

## SCRIPTURE AS A *LOCUS THEOLOGICUS*

One of the most difficult but one of the most valuable things for me in the preparation of this paper has been this effort to establish a satisfactory *status questionis*. My first inclination—I might almost say temptation—was simply to elaborate the basic theological principles governing scriptural interpretation as they are laid down by the Popes and by the theologians. However, it took only a little reflection to realize that this would be of no lasting value and might very well prove harmful. Not only would it be repeating what has been already said but it would be almost impossible to avoid giving the impression of appearing to defend the rights of theology against the encroachments of the exegetes. And such a situation is not only inimical to genuine theological development but unworthy of the sacred purposes which all of us seek to serve in the one Lord and the one Faith. Moreover, it takes very little study in the history of modernism to realize how these intramural struggles between orthodox theologians and exegetes sowed a bitter harvest which is still being reaped. Loaded epithets like “rationalists,” “modernist,” “integrist,” “reactionary” are still thrown around without taking into account the fact each of these terms has so many connotations that each constitutes several literary *genres* in its own right.

In the light of this it was evident that what the subject called for was an attempt to understand and assess the relations between theology and scripture in the light of the whole series of new dimensions that modern scripture scholarship has made relevant. Reading the extensive material from this standpoint it soon became clear that in the present state of exegetical work and study, particularly in the area of biblical theology, no fully developed synthesis of these relationships is presently possible. In fact such a synthesis, if attempted, would at best be superficial and transient. An overly facile concordance would in the long run hinder the very extensive and intensive discussion and cooperation that are needed for such a synthesis. Hence this paper makes no claim to any all-embracing solution. Rather it presents itself as an effort: (a) to define or at least describe the two distinct areas of knowledge and intelligibility involved,

(b) to formulate some of the principles and rules that govern the relationship of exegesis and theology, (c) some reflection on the contributions and limitations of each in regard to the other. Yet if these points are to be discussed fruitfully there are some issues which must first be considered and in view of which a proper attitude toward the discussion formulated. These issues are delicate and call for many nuances since they have their roots in both the disciplines themselves and the men who use them.

The first of these problematics for the theologian is the feeling that the exegete is so captive to or captivated by the exigencies of philology, literary criticism, history and archaeology that he tends to look upon the theological and the religious implication of his subject as either unimportant or someone else's concern. While this may be possible in an individual yet as a general statement it simply fails to take into account the object of exegeses and the correlative psychology of the exegete himself. The very nature of the exegetical methods requires these resources as well as a fundamental autonomy in their use, and without these his work is inadequate and his proper contribution to the understanding of revelation is rendered nugatory. Granted that both the exegete and the theologian start with the same source yet the way in which they investigate and seek understanding is quite different and quite distinctive. Scientific theology seeks to exhibit revealed truth with completeness and precision. It takes the various facets and elements in the data of revealed truth analyzes and formulates and develops them into an organic intellectual structure. So it seeks to bring out relationships, proportion, coherence, unity and exact forms of expression. It is the universal, not the singular and concrete, that is its immediate concern. The exegete, however, as exegete is bound to the text and primarily to the literal sense of the text. Before any theological effort is possible he must establish an authentic text, the meaning of the words, and so on to the point where he reaches as fully as possible the idea of the author as he expresses himself in his written text. This is the specific direction of Pope Pius XII for the exegetes that, "their foremost and greatest endeavor should be to discern and define clearly that sense of the biblical words which is called the literal

sense."<sup>1</sup> The spiritual sense which the theologian guided by the Church may legitimately and fruitfully employ in his synthesis will have to be most carefully used by the exegete lest it militate against his first work, which is the establishment of the literal sense.

Again it must be kept in mind that in a sense the exegete as exegete and biblical theologian stops where the dogmatic theologian begins. For his material covers revelation up to the moment it closes with the last written words of the last apostle. He deals in a sense only with the sacred history, the progressive revelation which manifests itself in truths and actions and persons and a whole order of historical understanding and revealed meanings and above all Divine Mystery. He looks to all the educative action of God in the experience of the Chosen People and the truths of God given through the human writing of the human author. The development of dogma, the life of the Church, the faith of the believers, the penetration of theology, all these must be part of the intellectual and religious climate of the exegete, but they are not the tools of his discipline as they are for the dogmatic theologian. To insist that the exegete do his work in terms of the object and resources of scientific theology is to render ineffective the rich contribution he is called upon to make as an exegete.

But this very point raises the much more profound and pressing problematic of methodology. And here I am inclined to agree with Father Lonergan's conviction that this methodology problem supposes an epistemological problem.<sup>2</sup> By this is meant that in this relationship of exegesis and dogmatic theology there are involved two ways, knowing which are quite distinct. One way is especially proper to scripture and to a large extent the Fathers and the other to scientific and especially speculative theology. As Father Lonergan writes:

The greater part of the evidence for the truths of faith as they are formulated learnedly today is to be found in documents not only written in a popular style but also springing from a

<sup>1</sup> *Divino Afflante Spiritu* (NCWC trans.) p. 14, n. 23.

<sup>2</sup> B. Lonergan, "Theology and Understanding," *Gregorianum* v. 35 (1954) pp. 630-648.

mind that conceived and judged not in the objective category of human thought but in the more spontaneous intersubjective categories of ordinary human experience and ordinary religious experience. Speculative theology is not immediately relevant to stimulation of religious feeling and this fact must be acknowledged explicitly and systematically (if not, then you have pressures which tend to re-enforce faith and understanding by these experimental modes.<sup>3</sup>

As Father Lonergan points out, the result of this is a narrow theology that attempts to restrict itself to scripture or to liturgy or the Fathers or spirituality alone. Such narrowness and emphasis on feeling often results in the reaction of the speculative theologian who rejects any scientific value in these whatsoever to the ultimate detriment of his own theological work. So here there is a real exegency for the Christian thinker, viz., to see how we can transpose from one to the other without injury to either discipline. Nor should this be thought of as a mere technical problem. Rather it looks to an essential task of the theologian which is the establishment of the relation between the defined dogmas and the experience and intuitions and insights spontaneous and unprecisioned of the inspired authors. For the theologian is obliged by his office and explicitly charged by Pope Pius XII to make clear the legitimate and vital relation that the teaching action of the church affirms as existing between dogma and its source, between defined truth and its scriptural origin.<sup>4</sup> As I hope to show later on in this paper this theological task calls for a more subtle notion of dogmatic development as well as a richer penetration of the *lumen sub quo* of theology: *ratio fide illustrata*.<sup>5</sup>

The third element in this somewhat long but necessary *status questionis* looks to something that Pope Pius stresses as well as being a fact in the history of exegetical development these last twenty-five years. It is the emphasis on the theological and religious interpretation of scripture. As the Holy Father puts it, exegetical interpretation should aim especially at theological doctrine.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Humani Generis* (NCWC trans.) p. 10, n. 21.

<sup>5</sup> Vatican Council in Denzinger-Baanwart n. 1799.

<sup>6</sup> *Divino Aflante Spiritu* p. 24, n. 54.

What should be recognized here is that the radical division between exegesis and theology, between the scientist and the believer, introduced by modernism has no place for the Catholic. The exegete cannot renounce being theologian. Père Levie points out the Catholic synthesis is one and the effort to construct it must be rigorously historical and profoundly theological. There can be no separation of the Christ of history and the Christ of Faith. There is only one Catholic Christianity and that is both of faith and of history and of one and the same time.<sup>7</sup> So if we read *Divino Aflante Spiritu* it is clear that while insisting on the best and fullest use of research tools it is an inspired text which is not to be separated from another context that is theological, i.e., the Christian Doctrine taught by the Church.<sup>8</sup>

Accordingly the Catholic exegete reflects on the historical conclusions as a sincere historian but also as a sincere believer. As a historian he must take every measure to be scrupulously objective in his use of the text. As a believer it is his understanding that this is also the word of God while he keeps constantly in view the total dogmatic synthesis of the church in which this passage or theme or experience finds its full place and meaning.<sup>9</sup> As the instruction of the Biblical Commission in 1950 so beautifully summed it up, the scripture professor "must himself be exceptionally well versed in theology and filled with a deep and sincere love of sacred doctrine. He should not take his stand exclusively on critical and literary principles of interpretation nor treat his work of exegesis as a thing apart from his students' total theological formation."<sup>10</sup> Correlatively, however, if there is to be fruitful cooperation then the dogmatic theologian must make every effort to appreciate personally Pope Leo XIII

<sup>7</sup> J. Levie, "Exégèse critique et interpretation théologique," *Recherches de Science Religieuse* vol. 39 (1951-52) p. 238. Besides the frequent references that the reader will find in this paper to Père Levie's writings I should like to acknowledge my general indebtedness to him for the overall inspiration and attitude taken in this paper derived largely from his articles in *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* and collected in *La Bible Parole Humaine et Message de Dieu*, Paris-Louvain 1958.

<sup>8</sup> *Op. cit.* n. 29, 55.

<sup>9</sup> J. Levie, *op. cit.* p. 183.

<sup>10</sup> *Enchiridion Biblicum* n. 598.

insistence that the relation of scripture and theology in the formation of the priest is no mere concomitance but a vital interconnection. He teaches that scripture is the very soul of theology and should spread its influence through the totality of the discipline.<sup>11</sup> Pius XII tells us that the theologian must always return to the sources of divine revelation:

For it belongs to them to find out how the doctrine of the living teaching authority is to be found either explicitly or implicitly in the scripture and tradition. Besides each source of divinely revealed doctrine contains so many rich treasures of truth that they can never really be exhausted. Hence, it is that theology through the study of its sacred sources remains ever fresh; on the other hand, speculation which neglects a deeper search into the deposit of faith proves sterile as we know from experience.<sup>12</sup>

The point to emphasize here is the concern that the Holy Father places on the need for theology to return to its sources. And this return to the sources is as he says necessary if theology is to avoid an arid sterility. I emphasize it here because it so clearly means so much more than the use of a text whether probative or not. It delineates the basic reality that the theologian must never lose sight of: the teaching Church is vitally linked with the past by scripture and tradition. The Church too is of necessity called to reflect unceasingly on its dogma and reread its scripture in view of the present, as well as to see the present in function of its scripture and dogma. It is a task that never ends this side of the beatific vision for scripture and dogma are both the work of the Holy Spirit and filled with inexhaustible divine riches. Here, too, I might affirm my personal conviction that the whole development in exegesis and the efforts of biblical theology have opened a tremendously rich resource for the dogmatic theologian.

