.

1500) developed a new civilization of which the elements were: invaders from the north, south and east, the peoples once under the Mediterranean aegis of the *Pax Romana*, the new socio-political institutions of castle, town and church, universities, new cities, new literatures, new systems of law, and above all, the persistence of the idea of a unity of all Christians. Despite the many diversities found locally,⁸ there is little doubt that by 1300 Western Europe was to a very large extent dominated by the Holy Roman Apostolic Church of the successors of St. Peter.

It was about 1267, at the Abbey of Admont (founded in 1074), that a seventeen-year old named Engelbert Poetsch⁹ professed the vows of a monk and a follower of the ancient *Rule* of St. Benedict. It appears likely that he was born of a well-to-do family of Northern Styria in Austria, at that time under the suzerainty of King Ottokar II of Bohemia. Engelbert was sent to study at Prague, 1271 to 1273, at which latter date he had to leave together with all Germans who sided against the Bohemian King and supported the first Hapsburg King of the Germans, Rudolf I. From 1278 to 1287 Engelbert studied in Padua, five years at the University, four at the convent of the Dominican friars.¹⁰ At the end of the nine years in Italy, he returned to Admont where he spent the next several years studying fundamental authorities (*originalia*),¹¹ classical, patristic and medieval. In 1297 he was elected Abbot of the famous Benedictine Monastery at Admont. In 1327 Engelbert was compelled to resign because of complaints that his administration had not been effective and because, over many years, he had entertained too many friends at the monastery. He died May 12, 1331.

To the learned Abbot of Admont the world of the later thirteenth

⁸ See Karl F. Morrison, *Europe's Middle Ages* (Glenview, 1970) where the traditional unity of Europe's Middle Ages is seriously questioned.

⁹ For bibliography and general orientation, see H. Schmidinger, *Dictionnaire d'histoire et géographie ecclésiastiques*, XV (1963), cols. 467-476; also G. B. Fowler, *Intellectual Interests of Engelbert of Admont* (New York, 1947, reprinted, 1967), hereinafter cited as: Fowler, *Intellectual Interests*.

¹⁰ The aim of the Dominicans is well expressed by a quotation from the *Regula O. F. P.*, Dist. II., cap. 14: *Ipsi vero (studentes) in studio totaliter sint intenti, ut de die, de nocte in domo, in itinere legant aliquid, vel aliquid meditantur.* Cited in M. Faucon, *La librairie des papes d'Avignon* (Bibliothèque des écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, fasc. 43, t. 1, Paris, 1886), p. 27f., note 4 as continued on p. 28.

¹¹ Fowler, *Intellectual Interests*, p. 130, n. 46.

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and early fourteenth centuries seemed every bit as perplexing as our later twentieth century seems to us. With the death of the great Hohenstaufen Emperor, Frederick II (1212 to 1250), Western Europe entered that period of indecision which was to be characteristic of the Later Middle Ages.¹² The future Hapsburg preponderance in Danubian lands was only established with great difficulty between the reigns of Rudolf I and Albert III (1273 to 1438). With the return to Venice of Marco Polo and the death in 1294 in faraway Cathay of his patron, the Yuan Emperor Kubilai Khan, the vast dominions of the Mongols began to break up. By 1348 the Ming Dynasty had inaugurated an isolationist policy and restored Chinese supremacy to the Celestial Empire, a supremacy which was to endure until the coming of the Manchus in 1660. Slowly the great trading powers of Genoa and Venice were to decline during these centuries as the Ottoman Turks formed a mighty empire in the Middle East. With the fall of Acre to the Mamelukes in 1291 (669 A.H.) the crusading efforts of Western Christendom were reduced to the level of diplomacy. The rise of the English Parliament, of the French Estates General, of the Cortès in Aragon and Leon; of town leagues in Northern Italy, the Rhineland, Upper Bavaria, and the Low Countries; of cantons in Switzerland; and of magnates everywhere in Europe foreshadowed the rise of those stronger monarchies which were to become absolute in the early modern period.

THEOLOGICAL WORKS

In the intellectual-spiritual sphere, Engelbert's time was also one of great activity whose major problem was the adaptation to Christian thought of the entire corpus of Aristotle's works, newly translated into Latin from Greek and Arabic and accompanied by vast commentaries and treatises in many languages. Not until 1322 when the learned Dominican friar, Thomas Aquinas, was canonized were his voluminous works officially freed from the suspicion of heresy. Faced by the much further ranging divergencies of opinion on ever more diverse views, Engelbert stood with St. Augustine and argued: "Diversity of translators does not confuse meaning but shows it."¹³

What Engelbert might suggest today in the realm of theological

¹² Heimpel, p. 134.

¹³ See his dedicatory preface to the commentary on Ps. 118, *Recensio II*, ed. G. B. Fowler, *Rech. Théol. anc. méd.*, 29 (1962), 312.

thinking, whether, for example, he would support the thinking of Cardinal Bea or that of Cardinal Ottaviani, is difficult to say. Since he was something of a conservative, I believe he would support some elements in the theology of each.

We do know that in his own theological works Engelbert was at pains to instruct clerics. His earliest treatise was a commentary on one of the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard found in Book III: "Whether God would have been incarnated if the first man had not sinned."¹⁴ Engelbert treated the same question in three others¹⁵ of his theological works, written shortly thereafter. In one of these, entitled *Concerning twelve special questions relating to the faith*, we find not only an excellent statement of his lifelong aim to show the order of things of faith as being higher than the things of reason, but also of his aim to show how these two orders are to be reconciled: "In mankind the order of all things is fulfilled. Thus, without prejudgment of greater authority and of reason, it seems better to say and we can believe that if Adam had not fallen, God would have been incarnated. Therefore, as in Christ, predestined to be king and chief of the blessed, to be the perfection of the everlasting kingdom of heaven, as in Alpha and Omega, i.e., in the first and the last — (so) all things divine, human, celestial, terrestrial and corporeal — come together and receive and have their end in that of blessedness."¹⁶

¹⁴ Only known copy found at Admont in Cod. 532, 13th century (ca. 1287), parchment, 25.1:17.5 cm. This date is earlier than that given by Wichner and Muchar whom I had followed in my *Intell. Interests*, p. 194, n. 18. The present dating is based on many years study of the manuscripts of Engelbert still found at Admont and the fact that students of theology commenced their writing careers with a commentary on some part of the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard as in this work.

