

## La théologie catholique entre intransigeance et renouveau

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## INTRODUCTION

Le concile Vatican II occupe une place si considérable dans l'histoire du catholicisme au 20<sup>e</sup> s. qu'il a retenu, plus que tout autre événement du siècle dernier, l'attention des historiens de l'Église. Ainsi, la période qui en précéda l'ouverture n'a pas bénéficié de toute l'attention qu'il aurait fallu lui accorder. Cette période, tantôt considérée comme une longue préparation du concile<sup>1</sup>, est aussi regardée comme l'antithèse du concile. Plus souvent, elle est définie comme « l'époque des mouvements » : mouvements liturgique, biblique, patristique, catéchétique, marial, œcuménique, missionnaire, intransigeant, sans exclure bien évidemment la « Nouvelle Théologie » et l'Action Catholique. Des monographies ont été consacrées à plusieurs de ces mouvements, mais on connaît encore trop peu de choses sur les interactions qui existaient entre tous ces mouvements, sans compter que, au-delà de l'affirmation sans cesse reprise qui veut qu'ils préparent et conduisent à Vatican II, bien peu d'études ont été réalisées sur le lien précis et effectif qu'ils entretiennent avec Vatican II et sa préparation au cours de la phase préparatoire. Pourtant, déjà en 1985, Giuseppe Alberigo affirmait qu'« Une connaissance historique adéquate des mouvements préconciliaires constituera un point de référence décisif pour comprendre le développement du Concile, surtout s'il est possible de mettre en lumière le point où chaque mouvement avait porté l'élaboration des points de force respectifs<sup>2</sup> ». Il s'agissait-là d'une invitation à dépasser l'affirmation impressionniste suivant laquelle le concile était débiteur des mouvements préconciliaires. Encore faut-il arriver à voir avec assez de précision comment chaque mouvement a été reçu par le concile et ce qui a résulté de cette réception.

De plus, il nous est très tôt apparu qu'il ne fallait pas simplement considérer les mouvements de renouveau préconciliaires si nous voulions comprendre quelque chose à ce qui s'est joué au concile et comprendre également la modalité (la juxtaposition d'énoncés pas toujours conciliables) par laquelle le concile est parvenu à dégager la grande unanimité que l'on sait sur l'ensemble de ses documents. Ignorer les mouvements intransigeants, c'est se condamner à ne pas comprendre le concile et sa dynamique propre, ses textes, témoins des compromis auxquels on est parvenu à la suite de patients efforts et de longues discussions, et la réception de Vatican II, marquée elle aussi par des tensions. Ces tensions, nous le pensons, sont déjà présentes avant le concile, au cours de sa phase préparatoire, se manifestent de manière parfois

<sup>1</sup> Voir l'ouvrage récent sur le pontificat de Pie XII et de son magistère, sous la direction de Philippe CHENAUX (dir.), *L'Eredità del Magistero di Pio XII*, Rome, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> CHENAUX, *L'Eredità*, p. 19, n. 24.

dramatique au concile, et sont toujours là au cours de la réception de Vatican II. Trop souvent, dans l'historiographie actuelle, il semble entendu que les schémas préparatoires ne sont que l'expression du courant théologique intransigeant de la première moitié du 20<sup>e</sup> s., alors que le concile, à la suite de sa seconde préparation au cours de la première intersession, est la reprise des idées développées de manière souterraine dans les autres mouvements. De plus, dans une construction schématique et bipolaire, on a pris l'habitude de passer de l'avant concile au concile, comme si la période préparatoire n'avait pas contribué à l'évolution des idées et à une première réception des « idées nouvelles » élaborées au cours de la première moitié du 20<sup>e</sup> siècle.

S'il est évident que le concile Vatican II (1962-1965) a constitué un moment clé dans le renouvellement de la théologie catholique contemporaine<sup>3</sup>, il nous semble que, contrairement à ce que l'on est parfois tenté de croire, la longue préparation du concile (1959-1962) ne se résume pas à trois années perdues. Déjà au cours de cette période, plusieurs projets théologiques<sup>4</sup> et façons d'exprimer le christianisme dans l'Église catholique au cours du 20<sup>e</sup> s. se rencontrent, se mesurent et se confrontent.

<sup>3</sup> Voir notamment Yves CONGAR, *La théologie au Concile. Le 'théologiser' du Concile*, dans *Situation et tâches présentes de la théologie*, Paris, 1967, p. 41-56.

<sup>4</sup> Plusieurs auteurs, au moment du concile, caractérisaient la théologie de l'époque de manière binaire, parlant de deux théologies ou de deux tendances. Voir Gérard PHILIPS, *Deux tendances dans la théologie contemporaine. En marge du II<sup>e</sup> Concile du Vatican*, dans *Nouvelle Revue théologique*, 85 (1963), p. 225-238. Ailleurs il distinguera entre « la théologie juridique notionnelle et une théologie de la révélation ouverte qui tient compte du travail scientifique moderne » ou deux conceptions: « la conception angoissée qui veut à tout prix conserver les positions établies, et la tendance qui veut apporter le message évangélique aux hommes ». Voir Karim SCHELKENS (dir.), *Carnets conciliaires de Mgr Gérard Philips secrétaire adjoint de la Commission doctrinale*, Leuven, 2006, p. 114. Pour sa part, H. de Lubac distinguait les groupes de la manière suivante: « On peut dire, [...] qu'il y a deux sortes de théologiens; les uns disent: relisons l'Écriture, saint Paul, etc.; scrutons la Tradition; écoutons les grands théologiens classiques; n'oublions pas de faire attention aux Grecs; ne négligeons pas l'histoire; situons dans ce vaste contexte et comprenons d'après lui les textes ecclésiastiques; ne manquons pas non plus de nous informer des problèmes, des besoins, des difficultés d'aujourd'hui, etc. – les autres disent: Relisons tous les textes ecclésiastiques de ces cent dernières années, encycliques, lettres, discours de circonstance, décisions prises contre tel ou tel, *monita* du Saint-Office, etc.; de tout cela, sans en rien laisser perdre ni en corriger le moindre mot, faisons une marqueterie, poussons un peu plus loin la pensée, donnons à chaque assertion une valeur plus forte; surtout, ne regardons rien au dehors; ne nous perdons pas dans de nouvelles recherches sur l'Écriture ou la Tradition, ni a fortiori sur des pensées récentes, qui nous feraient risquer de relativiser notre absolu. – Seul le théologien de la seconde espèce est considéré comme 'sûr' dans un certain milieu. (*Carnets du concile*, T. 1, Paris, Cerf, 2007, p. 53) Un autre témoin, P. Vallain, distinguait entre une « théologie conceptuelle, rationnelle, rationaliste même », et une « théologie vivante, renouvelée par les sources... cohérente avec la mentalité d'aujourd'hui, plus traditionnelle... (*Rythmes du monde*, 1 [1963], p. 53) Pour sa part, R. Laurentin distinguait entre deux écoles théologiques: « Lune pense notions et normes, elle met tout son soin à leur donner une netteté irréfragable, et si possible, univoque. Pour elle, la théologie a pour tâche de promouvoir des formules dogmatiques irréfornables, de réduire les zones d'obscurité où s'exerce encore librement la discussion théologique. Elle supporte mal ces hésitations peu conformes à la nature monolithique de la vérité. Aussi est-elle portée à définir et à condamner. [...] L'autre école pense Histoire du Salut et Annonce aux hommes de la « Bonne Nouvelle » c.-à-d. de l'Évangile. Elle tient à garder contact avant tout avec cette source jaillissante inépuisable. D'où l'importance que prend en elle [...] le ressourcement, c.-à-d. le culte du retour aux sources [...] Quant à la racine de la divergence, elle est double. Il y a ceux qui sont entrés dans la voie du ressourcement et ceux qui n'y entrent pas (*Lenjeu du concile. Bilan de la première session*, Paris, 1963, p. 29-34). Nous croyons cependant que, malgré un regroupement possible en deux grandes tendances, les courants étaient plus nombreux qu'il n'y paraît à première vue.

Il fallait donc étudier et préciser la présence concurrente de ces deux tendances, intransigeante (intégraliste) et mouvements de renouveau, regroupant plusieurs courants, au cours de la phase préparatoire, comme on a pu le faire au cours de la phase conciliaire.

Il s'agissait d'abord de mettre en relation les années pré-conciliaires (1907-1959) et la phase préparatoire du concile (1960-1962) de manière à mieux situer le concile dans la « longue durée » et à l'étudier « comme fait de réception<sup>5</sup> » de développements qui évoluent concurremment dans le corps ecclésial au cours d'une période assez longue, que l'on peut faire commencer avec la crise moderniste qui déchira l'Église à l'aube du 20<sup>e</sup> s., mais qui remonte sans doute plus haut encore jusqu'au pontificat de Pie IX. Ainsi, comme le suggèrent les études récentes du théologien Christoph Theobald ou John W. O'Malley<sup>6</sup>, l'étude du concile Vatican II et de sa réception ne peut commencer que par une meilleure compréhension de la place exacte qu'occupe ce concile dans l'histoire du christianisme et plus particulièrement dans l'histoire du catholicisme contemporain.

Le présent ouvrage, nous en avons bien conscience, ne fait qu'ouvrir la recherche sur le concile Vatican II comme fait de réception et sur la réception des mouvements qui travaillaient l'Église catholique au cours de la première moitié du 20<sup>e</sup> s. Ainsi, on examinera tour à tour la réception de divers mouvements : le mouvement patristique, d'abord, en examinant attentivement le traitement que fait Vatican II des textes d'Augustin; le mouvement biblique, ensuite, à travers la rédaction du schéma *De fontibus revelationis* ; le mouvement liturgique, en troisième lieu, à partir de quatre sites d'observation (l'Allemagne, la Belgique, les Pays-Bas et les États-Unis) ; la « nouvelle théologie » et le renouveau de l'ecclésiologie, ainsi que le mouvement œcuménique et le renouveau des relations entre les Juifs et les catholiques. Certes, plusieurs mouvements ne sont pas pris en compte ici, en particulier le mouvement missionnaire et celui de l'apostolat des laïcs. Cette étude n'examine pas non plus la réception du mouvement marial au cours de la phase préparatoire et de la phase conciliaire. Nous avons voulu cependant faire une place significative à la réception des mouvements intransigeants à Vatican II, en tâchant de reconstituer, dans un premier temps, cette nébuleuse difficile à circonscrire, de manière à en identifier les composantes et son fonctionnement en réseau avant d'en examiner, de manière plus précise, le rôle joué par sa composante brésilienne.

Ce premier travail nous a convaincu de la nécessité de poursuivre cette entreprise qui montre toute la complexité du milieu catholique qui est tout, sauf homogène. Ce premier travail, qui appelle plusieurs autres études, est indispensable si l'on veut comprendre Vatican II et sa dynamique interne. Un observateur de premier plan, Giuseppe Alberigo, remarquait que le concile Vatican II a largement été tributaire des années qui l'on précédé.

<sup>5</sup> Voir Gilles ROUTHIER, *Orientamenti per lo studio del Vaticano II come fatto di ricezione*, dans Maria Teresa FATTORI et Alberto MELLONI (dir.), *L'Evento e le decisioni. Studi sulle dinamiche del concilio Vaticano II*, Bologne, 1998, p. 465-500.

<sup>6</sup> Voir son chapitre très élaboré sur le long 19<sup>e</sup> s. : John W. O'MALLEY, *What happened at Vatican II*, Cambridge MA, 2008, p. 53-92.

Sa productivité [observe-t-il] a été forte tant qu'elle a affronté des aspects et des perspectives thématiques, élaborés et même expérimentés par des mouvements préconciliaires (domaine liturgique, biblique, œcuménique) ou des requêtes mûries en contrepoint à l'inflation des prérogatives papales, à la suite de Vatican II (valorisation de l'épiscopat). Quand il s'est agit de transcender les frontières des élaborations préconciliaires pour passer de la reconnaissance de la collégialité épiscopale à une ecclésiologie de communion, de la légitimation de l'œcuménisme au dépassement de l'uniatisme oriental, de l'immobilisme de la « *societas perfecta* » à la confrontation ouverte avec l'histoire des hommes, la même majorité s'est trouvée en difficulté. L'Élaboration antérieure était insuffisante, mais plus grave encore était la limite culturelle du noyau actif de cette même majorité tout entière centre-européenne et, en grande partie, de formation antérieure au second conflit mondial<sup>7</sup>.

Les acteurs au concile avaient eux aussi conscience que le concile reposait en grande partie sur la fermentation des idées qui l'avait précédé. Au moment où commençait sa préparation, Congar écrivait :

Au point de vue théologique, et surtout unionique, il apparaissait que le concile venait vingt ans trop tôt. En effet, il y avait trop peu d'années que cela bougeait. Déjà bien des idées avaient changé. Mais dans vingt ans, on eût eu un épiscopat fait d'hommes ayant grandi dans des idées bibliquement et traditionnellement ressourcées, dans une conscience missionnaire et pastorale réaliste. On n'en était pas là. Pourtant, bien des idées avaient déjà fait leur chemin et l'annonce même du concile, avec sa téléfinalité unionique, dans le climat plus humain et plus chrétien du pontificat de Jean XXIII, pouvait accélérer certains processus. [...] Il pourrait passer de « bonnes idées » en deux ans plus qu'en vingt ans de travail tout juste toléré : sauf qu'il ne passerait aujourd'hui dans la faveur du Pouvoir, que ce qu'on avait élaboré et semé dans les larmes<sup>8</sup>.

