



## The Influence of Victor White and the Blackfriars Dominicans on a young Elizabeth Anscombe:

An Essay accompanying the Republication of G.E.M. Anscombe's 'I am Sadly Theoretical: It is the Effect of Being at Oxford' (1938)

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### Abstract

This essay examines the Dominican influences on the Catholic philosopher G.E.M. Anscombe while an undergraduate at Oxford University between 1937–1941. It focuses on three Thomists who formally instructed Anscombe and how one Dominican, Victor White, likely instructed her on a radically Catholic perspective regarding the morality of warfare, which would not only influence her 1940 co-authored pamphlet, 'The Justice of the Present War Examined', but would shape her writings on war and murder for her entire academic career.

This essay accompanies the republication of Anscombe's 'I am Sadly Theoretical: It is the Effect of Being at Oxford,' her earliest known published essay. She wrote this article in response to a public invitation from the *Catholic Herald* for Catholics between the ages of 18 and 25 to make their voices heard by their fellow Catholics. In this teenage apologia, Anscombe outlines the goals for her life, and what it means for her as a Catholic to be a witness.

### Keywords

G.E.M. Anscombe, Victor White OP, Donald MacKinnon, Christian witness, the morality of war, conscientious objection, Catholic Social Teaching, PAX Society

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As is evident in her first published article ‘I am Sadly Theoretical: It is the Effect of Being at Oxford’, Elizabeth Anscombe’s passion as an undergraduate is to give Christian witness to her society. As an ‘under 25,’ Anscombe takes up the *Catholic Herald’s* general invitation to express her Catholic views and the life she intends to live. While other contributors share their dreams of becoming journalists, farmers, nurses, etc., Anscombe’s ambition is of a different order. She ‘chiefly wants all who are outside the Church to become Catholic, and all Catholics, saints’. In what she considers to be a generation immunized against the preached or printed word, Anscombe proposes to witness to her world by embodying ‘the Catholic social scheme’. In young Anscombe’s view, only the failure of regular Catholics to live their faith in the marketplace prevents England’s wholesale conversion to Catholicism. She summarizes her calling: ‘We must be the first ... to deal justly, suppress usury, underselling, unjust prices and wages, to respect and increase the human dignity of the poor by restoring to them greater control over their own lives’.

In this issue marking the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Dominican friars in England, my task is to examine the Dominican influences on Anscombe as an undergraduate at Oxford (1937-1941). Although she left few reminiscences of those days, since Anscombe rightly teaches us that a person’s intentions are typically shown by her actions, we can discern a number of key influences, in particular that of three Catholic ‘societies’. For example, in her ‘I am Sadly Theoretical’ article, we see the influence of the Catholic Social Guild (CSG).<sup>1</sup> In her other undergraduate publication, *The Justice of the Present War Examined*, co-authored with fellow undergraduate Norman Daniel, we see the influence of the PAX Society, whose views she and Daniel faithfully represented in their pamphlet.<sup>2</sup> However, the society that influenced Anscombe most was the Blackfriars Dominicans. This essay focuses on the Thomists who formally instructed Anscombe and how one Dominican, Victor White, likely instructed her on a radical Catholic per-

<sup>1</sup> I discuss the influence of the CSG and the PAX Society on Anscombe in extensive detail in John Berkman, ‘Justice and Murder: The Background to Anscombe’s Modern Moral Philosophy’, forthcoming in Roger Teichmann ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Elizabeth Anscombe* (Oxford: OUP, 2022).

<sup>2</sup> To see the influence of the PAX Society, one has to read the original pamphlet version of Elizabeth Anscombe and Norman Daniel, *The Justice of the Present War Examined: A Criticism Based on Traditional Catholic Principles and Natural Reason* (Glasgow, John S. Burns & Sons, 1940). Henceforth *JPWE*. In her 1981 collected papers, Anscombe only reprints part of the pamphlet. In the preface to the original pamphlet they write: ‘This pamphlet ... presents the results achieved in a series of open discussions held at Oxford both before and after the declaration of war. ... Those concerned are grateful to the association “Pax” (17 Red Lion Passage, W.C.1), to which many of them belong, and which has constantly upheld an interpretation of the teaching of the Church similar to that expounded here’.

spective on the morality of war, which would be reflected in *The Justice of the Present War Examined*.

Dominican influences on Anscombe began upon her arrival at Oxford in October of 1937. First, Anscombe sought instruction from the Dominicans with a view to being received into the Catholic Church. Second, shortly after arriving at Oxford, Anscombe and her new group of friends, ‘almost all Catholic or about to become Catholics ... centred on Blackfriars – the Oxford Dominicans’.<sup>3</sup> Third, in addition to her undergraduate social life revolving around Blackfriars, a Dominican (or Thomist) outlook was conveyed by three individuals who formally instructed Anscombe: Dominican Fr. Richard Kehoe; Dominican Fr. Victor White, and the Thomist philosopher Donald MacKinnon.<sup>4</sup> Of those three, I shall argue that Victor White OP exercised the greatest influence on Anscombe during her undergraduate years.

Fr. Richard Kehoe OP (1905-1981), a young and charismatic American-born Dominican, was assigned to ‘instruct’ Anscombe during her first undergraduate year, leading up to her coming into full Communion with the Catholic Church in April of 1938.<sup>5</sup> Kehoe was evidently a good apologist, as he was the most popular Catholic speaker in the earliest years of the Oxford Socratic Club.<sup>6</sup> Kehoe attended the Dominican school at Hawkesyard as a youth, joining the Dominicans at the age of 16. After his initial training, Kehoe was sent to the Angelicum in Rome and to the École Biblique in Jerusalem to train as a Scripture scholar. Kehoe returned from his studies in 1933, and was barely 30 when in 1935 he was appointed lector (professor) in Scripture at Blackfriars.<sup>7</sup> His methods of Scriptural interpretation were heavily literary, and somewhat avant-garde, and would influence the teaching of Scripture at Blackfriars long after Kehoe stopped teaching there in

<sup>3</sup> Elizabeth Anscombe, ‘Ruth Daniel: an Address given at the Requiem Mass sung at the Carmelite Church, Kensington, 14<sup>th</sup> January 1982’. Box 10, File 374, The Collegium Institute Anscombe Archive at the University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts.

<sup>4</sup> For those surprised to see MacKinnon described as a ‘Thomist philosopher’, see André Muller, ‘Donald M. MacKinnon: The True Service of the Particular, 1913-1959’ (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Otago, Dunedin, 2010).