I have spent some time on these preliminary points because it seems to me there is no viable discussion on the technical relationship between exegesis and theology possible unless these attitudes be a matter of conviction. They are, if I may so speak, the psycho-

<sup>11</sup> *Providentissimus*.

<sup>12</sup> *Humani Generis* p. 10, n. 21.

logical and personal *status questionis* that must be presupposed to any fruitful discussions of the matter at issue. In the light then of these considerations the first step is an effort to distinguish and delineate the two fields as clearly as possible. For the role each is to play is determined not only by the material they work with and the methods they use but above all by *intellectus fidei*—the understanding of the divine message intrusted to the church by Christ, Her Lord. For confusion of objects and methods leads to demands that a discipline do what it cannot do without betraying its own nature and contribution. And from this so often comes the further stage where, because it does not do what it cannot do, it is rejected as having no value whatsoever.

## II

### SACRED SCRIPTURE

Any discussions of the relations between exegesis and theology must begin with sacred scripture. This follows from the fact that primacy resides with scripture for it is first and foremost a source of revelation, the very word of God. Hence, it is absolutely indispensable to theology and for theology, which takes its rise from the fact that there has been a divine message given to man. So here we begin with: (a) the notion of revelation; (b) scripture as a source of revelation; (c) the relation between scripture and tradition; (d) exegesis to consider the work of Catholic exegesis in relation to theology.

*Revelation.* Revelation is for the Catholic, in the words of the Council of Trent, the *evangelium* originally promised through the prophets and contained in sacred scripture. Our Lord Jesus Christ first promulgated it with his own mouth and then ordered it to be preached to every creature through his apostles as the fount of every salutary truth and moral discipline."<sup>13</sup> However, behind these words of the Council of Trent lies a complete, rich and many faceted reality. It is first and foremost a divine action realized in and through the events that constitute the history of salvation. Each of

<sup>13</sup> D. B. 783.

these events is eternally willed and ordered in the divine plan that reaches from the call of Abraham to the coming of the Holy Spirit on the nascent church. This divine action expressed in words, acts, events and meanings is ultimately communicated to an inspired author who is himself an integral part of this total divine action. So we have the law, the prophets and the historians of Israel whereby the divine message is given. So for this message to reach us revelation and inspiration are and must be intimately united. And it is this divine action testified to by the Old Testament and this divine message transmitted through its inspired books that leads in turn to the central reality of the divine salutary action in history—Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

For the *evangelium* promulgated by Christ is the culmination of this divine work portrayed and interpreted in the Old Testament. For "God who at sundry times and diverse manners spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets last of all in these days has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things by whom also He made the world."<sup>14</sup> Thus Christ Himself is both the Supreme Revealer and the Supreme Revelation. Not only His oral teaching but by His manifestation as the Son of God through every word and deed; by His passion and death; by His resurrection and ascension. Through all these God reveals not only by word but much more richly and even profoundly by action. Words and actions and meaning and events which in turn are pondered and penetrated and interpreted by the apostles.<sup>15</sup> And all this is experienced and lived by the primitive church in union with the apostles who teach it and rule it. It is this totality that has been entrusted to the Church by the apostles and that constitutes the deposit of revelation. And it is precisely in relation to this deposit that the New Testament writing holds itself as a source. In the words of Levie "It is the message of Christ experienced and lived in the

<sup>14</sup> Heb. I, 1-3: Cf. Spicq *L'Épître aux Hébreux* where this point is tellingly made in his commentary on these verses.

<sup>15</sup> On this special apostolic light see: St. Thomas I, q. 57, a. 5, ad. 3; II-II, q. 1, a. 7; John of St. Thomas, *Tomus Theologicus* vol. VII, p. 120 seq.; Marin-Sola, *L'évolution homogène du dogme catholique*, vol. I, p. 57; C. Journet, *The Church of the Word Incarnate*, pp. 132-137.



primitive church under the action of the Holy Spirit of which the inspired evangelist is the witness and it is this message so formed that he expresses."<sup>16</sup>

"It is this message so formed that he expresses." These words, it seems to me, bring out two points that are essential to the work of exegesis and must, therefore, be clearly understood by the theologian. The first is the fact that the inspired writers of the New Testament are not and have no intention of simply being detached reporters. They themselves have lived and experienced the divine message in the Church and this experience shared with the Christian community is an integral part of their work. Secondly, the divine message so formed is transmitted through the inspired author in human words—the word of man. It is for this reason that Pius XII insists that if we are to come to a full knowledge of the divine message present in scripture we must know as fully as possible the personality of the sacred author, his modes of thought, vocabulary, sources, the literary milieu of his writing and so on.<sup>17</sup> While this has been emphasized and developed a great deal in the last fifteen years, yet, it seems to me important to this paper to restate it here. My reason for doing so is the occupational hazard which besets the dogmatic and speculative theologian whereby he is tempted to abstract from these elements and to concentrate on the divine aspect in scripture. It is this also which has sometimes led to an over-emphasis on the aspect of inerrancy to the neglect of the fact that it is but one part of the whole complex of inspiration. Certainly too, the theologian who studies this question of inspiration in the light of Pere Benoit's classic development of it in the order of instrumental causality should never fall into this overly simple approach.<sup>18</sup> If, in fact, he keeps in view the larger conception of inspiration he will be prepared to gain much more of the riches of the divine message. For the fullest penetration of the divine message of necessity

<sup>16</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 232.

<sup>17</sup> *Divino Aflante Spiritu*, 33-41.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. *La Prophétie*; also the suggestions of Père Labourdette in *Revue Thomiste* 50 (1950) pp. 414-421 which Père Benoit accepts in his "Note Complémentaire sur l'Inspiration" in *Revue Biblique* v. 63 (1956) p. 416 seq. Cf. also Robert and Tricot, *Initiation Biblique*, pp. 6-54.

calls for the understanding of the sacred writer in terms of his thought, his insights, his psychology, his formation and his purposes, since it is precisely by this medium that God has willed to communicate His message. So when we speak of scripture as a source of revelation we mean the divine message as taught and lived in the Church of the apostolic age and set down in writing under the inspiration of God by one who shared that life and formulated the divine message so taught and lived through a whole series of personal judgments, that are colored by his purposes, psychology and style and through all of which God Himself works.

*Scripture and Tradition.* As soon, however, as scripture is described as a source of revelation it implies for the Catholic its correlative which is tradition. And certainly no full consideration of the relation between exegesis and theology is possible without a clear understanding of the role of tradition as correlative to scripture. Moreover this correlation is today a specific point of divergency between Catholic and Protestant exegetes, as well as being one of the points of issue between Catholic exegete and Catholic theologian. Yet, tradition, rightly understood, is the bond between scripture and the dogma and so the area where I believe exegesis and theology meet and serve one another.

However, to establish this we must first of all recognize that the modern problem or discussion has its roots in the history of the Lutheran struggle of the sixteenth century. For Luther scripture and tradition were not only juxtaposed to one another, they were antithetical. To him tradition was in his sweeping phrase *plane addimentum satanae*.<sup>19</sup> For him tradition is the work of man and so of necessity there is an abyss between such work and the word of God. For the gospel is the "pure promise of God" opposed to every work of man. One, therefore, can find salvation only in the written gospel and must reject that effort of man which is tradition. So the principle, *sola scriptura* is founded on this fundamental opposition between God and men. For Luther the fundamental betrayal of the gospel by the Catholic church is the effort to harmonize these two

<sup>19</sup> *De abroganda missa, Werke*, ed. Weimar, t. 8, p. 418.

antinomies of the divine and the human.<sup>20</sup> Faced with this problem the Council of Trent dealt specifically with the concrete issues raised. It affirmed that there are apostolic traditions. It defined that these traditions were of divine origin. It stated that this revelation is contained in written books and non-written traditions and it put into clear relief the role of the church in transmitting this deposit of revelation.<sup>21</sup>

In these last few years, however, there has been considerable discussion by both Protestants and Catholics as to the matter of scripture and its relation to tradition. This discussion has raised a number of new perspectives which can be very valuable in any theological usage of scripture. Accordingly, it seems necessary to spend a little time on this point. From the Protestant standpoint a number of writers have recognized the fundamental inadequacy of Luther's strict conception of the *sola scriptura* as well as the false optimism of Calvin as to the perfect intelligibility of scripture. In the light of a much sounder and more profound biblical study leading Protestant theologians, particularly O. Cullmann, have discovered in the gospels themselves a truer idea of tradition.<sup>22</sup> They would recognize that the oral tradition of the apostles has primacy as well as divine authority even though they would confine it only to apostolic times.<sup>23</sup> On the other hand a number of Catholic authors have come to insist on the fact that while tradition is integrally related to the total reality, nonetheless all of revelation is somehow contained in scripture.<sup>24</sup> Such are the modern issues stated in

<sup>20</sup> Cf., G. Dejaifve, S.J. "Bible et tradition dans le Lutheranisme contemporain" *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* v. 78 (1956) p. 33 seq.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. D. B. 783.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Dejaifve, *art. cit.* pp. 36-43; O. Cullmann, *La Tradition, Problème exégetique*, (*Cahiers Théologiques*, 33), Paris 1953, and "Écriture et Tradition," *Dieu Vivant*, XXIII pp. 47 et seq.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Cullmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-42.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. J. Danielou, S.J., "Écriture et Tradition dans le dialogue entre les sépares," in *La Documentation Catholique*, 3 mars 1957, col. 283-294; C. Journet, "Scripture and the Immaculate Conception" in *The Dogma of the Immaculate Conception* (edit by E. O'Connor, C.S.C.) 1958, pp. 10-13; and *Équisse du développement du dogme marial* (Paris 1958) 39-41; Dillenschneider C.S. *Le sens de la foi et le progrès dogmatique du mystère marial* p. 55 and *Le principe premier d'une théologie marial organique* pp. 89-93.

skeleton form without however, I admit, the nuances and argumentations. What attitude is the theologian, largely shaped by the position of two distinct sources of revelation, to take? Since I myself have held and taught this two-source position for a number of years, I have felt it necessary to go back and review the whole situation in the light of this modern discussion and effort at re-evaluation. The following points summarize my conclusion.