En octobre 1963, alors que le débat sur l'épiscopat s'enlisait et qu'on se disputait sans fin sur le lien entre l'autorité de l'évêque et sa consécration, c.-à-d. sur la doctrine de la sacramentalité de l'épiscopat, Congar notait :

Malheureusement, si étrange que la chose puisse paraître, on manque des travaux historiques nécessaires pour apprécier pleinement la tradition théologique en ces matières. La théologie, depuis un siècle surtout, s'est exprimée d'une façon très unilatérale. Elle doit se retrouver ou réinventer plusieurs données de son propre héritage. Le Concile a été déjà et il sera encore, pour cela, une incitation puissante. Il eût fallu qu'il pût être bénéficiaire de publications dont le temps n'a permis qu'une partie<sup>9</sup>.

Ces quelques exemples montrent à souhait la nécessité d'étudier la réception des mouvements préconciliaires par le concile : à travers quelles médiations, à travers quelles interactions, à quel rythme, etc. Ce faisant, non seulement on aura mieux articulé le concile aux années qui le précédèrent, mais, au plan théologique cette fois, on aura compris plus en profondeur l'articulation de l'assemblée conciliaire au corps ecclésial dans sa totalité. Certes, le concile n'émane pas de l'Église comme une

<sup>7</sup> Giuseppe ALBERIGO, *La condition chrétienne après Vatican II*, dans Giuseppe ALBERIGO et Jean-Pierre JOSSUA, dir., *La réception de Vatican II*, Paris, 1985, p. 23.

<sup>8</sup> Yves CONGAR, *Mon Journal du concile*, Paris, 2002, p. 4-5.

<sup>9</sup> *Le bloc-notes du Père Congar*, dans ICI, 201 (1<sup>er</sup> octobre 1963), p. 3.

assemblée représentative élue, au sens démocratique du terme<sup>10</sup>, et il ne constitue pas un parlement auquel le peuple abandonne les pouvoirs législatifs dont il serait le sujet propre. D'autre part, l'assemblée conciliaire des évêques représente vraiment l'Église, dans un sens corporatif où un corps se représente et se personnifie dans sa tête, parce qu'il confesse avec elle la même foi apostolique. En ce sens, le concile reçoit, à travers les évêques réunis en assemblée, la foi de toutes les Églises locales et accueille les ferments de vie qui habitent le corps ecclésial. Pour sa part, Francis A. Sullivan parle d'une infaillibilité « a priori » des conciles, car la foi de toute l'Église s'y exprime, l'infaillibilité de l'Église *in credendo* trouvant son mode d'expression dans l'infaillibilité des conciles. Le *sensus fidelium*, cette conspiration des fidèles et des pasteurs dans la foi, y trouvant une modalité particulière d'exercice. En ce sens il n'y a pas deux ou trois sujets de l'infaillibilité, le pape seul, le concile et l'Église, mais un seul, l'Église dans sa totalité, qui trouve sa voix dans l'expression des Pères conciliaires assemblés<sup>11</sup>. Se trouvent ainsi articulés vie de l'Église et concile, mouvements préconciliaires et enseignement conciliaire.

Certes, il nous faut étudier la réception du concile, mais on ne pourrait pas comprendre celle-ci en ignorant la réception par le concile des mouvements de pensée qui le précèdent. On acquiert alors aussi une compréhension plus approfondie de ce qu'est un concile, un moment de discernement, à travers un processus de délibération. En effet, le concile ne retient pas tout : il fait un tri parmi tout ce qui se présente à lui pour être reçu, choisissant consciemment de retenir ceci plutôt que cela.

Cet ouvrage, fruit de la collaboration entre la Faculté de théologie de la Katholieke Universiteit Leuven et de la Faculté de théologie et de sciences religieuses de l'Université Laval, montre à souhait l'ampleur du champ de recherche des études sur Vatican II. C'est en somme à une compréhension du devenir du catholicisme dans le monde que nous convoque la recherche sur Vatican II.

<sup>10</sup> Yves CONGAR distingue fréquemment la «représentation» réalisée à travers une personnalité corporative et la «représentation» par délégation. On verra notamment son article *Quod omnes tangit ab omnibus tractari et approbari debet*, dans *Revue d'histoire du droit français et étranger*, 36 (1958), p. 248-249.

<sup>11</sup> Francis A. SULLIVAN, *Magisterium. Teaching Authority in the Catholic Church*, New York NY, 1983, p. 106 ss.



# THE AUTHORITY OF AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO AT THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

## A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF AUGUSTINE IN THE PREPARATORY AND THE PROMULGATED DOCUMENTS

Despite the fact that the *Patres* were never actually absent from Catholic theology,<sup>12</sup> one can generally state that a renewed interest arose to read and study them during

<sup>12</sup> In the Middle Ages the work of the Church Fathers were available in compilations, *florilegia*, e.g. Peter Lombard's *Liber Sententiarum*. The accent was put on synthesis, and no contradiction between or within the Patristic authors was perceived or accepted. The Fathers were, for example, also significantly represented in the work of Thomas Aquinas. The Renaissance and the Modern Era considered the *Patres* as *fontes*, less as *auctoritates* as before. Erasmus published in the 16<sup>th</sup> century critical editions, as a part of his program of reform and inner renewal. Theologians of the reformation—Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Bucer—stressed continuity with the Fathers. They wished to go back to the Early Church, and studied the Early Church to correct the contemporary Church. The Council of Trent also appealed to Fathers, and claimed that only the Catholic Church is the true heir of the *consensus patrum*. In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century the study of the Fathers was, both in Protestant and Catholic circles, an auxiliary discipline serving dogmatic theology: furnishing arguments and quotes for dogmatic theology. In Protestant Germany the study of the Fathers as a science, as such, slowly separated from dogmatic theology, because historical research of the Early Church revealed the concrete reality of the diversity of the Early Church (which was not really conforming the idealistic portrait of a unified Church and theology which was held at that time), gave the insight that Early and Patristic theology was influenced by (pagan) philosophy, and the understanding of the historical character of theology. In Catholic circles, the study of the Fathers was under suspicion, because Gallicans, Episcopalists, Jansenists etc. seemed to use the Fathers to criticize the *magisterium* and the primacy of Rome. The so-called modernists, with their historical and contextual approach of the Bible and the Fathers and their concept of the historical and cultural determination of dogmas, were condemned by Pius X. Later on, the *Nouvelle Théologie* and its appreciation of the Patristic sources were considered to have revived the modernist crisis. The Second Vatican Council however stimulated Patristic studies and Patrology. From the Renaissance onwards many editions of the Church Fathers saw light. Later on, the Maurists in the 18<sup>th</sup> century were very active in this field. Their results were later edited by J.-P. Migne in the popular edition of *Patrologiae Cursus Completus* in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the second half of the later century serials of critical editions were founded in Vienna (Latin Fathers, 1866), Berlin (Greek Fathers, 1897), Leuven-Washington (Eastern Fathers, 1903). Around the second half of 20<sup>th</sup> century all kind of handbooks and introductions were published (B. Altaner, A. A. Cayré, I. Quasten) and translations of the Church Fathers (*Bibliothek der Kirchenväter*, 1870; *Ancient Christian Writers*, 1946; *Sources Chrésiennes*, 1948). Also, in 1953 the first volume of *Corpus Christianorum* was published (Steenbrugge). Around this time, all kind of reviews studying the Patristic Era were established (*Sacris Erudiri*, 1948; *Vigiliae Christianae*, 1947; *Augustiniana*, 1950; *Revue des études augustiniennes*, 1954; *Augustinus*, 1956; *Augustinianum* 1960). For the presented historical overview of the history of the study of the *Patres*, see: Jürgen METTEPENNINGEN, *Más allá del Déficit de la Teología (1930-1965)*. *La Nouvelle Théologie y el Redescubrimiento de Agustín*, in *Augustinus*, 55/1 (2010), p. 165-184; Gustave THILS, *Orientaties in de theologie*, Brugge, Utrecht, 1963 [*Orientations de la théologie*, Leuven, 1958], p. 52-61; Paul J. J. VAN GEEST, *De weerbarstigheid van kerkvaders en van de patristiek*, in Paul J. J. VAN GEEST, Eginhardt P. MEIJERING, Liuwe H. WESTRA (eds.), *De status van de Kerkvaders. Geschiedenis, thema's, perspectief*, Zoetermeer, 2009, p. 17-81.



the 1940s and 1950s. It was around that same period that the scientific study of the Church Fathers—which actually slowly emerged around the turn of the previous century—came to a culmination point. Serials of critical editions and of translations of the writings of the theologians of the first six centuries were published. Handbooks, introductions and compendiums from the patristic era were composed. Also, very thorough and groundbreaking monographs were written, which scientifically studied the Church Fathers, and applied the historical critical method on their theology, writings and historical context.

This scientific *reveil* of the Church Fathers is also mirrored in the theological endeavours of that period. Again, the Church Fathers never disappeared from the scene of Catholic theology, however, a change in perspective occurred: they were no longer used as apologetical and auxiliary *auctoritates*, who provide citations to illustrate and substantiate dogmas—a very static and monolithic understanding of revelation—but as sources to revitalise and renew theology and its language—which is a more pluriform understanding of theology, of its historical context, and of the language it was expressed in throughout the history of Christianity. The theology of the *Patres* was studied and was considered as an important source for contemporary theology. Systematic studies of the theology of the Church Fathers were conducted by theologians involved in the theological discussions in the three decades before the Second Vatican Council—e.g. Jean Daniélou, Henri de Lubac, Hans Urs von Balthasar—who considered the Church Fathers as an alternative for the scholastic theology, as less technical and more dynamic, as revealing the essential aspects of Christian doctrine as this was discussed upon in the first centuries. Church Fathers were considered to have a greater feeling for synthesis, for the interconnectedness of the mysteries in the divine plan and for the historical character of this plan. Their way of presenting the message of Revelation was perceived to be religiously richer than the analytical and dialectical approach of later theology.

The return to the patristic sources was part of a greater framework, propagated especially by the so-called *Nouvelle Théologie*, a dynamic of *ressourcement*, a return *ad fontes*: Bible, Liturgy and Church Fathers:

Renouveau biblique et mouvement liturgique devaient tout naturellement se compléter par une renaissance patristique car les œuvres des grands docteurs de l'antiquité chrétienne font revivre une époque où la liturgie était, avec la Bible, dont on ne la séparait pas en pratique, la grande source de vie. Le trait caractéristique de la renaissance patristique actuelle c'est qu'il ne s'agit plus seulement, comme il y a un demi-siècle, de chercher dans les œuvres des Pères des arguments apologétiques pour prouver l'antiquité des doctrines professées ou des pratiques en usage dans l'Église catholique; on s'intéresse maintenant aux écrits des Pères pour ce qu'ils ont à nous apprendre de neuf ou, plus exactement, à nous réapprendre de ce que nous avons oublié depuis des siècles.<sup>13</sup>

In the beginning the Catholic *magisterium* was very suspicious concerning this Patristic *ressourcement*. A famous example is that the Jesuits Jean Daniélou and Henri de Lubac, who started in 1942 the Patristic series *Sources Chrétiennes*, had (around 1958) to take discrete distance from the serials because the accusations raised against

<sup>13</sup> Roger AUBERT, *La théologie catholique au milieu du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Tournai-Paris, 1954, p. 38.

the so-called *Nouvelle Théologie* could at that moment endanger the future of the project of *Sources Chrétiennes*.<sup>14</sup>

The general picture is that the Patristic renewal was conceived quite negatively by the Catholic *magisterium* —as is illustrated by the difficulties the *Nouvelle Théologie* experienced and the condemnation of ‘historical relativism’ by *Humani Generis* of 1950. Despite the fact that pope Pius XII stimulated in his encyclical a reflection on the Early Church, it seemed that the Patristic *ressourcement* had to wait for the Second Vatican Council and the documents it promulgated to be fully approved by the *magisterium*. These documents recognized the historical and contextual *Sitz-im-Leben* of the development of theological ideas, which made it possible to scientifically study the Fathers. More fundamentally, the Council documents themselves used the ideas and concepts of the *Patres* to formulate a contemporary theology, and especially a renewed ecclesiology.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, these documents even exhorted to study the Fathers as a special and authentic source for theology and spirituality.<sup>16</sup>

One of the most prominent Fathers present in the promulgated documents is Augustine, bishop of Hippo (354-430), whose 15<sup>th</sup> century anniversary of his birth was celebrated with a lot of attention in 1954. Augustine is the most quoted Father at the Council. Of the circa 330 quotes of *Patres* and *Doctores*, he was quoted 57 times, while Thomas Aquinas only 25 times. This paper intends firstly to evaluate the Patristic nature of the Vatican II documents by studying the references made to Augustine: how is he present, when exactly is he referred to, how do the Council Fathers read and use him, do they take account of the original intention of Augustine’s writings which they refer to? Several articles have already studied the Augustinian presence in the promulgated documents, and the majority came unanimously to the same positive conclusion: Augustine is a real source in Vatican II, his ideas are present throughout the documents, even in places where he is not mentioned.<sup>17</sup> This conclusion will also

<sup>14</sup> Étienne FOUILLOUX, *La collection “Sources Chrétiennes”. Éditer les Pères de l’Église au XX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris, 1995.

