

IS ALL REVELATION IN SCRIPTURE?

No urgency is more perennial to the theologian than that of the sources of his revealed doctrine. The current flurry of reappraisal regarding Tradition as a source separate from Scripture may seem ephemeral because it was occasioned by ecumenical rapprochement. But, even if we could in the whole course of history conceive a church catholic without schisms to be healed, she would still search for clarification on this as a purely internal issue.

From another point of view, it was the definition of the Assumption which changed the whole state of the question. For the widespread school of thought represented by Father Healy here, and by experts such as Lennerz, Iturrioz, and Beumer abroad,¹ the question is posed sharply: For the doctrine of the Assumption at least, no basis can be indicated in Scripture. Still we now know that it is revealed. Therefore there must be some revealed doctrine which is not in any way in Scripture. I think that we can respectfully *retort* this argument. It may be significant that the Apostolic Constitution, *Munificentissimus Deus*, did not attempt to give any Scriptural basis to the dogma. But what is more significant is that the document is unique among dogmatic declarations of the Church's whole history in renouncing all attempt to trace the historical continuity of tradition. The problem it poses therefore is just as much "whether the Assumption is in Tradition?" as "whether it is in Scripture?" Or rather it is a problem of entirely different order: "In what sense is the fulness of revelation to be conceived as having been enunciated in the relatively skeletal and even random formulations of *either*

¹ H. Lennerz, "Scriptura sola?" and "Sine scripto traditiones," *Gregorianum* 40 (1959) 38-53; 624-635; cf. 42 (1961) 517-522; J. Beumer, "Die katholische Schriftprinzip in der theologischen Literatur der Scholastik bis zur Reformation"; "Die Frage nach Schrift und Tradition nach Robert Bellarmin"; "Der Begriff der 'Traditiones' auf dem Trienter Konzil im Lichte der mittelalterlichen Kanonistik"; "Das katholische Traditionsprinzip in seiner heute neu erkannten Problematik": *Scholastik* 16 (1941) 24-52; 34 (1959) 1-22; 35 (1960) 342-362; 36 (1961) 217-240; "Das Verhältnis von Schrift und Tradition als theologisches Problem bei M. J. Scheeben und H. Schell," *Theologische Revue* 55 (1959) 203-214; D. Iturrioz, "Tradición y revelación," *Razón y Fe* 163 (1961) 453-468.

Scripture or historically continuous Tradition?" The answer to this question may enable us to show that the existence of revealed doctrines in Tradition which are *not* in Scripture has never been a genuine tenet of the Catholic Church.

There is no need to dwell here on the new perspective in which our problem has been set by researches of the past ten years. Attention has been drawn to the Cullmann-Daniélou dialogue.² In general the guarded Catholic acceptance of Form-Criticism reveals the gospel itself to us as the crystallization in written form of a kerygma and catechesis whose formulations were much broader than the New Testament writings themselves. Yet all of these together did not exhaust the living faith of the worshipping community. Post-apostolic history of tradition, as recently revised by Holstein, shows that *paradosis* was borrowed by Irenaeus from the Gnostics with all traits thereafter to be essential: the term itself, oral, apostolic, by succession.³

Irenaeus sketched in definitive fashion the basic structure of a theology of tradition: Tradition is the permanence of the teaching of the Apostles in the churches they founded. It is apostolic by a twofold title: (1) by its origin attested by apostolic succession; (2) by its content which is the kerygma taught by the apostles, transmitted, preserved, and proclaimed in the apostolic churches. The essential object of this apostolic message, of tradition, is Christ, announced by the Old Testament which finds its fulfilment in him.

