

## Discussant's Comments on Thomas Hollweck's "Leap in Being" Paper

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Thomas Hollweck is replying to Juergen Gebhardt's statement about translating the "meaning of self-interpretation into the language of rational discourse". It depends a lot on what is meant by rational discourse. I am not sure what JG means here. My understanding of philosophy and Eric Voegelin is expressed in Plato's Parable of the Cave. There is no rational discourse without the cognitive and moral experience of the ascent and being receptive to/grasping the idea of the Good. It is the ground of divinity that is both beyond the cosmos and the source of everything in it and which we have to touch upon in order to be rational. The mystical symbols are the "framework" for all discussion and knowledge. Thus the condition of rationality itself. But the "framework's" symbols are not, as Voegelin says in his essay on What Is Political Reality? concepts but markers of the meditative process. This process is the height of man's participation in the cosmos (which can also be spoken of as a "process"). Again, the criterion of rationality. But, keeping in mind that all symbols that discuss the cosmos, including a symbol like the cosmos itself, are not things, but index the meditation, the following seems to be true: There is 4 fold structure of being in which all 4 symbols—God, man etc. are partners. Nothing changes in the one without it also in some way changing in the other. As Thomas points out the primary experience continues. The differentiation transforms but does not "break" with any primary experience. It takes place "within" it. That is about as far as I can go at the moment. [I have left some of my notes on thomas's text below ]

NOTES on Thomas's text: 1. The Parable of the Cave and the Road to Damascus certainly report of events that have cognitive aspects but which also involve a change of being. Thus I think the point that TH makes that the leap in being designates an ontic event is indeed correct. P. 13. 2. It is always done by individuals'. 13 3. When we read that the "leap in being is not a leap out of existence" I think this emphasizes that we are already in the primary experience of the cosmos and that all that happens in the cosmos is a differentiation of the cosmos. If human beings experience this differentiation then of course they have not just had a cognitive experience, but a change of being. And since the human is also a part of the cosmos one can say the cosmos took a leap in being with them. A term like a leap in being does indeed seem to be a term that points to the mystical—beyond being—source of a cosmos that can differentiate 4. The emphasis on the "continuation of the primal field of reality that comprehends everything" p. 16. From the standpoint of a cosmos in which differentiations of primary experience are "present" from the beginning it would be just as correct to say, "what came later was present in the beginning" (otherwise where did it come from? It did not come from "out side the cosmos" because the cosmos is not a thing, a box, into which things from the outside come). 5. TH speaks of the "ambiguity of the term" p. 16. Isn't this an aspect of all mystical symbols? First of all they are developed in relationship to a certain question. And there is the ambiguity of the analogia entis. Second when the perspective, the question changes, they can be "isolated" and appear no longer precise symbols. It is at this point that we must make clear to ourselves, to what question was this new symbol the answer? 6. "The Leap in Being represents a conscious choice on Voegelin's part to preserve...the mystery of being",p. 17, I can only concur. He seems to have fought for the acknowledgement of the fact that being is a mystery, and fought to more precisely point to this "mystery" (not "solve it") all of his life.