<sup>15</sup> The influence of the Church Fathers on the reflection of the Trinitarian nature of the Church and of the people of God in *Lumen Gentium* is acknowledged: the Church as Trinity, as body of Christ, as community of the people of God. “L’ecclésiologie, qui prend sa véritable mesure autour du Concile Vatican II, tire ses racines de l’expérience des Pères. Les patrologues, qui ont été les acteurs du Concile, y ont largement contribué. De plus, notre monde n’est pas sans analogie avec celui de l’Antiquité tardive, et l’influence des Pères sur la Constitution *Lumen gentium* est tout à fait parlante”. Marie-Anne VANNIER, *L’influence de l’ecclésiologie des Pères sur celle de Vatican II*, in Marie-Anne VANNIER (ed.), *Les Pères et la naissance de l’ecclésiologie* (Patrimoine Christianisme), Paris, 2009, p. 11-20, p. 20. Cf. Gilles ROUTHIER, *Vatican II et le renouveau ecclésiologique de la Théologie Trinitaire*, in Emmanuel DURAND, Vincent HOLZER (eds.), *Les réalisations du renouveau trinitaire au XX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris, 2010, p. 217-246.

<sup>16</sup> *Presbyterorum Ordinis* 3, 19. *Optatam Totius* 16.

<sup>17</sup> “Da un punto di vista generale possiamo parlare della presenza di Agostino nel Concilio, come di tutti gli altri Padri e Dottori, ricordando le idee essenziali, metodologiche e tematiche comuni al Concilio ed ai Padri. Tra queste idee si annoverano: il linguaggio biblico e la fedeltà alla Sacra Scrittura, la teologia come storia della salvezza, cristocentrismo e storia organica e pedagogica dal Vecchio al Nuovo Testamento, l’alleanza tra la cultura e i valori della storia, il senso ottimistico di fronte ai valori terreni”. “In sintesi, possiamo dire che il Concilio Vaticano II ci ha offerto un Agostino per oggi. In sede di principii Agostino è stato il grande ispiratore, e come quello che conterà all’ora delle realizzazioni concrete saranno i principii, approfondendo la dottrina agostiniana si renderà il

be evaluated. Our incentive for this re-evaluation is that we found two articles that appeared shortly after the Council but which were not really conceived in the study of Augustine and his presence at the Council. These articles stress the continuity of the Augustinian ideas present in the promulgated documents with the doctrinal teachings before the Council regarding ecclesiology and matrimony.<sup>18</sup>

Secondly, this paper will ask the question whether one really had to wait for the Council and its Constitutions, Decrees and Declarations before proper attention was paid —also by the *magisterium*— to the Church Fathers and to Augustine in particular. A second, very specific, case study will facilitate an answer to this question. We will namely, in the same way as we investigated the promulgated documents, study the presence of the *Doctor Gratiae* in the *Series Prima* (*De Fontibus Revelationis*,

più grande servizio alla Chiesa. La Chiesa del servizio, la Chiesa della carità, la Chiesa dell'unità, la Chiesa della verità, la Chiesa della testimonianza, la Chiesa viva: ecco il pensiero fondamentale di Agostino ed il pensiero fondamentale della Chiesa d'oggi. Studiati da vicino i principi dei diversi documenti li troviamo in armonia con Agostino, e più ancora ci rendiamo conto che il Concilio è stato consapevole anche di questo fatto". José MORÁN, *La presenza di S. Agostino nel Concilio Vaticano II*, in *Augustinianum* 6 (1966), p. 460-488, p. 461, p. 488.

"Debemos confesar con satisfacción que San Agustín estuvo muy presente como hilo conductor en los documentos principales del Vaticano II. Non obstante, es justo reconocer también que las citas del pensador africano son muchas veces ocasionales y sin aprovechar de ellas todo el sentido que el Santo les dio. Parece como si peritos y redactores sólo hubieran pretendido demostrar la verdad del concilio con la verdad del obispo de Hipona". Álvarez Maestro discusses each document of Vatican II: the presence of citations of Augustine and Augustinian ideas (also in documents in which Augustine is not referred to). Jesús ÁLVAREZ MAESTRO, *Presencia de San Agustín en el Concilio Vaticano II*, in Isaac GONZÁLEZ MARCOS (ed.), *Concilio Vaticano II. 40 años después* (IX Jornadas Agustinianas, Residencia Fray Luis de León, Guadarrama (Madrid), 11-12 de marzo de 2006), Madrid, 2006, p. 231-281 (280).

Cf. also: Argimiro TURRADO, *Corpo di Cristo e salvezza nella dottrina di S. Agostino e del Vaticano II*, in *Chiesa e salvezza* (Atti della settimana agostiniana Pavese), Vol. 5, Pavia, 1975, p. 21-44; which studies the presence of Augustine's ecclesiology in Vatican II documents. This is not a study of the presence of explicit references to Augustine, and focusses on the teaching of Vatican II of the Church as body of Christ, as a community of grace and love between the Father and humankind in Christ, his Son, mediated by the H. Spirit (especially *Lumen Gentium* 2). Pedro LANGA AGUILAR, *San Agustín en el Concilio Vaticano II*, in José Demetrio JIMÉNEZ (ed.), *San Agustín, un hombre para hoy* (Congreso Agustiniiano de Teología. 1650 aniversario del nacimiento de San Agustín. Buenos Aires, 26-28 de agosto de 2004), Vol. 1, Buenos Aires, 2006, p. 227-260; which offers an analysis especially of Augustine's presence in the ecclesiology of Vatican II: Church as community and as ministry of service, in particular *Lumen Gentium* and also *Gaudium et Spes*.

Cf. also Amedeo ERAMO, *Mariologia del Vaticano II vista in S. Agostino*, Roma, 1973.

<sup>18</sup> Gaspare FAVARA, *La Chiesa comunione di Salvezza. Dottrina cattolica e pensiero agostiniano dopo il Concilio Vaticano II*, in *La Civiltà Cattolica*, 122/1 (1971), p. 439-452, stresses the necessity of the Church for Salvation, both in Augustine and *Lumen Gentium*: "La Chiesa appare così, come oggi si ama presentarla, la vera ed unica "comunione di carità e di salvezza", e la dottrina agostiniana sulla Chiesa si ritrova in perfetta armonia, non solo con la moderna tendenza ecclesiologica che superando un esagerato giuridismo ha preparato l'enc. *Mystici Corporis* di Pio XII e la cost. *Domm. Lumen Gentium* del Concilio Vaticano II, ma anche con la posizione di quei moderni ecclesiologi i quali nelle fondamentali disposizioni cristiane *pistis e agape* vedono la giusta soluzione del problema dell'universale salvezza, la spiegazione adeguata del votum Ecclesiae ed il vero significato della Chiesa nella storia" (p. 451-452). John J. HUGO, *St. Augustine at Vatican II*, in *The Homiletic and Pastoral Review* 67/9 (June 1967), p. 765-772, analyses Augustine's writings as the chief source for the marriage teaching of Vatican II, which is moreover in line with the teaching of popes Pius XI (esp. *Casti Connubii*) and Pius XII on this subject: conjugal love, in which sexual intercourse is only justified by love, and aimed at the fruitfulness of this love: procreation and parenthood, personal relationship in fidelity as communion.

*De Deposito Fidei Pure Custodiendo, De Ordine Morali Christiano, De Castitate, Matrimonio, Familia, Virginitate, De Sacra Liturgia, De Instrumentis Communicationis Socialis, De Ecclesiae Unitate «Ut Omnes Unum Sint»*) and *Series Secunda (De Ecclesia, De Beata Maria Virgine Matre Dei et Matre Hominum)* of the preparatory documents for the Council, published in 1962. The first were sent to the Fathers before the opening of the Council, the second were distributed in november 1962. Five of the said nine *schemata* (on Liturgy, Revelation, Church, Oecumenism, Communication Media) were discussed during the first *sessio*, and were rejected by the Council Fathers as too static and Neothomistic, not Biblical and Patristic enough, etc. The specific presence of Augustine in the preparatory conciliar schemas has not previously been investigated.

We will follow the chronological order, and first study the preparatory documents and then the promulgated. Afterwards our findings will be combined and compared. Both sets of documents will be presented in the same threefold way: (1) literal citations to Augustine, (2) non-literal references and allusions to Augustine, (3) very vague or even incorrect references to Augustine.

### SERIES PRIMA AND SERIES SECUNDA OF THE SCHEMATA CONSTITUTIONUM ET DECRETUM OF 1962<sup>19</sup>

The preparatory documents contain 49 references to Augustine in 38 different notes.

#### LITERAL CITATIONS OF AUGUSTINE

A first striking observance is that from the 49 references made to Augustine in the preparatory documents, 27 are literal citations, thus, citing a little more than half of the Augustine references as quotes.

*De Fontibus Revelationis* cites *De consensu evangelistarum* to contend that the gospel stands deservedly pre-eminent in the collection of the sacred writings.<sup>20</sup> Priests

<sup>19</sup> *Sacrosanctum Oecumenicum Concilium Vaticanum Secundum. Schemata constitutionem et decretorum de quibus disceptabitur in Concilii sessionibus, Series Prima, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1962:*

- *Schema Constitutionis Dogmaticae De Fontibus Revelationis.*
- *Schema Constitutionis Dogmaticae De Deposito Fidei Pure Custodiendo.*
- *Schema Constitutionis Dogmaticae De Ordine Morali Christiano.*
- *Schema Constitutionis Dogmaticae De Castitate, Matrimonio, Familia, Virginitate.*
- *Schema Constitutionis De Sacra Liturgia.*

- *Schema Constitutionis De Instrumentis Communicationis Socialis.*

- *Schema Decreti De Ecclesiae Unitate «Ut Omnes Unum Sint».*

*Sacrosanctum Oecumenicum Concilium Vaticanum Secundum. Schemata constitutionem et decretorum de quibus disceptabitur in Concilii sessionibus, Series Secunda, De Ecclesia et de B. Maria Virgine, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1962:*

- *Schema Constitutionis Dogmaticae De Ecclesia.*
- *Schema Constitutionis Dogmaticae De Beata Maria Virgine Matre Dei et Matre Hominum.*

<sup>20</sup> *Nota 1* (on p. 18): *De consensu evangelistarum* 1, 1: PL 34, c. 1041-1042. As reference to: "Neminem fugit inter omnes divinas Auctoritates, quae Sanctis Litteris continentur, Evangelium merito excellere" (p. 17: *Caput 4: De novo Testamento; §1: De Evangelii eorumque auctoribus*).

Augustine: "In the entire number of those divine records which are contained in the sacred writings, the gospel deservedly stands pre-eminent" (p. 77). S. D. F. SALMOND (trans.), M. B. Riddle (notes, ed.),

have to read Scripture. Paul recommends this (2T13,16-17). Also the Fathers recommend it: Gregory, Jerome, and Augustine. The latter's *sermo* 179 exhorts preaching priests to individually listen to the word of God when they preach: "it's a futile preacher outwardly of God's words, who isn't also inwardly a listener".<sup>21</sup>

*De Deposito Fidei Pure Custodiendo* claims that the truth held by the Church is not merely subjective, but conforms to the truth that reason does not make itself but finds as such. This is the same epistemological thesis Augustine expressed in his *De vera religione*: "Non enim ratiocinatio talia fecit, sed invenit".<sup>22</sup> The same writing is quoted to express God's revelation in the salvation of history: "it was his will that what is being done with the human race should be brought to our attention through history and through prophecy".<sup>23</sup> However, the context is somewhat different. Augustine was

*The Harmony of the Gospels* (Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 6), Grand Rapids MI, 1979 (reprint), p. 65-236, p. 77-78.

<sup>21</sup> Nota 6 (on p. 21): *Sermo* 179, 1: PL 38, c. 966. As reference to: "... ne inanis forinsecus praedicator fiat 'qui non est intus auditor'" (p. 20: *Caput* 5: *De Sacra Scriptura in Ecclesia*; §26: *De lectione S. Scripturae apud sacerdotes*).