² J. Daniélou, *Dieu Vivant* 24 (1953) 105-116 "Réponse à Oscar Cullmann"; Cullmann, "Ecriture et Tradition," 45-67; also *La Tradition* (Neuchâtel, 1953), appraised by P. Benoit in *Revue Biblique* 62 (1955) 258-264; cf. H. Bacht, "Tradition und Sakrament, zum Gespräch um O. Cullmanns 'Tradition,'" *Scholastik* 30 (1955) 1-32; H. Holstein, "La tradition catholique," *Etudes* 301 (1959) 346-354; J. Geiselmann, "Schrift-Tradition-Kirche: ein ökumenisches Problem" and Ernst Kinder, "Schrift und Tradition," in O. Karrer-Festschrift *Begegnung der Christen* (Frankfurt, 1959) 131-160; 115-130.

³ H. Holstein, *La Tradition dans l'Eglise* (Paris, 1960) 61 and "La tradition des Apôtres chez Irénée," *Recherches de Science Religieuse* 36 (1949) 229-270; A. Michel, "Tradition," *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique* (Paris, 1946) 15, 1252-1350; A. Deneffe, *Der Traditionsbegriff* (Münster, 1931) [has serious lacunae, depends on Billot more than he acknowledges; Burghardt PCTSA 6, 45]; D. B. Reynders, "Paradosis: le progrès de l'idée de tradition jusqu'à saint Irénée," *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 5 (1933) 155-191.

Tradition, then, appears as distinct from Scripture, but strictly bound up with it. Tradition is its living commentary, the principle of its understanding, the key to its correct and fruitful reading. Outside the Church, in which apostolic tradition is preserved, Scripture can be approached only with great risk of misunderstanding and error. For Irenaeus, Scripture and tradition constantly interact on each other and are mutually interdependent.

Scripture, the Word of God, preserved in the tradition of the people of God and the first Christian communities, demands for its understanding the environment and support of tradition; tradition itself stands in the service of Scripture and spends its energies in comprehending and teaching its religious meaning.⁴

As it emerges from Irenaeus, the notion of tradition is essentially interpretative and the term was employed by him in this fashion. [Dr. Pelikan has pointed out that the same basic notion of the function of the tradition pervades the work of St. Athanasius.]

The Greek fathers continued the perspective of Irenaeus. Daniélou claims, however, that after Irenaeus the Greek Church went even farther than the Latin in the preeminence accorded to tradition.⁵

In the Latin church Prosper of Aquitaine borrowed a formula from Augustine's *Letter 217* in the sense that the "Obligation of praying to obtain grace implies belief in the necessity of grace," *legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi*. This formula came quickly and universally to be applied in the sense that liturgical formulas are a norm of the content of revelation held by faith.⁶ Vincent of Lerins' formula *quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus* is so famous that we imagine it had great influence in the late Patristic age; yet it was practically ignored from the composition of the *Commonitorium* in 434 until its implications on the insufficiency of

⁴ Holstein, *La Tradition*, 85-86.

⁵ Smulders, "Le mot et le concept de tradition chez les pères grecs," *Recherches de Science Religieuse* 40 (Mélanges Lebreton 2, 1952) 41-62; J. Daniélou, "Scripture, Tradition, and the Dialogue" [from *Documentation catholique* 54 (1957) 283-294], *Theology Digest* 9 (1961) 39. See also E. Symonds, "The Patristic Doctrine of the Relation of Scripture and Tradition," *Eastern Churches Quarterly*, 7-Supplement (1947) 59-70.

⁶ K. Federer, *Liturgie und Glaube* (Freiburg, 1950) 41; Holstein, *La Tradition* p. 244.

Scripture proved useful to the Tridentine mentality.⁷ Its "canonization of the old merely because old" seems to be pushed beyond reason in Bossuet. The formula itself represents only one aspect of tradition. It has served the cause of polemic defense of the faith, but it does not express the full notion of tradition, positive as well as negative. In fact, if taken by itself, the formula poses even for a sympathetic Protestant an almost insurmountable hurdle to recent Papal reliance on any existing consensus which is not traceable by historical continuity back to Apostolic times.⁸

