Rahner. His theology has always been a highly apophatic theology: the experience of God as the incomprehensible One. God and God's reign lie beyond the categories of both the theoretical and practical intellect, so that the final word of theological and practical theology is silence before the ever greater One.

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Topic: Development and Truth: Is "Development" the Issue?
Convener: Paul G. Crowley, Santa Clara University
Moderator: Mary E. Hines, Emmanuel College
Presenters: Bradford E. Hinze, Marquette University
                   Jack A. Bonsor, Santa Clara University
                   Stephen R. Schloesser, Boston College

This select group was convened to examine whether "development" is an apt metaphor for understanding how "truth" has been embraced in various ways at different moments in the history of the church. When Newman introduced the idea of development in the nineteenth century, he was working within a context of modernity's assumptions about the directionality and rationality of history and the architectonic ordering of truth. These modern assumptions are no longer taken for granted. One result has been the onset of crisis for the notion of truth itself, as well as for the notion of the progressive development of its doctrinal and theological expression. The problem with development as a metaphor governing doctrinal change is that it could stand in the way of a free embrace of what the Spirit might send the church. The disintegration of the modern consensus about truth and development therefore requires a hermeneutics for the understanding of faith in its relative continuities and radical discontinuities.

Bradford Hinze approached the topic by focusing on the implications of the recent string of apologies emanating from Rome to Jews, women, non-Catholic Christians, Muslims, and the scientific community (i.e., Galileo), among others. In these apologies the pope has highlighted the importance of dialogue within the church and in relation to various groups addressed in these apologies. Hinze maintains that this way of approaching ecclesial repentance invites a dialogical understanding of revelation and church, and a willingness to acknowledge the sinfulness of the church as a whole. Ecclesial repentance could therefore serve as an impetus for change in teachings and practices of the church and also as an alternative to logic-driven and organic approaches to doctrinal change. The act of ecclesial repentance, which is ultimately a response to the call of the gospel, raises the issue of the historicity of doctrinal truth and the need for a doctrinal change that could be construed as discontinuous or heterogeneous. However,

through all of this change there is heard the voice of Christ, and in the act of ecclesial repentance, the church submits to the ongoing divine pedagogy of the Triune God.

Jack Bonsor took up the matter of the historicity of doctrine, and further suggested that revealed truth itself has a history. The notion that the truth is an unchanging organic unity for which the unity of the church itself is a sign and instrument (*Lumen Gentium*) must be challenged by what is in fact the case. Every synthetic account of truth is liable to disillusion because synthesis is privative; it simultaneously reveals and conceals what is at hand. What has been concealed will almost inevitably and inconveniently reassert itself at some future moment, leading to crises of contradiction. The notion of the unity of the church would therefore be well served by a notion of truth that leaves room for the inevitable contradictions served up within truth's history. Bonsor illustrated his point by comparing the Letter to the Hebrews with Romans. Hebrews 8 reads the first-century schism between church and synagogue as the rejection and vanishing of the "old" truth that was preparatory to the revelation of God in Christ. In Romans 9-11, however, the schism is God's own work. The disbelief of the Jews, rather than being superseded, actually plays a role in God's saving plan. Despite the revelation of God in Christ, the Jews remain God's chosen people. Paul is willing to live with the apparent contradiction: "For who can know the mind of God?" (cf. Rom. 11:33-36). The ultimate resolution of this matter, the unity of truth, awaits the Lord's return.

Picking up the theme of ecclesial repentance introduced by Hinze, Bonsor then applied this Pauline insight to the phenomenon of retrospective reconciliation, which he argued implies a notion of truth that embraces contradictions. In the Galileo case, the church learned retrospectively that the presumed unity of truth, which, based on Aristotelian principles, held that there could be no contradiction between science and revelation, harbored the seeds of its own destruction. Once Aristotelianism was subverted, the old model of unity no longer held. A proleptic conception of truth's unity might have avoided the tragic consequences of the Galileo affair. There is a cautionary lesson to be learned here about ecclesial prudence, patience and tenuous judgment before new questions, data and perspectives, and about the presumptions we make about truth itself. On any number of issues, the contemporary church could do well to heed Paul's eschatological understanding of the ultimate unity of truth.

Following upon the notions of discontinuity and contradiction introduced by Hinze and Bonsor, historian Stephen Schloesser suggested that development is inadequate for describing the course of tradition. His example is Neo-Thomism, which, far from having developed as a theological tradition from the thirteenth century, was in fact "invented" during the nineteenth-century revival of Thomas Aquinas, especially under Leo XIII. But even before Leo, the Thomistic revival of the 1820s had as its philosophical aim the refutation of the idealism, skepticism and rationalism of such thinkers as Descartes, Hume and Kant, who

challenged the mind's ability to grasp reality as such. Thus, the Neo-Thomist project was defensively epistemological. Yet nothing could have been further from the primary intention of Aquinas himself, for whom reconciliation between revealed religion and scientific reason was paramount. Leo XIII's *Aeterni Patris* (1879), however, urges a retrieval of Thomas precisely because reason is fallible. Leo thus reconfigures the optimism of the thirteenth-century project into a pessimistic assault on the limitations of reason and its propensity to error. Reason and faith are ultimately reconciled, but in the refuge of faith as a bulwark and in the "invention" of a perennial Thomistic tradition.

Jacques Maritain, one of the leaders of the Thomistic revival, reflected in himself some of the inner contradictions of the movement. On the one hand, especially in his younger days, he was on the vanguard of faith and discipline, presenting himself as an *anti-moderne*. But his antimodernism harbored the seeds of what might properly be called the "ultramodern." Later, Maritain would find the neo-Gothic to be absurd and *passé*, and he gradually became a kind of patron of some of the more well-known members of the Parisian avante-garde. For Maritain, the antimodern (the eternal) came to be expressed in ultramodernist dress (the modish). Any reading of his own contributions to the Thomist revival cannot be understood outside this complex context of his own cultural stance.

Schloesser then juxtaposed this analysis of the invention of tradition to three models of change: development (Newman), bisociation (Koestler), and mimicry (Butler), and suggested how the Neo-Thomistic movement can be understood within each framework. He himself tends toward a view balanced between the second and third positions. Thus, if there is a unity of truth, it lies in the imagined wholeness of the church across time. The church—like any performer—improvises, interprets, mimics, echoes what reverberates in its memory.

These were enormously rich papers, and several themes were addressed within them that the speakers were unable to speak to directly due to the limitations of time.

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