

### Doctrinal Pluralism

A discussion of a pluralism in church doctrines needs a rather broad context. Accordingly my remarks will come under the following series of headings:

1. Pluralism and Communications
2. Pluralism and Classicist Culture
3. Pluralism and Relativism
4. Undifferentiated and Differentiated Consciousness
5. Pluralism and Theological Doctrines
6. Pluralism and Conversion
7. Pluralism and Church Doctrines: The First Vatican Council
8. Pluralism and Church Doctrines: The Ongoing Context
9. The Immutability and Historicity of Dogma
10. Pluralism and the Unity of Faith

#### 1. Pluralism and Communications

In the final paragraph of the gospel according to Matthew, our Lord biddeth the Eleven to go forth and make all nations his disciples. This command has always stood at the basis of the church's mission, but in our age it has taken on a special significance. On the one hand, anthropological and historical research has made us aware of the enormous variety of human mentalities, cultures, and social arrangements. On the other hand, even a brief experience of historical investigation makes <sup>one</sup> ~~us~~ aware how diligently yet how circumspectly one must proceed if one is to hope to reconstruct the meanings and intentions of another people, another time, another place. So it is that now we can know so much more about all nations and about the differences among them. So too it is that now we can understand the vastness and the complexity of the task of preaching the gospel to all nations.

This fact of diversity entails a pluralism, not yet of doctrines, but at least of communications. If one doctrine is to be preached to all, still it is not to be preached in the same manner to all.<sup>1</sup> If one is to communicate with those of another culture, one must employ the resources of their culture. To employ simply the resources of one's own culture is not to communicate with the other but to remain locked up in one's own. On the other hand, it is not enough simply to employ the resources of the other culture; one must do so creatively. Merely to employ the resources of the other culture would be to fail to communicate the Christian message. But creative employment of those resources makes it possible to say in that culture what as yet had not been said.

There is a further point. Once Christian doctrine has been introduced successfully within a culture, it will proceed to develop along the lines of that culture. So it was that the gospel first preached in Palestine developed into a Judaic Christianity that employed the thought-forms and stylistic genera of Spätjudentum in its apprehension of the Christian mysteries.<sup>2</sup> So too down the ages there have developed the idiosyncrasies of many local or national churches. Nor do these ongoing differences, once they are understood and explained, threaten the unity of faith. Rather they testify to its vitality. For, as once was said, quidquid recipitur, ad ~~modum~~ modum recipientis recipitur, <sup>while</sup> ~~and~~ the absence of varying modalities would seem to prove an absence of genuine assimilation and the presence of only a perfunctory acceptance.

## 2. Pluralism and Classicist Culture

The contemporary notion of culture is ~~superventive~~ empirical. A culture is a set of meanings and values informing a common way of life, and there are as many cultures as ~~there are~~ there are distinct sets of ~~ex~~ such meanings and values.

But this manner of conceiving culture is relatively recent. It is a ~~poor~~ product of empirical human studies. Within less than one hundred years it has replaced an older, classicist view that had flourished for over two millenia. On the older view culture was conceived normatively. It was the opposite of barbarism. It was a matter of acquiring and assimilating the tastes and skills, the ideals, virtues, and ideas, that were pressed upon one in a good home and through a curriculum in the ~~the~~ liberal arts. It stressed not facts but values. It could not <sup>claim to</sup> be universalist. Its classics were immortal works of art, its philosophy was the perennial philosophy, its laws and structures were the deposit of the prudence and the wisdom ~~of~~ of mankind. Classicist education was a matter of models to be ~~emulated, or~~ imitated, of ideal characters to be emulated, of eternal verities and ~~a~~ universally valid laws. ~~It sought to produce not the mere~~ It sought to produce not the mere specialist but the uomo universale that <sup>could</sup> turn his hand to anything and do it brilliantly.

The classicist is not a pluralist. He knows that circumstances ~~will~~ alter cases but he is far more deeply convinced and that circumstances are accidental, that, beyond them, there is some substance or kernel or root that fits in with classicist assumptions of stability, immutability, fixity. Things have

their specific natures; these natures, at least in principle, are to be known exhaustively through the properties they possess and the laws they obey; and over and above the specific nature there is only individuation by matter, so that knowledge of one instance of a species automatically is knowledge of any instance. What is true of species in general, also is true of the human species, of the one faith coming through Jesus Christ, of the one charity given through the gift of the Holy Spirit. It follows that the diversities of peoples, cultures, social arrangements can involve only a difference in the dress in which church doctrine is expressed, but cannot involve any diversity in church doctrine itself. That is semper idem.

The pluralist begs to differ. He refuses to grant that human concepts resemble Plato's immutable forms. He insists that human concepts are products and expressions of human understanding, that human understanding develops over time, and that it develops differently in different places and in different times. Again, he would claim that a human action, determined solely by abstract properties, abstract principles, abstract laws, would be not only abstract but also <sup>inhumanly</sup> inept on every concrete occasion. For possible ~~human courses of action~~ courses of human action are the discoveries of human intelligence, perhaps remotely guided by principles and laws, but certainly grasped by insight into ~~concrete~~ concrete situations. Moreover, it is by further insight that the probable results of each <sup>possible</sup> course of action are determined, and that determination, so far from settling the issue, stands in need of a free and hopefully responsible choice before action can ensue. Finally, ~~in~~ <sup>in</sup> so far as a situation or a course of action is intelligible, it can recur; but the less intelligent people are, the less they learn from the defects of previous acts, and the

more likely they are to settle into some ~~of~~ routine that keeps mistakes to make their situation ever worse. repeating the same ~~act~~ On the other hand, the more intelligent they are, the more they can learn from previous mistakes, and the more they will keep changing their course of ~~of~~ action and, as well, keep ~~them~~ changing their situation and so necessitating still further changes in their courses of action.

The pluralist, then, differs from the classicist inasmuch as he acknowledges human historicity both in principle and in fact. Historicity means ~~that~~ -- very briefly -- that human living is informed by meanings, that meanings are the product of intelligence, that human intelligence develops cumulatively over time, and that such cumulative development differs in different histories.

Classicism itself is one very notable and, indeed, very noble instances of such cumulative development. It is not mistaken in its assumption that there is something substantial and common to human nature and human activity. Its oversight is its failure to grasp that that something substantial and common also is something quite open. It may be expressed in the four transcendental precepts: Be attentive, Be intelligent, Be reasonable, Be responsible. But there is an almost endless manifold of situations to which men successively attend. There vary enormously the type and degree of intellectual and moral development brought to deal with situations. The standard both for human reasonableness and for the strength and delicacy of a man's conscience is satisfied only by a complete and life-long devotion to human authenticity.

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I have been outlining the theoretic objections to classicist thought. Far more massive are the factual objections.

For a century and a half there have been developing ~~far more~~ highly refined methods in hermeneutics and history, and there have been multiplying not only new modes of studying scripture, the Fathers, the Scholastics, the Renaissance and Reformation, and subsequent periods, but also there have emerged numerous historically-minded philosophies. To confine the Catholic Church to a classicist mentality is to keep the Catholic Church out of the modern world and to prolong the already too long prolonged crisis ~~is~~ within the Church.