<sup>5</sup> From Anscombe’s note in ‘I am Sadly Theoretical’, that she ‘Converted in 1935, recently received into the Church’, it is not clear what instruction was needed.

<sup>6</sup> The Socratic Club was founded under C.S. Lewis’s leadership in 1941 to conduct debates about the truth of Christianity. Between 1942-1947, Kehoe spoke four times to the Socratic Club, Martin D’Arcy SJ spoke three times, Gerald Vann OP spoke twice, and no other Catholic spoke more than once. List of speakers at the Socratic Club courtesy of the Marion E. Wade Center, Wheaton, IL.

<sup>7</sup> Biographical information on Richard Kehoe OP can be found in Bede Bailey, Dominic Aidan Bellenger, and Simon Tugwell eds. *Letters of Bede Jarrett: Letters and Other Papers from the English Dominican Archives* (Stratton on the Fosse, Bath: Downside Abbey, 1989).

1947.<sup>8</sup> While we do not know the details of Kehoe's spiritual influence on Anscombe, her concern and affection for him were clear over the years when she heard about his troubles (Kehoe left the Dominican Order), and upon hearing of his death.<sup>9</sup>

Besides being Anscombe's spiritual guide into the Catholic Church in 1937–1938, Kehoe was best friends with another young lector (professor) at the Blackfriars *studium*, the brilliant and maverick Thomist theologian, Victor White.<sup>10</sup> Kehoe almost surely spoke to White about Anscombe, because Victor White, a man who lived for ideas, was a perfect match for the spiritually and intellectually intense Anscombe.<sup>11</sup>

The year after being instructed by Kehoe, Anscombe took the highly unusual step of requesting tutorial instruction from a Dominican friar, namely, Fr. Victor White, OP (1902–1960). Despite the fact that this kind of thing was 'not done', Anscombe somehow got permission, as presumably did White.<sup>12</sup> In recruiting White to be her tutor, Anscombe secured the most innovative interpreter of Thomas at Blackfriars.<sup>13</sup> But

<sup>8</sup> Fergus Kerr writes that 'Our novice master Simon Blake had been taught Scripture by Richard Kehoe and used his extensive notes to introduce us to his very poetic/ Jungian/ allegorical/ typological exegesis, so my own knowledge of the OT such as it is owes a great deal to RK's approach'. (Email correspondence with Fergus Kerr, OP, May 3rd, 2020).

<sup>9</sup> Fr. Louis Roy OP writes 'I am the one who gave [Anscombe and Geach] the news that the Dominican who had received them into the Catholic Church had died. This Dominican had subsequently left the Order. I do remember that Elizabeth was moved and I was struck by the fact that far from condemning his having renounced the exercise of his priesthood, she spoke of him with compassion and tenderness'. (Email correspondence with Louis Roy, OP, May 24, 2021).

<sup>10</sup> See Clodagh Weldon, *Fr. Victor White, O.P.: The Story of Jung's 'White Raven'* (Scranton, PA: University of Scranton Press, 2004), 244, n.19, and Adrian Cunningham, 'Victor White: A Memoir' in Ann Conrad Lammers and Adrian Cunningham eds., *The Jung-White Letters* (London: Routledge, 2007), 307–334.

<sup>11</sup> As Lammers notes, 'White was an intense, introverted thinker to whom the world of ideas was a source of both ecstasy and torment. An unresolved intellectual problem could reduce him to physical illness. As one Dominican contemporary recalls, on these occasions he would be literally sick and take to his room, sometimes for days'. Ann Lammers, *In God's Shadow: The Collaboration of Victor White and C.G. Jung*, (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1994), 90.

<sup>12</sup> My thanks to Professor Benjamin Lipscomb, whose original discovery of Anscombe's undergraduate tutorial reports in the St. Hugh's College archives made this article possible.

<sup>13</sup> In 'Scholasticism' (1934), one of his earliest articles, White is setting out a theological agenda for the English Dominican Order. As Nichols puts it, 'That agenda is neither (with the theological Modernism) deconstructionist nor (with the most unimaginative or contemporary neo-scholasticism) merely repetitive, but "constructionist" in both preserving tradition (a *sine qua non*) and building on it'. See Aidan Nichols, *Dominican Gallery: Portrait of a Culture* (Leominster: Gracewing, 1997), 184. In the 1930s, *ressourcement* theology was in its infancy, and its sources-based method of interpreting Aquinas was viewed by 'transcendental Thomists' with great suspicion. For an introduction to this movement see Patricia Kelly, *Ressourcement Theology: A Sourcebook* (London: T&T Clark, 2021), 15–32. The leading manifesto for the recovery of an historical and source-oriented method of interpreting Aquinas was M.D. Chenu OP's 1937 book *Une école de théologie: Le Saulchoir*. By February 1938 other Dominicans in the Roman Curia had forced Chenu to withdraw the book, and by

White was more than that, as he was also Blackfriars' expert on what Anscombe called the 'Catholic social scheme', i.e. the Catholic social and political thought of the day. In addition, White was Oxford's foremost exponent of the Pax Society viewpoint on the morality of war.<sup>14</sup> To understand how White came to possess his unique set of qualities, and why his tutoring Anscombe was so extraordinary, it is necessary to provide background both on White and on Anscombe's degree programme.

### **Victor White OP: Thomist, Theo-political Theorist, 'Paxist'<sup>15</sup>**

In the 1930s Victor White was not only an intellectual giant at Blackfriars, he was somewhat of a theological auto-didact. Compared to many of the other lecturers, White had relatively little advanced theological education. Completing his basic philosophy and theology training in 1928 and duly ordained, Dominican Provincial, Bede Jarrett, had to make a decision about White's future. This came at a providential moment in the history of the English Dominicans. The Dominican *studium* was moving from Hawkesyard to Oxford the next year, the culmination of Jarrett's grand (and at times controversial) vision for the future of the English Dominican Province. A historian of the social and political vision of the Dominican Order, especially as embodied in its Constitutions, Jarrett wanted lecturers at the new *studium* who could and would present a culturally-relevant Thomism. As Weldon puts it,

Jarrett, eager to bring the philosophical and theological tradition of Aquinas to the concerns of the day, wanted the Dominican community to engage with contemporary scholarship at the university. Accordingly, he appointed lecturers who believed that Aquinas was not to be taught by manuals, but rooted in history, art, philosophy, psychology, literature, and culture.<sup>16</sup>

1942 it would be placed on the Roman Index. As Chenu was coming under fire, *Blackfriars* began to publish articles by him, publishing four by Chenu in 1938 and 1939. For a discussion of Chenu's approach to Aquinas, which highly influenced later generations of Thomists, see Fergus Kerr, 'Chenu's Little Book', *New Blackfriars*, 66:777 (November 1985), 108-112.