Augustine preaches a sermon on Jas. 1:19: "but let each of you be quick to hear, but slow to speak", and on Jas. 1:22: "but be doers of the word, and not hearers only". Both verses are quoted in the opening paragraph of the sermon, in which Augustine applies them on the preaching office (which is a *topos* in Augustine's sermons, namely to emphasize that the sermon contains God's words and not the words of the preacher and that the preacher therefore also has to listen to God): "So on the strength of this utterance flowing from the wellspring of truth, through the absolutely truthful mouth of the apostle, I too make bold to add my own exhortation to you; and while I'm exhorting you, to take a look at myself. After all, it's a futile preacher outwardly of God's words, who isn't also inwardly a listener". For this reason the preacher also needs the prayers of his listeners. John E. ROTELLE (ed.), Edmund HILL (trans., notes), *Sermons 3/5 (148-183), On the New Testament* (The works of saint Augustine: a translation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, 3/5), Brooklyn/New York NY, 1992, p. 298.

<sup>22</sup> Nota 5 (on p. 28): *De vera religione* 39, 73: PL 34, c. 155. As reference to: "Quemadmodum autem Ecclesia, divino eloquio iugiter freta, semper tenuit veritatem non esse quid mere subiectivum, sed potius existimandam esse humanae mentis singularem perfectionem, qua rerum universitati eadem mens conformari potest, iuxta illud Augustini: 'Non enim ratiocinatio talia fecit, sed invenit'; ita pari firmitate semper agnovit hominis intellectum facultate ditari veritates necessarias et immutabiles assequendi et de illis propositiones enuntiandi quae mutationi non sint obnoxiae" (p. 27: *Caput* 1: *De cognitione veritatis*; §4: *De veritate primorum principiorum*).

Augustine: "Where these things are seen is where the light is that is independent of space and time and of any fancies or imaginings of such places and space. Can these things in any degree perish, even though every reasoner should vanish or grow old among the carnal ones below? Reasoning, after all, does not make such things but finds them. So then, before they are found they abide in themselves, and when they are found they make us new again". Ramsey BONIFACE, Michael FIEDROWICZ (eds.), *On Christian Belief* (The works of saint Augustine: a translation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, 1/8), Hyde Park/New York NY, 2005, p. 79.

<sup>23</sup> Nota 4 (on p. 42): *De vera religione* 25, 46: PL 34, c. 142: "Quid autem agatur cum genere humano, per historiam commendari voluit [Deus] et per prophetiam". As reference to: "Quapropter, etsi agnoscendum sit revelationem nobis datam esse in humanae salutis historia, sive praenuntiata sive narrata: tamen minime sentiendum est, revelationem meris istis eventibus iam ita constitutam esse, ut sermone Christi, Filii Dei, aliorumque Dei legatorum secundarie tantum compleatur" (p. 36: *Caput* 4: *De revelatione publica et de fide Catholica*; §18: *Revelatio et historia salutis*).

Augustine poses the question: which authorities primarily are to be trusted? "Now, divine providence, as well as caring for the interests of individuals, as it were privately, is also concerned publicly, so to say, with those of the whole human race. But, while God knows what he is doing with individuals, and they know what is being done with them, it was his will that what is being done with the human race should be brought to our attention through history and through prophecy. Now, faith is good for

not writing on revelation but on providence. Despite the different contexts/intents, the dogmatic schema is in line with the thoughts of Augustine, here in this specific writing and in general.

*De Deposito Fidei Pure Custodiendo* most frequently quotes one of Augustine's most important and elaborate dogmatic writings, *De civitate Dei*. God is in the words of Augustine indicated as "the cause which constituted the universe, the light by which the truth is perceived, the fount by which happiness is drunk".<sup>24</sup> The use of this citation is true to the content of the message of Augustine, the original context however is somewhat different: Augustine is expressing why he prefers the Platonists above all other philosophers because they recognize a divine cause of the world. *De civitate Dei* is quoted to express that God is not only the cause, but also the aim of rational nature: rational nature is created by God in such an excellent way that its need is only satisfied by being perfectly blessed, and for the later nothing but God suffices,<sup>25</sup> who is the end of our desires which will be reached in heaven.<sup>26</sup> The schema

dealing with temporal matters, whether past or future, more by believing than by understanding, but it is our business to work out which human beings or books are to be trusted about the correct worship of God, in which lies the one salvation". BONIFACE, M. FIEDROWICZ (eds.), *On Christian Belief*, p. 59.

<sup>24</sup> Nota 3 (on p. 32): *De civitate Dei* 8, 10, 2: PL 41, c. 235. As reference to: "Profecto sancti Patres et Doctores Ecclesiae (Nota 2: Gregorius Nazianz., Ioannes Chrysost., Augustinus, Thomas, Pius XII) variis atque firmissimis argumentis demonstrarunt Deum esse et "causam constitutae universitatis, et lucem percipiendae veritatis et fontem bibendae felicitatis" (Nota 3)" (p. 30: *Caput 2: De Deo*; §8: *Argumentum ex perfectionibus mundi*).

Augustine claims that the excellence of the Christian religion surpasses all the arts of the philosophers. Amongst the philosophers, he writes to prefer the Platonists. "This, therefore, is the reason why we prefer the Platonists to all others: because, while other philosophers have exhausted their ingenuity and zeal in seeking the causes of things and the right way to learn and live, these, by knowing God, have discovered where to find the cause by which the universe was established, and the light by which truth is to be perceived, and the fount at which we may drink of happiness". Roger W. DYSON (trans., ed.), *Augustine. The City of God against the Pagans* (Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought), Cambridge, 1998, p. 326-327.

<sup>25</sup> Nota 9 (on p. 53): *De civitate Dei* 12, 1, 3: PL 41, c. 439: "... in tanta excellentia creata est (rationalis natura), ut ... (non) expleat indigentiam suam nisi utique beata sit, eique explendae non sufficiat nisi Deus". As reference to: "Homo enim ad imaginem Dei creatus, naturale gerit desiderium felicitatis quod in nullo bono finito ex tot quiescere potest (Nota 8), atque ultimam ac perfectam beatitudinem, qua adepta nihil remaneat appetendum, Dei visione consequitur (Nota 9)" (p. 52: *Caput 7: De ordine naturali et supernaturali*; §38: *Mysterium nostrae elevationis ad ordinem supernaturalem*).

Augustine: "Those things in the created universe which are not capable of blessedness are not, however, better merely because they cannot be miserable. For it cannot be said that the other members of the body are superior to the eyes because they cannot be blind. But just as the sentient nature, even when it suffers pain, is superior to that of a stone which cannot suffer pain, so the rational nature is more excellent even when it is miserable than is that from which reason or sensation is absent, and which can therefore experience no misery. Since this is so, then, it is clearly a fault in such a rational nature if it does not cleave to God. For it has been created with an excellence such that, though mutable in itself, it can nonetheless achieve its blessedness by cleaving to the immutable Good, the supreme God; nor is its need satisfied unless it can be perfectly blessed, for which purpose only God suffices". DYSON, *Augustine*, p. 499.

<sup>26</sup> Nota 7 (on p. 64): *De civitate Dei* 22, 30, 1: PL 41, c. 802. As reference to: "Deus enim «finis erit desideriorum nostrorum, qui sine fine videbitur, sine fastidio amabitur, sine fatigatione laudabitur»" (p. 62: *Caput 9: De novissimis*; §53: *Caelestis beatitudo est aeterna*).

Augustine: "The reward of virtue will be God Himself, Who gives virtue, and Who has promised Himself to us, than Whom nothing is better or greater ... This, too, is the correct understanding of



also declares that opposite to eternal beatitude, is eternal damnation, which is, as is explained by Augustine, equal to the blessed eternal life that is also without end.<sup>27</sup>

A second writing of Augustine frequently quoted in the schema *On the Deposit of the Faith* is his *De Trinitate*, specifically written to express that man is *imago Dei* and as such can partake and share in God's nature.<sup>28</sup> *De Trinitate*, together with a quote from *Contra Faustum*, is cited twice to stress the idea of *satisfactio Christi*: humanity is redeemed from its sin by Christ's absolving death on the cross—Christ who died for our sins, being without any sin or guilt himself.<sup>29</sup>

what the apostle says, 'That God may be all in all.' (1Cor 15:28) God will be the end of our desires. He will be seen without end, loved without stint, praised without weariness. And this duty, this affection, this employment, will, like eternal life itself, be common to all." DYSON, *Augustine*, p. 1179.

<sup>27</sup> Nota 4 (on p. 64): *De civitate Dei* 21, 23; PL 41, c. 736. As reference to: "Fide enim catholica credendum est poenas a damnatis in inferno luendas, quas ipsi suis contra legem aeternam praevaricationibus meruerunt, fore perpetuas. 'Et ibunt hi, ait Dominus, in supplicium aeternum, iusti autem in vitam aeternam' (Mt. 25, 46). 'Utrumque aeternum, inquit S. Augustinus, unde quia vita aeterna sanctorum sine fine erit, supplicium quoque aeternum quibus erit, finem procul dubio non habebit'" (p. 62: *Caput 9: De novissimis*; §52: *Poenae damnatorum sine fine erunt*).

Augustine: "Again, how can we suppose that 'eternal punishment' means 'fire continued for a long time', while believing that 'life eternal' means 'life without end'? After all, on the same occasion, Christ spoke of both in similar terms in one and the same sentence: 'These shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.' If both 'eternal', then, we must understand both as either 'prolonged but eventually coming to an end', or as 'without end'. For 'eternal punishment' on the one hand and 'eternal life' on the other are parallel in meaning, and it would be most absurd to use them in one and the same sentence to mean, 'Eternal life will be without end, while eternal punishment will have an end.' Thus, because the eternal life of the saints will be without end, there is no doubt that the eternal punishment of those condemned to it will also have no end". DYSON, *Augustine*, p. 1084.

<sup>28</sup> Nota 7 (p. 53): *De Trinitate* 14, 8, 11; PL 42, c. 1044: "Eo quippe ipso imago eius est, quo eius capax est eiusque particeps esse potest"; *De Trinitate* 14, 4, 6; PL 42, c. 1040: "quia summae naturae capax est, et esse participes potest, magna natura est [homo]". As reference to: "Eorundem tamen Patrum ac Doctorum praeunte doctrina, agnoscenda est in humana natura non solum capacitas ad supernaturale hoc donum suscipiendum (Nota 7), verum etiam admirabilis convenientia" (p. 52: *Caput 7: De ordine naturali et supernaturali*; §38: *Mysterium nostrae elevationis ad ordinem supernaturalem*).

Augustine: "But we must first consider the mind in itself before it is a partaker of God, and before His image is to be found in it. For we have said that, even though it has become impaired and disfigured by the loss of its participation in God, it remains nonetheless an image of God. For it is His image by the very fact that it is capable of Him, and can be a partaker of Him; and it cannot be so great a good except that it is His image". "Although man is disquieted in vain, yet he walks in an image." (cf. Ps. 38:7) For although it is a great nature, yet it could be corrupted because it is not the highest, and although it could be corrupted because it is not the highest, yet because it is capable of the highest nature and can be a sharer in it, it is a great nature". Sydney McKENNA, *Saint Augustine. The Trinity* (The Fathers of the Church, 45), Washington DC, 1963, p. 426; 418.

<sup>29</sup> Nota 9 (on p. 67): *Contra Faustum* 14, 4; PL 42, c. 297: "Suscepit autem Christus sine reatu supplicium nostrum, ut inde solveret reatum nostrum et finiret etiam supplicium nostrum"; *De Trinitate* 4, 13, 17; PL 42, c. 899: "Morte sua quippe uno verissimo sacrificio pro nobis oblato, quidquid culparum erat unde nos principatus est potestates ad luenda supplicia iure detinebant, purgavit, aboluit, exstinxit". Nota 10 (on p. 69): *De Trinitate* 13, 10, 13; PL 42, c. 1024: "Non alium possibilem Deo defuisse...sed sanandae nostrae miseriae convenientiorem modum alium non fuisse, nec esse oportuisse".

As reference to: "Quapropter haec Sancta Synodus, doctrinam de humana redemptione ex purissimis divinae revelationis fontibus hauriens praelucente perenni Ecclesiae magisterio (Nota 9), reiicit opiniones illorum, qui falso aestimantes peccato nullam veri nominis offensam Deo inferri, affirmare praesumunt sacrificium Christi in cruce valorem tantummodo et efficaciam habuisse exempli, meriti et liberationis, non autem verae et proprie dictae satisfactionis pro humanis sceleribus, quasi hoc

*Contra Iulianum* is quite often alluded to in this dogmatic schema, to substantiate the doctrine of original sin, and is quoted literally only once, to stress the truth of this dogma which was believed during antiquity throughout the whole Church.<sup>30</sup>

*De Castitate, Matrimonio, Familia, Virginitate* cites *De bono coniugali*, to indicate the three good aims of Christian marriage: *proles, fides, sacramentum*; and *De Genesi ad litteram* to explain that *proles* means that “children should be welcomed with love, brought up with kindness, given a religious education”.<sup>31</sup> A general grace claim of

divinae iustitiae repugnaret, dum e contra tam misericordiae quam iustitiae aeterni Patris maxime congruit (*Nota 10*)” (p. 67: *Caput 10: De satisfactione Christi*; §59 *Reprobantur opiniones pervertentes notionem peccati prout est offensa Dei, et satisfactionis a Christo pro nobis exhibitae*).