The teaching of St. Thomas on tradition is difficult to assess; the term is not found at all in Thomas Pègues, O.P., *Dictionnaire de la Somme Théologique de Saint Thomas d'Aquin* [2 vols. (Paris-Toulouse, 1935)] and neither is "oral." Was it because *as it reached* St. Thomas every "dictum" had become a "text"? Congar, unsatisfied with this explanation of a confrere and even less with Tavard, finds Aquinas fully aware of a double problem in tradition, both its present validity and its historical continuity. For Thomas, tradition is one of the functions of *sacra doctrina* and basically it is interpretative of Scripture.⁹ For the Scholastics theology itself was but a commentary on Scripture.¹⁰ De Vooght asserts the Scholastics held that all theology is contained in Scripture for the double reason that they didn't read Scripture and they used its texts uncritically.¹¹

⁷ A. d'Alès, "La fortune du Commonitorium," *Recherches de Science Religieuse* 26 (1936) 334; Holstein, *La Tradition* p. 90; J. Madoz, *El concepto de la tradición en S. Vicente de Lerins* (Rome, 1933); H. Kremser, *Die Bedeutung des Vincenz von Lerinum für die römisch-katholische Wertung der Tradition* (Hamburg dissertation, 1959).

⁸ F.-J. Leenhardt, "Ecriture et Tradition," *Etudes Théologiques et Religieuses de Montpellier* 36 (1961) 13; 6.

⁹ Y. Congar, "'Tradition' und 'Sacra Doctrina' bei Thomas von Aquin," J. Geiselman Festschrift *Kirche und Überlieferung*, ed. by J. Betz and H. Fries (Freiburg, 1960) 203; G. Geenan, "The Place of Tradition in the Theology of Saint Thomas," *The Thomist* 15 (1952) 110-135.

¹⁰ J. R. Sheets, "The Scriptural Dimension of St. Thomas," *American Ecclesiastical Review* 144 (1961) 154-173; J. de Ghellinck, 'Pagina' et 'Sacra Pagina': histoire d'un mot et transformation de l'objet primitivement désigné," *Mélanges A. Pelzer* (Louvain, 1947) 23-59; R. Guelluy, "L'évolution des méthodes théologiques à Louvain d'Erasmus à Jansenius," *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique* 37 (1941) 31-144 sp. 53; 86.

¹¹ P. de Vooght, *Les sources de la doctrine chrétienne d'après les théologiens du XIV^e siècle* (Bruges, 1954) 263.

A forceful contribution to our survey in Tavard's *Holy Writ or Holy Church* is his unmasking of the confusion caused by the Decretalists. In their frenzy to bridle conciliarism, Prierias could declare "The decretals of the Roman Pontiffs have to be added to the canonical Scriptures" and Tancred could supply the next step "the Pope can create out of nothing."¹² In this "tendency of ascribing undefined, ill-described, at times quite unintelligible doctrinal and jurisdictional powers to the papacy . . . objective theological concern over the [Tradition apart from Scripture] question was infrequently entertained, and in historical retrospect becomes hopelessly confused with the mass of pro-papal and anti-papal hyperboles. The same must be said about the Reformation that followed upon and surely in some measure resulted from this state of affairs. . . . *Scriptura sola* became fighting words."¹³

Doubtless the name of Geiselman will be a household word to future theologians for his vindication (based on Ortigues) of seeing in Trent's decree a rejection of the *partim-partim* rather than the tacit acceptance of it which Lennerz holds.¹⁴ The bulk of the most recent articles forms a chorus of acceptance of this thesis and insistence on its ecumenical value.¹⁵ To us whose native language is

¹² G. H. Tavard, *Holy Writ or Holy Church* (New York, 1959) 89; 117.

¹³ J. Gaffney, "Scripture and Tradition in Recent Catholic Thought," *The Theologian* 17 (1961) 97.

¹⁴ J. R. Geiselman, "Das Missverständnis über das Verhältnis von Schrift und Tradition und seine Überwindung in der katholischen Theologie" *Una Sancta* 11 (1956) 131-150, in French in *Istina* 5 (1958) 197-214; "Das Konzil von Trient über das Verhältnis der Heiligen Schrift und der nicht geschriebenen Traditionen," in M. Schmaus, *Die mündliche Überlieferung* (Munich, 1957) 123-206; *Die lebendige Überlieferung als Norm des christlichen Glaubens* (Freiburg, 1958); E. Ortigues, "Ecriture et traditions apostoliques au Concile de Trente," *Recherches de Science Religieuse* 36 (1949) 271-299.