First of all we are concerned with revelation; and revelation has two distinct notes. As St. Thomas points out, there is an *acceptio* and *judicium de acceptis*.<sup>25</sup> This means (as distinguished from vision) revelation consists not only in revealed formulas (whether words or images or actions) but also there must be some understanding of them, so both *revelata et sensus revelatorum* are necessary. In fact it is the divine meaning that constitutes the formal note of both revelation and faith.<sup>26</sup> Now it seems to me that any consideration of the formal note of tradition must center around the element of the *sensus divinus revelationis*. Set in this context the term "tradition" used by the Catholic in regard to revelation would have three distinct but not totally separable connotations. First the communication of revelation by Christ to the apostles; secondly the transmission of revelation by the apostles to the primitive Church; finally the transmission of revelation by the Church to the world. Now in each case it is the same revelation but the difference lies in the quality and manner in which the meaning or the *judicium de acceptis* is transmitted.

In the first case the apostles received revelation either directly from the mouth of Christ or *dictante Spiritu Sancto*. What distinguishes them, makes them the unique *fons omnium veritatum*, is the fact that by a special privilege they have an infused apostolic light whereby they have an explicit knowledge of the whole content of revelation.<sup>27</sup> So that not only formal teaching but action and prophetic intimation are all illumined by this special gift of office—

<sup>25</sup> *De Veritate*, q. 12, art. 7.

<sup>26</sup> In II ad Corinth., cap. 12, lect. 1; II-II q. 8, art. 2, ad. 2, cf. Billot *De Ecclesia Christi*, 2, 10, thes. 16 (Roma 3rd edit. p. 356).

<sup>27</sup> Cf. supra n. 15 and see also St. Thomas, S. T. II-II, q. 106, a. 4; I-II, q. 51, a. 4; Suarez, *De fide*, disp. 2, sect. 6, n. 18.

they have the sense of Christ. And this sense informs every element of revelation. It is this totality that is the *traditio constitutiva*.<sup>28</sup>

It is this *traditio constitutiva* that the apostles draw on for their kerygma, their preaching which is anterior to the written gospel. It is through their preaching that you have the *traditio revelationis* to the primitive and apostolic church. This tradition is constituted by formulae both written and oral as well as by actions and judgments and decisions. And here they transmit all that God has revealed but not all the implied things which they know explicitly. So the gospel that they preached, the writings composed by themselves or their disciples, the interpretations, customs, liturgical practices, decisions, all were ways by which they convey meaning.<sup>29</sup> And the primitive Christian community joined with the apostles, both lived in and through that experience and also interpreted it. It is this that constitutes the apostolic tradition which is transmitted by the Church to the succeeding ages. Hence, there can be no separation of tradition and scripture here because they constitute a living whole. It is to be read in terms of the whole life of the Church which constitutes its proper atmosphere and connatural light. For it is the Church that not only transmitted it, but in which its total meaning is found. Thus we can see that the revealed word of God is found in its totality in the bible and tradition, and it is in this sense that we can speak of the *traditio objectiva or continuativa*<sup>30</sup> which has a double element to which the Church returns to draw its teaching for every age.

The third connotation of tradition is what since the time of Franzelin has been called the *traditio activa*.<sup>31</sup> It is the transmission, explanation, interpretation and development of the deposit through the centuries. It is in short the work of the magisterium to which

<sup>28</sup> For the use of this *traditio constitutiva* see Congar, "Théologie" in DThC t. 15, 464-465; Michel, "Tradition" *ibid.* 1345-46.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. L. De Grandmaison.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Franzelin, *De Divina Traditione et Sacra Scriptura* pp. 11-28.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*; all that is meant by this active tradition or what he calls the "predicatio ecclesiae" is very extensively elaborated by Billot in his *De immutabilitate traditionis contra modernam haeresim evolutionismi* (4th ed.; Rome, 1929) pp. 11-45, presertim p. 33; also W. J. Burghardt, S.J., "The Catholic Concept of Tradition," *Proceedings CTSA* (1951) pp. 59-67.

has been entrusted the whole deposit of faith, both scripture and tradition.<sup>32</sup> It, too, is a work of the Holy Spirit. It is not only an intellectual gift but a reality that has lived. It is an office that manifests itself in professions of faith, the preaching of the Pope and Bishops, the writings of the Fathers, as well as in the actions, liturgical life and prayers of the body of Christ. It is not identical with the *traditio constitutiva* or the *traditio objectiva*. However, it is not separable from them in fact, since they are all essential elements of the divine plan by which we receive revelation, and each is dependent on the other. *Traditio activa* simply makes clear the role of the Church in the transmission and penetration and assimilation of the good news that has been revealed by Christ. It exists, therefore, to serve the word of God.

However, granting the *de facto* inseparability of scripture and tradition and recognizing their distinction, is it an inadequate distinction? Can we hold, as Monsignor Journet and Pere Danielou do, that "scripture toward the time of its completion appears as containing explicitly certainly not all revealed truths but at least the essential ones, the principles, the articles of faith from which the entire deposit could with the help of the Holy Spirit be made explicit later on?"<sup>33</sup> It is *this* that is read in the light of the oral preaching of the apostles which is received, lived and pondered on in the primitive church. As far as content goes, however, it is scripture which makes permanent the apostolic preaching and from which revelation must be drawn and interpreted by the Church and so given its full intelligibility and life. Against this position stands what has largely dominated theological thought since the time of Melchior Cano and Bellarmine. This would make scripture and tradition two distinct sources as regards the content of revelation. What then is to be said?

First of all we are indebted to the study of Professor Geiselmann who has shown that the Council of Trent specifically rejected a phrasing that would explicitly emphasize or canonize a disjunctive or twofold source.<sup>34</sup> However, the actual statement which is repeated

<sup>32</sup> Cf. *Humani Generis*.

<sup>33</sup> Journet, "Scripture and the Immaculate Conception," *op. cit.* p. 12.

<sup>34</sup> J. R. Geiselmann, "Das Missverständnis über das Verhältnis von Schrift

in the *verbo scripto vel tradito* of the Vatican Council as well as the usage of Pius XII of the phrase "scripture and tradition" make it clear that no absolute argument may be raised for or against the twofold position on authority alone.<sup>35</sup> In the light of this I would say, therefore, that *a priori* there is no necessary reason for accepting or rejecting either position. It is a matter of fact that must be resolved in the light of the data available. And here I offer, simply as an opinion, that while there is no difficulty in accepting a position that the substance of revelation as regard content is found in scripture, it is not necessary to hold that the totality is. I do not deny that it could be but in the present state of the case the formula *scriptura sola* used absolutely simply does not seem to me to account for all the data. Certainly there is no intrinsic reason for denying and there is good reason to believe that certain disciplinary and supplementary doctrines and interpretations would be transmitted by tradition without necessarily being in scripture at all. Certainly, too, despite Monsignor Journet's strong opinion to the contrary, the present development of Mariology seems to call for this qualification on *scriptura sola*—recognizing of course its *de facto* inseparability from tradition.<sup>36</sup>

In any case, whatever else be involved the very fact that the whole deposit of revelation has been entrusted to the Church to keep, explain and develop, is a necessary postulate for exegesis and theology. It is this revelation so transmitted that both the exegete and theologian must concern themselves with. This concern is basic to both for each seeks through his discipline to achieve a richer order of intelligibility from the deposit of Faith. Each uses the powers

und Tradition und seine Überwindung in der Katholisch Theologie," in *Una Sancta*," (Sept. 1956), pp. 131-150; cf. Edmon Ortigues, "Écriture et Tradition Apostolique au Concile de Trente" *Recherches des Sciences Religieuses* 36; A. Michel, *art. cit.*, col. 1315 (1949) pp. 271-299.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. D.B. 1792 and *Humani Generis*; also J. Vacant, *Études Théologiques* I, 376.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Baumgartner, "Tradition et Magistère" in *Recherches des Sciences Religieuses* 41 (1953) pp. 161-187; A. A. Stephenso "The Development and Immutability of Christian Doctrine" in *Theological Studies* 19 (1958) pp. 494-495; G. Owens, "Is All Revelation Contained in Sacred Scripture?" *Studia Montis Regii*, pp. 55-60.

of the human mind illumined by faith to seek a more fruitful understanding of God's revealed word. In this object, therefore, they are one but by the very nature of their respective disciplines not only the methods used but the order of intelligibility they seek are diverse. For the exegete the medium by which he works or, if you will, communicates with the deposit of revelation is first and foremost the literal sense of the text, that is, what the author intended to say when he wrote the words. His whole contribution through exegesis and biblical theology stems from and ultimately rests on the establishment of this literal sense. The theologian on the other hand communicates as theologian with the deposit of revelation by means of the dogmas, the articles of faith which are the first principles of his discipline. The literal sense, exegesis and biblical theology he uses in the light of the dogma and he uses them to penetrate and explicate as far as possible the intelligibility of the dogma, as well as the systematic exploration of the virtualities of revelation. Briefly then let us say something about the literal sense, exegesis and biblical theology, insofar as it is their proper achievement that alone can make of scripture a fruitful and effective theological place. Since I have already taken occasion to emphasize the primacy of the literal sense and the complex and difficult corpus of discipline its establishment calls for, I will not repeat it here. However, it might be well for theologians to appreciate Pius XII's admonition to show an especial charity to the work of Catholic scripture scholars. For charity is, as St. Paul tells us, patient and sometimes we do succumb to impatience at all of the time and effort that seems to be expended on literary criticism, textual criticism, archeology and history. But it is a slow work and we must recognize how much there is to be done of this kind of drudgery which, while preliminary, is absolutely necessary for solid exegetical interpretation.