### 3. Pluralism and Relativism.

As the breakdown of Scholasticism has left many Catholics without any philosophy, so the rejection of the classicist outlook leaves many without even a Weltanschauung. In this state of almost complete disorientation they feel confronted with an endless relativism when they are told that no one in this life can ~~hope to~~ aspire to a knowledge of all mathematics, or all physics, or all chemistry, or all biology, or the whole of human studies, or of all the philosophies, or even of the whole of theology.

What is worse is that usually they are not equipped to deal effectively and successfully with the premisses set forth by relativists. These premisses are: (1) the meaning of any statement is relative to its context; and (2) every context is subject to change; it stands within a process of development and/or decay; and (3) it is not possible to predict what the future context will be.

The trouble is twofold. On the one hand, these premisses, as far as they go, are true. On the other hand, the complement they need does not consist primarily in further propositions; it is to be found only by unveiling the <sup>invariant</sup> structure of man's conscious and intentional acts; and that unveiling is a long and difficult task. That task cannot be even outlined here, and so we have to be content to indicate briefly the type of qualification that can and should be added to the premisses of relativism.

7 It is true that the meaning of any statement is relative to its context. But it does not follow that the context is unknown or, if it is unknown, that it cannot be discovered.<sup>3</sup> Still less does it follow that the statement understood within its context is mistaken or false. On the contrary, there are <sup>true</sup> many statements whose context is easily ascertained.

It is true that contexts change, and it can happen that a statement, which was true in its own context, ceases to be adequate in another context. It remains that it was true in its original context, that that truth can be reformulated in the present context, and that sound exegetical and historical procedures can reconstitute the original context.

It is true that one cannot predict in detail what future changes of context will occur. But one can predict, <sup>for example,</sup> that the contexts of descriptive statements are less subject to change than the contexts of explanatory statements. Again, with regard to explanatory statements, one can predict that a theory that radically revised the <sup>of chemical elements</sup> periodic table would account not only for all the data accounted for by the periodic table but also for a substantial range of data for which the periodic table does not account.

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Such inadvertence seems to be the root of the confusion concerning objects and objectivity that has obtained in Western thought since Kant published <sup>his</sup> Critique of Pure Reason.<sup>4</sup> In the world of immediacy the only objects are objects of experience, where "experience" is understood in the narrow sense and denotes either the outer experience of sense or the inner experience of consciousness. But in the world mediated by meaning -- i. e., mediated by experiencing, understanding, and judging -- objects are what are intended by questions and known by intelligent, correct, conscientious answers. It is by his questions for intelligence (quid sit, cur ita sit), for reflection (an sit), for deliberation (an honestum sit), that man intends without yet knowing the intelligible, the true, the real, the good. By that intending man is immediately related to the objects in the world mediated by meaning; answers only mediately are related to such objects, i. e., only inasmuch as they are answers to questions. On this showing the tendency to an empiricism arises when one applies the criteria of the world of immediacy to activities with respect to the world mediated by meaning. The tendency to idealism accepts the empiricist notion of reality, insists that human cognitional activity consists in raising and answering questions, <sup>mistakenly</sup> grants that such activity is concerned with merely ideal objects. Finally, a critical realism asserts that ~~an~~ adult human knowledge of reality is a matter not solely of experiencing but of experiencing, understanding, and judging.

Besides the differentiation of consciousness involved in growing up, further differentiations occur with respect to the world mediated by meaning. Here the best known is the differentiation of commonsense meaning and scientific meaning.



Such inadvertence seems to be the root of the enormous confusion that obtains with regard to the term, object. In the world of immediacy the only objects are objects of experience, where "experience" is understood in the narrow sense and means either the outer experience of sense or the inner experience of consciousness. But in the world mediated by meaning objects are what are intended in questions and known by correct answers. The archetypal confusion of these two quite distinct meanings is to be found in the first sentence of the Transcendental Aesthetic in the Critique of Pure Reason. There one learns that the one way in which objects are immediately known is by Anschauung, i. e., by sensitive intuition. From this assumption there follows the later claim that the categories of the understanding only mediately apply to objects, i. e., only inasmuch as they are applied to sensible data, and that the ideas of reason refer to objects only by the double mediation of understanding and sense. Collection 208.

Its origins are celebrated in Plato's early dialogues in which Socrates explains what he means by a definition that applies <sup>sobriety,</sup> omni et soli, seeks definitions of courage, ~~companionship~~, justice, and the like, shows the inadequacy of any proposed definition, admits that he himself is unable to ~~define~~ answer his own questions. But a generation or so later in Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics we find not only general definitions of virtue and vice but also definitions of an array of <sup>specific</sup> ~~specific~~ virtues each one flanked by vices that sin by excess or by defect. However, Aristotle not merely answered Socrates' questions but also set up the possibility of answering them by a sustained scrutiny of linguistic usage, by selecting the precise meaning he assigned to the terms he employed, by constructing sets of interrelated terms, and by employ<sup>ing</sup> such sets to systematize whole regions of inquiry.

<sup>was effected</sup>  
 Thereby, the differentiation of commonsense meaning and scientific meaning. Socrates and his friends knew perfectly well what they meant by courage, sobriety, justice. But such knowledge does not consist in universal definitions. It consists simply in understanding when the term may be used appropriately, and such understanding is developed by adverting to the response others give to ~~one's~~ one's statements. As it does not define, so too common sense does not enounce universal principles; it offers proverbs, i. e., <sup>1</sup> pieces of advice it may be well to bear in mind when the occasion arises; hence "Strike the iron while it is ~~hot~~ hot" and "He who hesitates is lost" are not so much contradicted as complemented by "Look before you leap." Finally, common sense does not syllogize; it argues from ~~analogies~~ analogy; but its analogies resemble, not those constructed by logicians, in which the analogue partly is similar and partly dissimilar, but rather Piaget's adaptations which consist in two parts:

an assimilation that calls on the insights relevant to somewhat similar situations; and an adjustment that adds insights relevant to the peculiarities of the present situation.

But besides the world mediated by commonsense meanings, there is another world mediated by scientific meanings, where terms are defined, systematic relationships are sought, procedures are governed by logics and methods. This second world was intuited by Plato's distinction between the flux of phenomena and the immutable Forms. It was affirmed more soberly in Aristotle's distinction between the priora quoad nos and the priora quoad se. It has reappeared in Eddington's two tables: one brown, solid, heavy; the other colorless, mostly empty space, with here and there an unimaginable wavicle. So it is that scientists live in two worlds: <sup>at one moment they are</sup> with the rest of us in the world of common sense; <sup>at another they are</sup> apart from us and by themselves with a technical language of their own and with ~~and~~ reflectively constructed <sup>and controlled</sup> cognitive procedures.