<sup>14</sup> In the summer of 1939, MacKinnon wrote that 'My debt to the Dominicans is, I hope, sufficiently acknowledged. No English Catholic who has faced these problems [regarding the moral legitimacy of war] could hope to have made headway apart from the work of Fr. Vann and Fr. White'. (Donald MacKinnon, 'The Task of the Christendom Group in Time of War-II', *Christendom: A Journal of Christian Sociology*, 9:34 (September 1939), 206.

<sup>15</sup> White used the term 'Paxist' and phrase 'Paxist viewpoint', because Pax members, though they supported conscientious objectors, were in no sense pacifists. They believed a war could be just, but recognized that the vast majority were not, and that individual Catholics must in conscience decide if they would participate in their nation's wars after discerning the justice or injustice of their nation's ends and means for a particular war.

<sup>16</sup> See Weldon, *Story of Jung's 'White Raven'*, 11. For more on Fr. Bede Jarrett's areas of scholarly expertise, as well as his vision for the future of the English Dominicans, see Nick

Although the term had not yet been invented, we might say that Jarrett was looking for something approximating a *ressourcement* Thomist, who by understanding Aquinas in light of his own history and culture, could appropriately apply Aquinas' teaching to contemporary culture. In White, Jarrett had found a Thomist theologian who was at least groping in that direction.

There's good reason to think that in a 25 year-old Victor White, Jarrett saw a protégé. For White shared Jarrett's (and Vincent McNabb's) desire to see social and political questions through a Dominican lens, and their fascination with Dominican tertiary Eric Gill's Ditchling, Capel-y-ffin, and Pigott's Communities. By the early 1930s, White had befriended both Eric Gill and the Dominican tertiary Donald Attwater, a writer and editor associated with Gill.<sup>17</sup> White's friendships with them would lead to fruitful collaborations in the late 1930s, when both Attwater and Gill would serve as President of the PAX Society.

Regardless of whether 'protégé' is the best description of their relationship, Jarrett recognized White's scholarly gifts, and presented him with opportunities to use them. Having determined that White would be a lector when the Oxford *studium* opened the following year, Jarrett sent White to Louvain to obtain a licentiate.<sup>18</sup> Returning in less than a year, White attended the Oxford *studium's* inauguration, and in 1930, at age 27, he began as a lector in dogmatic theology.<sup>19</sup>

In January of 1934, Jarrett presented White with a second important opportunity to exercise his intellectual gifts. From December of 1932 until March of 1934, Jarrett was editor of *Blackfriars*. Consonant with Jarrett's vision for the *studium*, he wanted to return *Blackfriars* to its original mission, which was not to 'entertain or necessarily edify its readers', but to 'try to tell relevant truths and insist on those truths that are either unknown or neglected or in danger of being forgotten'.<sup>20</sup> In large part, this would be to return to a focus on social questions, moving it 'quite decisively away from the predominantly literary, not to say somewhat precious and belles-lettres review it was in the later 1920s,

O'Brien, 'Bede Jarrett, Sir Ernest Barker and the political Significance of the Dominican Order', *New Blackfriars* 92:1040 (July 2011), 464-483.

<sup>17</sup> For White's friendship with Gill dating to the 1920s, see Robert Speaight, *The Life of Eric Gill* (London: Methuen, 1966), 209.

<sup>18</sup> See Weldon, *Story of Jung's 'White Raven'*, 10-11, 242. The licentiate was (and is) the minimum academic requirement to teach in a Catholic seminary.

<sup>19</sup> The Dominicans typically sent academically gifted students to Europe for 3-5 years of further study, for specialized degrees or for doctorates. In contrast, Bede Jarrett's appointment of White as lector followed more the customs of Oxford University than the Dominican Order. Appointment to a fellowship of an Oxford College upon completion of one's first degree studies or very shortly thereafter was a sign of the brilliance of a young scholar who required no additional training. Fr. Jarrett, being the first Dominican to attend Oxford University since the Reformation, perhaps appreciated that custom more than most Dominicans.

<sup>20</sup> Bede Jarrett, 'Editorial', *Blackfriars*, 1:1 (January 1920), 4-5.

to discuss the “social and economic ills” that afflicted Britain and the wider world, in the light of the teaching of Pope Pius XI.<sup>21</sup> After a year’s effort to transform *Blackfriars*, with Thomas Gilby as assistant editor, Jarrett was generally pleased with the results, but he apologized that the ‘new’ Blackfriars at times suffered from ‘overfrankness of expression’.<sup>22</sup> Such overfrankness by one of the Dominicans had already led to trouble<sup>23</sup>, and it seems that Jarrett’s solution, although he did not publicly indicate it, was to add a second pseudonymous column.<sup>24</sup> The new columnist was ‘Penguin’ (aka Victor White), whose ‘Extracts and Comments’<sup>25</sup> would appear in *Blackfriars* every month from January 1934 to September 1939. During those six years White – either under his own name or as ‘Penguin’ – had at least 130 discrete publications in *Blackfriars*.<sup>26</sup> From 1937 to 1939, White’s contributions to *Blackfriars* averaged more than two pieces a month.

In 1935 Gilby departed Oxford for London,<sup>27</sup> and White became assistant editor of *Blackfriars* under Hilary Carpenter, who had succeeded Jarrett as editor.<sup>28</sup> While Carpenter initially contributed monthly editorials, this ceased in early 1937, with the ethos of *Blackfriars* already evolving. From 1936 onwards, *Blackfriars* was filled with articles on political ideologies, conflicts arising from them, and the morality of war conflicts, e.g. communism and fascism, Italy and Abyssinia, the Spanish civil war, and the rise of Hitlerism. In contrast to most of the English Catholic press, *Blackfriars* included a range of perspec-

<sup>21</sup> Fergus Kerr, ‘*Blackfriars* from 1924 to 1934’, *New Blackfriars*, 84:993 (November 2003), 494.

<sup>22</sup> Bede Jarrett, ‘Editorial’, *Blackfriars*, 15:166 (January 1934), 5.