Augustine: “But Christ took on our punishment without guilt so that he might in that way destroy our guilt and also end our punishment”. Roland J. TESKE (trans., ed.), *Answer to Faustus, a Manichean* (The works of saint Augustine: a translation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, 1/20), New York NY, 2007, p. 176-177. Augustine: “For since He has offered the one wholly real sacrifice by His death, whatever fault there was, on account of which the Principalities and the Powers lawfully held us captive in order to make us atone for our guilt, He has washed away, abolished, and extinguished, and by His Resurrection He has predestined and called us to a new life, and justified those whom He called, and glorified those whom He justified”. McKENNA, *Saint Augustine*, p. 152.

Augustine: “To those, therefore, who say: ‘What, was there no other way for God to liberate men from the misery of this mortality, that He should will the only-begotten Son, who is God and co-eternal with Himself, to become man by putting on a human soul and flesh, and so having been made mortal to suffer death?’ It is not enough so to refute them as to assert that this way, whereby God deigned to liberate us through the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus was both good and befitting the divine dignity; but we must also show that other possible means were not lacking on God’s part, to whose power all things are equally subordinate, and yet that there was no other way more fitting, and no other needed for healing our misery”. McKENNA, *Saint Augustine*, p. 388.

<sup>30</sup> *Nota 2* (on p. 59): *Contra Iulianum* 6, 5, 11: PL 44, c. 829. As reference to: “Igitur, etiam qui experiuntur difficultatem quaestionis, regantur oportet gubernaculo auctoritatis, quod est regula fidei; etsi enim natura peccati originalis non facili ratione pervideatur, nec expedite sermone explicetur, ‘verum tamen est quod antiquitus veraci fide catholica praedicatur et creditur per Ecclesiam totam’” (p. 54: *Caput 8: De peccato originali in filliis Aadae*; §43: *Dogma de peccato originali mysterii velamine obtectum est*).

Augustine discusses original sin: “But even if it is not investigated by reason and explained in words, what the true Catholic faith has proclaimed and believed from antiquity throughout the whole Church is nonetheless true. The Church would neither exorcise the children of the faithful nor subject them to the rite of exsufflation, if it did not rescue them from the power of darkness and from the prince of death, as I stated in my book to which you pretend to make a reply”. Roland J. TESKE (trans.), John E. ROTELLE (notes, ed.), *Answer to the Pelagians. 2: Marriage and Desire; Answer to the Two Letters of the Pelagians; Answer to Julian* (The works of saint Augustine: a translation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, 1/24), New York NY, 1998, p. 484.

<sup>31</sup> *Nota 7* (on p. 132): *De bono coniugali* 24, 32: PL 40, c. 394: “Haec omnia bona sunt, propter quae nuptiae bona sunt: proles, fides, sacramentum”.

*Nota 9* (on p. 132): *De Genesi ad litteram* 9, 7, 12: PL 34, c. 397.

As reference to: “Quae quidem bona veluti in summam collegit S. Augustinus hisce verbis: «Haec omnia bona sunt, propter quae nuptiae bonae sunt: proles, fides, sacramentum”. (*Nota 7*) Circa ista tria bona divinitus data sunt iura et obligationes, a coniugibus debite servanda; et inter ea, attento fine, ob quem matrimonium a Deo institutum est, bonum prolis primum locum tenet. Ideoque oportet proles amanter suscipiatur, benigne nutriatur, religiose educetur, ut nervose dicit idem S. Augustinus (*Nota 9*) [...]” (p. 127-128: *Caput 2: De iuribus, obligationibus, virtutibus matrimonio christiano propriis*; §16: *Iura et obligationes quoad bonum prolis*).

Augustine gives a summary of the three goods of marriage: “These things, namely, offspring, fidelity and the sacrament, are all good, and because of them marriage is good”. Ray KEARNEY (trans.), David G. HUNTER, John E. ROTELLE (eds.), *Marriage and Virginit. The Excellence of Marriage; Holy Virginit;*



Augustine is applied on marriage by quoting *De natura et gratia*: “God, then, does not command what is impossible; rather, by his commandment, He warns you to do what you can and to ask for what you cannot”.<sup>32</sup>

*De Ecclesia* quotes of Augustine’s *De abstinentia* (better known today as *De continentia*) to express that the Church, despite being Christ’s body, is not *sine macula et ruga*, since its members are not, because as long as they have carnal concupiscence, they sin.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, Augustine is cited to express the Church’s obligation to preach, in order that “in the nations in which the Church does not yet exist it must come to be”.<sup>34</sup> Augustine’s anti-Donatist assertions to always consider the Donatists

*The Excellence of Widowhood; Adulterous Marriages; Continence* (The works of saint Augustine: a translation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, 1/9), New York NY, 1999, p. 57.

Augustine: “And so I do not see what other help a wife was made to provide the man with, if you set aside the reason of having children; why in any case you should set it aside I cannot imagine. ... I mean, just because immoderate sexual activity is an evil, it does not follow that marriage, even between over-sexed persons, is not a good. Quite the contrary; not only does that evil not make this good blameworthy, this good makes that evil pardonable, since what is good in marriage can never be a sin. This good, in fact, is threefold: fidelity, offspring, sacrament. What fidelity means is that neither partner should sleep with another person outside the marriage bond; offspring means that children should be welcomed with love, brought up with kindness, given a religious education; sacrament means that the union should not be broken up, and that if either husband is sent away, neither should marry another even for the sake of having children. This is, so to say, the set-square of marriage, good either embellishing the fertility of nature, or putting straight the crookedness of lust”. Edmund HILL (trans.), John E. ROTELLE (ed.), *On Genesis. A Refutation of the Manichees; Unfinished Literal Commentary on Genesis; The Literal Meaning of Genesis* (The works of saint Augustine: a translation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, 1/13), New York NY, 2002, p. 382.

<sup>32</sup> Nota 22 (on p. 134): *De natura et Gratia* 43, 50: PL 44, c. 271. As reference to: “Quos tamen actus coniuges, iuvante Dei gratia, praestare possunt. Deus enim impossibilia non iubet, sed iubendo monet et facere quod possis et petere quod non possis, et adiuvat ut possis, cum Deus id recte petentibus non denegat, nec patiatur nos, supra id quod possumus, tentari (cf. 1Co10,13)” (p. 129: *Caput 2: De iuribus, obligationibus, virtutibus matrimonio christiano propriis*; §17: *Iura, ligationes et virtutes quoad bonum fidei*).

Augustine: “God, then, does not command what is impossible; rather, by his commandment, he warns you to do what you can and to ask for what you cannot”. R. J. TESKE (trans.), J. E. ROTELLE (ed.), *Answer to the Pelagians: 1: The Punishment and Forgiveness of Sins and the Baptism of Little Ones; The Spirit and the Letter; Nature and Grace; The Perfection of Human Righteousness; The Deeds of Pelagius; The Grace of Christ and Original Sin* (The works of saint Augustine: a translation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, 1/23), New York NY, 1997, p. 250.

<sup>33</sup> Nota 40 (on p. 13): *De abstinentia* 11: PL 40, c. 366: “Comparat Ecclesiam cum carne concupiscenti contra spiritum, quatenus nondum pacem ex infirmitate languoris in membris habet: ‘Deinde, cur non confiteamur in hominibus spiritualibus Ecclesiam subditam Christo, in carnalibus autem adhuc concupiscere adversus Christum [...] Has enim carnis concupiscentias Christus in suis sanat, sed in nullis amat. Unde sancta Ecclesia quamdiu habet etiam membra talia, nondum est sine macula et ruga’”. As reference to: “In eo (= in Christo Iesu) tamen non omnia membra sanctitate virescunt, quia aegrotat in ipso membra constituent quae nempe gratia et caritate privata, saltem virtute fidei cum Christo Capite iunguntur” (p. 11: *Caput 1: De ecclesiae militantis natura*; §5: *Enucleatio figurae corporis*). Augustine: “So then, why do we not proclaim that the Church is subject to Christ in spiritual persons, but in carnal persons it still has desires opposed to Christ? [...] Christ heals these desires of the flesh in those who belong to him, but he does not like them in anyone. Hence, as long as the Church has members who are like that, it is not yet without spot or wrinkle”. KEARNEY (trans.), HUNTER, ROTELLE (eds.), *Marriage and Virginity*, p. 209-210.

<sup>34</sup> Nota 5 (on p. 77): *Epistula* 199 (ad Hesychium) 12: PL 33, c. 922-924: “S. Aug. docet ad hoc spectare praedicationem evangelicam ut ubicumque stabiliatur Ecclesia reddens Deo cultum debitum; c. 923: ‘In quibus ergo gentibus nondum est Ecclesia, oportet ut sit’”. As reference to: “Ubicumque igitur

as brothers who share the same heritage are cited to define the ecumenical attitude the Church should keep.<sup>35</sup>

Although Augustine did not develop a systematic mariology, *De Beata Maria Virgine Matre Dei et Matre Hominum* uses Augustine as a source to define the place of Mary within the Church: as physical mother of Christ, she is a very exceptional member of the body of Christ, by which she “cooperated with charity for the birth of

terrarum Ecclesia, independenter a quavis humana potestate, ius inalienabile habet praecones evangelicos mittendi, communitates christianas stabiliendi, homines sibi incorporandi per baptismum in eosque sibi subditos suam exercendi potestatem tam docendi quam regendi et sanctificandi” (p. 74: *Caput 10: De necessitate ecclesiae annuntiandi evangelium omnibus gentibus et ubique terrarum*; §46: *Natura muneris*).

Augustine’s letter 199 stresses that before the end of the world the gospel must be preached to the whole world, and there are still many nations that have not heard the gospel (§46). The Lord promised that all the nations, not just the Romans, would be the offspring of Abraham (§47). Hence, the Church must spread to all the nations in order that such prophecies may be fulfilled (§48). When the Lord said that his disciples would be his witnesses to the ends of the world, He did not mean only those disciples to whom He was then speaking (§49). Both in the Old and in the New Testament the past tense is often used for events that lie in the future (§50-§51). In §48 Augustine writes: “In the nations in which the Church does not yet exist it must come to be – not in order that all who live there may believe, for God promised all the nations, but not all the human beings of all the nations”. Roland J. TESKE (trans., notes), Boniface RAMSEY (ed.), *Letters 156-210* (The works of saint Augustine: a translation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, 2/3), Hyde Park/New York NY, 2004, p. 351.

<sup>35</sup> Nota 8 (on p. 89): *Sermo 359*, 4: MA 1, p. 575: “Non ei dico: Domine (dic) fratri meo dividat mecum haereditatem; sed dico, Domine, dic fratri meo teneat mecum haereditatem”. *Sermo ad Caesarensis Ecclesiae plebem* 5 PL 43, c. 694: “Veni ad haereditatem: maxime quia ipsa haereditas non est illa terra quae data est filiis Iacob. Filiis Israel data est terra: quanto a pluribus possidebatur, tanto plus angustabatur. Haereditas nostra pax vocatur Testamentum lego: Pacem meam do vobis, pacem meam relinquo vobis (Io. 14:27). Simul teneamus quod dividi non potest. Non eam angustat numerus possessor, quantumque venerint”. As reference to: “Monet propterea Sacra Synodus omnes fideles, ut fratribus separatis verbo et exemplo magis magisque ostendant plenitudinem Revelationis in sola Ecclesia Catholica vere et pure teneri, ita quidem ut tandem fratres nostri nobiscum iterum coniuncti, nobiscum etiam plenitudinem hereditatis Christi possideant” (p. 82: *Caput 11: De oecumenismo*; §51: *De habitudine Ecclesiae Catholicae ad communitates christianas separatas*).

Augustine preaches on concord with the Donatists/concord among Christians, and in §4 of *Sermo 359* he says: “In a word, our tone is quite different from that brother’s, who appealed to Christ as he was walking this earth. Because we too are appealing to him in this case, as he is seated in heaven; and we are not saying, Lord, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me (Lk. 12:13); but, ‘Tell my brother to possess the inheritance with me’”. John E. ROTELLE (ed.), Edmund HILL (trans., notes), *Sermons 310 (341-400), On Various Subjects* (The works of saint Augustine: a translation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, 3/10), Hyde Park/New York NY, 1995, p. 202-203.