¹⁵ 1. *De xii questionibus specialibus ad fidem spectantibus*, end of q. 10, in Kremsmünster Ms. CC 138, 13th century (ca. 1288?), parchment, 28.2:16.6 cm. f. 148v, c. 2 to 149r, c. 1. I adopt this dating from the data in W. Neumüller, *Die mittelalterliche Bibliothekskataloge des Stiftes Kremsmünsters* (1950), p. 53. I should like to express my thanks herewith to P. Willibrord for his many kindnesses to me over the years beginning in that memorable fall of 1951 when he arranged that Mrs. Fowler and I be guests at the venerable Abbey of Kremsmünster. 2. *De gracia salvationis et iusticia dampnationis humane*, (ca. 1296?), Prague, Narodni a universitni knihovna, God. lat. 1307 (VII.E.18), 14th century, paper, 21.5:15.5 cm., fol. 43r. 3. The lost *De articulis fidei*, mentioned in *De summo bono hominis in hac vita*, chap. 3, in *Opuscula philosophica celeberrimi Engelberti abbatis Admontensis*, ed. B. Pez (Ratisbonae, 1725), p. 16.

¹⁶ . . . in specie humana ordo universitatis completeretur. Ita sine preiudicio maioris auctoritatis et rationis donec et tenere possumus, quod, si homo lapsus non

In one of his best known and most elaborate works, entitled *On the life and virtues of the Blessed Virgin Mary*,¹⁷ Engelbert collected carefully all that was known in his day. Although, on that challenging subject, with Brother Thomas Aquinas and others, he holds that the Blessed Virgin was not free altogether from the taint of original sin,¹⁸ he anticipates the dogma pronounced by Pope Pius XII in 1950 of her bodily assumption into heaven by saying that that teaching had long been agreeable and altogether pleasing to the Church.¹⁹

Engelbert's most voluminous theological treatise was a commentary on the 118th Psalm, the great psalm for priests, on which such great scholars and saints as Ambrose, Jerome and Augustine had also prepared glosses. The gloss of Abbot Engelbert, which has never been published, takes up some 452 folio size pages of tightly abbreviated Latin script in the best surviving copy found in a parchment manuscript at Admont.²⁰ In a fragment of another copy of this same work, not known prior to 1962,²¹ there was found a prefatory letter dedicating it to Engelbert's friend and protector, Archbishop Conrad IV of Salzburg (1291 to 1312). The beginning of this letter was found in another fragment which scholars had hitherto considered as a separate work on duties by an unknown writer. The value of the newly discovered fragments lies in their giving us a hint of difficult times in

fuisset adhuc, deus incarnatus esset, propter hoc, ut in Christo, in regem et caput beatorum predestinato ad perfectionem eterni regni celorum, tanquam in alpha et omega, id est primo et ultimo omnia divina et humana et celestia ac terrestria et spiritualia et corporalia in unum convenirent, et in ipso, beatitudinis finem acciperent et haberent. De hac questione composui libellum specialem. Ibi querat qui voluerit. (Quoted from Kremsmünster Ms. CC 138, fol. 148v, col. 2-149r, col. 1). The two concluding sentences refer to the tract noted above in note 14.

¹⁷ Ed. Bernhard Pez with incorrect title *De gratiis et virtutibus B. V. M.* in *Thesaurus anecdotorum novissimus*, Graz and Augsburg, t. I (1721), pars 1, cols. 503-762. The earlier and better manuscripts carry the correct title: *De vita et virtutibus B. V. M.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, col. 708D; *Summa Theologiae*, Q. 27, Art. 2 (Vol. XI, col. 290 of the Leonine edition).

¹⁹ Fowler, *Intellectual Interests*, p. 44, note 32.

²⁰ Admont Ms. Cod. 96, 13th century (ca. 1398), parchment, 32.5:24 cm., 2 cols. This dating is earlier than that given by Wichner in his handwritten *Catalogus codicum manu scriptorum Admontensis* (1889) for reasons I hope to discuss elsewhere. In another copy Cod. 97, 14th century (early), parchment, 32:23 cm., 2 cols. the tract takes up 644 pages.

²¹ First printed in *Rech. Théol. anc. méd.*, 29 (1962), 306-309.

the Salzburg archdiocese during the years 1290 to 1297.²² Today's pen-tecostals (Jesus Freaks ?) might be interested in the fact that Engelbert invoked the aid of the Holy Spirit in compiling this enormous commentary on Psalm 118.²³ The newly discovered fragments stress, too, that balance between contemplation and action which is characteristic of most of Engelbert's writings.

To demonstrate Engelbert's firm understanding of didactics in theology perhaps a quotation from his work entitled *On the Grace of Salvation and the Justice of Human Damnation* may suffice: "And to avoid and escape the road leading to damnation, the Holy Spirit, author and teacher of Holy Scripture and lover of human salvation, rightly teaches us in words presented from the very beginning of the world, how to ask questions and how to follow the road which leads to safety and to salvation."²⁴

In the very same tract, Engelbert gives an *exemplum* to aid his readers to understand God's order.²⁵ In brief, he suggests that we consider a very powerful, very gracious and very just king. This king had created his knight as from nothing and, in order to have the knight serve him better and more faithfully, had bestowed on this knight and his offspring in perpetuity a castle and a city. The understanding was that so long as this knight served his lord, this king agreed that the knight would have undisputed ownership of the castle and the city. If, however, the knight left the king's service or did not obey the king's commands, then the knight and all his offspring would be deprived forever of that fief or benefice with the glory associated therewith. That most powerful and gracious king is, of course, God Almighty, and the knight is Adam. Since Adam disobeyed his liege lord, he had to be punished as would any knight or soldier of Engelbert's time.