<sup>23</sup> According to Kerr, a February 1932 article by Thomas Gilby had required the suppression of the printed issue prior to its distribution. For more on the ‘suppressed issue’, see Kerr, ‘*Blackfriars* from 1924-1934’, 492-493.

<sup>24</sup> The first pseudonymous column by ‘Jacobin’ (aka Thomas Gilby) began when Jarrett started editing *Blackfriars* in December of 1932. Gilby’s ‘Jacobin’ *persona* died out in 1934.

<sup>25</sup> For the first few months it was called ‘Extracta’, before settling on the title ‘Extracts and Comments’. From reading these columns it becomes clear that each month ‘Penguin’ was reading at least 10-20 religious periodicals from Britain, Europe, America, and elsewhere. While these monthly pieces ranged widely, Penguin regularly focused on two sets of highly controverted questions: war and ecumenism. Penguin’s column bears comparison to Fr. Richard Neuhaus’ much later ‘The Public Square’ column in *First Things* from 1990-2009.

<sup>26</sup> Not included in this count are pieces which White wrote under other pseudonyms, such as ‘Praedicator’, ‘OP’, ‘Henry Gordon’, and ‘M. A. Bousfield’. In addition, the style of some of the editorials published while Carpenter was editor may indicate White’s hand.

<sup>27</sup> See Nichols, *Dominican Gallery*, 184.

<sup>28</sup> White refers to himself as ‘assistant editor’ of *Blackfriars* in 1937, both in a January 29<sup>th</sup> letter to the *Catholic Herald* and in a September 24<sup>th</sup>, 1937 letter to Luigi Sturzo. (Luigi Sturzo Institute Historical Archive, Dossier 621, Document 52.) My thanks to Concetta Argiolas of the Sturzo Institute. Over the last 30 years numerous articles on the Catholic press during the 1930s have referred to Victor White as the editor of *Blackfriars*, but I have found no evidence of White being editor of *Blackfriars* until a brief period in 1940.

tives, emphasized the scholastic tradition of just war, and published critiques of the possibility of a just ‘modern war’ by e.g. Eric Gill, Franziskus Stratmann OP, and Gerald Vann OP. *Blackfriars*’ relatively ‘neutral stance’ on the Spanish civil war came in for harsh criticism.

Furthermore, in the late 1930s, *Blackfriars* published articles by three highly controversial French intellectuals: two articles by Jacques Maritain, who at this time was *persona non grata* in many Catholic circles for his opposition to Franco; two articles by Yves Congar OP, whose work on ecumenism was highly controversial; and four articles by M. Dominique Chenu OP, whose provocative endorsements of aspects of modernism and whose advocacy of *ressourcement* theology made him the *bête-noire* of the (Dominican-dominated) Roman Curia. During this time, White’s own theo-politics and views on war were mostly being presented in *Blackfriars* under the guise of ‘Penguin’. However, that changed on May 12, 1939, as I will discuss below.

I have recounted this early background to Victor White, not only because it shows how perfectly suited White was to address Anscombe’s intellectual and spiritual concerns, but also because White’s early scholarship, especially his work on Catholic social teaching, generally receives little attention.<sup>29</sup> White’s ground-breaking engagement with psychology, particularly in relation to Carl Jung, has been rightly recognized, thanks to the pioneering work of Ann Lammers and Adrian Cunningham, and developed by Aidan Nichols and Clodagh Weldon.

Unfortunately, this has led some to largely equate Victor White’s significance with his engagement with psychology, and this is profoundly mistaken. Up until 1950, of his more than 200 publications, less than 10% dealt with modern psychology. So in 1954, when at age fifty-two, White was granted the *Sacrae Theologiae Magister*, the highest academic honour in the Dominican Order, it was not based on his work on psychology.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, White’s work on psychology would have been irrelevant to the incredibly high esteem with which the next generation of Thomists, e.g. Cornelius Ernst, Columba Ryan, and Herbert McCabe held White, and to why scholars like Maritain, Dawson, and MacKinnon, to name just a few, were citing White’s writings from the 1930s.

<sup>29</sup> This is not entirely surprising, considering the high percentage of White’s early articles which he wrote under a pseudonym. Even so, Victor White merits the longest chapter in Aidan Nichols’ *Dominican Gallery*, which portrays seven exemplary Dominicans of White’s era.

<sup>30</sup> In fact, it was his work on Jung that seems to have led to his being abruptly denied becoming Regent of Studies at Blackfriars shortly after becoming a Master of Sacred Theology. On this development, See Lammers, *In God’s Shadow*, and Aidan Nichols, ‘The rebellious discipleship of Father Victor White: theology and psychology in a critic of C.G. Jung’ in Craig Titus ed. *Philosophical psychology: psychology, emotions, and freedom* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2009).



## Anscombe's Undergraduate Degree Programme

To understand why Victor White's tutoring Anscombe was so exceptional, one must understand the rubrics of her degree.<sup>31</sup> Greek and Latin literature were studied for five terms, and then examined (Moderations or 'Mods'), which Anscombe duly completed in March of 1939.<sup>32</sup> For the next seven terms, one studied two things: 'the history and thought of the Greek and Roman worlds' and 'Logic and Moral Philosophy both in the Greek and in the modern world'.<sup>33</sup> Successful completion of examinations in these subjects gave the students a degree in *Literae Humaniores*, or 'Greats' as it was popularly known. The degree regulations allowed and even encouraged a student to focus on his or her strength, i.e. either in ancient history, or in ancient and modern philosophy.

It is understood that an adequate performance in Philosophy is in general demanded for a first class [degree] from a candidate whose chief strength is in History, and an adequate knowledge of History from one whose chief strength is in Philosophy; *but the principle of compensation is applied freely*. ... the philosopher should ... have at least an outline knowledge of his periods of history.<sup>34</sup>

With Anscombe, the regulation that 'the principle of compensation is applied freely' was apparently taken to an extreme, legend having it that she was awarded a first on the strength of her philosophy papers, despite not being able to recite one fact about Roman history in her 'Viva' (i.e. her oral exam).<sup>35</sup>

Victor White first tutored Anscombe from April to June of 1939, at the outset of her 'Greats' programme. For a Dominican to teach an

<sup>31</sup> An Oxford degree in classics was a four-year degree. With three terms a year, it required 12 terms of study.

<sup>32</sup> Results of these exams were published in all the national newspapers. Anscombe's results (Class II) appeared in print on April 8, 1939.