¹⁵ P. de Vooght, "Ecriture et tradition d'après des études catholiques récentes," *Istina* 5 (1958) 183-196; H. Holstein, "La tradition d'après le concile de Trente," *Recherches de Science Religieuse* 47 (1959) 367-390 [= *Theology Digest* 9 (1961) 43-48; cf. E. Stakemeier, "Das Konzil von Trient über die Tradition: zu einer Untersuchung von H. Holstein," *Catholica* 14 (1960) 34-48]; W. Koch, "Der Begriff traditiones im Trienter Konzilsdekret der Sessio IV," *Theologische Quartalschrift* 132 (1952) 46-61, 193-212; earlier L. Cristiani, *L'Eglise à l'époque du Concile de Trente* (Paris, 1948); J. Salaverri, "La tradición valorada como fuente de la revelación en el Concilio de Trento," *Estudios Eclesiásticos* 20 (1946) 33-61; R. Hull, "The Council of Trent and

English it is of interest to note that the notion (not the term) *partim-partim* was the invention of Henry the Eighth in his Catholic days in 1521 as attested by Thomas More.¹⁶ John Fisher first used the term in his own writings in 1524. He borrowed it from Traversari's Pseudo-Denis in the sense that tradition itself is handed down partly in writing and partly not.¹⁷ Driedo of Louvain applied *partim* to *rites and customs* as distinct from doctrine.¹⁸ In Trent's reaction to Bonucci, Nacchianti, and Richard Pates of Worcester, perhaps too little heed was paid to Le Jay's plea to distinguish doctrinal from ceremonial-disciplinary traditions.¹⁹ Congar has just shown that the proper way to pose the question is "Among the 'apostolic traditions not contained in Scripture,' have genuinely dogmatic truths ever been reckoned?" and his erudite answer is convincingly negative.²⁰

The counter-reformers seriously considered as an alternative to *partim, continuing revelation* instead of tradition: such was the published doctrine of Ellenbog, Herborn, and for a time Schatzgeyer.²¹ The formula *partim in traditione* became firmly entrenched through the work of Cano, Bellarmine, and Canisius. However, in the last century Möhler, Kuhn, and Newman laid the groundwork for dislodging it.²²

Tradition," *American Ecclesiastical Review* 81 (1929) 469-482, 602-615; A. Spindeler, "Pari pietatis affectu: das Tridentinum über Heilige Schrift und apostolische Überlieferung," *Theologie und Glaube* 51 (1961) 161-180; B. van Leeuwen, "Schrift und Tradition," *Wissenschaft und Weisheit* 21 (1958) 36-50.

¹⁶ Tavard, *Holy Writ or Holy Church*, p. 132.

¹⁷ Geiselman *apud* Schmaus, p. 140.

¹⁸ J. L. Murphy, *The Notion of Tradition in John Driedo* (Milwaukee, 1959) 232; J. Lodrioor, "La notion de tradition dans la théologie de Jean Driedo de Louvain," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 26 (1950) 37-53; Tavard, *Holy Writ or Holy Church*, 148.

¹⁹ Holstein, *Theology Digest* 9 (1961) 44.

²⁰ Congar, "Traditions apostoliques non écrites et suffisance de l'Écriture," *Istina* 6 (1959) 279-306, sp. 282; 288.

²¹ Tavard, "A Forgotten Theology of Inspiration: Nicolaus Ellenbog's Refutation of *Scriptura Solo*," *Franciscan Studies* 15 (1955) 106-122; *Holy Writ or Holy Church* 161-3.