It is this matter of what I have called exegetical interpretation that I should like to emphasize here. For it is evident that the establishment of this literal sense is simply the first step. The Catholic exegete has a theological office to fulfill. For he expends all his effort to establish the literal sense precisely to get at the divine message which is communicated through the words and ideas of the inspired author. For it is in the matter of interpretation that



he is most properly a *Catholic* exegete. For here by God's own gift of faith he is in living communion with the divine message—a gift which not only enables him to assent to this message as the word of God but which at the same time is a gift that illumines his mind the better to penetrate it. For by this gift he is in effective communion with the same Divine Spirit that inspired the sacred books themselves. By this faith there is also open to him that whole order of intelligibility which the Church has of God's revealed word. He knows too that scripture is not sufficient of itself but is inseparably joined with a teaching Church. And from this follow two important consequences for both the theologian and the exegete. First, the Church has continued and will continue to develop her understanding of revelation and bring to bear her experience in order to understand the scripture ever more fully. Secondly, because of this the totality of biblical theology is open only to a Catholic in communion with the Church.

The Catholic exegete, therefore, begins with the realization that Catholic doctrine is the norm. Because of the unity of faith he knows that God who is the author of the scriptures is also the principal author of the divinely assured teaching of the Church, so there can be no contradiction. It is because of this that Catholic biblical exegesis goes beyond philology and demands that the exegete be also a theologian and it is precisely because of this that his exegesis must be the first stage in making of scripture a theological place. Yet, this does not and cannot exempt him from scientific integrity but rather postulates it. So, each text is to be determined by all the historical, philological and literary resources possible. Secondly, by its very nature, a sound scientific exegesis demands that the context be determined in the same way so that the development of truth in the mind of the author at the moment he wrote can be known as far as possible. The Catholic exegete must be sincerely scrupulous in this regard and as objective as possible. But he also knows that there is another context—the theological context. This is the whole corpus of Christian dogma proposed by the Church. It is here, too, that the theologian can be of help for it is in the light of as full and rich a theological synthesis as possible that the Catholic exegete must weigh and reflect upon his historical con-

clusions. Here his sincerity as a believer is at stake for only in this way does he truly understand the inspired character of God's word and does not lose sight of the integral dogmatic context in which the Word of God has lived and lives. Moreover, it is only by this means that the full riches of the literal sense can be plumbed.<sup>37</sup> For the theological usage of scripture the importance of the establishment and exegesis of the literal sense cannot be overestimated. Just as it has primacy for the exegete so it must also have primacy in its use by the theologian. If scripture is to be a theological place in any proper sense then it is here that we must begin. St. Thomas stated centuries ago that all the other senses are founded on the literal sense from which alone arguments can be drawn.<sup>38</sup> The theologian can and ought to make use of other senses but he should know and use them for what they are and when he speaks of the sense of scripture it ought automatically to be assumed and be evident that he means the literal sense unless he specifically indicates otherwise.

However, it seems to me that the most valuable contribution that modern scriptural scholarship has to make is in the realm of biblical theology. This is said recognizing that there is still much discussion over the nature and organization of biblical theology. But two things have been clearly established: the inadequacy and misleading character of the "proof text" approach; and secondly, the necessity of seeing the teaching of scripture in the light of the themes that dominate it and the theological synthesis that colors and orients the mind of the inspired author. It is clear in the work that has been done in these past fifteen years that this is a far richer order of intelligibility than merely citing texts. In fact, it is far more properly theological in its usage. By this means we can see and present far more effectively the total picture of revelation and its meaning and so more closely approximate the *intellectus fidei*. Thus when we view St. Paul's affirmation in the light of a synthesis of his total thought the individual texts have a probative force that no other approach could give them. Again, it is only in the light of a real

<sup>37</sup> Cf. this paper and its treatment of the analogy of faith as applied to scripture.

<sup>38</sup> I, Q. 1, a. 10.

biblical theology that most of the Old Testament can be of value to the theologian. Only rarely does an individual text from the Old Testament add to the order of intelligibility in theology. It is much more likely to be a problem calling for explanation. But the development of a biblical theology that will bring into architectonic relationship the Old Testament to the New to which it is ordered and by which it is fulfilled, will be invaluable. Such a work cannot fail to open to the work of theological synthesis a veritable treasure trove.

What then is the nature of this biblical theology? As was mentioned, it is still being discussed but several things seem to be clear and generally agreed upon. First it is truly a *biblical* theology. This quite correctly means the refusal to try to formulate it or achieve it in the categories of speculative theology. It must be done rather in terms of the great biblical themes themselves. It must seek to know the object of faith through the biblical formulas and frameworks themselves. Secondly, it is properly a theology, that is, by reason of its object and its light. It deals with revealed truth, reflects upon it in the light of faith and it uses human intelligence illumined by that faith to come to a fuller understanding of the word of God contained in the sacred books.

Up to this point the Catholic scripture scholars would seem to be in general agreement as to the description of a biblical theology. However beyond this point there is considerable divergency. Some feel that what has been stated above is the most that can be said in the present state of biblical scholarship. Others would project a biblical theology that would seek to form a coherent whole along architectonic lines. Still others seem to feel that such a synthetic totality would be untrue to the very nature of the biblical themes.

However in the face of this discussion my own strong inclination is to make my own the larger view of Pere Braun,<sup>39</sup> and its elaboration in recent months by Pere Spicq.<sup>40</sup> As Pere Spicq envisages it, biblical theology should be conceived along architectonic lines. As

<sup>39</sup> "La théologie biblique," *Revue Thomiste* vol. 53 (1953) pp. 251 seq.

<sup>40</sup> "Nouvelles réflexions sur la théologie biblique," *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques*, vol. 42 (1958) pp. 209-219; cf. *ibid.* "L'avènement de la théologie biblique" vol. 35 (1951) pp. 561-574.

theology it will seek to organize the intelligibility of the whole as a whole. So it will take the entire body of biblical revelation and order it so as to manifest how it forms a coherent unity. Like speculative theology biblical theology endeavors to form a harmonious construction wherein each texts plays its part in the book and each book plays its part in the whole and all is reflected upon in the light of its fulfillment in the New Testament.

While this total biblical theology still remains unachieved there is sufficient work done to form an integral and valuable theological source for the dogmatic theologian. Much work of synthesis has been done on individual themes and collections of themes as well as with regard to particular authors such as St. Paul and St. John. Certainly, there is here a rich theological place that no theologian may in conscience neglect if he would fulfill his office properly. Moreover I am convinced that it is particularly in this area of biblical theology that the exegete can make and does make his most fruitful contribution to the service of theology as a whole. Equally the teacher of theology will find that what has been done thus far, adds both a richness and depth to its presentation of dogma that makes all efforts spent here thoroughly worthwhile.

In concluding this section it is manifest enough that it has been primarily concerned with scripture and the work of exegesis. This was deemed necessary in order to bring into one perspective as much as possible of the scriptural vision that is necessary for proper theological usage. In a paper intended primarily for theologians and given by a theologian the major concern ought to be a consideration of the whole new order of perspectives with which modern scholarship has enriched scriptural understanding. This must be first appreciated before the teacher of theology is in a position to see something of the full potential of scripture as a theological place. It is in the light of this that we now consider the work of theology in regard to scripture.

### III

#### THEOLOGY

As every Catholic believes, the full and authentic penetration of the divine message contained in scripture is possible only to the

Church. Exegesis, theology, Christian piety and experience, the total experience of the Church, each of these has a part to play in understanding to the full the divine message. The Church uses all of them and perfects their efforts by making them her own. Because the exegete and the theologian are both servants of the Church they serve her total mission best when they are scrupulously faithful to the requirements of their own discipline and see their common end cooperatively.

The dogmatic theologian in view of his office must approach the content of revelation from a different standpoint than that of the exegete and the biblical theologian. He too is concerned with the understanding of the divine message. He seeks that understanding, however, in accord with the means proper to his discipline. So he begins with the dogmas which are the first principles that orientate and govern his work. It is these dogmas that make immediately possible the opening of revelation to the light cast by rational truth and knowledge drawn from created things.<sup>41</sup> It is in the light of these dogmas and their development as well as the fruits of the centuries of speculative effort that he comes to scripture. He comes to scripture in order to penetrate more deeply into the dogma and at the same time balance, enrich, and vitalize the theological synthesis which it is his office to shape and communicate. Hence I submit that the theological approach to scripture as a theological place must be through the medium of the dogmatic affirmations of the Church. If this be so then the resources on which theology will call directly are: (a) *dogma*, (b) *dogmatic development*, (c) *the analogy of faith and Catholic teaching* and, (d) *theological speculation*.

*Dogma.* By dogma here I mean a truth infallibly proposed by the Church as being contained in revelation and which must be believed by all the faithful as of divine faith.<sup>42</sup> By beginning with dogma we pose clearly the basic problematic between the exegete and the theologian and we also set in perspective the methodological steps

<sup>41</sup> Cf., A. Gardeil, *Le donné révélé et la théologie*, (2nd edition 1932) pp. 77-117; L. De Grandmaison, "Qu'est-ce qu'un dogme?" *Bulletin de Littérateur Ecclésiastique*, Oct. 1905, p. 8.