<sup>33</sup> *Handbook to the University of Oxford* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932), 144. The philosophy curriculum consisted of 'a thorough study of two Greek books, one of Plato and one of Aristotle, and of the philosophical questions arising out of them, and also of a general study of Logic and Moral Philosophy, and Political Philosophy, including the outlines of Political Economy'.

<sup>34</sup> *Oxford University Handbook*, 146. Italics added by author.

<sup>35</sup> Anscombe's single-minded focus on philosophy while studying 'Greats' is evidenced from the vast disparity in her 'Greats' tutorial reports. While the tutorial reports from philosophy tutors White and MacKinnon were glowing, they were in stark contrast to the reports from her ancient history tutors: 'She is really more than a little lazy'; 'Miss Anscombe ... has only produced one essay, which ... was rather slight. ... Miss Anscombe might fail to cover enough of the necessary ground in Greats'; and 'Of Miss Anscombe I hardly know what to say. On the two occasions when I have seen her, she has ... been singularly reluctant to express any definite view'. St. Hugh's College Archives, SHG/J/3/2. With kind permission of the Principal and Fellows of St. Hugh's College, Oxford. My thanks to Amanda Ingram, archivist of St. Hugh's College.

undergraduate was unusual in itself, and for Victor White to tutor a 'Greats' student, was even more odd, for at least three reasons. First, while they resided in Oxford, Dominicans rarely had any status with the University<sup>36</sup> and thus were not typically eligible to teach its students.<sup>37</sup> Second, Anscombe arranged to have White tutor her in medieval philosophy (Aquinas), which was not even a part of the 'Greats' curriculum. Third, although White was to tutor Anscombe in philosophy, his formal qualification was in theology.

Evidently, the tutorials were a great success. At the end of May in 1939 White wrote his report to the philosophy tutor at Anscombe's college:

Dear Miss Glover, I was very glad to hear from you of the proposals for four further tutorials [next term] for Miss Anscombe. For although she has been covering the ground with quite astonishing rapidity, there still remain two books of the *Contra Gentiles* & the short but stiff *De Unitate Intellectus* which it would be impossible to deal with at all adequately in the two remaining sessions. For my part, I should be very pleased to give her the four tutorials next term, & while I fully understand that her 'special' must not interfere with her ordinary work, I think it would be very advantageous if this could be arranged. I am thoroughly pleased with her work for me this term. She has evidently worked very hard, her essays have shown a really intelligent understanding of the matter, & I have found her very quick in overcoming the difficulties which have arisen in the text. I have been particularly pleased at the evidence she has shown of ability at co-relating Aquinas with what she has already learned of later philosophy & later problems.<sup>38</sup>

It is evident that Anscombe was equally happy with the tutorials, as she continued for a second term with White.<sup>39</sup> Again, White was very happy with Anscombe's progress. 'I have been completely satisfied with Miss Anscombe's work for me. She has evidently worked hard, & I find her quick & intelligent'. While Anscombe undoubtedly worked diligently in her papers on Aquinas, it is hard to imagine that discussions between her and White, whether during or after their formal tutorials, were restricted to the philosophy of Aquinas. For not only did White and Anscombe both have a passionate interest in Catholic social thought and the morality of war, during this time Anscombe's fiancée, Peter Geach, was deciding on whether to become a conscientious

<sup>36</sup> Even eminent medieval historians such as Gervase Mathew OP and Daniel Callus OP would only receive university appointments after WWII.

<sup>37</sup> While the occasional graduate student might consult with a renowned Dominican scholar in a specialized sub-field, this obviously did not apply for tutoring an undergraduate. Furthermore, this being prior to WWII, the issue of the loss of Oxford dons to military service was not yet an extenuating circumstance.

<sup>38</sup> St. Hugh's College Archives, SHG/J/3/2. With kind permission of the Principal and Fellows of St. Hugh's College, Oxford.

<sup>39</sup> The second term being Michaelmas (October-December) 1939.

objector (which he did). Furthermore, her tutorials with White coincided with the time Anscombe was attending Pax Society meetings in Oxford. Considering that White and MacKinnon were probably Oxford's only two 'Paxists' who were publishing on that viewpoint, it is hard to imagine that they did not attend at least some of the meetings. After completing her two terms of tutorials with White on Aquinas, Anscombe was sent to study Plato with Donald MacKinnon (January – June 1940).

MacKinnon, Keble College's Anglo-Catholic philosopher, was one of the first Oxford dons to have a close relationship with the Dominicans, dining at Blackfriars with Victor White and his other Dominican friends on a regular basis.<sup>40</sup> Fergus Kerr notes that 'as the recently published histories all say, [MacKinnon] counts as by far the most influential British theologian of the twentieth century'.<sup>41</sup> He was the third Thomist to formally instruct Anscombe.<sup>42</sup> After one term, MacKinnon reports that 'Miss Anscombe has been making very good progress with her Platonic books. She covers the ground quickly. She has an unusually clear and definite grasp of her own ideas. She seem to give every prospect of doing first class work in this subject'. After a second term, MacKinnon was equally pleased.

Miss Anscombe has been doing very well at her set books, & her essays have always been at a high level. She has a very quick & definite mind, & though I think she would gain in the end by being more tentative in her conclusions, she is certainly forming clear ideas of her own, & ought to be able, after revision, to write  $\alpha$  papers on Plato in the schools.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Fergus Kerr, 'Remembering Donald MacKinnon', *New Blackfriars*, 85:997 (May 2004), 266.

<sup>41</sup> Kerr, 'Remembering Donald MacKinnon', 266. I am much indebted to André Muller's dissertation for insights on almost everything I have to say about MacKinnon in this paper.

<sup>42</sup> Knowing that White and MacKinnon were friends, and that MacKinnon shared White's interests in Christian social thought and the 'Paxist' viewpoint on war, one cannot help but wonder if White might have been instrumental in Anscombe coming to be tutored by MacKinnon. For Donald MacKinnon's advocacy for a 'Paxist' viewpoint, see 'Review of Reckitt, *Religion in Social Action*'. *Christendom* 8 (June 1938), 150; MacKinnon, 'Christian Social Thought', *Theology* 38 (May 1939), 381; MacKinnon, 'The Task of the Christendom Group in Time of War'. *Christendom* 9 (June 1939), 139-143 and (September 1939), 140-142, 204-206; MacKinnon, 'No Way Back: Some First Principles of Catholic Social Judgment Restated: Review of Peter Drucker's *End of Economic Man*'. *Christendom* 9 (December 1939), 292-298; and MacKinnon, *The Church of God* (London: Dacre Press, 1940), 81-99. Furthermore, MacKinnon cites White in all of these articles and most of the other articles he writes during this period. In 'The Task of the Christendom Group', MacKinnon approvingly refers to Robert Regout's *La doctrine de la guerre juste de saint Augustin à nos jours* (Paris: A. Pedone, 1935), which seems to be been virtually unknown in England, but is cited in Anscombe and Daniel's JPWE.