~~Besides the scientific differentiation of consciousness~~

Besides the scientific there ~~is~~ a religious differentiation of consciousness. It begins with asceticism and culminates in mysticism. Both asceticism and mysticism, when genuine, have a common ground. <sup>That ground</sup> It was described by St. Paul when he exclaimed: "... God's love has flooded our inmost heart through the Holy Spirit he has given us" (Rom 5, 5). That ground can bear fruit in a consciousness that lives in a world mediated by meaning. But it can also withdraw one <sup>for a time</sup> from the world mediated by meaning into the cloud of unknowing, and then one is for God, belongs to him, gives oneself to him, not by one's own ~~as~~ initiative but in ~~surrender to him~~ a silent, joyous, peaceful surrender to his initiative.

Ordinarily the scientific and the religious differentiation of consciousness occur in different individuals. But they can be found in the same individual as was the ~~xxx~~ case with Thomas of Aquin. At the end of his life his prayer was so intense that it interfered with his theological activity. But earlier there could have been an intermittent religious differentiation of consciousness, while later still further development might have enabled him to combine prayer and theology as St. Theresa of Avila combined prayer and business.

Besides the scientific and the religious there is the scholarly differentiation of consciousness. It combines the common sense of one's own place and time with ~~thems~~ a detailed understanding of the common sense of another place and time. It is a specifically modern achievement and it results only from a lifetime of study.

Besides the scientific, the religious, and the scholarly, there is the modern philosophic differentiation. Ancient and medieval philosophers were principally concerned with objects. If they attained any differentiation, that did not differ from the scientific. But in modern philosophy there has been a sustained tendency to begin, not from the objects in the world mediated by meaning, but from the immediate data of consciousness. In a first phase, from Descartes to Kant, the primary focus of attention was cognitional activity. But after the transition provided by German idealism, there was a notable shift in emphasis. Schopenhauer wrote on Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung; Kierkegaard took his stand on faith; Newman took his on conscience; Nietzsche extolled the will to power; Dilthey aimed at a Lebensphilosophie; Blondel at a philosophy of action; Scheler was abundant on feeling; and similar tendencies, reminiscent of Kant's emphasis on practical reason, have been maintained by the personalists and the ~~existential~~ existentialists.

We have distinguished three differentiations of consciousness: the scientific, the religious, and the modern philosophic. We have noted the possibility of compound differentiation: the same consciousness may be differentiated both scientifically and religiously; but we may add at once the further possibilities of the same consciousness being differentiated <sup>either</sup> both scientifically and philosophically or both religiously and philosophically. Finally, there is the possibility of triply differentiated consciousness, namely, scientifically and religiously and philosophically and, far more common, the totally undifferentiated consciousness that operates solely in the manner of common sense.

There result eight different types of consciousness: one undifferentiated; three singly differentiated; three ~~double~~ doubly differentiated; and one triply differentiated.

The triply differentiated can understand its own type and it can figure out just what is happening when it meets any one of the other types. In contrast, the totally undifferentiated type understands itself; it can understand the others in so far as at times they operate in the commonsense fashion; but for the rest it finds them simply beyond its horizon. In philosophy it will praise the pre-Socratics; in theology it will prefer not to go beyond biblical statements; indeed, it may even argue that God has revealed through the bible that religious consciousness is undifferentiated consciousness.

Doubly differentiated consciousness will understand something about all the others, but it will have a blindspot for the type of differentiation it does not possess. Similarly, singly differentiated consciousness will understand something about all the others, but it will have a blindspot for the two differentiations that it lacks.

We have distinguished four differentiations of consciousness, the scientific, the religious, the scholarly, and the modern philosophic. We have noted the possibility of one compound differentiation in which the scientific and the religious were combined in a single individual. But there are five other ~~possibilities~~ possibilities of twofold differentiation: scientific and scholarly; scientific and philosophic; religious and scholarly; religious and philosophic; scholarly and philosophic. Besides, there are four possibilities of threefold differentiation: scientific, religious, and scholarly; scientific, religious, and philosophic; scientific, scholarly, and philosophic; religious, scholarly, and philosophic. Further, there is one case of fourfold differentiation in which scientific, religious, scholarly, and philosophic differentiations are combined. Finally, there is also one case of undifferentiated consciousness which is at home only in the realm of common sense: it shares Heidegger's affection for the pre-Socratics, the linguistic analyst's insistence on ordinary as opposed to technical language, and the strident devotion to the bible of those that want no dogmas.

There are then, on this analysis, twelve different types of consciousness and from them result twelve different worlds mediated by meaning. Still, this division is highly schematic. Further differences arise when one considers the degree to which consciousness has developed, the measure in which differentiated consciousness is integrated, the obnubilation imposed upon a consciousness that is less differentiated than its place and time demand, and the ~~for~~ frustration imposed upon a consciousness that has achieved a greater differentiation than most other people in its social circle.

## 5. Pluralism and Theological Doctrines

We have been considering diverse differentiations of human consciousness. Our aim has been to gain an insight into contemporary theological pluralism. It is time for us to set about applying the distinctions that have been drawn.

In general, the more differentiated consciousness is quite beyond the horizon of the less or the differently differentiated consciousness. Inversely, the less differentiated consciousness can easily be understood by the more differentiated, in so far ~~inasmuch~~ as the former is included in the latter.

Undifferentiated consciousness is the most common type. To this type will ~~belong~~ always belong the vast majority of the faithful. As a type it can be understood by everyone. But <sup>itself</sup> it is only mystified by the subtleties of scientifically differentiated consciousness, by the oracles of religiously <sup>by the strangeness of scholarly differentiated consciousness,</sup> differentiated consciousness, by the profundities of the modern philosophic differentiation. One can preach to it and teach it only by using its own language, its own procedures, its own resources. These are not uniform. There are as many brands of common sense as there are languages, socio-cultural differences, almost differences of place and time. The stranger is strange because he comes from another place. Hence to preach the gospel to all men calls for as many men as there are different <sup>each of</sup> places and times, and it requires <sup>each of</sup> them to get to know the people to whom he is sent, their manners and style and ways of thought and speech. There follows a manifold pluralism. Primarily <sup>it</sup> is a pluralism, not of doctrine, but of communications. ~~The religious apprehension of undifferentiated consciousness is through rituals, narratives, titles, parables, metaphors, praise and blame, commands and prohibitions, promises and threats.~~

But within the realm of undifferentiated consciousness there is no communication of doctrine except through the available rituals, narratives, titles, parables, metaphors, modes of praise and blame, command and prohibition, promise and threat.