<sup>42</sup> DB 1792 (Vatican Council).

of the theologian. For between the universalization in word and concept, represented by the dogma on the one hand and the insights concrete, spontaneous and highly individual given by the inspired writer on the other, there is a definite gap.<sup>43</sup> With regard to this problematic, at once historical and theological, the theologian and the exegete have two distinct functions, yet each is necessary to the exposition of the totality of the divine message. The exegete must endeavor to determine what the text manifests as to the degree of awareness that the inspired author had of the doctrine given. The theologian has for his function to illumine the relationships between the dogma and its sources, between defined truth and its scriptural place. He knows that there is a bond between the two that is both legitimate and necessary. Legitimate because the Church that defines the dogma is the same Church to which has been entrusted the deposit of revelation to be transmitted and explained. It is a necessary bond since the dogma pre-supposed homogeneity and indefectible transmission. Moreover by the work of positive theology the theologian not only penetrates the dogma more fully but also in the light of the dogma seeks a fuller understanding of the divine message communicated through the sources. He must presume and depend on the work of the exegete and the biblical theologian if his work is to be sound, but his primary purpose is not exegetical; it is theological. He seeks to use the resources of speculative reason to illumine and penetrate the divine message and then to synthesize it. It is in this area that he makes his proper contribution, seeking to bring about order and organization and it is from this point of view that scripture is one of his basic resources but not the only one.

*Development of Dogma.* In order for the theologian to show homogeneity between dogma and its scriptural sources he has as his basic instrument the development of dogma. It is this fact that does not seem to have been exploited as fully as it might have been. This is undoubtedly due to the problems concerning dogmatic development itself. The fact remains, however, that without at least a

<sup>43</sup> The concern here is not with the apologetical or polemical issue but the theological exigency and the historical problem. Cf. J. Levie, S.J., "Exégèse critique et interpretation théologique," *Recherches de Science Religieuse*, vol. 39 (1951-52) p. 238 seq.

viable and working concept of dogmatic development it is not possible for the theologian to make full use of scripture as a theological place. It is only through the medium of dogmatic development that he will be able to see something of how the inspired text prepares for the development, serves as its foundation and renders it possible. Moreover it may very well be that some of the conflict between the theologian and the exegete is due to the failure to realize that between the literal sense and the full theological content of the text lies precisely this fact of dogmatic development.

This dogmatic development, as Cardinal Newman so perceptively saw, is not something that we introduce to meet a historical situation but rather inherent in the very nature of revelation itself.<sup>44</sup> Christian revelation is a fact transmitted as an idea. The divine message incarnated in human thought cannot perfectly express itself or reach a real coextension with the truth as it is in the divine mind save by a continuing historical development. But this development, because it is a development of ideas, by its very nature is a dynamic thing. It is not a material thing, but a thing of the mind and of meaning and therefore of understanding. It is a homogeneous development between the revealed idea and the understanding of it as it is in God's mind. Grant, therefore, a living tradition and vital development, and the discovery of new aspects, fuller meanings and relationships necessarily follows.

The same point can be seen from the nature of scripture, which is our concern here. It is clear that, since God knows the whole design of redemption down to its infinitesimal detail, scripture will be engorged with senses and meanings that are clearly perceived or known only by God. The inspired author, then, is only and can only be a deficient instrument as regard the totality of divine thought. Further, too, the inspired book passes beyond its immediate audiences, the author's contemporaries, and is destined for the Catholic Church which will continue until the consummation of the world. It is this fact that has led to extensive discussion about the *sensus plenior* and its relation (as well as that of the other senses of scripture) to the literal sense. I myself however think that, what-

<sup>44</sup> *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (1890), p. 55.

ever be the resolution of this exegetical problem, from the theological point of view it is sounder and more fruitful to treat the matter from the larger and far more flexible framework of dogmatic development.

While all recognize the fact of dogmatic development the question is the *how*. Over this question of the nature of development there has been a great deal of division and effort. Much of the modern discussion has centered around the definability of the theological conclusion.<sup>45</sup> No certain position has yet emerged from this controversy. In this regard, simply as a personal opinion, it has seemed to me that this approach from the sole standpoint of the definability of a theological conclusion is far too restrictive. Not only do you have the fact that revelation is an unique case, but there are historical and theological factors that have as essential a role as the rigorously dialectical. And the light of faith and piety and experience all have a part to play in the understanding and development of revelation. This becomes clear when we endeavor to relate dogma to scripture through the medium of dogmatic development. For the evidence indicates that the Church can define a truth which is not rigorously deducible or for which the historical proofs are relatively obscure.

How then shall we formulate a workable concept of dogmatic development that will enable us to place in a coherent whole all the factors that enter into the development and explanation of revelation? Personally I am convinced that the best framework I have seen is that suggested by Father Dhanis<sup>46</sup> and which Father Benard has developed considerably and applied in some detail.<sup>47</sup> Limitations of space force me to run the risk of doing a grave injustice to the carefully nuanced formulae used by these men, hence any

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Marin-Sola, *L'Évolution homogène du dogma catholique* 2 vols. and R-M Schultes *Introductio in Historiam Dogmatum* (Paris 1922); also C. Journet, *The Church of the Word Incarnate* pp. 338-346; *ibid.*, *Équisse du développement du dogme marial* (Paris 1954) 53 seq.

<sup>46</sup> E. Dhanis, "Révélation explicite et implicite," *Le sviluppo del dogma*, (Rome 1953) pp. 168-218.

<sup>47</sup> "The Development of Doctrine: A Basic Framework" *Proceedings of the Society of Catholic College Teachers of Sacred Doctrine* vol. 5 (1959) pp. 14-29.



damage is my fault arising from the need here to say something about it and yet not having the space to develop it as it deserves.

I find it convincing because it begins with the clear understanding of the "implicit to explicit" approach which has been sanctioned by the *magisterium*. And in the matter of implicit element it also by-passes the idea of virtually implicit which is so ambiguous when used of dogma. Thus it centers rather on the formally implicit. Finally it begins where the whole process must begin namely the fact of revelation as a *locutio Dei*—the divine message (God speaking) to man. God thus wills to give truth to man and stands as the witness of that truth. So revelation is divine testimony. Hence the *formal* element of this testimony is the transmission of the thought, of the idea to the mind of the hearer. It is this formal element that allows us to apply the proper analogy of *locutio* to God.

This formal element is, of course, reflected first of all in the explicit statement, but as is the case with us the explicit statement can contain other ideas which implicitly God also wishes to convey. These implicit ideas are formally conveyed in the divine testimony because God wishes to convey them. These implicit ideas can become explicit in the light of other things that the recipient already knows or believes. This would be the *immediately* implicit. Once this becomes explicit we have an added instrument for the fuller understanding of the divine testimony. For in the light of this now explicit knowledge or understanding we are able to see further implications and so also make them explicit. This would be the *mediately* implicit. But what controls, and, if you will, "objectifies" this whole approach is that the formal element depends on what God wishes to convey either explicitly or implicitly. Hence we are concerned not with purely dialectical conclusions or virtualities but with what the divine intention included implicitly in the deposit of revelation.

The value of this framework in the approach to the divine message contained in Scripture seems to me quite clear. It delineates clearly the role of the *magisterium* to whom has been entrusted the office of infallibly discerning the divine message contained therein. As Pius XII wrote in *Humani Generis* "God has given to his Church a living *magisterium* to elucidate and explain what is contained in

the deposit of faith only obscurely and as it were implicitly.”<sup>48</sup> Secondly in this framework it is possible to bring into a coherent whole all the factors which must be accounted for in dogmatic development. Thus we have the presence of the Spirit of Truth in the universal Church, the Christian sense of the believers (“the faith of the Christian people” to which *Munificentissimus Deus* alludes) the infallibility of the *Ecclesia credens* sustained and directed by the active infallibility of the magisterium. Moreover due place is given to the investigations of exegesis, history and speculation. These last are not normative of development but the instrument that the Church uses to seek out the movements of the Holy Spirit in the Church and the faith which has corresponded to them. Finally such an approach effectively answers any charge that the intervention of the Church in the interpretation of scripture is arbitrary or merely extrinsic and protective. In the light of its living function the Church brings to bear on scripture its synthesis of dogmatic development. Thus between the rigorous scientific exegesis and the ecclesiastical exegesis there can be no dichotomy. The Church has need of its exegetes and its historians and its philologists. She does not by-pass their labor nor ignore their conclusions. She perfects their work by completing it. For she alone is able to determine infallibly what God wished to say—the formal element of the divine testimony.<sup>49</sup>

*The Analogy of Faith and Catholic Teaching.* If it is the de-

<sup>48</sup> n.

<sup>49</sup> As will be noted all through this treatment I have spoken only of the “development of *dogma*. I have done so because I believe that Father Bernard has greatly clarified the whole issue of development by distinguishing dogmatic development from both theological and doctrinal development. “The development of theology . . . the corpus of theology as it is taught today is a synthesis of revelation and human reason, ordered and articulated in an harmonious whole. . . . It includes theses qualified not only as “de fide” but also . . . as “certain,” “common among theologians” . . . “probable, etc. Father Bernard uses the phrase “the development of Catholic teaching” to avoid any ambiguity in the use of the term “doctrine.” “Catholic teaching is a broad term, including both dogmas and a considerable body of other truths which, while not dogmas, nevertheless call upon the assent of all Catholics” (pp. 15-16). Here however we have used dogma in the strict technical sense. I recognize that the other two have their use in the employment of scripture as a theological place but this is not the issue at this point.

velopment of dogma that enables the theologian to relate the dogma with its sources it is by the analogy of faith and Catholic teaching that he seeks to illumine that relationship. Basically the term "analogy of faith" has become a technical term to designate the solidarity which unites the Christian truths amongst themselves. So historically the theologian has looked upon this harmony of the dogmas amongst themselves as one of the instruments in arriving at a greater understanding of the content of faith. In fact it is this cohesion of Christian truth that the Vatican Council offered as just such a resource.<sup>50</sup> Its usage in our present context is consecrated by Leo XIII in his *Providentissimus Deus*. In this encyclical after having recalled the duty of the Catholic exegete to conform his teaching to the judgment of the Church in those passages which the Church has authentically interpreted he goes on: "as for the rest the analogy of faith must be followed and Catholic teaching as it is received by the Church must be used as the supreme norm."<sup>51</sup> Here the Pope would seem to associate these two conjunctively as a single norm and the succeeding magisterial documents appear to bear this out. On the basis of this as well as its history I would hold that as a principle of theological interpretation the analogy of faith would have two aspects: (a) the analogy of faith drawn from the scriptures themselves; (b) the analogy of faith of Catholic teaching in general. For as Pere Lagrange remarked even from the critical point of view this simply takes account of the Church as the milieu in which scripture appears and in which it continues to live and bear fruit.