²² Holstein, *La Tradition* 103-117; U. Horst, "Das Verhältnis von Schrift und Tradition nach Melchior Cano," *Trierer Theologische Zeitschrift* 69 (1960) 207-223; p. 214 cites Cano's *Loci Theologici* 3, 3, 91 b: "there are many dogmas of the Catholic faith which are not contained in Scripture."—G. Voss, "Johann

This hurried survey has been taking for granted the basic issue we are gathered here to discuss: Does Catholic teaching require the admission that there are some revealed truths in tradition which are in no way in Scripture? Our answer is "No," and will involve three points: the nature of Scripture, the nature of tradition, and the development of dogma.

First, from the nature of Scripture. We may lay down the principle "Every dogma is in Scripture according to the *mode* whereby anything is in Scripture." As Father John Murphy learned of Driedo, "When the New Testament was written down, it was never intended to contain a full and complete account of the Gospel-message. . . . On the other hand, it is important to note that they did not abbreviate the written account so much that they passed over any important truth altogether."²³ Scripture is neither a biography nor a summa of theology. It is the expression of the faith of the community. It appears to be a *random sampling* of the whole content of revelation. The space and emphasis given to various truths are proportioned not to objective reality but to concrete local and temperamental needs. Within the fully-articulated body of truths toward which any systematic theology must strive, Scripture has formulated only a relatively small and seemingly disjointed number. Just as the "whole life of Christ" is contained in the gospels, so the "whole of revelation" is contained in Scripture, even though we may not be able to point to a specific fact or find clarification in any specific text. Our "tradition" in the matter has grown up as an explanation of Scripture but only loosely connected with any particular text. The words of Kuhn a century ago are particularly relevant today: "The Gospels and apostolic writings are the writing down of the apostolic kerygma; their content coincides with it; there is no reason for broaching the incompleteness of the content of Scripture."²⁴

Adam Möhler and the Development of Dogma," *Theological Studies* 4 (1943) 420-444. On Newman, Y. Congar, "Sainte Ecriture et sainte Eglise," *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques* 44 (1960) 81. Newman's position is traced via Perrone to Kuhn and Möhler, in J. Geiselman, *Lebendiger Glaube aus geheiligter Überlieferung* (Mainz, 1942).

²³ Murphy, *Notion of Tradition in Driedo*, p. 117.

²⁴ Cited by Geiselman, "Missverständnis," *Una Sancta* 11 (1956) 149 = *Istina* 5 (1958) 213; in *Die lebendige Überlieferung* he traces chiefly to Kuhn

This does not mean that a proof of any and every dogma can be derived from the biblical text by purely grammatical and deductive procedures.

Where Geiselmann admits that Scripture "coincides with the essential of the original and living apostolic kerygma," Ortiqes prefers to say that "the Church possesses a certain spontaneity in the administering of the message": the Church can define a dogma not deducible from Scripture and yet better understood in the light of Scripture, because the Church is here interpreting "that divine reality which it bears sacramentally and which the Scripture discloses to it."²⁵

Secondly, from the nature of Tradition. The word tradition with the implication of "a source separate from Scripture" came into usage only shortly before Trent. In its origin (like the word theology itself to the Scholastics) it meant precisely "Sacred Scripture commented," or we might say "Scripture read in the spirit of the primitive Christian community."²⁶ This tradition not only implies Scripture but it equally implies the vital activity of the community. Just as every act of knowledge involves a certain *adapting* of the object to the mind in which it is to be received [and the much fuller insight conveyed by art or poetry involves this creative interpretation in a proportionately higher degree]—so the vital activity of the faithful in handing down the message enshrined in Scripture involved at least vivifying it with relevance to the changing outlook and new problems of their own background as distinct from the background of Palestinian Hellenism.

"It is in the Church, in today's Church, that we shall find the Word of God. But we shall find it there not like a collection of objects on display in a museum," says Liégé. "What is contained by way of outline in the written Gospel has light thrown upon it by traditions which are in their way also bearers of the mystery of

the view "all in Tradition, part also in Scripture"; see Tavard's "Is 'Tradition' a Problem for Catholics?" in answer to Robert McAfee Brown's "'Tradition' as a Problem for Protestants," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 16 (1961) 375-84 (sp. 376); 197-221.