An exception to this last statement must be noted. The educated classes in a society, such as was the Hellenistic, normally  
 ^ are instances of undifferentiated consciousness<sup>1</sup>. But their education had among its sources works of genuine philosophers, so that they could be familiar with logical principles and take propositions as the objects on which they reflected and operated. In this fashion the meaning of homoousion for Athanasius was contained in a rule concerning propositions about the Father and the Son: eadem de Filio quae de Patre dicuntur, excepto Patris nomine.<sup>6</sup> Again, the meaning of the one person and two natures<sup>1</sup>, mentioned only <sup>in the second paragraph of</sup> ~~and incidentally in~~ the decree of Chalcedon, stands forth in the repeated affirmation of the first ~~par.~~ paragraph  
 ^ ~~decree~~ that it is one and the same Son our Lord Jesus Christ that is perfect in divinity and the same perfect in humanity, truly God and the same truly man, consubstantial with the Father in his divinity and ~~nonsubstantia~~ the same consubstantial with us in his humanity, born of the Father before the ages ~~in his divinity and the same these last days... born of the Virgin Mary in his humanity. now is the time for all good men~~  
 in his divinity and these last days the same... born of the Virgin Mary in his humanity.<sup>7</sup> Now the meaning of the first paragraph can be communicated without any technical terms. However, logical reflection on the first paragraph will give rise to questions. Is the humanity the same as the divinity? If not, how can the same be both God and man? It is only after these questions have arisen in the mind of the inquirer that it is



relevant to ~~expalin~~ explain that a ~~dist~~ distinction can be drawn between person and nature, that divinity and humanity denote two natures, that it is one and the same person that is both God and man. Such logical clarification is within the meaning of the decree. But if one goes on to raise metaphysical questions, such as the reality of the distinction between person and nature, one not only moves beyond the questions <sup>explicitly</sup> envisaged by the ~~de~~ decree but also beyond the horizon of undifferentiated consciousness.

Religiously differentiated consciousness can be content with the negations of an apophatic theology. For it is in love and on its love there are not <sup>^</sup>~~without~~ any reservations or conditions or qualifications ("... with one's whole heart and one's whole soul and with all one's mind and all one's strength...."). By such love it is orientated positively to what is transcendent in lovableness. Such a positive orientation and the consequent self-surrender, as long as they are operative, enable one to dispense with any intellectually apprehended object; <sup>g</sup> and when they ~~ce~~ cease to be operative, the memory of them enables one to be content with enumerations of what God is not.

It may be objected that nihil amatum nisi praecognitum. But while that is true of other human love, it does <sup>7</sup> not seem to be true of the love with which God floods <sup>our</sup> ~~en~~ <sup>^</sup> inmost heart through the Holy Spirit given to us. That grace is the finding that grounds our seeking God through natural reason and through positive religion. That grace is the touchstone by which we judge whether it is ~~god~~ really God that natural reason reaches <sup>9</sup> or positive religion preaches. That grace would be the grace sufficient for salvation that God offers all men, that underpins what is good in all the religions of mankind, that explains how

those that never heard the gospel can be saved. That grace is what enables the simple faithful to pray to their heavenly Father in secret even though their religious apprehensions are faulty. That grace is what replaces doctrine as the unum necessarium in religion. ~~now is the time for all good men to~~ necessarium in religions generally. That grace indicates the theological justification of Catholic dialogue with Christians, with non-Christians, and even with atheists who may love God in their hearts without knowing him <sup>with</sup> ~~by~~ their heads.

However, what is true of religions generally, is not true of the Christian religion. For it knows God not only through the grace in its heart but also through the revelation of God's love in Christ Jesus and the ~~handing on~~ <sup>witness to</sup> ~~handing on~~ of that revelation down the ages through the church. Christian love of God is not just a state of mind and heart; essential to it is the intersubjective, interpersonal component in which God reveals his love and asks ours in return. It is at this point that there emerges the function of church doctrines and of theological doctrines. For that function is to explain and to defend the authenticity of the ~~revelation in Christ Jesus and the handing on of the revelation~~ church's witness to ~~handing on of the revelation in Christ Jesus.~~

As already explained, there was a slight tincture of scientifically differentiated consciousness in the Greek councils. In the medieval period there was undertaken the systematic and collaborative task of reconciling all that had been handed down by the church from the past. A first step ~~or was Abelard~~ Abelard's Sic et non, in which some one hundred and fifty-eight propositions were both proved and disproved by arguments from scripture, the Fathers, the councils, and reason.<sup>10</sup> In a second step there was developed the technique of the quaestio:

Abelard's ~~hypothesis~~ <sup>and his sic became</sup> non became videtur quod non and sed contra est.

To these were added a general response, in which principles of solution were set forth, and specific responses in which the principles were applied to the conflicting evidence. A third step was the composition of books of sentences that collected and classified ~~under an orderly list of headings~~ relevant passages from scripture and subsequent tradition. A fourth step were the commentaries ~~of~~ on the books of ~~selected~~ sentences in which the technique of the questio was applied to these richer collections of materials. The fifth step was to obtain a conceptual system that would enable the theologian to give coherent answers to all the questions he raised; and this was obtained partly by adopting and partly by adapting the Aristotelian corpus.

Scholastic theology was a <sup>o</sup>manumental achievement. Its influence on the church has been profound and enduring. Up to Vatican II, which preferred a more biblical turn of speech, it has provided <sup>much of</sup> the background whence proceeded pontifical documents and conciliar decrees. Yet today by and large it is abandoned, and that abandonment leaves the documents and decrees that relied on it almost mute and ineffectual. Such is the contemporary crisis in Catholicism. It is important to indicate why it exists and how it can be overcome.

The Scholastic aim of reconciling all the documents of the Christian tradition had one grave defect; it was content with a logically and metaphysically satisfying reconciliation; it did not realize how much of the multiplicity in the inheritance constituted not a logical or metaphysical but <sup>basically</sup> ~~simply~~ a historical problem.

Secondly, the Aristotelian corpus, on which Scholasticism drew for the framework of its solutions, suffers from a number of

defects. The Posterior Analytics set forth an ideal of science in which the key element is the notion of necessity, of what cannot be otherwise. On this basis, science is said to be of the necessary, ~~and~~ while opinion regards the contingent; similarly, wisdom is concerned with first principles, while prudence regards contingent human affairs. There follows the primacy of speculative intellect, and this <sup>is</sup> buttressed by a verbalism that attributes to common names the properties of scientific terms. Finally, while man is acknowledged to be a political ~~and~~ animal, the historicity of the meanings that inform human living is not grasped, and much less is there understood the fact that historical meaning is to be presented ~~by~~ not by poets but by historians.

In contrast, modern mathematics is fully aware that its axioms are not necessary truths but only freely chosen and no more than probably consistent postulates. <sup>3</sup> The modern sciences ascertain, now what must be so, but only what is in itself hypothetical and so in need of verification. First principles in philosophy are not verbal propositions but the de facto invariants of human conscious intentionality. What was named speculative intellect, now is merely the operations of experiencing, understanding, and judging, performed under the guidance of the moral deliberation, evaluation, decision, that selects a method and sees to it that the method is observed. The primacy now belongs to practical intellect and, perforce, philosophy <sup>ultimately</sup> becomes a philosophy of action. Finally, it is only on the basis of intentionality analysis that it is possible either to understand human historicity or to set forth the foundations and criticize the practice of contemporary hermeneutics and critical history.