Augustine: *Sermo ad Caesarensis* 5: “Filiis autem ancillarum de Iacob, quia et illi ut nascerentur coniugia iusta uoluerunt, filios ergo ancillarum de Iacob nouimus in unam hereditatem aduocatos. Simul numerati sunt omnes patriarchae duodecim; nullum ab altero uteri diuersitas separauit, quia omnes caritas sociavit. Quid interest ergo ubi baptismum acceperis? Baptismus meus est, dicit tibi Sara, baptismus meus est, dicit tibi Rachel. Noli superbire, ueni ad hereditatem, maxime quia ipsa hereditas non est illa terra quae data est filiis Iacob. Filiis Israel data est terra; quanto a pluribus possidebatur, tanto plus angustabatur. Hereditas nostra pax uocatur; testamentum lego: pacem meam do uobis, pacem meam relinquo uobis [Io. 14:27]. Simul teneamus quod diuidi non potest. Non eam angustat numerus possessor, quantumque uenerint, sicut promissum est: sic erit semen tuum tamquam stellae caeli et sicut arena quae est ad labium maris. In semine tuo benedicentur omnes gentes [Gn. 22:17sq.]”. (CSEL 53, p. 174.)

the faithful in the Church”,<sup>36</sup> and she carried Christ in her heart “a greater privilege than doing so in her body”.<sup>37</sup> Besides being a member, Mary is also a prefiguration of the Church, imitated by the Church as being a virgin and mother.<sup>38</sup> While this preparatory document clearly states that Mary was conceived immaculate and that she lived without personal guilt, the passage from *De natura et gratia* is quoted in which Augustine refuses to state that Mary is, just like all men, a sinner, but neither is he ready to clearly claim that she was able to completely conquer sin.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Nota 2 (on p. 101): *De sancta virginitate* 6, 6: PL 40, c. 399, CSEL 41, p. 240.

Nota 3 (on p. 101): *Sermo* 25, *De verbis Evangelii Matthaei* 12, 41-50, 7: PL 46, c. 938: “Maria portio est Ecclesiae, sanctum membrum, excellens membrum, supereminens membrum, sed tamen totius corporis membrum”.

As reference to: “Haec autem alma Parens, quae “cooperata est caritate ut fideles in Ecclesia nascerentur” (Nota 2), non modo “supereminens” (Nota 3) prorsusque singulare membrum Ecclesiae est, verum etiam eiusdem exemplar (Nota 4), immo et Mater dicitur” (p. 93: §1: *De arcta necessitudine inter Christum et Mariam iuxta Dei beniplacitum*).

Augustine compares the virginity of Mary and the virginity of the Church. “So that woman, and she alone, was both a mother and a virgin, not only spiritually but also physically. She is not spiritually the mother of our head, as that is the Savior himself. On the contrary, she was born spiritually from him, as everyone who believes in him, including her, is rightly called a child of the bridegroom. On the other hand, clearly she is the mother of his members, which is ourselves, since she has cooperated with charity for the birth of the faithful in the Church. They are the members of that head, but she is physically the mother of the head himself. So it was fitting that by a unique miracle our head was born physically from a virgin, to signify that his members would be born spiritually from the virgin Church”. KEARNEY (trans.), HUNTER, ROTELLE (eds.), *Marriage and Virginity*, p. 70-71.

Augustine: *Sermo* Denis 25, 7 = *Sermo* 72A: “Mary is holy, Mary is blessed, but the Church is something better than the Virgin Mary. Why? Because Mary is part of the Church, a holy member, a quite exceptional member, the supremely wonderful member, but still a member of the whole body. That being so, it follows that the body is something greater than the member. The Lord is the head, and the whole Christ is head and body. How shall I put it? We have a divine head, we have God as our head”. ROTELLE (ed.), HILL (trans., notes), *Sermons* 3 (51-94), *On the New Testament* (The works of saint Augustine: a translation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, 3/3), Brooklyn/New York NY, 1991, p. 288.

<sup>37</sup> Nota 39 (on p. 120): *De sancta virginitate* 3: PL 40, c. 398. As reference to: “Nihil enim materna propinquitas Mariae profuisset, nisi felicius Christum corde quam carne gestasset” (p. 98: §5: *De cultu erga beatissimam Virginem Mariam*).

Augustine: “So even the close relationship of being his mother would have been no benefit to Mary, if she had not carried Christ in her heart, a greater privilege than doing so in her body”. KEARNEY (trans.), HUNTER, ROTELLE (eds.), *Marriage and Virginity*, p. 69.

<sup>38</sup> Nota 4 (on p. 101): *Sermo* 213, 7: PL 38, c. 1064: “Mariae simillima est” Ecclesia; *Sermo* 25, *De verbis Ev. Matthaei* 12, 41-50: PL 46, c. 938: “In ipsius typo [Ecclesiae] Maria virgo praecessit”. Augustine, *Sermo* 213, 7: “[The Church] is both virgin, and she gives birth. She imitates Mary, who gave birth to the Lord. Didn’t the virgin, Saint Mary, both give birth and remain a virgin? So too the Church both gives birth and is a virgin”. ROTELLE (ed.), HILL (trans., notes), *Sermons* 3/6 (184-229Z), *On the Liturgical Seasons* (The works of saint Augustine: a translation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, 3/6), New Rochelle/New York NY, 1993, p. 145.

Augustine, *Sermo* 25 Denis = *Sermo* 72A, 8: “The virgin Mary came first as a representative figure of the Church”. Augustine explains, namely as virgin and mother. ROTELLE (ed.), HILL (trans., notes), *Sermons* 3 (51-94), *On the New Testament*, p. 288.

<sup>39</sup> Nota 24 (on p. 112): *De natura et gratia* 36, 42: PL 44, c. 267: “Excepta itaque sancta Virgine Maria, de qua propter honorem Domini nullam prorsus cum de peccatis agitur, haberi volo quaestionem: (unde enim scimus quid ei plus gratiae collatum fuerit ad vincendum ex omni parte peccatum, quae concipere ac parere meruit, quem constat nullum habuisse peccatum?): hac ergo Virgine excepta, si omnes illos sanctos et sanctas, cum hic viverent, congregare possemus et interrogare utrum essent sine peccato, quid fuisse responsuros putamus?”. As reference to: “Maria Virgo a Deo, qui ineffabili

## ALLUSIONS TO AUGUSTINE

The documents drawn up by the preparatory commission contain 16 references to Augustine, which are not literal citations.

*De Fontibus Revelationis* refers to *De doctrina christiana* and explains that the historical context of composition and genres of the different books of the Bible have to be taken into account when the inspired and inerrant nature of the Scriptures is considered.<sup>40</sup>

In *De Deposito Fidei Pure Custodiendo* Augustine figures as one of the *sancti Patres et Doctores Ecclesiae* who have argued that God created the universe in a perfect way.<sup>41</sup> Four allusions are made to four different writings (*Contra Iulianum*, *De Genesi ad litteram*, *De peccato originali*, *De civitate Dei*) of Augustine regarding one of his

eam persecutus est amore, singularibus omnino privilegiis ornata est: mirabilis quippe fuit in suo ortu, ob immaculatam conceptionem; mirabilis in sua vita, cum expers omnis culpae personalis (*Nota 24*), insimul mater semperque, mente et corpore, virgo exstiterit; mirabilis denique in suo exitu, quia etsi secundum antiquam et venerabilem traditionem mortem subiit temporalem, quo plenius Filio suo assimilaretur, nexibus tamen mortis cum deprimi minime potuisset, corpore et anima gloriose in caelum assumpta est" (p. 96: §4: *De singularibus privilegiis Dei hominumque Matris*).

Augustine reports that Pelagius indicates as righteous Simeon, Joseph, John, Elizabeth, Mary. "Piety demands, he [Pelagius] says, that we admit that she [Mary] was without sin. Let us then leave aside the Holy Virgin Mary; on account of the honor due to the Lord, I do not want to raise here any question about her when we are dealing with sins. After all, how do we know what wealth of grace was given to her in order to conquer sin completely, since she merited to conceive and bear the one who certainly had no sin? Apart then from this virgin, if we could gather together all these holy men and women when they were living this life and could ask whether they were without sin, what are we to suppose that they would have answered". All the other biblical persons would, according to Augustine, refute the idea that they are without any sin. TESKE (trans.), ROTELLE (ed.), *Answer to the Pelagians*, p. 245-246.

<sup>40</sup> Nota 8 (on p. 14): *De doctrina christiana* 2, 18, 26: PL 34, c. 75-76 (the schema wrongly indicated book 2, but it has to be book 3 to be correct with the indicated PL-reference). As reference to: "Haec tamen inerrantia diiudicanda est ex modo quo veritas in libro sacro attingitur. Qui modus imprimis elucet ex indole generali libri, de qua, in casu dubii, definitivum iudicium soli competit Ecclesiae. Aliter enim veritas exprimitur in libro historico vel didactico; aliter in prophetico, poetico, allegorico, parabolico. Quod autem ad singula spectat, modus attingendi veritatem diiudicetur oportet etiam ex sensu quem in determinatis adiunctis pro sui temporis condicione expressit hagiographus" (p. 13-14: *Caput 2: De scripturae inspiratione, inerrantia et de compositione litteraria*; §13: *Quomodo inerrantia diiudicanda sit*). Augustine: "Again one has to be on one's guard against supposing that whatever in the Old Testament, with respect to the condition of those times, is not an infamy nor a crime either, even when understood literally and not figuratively, can be transferred also to these times and put into practice in life today". EDMUND HILL (trans.), JOHN E. ROTELLE (notes, ed.), *Teaching Christianity* (The works of saint Augustine: a translation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, 1/11), New York NY, 1996, p. 181.

<sup>41</sup> Nota 2 (on p. 32): *Confessiones* 11, 4, 6: PL 32, c. 811; *Sermo* 141: PL 38, c. 776-778. Augustine: "Heaven and earth plainly exist, and by the very fact that they undergo change and variation, they cry out that they were made. [...] It was you who made them, Lord: you are beautiful, so it must have been you, because they are beautiful; you who are good must have made them, because they are good; you who are, because they are". MARIA BOULDING (trans.), *The Confessions* (The works of saint Augustine: a translation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, 1/1), New York NY, 1996, p. 288. Augustine preaches in *Sermo* 141 on John 14:6 ("Christ is the way, the truth and the life") against the philosophers, who could have found "the creator through the creature, the producer through the product, the architect of the world through the world". According to Augustine, the pagan philosophers lost, out of pride, what they found through their research, because they thought that wisdom was their merit. ROTELLE (ed.), HILL (trans., notes), *Sermons 3/4 (94A-147A)*, *On the New Testament*, p. 409.

crucial theses: original sin, namely Adam's sin is transmitted to all of humanity and for this reason all of humanity needs to be liberated by Christ.<sup>42</sup>

*De ordine Morali Christiano* refers to *De spiritu et littera* to highlight the special nature of man's origin, namely created directly by God *ad imaginem et similitudinem Dei*.<sup>43</sup>

*De Castitate, Matrimonio, Familia, Virginitate* refers to the general principle of Augustine that God helps man to prevent sin rfrom *De natura et gratia*, and applies this to the Christian endeavour to live chaste as unmarried singles (*soluti*).<sup>44</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Nota 8 (on p. 59): *Contra Iulianum* 1, 3, 9: PL 44, c. 645; *Contra Iulianum* 1, 5, 15: PL 44, c. 649.

Nota 9 (on p. 60): "S. Augustinus aperte docet veritatem de unitate generis humani esse de fide: cf. August., *De Gen. ad litt.* 9, 11, 19: PL 34, c. 400 et *De pecc. orig.* 24, 28: PL 44, c. 398. Vide etiam *De Civ. Dei* 16, 8 et 16, 9: PL 41, c. 486-487, quibus in locis de distinctione stirpium et de antipodis".

As reference to: "Cum exstent, etiam inter Ecclesiae filios, qui nostris diebus, unitatem originis humani generis aut negent aut in dubium vocent, sacrosancta Vaticana Synodus secunda ad integritatem tutandam doctrinae supra expositae, qua credimus peccatum originale illud ab uno in omnes generatione transfundi (Nota 8), et ad fovenda necessitudinis caritatisque vincula inter omnes populos, qui ad unam Christi gratiam vocantur quemadmodum ab uno fonte promanant, profitetur et docet, quod universa Ecclesia, divina innixa revelatione, semper tenuit et docuit, homines nempe hisce in terris (post Adam viventes), quamlibet gerant corporis formam vel colorem, communem suae naturae habere originem sicut communem salutis habent auctorem (Nota 9)" (p. 56: *Caput 8: De peccato originali in filiis Adae*; §48: *Doctrina de communi origine generis humani*).

Augustine, *Contra Iulianum*: quotes Olympius and Hilary of Poitiers to assert his claim, against Julian, that original sin comes from Adam and by Adam was transferred to all of humanity except Christ. TESKE (trans.), ROTELLE (notes, ed.), *Answer to the Pelagians*, p. 271-272.

Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram*: "And so the woman, being made for the man, from the man, in that sex and shape and distinction of parts by which females are known, gave birth to Cain and Abel and all their brothers and sisters, from whom all human beings would be born. Among them she also gave birth to Seth, through whom we come to Abraham and the people of Israel and the nation now so widely known among all the nations, and to all nations through the sons of Noah. To doubt this is to undermine the foundations of everything we believe, something therefore the faithful should put entirely out of their minds". Edmund HILL (trans.), John E. ROTELLE (ed.), *On Genesis: a Refutation of the Manichees; Unfinished Literal Commentary on Genesis; The Literal Meaning of Genesis* (The works of saint Augustine: a translation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century 1/13), New York NY, 2002, p. 386.