²⁵ P. de Vooght, "Ecriture et tradition," *Istina* 5 (1958) 186.

²⁶ H. de Lubac, *Exégèse médiévale* (Paris, 1959) 1, 57; "Scripture in the early Church meant Scripture read in the Church and interpreted by the

Christ."²⁷ Tradition includes the whole ensemble of elements (persons, things, events, ingredients) which God has used as secondary and instrumental causes to convey his truth to us. The whole living milieu into which God has inserted himself gives expression to his truth.²⁸ Too many Christians today refuse to face their own responsibility for the lived transmission of tradition, and prefer to regard it as a body of already formulated truths which can be found somewhere and will eventually be spoken by the Magisterium. In this view of tradition, it is small wonder that a Protestant of ecumenical striving could recently characterize the average Catholic attitude: "Just think of it! the Church possesses in its storerooms more truths than you poor mortals could ever form any idea of!"²⁹

This caricature (the Catholic caricature, not the Protestant's recording of it) must ultimately stem from the oversimplification of identifying Tradition with Magisterium *simpliciter*, which for a time threatened to become normative but has now been quite generally overcome.³⁰ In saying that the deposit of faith has not been

tradition of the Apostles," cited by Tavad, *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 16 (1961) 376. Cf. Y. Congar, *La Tradition et les traditions* (Paris, 1960), and footnote 10 above.

²⁷ A. Liégé, "The Sources of the Christian Faith," in A. M. Henry, *Introduction to Theology* (Chicago, 1954) 6; 12.

²⁸ R. Bernard, commentary on his French translation of St. Thomas' *Secunda-Secundae*, *La Foi* I (Paris, 1941) 247, on 2-2,1,7; cf. also 357-385, Tradition and Church.

²⁹ Leenhardt, *Etudes Théologiques et Religieuses* 36 (1961) 9.

³⁰ P. Lengsfeld, *Überlieferung: Tradition und Schrift in der evangelischen und katholischen Theologie der Gegenwart* (Paderborn, 1960) 106; J. Salaverri, "De Ecclesia Christi" in B.A.C. *Sacrae Theologiae Summa*⁴ (Madrid, 1958) 778, and especially footnote 29 adding recent proofs for the distinction from the Holy Office condemnation of Chenu and Charlier, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 34 (1942) 37, and also from *Humani Generis*. See also J. Filograssi, *Gregorianum* 32 (1952) 144-7; and J. Ternus *Divus Thomas* Freiburg 16 (1938) 31-56, 197-229. Identification of Tradition with Magisterium, defended by Deneffe, Pesch, Zapalena, Dieckmann and now M. Bévenot, "Tradition, Church, and Dogma" *Heythrop Journal* 1 (1960) 39, seems reducible to a passage of Billot, *De immutabilitate traditionis*² (Rome, 1907) 33, reproduced as "perhaps the most illuminating single paragraph I have encountered on tradition" by Walter J. Burghardt, "The Catholic Concept of Tradition in the Light of Modern Theological Thought," *Proceedings of the Catholic Theological Society of America* 6 (1951) 62, note 62. It would seem that this view of Billot's is shared by J. V. Bainvel, *De magisterio vivo et traditione* (Paris, 1905) 56,

entrusted to each of the faithful nor even to the theologians but only to the Magisterium, the encyclical *Humani Generis* is obviously according to Baumgartner *not* envisioning *traditio activa*, but rather its recording in statements which of course when once pronounced by the Church do *bind* or rather liberate us all.³¹

Our third warrant for seeing the whole of revelation in Scripture just as truly as the whole of revelation is in Tradition, is the very nature of the development of dogma. As we have seen, the definition of the Assumption is not based any more palpably on the historically-attested continuity of tradition than it is on Scripture.³² Burghardt rejects Altaner's ultimatum, "Because it is not contained in the first eight centuries, it is not contained in Tradition at all."³³ Yet a perceptive article of Müller poses five blunt questions, hitherto never sufficiently distinguished, regarding the validity of a dogmatic as distinct from a historical tradition.³⁴ At any rate we now know that

though this essay is called by Holstein, *La Tradition* 130 "a timid voice uttering excellent formulas inaudible beside Billot's roaring." Holstein notes on p. 208 that even Cano stipulated that the authority of the Roman Church is not strictly tradition, but a privileged *witness* of tradition; and if Pius IX really said "la tradizione sono io," it escaped him in a moment of excitement in reaction to an indiscretion.