The defects of Scholasticism, then, were the defects of the methods of its time. It could not inspect modern history and thereby learn the importance of history in theology. It could not inspect modern science and thereby correct the mistakes in Aristotle's conceptual system. But if we cannot blame the Scholastics for their shortcomings, we must undertake the task of remedying them. A theology is the product not only of a faith but also of a culture. It is cultural change that has made ~~Sec~~ Scholasticism no longer relevant and that demands the development of a new theological method and style, continuous indeed with the old, yet meeting all the <sup>genuine</sup> exigences both of the Christian religion and of an up-to-date philosophy, science, and scholarship.

Until that need is met, pluralism will obtain.

Undifferentiated consciousness will continue its ban on Scientifically differentiated consciousness will ally itself with secularism. technical theology. Religiously differentiated consciousness will know that the main issue is in the heart and not the head. Scholarly Scientifically differentiated consciousness will continue to pour forth the fruits of its research in interpretations and histories. Philosophically differentiated consciousness will continue to twist and turn in its efforts to break loose from Kant's grasp. But the worthy successor to thirteenth century achievement will be the fruit of <sup>a fourfold</sup> ~~triple~~ differentiated consciousness in which the workings of common sense, science, scholarship, intentionality analysis, and the life of prayer have been integrated. now is the time for all good men to come to the aid consciousness, in which the workings of common sense, science, scholarship, intentionality analysis, and the life of prayer have been integrated.

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Pluralism and Conversion

Conversion involves a new understanding of oneself because, more fundamentally, it brings about a new self to be understood. It is putting off the old man and putting on the new. It is not just a development but the beginning of a new mode of developing. Hence, besides the beginning, there is to be considered the consequent development. This may be great or average or small. It may be marred by few or by many relapses. The relapses <sup>been</sup> may have <sup>bias</sup> corrected fully, or they may still leave their traces in a <sup>basis</sup> ~~basis~~ that may be grave or venial.

Conversion is three-dimensional. It is intellectual inasmuch as it regards our orientation to the intelligible and the true. It is moral inasmuch as it regards our orientation to the good. It is religious inasmuch as it regards our orientation to God. The three dimensions are distinct, so that conversion can occur in one dimension without occurring in the other two, or in two dimensions without occurring in the other one. At the same time, the three <sup>dimensions</sup> ~~dimensions~~ are solidary. Conversion in one leads to conversion in the other dimensions, and relapse from one prepares for relapse from the others.

By intellectual conversion a person frees himself from confusing the criteria of the world of immediacy with the criteria of the world mediated by meaning. By moral conversion he becomes motivated primarily not by satisfactions but by <sup>b</sup> values. By religious conversion he comes to love God with his whole heart and his whole soul and all his mind and all his strength; and in consequence he loves his neighbor as himself.

The authentic Christian strives for the fulness of intellectual, moral, and religious conversion. Without intellectual conversion he tends to misapprehend not only the

world mediated by meaning but also the word God has spoken within that world. Without moral conversion he ~~too~~ tends to pursue not what truly is good but what only apparently is good. Without religious conversion he is radically desolate: in the world without hope and without God (Eph 2, 12).

While the importance of moral and religious conversion will be readily granted, hesitation will be felt by many when it comes to ~~an~~ intellectual conversion. They will feel that it is a philosophic issue and that it is not up to theologians to solve it. But while these contentions are true, they are not decisive. The issue is also existential and methodical. Theologians have minds~~§~~. They have always used them. They may use them properly and they may use them improperly. Unless they find out the difference for themselves or learn about it from someone else, they will be countenancing a greater pluralism than can be tolerated.

Indeed, in my opinion, intellectual conversion is essentially simple. It occurs spontaneously when one reaches the age of reason, implicitly drops earlier criteria of reality (are you awake? do you see it? is it heavy? etc.), and proceeds to operate on the criteria of sufficient evidence or sufficient reason. But this spontaneous conversion is insecure. The use of the earlier criteria can recur. It is particularly likely to recur when <sup>one</sup> gets involved in philosophic issues. For then the objectification of what is meant by sufficient evidence or sufficient reason is exceedingly complex, while the objectification of taking a good look is simplicity itself. So one becomes a naive realist, or an empiricist, or an idealist, or a pragmatist, or a phenomenologist, and so on.

Now, in any individual, conversion can be present or absent; in the former case it can be present in one dimension or in two or in all three; it can be enriched by development, or distorted by aberration, and the development and aberration may be great or ~~xx~~ small. Such differences give rise to another variety of pluralism. Besides the pluralism implicit in the transition from classicist to modern culture, besides the pluralism implicit in the coexistence of undifferentiated and variously differentiated consciousness, there is the more radical pluralism that arises when all are not authentically human and authentically Christian.

~~Unauthenticity may be open-eyed and thorough-going and, then it leads to a loss of faith. But also it may ~~unauthentic~~ lack clear self-awareness and, what happens then, has been studied somewhere by Karl Jaspers. On a number of points the person will be what a Christian is supposed to be, but on another number of points he will not be what he is supposed to be. Moreover, this discrepancy will lead to a devaluation of Christian language. Terms that denote what one is not, will be broadened to cover what one is. Doctrines that are embarrassing will not be mentioned. Conclusions that would not be accepted, are not drawn.~~

Unauthenticity may be open-eyed and thorough-going, and then it heads for a loss of faith. But the unconverted need have no clear idea what it is to be converted. They can be unaware of what they are. On a number of points they will be Catholic, but on a number of other points they will not be. There will result a devaluation, an inflation, of language and of doctrine. Terms that denote what one is not, will be ~~broadened~~ broadened to cover what one is. Doctrines that are embarrassing will not be mentioned. Unacceptable conclusions will not be drawn.



Quite by itself the pluralism resulting from a lack of conversion<sup>8</sup> can be perilous. But the dangers are multiplied many times when the lack of conversion combines with other aspects of pluralism. <sup>9</sup>The transition from classicist to modern culture, if combined with lack of conversion, can amount to a watering down of the faith. Undifferentiated consciousness, combined with defective conversion, will opt for the gospels and drop the dogmas. Religiously differentiated consciousness will deprecate insistence on doctrines. Scholarly differentiated consciousness can unleash floods of information in which origins are obscure and continuity hard to discern. The modern philosophic differentiation can prove a trap that confines one to a subjectivism and a relativism.

#### 7. Pluralism and Church Doctrines: The First Vatican Council

Early in the second half of the nineteenth century it was felt in Roman circles that the immutability of faith and even the distinction between faith and reason had been disregarded in the writings of Anton Günther (DS 2828 ff.) and Jakob Frohschammer (DS 2850 ff.; cf. DS 2908 f.).

The matter was further pursued by Cardinal Franzelin both in the votum he presented to the preconconciliar committee<sup>11</sup> and in the schema, Contra errores ex rationalism<sup>o</sup> derivatos, presented for discussion<sup>12</sup> in the early days of Vatican I.