<sup>43</sup> St Hugh's College archives, SHG/J/3/2.

In her final year Anscombe would receive strong evaluations from two other philosophy tutors for her work on modern philosophy (Kant), and logic.<sup>44</sup>

There are some striking features of the roles Victor White and Donald McKinnon played in Anscombe's life as an undergraduate. First, these two Thomists, while teaching her Aquinas and Plato, also shared her Catholic social and political commitments, and undoubtedly helped to confirm her in the Catholicity of her minority viewpoint on the morality of the war. For the fifteen month period during which Anscombe was tutored by White and MacKinnon coincided with the time period during which we know that Anscombe was actively involved with the Pax Society. Second, it was these two tutors who elicited Anscombe's most diligent work, and were probably the tutors most helpful in Anscombe attaining her first. Finally, it is probably no coincidence that White and MacKinnon were the tutors who prepared her for her examination papers on the two 'canonical' philosophers Anscombe would turn to most during her philosophical career – Plato and Aquinas.<sup>45</sup>

### White, Anscombe, and The Paxists

When Victor White began to tutor Anscombe in April of 1939, White had not made his 'Paxist' views publicly known in the same way as had friends such as Eric Gill, Donald Attwater, and Gerald Vann OP. However, that all changed on May 12, 1939, when White published a letter in the *Catholic Herald*, stating what he took to be the minimum conditions (i.e. moral standards) of British government conduct for a Catholic to licitly participate in the war.<sup>46</sup> That surely did not escape Anscombe's notice, and perhaps initiated conversations between them on that very topic.<sup>47</sup> White emphasized in the letter that he presented these standards, not as any kind of threat, but rather so that, just as the authorities knew where the Quakers stood on the morality of war, so too should the authorities know the moral stance of Catholics.

<sup>44</sup> Anscombe's two philosophy tutors in 1940-1941 were William De Burgh (1866-1943), who had retired from a career at the University of Reading in 1934, and Raymond Klibansky (1905-2005), a Jewish refugee scholar from Germany at Oriel College from 1936-1946, who took up a chair at McGill University after the War.

<sup>45</sup> From the time of her appointment to Somerville College, Oxford in 1946 through 1952, all her University lectures series were on Plato.

<sup>46</sup> Victor White, 'Catholics and War: The Principles Involved', *Catholic Herald*, May 12, 1939. MacKinnon's 'Task of the Christendom Group', based on a paper read on April 13<sup>th</sup>, 1939, and published in June of 1939, is similarly devoted to the 'minimal requirement' in terms of the witness of the Church in time of war.

<sup>47</sup> I have yet to discover whether Anscombe's interest in the PAX Society arose independently of White, or was inspired by White.

White outlined these ‘minimum standards’ of British conduct in a future war necessary for it to be deemed ‘just’, standards which would be ‘upheld by all who respect the natural law in its integrity’, in five points: *first*, the war must have a just end, i.e. with limited and concrete ends, so that those fighting know what constitutes a war’s successful conclusion;<sup>48</sup> *second*, that if the country being attacked was guilty of historical injustices against the aggressor, had made efforts to negotiate an equitable settlement; *third*, that no Catholic could formally cooperate with any direct killing of non-combatants, nor support a war in which such killing would be a method of warfare; *fourth*, that all forms of propaganda must be resisted as much as possible; and *fifth*, that any alliance with the Soviets should be undertaken with deep distrust, and no war would be just which served to extend atheistic communism.

When Anscombe and Daniel published their pamphlet ‘The Justice of the Present War Examined’ in March or April of 1940, their argument in all essential points repeat the views of White, although the logic of the viewpoint was presented in a more sustained fashion. Furthermore, except for their quotes from Pope Pius XII’s *Summi Pontificatus*, which would only be issued in October 1939, there is hardly a citation in Anscombe and Daniel’s pamphlet that is not also found in White’s or MacKinnon’s earlier publications.<sup>49</sup> In noting this, I am not implying that Anscombe and Daniel actually got all or even any of their sources from White (or MacKinnon), but it points to the striking similarities in their perspectives. Although one cannot claim with any authority that Victor White or Donald MacKinnon were key sources for Anscombe and Daniel’s arguments regarding the morality of the war, it is safe to say that the Paxist arguments presented by White and MacKinnon were only in the air amongst a relatively small circle of people, and it was thin air.<sup>50</sup> However, given the propaganda of the time, and the

<sup>48</sup> With the grave injustices of the Treaty of Versailles still fresh in memory, no thoughtful person could again leave their own decisions of conscience to the moral consciences of their country’s rulers. When White was challenged in another letter to the editor that he should give his country’s rulers ‘the benefit of the doubt’, White responded ‘I agree that, given no reason to the contrary, government be given the benefit of the doubt... However there are some points on which there can be no doubt’; White had no doubt that, giving leeway to make secret decisions concerning the ends and means of a war, Britain’s rulers could not be trusted to prosecute a just war. Victor White, *Catholic Herald*, June 2, 1939.

<sup>49</sup> One exception is Anscombe and Daniel’s reference to *The Names of Christ*, a work by the 16<sup>th</sup> century Spanish poet and political theologian Luis de Leon.

<sup>50</sup> MacKinnon commends or argues for a ‘Paxist’ viewpoint in MacKinnon, ‘Review of Reckitt, *Religion in Social Action*’. *Christendom* 8 (June 1938), 150; MacKinnon, ‘Christian Social Thought’, *Theology* 38 (May 1939), 381; MacKinnon, ‘The Task of the Christendom Group in Time of War’. *Christendom* 9 (June 1939), 139-143 and (September 1939), 140-142, 204-206; MacKinnon, ‘No Way Back: Some First Principles of Catholic Social Judgment Restated: Review of Peter Drucker’s End of Economic Man’; *Christendom* 9 (December 1939), 292-298; and in MacKinnon, *The Church of God* (London: Dacre Press, 1940), 81-99. Furthermore, MacKinnon cites White in all of these articles and most of the other articles he

weakness or vacuity of most so-called moral reflection on war, the air being provided by White and MacKinnon would certainly have been refreshing to Anscombe and Daniel.