(a) *The analogy of faith drawn from the scriptures themselves.* Here, it would seem to me, immediately relevant would be all that we have seen by way of the function and nature of biblical theology. So the positive theologian, turning to biblical theology here, would be using this instrument. There, too, would also be here what we have seen on the point of the theological synthesis that underlies the writing of each of the inspired authors; particularly in the New Testament, as well as the inter-relations amongst them. All this I would place under the general heading of biblical theology which we have already discussed.

<sup>50</sup> D.B. 1796.

<sup>51</sup> E.B. 109.

In addition to this I feel there should be incorporated under this heading the various senses which the Church illumined by the Holy Spirit has come to see in this divine message. It is the whole ambit of what is called the spiritual sense. By this is meant the whole area which, while it may escape the inspired author himself, is nonetheless willed by the primary author, God—it is part of the formal element of the divine message. However, in making this point, let me insist once again that the literal sense has primacy. The spiritual sense is only authentic when it does no violence to the literal sense in order to introduce unrelated ideas. It is not a mere accommodation nor is it an oratorical or pastoral artifice. It must flow from the literal sense and be discernible in the light of the religious and doctrinal context that is proper to the Sacred Books. So the realities, personages, events and even formulae of the Old Testament are looked upon as symbols and types prefiguring and announcing the realities, events, personages and truths of the New Testament. For in its totality the Old Testament by the will of God constitutes a progressive ascension to Christ and Christianity. So, this spiritual sense is not opposed to the unity of the literal sense, but it is a deeper penetration of the message under the guidance of the Church and its historical experience. Hence it looks to being and enrichment of that literal sense through a clarification of the nuances and resonances which are indicated only in an obscure manner. Implications are made explicit only in the light of a fuller knowledge gained by the Church, the Church working through its reflection, experience and history and guided in all by the Holy Spirit.

It is for these reasons that the spiritual sense whether typical or moral or eschatological has appeared in Christian thought from the beginning and has continued up to our time. It has been recognized as legitimate and justifiable both theologically and historically from the supernatural point of view. For the least word of God has a universality that passes beyond the mind of its first recipient and is infinitely rich with applications and implications to new situations and developments. By way of guidance in avoiding the purely arbitrary and yet making sound theological usage of this element of scripture as a theological place we might well follow Pere

Levie's rules.<sup>52</sup> First, this type of ecclesiastical interpretation finds its surest and most fruitful expression in the inspired texts which are the base of both theological and dogmatic conclusions of quite extensive bearing, for example Christ the new Adam. Secondly, by resting solidly on these analogies and seeing them in the light of biblical theology one can more surely enrich scriptural understanding from the spiritual sense introduced by the Fathers and by the liturgy in the context of Christian piety. Only when this relationship is clearly maintained is it possible to avoid excess and purely human ingenuity. Thirdly it is not a question of finding isolated or occasional or superficial resemblances but of seeing these types and moral patterns in the whole history and thought of Israel as it moves toward its fulfillment in Christ and His Church.<sup>53</sup> Before we make use of these analogies we must have assurance from the teaching of the Church, liturgically or otherwise, that this is indeed an integral part of the total historical development.

(b) *The analogy of faith drawn from the general Catholic teaching.* By Catholic teaching here is meant the *doctrina Catholica* which will include not only dogma but other truths which while not dogmas call for the assent of all Catholics. The relation of this to the interpretation of scripture is clear enough. "The true grandeur of scripture does not lie in being the end of a process because the end of the process is the Church growing unto the fullness of the measure of Christ. Thus the true grandeur of scripture is in being a perpetual point of departure with which the Church is always in contact." Moreover, while the Church has not authentically interpreted many texts still there are a large number of doctrinal decisions born of scripture where the decision of the Church has continued and completed the scriptural interpretation. So, for example, the Church draws dogmatic conclusions from the text of St. Paul. The exegete cannot prove that they are explicitly in the conscious-

<sup>52</sup> Op. cit. 289-295.

<sup>53</sup> On this whole relationship, cf., J. Coppens, *Les Harmonies des deux Testaments. Essai sur les divers sens des Ecritures et sur L'Unité de la Revelation*, Cahier VI de la *Nouvelle Revue Theologique* (1949).

ness of the inspired writer but in the actual doctrinal synthesis of the present they become clear since it is the Church that guards and judges the total idea. Hence while all revelation is given in the Apostolic age it is given to a divine pedagogue to be explicitated and formulated and synthesized within and by the Church. It is this body of Catholic teaching as it actually is here and now that forms a necessary context for the Catholic interpretation of scripture. Here at the side of the theologian and the exegete is always the work of the Church ever seeking to express the truth of the Church more perfectly and moving continually to a total synthesis. Accordingly it must not be forgotten that this is a positive resource in the use of scripture. The work of the Church is not simply to say that such and such an interpretation is wrong or even solely to interpret certain texts infallibly. Rather, it is a living and continuous effort to develop the totality of its theological sense and content. By its doctrinal, moral and mystical life it continues to furnish resources by which the full riches of scripture may be developed. To sum it up: "God who alone sees the ultimate connection of all the doctrinal texts in scripture has given to His Church by the constant presence of His Spirit the privilege of perceiving progressively the doctrinal synthesis which He has foreseen and willed from the beginning. And this work the Church does by the moral efforts of its saints, the moral needs of its faithful, and by the scientific work of its exegetes, theologians and teachers as well as the directives of the magisterium."<sup>55</sup> Using every scientific care the theologian has no choice but to turn to this resource in coming to the theological content of scripture. He must not confuse scriptural exegesis properly speaking with dogmatic development. But he knows that for the Catholic they are closely bound and that the teaching of the Church guided by the Holy Spirit can reach a richer, deeper and more complete sense than can be logically deduced from the rigorous, critical exegesis of the words themselves. It is this sense of scripture that a very considerable number of scriptural scholars call the *sensus plenior*. I prefer dogmatic development and see the analogy of faith as being essentially an application of this doctrinal development.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 281.

*Speculative Theology.* That speculative theology has a necessary role to play in the full use of scripture as a theological place is something which has been too frequently ignored and in some cases denied. This most unfortunate situation seems to stem from two causes. The first is a misconception of the true function of speculative theology and the other is the epistemological problem that was mentioned in the beginning of this paper. It is my belief therefore that we will add a great deal to the full understanding of the relationship between scripture and theology if we treat each of these as problems in some detail.

To begin with speculative theology is essentially the effort by which human intelligence vivified by grace and possessed of revelation endeavors to attain to a fuller understanding of the revealed truths it possesses. To accomplish this aim the intellect, illumined and guided by faith, employs the resources of speculative intelligence and human wisdom and works in accord with the principles and laws of reason. Yet, as history shows, this effort has given rise to many suspicions on the part of Catholics. So, it has been attacked in the name of the bible or of Christian piety or spiritual simplicity and the like. But if we study the underlying fear that causes these attacks it would seem to be the feeling that the approach of speculative theology somehow denigrates from the mystery or transcendence or spiritual character of revelation. Modernly, however, speculative theology has been called upon to give way to a kerygmatic theology that would set forth the truths of faith in the forms in which the bible and tradition present them—and so communicate them more effectively. Some insist that, by its analyzing and systematizing, speculative theology has reduced the living word of God to a lifeless body of abstract definitions. Others feel that its intellectual emphasis alienates those who seek God through religious experience and so endangers the very mystery that it seeks to understand.

Such then baldly stated are the criticisms advanced against speculative theology. In answer to them let me say that they are not without value and that I am sure they might be substantiated in individual cases. However, the generalizations that have been made from these particular cases suffer from a very dangerous defect. It

is the failure to understand that speculative theology is only one way of knowing God but in the eyes of the Church it is a most important way. Because it is only one of the ways of knowing God it has its necessary limitations but, as the Church makes clear in the training of her priests, speculative theology has a necessary place to play in her saving mission. It is well to keep in mind too that if you eliminate speculative theology you will do away with dogmatic development for, as the history of the Nicene creed will testify, dogmatic definitions presuppose the work of speculative theology. So speculative theology has a work to do and that specific work the Church approves, encourages and, throughout her history, has used on a large scale. For the Church has always been aware that speculative theology is a vital exigency of a living mind illumined by faith and receptive of revelation. Try to do away with a sound speculative theology and one is forced to introduce an unsound and inadequate one or give up the use of the mind altogether in the work of understanding the content of revelation. It is not the only way of knowing God but to criticize it because it does not or cannot undertake the other ways of knowing God is as futile as it is unwarranted.

The other source of difficulty about speculative theology is what I have termed the epistemological problematic. It is this that is the modern issue between exegesis and theology. As was indicated in the first part of this paper this problem centers on the fact that to have a speculative theology we must transpose from the categories of revelation to an order of philosophical categories and classifications. Simply put the difficulty is: has not the employment of Aristotelian notions in the place of biblical categories obscured the living realities of the Gospel? Therefore will not the interpretation of revelation by speculative theology actually deform it? Hence must we not bypass these Greek philosophical notions if we truly would appreciate the living content of the Bible? It may be charged that I have stated the problem too sharply or without proper nuances. Perhaps! But there is ample evidence of the existence of this attitude of mind which looks upon the accomplishment of speculative theology as a kind of historic relativity whose need is now passed.