In the final form of the dogmatic constitution, Dei Filius, promulgated by Vatican I, the matter was treated quite succinctly in the last paragraph of the fourth chapter and in the appended canon (DS 3020, 3043),<sup>13</sup> but the exact meaning of this paragraph and canon is to be reached only by recalling the definitions and distinctions of chapters two, three, and four. To this end the following notes may be helpful.

DS 3004: God can be known with certitude by the natural light of human reason.

DS 3005: Revelation contains truths of two distinct orders: those that lie within the reach of ~~human~~ human reason; and those that simply ~~do~~ exceed the grasp of the mind of man.

DS 3006: Supernatural revelation is contained in written books and unwritten traditions.

DS 3008: Faith is a supernatural virtue by which ~~we~~<sup>we</sup> believe to be true what God has revealed, not because the light of reason grasps the intrinsic truth of the mysteries, but because of the authority of God himself who reveals ~~the~~ the mysteries and can neither deceive nor be deceived.

DS 3011: By divine and catholic faith there are to be believed all (1) that is contained in scripture and tradition and (2) that has been proposed to be believed as divinely revealed either in a solemn pronouncement by the church or in its ordinary and universal teaching office.

DS 3020, 3041, 3043 mention "dogmas." They would seem to coincide with the truths to be believed by divine and catholic faith.

DS 3015: There are two orders of knowledge differing both in their principle and their object. The principle, natural reason, reaches its proportionate objects. The principle, divine faith, attains as objects mysteries hidden in God which, were they not revealed, simply could not be known by us.

DS 3016: Reason, illumined by faith, when it inquires diligently, piously, soberly, reaches with God's help some ~~under~~ extremely fruitful understanding of the mysteries both in virtue of the analogy of the things it knows naturally and in virtue of the interconnection of the mysteries with one

pronouncement by the church or in its ordinary and universal teaching (DS 3011). In the usage of the council the term, dogmas (cf. DS 3017, 3020, 3041, 3043), would seem to denote the truths that are to be believed by divine and catholic faith.

In the Schema contra errores ex rationalismo derivatos Chapters V, VI, XI, XII, XIV deal with topics ~~arising arising~~ ~~from~~ connected with Günther's doctrines. Mansi 50, 62.63.67.68.69. See also Franzelin's annotations (12) to (15), ~~and~~ (24) to (27), and (29) to (34). Mansi 50, 83-87. 99-102. 103-108.

another and with man's last end. But it never becomes capable of grasping them after the fashion it grasps the truths that lie within its proper range. For the divine mysteries by their very nature so exceed created intellect that even when given by revelation and accepted by faith still by the veil of faith itself they remain covered over as it were by some sort of cloud.

DS 3020: "Crescat igitur... et multum ~~vehementer~~ pr  
vehementerque proficiat, tam singulorum quam omnium, tam  
unius hominis quam totius ecclesiae, aetatum et saeculorum  
gradibus, intelligentia, scientia, sapientia: sed in suo  
dumtaxat genere, in eodem scilicet dogmate, eodem sensu,  
eademque sententia."

It would seem that the intelligentia whose development is desired by the council is the one approved in DS 3016. That developing understanding would ever be within the same genus, within the same dogma, ~~within the same~~ would ever be an understanding of the same mysteries hidden in God, revealed by him, received by faith, and covered over with the veil of faith.

There is, however, another type of understanding to which the council alludes with the expression, altioris intelligentiae specie et nomine. A first indication of its nature may be had from the canons appended to this fourth chapter of the constitution, Dei Filius.

In the first canon there are condemned those that ~~deny~~ affirm that in divine revelation there are ~~not~~ not contained any true mysteries, and that all the dogmas of faith can be understood and demonstrated from natural principles by appropriately cultivated reason. DS 3041.

In this passage Vatican I places a definite limit on pluralism. Similarly, in the third canon appended to chapter four, one reads: "If anyone says that it is possible with the progress of science for another sense

The second canon condemns those that affirm that human disciplines are to be conducted with such liberty that their assertions, even when opposed to revealed doctrine, may be held to be true, and that they may not be proscribed by the church. DS 3042.

The third canon condemns those that affirm that with the advance of science it is possible to attribute to the dogmas propounded by the church a meaning other than that which the church has understood and still understands. DS 3043.

The main thrust, then, of chapter four is against a rationalism that considers mysteries non-existent, that would demonstrate the dogmas, that defends science though opposed to church doctrine, that claims the church has no right to condemn ~~any~~ scientific opinions, and that grants science the competence to reinterpret the church's dogmas.

~~We have seen the positive affirmation of the mysteries~~

We have already noted the passages ~~concerned~~ concerned with the mysteries, faith, reason illumined by faith, and the natural light of human reason. We have now to ~~consider~~ note the passages, ~~passage~~, in which the liberty of science is put within proper limits, and then the immediately subsequent passage, in which the meaning of dogma is claimed to be <sup>a permanent acquisition.</sup> ~~over the same.~~

~~DS 3019: After~~

DS 3017: There is never any real contradiction between faith and reason.

DS 3018: The church has a divine right to proscribe what mistakenly claims to be science.

DS 3019: Faith and reason can and should collaborate.  
church  
The ~~church~~ is far from forbidding human disciplines from employing their own principles and methods within their own

field. But granting this rightful liberty, it is on its guard lest these disciplines (1) fall into error by impugning church doctrines or (2) overstepping their proper bounds they invade and upset what pertains to faith.

DS 3020: For the doctrine of faith, which God has revealed, has not been proposed as some sort of philosophic discovery to be perfected by the talent of man. It is a divine deposit, given to the Spouse of Christ, to be guarded faithfully and to be declared infallibly. Hence there is ever to be retained that meaning of the sacred dogmas that once was declared by holy mother church. From that meaning there is to be no departure under the pretext of some higher understanding.

It would seem that the pretended <sup>higher</sup> understanding is the work of the natural light of reason (1) operating beyond the range of its competence (DS 3019) and (2) not observing the limitations that are to be observed even by reason illumined by faith (DS 3016).

To conclude, faith accepts the mysteries revealed by God because of God's authority and not because their intrinsic truth is grasped by human intelligence. The natural light of reason has no capacity to discover, establish, <sup>clarify</sup> ~~clarify~~, improve upon faith's acceptance of the mysteries. Even reason illumined by faith, while it can advance in its understanding of the mysteries, cannot advance by substituting ~~something~~ something else in place of the revealed mysteries. Moreover, its <sup>advance</sup> in understanding does not give it the competence with respect to the mysteries that natural reason enjoys with respect to its proportionate objects, for the mysteries ever remain covered over with the veil of faith. From this set of considerations <sup>it does not appear possible that</sup> ~~how~~ anyone can correct the account of the mysteries revealed by God and infallibly declared by the church.