In his tract *On the Body of Christ*,²⁶ Engelbert uses the standard authorities, classical, patristic and medieval; his most recent reference is to Brother Thomas (Aquinas). Among others appear Hostiensis,

²² *Ibid.*, p. 308; cf. A. Hessel, *Jahrbücher des deutschen Reiches unter Albrecht I. von Habsburg* (München, 1931), pp. 29f., 37-41.

²³ *Rech. Théol. anc. méd.* 29 (1962) 309.

²⁴ . . . ut illam fugiant et devitent, recte, in verbis a principio propositis, spiritus sanctus, auctor et doctor sacre scripture et amator salutis humane . . . sub interrogatione docet querere et sequi viam ducentem ad salutem et salvationem. . . . Prague Ms. Cod. Nar. a univ. knihovna 1307 (Q. IV. 38), fol. 33v.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, chap. 1. fol. 34f-35v.

²⁶ I have been preparing the text for publication.

Pope Innocent III, the *Glossaria Magna* on the letters of St. Paul compiled by Peter Lombard, Gratian's *Decretum*, the *Decretales* of Pope Gregory IX, Hugh of St. Victor, St. Anselm, Lanfranc. This work, which is a highly regarded defense of the dogma of transubstantiation, was not known as extant, or indeed as Engelbert's, until 1939 when it was discovered in a manuscript in the Bavarian State Library.²⁷ In the prologue, Engelbert tells us that he wrote it for his own satisfaction in order to refute a new teaching on the eucharist presented about 1304 by one of the masters at the University of Paris.

What would Engelbert have to say about the twentieth-century confidence in the natural sciences? From the five writings which are known to have survived, it can be inferred that he would approve some of the astronauts' awareness of the presence in the universe of a mightier force than lasers, computer engineering, rockets, electronics and astronomy. He endorses St. Augustine's dictum that nature's laws were part of that creation which the Almighty found good and that these laws are not to be flouted capriciously. In his unpublished commentary on the Gospel according to St. John, the Abbot of Admont stresses the creative power of the Trinity as manifested especially in man who has the perfect archetype in the divine Word become flesh.²⁸ The commentaries compiled by Engelbert on Aristotle's treatise *De mundo*²⁹ and *On the Rise of the Nile* suggest the Abbot's interest in natural phenomena; it is most unfortunate that these two commentaries³⁰ have not as yet been located.

HUMAN INTERESTS

As one might expect from the author of a work entitled *On the Causes of Longevity in Men before the Flood*, Engelbert admonishes his readers to take good care of their bodies and minds. He speaks of the impor-

²⁷ E. Schulz, "Zur Beurteilung Engelberts von Admont," *Archiv f. Kulturgeschichte*, 29 (1939), 51-63.

²⁸ Seems extant only in a Ms. of the Cistercian Monastery at Rein: Cod. 60, 15th century (1410), paper, folio, fols. 65v, col. 1-92r, col. 1. Engelbert probably wrote this work soon after his return to Admont from Padua. I am preparing an edition.

²⁹ *Rech. Théol. anc. méd.* 29 (1962), 303; cf. also Engelbert's *Speculum virtutum moralium*, Tr. XI, cap. 10, ed. B. Pez in *Bibliotheca ascetica antiquo-nova*, t. III. Ratisbonae, 1724, p. 399.

³⁰ Only one other commentary on the *De inundatione Nili* is known to me, i.e., that by Bartholomew of Bruges, as noted by A. Pelzer, *Revue néoscolastique de philosophie*, 36 (1934), 46of.

tance of sleep and exercise. He suggests, as did many of his authorities, Muslim, Jewish and Christian, that men before the Flood lived longer because they ate plenty of vegetables and fruits.³¹ In a manner reminiscent of St. Ambrose of Milan, Alcuin of York, and Rhabanus Maurus of Fulda and Reichenau, Engelbert held that the works of nature display the glory of their Creator.

In the latter half of the twentieth century many psychologists have dropped from their technical jargon such words as soul, mind, instinct and spirit because (at least so it is alleged) they correspond to ill-defined referents. Engelbert follows the widely read *Book of Causes*³² and states "that the noble human soul was created on the horizon of eternity, i.e., on the boundary of time and the everlasting." He follows Aristotle in referring to the soul as the mover of the human body, and its efficient, formal and final cause. From Claudius the Mamertine, Engelbert borrows the notion that the soul's essence is like a point that can be extended to form a line, a commonly used simile that well illustrates his tendency to describe even incorruptible and incorporeal substances in concrete terms. In another place, Engelbert says that the human soul is one of five active agents of the universe.³³

Considerable importance is given by Engelbert to the sense of sight³⁴ as a link between the interior life of the soul and the exterior life of the world. He holds that "sight is by far the most important instrument we have for apprehending the sensibles, which are the basic data for knowledge of any sort." In a lengthy passage on contemplation,³⁵ he shows how it differs from simple reflexion and meditation. Using the writings of Aristotle, Pope Gregory I, Richard of St. Victor and St. Bernard of Clairvaux, he distinguishes six levels of contemplation: 1) pure imagination, 2) reasonable imagination, 3) imaginative reason when by analogy with visible things we are raised to consider invisible things, 4) pure reason, 5) reason above reason, but not contrary to it or beyond it, when by faith or inspiration or revelation the soul acquiesces in those things which can not be understood by human reason, i.e., God's omnipotence, wisdom, providence, grace, judgment and

³¹ Fowler, *Intell. Int.* p. 77.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 90, note 8: . . . quod anima nobilis, scilicet humana, creata est in horizonte eternitatis, id est in confinio temporis et evi, sive eternitatis.

³³ *Ibid.* p. 91, notes 12 and 13.

³⁴ *Ibid.* p. 103 citing Pez, *Thes. anecd. nov.* I.1, col. 608-618.