³¹ C. Baumgartner, "Tradition et magistère," *Recherches de Science Religieuse* 41 (1953) 171; further now R. Latourelle, "Notion de révélation et magistère de l'Eglise," *Sciences ecclésiastiques* 9 (1957) 201-261; and a paper of my colleague Robert North, "The Humility of Infallibility" to which I am indebted for some of these references. The article "Schrift und Tradition" by Protestant K. E. Skydsgaard in *Kerygma und Dogma* 1 (1955) 166, cites *Humani Generis* in a sympathetic portrayal which concludes "The Catholic view is crystal clear and sharp; the only question is, is it sufficiently critical?"

³² H. Bacht, "Tradition und Lehramt um das Assumpta-Dogma," in M. Schmaus, *Die mündliche Überlieferung* (Munich, 1957) 3; J. Ternus, *Scholastik* 25 (1950) 321-360; Y. Congar, *La tradition et les traditions* (Paris, 1960) 267, claiming that before the "assumptionist movement" the distinction between "historical tradition" and "dogmatic tradition" scarcely existed. Tavad's *Holy Writ or Holy Church*, p. 215, notes that one of the earliest compiled lists of "doctrines not in Scripture, but held by a private and secret tradition deriving from the Apostles," by Richard Smith around 1550 in Oxford, includes the Assumption.

³³ Burghardt, *Proceedings CTSA* 6 (1951) 74; Altaner, *Theologische Revue* 44 (1948) 129-140; 45 (1949) 129-142; 46 (1950) 5-20.

³⁴ O. Müller, "Zum Begriff der Tradition in der Theologie der letzten hundert Jahre," *Münchener Theologische Zeitschrift* 4 (1953) 164-186.

the Assumption is contained in revelation, and this means that it *has* been handed down faithfully *in some form* from age to age since the deposit of faith was closed with the death of the last Apostle. Oddly, Protestants like Gloege who can express intense admiration for this organic logical unity of Catholic theology, condemn it ultimately as an excessive yielding to the evolutionism of our age!³⁵

Dogma is conceptualized, authoritative formulation of the deposit. Progress in dogma is not progress either in the existence of the truth or in its affirmation, but simply in its understanding.³⁶ This progress pertains rather to the *concept* than to the judgment.³⁷ Such further insight undoubtedly comes in connection with those conceptualizations in which living Tradition has already been expressed; but ultimately it draws on a reality more basic than either of these. "Before being, and in order to be, a transmission of *truths*, is not tradition first of all a transmission of realities?"³⁸ The current stress is upon regarding this Tradition as living.³⁹

The challenge of Roman Catholicism is the challenge of a living tradition. . . . Although this has always been true of

³⁵ G. Gloege, "Offenbarung und Überlieferung," *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 79 (1954) 215.—In 85 (1960) 19-32, H. Engelland, "Schrift und Tradition," is more resolutely evangelical; further J. S. Whale, *The Protestant Tradition* (Cambridge, 1955); B. Gerhardsson, *Memory and Manuscript* (Lund, 1961).

³⁶ See M.-Michel Labourdette, "La théologie, intelligence de la foi," *Revue Thomiste* 46 (1946) 5-44; E. Persson, *Sacra Doctrina* (Lund, 1957); F. Marin-Sola, *L'évolution homogène du dogme catholique* (Fribourg, 1924).