8. Pluralism and Church Doctrines: The <sup>Ongoing</sup> ~~Existing~~ Context

A statement has a meaning in a context. If one already knows the context, the meaning of the statement is plain. If one does not know the context, one discovers it by asking questions. The answer to a first question ~~and~~ <sup>may</sup> suggest two further questions. The answers to them suggest still more. Gradually there is woven together ~~interwoven~~ an interlocking set of questions and answers and, sooner or later, there is reached a point where further questions have less and less relevance to the matter in hand. One could ask about this and that and the other, but the answers would not help one to understand better the meaning of the original statement. In brief there is <sup>a</sup> limit to useful questioning, and when that is reached the context is known.

Such is the prior context, the context within which the original statement was made and through which the <sup>original</sup> meaning of the statement is determined. But besides the prior context, there is also the subsequent context. For a statement may intend to settle one issue and to prescind from other issues. But settling the one does not ~~put~~ <sup>put</sup> burke the others. Usually it contributes to a clearer grasp of the others and a more urgent pressure for their solution. According to Athanasius the council of Nicaea used a non-scriptural term <sup>in</sup> ~~as~~ a confession of faith, not to set a precedent, but to meet an emergency. But the emergency lasted for thirty-five years and, ~~after~~ <sup>some twenty</sup> years after it <sup>had</sup> subsided, the first council of Constantinople felt it necessary to answer the question ~~whether the~~ whether only the Son or also the Holy Spirit was consubstantial with the Father. Fifty ~~years~~ years later at Ephesus, it was necessary to clarify Nicaea by affirming that it was one and the same

~~that was born of the Father and not made~~

that was born of the Father and born of the Virgin Mary.

Twenty-one years later it was necessary to add that one and the same could be both eternal and temporal, both immortal and mortal, because he had two natures. Over two centuries later there was added the further clarification that the divine person that had two natures also had two operations and two wills. Within this matrix ~~Upon this basis~~ there arose a series of questions about Christ as man. Could he <sup>be</sup> sin? Did he feel concupiscence? Was he ignorant? in any way ~~ignorant~~ Did he have sanctifying grace? To what extent? Did he have immediate knowledge of God? Did he know everything pertaining to his mission? Such is the Christological context that did not exist prior to Nicaea but, bit by bit, came into existence subsequently to Nicaea. It does not state ~~what was intended at Nicaea. It does state what Nicaea effectively~~ ~~came to mean, now is the time for all good men to come~~ what <sup>it</sup> was intended at Nicaea. It does state what resulted from Nicaea and what became in fact the context within which Nicaea was to be understood.

As one may distinguish prior and subsequent stages in an ongoing context, so one ongoing context may be related to another. Of these relations the commonest are derivation and interaction. The Christological context, that was built up by answering questions that stemmed from the decision at Nicaea, was itself derived from the earlier tradition expressed in the New Testament, ~~in~~ by the apostolic Fathers, by orthodox Judaic Christianity, <sup>Christian</sup> by the apologists, and by the later antenicene Fathers. Again, out of the whole of earlier Christian thought there was derived the ongoing context of medieval theology, and this ongoing context interacted with subsequently developed ~~thought~~

church doctrines, as is clear from the dependence of theologians on church authority and, inversely, from Scholastic influence on pontifical and conciliar statements up to the second Vatican council.

Now such ongoing contexts are subject to many influences. They are distorted by the totally or partly unconverted that usually are unaware of the imperfections of their outlook. They are divided by the presence of people with undifferentiated or differently differentiated consciousness. They are separated because members of different cultures construct different contexts by finding different questions relevant and different answers intelligible.

Such differences give rise to a pluralism, and the pluralism gives rise to incomprehension and exasperation. The unconverted cannot understand the converted, and the partly converted cannot understand the <sup>totally</sup> converted. Inversely, because they are misunderstood, the converted are exasperated by the unconverted. Again, undifferentiated consciousness does not understand differentiated consciousness, and partially differentiated consciousness does not understand ~~a fourfold~~ <sup>a fourfold</sup> differentiated consciousness. Inversely, because <sup>it is</sup> ~~they are~~ <sup>more adequately</sup> met with incomprehension, differentiated consciousness is exasperated by less adequately differentiated consciousness. Finally, our historically minded contemporaries have no difficulty understanding the ghettos in which a classicist mentality still reigns, but the people in the classicist ghettos not only have no experience of serious historical investigation but also are quite unaware of the historicity of their own ~~mentalities~~ assumptions.

Such pluralism is a stubborn fact. Those that understand far are outnumbered by those that do not, and the majority has no intention of learning from the minority. The classicist can rightly argue that classical culture is morally superior to its modern successor. Undifferentiated consciousness has no notion of what is meant by differentiated consciousness, and it will have no notion of it until it ceases to be undifferentiated and becomes differentiated; indeed, it will have no adequate notion until it attains the fourfold differentiation. ~~it becomes triply differentiated~~ Finally, the unconverted or partially converted can appeal to the parable of the cockle (Mt 13, 24 - 30) and that appeal can more readily be granted if they do not insist on governing or teaching the church, if they do not insist on governing the church or teaching in it.

9. ~~The Immutability and Historicity of the Dogma~~

~~Edmundson~~

~~It will serve to bring together our account of certain passages in the constitution, Dei Filius~~

OVER

## 9. The Immutability and Historicity of Dogma

What we have learned from ~~the~~ our study of the constitution, Dei Filius, has now to be placed in its ongoing context. First, then, we ask in what respect a dogma is immutable. Secondly, how is it known (causa cognoscendi) to be immutable. Thirdly, why is it immutable (causa essendi). Fourthly, we ask whether the immutability of dogma excludes demythologization. Fifthly and finally we ask whether immutability excludes historicity.

First, in what respect is a dogma immutable? It is immutable in its meaning, in the meaning declared by the church, in the meaning from which one is not to depart under the pretext of a deeper understanding, in the meaning which the church has understood and understands.

DS 3020: Hinc sacrorum quoque dogmatum is sensus perpetuo est retinendus, quem semel declaravit sancta mater ecclesia, nec umquam ab eo sensu altioris intelligentiae specie et nomine ~~recedendum, recedendum~~ recedendum.

DS 3043: Si quis dixerit, fieri posse, ut dogmatibus ab ecclesia propositis aliquando secundum progressum scientiae sensus tribuendus sit alius ab eo, quem intellexit et intelligit ecclesia: an. s.

What is immutable, then, is a meaning and not a verbal formula. The same verbal formula is interpreted differently in different contexts, and it is precisely against this shift of context and the ~~the~~ attribution of ~~a new~~ new meaning to the dogmas that the council proceeded (DS 3043).

Again, it is not the same verbal formula but the same meaning that can be discerned in the verbis et rebus of divine revelation, <sup>14</sup> in the words of scripture, in the councils of the

church, and in the explanations of theologians.

Finally, it is <sup>by</sup> the same meaning that <sup>faith remains</sup> ~~in eodem genere~~  
<sup>in</sup> ~~in~~ suo dumtaxat genere, in eodem scilicet dogmate, eodem sensu,  
 eademque sententia, though with respect to that meaning ~~understanding~~  
 understanding, knowledge, and wisdom can grow and advance (DS 3020).