Anscombe and Daniel's argument was nuanced and sustained, but not complex.<sup>51</sup> Their view was that if one's nation is fighting a *just* war, it is permissible and may be obligatory for the Catholic to participate. However, if it seems that one's rulers may intend to fight an *unjust* war, then the individual Catholic must discern in conscience the intentions of their rulers with regard to their ends in the war and the means they intend to use in fighting the war. If one's rulers intended ends are unjust and/or the intended means of fighting are unjust, then it would be a sin for a Catholic to participate in such a war. For Catholics are guided in their moral life by the natural law and the divine law, and may not, regardless of their government's demands, sin against God's laws.

A significant portion of Anscombe's and Daniel's pamphlet is a detailed analysis of the intentions of Britain's rulers with regard to their aims and intended means for the war. Their conclusion is unambiguous: a moral 'condemnation of the war'. While Anscombe and Daniel fully recognize that the Nazis are clearly irrational and evil, beneath British propaganda they find that Britain's *ends* are not to right the injustices of the Nazis, but to preserve an unjust status quo, and to destroy Germany. As for their means, Britain is already engaged in immoral *means* by its blockades, and has made clear its intention to directly attack civilians, including unjust reprisals. Finally the government is engaging in the injustice of propaganda. On the basis of their analysis, their conclusion is stark: 'Only one conclusion is possible: however grievous it may be, those who recognize this cannot participate in this war without sin'.<sup>52</sup> As Christians 'we cannot restrain evil by doing sin, or fight for God rejecting him while we do'.<sup>53</sup> For 'it is better to suffer the sensation of sterility than... Out of fear to fight the madness of others with a madness of our own'.<sup>54</sup> Furthermore, they assert that it is both the right and

writes during this period. In 'The Task of the Christendom Group', MacKinnon approvingly refers to Regout's 1935 book, which seems to have been virtually unknown in England, but is cited in Anscombe and Daniel's *JPWE*.

<sup>51</sup> Anscombe and Daniel became dues-paying members of the PAX Society on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1939, along with 16 other Oxford students. The March 1940 issue of the *PAX Bulletin* said: 'The Oxford branch of PAX is shortly bringing out a pamphlet, *The Justice of the Present War Examined...*', so it was published at the earliest in late March. The next issue of the *PAX Bulletin*, in May 1940, recommended Anscombe and Daniel's recently published pamphlet. By then Anscombe claims to have withdrawn it from publication. However, considering the December 1940 issue of the *PAX Bulletin* says that their pamphlet is 'particularly recommended' to COs preparing statements, one has to wonder how diligent Anscombe was in withdrawing it. (PAX membership records and references to the *PAX Bulletin* are courtesy of the PAX Society archives).

<sup>52</sup> *JPWE*, 24.

<sup>53</sup> *JPWE*, 29.

<sup>54</sup> *JPWE*, 28.

duty for individuals to discern the justice of a war. They may not simply ‘write a blank cheque’ to their rulers, but must in conscience judge the morality of the war.

### Why Publish their Pamphlet?

Given the similarities between Anscombe and Daniel’s pamphlet and White’s letter (and his other publications on war), one must thus ask why they bothered. If Anscombe and Daniel were more or less repeating arguments already being made by White, or in other Pax literature by luminaries like Eric Gill, Donald Attwater, or Gerald Vann OP, what was their point in publishing their pamphlet? While the *Pax Bulletin* praised their article as being very helpful to potential COs, it was a very lonely enterprise to be publishing their pamphlet in April of 1940, when fear of a possible invasion of Britain by Germany was beginning to grip the country. Furthermore, publishing their pamphlet was not only likely to bring rebuke from their Archbishop (which it did), it might provoke legal action against them.<sup>55</sup> So what pushed them to publish it?

Any answer to that question is necessarily speculative, but soon after the war began, five months after White’s May 12th letter, there were signs of discord in *Blackfriars*, about which, considering her views on the morality of the war that Britain intended to fight, Anscombe could not have been happy. In the October 1939 issue of *Blackfriars*, Hilary Carpenter OP, still officially editor of *Blackfriars*, produced his first editorial for more than 2 years. The careful reflection about the morality of war which had been nurtured in *Blackfriars* in previous months and years was nowhere to be seen. Carpenter began his editorial speaking for ‘all the peoples of England’, that our war aim ‘is wholly and objectively good’, that we stand ‘for freedom and liberty’, that all of us have ‘a clear and well-informed conscience as to the objective rightness’ of our aims and that while sometimes war is complicated, in this instance ‘all of our consciences should be clear’. He then added, quoting the Catholic Bishop of the Armed Forces, that Britain’s cause is ‘right and just in the eyes of God and of all good men’. Although the war was only weeks old, Carpenter dispatched all possible moral and religious objections, without offering a single moral or theological argument.

<sup>55</sup> At that time, members of the larger Peace Pledge Union were being arrested and charged for campaigning against the war. For example, in May of 1940 six leaders of the PPU were arrested, charged, and convicted of trying to cause ‘disaffection’ among military personnel ‘likely to lead to breaches of their duty’. (See Sybil Morrison, *I Renounce War: The story of the Peace Pledge Union* (London: Sheppard Press, 1962), 45–48.) While these PPU members were not ultimately imprisoned, Anscombe and Daniel could not predict the possible legal consequences of publishing their pamphlet.

Having dismissed any possible moral or spiritual objections, Carpenter then pointed to the potential moral and spiritual benefits of the war. Carpenter connected a moral benefit with the new opportunities for suffering. While ‘there can be no doubt that those who suffer most in war are those who least deserve to suffer’, by ‘the calm spirit of readiness to accept tremendous self-sacrifice ... there is something to be gained ... in the moral order’. And what is the spiritual benefit by the suffering of those who least deserve it? ‘There is something essentially Christian in this. It ... may well be a God-given way of paying the price ... for the liberty of the adoption of the sons of God. ... That is the divine providence and that the opportunity of this present war’.<sup>56</sup> It must have been hard for discerning readers to believe that such claims were coming from *Blackfriars*. Devoid of any moral or theological argument, it was not a call to faith or the gospel of Jesus Christ, but a panegyric to the romance of war.