³⁵ *Ibid.* p. 105.

justice, 6) contemplation above and beyond reason, when the soul, "by the irradiation of divine illumination apprehends such matters as all human reason, contradicts and rejects, e.g., the unity of the divine essence in the Trinity of persons, the virgin birth, the conversion of bread and wine into the substance of the Lord's body and blood." Engelbert says, indeed, that it is impossible to see anything introspectively without freeing oneself entirely from outside matters.³⁶

It is, accordingly, not difficult to imagine Engelbert's dismay if he were to confront the mania of the later twentieth century for sentimentalism, sensationalism and constant irritation in every aspect of human life. He would urge strongly that we develop the ability to see through and beyond the simplifications of the advertisement and news industries, to keep the mind keen by not overloading it with trivia and by not impoverishing the categories of thought.³⁷ Otherwise these categories shrink more and more into mere clichés, or slogans that appeal only to the senses and dull even the senses by endless repetition. He would stress the need for the contemplative element in any civilization. Without that element it is soon barbarized and destroyed!³⁸

If the learned Abbot of Admont were to see some of the works of present-day poets, dancers, painters and sculptors he would find them empty of meaning. He would be ignorant of what those alleged artists are stating in their work; for to him these works would present no thesis and hence would be significant of nothing. He would urge us to represent things more nearly as they are in God,³⁹ to get at what is good or bad for us in the experience of life, rather than to represent things as they are in themselves or because we like or dislike them. Engelbert would, like Plato, banish from our midst all artists who allow themselves to imitate all sorts of things, however shameful.⁴⁰

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ See I. Jenkins, "The Postulate of an Impoverished Reality," *Journal of Philosophy*, 39 (Sept. 24, 1942), 533-547, esp. 539.

³⁸ On the whole question: "What is Civilization?" see Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy in *The Albert Schweitzer Jubilee Book*, ed. Carl Roback (Cambridge, Mass., 1946), p. 269.

³⁹ Fowler, *Intell. Interests*, p. 147, citing Coomaraswamy, *Transformation of Nature in Art* (Cambridge, Mass., 1934, reprinted 1956), p. 31.

⁴⁰ It is not "doing good" but "doing right" that is needed to maintain a true civilization. Not "social work" but "intellectual work" is needed by religion to accomplish its mission. See A. K. Coomaraswamy, *Figures of Speech or Figures of Thought* (London, 1946), p. 18; also G. Mann's remarkable essay entitled "Die Europäische Moderne" *Propyläen-Weltgeschichte*, 11 (1965), 477-540.

Vision and hearing and harmony are given us, not as an aid to irrational pleasure, as is nowadays supposed, but to assist the soul's interior work, to restore it to order and concord with itself.

The question of how people know was by no means settled in Engelbert's day, nor has that *quaestio disputata* been resolved in the 1970's. But — and this point can not be overemphasized — he would deplore the lack of awareness of that deeper vision which we seem to have forgotten and without which the people perish. With Jerome, in his gloss on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, he asks: "What has fascinated you, O senseless Galatians?" "Ye have eyes, yet ye see not."⁴¹ If man's view of nature and art does not include awareness of the divine craftsman, Engelbert declares that view to be faulty.

What can be done, and what would Engelbert's thinking be on the most serious of modern perplexities, i.e., the rebuilding of a moral and intellectual order? This problem — despite its enormous implications and complexity, despite the prophets of doom and gloom, those oversimplifiers and cliché-makers, whose name is legion — can be confronted by asking ourselves two perennial questions: 1) How does a civilization (society, economy, polity, art, literature, religion) survive and carry on at any time in the 5,000 years of history? 2) How does a civilization (society, economy, polity, art, literature, religion) survive and persist in our later twentieth century; given the problems stemming from changes which have appeared with increasing intensity during the last two centuries?

To grapple with the second question first, i.e. the perplexities of the last third of the twentieth century, it is important to confront the changes that make occidental civilization so frightening to cultures "not yet spoiled," i.e.: 1) industrialization and *mass*-production with its inevitable consequences of decline in individualism in agriculture and handicrafts, 2) *mass* means of transportation and communication, 3) the growth of tyranny by the majority, i.e., *the masses*, as affected by the changing moods of a sensation-oriented press, radio, and — more recently — the contrived pictures and running sensational and irritable commentary of the television communication news manipulators! 4) the development of *massive* research programming and the growing faith in practical, positivistic mathematical sciences, more and more

⁴¹ Hieronymi Comm. super D. Pauli Epist. ad Galat. Lib. I, cap. 3, 1 in *PL*, XXVI, 372A-373C; Petri Lombardi Comm. in Epist. Pauli ad Galat. I, cap. 3, 1 in *PL*, CXCII, 117D.

emphasizing the physical sciences, 5) *mass* education with the inevitable decline in values based on principles which are believed or remembered. The common denominator of these five is their dependence on a *mass*-minded, mechanized society. In those tell-tale weathervanes of human character and endeavor, the arts and literatures, we have the clearest indications of social illness and decline. To reverse that assertion: it is also in the arts and literature that the normal and healthy principles and traditions of a stable civilization manifest themselves.

Now this *mass* common denominator (*mass*-mind, *mass* values, *mass* production, etc.) would be incomprehensible to Abbot Engelbert. Nor would he comprehend our perplexities any better — as some of us really fail to do — if we employ the different wording for our dilemmas as put by such pundits as A. J. Toynbee, i.e.: atomic energy,⁴² population explosion, urbanization, mechanization, affluence and leisure. Engelbert would, to be sure, have understood Toynbee's suggestions that we *can* change such dangerous habits as waging war and loyalty to national (tribal) customs. But, as a denizen of a farming and hand-craft-based society, Engelbert knew nothing of the population limitation problem. For, in his day only half the children born survived to replace their peasant parents. In brief, breeding up to the physical limit was an unmixed good in the early fourteenth century; today such breeding is much questioned.