³⁷ B. Lonergan, *Divinarum Personarum conceptionem analogicam evolvit* (Rome, 1959) 7-51, esp. 9-13; F. E. Crowe, "Development of Doctrine and the Ecumenical Problem," *Theological Studies* 23 (March 1962) 27-46, esp. 37-39.

³⁸ *Istina* 5 (1958) 132, editorial accompanying Geiselman's *Missverständnis*.

³⁹ J. Pelikan, *The Riddle of Roman Catholicism* (New York, 1959), 227-240; P. Chaillet, "La Tradition Vivante," *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques* 27 (1938) 161-183; J. Ranft, "La tradition vivante," in Möhler-Festschrift *L'Eglise est une* ed P. Chaillet (Paris, 1939) 102-126, sp. 111; Ranft, *Der Ursprung des katholischen Schriftprinzips* (Würzburg, 1931); H. Fries, "Vom Formalprinzip des Katholizismus," *Catholica* 14 (1960) 118-132; O. Semmelroth, "Überlieferung als Lebensfunktion der Kirche" and "Die Heilige Schrift als Glaubensquelle" *Stimmen der Zeit* 148 (1951) 1-11; 162 (1958) 36-50; H. Bacht, "Tradition als menschliches und theologisches Problem," *Stimmen der Zeit* 159 (1957) 285-300; J. Bakhuizen van den Brink, "Traditio im Theologischen Sinne," *Vigiliae Christianae* 13 (1959) 65-86.

Roman Catholicism, it has acquired new relevance in modern times. For today the Christian church is one of the few cultural forces that can unite us with our living past. Political, social, and even educational life have lost much of their touch with the tradition. The church is still one place where people can acquire a sense of belonging to a lineage.

... The liturgical scholars of Rome have begun to recover some of that richness and variety as they have given more attention to the Eastern traditions. Behind this is a sound theological principle, which we must extend not only to Roman Catholicism and to Eastern Orthodoxy, but also to the several Protestant traditions. If they take the measure of their own heritage, they will discover a living contact with the Catholic tradition. This contact will help them to see how catholic they are in the true sense of the word, and it will point the way for a recovery of a deeper catholicity that is nevertheless germane to their own special heritage.⁴⁰

It is even claimed that tradition has something of the character of a sacrament or incarnation of the Word. Just as in recent efforts to envision preaching as sacramental in some sense, theological thinking has perhaps not yet been sufficiently clarified to warrant our pronouncing whether we have here a genuine analogy of proportionality or merely a fertile poetic metaphor.⁴¹ But the circum-session of the two sources of our faith, Scripture and Tradition, is sure to find its ultimate explanation in the living and growing reality of the Church.

To summarize: Scripture and Tradition, although distinct principles, are so united *in the Church* that they make up one authoritative source of revelation. Scripture is the content of Tradition, whereas Tradition provides the interpretation or form according to which Scripture is received by post-apostolic Christians. This opinion

⁴⁰ J. Pelikan, *The Riddle of Roman Catholicism* (New York, 1959), 234-235.

⁴¹ Catholics will find intriguing the formulation of E. R. Fairweather, "Scripture in Tradition," *Canadian Journal of Theology* 5 (1959) 9: To answer whether the biblical witness is in some sense "over the Church" requires grasping the Church as the sacrament of the Body of Christ, its incarnation by analogy of proper proportionality. "From all this it follows that the Church, in its life and action, neither repeats what Christ has done once for all nor performs an essentially new and different function."

has been espoused by outstanding modern theologians and finds support in the doctrine of the Fathers and the teaching of medieval theologians. Trent's teaching did not decide the matter. Post-Tridentine polemic over "Scriptura sola" does not seem to have thrown much light on this point. But recent studies on the formation of the Gospel tradition, on senses of Scripture that go beyond the humanly discoverable intention of the writer, on the theology of biblical inspiration, as well as the historical studies of Geiselman, Holstein, Tavad, and Ortigues have all provided support for the sufficiency of Scripture. However, the ultimate solution to the problem depends on an adequate theory of the development of dogma.

GERALD VAN ACKEREN, S.J.
St. Mary's College
St. Marys, Kansas