Augustine, *De peccato originali* (= second book of *De gratia Christi et de peccato originali*) asserts that the Christian faith rests upon Adam (who sold us under the power of sin) and Christ (who redeemed us from sin): "The Christian faith, then, truly consists in the influence of these two men". TESKE (trans.), ROTELLE (ed.), *Answer to the Pelagians*, p. 447.

Augustine, *De civitate Dei* declares that all men descend from Adam (whatever their colour, shape, motion, sound, natural power is). 'Antipodes', people who live on the other side of the earth, do not exist. DYSON (trans., ed.), *Augustine*, p. 785-787.

<sup>43</sup> Nota 1 (on p. 95): *De spiritu et littera* 28, 48: PL 44, c. 229. As reference to: "Humanae personae dignitas in eo sita est, quod homo ad imaginem et similitudinem Dei factus, et natura sua immediate ad Creatorem ordinatus, rationis lumen, liberae electionis potestatem, amoris flammam, rerumque corporalium dominium a Deo accepit" (p. 92: *Caput 5: De naturali et supernaturali dignitate personae humanae*; §23: *Homo factus ad imaginem Dei*).

Augustine: "Nonetheless, the image of God has not been removed from the human soul by the stain of earthly loves to such a point that not even the faintest outlines of it remain. [...] The very image of God, which godlessness had not completely wiped out, is renewed in the mind of those who believe through the New Testament —for it had remained true that the soul of a human being could not exist without being rational". TESKE (trans.), ROTELLE (ed.), *Answer to the Pelagians*, p. 181.

<sup>44</sup> Nota 5 (on p. 108): *De natura et gratia* 48, 50: PL 44, c. 271. As reference to: "Immo etiam pravi contra castitatem interni actus deliberati severe prohibentur a Domino (cf. Mt. 5:28; 15:18-19). Neque dicatur haec, praesertim hodie, vitari non posse. Nam etiam soluti capaces sunt, humiliter implorante et

Augustine's doctrine on unlawful human love – his example that in the community of the Church (body of Christ) the love for a prostitute leads to hell – is referred to in *De Ecclesia* to express that there are also sinners within the Church.<sup>45</sup> Discussing the attitude towards 'separated' Christians, a footnote refers to the distinction Augustine makes between *ducere in via/Christo* and *ducere ad viam/Christum*. According to Augustine, non-Christians should be led to Christ. Once converted to Christianity they should be guided along the way of Christianity by Christ himself. The preparatory schema applies this distinction on non-Catholic Christians and Catholic Christians.<sup>46</sup> The conclusion of Augustine's *Regula* is alluded to in order to express that hierarchical relations within the Church should be inspired by love.<sup>47</sup>

iuuante Dei gratia, seruandi castitatem, ut de ipsis iam declaravit S. Tridentina Synodus, et semper docuit Ecclesia (Nota 5)" (p. 104: *Caput 2: De castitate solutorum*; §5: *De castitate in solutis*).

Augustine: "He [Pelagius] would not be correct in saying that not sinning depends only upon us, even though sinning would depend upon us. For even then there would be God's help, and it would offer itself to those who want it, like a light to help healthy eyes to see. [...] And so, I am astonished at the disposition of his heart that allows him to think that not sinning is up to us, even without the help of the medicine of our savior, and to maintain that the ability not to sin comes from our nature. And yet, it is so obvious that our nature had been corrupted that the failure to see this is a mark of a still greater corruption". TESKE (trans.), ROTELLE (ed.), *Answer to the Pelagians*, p. 253.

<sup>45</sup> Nota 40 (on p. 13): *Sermo 349, 2: PL 39, c. 1530*. As reference to: "In eo (= in Christo Iesu) tamen non omnia membra sanctitate virescunt, quia aegroti in ipso membra constituunt quae nempe gratia et caritate privata, saltem virtute fidei cum Christo Capite iunguntur" (p. 11: *Caput 1: De ecclesiae militantis natura*; §5: *Enucleatio figurae corporis*).

Augustine preaches in *Sermo 349* on charity, and distinguishes divine, lawful human, and unlawful human love. *Sermo 349, 2*: "So, to give a quick instance, the human charity by which one's wife is loved is lawful; by which a prostitute, or someone else's wife is loved, unlawful. Even in the streets and market place the lawful kind of charity is preferred to the prostitute variety; while in the house of God, in the temple of God, in the city of Christ, in the body of Christ, the love of a prostitute leads the lover straight to hell". ROTELLE (ed.), HILL (trans., notes), *Sermons 3/10 (341-400), On Various Subjects*, p. 101.

<sup>46</sup> Nota 17 (on p. 19): "Nota distinctionem S. Augustini: "*Ducere in via et ad viam*; *ducere in Christo et ad Christum*". Cf. *In Ps. 85, 15: PL 37, c. 1092*". As reference to: "Nam fidei illi communi in Christum accedit eiusdem consecrationis baptismalis participatio; orationum, expiationum et beneficiorum spiritualium aliqua saltem communitio; immo aliqua in Spiritu Sancto coniunctio, quippe qui non solum donis et gratiis in ipso mystico Corpore operatur, sed sua virtute, non exclusa gratia sanctificante, etiam extra venerandum illud Corpus agit, ut fratres separati, modo a Christo statuto, eidem incorporentur" (p. 16 *Caput 2: De membris ecclesiae militantis eiusdemque necessitate ad salutem*; §10: *Unio cum separatis*).

Augustine: "*Lead me in your way, Lord, and I will walk in your truth*. Your way and your truth are your life, which is Christ. The Body is on its way to him, but also draws its life from him: *I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life* (Jn 14:6). *Lead me in your way, Lord*. In what way? *I will walk in your truth*. It is one thing for him to bring you to the way, and another for him to lead you along it. Look at humankind – everywhere poor, everywhere in need of help. Those who are adrift from the way are not Christians, or are not yet Catholics; they must be led to the way. But once they have been guided to the way, and have become Catholics in Christ, they must be led along by him in the way itself, to make sure they do not fall. They are now walking in the way; there is no doubt of that. *Lead me in your way, Lord*. I am certainly on the way, Lord, your way, but lead me in it. *And I will walk in your truth*: with you to lead me I shall not go astray, but I will if you let go of me". MARIA BOULDING (trans.), JOHN E. ROTELLE (ed., notes), *Expositions of the Psalms: 73-98* (The works of saint Augustine: a translation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, 3/18), New York, 2002, p. 235.

<sup>47</sup> Nota 6 (on p. 63): *Regula ad Servos Dei 11: PL 32, c. 1348*. As reference to: "Christi auctoritate ornati, sciant etiam se induere debere imaginem boni Pastoris; subditos sincera caritate diligant, et studeant plus amari quam timeri (Nota 6), semper memores subditorum et praepositorum unum esse Dominum



*De Beata Maria Virgine Matre Dei et Matre Hominum* furnishes its central propositions with allusions to Augustine. Christ is born from a woman in order that both sexes are involved in mankind's salvation.<sup>48</sup> Augustine serves as an example for the doctrine of the virginal birth of Christ.<sup>49</sup>

### VAGUE AND INCORRECT USE OF AUGUSTINE

Some six references to Augustine in the preparatory documents seem to be incorrect, or are at least very vague.

*De Fontibus Revelationis* substantiates the idea of perfection of the world by quoting *De libero arbitrio*, while the latter only deals with God's perfection.<sup>50</sup> *De Deposito Fidei Pure Custodiendo* refers to a paragraph in *Contra Iulianum* which deals with Adam and Eve's shame for their nakedness as punishment for their first sin. This reference functions as a note to the general chapter title *De peccato originali in filliis Adae*, which

in caelis, apud quem nulla est acceptio personarum (cf. Eph. 6:9)" (p. 61: *Caput 8: De auctoritate et oboedientia in ecclesia*; §38: *De relatione inter praepositos et subditos et de iure criticae liberae*).

Augustine: "When you heed these observances with fidelity and piety, in the name of Christ, you will make progress and we shall experience no little joy over your salvation. Amen". George LAWLESS (trans.), *Augustine of Hippo and his Monastic Rule*, Oxford, 1987, p. 79.

<sup>48</sup> Nota 6 (on p. 102): *Quaestiones Octoginta tres*, q. 11: PL 40, c. 14. As reference to: "Cum igitur aeterni Patris Verbum hominis naturam ex muliere sumere voluerit ut, quemadmodum per feminam mors, ita et vita nobis per feminam oriretur, et sic liberatio ope utriusque sexus haberetur (Nota 6), non id ante perficit quam designatae matris, ex praevisis meritis Christi sublimiore modo redemptae, libera acceptatio accessisset (cf. Lc. 1, 38), ut Filius Dei incarnatione eius quosque Filius ac novus Adam Salvatorque mundi fieret" (p. 93-94: §2: *De munere beatissimae Virginis Mariae in oeconomia nostrae salutis*).

Augustine: "Question 11: Why was Christ born of a woman? When God sets free, he does not free a part, but he frees the whole of that which chances to be in danger. Therefore the Wisdom and Power of God, who is called the only begotten Son, has declared mankind's deliverance through the assumption of human nature. But mankind's deliverance had to be evidenced among both sexes. Therefore, since it was needful to become a man, which is the more honorable sex, it reasonably followed that the deliverance of the female sex be seen that man's birth from a woman". Louise MOSHER, *Saint Augustine. Eighty-three Different Questions* (The Fathers of the Church, 70), Washington (DC) 1982, p. 42.

Despite the fact that Augustine, especially in his sermons, stresses the juxtaposition Eve-Mary: by Eve death came into the world (by giving in to sin, causing the fall and original sin) and by Mary life (by giving birth to Christ, who saves mankind from original sin). The schema does however not refer to one of these texts of Augustine.

<sup>49</sup> Nota 31 (on p. 115-116): *Epistula 137 ad Volusianum* 2, 8. As reference to: "Omni quoque oportebat, ut Filius, qui peculiari dilectionis affectu Matrem prosequatur – quippe voluit corporalem integritatem Matris in ipsomet partu incorruptam atque illibatam manere (Nota 31), [...]" (p. 97: §4: *De singularibus privilegiis Dei hominumque Matris*).

Augustine: "For God is great not by mass but by power. [...] This power brought forth the members of the infant through the inviolated virginal womb of his mother, the same power that afterwards brought the members of the man through closed doors". Roland J. TESKE (trans., notes), Boniface RAMSEY (notes, ed.), *Letters 100-155* (The works of saint Augustine: a translation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, 2/2), Hyde Park/New York (NY), 2003, p. 216-217.

<sup>50</sup> Nota 2 (on p. 32): *De libero arbitrio* 2, 7, 15 usque 15, 39: PL 32, c. 1249-1262.

Augustine: "[...] each one of us has his own rational mind". (p. 215.) "God exists truly and most perfectly. [...] I accept all this, overwhelmed as I am with an incredible joy which I am unable to express to you in words. I declare that it is absolutely certain. I do so, prompted by that inner voice which makes me want to hear the truth itself and to cling to it. I not only grant that this is good, but also that it is the highest good and the source of happiness". (p. 149.) Robert P. RUSSELL (trans.), *The Free Choice of the Will* (The Fathers of the Church, 59), Washington (DC), 1968, p. 63-241, p. 125.

deals with original sin *in globo*. Augustine's text on shame which is referred to thus deals only with one specific aspect of Augustine's doctrine on the presence of original sin in Adam's progeny; and of the issue considered in this schema.<sup>51</sup>

*De Ecclesia* considers as *sensu proprio* members of the Church: baptised, in unity with the faith and the authority of the Church. In this context, the schema considers the place of catechumens as members of the Church by referring to a text from *De baptismo*, in which Augustine declares that he prefers a virtuous and pious catechumen above a baptised heretic, however, he does not state at this juncture whether this catechumen belongs to the Church, unlike in other places where he does state as such.<sup>52</sup> The same document refers to *Epistula* 209 as an example that in the past, sometimes, the bishop ordination was given to somebody who was not yet a priest, but this letter does not mention this fact.<sup>53</sup>

*De Beata Maria Virgine Matre Dei et Matre Hominum* refers to *Sermo* 215 in order to discuss the part Mary had in her Son's redemptive work. This matter however is not really dealt with in the sermon in question, in which Augustine preaches that Mary

<sup>51</sup> Nota 1 (on p. 57): *Contra Iulianum* 4, 16, 82. As reference to the chapter title: *Caput* 8: *De peccato originali in filliis Adae* (p. 54).

Augustine deals in this passage with Adam and Eva's shame for their nakedness as punishment. TESKE (trans.), ROTELLE (notes, ed.), *Answer to the Pelagians*, p. 428-429.

<sup>52</sup> Nota 12 (on p. 19): *De baptismo* 4, 21, 28; PL 43, c. 172. As reference to: "Voto autem ad Ecclesiam ordinantur non catechumeni dumtaxat (Nota 12), qui, Spiritu Sancto movente, conscio et explicito desiderio ad Ecclesiam aspirant, [...]" (p. 15: *Caput* 2: *De membris ecclesiae militantis eiusdemque necessitate ad salutem*; §9: *Quinam membra sensu proprio*).