Engelbert would certainly fail to comprehend our occidental, massive and compulsory elementary educational system supported by the state — and it is on this development that innumerable educationalists, graduates of schools of education (not scholars) base their hope that the Occident will yet change its habits sufficiently and in time to avoid the catastrophe that looms ahead. Nor would he understand the perplexities confronting the twentieth century on advanced levels of education, largely because, by overuse, the word "education" has lost its significance⁴³ for instruction and inspiration and because its current thrust, in the USA at least, is chiefly toward effecting a social adjustment among variegated minority groups. He would deplore the decline in teaching youth to distinguish between virtues and vices.

In answering the question: How did any society survive and persist

⁴² Toynbee, *Change and Habit*, index.

⁴³ *Bildung* (German); *paideia* (Greek) would better preserve the basic meaning.

at any time during the last 5,000 years? Engelbert would support the blunt statement of Napoleon: "Aristocracy always exists. Destroy it in the nobility, and it removes itself to the rich and powerful houses of the middle class. Destroy it in these, and it survives and takes refuge with the leaders of the workshops and the people."⁴⁴

INSTRUCTION OF LEADERS

Engelbert would give wholehearted support to all those who firmly believe in the cherishing of a leadership element in any grouping of man; more especially he would help by every means at his disposal the efforts of those who are at pains to foster higher quality of learning. He would oppose all who mistakenly hold to the illusion that equality among men strengthens a society and assists that society in surviving the onslaughts of change. In short, he would not water down standards of quality for the sake of a sentimental egalitarianism.

Our abbot would be unable to understand our dependence on mass-media. He would certainly deride the emphasis of these media on gossip and sensation, e.g., the latest riot, crime, accident, scandal, or venality in government. And his derision would soon turn to apprehension, could he be within earshot or eyeshot of our radio or television machines. His apprehension would derive from a fear that the leaders of our society were falling down on the job. And on three counts. First, he would assert that it is the duty of those in power to keep society in equilibrium between the forces of change and habit, to keep the ship of state on course. Even if he had understood the democratic process, he would not have comprehended the value, allegedly inherent in daily dissent, constant protest and complaint by newsmen and others in matters of which they know little. Second, he would argue that leaders of society be trained in history, geography, diplomacy, law, rhetoric, literature and the other arts; were he living today he would add the natural sciences. Third, he would presuppose that leaders are responsible to Almighty God for their people and God's. Certainly he assumed that persons who were not called to leadership looked for protection, guidance and benevolence from emperors, kings, princes, dukes, counts, margraves, burggraves, knights, ministeriales, priests, bishops — indeed

⁴⁴ Quoted by Sir Richard Livingstone in his presidential address entitled "Equality and Quality in Education," before the *Conference of Educational Associations*, 30th *Annual Report*, 1947, p. 13.

all magnates, prelates and guildmasters. He states clearly that a prince is of more value than a monk⁴⁵ because the prince has greater responsibilities. Presupposed for both was self-control.⁴⁶

That Abbot Engelbert believed in instruction is evident as the purpose of almost all his forty-five writings. In his theological works he attempted to answer the doubts and perplexities of friends and associates as well as to discuss certain questions which he believed to be important for his time. In his works on natural science he collected information, which in his opinion was needed, to demonstrate God at work among his creatures. Most important, and hitherto not stressed sufficiently, were his works on moral philosophy in which we find a persistent attempt to admonish the contemporary and future magnates and leaders of Austria in respect of their duties in their various callings.

It is indeed the ethical writings of our polymath that signal his concern for the restoration and maintenance of a world of justice and order; this concern was as much a problem for Europe in the early fourteenth century as it appears to be for the last thirty years of the twentieth. In his tract carrying (in the Klagenfurt copy, Ms. of the episcopal library XXXdl, f. 148r) the title: *On Offices and Their Abuses in All States*, perhaps written as early as 1287⁴⁷ he follows the structure of the widely popular Ps.-Cyprian's Tr. *On the Twelve Abuses of the World*. About 1290, Engelbert wrote his *Summa on the Government of Princes*,⁴⁸ probably as a guide to Albert who, though successor to Rudolf in the Hapsburg lands (May 5, 1292), failed of election as King of the Germans. In 1309, Engelbert dedicated his lengthy *Mirror of Moral Virtues*⁴⁹ to Albert's younger sons, Albert II and Otto, who were seeking to avenge their father's assassination in the previous year (1308). In 1313 he wrote *On the Rise and Fall of Kingdoms and*

⁴⁵ See E. Buschmann, *Das Herrscheramt nach der Lehre der mittelalterlichen Fürstenspiegel* (Diss. Frankfurt-am-Main, 1918, typescript), p. 119.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* Engelbert seems here to break with the Aristotelian idea that the *vita contemplativa* is superior to the *vita activa*.

⁴⁷ First published in *Essays in Medieval life and Thought*, ed. J. Mundy et al. (New York, 1955), pp. 109-122.

⁴⁸ This dating is earlier than that of Wichner for reasons, largely palaeographical, which will be discussed in the editio altera announced by the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* (Staatsschriften des späteren Mittelalters, I. Band, 2. Stück). The first edition of J. J. G. Huffnagl was published in 1725 at Regensburg.

⁴⁹ Edited by B. Pez in *Bibl. asc. antiquo-nova*, t. III (1724). It deserves a modern critical edition and I have commenced work thereon.

Especially of the Roman Empire.⁵⁰ In this work he mentions the Emperor Henry VII, as the ninety-seventh in direct succession from Augustus Caesar.⁵¹ In his tract *On God's Providence*,⁵² dated about 1320, Engelbert stresses the role of divine providence as lord of history and of eternity whose agents were in turn: Assyria, Persia, Macedonia and Rome.⁵³

To instruct the magnates of his day Engelbert uses *exempla* from Greek and Roman history to such an extent that four of his works might well have been written in the first century A.D. by a friend of Lucius Annaeus Seneca. Certainly there is little in his *On Advice for Living*⁵⁴ (written perhaps ca. 1287), *On the Government of Princes*, (ca. 1290), *On the Highest Good of Man in This Life* (after 1287), and *A Mirror of Moral Virtues* (about 1309) to suggest that their author was a distinguished Benedictine theologian. In all four he stresses how his readers may attain wisdom and equanimity of spirit.