In witness of this it is only necessary to read the testimony of Pius XII in *Humani Generis*.

First of all it must be realized that many of the less trained who wish to adhere to the Bible alone may have been the victims of some confusion. For the biblical categories themselves have two elements. There are first the intelligible realities intended and willed by God, the *formal element*. Secondly there is the semitic or the Greek form of these intelligible realities as they are expressed in the Bible. This latter aspect is secondary. God willed revelation for all men and as an intelligible reality it transcends every possible culture and is capable of finding expression in every language. This of itself, while a delicate thing, does not of necessity involve a deformation of revelation. In fact as we saw in the matter on the development of dogma, the very fact that the divine message is preached to men already having a background of ideas makes such development possible. For it enables them to draw implications that are in the divine deposit and formally willed by God—thus, *person, nature, consubstantial, procession, relation*. Nor should it be forgotten that in a historical plan, such as is the divine design of salvation, for better than a thousand years the Church has made its own the resources of Greek thought to draw out the implications of revelation. This can hardly be an accident.

Besides this general point there is as I have indicated a real epistemological issue that lies at the root of this problematic. It is this issue that I am particularly concerned with here since it so directly affects the relationship with theology to scripture as a theological place. It is as stated the transposition of biblical categories to philosophical and abstract classifications. In considering this point it should be noted that such a transposition is a natural and normal process to be expected in any growth in understanding. For an extensive and detailed and profound study of this natural process I refer you to Father Lonergan's recent work entitled *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*. Unhappily I am forced to content myself here with a summary presentation of his conclusions and their application to theology. He points out that one of the ways in which man unfolds his desire to know is by answering and asking questions and so (as distinct from the mystical pattern

of experience) he operates in the intellectual pattern of experience. It is out of this intellectual pattern of experience that the fundamental metaphysical pattern natural to the human mind arises.<sup>56</sup> Metaphysics so conceived is the *philosophia perennis* which prescind from the fact of whether or not it is a western or an eastern mind. When an Oriental inquires, understands, reflects and judges he performs the same intellectual operations as an Occidental.<sup>57</sup> In the light of this then we have the ordinary process of development in the pattern of intellectual experience.

Applying this to the realm of revealed doctrine Father Lonergan would suggest that the following steps take place:

1. The initial divine revelation.
2. The work of teachers and preachers communicating and applying this initial message to a succession of different audiences.
3. The work of the speculative theologian seeking a universal formulation of the truths of faith—a form accessible to any sufficiently cultured audience.
4. The work of the historical (positive) theologian revealing the doctrinal identity in the verbal and conceptual differences.<sup>58</sup>

This of course is only a parallel of the natural development of understanding but does bring into a highly suggestive frame of reference the interrelations of these various efforts seeking to plumb the intelligibility of revelation. Every full interpretation of reality has to mount to a universal viewpoint. Yet it retains its doctrinal identity through a diversity of conceptualizations and expressions. The Church too presents the same doctrine and meaning through a diversity of expressions. So to come to the universal viewpoint which is an integral element of any true interpretation of reality the Church takes the *philosophia perennis*. It makes use of this *philosophia perennis* and its expansion into speculative theology to enrich its understanding by achieving this universal standpoint. So in approaching scripture the theological interpreter works from this firmer and broader base that includes the whole historical situation and

<sup>56</sup> B. Lonergan, S.J., *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, p. 736.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 738-740.

the theologically transformed viewpoint. Out of this come the dogmatic decisions and as a result the technical theses of the dogmatic theologian can easily be the true interpretation of scriptural texts, patristic teaching and traditional utterances.<sup>59</sup>

This approach or perspective brings us directly to the heart of the matter in this whole question of speculative theology and scripture. It is basically the question of analogy. This is central to Catholic theological thought and is the key to the legitimate transmission from the biblical categories to the more universal framework of dogma and speculative theology. As the work of Rudolph Bultmann, Paul Tillich, and Karl Barth makes it overwhelmingly evident it is a crucial issue in the whole question of biblical exegesis. Against their position the Catholic view of analogy affirms that between a nominalist agnosticism that exalts the divine transcendence to a point where whatever ideas we express about God are pure verbalisms and symbols and the unconscious and crass anthropomorphisms that attempt to define God in material terms there is another way, a middle way, a properly human way. It is the way of metaphysical analogy which has been affirmed by the Church and is the cornerstone of Catholic speculative theology. If this be denied or rejected then we are forced to accept an unbridgeable abyss between God and man in the very order of revelation itself. This, it seems to me, has always been present in historic Protestantism and I feel that its modern exponents in the search for intelligibility ultimately resolve this problem by a mystique which is impervious to intellectual analysis. As Monsignor Journet has so perceptively observed:

If we look for the ultimate reason for the differences between Catholicism . . . and Protestantism, we are soon inclined to point to the different forms of spirituality that they embody. On the one hand there is the spirituality of the Incarnation, or in a broader sense the spirituality of the transfiguration of matter by the spirit. This is the Catholic form of spirituality with its doctrine of the Incarnation. . . . On the other hand we have a sort of spirituality of disincarnation, or in a broader sense a spirituality of the separation of matter and spirit. That is the anti-Catholic form of spirituality with its thousand forms, . . .

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 741-748.

On a more metaphysical plane we may see the opposition as one between a dogmatic view of the analogy of being, in accordance with which the divine privileges, especially divine sanctity can be communicated analogically to creatures—as existence once was—without affecting adversely the divine transcendence but rather manifesting it. On the other hand we have a dogmatic view of the uniqueness of being, which can only safeguard the divine transcendence by denying any possibility for the divine privileges to be communicated especially divine sanctity: either (a) to the humanity of Christ because of the fear of monophysitism; or (b) to creatures because of the fear of idolatry.<sup>60</sup>

Because this “dogmatic view of the analogy of being” is so central a point of divergence and so essential an element of incarnational theology and enters so deeply into the field of scriptural exegesis it must be seen in its specifically theological framework. I say “theological” framework because it must not be forgotten that speculative theology is not a philosophy but essentially a work of faith employing and illumining the resources of reason. Speculative theology is not a philosophy of religion or even of dogma. Not only is it dependent on faith but the grace of faith is one of its constitutive elements.<sup>61</sup> For the Catholic theology is a vital organic relation between faith and discursive reason.<sup>62</sup> This relationship is simply not conceivable in the historical Protestant notion of faith.

The full appreciation of the function of analogy in Catholic theology also calls for some understanding of the manner in which divine faith influences reason. For the grace of faith is not simply a supernatural modification of the rational assent that results from the motives of credibility. Rather it is the illumination of the created mind by the Uncreated Spirit. For infused faith presents to the mind the *Veritas Prima* i.e. the order of truth contained in the mind

<sup>60</sup> C. Journet, *The Primacy of Peter*, pp. 36-37.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. A. Leonard, “La Foi, Principe Fondamental du Developpement du Dogme,” *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Theologiques*, v. 42 (1958) p. 282 seq.; L. Malavez, “La Foi comme evenement et comme signification,” *Nouvelle Revue Theologique* v. 81 (1959) pp. 386-87.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. “The Scientific Teaching of Theology,” *Proceedings of the Catholic Theological Society* 1949, pp. 131-134.

of God Who is truth.<sup>63</sup> God revealing Himself, *Veritas Prima in dicendo*, thus bears in upon the intellect drawing forth its assent and admitting it to the divine order. Mystery remains of necessity but by this divine faith we are in living relation not with the *enuntiabile sed ad rem*.<sup>64</sup> Because faith is not vision it will seek through all its resources to unfold and develop the implications of what it possesses. But whatever be the resources used they are ruled by a principle that is anterior and superior to them—the virtue of faith which adheres to all that God has revealed *in globo*. It is this adherence to the *Veritas Prima* that animates the whole theological process. So for example, the way to heresy is barred not by reason but by faith. It is faith that perceives the correspondence between the revealed utterance and the dogma. It is faith that discerns with surety the identity of successive states of dogma.<sup>65</sup> So too the work of theology is not only commanded by the faith but illumined by that faith as to meanings and values that are open only to the believer—the *fides quaerens intellectum*. True reason judges the revealed proposition and even in the matter of supernatural values the judgment of reason must be exercised in some way. But as Father Malavez points out reason working here is not reason left

<sup>63</sup> St. Thomas, *De Veritate*, q. 14, art. 8.