Strangely, for the first time since the January 1934 issue, the October 1939 issue did not feature Penguin’s ‘Extracts and Comments’. However, in its place was a short, unsigned article, although clearly by White, consisting of a single extract and a single comment, entitled ‘Reprisals’. The extract was from the Sept 4<sup>th</sup> issue of *Osservatore Romano*, commenting on the German and Anglo-French replies to Roosevelt’s appeal for ‘humane warfare’, where both parties said they would refrain from civilian bombardment on condition that the others did the same. An excerpt from the long extract reads as follows:

*And let there be no talk - none! - of reprisals.* Our words here must be plain and strong. Let no one quote against us the ‘harsh law of necessity’; that is another ready-made phrase to screen one kind of harshness only - that of cruelty. Reprisals against civilian populations are a monstrous thing. The innocent would still pay for the guilty. Against the innocent victims of the one side would be set the innocent victims of the other. Not thus are humanity and offended justice to be appeased; this is no repayment of injuries; it is complicity in a crime ... The law of retaliation applied to those unarmed, to women and children and the aged - one has only to think of it, only to formulate it to arouse in every soul an unequalled horror, to find oneself powerless in any language to express its shameful, accursed meaning.

Following the extended extract, the ‘comment’ was only one sentence long.

BLACKFRIARS feels that every publicity should be given to this most Christian appeal which, we cannot doubt, has the approval, if not the actual authority of the Holy Father himself.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>56</sup> Hilary Carpenter, OP, ‘Editorial’, *Blackfriars*, 20:235 (October 1939), 723-726.

<sup>57</sup> Anonymous, ‘Reprisals’, *Blackfriars* 20:235 (October 1939), 765-766.



Although White was only assistant editor of *Blackfriars*, here, seemingly for the first time, White signed an ‘extract and comment’ not by ‘Penguin’, but on behalf of *Blackfriars* as a whole. The editor could not have been pleased.<sup>58</sup>

Ironically, Carpenter’s editorial was a perfect exemplification of what White had written in *Blackfriars* only five months earlier, that when the gospel of Jesus Christ is sold out to the ends of nationalistic propaganda, it only serves to discredit the gospel once a war is over. That was White’s argument as to why neither the propaganda of nations nor of nationalistic Church Hierarchies could be trusted to guide the conscientious decisions of individual Catholics as to the moral acceptability of participating in a war:

The scandal of ‘the failure of the Churches’ during the world-war of 1914–1918 ... are too evident for us to ignore. ... The ‘recruiting parsons’ may have helped to fill the trenches during the war; they certainly succeeded in emptying the pews afterwards. The shallow casuistry with which they sought to evade the Sermon on the Mount disqualified them in the eyes of thousands from being taken seriously as authentic representatives of Christ. ... The ‘God our help in ages past’ so constantly invoked was the petty British tribal god of the Recessional. ... [The Churches] excelled all others in the propagation of self-righteous cant, ... elevating the Kaiser to the dignity of Anti-Christ. ... When the war was over and seen as the sordid and futile waste it really was, it was widely felt that ‘Christianity had failed’. Failed, not the world only, but its own message. The war to end war, the war which was to establish the reign of righteousness and justice, left the world worse off and with more injustice than before. Christians had succumbed to propaganda instead of bearing witness to the truth.<sup>59</sup>

After the October 1939 issue of *Blackfriars* with its dueling messages, Penguin continued on, but his column was reduced by 80%.<sup>60</sup> In addition, no other article by White on the subject of war would appear in *Blackfriars* for the duration of WWII, despite the fact that at the end of White’s ‘War and the Early Church’ (*Blackfriars*, Sept 1939), he had promised an article on medieval perspectives on war would follow.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>58</sup> The October 1939 issue of *Blackfriars* also featured Gerald Vann’s ‘In Tempore Belli’, which immediately followed Carpenter’s editorial in that issue.

<sup>59</sup> Victor White, ‘Wars and Rumours of War’, *Blackfriars*, 20:231 (June 1939), 404–406.

<sup>60</sup> Prior to October of 1939, Penguin’s ‘Extracts and Comments’ were typically ten or more pages long. After October 1939, his new column ‘Contemporanea’ (which had previously been a subsection of his ‘Extracts and Comments’ column) was allotted 1–2 pages.

<sup>61</sup> The same apparently applied to Gerald Vann OP after the appearance in January 1940 of his article ‘Patriotism and the Life of the State’. Vann’s article elicited a letter from Dominican Provincial Bernard Delany to Vincent McNabb, asking for McNabb’s judgment on its orthodoxy. While White and Vann were apparently banned from contributing full-length articles, *Blackfriars* would publish numerous articles on the war, including some commissioned from non-Dominicans and military chaplains. Perhaps most tellingly, for the October

In early 1940, when Anscombe and Daniel were preparing to publish their pamphlet, they were surely aware of the difficulties being faced by Victor White and Gerald Vann among the Dominicans. Even the utterly fearless Eric Gill was confiding in letters that soon he might not be able to speak about the morality of the war.<sup>62</sup> These few voices who, Anscombe was convinced, were legitimately questioning Britain's morality in fighting the war, were being silenced. This takes us back to her 1938 article, where Anscombe clearly stated that her task as a Catholic was to be a witness, and to witness to the 'Catholic social scheme'. Her 1940 pamphlet was a rigorous and prophetic call to faithfulness in light of that Catholic social scheme. Could it be that Anscombe and Daniel realized that the Catholic voices who inspired them were being silenced, and that they were having none of that, and so saw themselves as trying to keep a torch from being extinguished? Of course, we cannot know with any certainty why Anscombe and Daniel published their pamphlet in April of 1940, but the account I have provided was certainly in line with Anscombe's strong convictions, both about the morality of the war, and about being a witness.

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1940 issue of *Blackfriars*, both McNabb and Vann were commissioned to contribute articles on obedience, and they were published alongside the other. My thanks to Fr. Richard Finn OP for providing me a copy of McNabb's March 5, 1940 letter to Delany, which can be found in the Dominican archives at Douai Abbey.

<sup>62</sup> For example, on Feb 29, 1940, Eric Gill writes to his brother 'Im pretty well entangled in pacifist doings at present. Free speech is still allowed but there are those who wish it wasn't and I shd.n't be surprised if they won. ... Tell Donald [Attwater] that we've just printed a PAX leaflet entitled conscience for the benefit of C.O.s & their judges. ... It ought to be useful, as it's astonishing how few know what a conscience is when asked'. See Walter Shewring ed., *The Letters of Eric Gill* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1947), 443.