For older students, Engelbert had many helpful suggestions.⁵⁵ With Seneca, his favorite Roman writer, he advocates the advantages of reading a few books thoroughly rather than many superficially. The highest good,⁵⁶ he is at pains to advise his princely pupils, does not consist of fleshly delights, or in riches, or honors, glory, praise, or fame. Nor is it in the development of reason, man's *optimum bonum*, even though reason distinguishes man from the beasts.⁵⁷ With Aristotle, most often quoted of his Greek sources, Engelbert holds that from the viewpoint of practical wisdom the ultimate good of this life for *homo inquantum homo*⁵⁸ is rational action in accordance with perfect virtue. From the viewpoint of speculative wisdom, the *summum bonum* in this life consists of the possession of tranquility, cheerfulness and security.

⁵⁰ Edited by G. Bruschi in 1553. New edition to appear among *Schriften des Engelberts von Admont* announced by the Monumenta Germ. Historica.

⁵¹ Bruschi ed., p. 86.

⁵² Ed. B. Pez in *Bibliotheca ascetica antiquo-nova*, t. VI. Ratisbonae, 1724.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. CXLI.

⁵⁴ I am preparing an edition.

⁵⁵ Fowler, *Intell. Interests*, p. 113.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Speculum virtutum moralium*, in Pez, ed. *Bibl. asc.* III., p. 31f. The phrase is important. See now E. Buschmann, "Rex inquantum rex," *Miscellanea Mediaevalia*, 7 (1970), 303-333.

In confronting the perplexities of his own time, and those of any era of the last 5,000 years of history, the Abbot of Admont advised those in positions of authority to imitate⁶⁰ the virtues of their illustrious forebears and to maintain the ideal of *noblesse oblige*. Young knights should be trained in the use of weapons to harden their bodies. They should develop self-control by learning not to lose their tempers if they are beaten at dice or chess. Engelbert notes that the officials in Spain⁶⁰ and Italy are well versed in law. He discusses the necessity to remain clear-headed in war; for war, as such, is to him not immoral or forbidden. He analyzes the different kinds of war, how to prepare for them, and how to make decisions on the battlefield. He would agree with Santayana that those who do not study the past are doomed to repeat it.⁶¹ Abbot Engelbert would attempt to reverse the alarming decline of interest in history in the USA, at least in so far as the leadership element is concerned.

STUDY OF HISTORY

By history Engelbert did not mean the philological or scientific study of the past which our modern scholars have attempted since the days of Barthold G. Niebuhr, Leopold von Ranke and Theodor Mommsen. Instead, Engelbert and his contemporaries looked upon history as the great treasure house of the past from which they could draw *exempla* of virtues and vices to instruct the future leaders of society. Among Engelbert's sources were: Holy Scripture, canon and civil (Roman) law, Aristotle, Cicero, Seneca, Vergil, Horace, Ovid, Hilary of Poitiers,⁶² Augustine, Jerome, Ambrose, Ps.-Aristotle, Boethius, Cassiodorus, Eutropius, Pope Gregory I, Paul the Deacon, Sextus Aurelius Victor, Bede, Hugh and Richard of St. Victor, William of Conches, Abelard, St. Anselm, Lanfranc, Bernard of Clairvaux, Walter of Châtillon, Jacobus da Voragine,⁶³ Gratian, Peter Lombard, Innocent

⁶⁰ Fowler, *Intell. Interests*, p. 115.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 150, n. 4.

⁶² Unpublished is Engelbert's own tract entitled: *De sensu doloris Christi in passione et de declaracione verborum Hilarii* which survives only in Ms. Cod. 269 of the Cistercian Monastery at Zwettl, 14th century (ca. 1350), parchment, 24:17.5 cm., fols. 153v-159r.

⁶³ Engelbert refers to the *Legenda aurea* as *Chronica* in *Spec. virt.* (Bibl. asc. III, p. 104f.) pars III, cap. viii; he had made use of the same story in *De fascinatione*, cap. 14 (end): Ms. Kremsmünster CC 138, fol. 155v, col. 2.

III, Hostiensis and Brother Thomas Aquinas. Abbot Engelbert did not distinguish between ancients and moderns among his sources, nor among Christians or pagans. The "battle of the books" was not to come until the seventeenth century in France.

In his efforts to restore a moral and intellectual order for his day, Engelbert became one of the first to distinguish between fictional story and genuine history.⁶⁴ He believed it was important for magnates not only to know the stories of the past, but also to know legends, parables, riddles, similes, metaphors, methods of speech making, and differing levels of conversation. He speaks of the popularity among Italians of the fables of Roland and Oliver, among the French of Charles and Arbogast,⁶⁵ among the Germans of Dietrich of Verona, of Ekko and Hildebrand. Another reason fables are of value, Engelbert says, is "to explain nature" as do the tales of Saturn and Jupiter and Ceres and Pluto, and the like, in so far as they are allegorized to suit the condition of the world and its elements. A third reason is to explain the customs of men, as in the fables of Aesop, or in the stories of distant races like the Hindus and the Ethiopians.

Anent the perennial perplexity concerning the nature of the state,⁶⁶ Engelbert follows Aristotle, Cicero and St. Augustine. Like the Philosopher he declares that the state imitates nature as an archetype, just as art imitates nature in its manner of operation.⁶⁷ Engelbert distinguishes between the perfect felicity of the City of God and the comparatively imperfect felicity of this life which is never apart from sin and pain.⁶⁸ Human imperfection demands the subordination of the less perfect to the more perfect: the wife and the family under the monarchical rule of the husband as *paterfamilias*, the household under the *civitas*, the *civitas* under the *regnum*, and finally the *regnum* under the universal state: the Roman Empire, in whose felicity, as universal (and, hence, one and ultimate and best) consists the safety and felicity of all.

In his argument for the Roman Empire, we have the answer of a

⁶⁴ Fowler, *Intell. Interests*, p. 139f.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 139f. citing *Spec. virt.* X.18 (Pez, *Bibl. asc.* III, 344f.).