<sup>64</sup> *Summa Theologica*, II-II q. I. art. 2, ad 2.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. A. Leonard, art. cit., pp. 281-282. This direct interrelation of faith and reason with faith as a primary principle in the work of understanding has considerable importance in the modern approach to Scripture. The Protestant exegetes have laid a very heavy emphasis on the personal and existential character of the act of faith but along with this unilateral insistence on the decision and personal values involved in faith is a real reticence and even ambiguity in regard to this intellectual element. It would appear that they are attempting to bring under faith alone values and exigencies that belong to the other two theological virtues. For us faith as a living faith necessitates a vital connaturality produced by charity and this involves not only supernatural contemplation but in addition a real order of affective union with God. To this is added, as St. Thomas teaches, the gifts of the Holy Spirit wisdom and understanding opening our minds to the direct action of the Holy Spirit. It is this total supernatural structure that encloses the decision of faith and its consequent development. In this perspective the existentiality of faith is largely assured by the intervention of the will and so is an intellectual commitment that demands the vital engagement of the whole believing person in its adherence to truth as revealed.

solely to its own resources but the intelligence of "the new man" illumined by faith, adhering to the *Prima Veritas*, fixed on his supernatural end and so by grace seeing, as it were, from within.<sup>66</sup>

Yet, while insisting on this illuminative role of faith in the theological effort it should not be inferred that divine faith gives us a vision of the reality as it is in the mind of God. Faith illumines reason not by way of direct vision but by enabling it to better understand the truth as *revealed*. Faith begins with the fact that God has expressed His revelation in human language, concepts and actions and hence the theologian is concerned with the order of *logical* truth not the reality as it is in the mind of God or *ontological* truth. For the theological effort evoked by faith is dependent on the resources of reason and it is logical truth that characterizes the relation of mind with being. It is essential to understand this point since it is this realism that underlies our common theological tradition. In this view our natural knowledge begins with sense experience and the truth of our intellect is in accord with the *res* from which we receive our knowledge. It is in things that our mind finds the proper principle of its truth.<sup>67</sup> On the other hand the thing itself finds its truth in its conformity with the divine idea—ontological truth. Between the Divine Intellect and ours is the mediation of things, so between our knowledge of these things and the things as they are known by God can only be analogy. Moreover since our natural knowledge is based on things then our rational knowledge of spiritual things can only be by analogy from what we know directly i.e. the order of sensible reality. Exemplifying this would be the whole treatment of God's existence and attributes in the light of the Vatican Council's definition on our natural knowledge of God.<sup>68</sup>

The bearing of this distinction on our problem of theological analogy becomes evident when it is realized that revealed truth must also be placed in this order of logical truth. Once it is understood that it is in this order of logical truth and analogy it becomes clear that by its very nature it is open to the resources of speculative intelli-

<sup>66</sup> Cf. L. Malavez, *op. cit.*, p. 388.

<sup>67</sup> *Summa Theologica* I, 16. art. 5, ad 2.

<sup>68</sup> *DB* 1785, 1806.

gence. When we assent to revealed truth we conform our minds to the created realities chosen by God to manifest his mysteries. There is analogy between our knowledge by faith and God's knowledge of these realities there cannot be univocity. The theologian deals with the message revealed by God and transmitted and explained by the Church. This revelation, however, is made by means of human concepts. In fact, these divine truths are humanized in their very formulation and it is these human statements that tell us of the mysteries that are in God. But it is God alone who guarantees that these statements do make known the divine mysteries which are unknowable to us. This is why before we can have theology we must respond to these statements by faith and assent to them on the authority of God revealing. Thus the theologian neither sees the mind of God directly nor does he receive any new revelation. He begins with the analogies chosen by God from things known to the human mind, and he seeks some understanding of the divine mysteries formulated in human language. Because they are in human terms they are analogous to the idea as it is in the mind of God but that they are true analogues is guaranteed by God Himself. Theological truth is thus measured by the dogmas and it is through the medium of the dogmas in which these analogies are expressed that it legitimately transposes from biblical categories to the more universal and metaphysical categories of speculative theology. It is a legitimate transposition, because the intelligible reality whether in scripture or dogma or theology is in the order of human truth. Hence the truth in each of these is univocal not analogical. So, for example, *generatio* whether found in scripture or dogma or theology is analogous to the reality as it is the mind of God. But it is not analogous in the order of human truth but univocal; it is the same human reality no matter what the category. Because it is the same human reality then each of the categories, biblical, dogmatic and theological, is capable of enriching our understanding of it and bringing out ever more fully the total reality which God wills it to convey. For each of these disciplines is an instrument of a human mind which is specifically one and so affirms the truth in the same specific way no

matter what the category. For it is the analogy of being that is at the heart of the whole process demanding and justifying it.<sup>69</sup>

*Speculative Theology and Exegesis.* The legitimacy and necessity of speculative theology give rise to my final point which is that all fruitful exegesis supposes a philosophical framework and so ultimately a theology. Modernly this consideration is of grave importance as has been pointed out by Father Bea recently in *Biblica*.<sup>70</sup> His article was occasioned by the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of the encyclical *Pascendi*. As he sees it the key to Modernism and its central issue does not lie in the techniques and methods that they brought to the fore and employed. For while these methods stood in need of considerable refinement and development they did not constitute the essential difficulty. Rather the real issue was the philosophical presuppositions that governed so many of the proponents of these methods. These philosophical postulates were the offspring of a varied philosophical heritage but in the long run they made of religion something that was essentially internal, irrational, affective and evolutionary. Dogmas could only be symbols subject to continual evolution seeking to express an ever changing experience but having no relation to any absolute truth. It was because of their understanding of this philosophical danger that the modern Popes from the time of Leo XIII have insisted on a full and sound theological formation in order to assure a sound Catholic exegesis. To achieve this end they have required an equally solid formation in scholastic philosophy so that there might be a speculative theology truly capable of employing its service and values in the service of the faith and its fuller understanding of God's revealed Word.

In order to illustrate the relevance of these papal directives let me take as an example the exegetical work of Rudolph Bultmann as presented through the studies of Pere Malavez.<sup>71</sup> Here I shall

<sup>69</sup> Cf. Labourdette O.P. and Nicholas O.P., "L'analogie de la vérité et l'unité de la science théologique," *Revue Thomiste* v. 47 (1947) pp. 417-466; my indebtedness to this article is very heavy and so the single reference here indicates that much of what I have said on analogy comes from this source.

<sup>70</sup> A. Bea, S.J., "L'Enciclica *Pascendi* e gli studi biblici," *Biblica* v. 39 (1958) pp. 121-138.

<sup>71</sup> L. Malavez, S.J., *The Christian Message and Myth* (London 1958).



simply confine myself to Bultmann's "existential principle of interpretation."<sup>72</sup> First of all, as is evident, phenomenological analysis is of capital importance in the full understanding of the Bible. Certainly too, we do not dispute Bultmann's insistence on the relevance of the psychological personal sense and of existential analysis for scriptural interpretation. Underlying his whole approach however is a principle and a philosophical pre-supposition that are of considerable importance to both the theologian and the exegete. The philosophical pre-supposition is "a considered interpretation of existence" formulated in the structures and categories of Heidegger. For a criticism of the inadequacies and errors of the anthropology so constructed as well as the limitations it puts on biblical criticism itself I refer you to Pere Malavez's study as well as the critique of Marle.<sup>73</sup> My interest here is the principle on which this is done. For what Bultmann argues most cogently is that it is simply not possible to have an exegesis without a philosophical framework and while we cannot accept his concrete formulations we nonetheless can apply his argument to the need for a vital and sound speculative theology.

Perhaps it may be in order to explain my use here of Bultmann to bring out the importance of speculative theology to exegesis. I must admit frankly that it was his argument that brought home to me most sharply this relationship. Perhaps I should also add that while seeing the force of his arguments their inadequacies made me re-reflect on what he shows to be a central fact in exegesis. It is the simple and evident fact that if man and his natural situation and lights are neglected we will fail to comprehend the Word of God which is addressed to man. There is of necessity anthropology which the word of God presupposes and in that sense subordinates itself to. It is precisely that anthropology which the exegete must recognize, analyze and reflect upon if he would exegete the divine message—he must think philosophically—for the natural light of our mind is part of the whole process by which we understand God's

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 29-49.

<sup>73</sup> R. Marle, "Theologie Protestante: R. Bultmann et la 'Demythologization' du message neotestamentaire," *Recherches de Science Religieuse* v. 41 (1953) pp. 612 seq.

Word. As St. Thomas puts it: "In the light of the first truth we understand and judge all things in as much as the light of our intellect, whether natural or engraced, is nothing else than a certain impression of the first truth (the truth of the divine intellect)"<sup>74</sup> So that when we refer revelation to the natural light of our mind (as we must) we are in a very real way referring it back to God the absolute truth.

Moreover the direction which the concrete applications of Bultmann have taken has also made me clearly aware of the importance of a vital speculative theology. For, along with a great deal of modern biblical criticism, he has tended toward a philosophical postulate in which the terms *historical* and *supernatural* are incompatible and it is in view of this that Catholic theology offers a resource of major value to the Catholic exegete. For in Catholic theology with its incarnational realities there is no absolute and unapproachable transcendence. There is a personal God distinct from the world, supernatural and transcendent it is true, but a God able to intervene in the world that he created. All our theology is sustained by the fact that God has actually intervened. We recognize the philosophical possibility of historical supernatural events, and theologically we acknowledge the existence of such events. We recognize too the existence of a supernatural objective word as the revelation of the scriptures. These facts and this word are not creations of the human mind but result from the intervention and initiative of God. So, by reason of our philosophy and its incorporation into our theology, there is no need to reject as non-historical the supernatural element in scripture. For us history and the supernatural are compatible. There is a distinction, but also a harmonious continuity of the natural and the supernatural in history; of faith and reason in cognition; of grace and the will in justification. This is the fundamental inspiration of Catholic theology by reason of which it must refuse to accept a critical approach based on other principles.

In saying all this, I am not unaware that this speculative theology can in some hands lose its relevance to these critical problems. I am

<sup>74</sup> *Summa Theologica* I, 88, art. 3, ad 1; also 79, 4 and 84, 5.

also conscious that it can be transmitted and applied as though it were a closed system calling for no personal reflection or assimilation. These may be verified in individual cases, but what I hope to make clear is the need for a continuing and vital effort, that vital effort resting on the Christian interpretation of the world and the effort to understand man, his situation and the world in which he lives in the light of Christianity. It maintains that there is an abiding metaphysical pattern in the developing universe—a pattern which is capable of being understood and stated. It does not follow that any given man has an adequate understanding, nor that any man is released from the obligation of a continuing development of insight. Nor does it exclude the possibility of fresh insight into truth from non-Catholic thinkers. It does claim that these insights can be organically assimilated by a vital speculative theology.

In conclusion, let me say that the preparation of this paper has been an enormously enriching experience. In presenting it to this group I am very conscious of its inadequacies and its limitations. My trust is that, through discussion and reflection, the convictions, opinions and tentatives presented here may prove of value to the members. But my one best hope is that it will serve as a stimulus to a fuller and more fruitful employment of our rich theological resources. Out of this will come a deeper understanding of the fact that in these last days God has spoken to us by His Son.

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