Next, how are dogmas <sup>k</sup> known to be immutable? What God  
 reveals and the church infallibly declares is true. What is  
 ever true, never can be truthfully denied.

DS 3020: Neque enim fidei doctrina, quam Deus revelavit,  
 velut philosophicum inventum proposita est humanis ingenis  
~~perficienda,~~  
~~perficiendum;~~ sed tanquam divinum depositum Christi sponsae tradita,  
 fideliter custodienda et <sup>f</sup> infallibiliter declaranda. Hinc  
 sacrorum quoque dogmatum is sensus perpetuo est retinendus....

Thirdly, why are dogmas immutable? Because they refer to  
 mysteries hidden in God that, unless revealed, could not be  
 known (DS 3015). By their very nature the divine mysteries  
 are beyond the range of created intellect, so that even when  
 revealed by God and accepted by faith they cannot be grasped  
 as can the proper objects of human intellect but remain as it  
 were covered over with the veil of faith itself (DS 3016).  
 For the mysteries are known to be true, not because their  
 intrinsic truth is grasped, but because of God's authority  
 who neither can deceive or be deceived (DS 3008). And while  
 understanding<sup>f</sup> of the mysteries can increase, still it is  
 only by analogy with what naturally is known and by the  
 interconnection of the mysteries with one another and with  
 man's last end ~~(DS)~~ (DS 3016). Finally, it is always with  
 respect to the mystery that is revealed and believed, and not  
 with respect to some human substitute for the mystery, that  
 understanding<sup>dg</sup> does increase. It follows that the dogmas

conveying a supernatural revelation (DS 3006) have a divine origin and, ~~in virtue of their intrinsic hiddenness cannot become~~ ~~in themselves, stand outside the human historical~~ part and parcel of the human historical process into which God introduces them.

Fourthly, does the immutability of the dogmas exclude demythologization? Demythologization may be mistaken or correct. The immutability of the dogmas excludes mistaken demythologization. But it does not exclude correct demythologization. Since the end of the second century there has been in the church a philosophic demythologization of the anthropomorphisms of scripture and the creeds. The Father has no right hand at which the Son might sit. Whether there exists a correct historical demythologization over and above the philosophic demythologization is a further question that cannot here be considered. We must be content with the general principle that, if a meaning has been revealed by God, then it cannot be the object of correct demythologization, and if it has not been revealed by God, then it cannot be an immutable dogma.

Finally, does immutability exclude historicity? Historicity pertains, not to the meaning revealed by God, but to the various contexts within which in the course of time that meaning has been expressed and communicated. Such contexts are many. There are <sup>^</sup>the context of the res et verba through which revelation occurred, the context of Palestinian and Hellenist the context of the New Testament, ~~Christian~~ preaching by the apostles, the context of ~~the apologists and~~ early Christian writers and <sup>^</sup>the antenicene Fathers, the ongoing context of the councils, the context of medieval Scholasticism, of the counter-reformation, of the theological manuals, of the present day when classicism and Scholasticism ~~are being~~ have been largely repudiated.

# 10. Pluralism and the Unity of Faith

The root and ground of unity is charity, agape, the fact that God's love has flooded our hearts through the Holy Spirit he has given us. The acceptance of that gift constitutes religious conversion and leads to both moral and intellectual conversion.

However, religious conversion, if it is Christian, is not just a state of mind and heart. Essential to it is an ~~intersubjective~~ intersubjective, interpersonal component. Besides the gift of the Spirit within, there is the outward challenge of Christian witness, which recalls the fact that of old in many ways God has spoken to us through the prophets but in this latest age through his Son (Heb 1, 1.2).

The ~~fact~~ function of church doctrines <sup>lies within</sup> is the function of bearing <sup>this</sup> witness. For there are mysteries revealed by God and infallibly declared by the church (DS 3016, 3020). Their meaning ~~human~~ is independent of human historical process. But the contexts, within which such meaning is grasped and expressed, vary both with cultural differences and with the measure in which consciousness is differentiated.

Such variations of context, so far from violating the unity of faith, manifest its richness and its vitality. What is opposed to the unity of faith is the absence of conversion; opposed to faith itself is the absence of religious conversion; opposed to the unity of faith is the absence ~~of~~ of moral or of intellectual conversion.

Also opposed to the unity of faith is the bigotry that seeks to impose its own culture or its own type of consciousness on those with a different culture or a different type of consciousness.



### Notes

- 1) This distinction was drawn by John XXIII in his opening address at Vatican II. See AAS 54(1962), 792 lines 8 - 11.
- 2) See Jean Daniélou, Théologie du judéo-christianisme, Tournai & Paris (Desclée) 1958; E. T., London (Darton, Longman & Todd) 1964. Les symboles chrétiens primitifs, Paris (du Seuil) 1961; E. T. London (Bruns & Oates) and Baltimore (Helicon) 1964. Études d'exégèse judéo-chrétien, Paris (Beauchesne) 1966.
- 3) On the relativist contention that contexts are infinite, see my book Insight, London (Longmans, Green) 1957 and New York (Philosophical Library) 1970, pp. 342 ff.
- 4) On the Kantian notion of object, briefly, B. Lonergan, Collection, London (Darton, Longman & Todd) and New York (Herder & Herder) 1967, p. 208; at length, J. Colette et al., Procès de l'objectivité de Dieu, Paris (du Cerf) 1969.
- 5) See William Johnston, The Mysticism of the Cloud of Unknowing, New York, Rome, Tournai, Paris (Desclée) 1967. Karl Rahner, The Dynamic Element in the Church, Montreal (Palm) and Freiburg (Herder) 1964, pp. 129 ff. Cf. Paul Tillich's being grasped by ultimate concern, e. g., Systematic Theology, New York (Harper) and Chicago (Chicago Univ. Press) 1967, I, 12 and see index for further references.
- 6) Athanasius, Oratio III c. Arianos, 4, MG 26, 329 <sup>A.</sup>
- 7) DS 301 f.
- 8) Cf. Karl Rahner, loc. cit.

- 9) On the transition from the context of the first Vatican council to the contemporary context on natural knowledge of God, see my paper, Proceedings of the Catholic Theological Society of America, 23(1968), 54 - 69.
- 10) ML 178, 1339 ff.
- 11) The votum has been published in an appendix to the work of Hermann J. Pottmeyer, Der Glaube vor dem Anspruch der Wissenschaft, Die Konstitution über den katholischen Glauben "Dei Filius" des 1. Vatikanischen Konzils und die unveröffentlichten theologischen Voten der vorbereitenden Kommission, Freiburg (Herder) 1968, see pp. 50\*, 51\*, 54\*, 55\*.
- 12) See chapters V, VI, XI, XII, XIV, of the schema, Mansi 50, 62-69, and the abundant annotations, Mansi 50, 83 ff.
- 13) On this chapter and canon, see Pottmeyer, op. cit., pp. 431 - 456.
- 14) As conceived in Vatican II, De divina revelatione, I, 2.