⁶⁶ See Fowler, *Intell. Interests*, p. 147, n. 164. Since that book there has been much written on the medieval idea of the state as a *ratio publica utilitatis*. See G. Post, "Law and Politics in the Middle Ages," *Perspectives in Medieval History* (Chicago and London, 1963), p. 64f.

⁶⁷ Fowler, *Intell. Interests*, pp. 167, 172f.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* 172f. citing *De ortu*, c. 18 (ed. Bruschi, p. 99).

medieval thinker to the modern perplexity over the future of the United Nations. Engelbert argues as if he were a Peripatetic justifying the polis,⁶⁹ but he goes beyond his Hellenic model in pleading, like Alexander the Great, Polybius and Cicero for the establishment of a world "republic" such as materialized during the first two centuries after the first "princeps," Emperor Caesar Augustus. He is one of the first medieval writers to elaborate effectively the concept that mankind is one people, with one true law, one true consensus, and that mankind is consequently one true republic.

On the twentieth-century perplexity over differing religious traditions, Engelbert believes it possible⁷⁰ for all mankind to be united under the Roman Imperium-Sacerdotium, for he holds that natural justice is just as much a possession of Germany as Greece, i.e., of any nation. He writes of a brotherhood of man that shares certain traits universally. He defines religion with Cicero as the virtue which cares for the cult and ceremonies of divinity. His politico-moral writings reflect the prevailing doctrine of his day, which restricted the task of the state to finding its necessary complement and higher goal in the task of the Church. The traditional superiority⁷¹ of spiritual authority over temporal power is implicit in all his writings. Indeed, he quotes St. Augustine to the effect that "there can be no true state outside the Church." Regardless of his ignorance of the immense worlds beyond Europe's horizon⁷² — our own understanding of these worlds remains minimal and myopic — it is certain that under the sure guidance of Aristotle's thought, Engelbert had, in the early years of the fourteenth century, advocated a world federation of states under the spiritual *auctoritas*⁷³ of the Roman Church and the *potestas* of the Holy Roman Empire. As a consequence, one may assume that he would approve recent pronouncements of the Second Ecumenical Council held at the Vatican (1962 to 1965) that the non-Christian world should be con-

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* p. 173f.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 174 and 176.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 176.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 178.

⁷³ Cf. also the distinction between the two words found in *Index Rerum Gestarum Divi Augusti* (= Monumentum Antiochenum-Ancyranum), cap. 34: Post id tempus *auctoritate* omnibus praestiti, *potestatis* autem nihilo amplius habui quam ceteri qui mihi quoque in magistratu conlegae fuerunt. (*Imperatoris Caesaris Augusti Operum Fragmenta*, 3rd ed., Henrica Malcovati [Corpus scriptorum latinorum Paravianum]), 1948, p. 144f.

sidered as a "cryptic church." In effect, then, Engelbert would subscribe to the well known gloss of St. Ambrose on I Cor xii.3: "All that is true, by whomsoever it has been said, is of the Holy Spirit" (a dictum endorsed by St. Thomas Aquinas). Engelbert would endorse St. Justin Martyr's saying: "God is the Word of whom the whole human race are partakers, and those who lived according to Reason are Christians even though they be accounted atheists . . . Socrates, and Heracleitus, and of the barbarians Abraham and many others." So, too, Engelbert would approve of Meister Eckhart of the Order of Friars Preacher, perhaps the greatest of the Christian mystics, when he speaks of Plato as "that great priest," and as having "found the way, ere ever Christ was born." Nor would Engelbert have faulted his beloved St. Augustine when that great teacher affirmed that "the very thing that is now called the Christian religion was not wanting amongst the ancients from the beginning of the human race, until Christ came in the flesh, after which the true religion which already existed, began to be called Christian."⁷⁴

It is my opinion that Abbot Engelbert would support — as do a few, but much misunderstood, thinkers of the mid-twentieth century even in the Occident — e.g., A. N. Whitehead, F. Schuon, M. Pallis, E. Gill, R. Guénon, and A. K. Coomaraswamy — the establishment of an intellectual-spiritual *élite* (without, of course, the over-simplified, constant, connotation which our mass media, following Herr Dr. Goebbels, Hitler's Minister of propoganda, have made of that useful word). The establishment of such a "leadership group" should in my opinion be of the highest order of priority for a society desiring to avert impending disaster. As the second order of business, Engelbert would be compelled to recognize the difficulties inherent in establishing an *élite*. Such an *élite* cannot possibly arise from the mindless anarchies of sentimental egalitarianisms or from the ruthless prison-states established or advocated one way or another during the years 1917 to 1971 usually in the name of a "Peoples' Democracy," "Peoples' Democratic Republic," "Peoples' Socialistic Democratic Republic," "People Power," Socialism or Corporatism," "National Socialist Republic" — all over-simplistic in conception, usually devoid of anything but emotionalism or fanaticism, and easily manipulated by a few, usually unscrupulous, usually amoral,

⁷⁴ As quoted in A. K. Coomaraswamy, "Paths that Lead to the Same Summit," reprinted as No. III in *Am I My Brother's Keeper?* p. 47f.

usually "professional liberals." Such over-simplifiers have recently been correctly designated "illiberal liberals."

MIDDLE AGES IN PERSPECTIVE

It may well be too late for the foregoing remedy for our classless, casteless, parlous condition, and the confrontation of a medieval abbot with the desperate necessity of occidental civilization to reform itself may not avail. But it is important to know wherein it has failed, at least in terms of Engelbert's thinking. Perhaps his lifelong efforts to assist his world to survive, to remain rational, to reform, can not be heard in the late twentieth century, which is perhaps too numbed by its own welter of cacophonies to listen, perhaps too ready to admit that any voice from the past — to say nothing of the "medieval" past — is irrelevant. More likely he would be unheard because the twentieth century no longer believes in man as potentially more than man.⁷⁵ Even the illiterate farmers of Styria in Engelbert's day believed that. They believed and knew also that their world survived because of principles, such as: superiors rule inferiors, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's," and that the patrons of the arts commissioned works of art for the glory of God and the inspiration of man — all men.

It would be a gross error to think that violence and turbulence did not exist in Engelbert's time. His own immediate predecessor as Abbot of Admont, Henry II, was murdered in April, 1297 while hunting in the woods near the monastery. The Austrian Duke, Albert I, King of the Germans (1298–1308), was assassinated by a personal enemy. From 1312 to 1322 there was intermittent war over conflicting claims to the imperial crown between Frederick of Austria and Louis of Bavaria, the Wittelsbach King of the Germans; also there were Hungarian raids as far west as the Rhine nearly every year. During Engelbert's lifetime there were heresies, as had been the case since St. Paul's day,⁷⁶ and there were disorders and riots in different parts of Europe. In my judgment, however, such local disturbances as were frequent throughout

⁷⁵ Fowler, *Intell. Interests*, p. 92f. See now the profound book by Wolfram von den Steinen, *Homo caelestis*, 2 vols. (Bern and Munich, 1965) and the excellent review by G. Ladner in *Speculum*, 46 (April, 1971), 402–408.

⁷⁶ See Herbert Grundmann, "Oportet et haereses esse: Das Problem der Ketzerei im Spiegel der mittelalterlichen Biblexegese," *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte*, 45 (1963), 129–164.

the Middle Ages, such feuds and wars as were constant among the magnates, do not justify the inferences of some present day scholars which suggest that the unity of the Middle Ages did not exist or that there was no persistent desire for such a unity. I would suggest instead that from 1250 to 1331 there was no such decline of respect for authority, no such slackening of the will to preserve law and order as has been seen in the twentieth century.

Engelbertus Abbas Admontensis was convinced that our judgment of things is good or bad depending on the thoroughness of our study.⁷⁷ He never forgot that "reasons assumed by faith in theological matters differ from those drawn from arguments used in physics." He speaks often, as previously noted, of the twofold nature of truth, occult and manifest.⁷⁸ He makes much of the fact that men spend their lives in the midst of contingencies and they can overcome these by the exercise of prudence. He believes that things which men attribute to accident seem so only because of ignorance. Lest such views make him appear too much a follower of Aristotle, it should be pointed out that for Engelbert and his times, divine providence controls all things in the world — both causal and contingent.

As a true citizen of Augustine's City of God (of the Church and not of this world), Engelbert was not greatly perturbed over the perplexities of his times, nor over the widespread alarm over the approaching end of the world. He knew that many things had to occur before "that day of wrath." It is more likely, indeed, that his chief concern with history from Creation to Doomsday was with man's character and with what shapes man's character.

On the purpose of history writing — on which there always exist some perplexities even among the most learned — Engelbert believed that both sacred and profane history culminated in the time of Caesar Augustus⁷⁹ in whose reign the known world was at peace after two hundred years of wars and civil wars in which the Romans had gained more and more power. In Augustus' reign occurred the central event of all ages: the Incarnation. Engelbert believed that the chief purpose of human history writing was to give illustrations of ethical and unethical behavior among men, and thus not only to reveal the ways of God to man, but also to guide the leaders and their offspring into the

⁷⁷ Fowler, *Intell. Interests*, p. 155.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 162f.

ways of virtue. While perfectly well aware of contemporary events and temporal changes, his lifelong efforts to better the education of the magnates seem to indicate that he had by no means abandoned hope for man. As a scholar and a mystic, one senses, however, his deeper concern with matters eternal rather than ephemeral. For Engelbert, as for St. Augustine and Toynbee, history ends in metahistory.

The denizen of the Occident of the later twentieth century, whether he be a declared Christian, an agnostic or an atheist is confronted with the painful necessity of broadening his intellectual range of vision, so that he becomes in fact a denizen of the wider world of human and supernatural experience, both of his own deeper past and of the deeper past of alien civilizations. Ultimately, that denizen of the Occident must come to appreciate the mighty premises of that one perennial philosophy that runs through all traditions and all civilizations at all times and in all places.

As a denizen of the Occident c. 1250 to 1331, Engelbert of Admont, would — upon confronting our modern perplexities — at once detect that something had gone very much awry and that the world had changed very much since his day. He would fail to understand our saying: “Everything depends on the modes of production,”⁸⁰ when we take no account of what the modes of production depend on. He understood very well that “man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Math iv.4) and “the invisible things of God are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made” (Rom i.20).

We Occidentals of the later twentieth century, especially we who dwell in the materialistic, profane, anti-traditional United States of North America, need all the help we can obtain in trying to understand our ancestors generally, and more particularly our own, historically documented, traditional age — the Middle Ages (500 to 1500). Ultimately, we shall be forced to admit that our fascination with computerized data banks, our technological equipment, our much touted physical sciences, our critically based historiographies and philologies, our mass production of goods and ideas which profane the life of the individual and threaten to reduce him to a cog in one vast murderous machine, is wrong.⁸¹ If these fascinations persist and continue to accelerate as they have, at least since 1945, it is difficult to see ahead any-

⁸⁰ Quoted from E. Parmelee Prentice.

⁸¹ See note 4, above.

thing but chaos. Everything depends on what used to be called in the U.S. Navy of World War II "a correct estimate of the situation." We can not turn the clock back, nor can we stand idly by while a fearsome destiny has its way with us, as with earlier civilizations which refused to look to the past for counsel on the great question: How do we change, without changing so much that we no longer retain the stability that comes from habit?

Like Xenophon at the end of his life in his great but hitherto unappreciated *Cyropedia*,⁸² Engelbert was convinced that the structure of a government is not so important as the men in positions of authority and responsibility. Hence, the advice of one medieval thinker confronting modern perplexities rings unmistakably clear across the centuries: *Ceaselessly cherish and strive to improve the potential and the quality of leadership.*

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⁸² See the unpublished Ph.D. dissertation by Joan M. Todd, University of Pittsburgh, 1968.