Augustine: "Now, in this matter I do not hesitate for a moment to place the Catholic catechumen, who is burning with love for God, before the baptized heretic; nor yet do we thereby do dishonor to the sacrament of baptism which the latter has already received, the former not as yet; nor do we consider that the sacrament of the catechumen is to be preferred to the sacrament of baptism, when we acknowledge that some catechumens are better and more faithful than some baptized persons". However, Augustine complements, to be admitted to the Kingdom of heaven, one has to be a good person (truly converted), has to be baptised and in unity with the Catholic Church. J. R. KING (trans.), Chester D. HARTRANFT (notes, ed.), *Writings in Connection with the Donatist Controversy* (Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 4), Edingburgh/Grand Rapids (MI), 1996 (reprint), p. 369-675, p. 460.

Cf. *Ad Gentes* 2, 2 deals with the same topic, referring to *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 11, 4 which formulates clearer that catechumens belong to the Church.

<sup>53</sup> Nota 4 (on p. 21): *Epistula* 209: PL 33, c. 953. This reference is given as an example that: "Certum est saepe datum esse consecrationem episcopalem subiecto qui nondum erat sacerdos". As reference to the position that the sacrament of bishop ordination is administered by bishops: this is an established tradition, and one has to be priest before being ordained bishop (p. 20: *Caput* 3: *De episcopatu ut supremo gradu sacramenti ordinis et de sacerdotio*; §11: *Episcopatus ut Sacramentum*).

Augustine writes to pope Celestine for his help against bishop Antoninus of Fussala, made bishop by Augustine, but who was accused of serious crimes. In *Epistula* 209, 3 Augustine writes that he —before appointing Antonius— had someone else in mind: a priest, and to ordain him bishop he invited the primate of Numidia to perform the episcopal ordination. This man however changed his mind, and in order to prevent that the primate had to return without accomplishing the purpose he came to Hippo for, Augustine suggested Antonius. Antonius was, though this is not described in this letter, at the moment only a lector who was only twenty years old. Cf. Serge LANCEL, *Saint Augustine*, London, 2002, p. 252-257. Jane E. MERDINGER, *Antoninus of Fussala*, in Allan D. FITZGERALD (ed.), *Augustine through the Ages. An Encyclopedia*, Grand Rapids/Cambridge, 1999, p. 47-48; Ch. MUNIER, *Antoninus Fussalensis Episcopus*, in Constantin MAYER, Karl Heinz CHELIUS, *Augustinus-Lexikon*, Vol. I/3, Basel, 1988, p. 378-380.



conceived Christ by believing in him.<sup>54</sup> The same document alludes to *De Trinitate* 13, to express that God by making Mary (female) conceive Christ (male) wanted to indicate that both sexes will be saved, while Augustine in this passage does not write on the salvation of both sexes.<sup>55</sup>

### PROMULGATED CONSTITUTIONS, DECLARATIONS AND DECREES<sup>56</sup>

The Council documents contain fifty seven different explicit references (and four general references) to Augustine in forty notes.<sup>57</sup>

#### LITERAL CITATIONS OF AUGUSTINE

The promulgated documents contain sixteen literal citations of the bishop of Hippo.

The dogmatic constitution *Dei Verbum* contains two citations of Augustine, one to express the relation between the Old and the New Testament (“the New Testament be hidden in the Old and the Old be made manifest in the New”)<sup>58</sup> and one to exhort all who are active in the ministry of the word to read and study Scripture

<sup>54</sup> Nota 9 (on p. 104): “Cf. etiam *Sermo* 215, 4: PL 38, c. 1074. “Est consensus in Salvatore incarnandum qui [Mt. 1, 21] ‘salvum faciet populum suum a peccatis eorum’”. As reference to: “Quo consensu, Maria, filia Adae, facta est non tantummodo mater Iesu, unci divini Mediatoris ac Remptoris, verum etiam cum eo et sub eo operam suam consociavit in humani generis redemptione peragenda” (p. 94: §2: *De munere beatissimae Virginis Mariae in oeconomia nostrae salutis*).

Augustine: “[...] the blessed Mary herself conceived by believing the one whom she bore by believing”. ROTELLE (ed.), HILL (trans., notes), *Sermons 3/6 (184-229Z), On the Liturgical Seasons*, p. 162.

Mt. 1:21 is quoted and explained many times by Augustine (in his *medicus*-typology), but not here in *Sermo* 215, 4.

<sup>55</sup> Nota 6 (on p. 102): *De Trinitate* 13, 18, 23: PL 42, c. 1032.

Augustine deals in *De Trinitate* 13, 18, 23 with the fact that Mary conceived with faith as a virgin (opposed to by sexual activity and with lust) but does not stress the fact that by the conception by Mary God wanted to express the salvation of both sexes.

<sup>56</sup> The quotations from the Vatican II documents are taken from [http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/index.htm](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/index.htm), accessed September 2010. Copyright 1965, by Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

<sup>57</sup> The presence of Augustine in specific documents is discussed in: José MORÁN, *La presenza di S. Agostino nel Concilio Vaticano II*, in *Augustinianum*, 6 (1966), p. 460-488: *Lumen Gentium*: p. 463-475, *Ad Gentes*: p. 475-479, *Dei Verbum*: p. 479-481, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*: p. 481-482, *Gaudium et Spes*: p. 481, p. 484-487, *Presbyterorum Ordinis*: p. 481, *Optatam Totius*: p. 481, *Dignitatis Humanae*: p. 483-484; Jesús ÁLVAREZ MAESTRO, *Presencia de San Agustín en el Concilio Vaticano II*, in Isaac GONZÁLEZ MARCOS (ed.), *Concilio Vaticano II. 40 años después*, Madrid, 2006, p. 231-281: *Lumen Gentium*: p. 237-250, *Dei Verbum*: p. 250-252, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*: p. 252-254, *Gaudium et Spes*: p. 254-258, *Christus Dominus*: p. 258-259, *Presbyterorum Ordinis*: p. 259-261, *Optatam Totius*: p. 261-262, *Perfectae Caritatis*: p. 262-263, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*: p. 263-265, *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*: p. 265-266, *Ad Gentes*: p. 266-269, *Unitatis Redintegratio*: p. 269-271, *Inter Mirifica*: p. 271, *Dignitatis Humanae*: p. 271-272, *Gravissimum Educationis*: p. 272-273, *Nostra Aetate*: p. 273-274.

<sup>58</sup> Note 2: *Quaestiones in Heptateuchum* 2, 73: PL 34, c. 623. As reference to: “God, the inspirer and author of both Testaments, wisely arranged that the New Testament be hidden in the Old and the Old be made manifest in the New. (Note 2) For, though Christ established the new covenant in His blood (see Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25), still the books of the Old Testament with all their parts, caught up into the proclamation of the Gospel, (3) acquire and show forth their full meaning in the New Testament (see Matt. 5:17; Luke 24:27; Rom. 16:25-26; 2 Cor. 14:16) and in turn shed light on it and explain it” (*Chapter 4: The Old Testament*; Art. 16).

themselves (“an empty preacher of the word of God outwardly, who is not a listener to it inwardly”).<sup>59</sup>

*Lumen Gentium* contains several citations from Augustine. This document addresses the Augustinian triple aim of the sacrament of matrimony (expressing the unity between Christ and his Church, to sustain each other, to raise children) and states that not only celibacy but also chastity of married people is a gift from God.<sup>60</sup>

Regarding the mystery of the Church, the constitution of which belongs to God's predestination, the document declares: “In the present era of time the Church was constituted and, by the outpouring of the Spirit, was made manifest. At the end of time it will gloriously achieve completion, when, as is read in the Fathers, all the just, from Adam and ‘from Abel, the just one, to the last of the elect,’ (*Note 2*) will be gathered together with the Father in the universal Church”.<sup>61</sup> However, there is a slight

Augustine: “Loquere tu nobis, et non loquatur ad nos Deus, ne quando moriamur [Ex. 20:19]. Multum et solide significatur ad uetus testamentum timorem potius pertinere sicut ad nouum dilectionem, quamquam et in uetere nouum lateat et in nouo uetus pateat. Quomodo autem tali populo tribuatur uidere uocem Dei, si hoc accipiendum est intellegere, cum sibi loqui Deum timeant ne moriantur, non satis elucet”(CCL 33 p. 106/1276; 1282).

<sup>59</sup> *Note 4: Sermo 179, 1: PL 38, c. 966.* As reference to: “Therefore, all the clergy must hold fast to the Sacred Scriptures through diligent sacred reading and careful study, especially the priests of Christ and others, such as deacons and catechists who are legitimately active in the ministry of the word. This is to be done so that none of them will become “an empty preacher of the word of God outwardly, who is not a listener to it inwardly” (*Note 4*) since they must share the abundant wealth of the divine word with the faithful committed to them, especially in the sacred liturgy. The sacred synod also earnestly and especially urges all the Christian faithful, especially Religious, to learn by frequent reading of the divine Scriptures the “excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ” (Phil. 3:8)” (*Chapter 6: Sacred Scripture in the life of the Church; Art. 25*).

Augustine holds this sermon on Jas. 1:19 (“but let each of you be quick to hear, but slow to speak”), and Jas. 1:22 (“but be doers of the word, and not hearers only”). These verses bear significance for preachers: “So on the strength of this utterance flowing from the wellspring of truth, through the absolutely truthful mouth of the apostle, I too make bold to add my own exhortation to you; and while I’m exhorting you, to take a look at myself. After all, it’s a futile preacher outwardly of God’s words, who isn’t also inwardly a listener”. For this reason the preacher also needs the prayers of his listeners. ROTELLE (ed.), HILL (trans., notes), *Sermons 315 (148-183), On the New Testament*, p. 298.

<sup>60</sup> *Note 7: “I Cor. 7, 7: Unusquisque proprium donum (idion charisma) habet ex Deo: alius quidem sic alius uero sic. Cfr. S. Augustinus, De Dono Persev. 14, 37: PL 45, 1015. Non tantum continenti Dei donum est, sed coniugatorum etiam castitas”.*

As reference to: “Those of the faithful who are consecrated by Holy Orders are appointed to feed the Church in Christ’s name with the word and the grace of God. Finally, Christian spouses, in virtue of the sacrament of Matrimony, whereby they signify and partake of the mystery of that unity and fruitful love which exists between Christ and His Church, help each other to attain to holiness in their married life and in the rearing and education of their children. By reason of their state and rank in life they have their own special gift among the people of God” (*Chapter 2: On the people of God; §11*). Augustine stresses that both celibacy and chastity of married people are God’s gifts. “There [1Cor 7:7] he showed well enough that not only celibacy, but also the chastity of married people is a gift of God”. TESKE (trans.), *Answer to the Pelagians. 4: To the Monks of Hadrumetum and Provence*, p. 215-216.

<sup>61</sup> *Note 2: Sermo 341, 9, 11: PL 39, c. 1499.* As reference to: cf. above in full text (*Chapter 1: The mystery of the Church; §2*).

Augustine’s *Sermo 341* deals with the presence of Christ in the Scriptures, against the Arians. *Sermo 341, 11* has the idea of the *Totus Christus* as topic: Christ and the Church together as head and body. “All of us together are the members of Christ and his body; not only those of us who are in this place, but throughout the whole world; and not only those of us who are alive at this time, but what shall I say? From Abel the just right up to the end of the world, as long as people beget and are begotten,

difference in context. While the Church's doctrine of predestination is constructed by and on Augustine's teaching, the original context in Augustine's *Sermo* 341 of the sentence quoted by *Lumen Gentium* is not that of predestination, but the stress that all believers—from the present, past and future—belong to one and the same body of Christ, the so-called *Totus Christus*. Augustine, moreover, very rarely deals with the topic of predestination in his sermons. *De civitate Dei* is also quoted to help to define the Church, which is “like a stranger in a foreign land, presses forward amid the persecutions of the world and the consolations of God”.<sup>62</sup> Again, the context is somewhat different. While, according to *Lumen Gentium*, the Church suffers from the fact that sinners exist (and the Church embraces those sinners), Augustine does not have in mind sinners in general but very specifically heretics. Another sermon, *Sermo* 340, is quoted to express the pastoral ministry of bishops: “What I am for you terrifies me; what I am with you consoles me. For you I am a bishop; but with you I am a Christian. The former is a duty; the latter a grace. The former is a danger; the latter, salvation”.<sup>63</sup>

The Council Fathers quoted Augustine in *Lumen Gentium* in order to understand the relationship between Mary and the Church: as physical mother of Christ she helped the faithful, the members of the Church, to be born in the Church – the body

any of the just who make this passage through this life, all that now—that is, not in this place but in this life—all that are going to be born after us, all constitute the one body of Christ; while they are each individual members of Christ”. ROTELLE (ed.), HILL (trans., notes), *Sermons 3/10 (341-400)*, *On Various Subjects*, p. 26.

<sup>62</sup> Note 14: *De civitate Dei* 18, 51, 2: PL 41, c. 614. As reference to: “The Church, “like a stranger in a foreign land, presses forward amid the persecutions of the world and the consolations of God” (Note 14), announcing the cross and death of the Lord until He comes. By the power of the risen Lord it is given strength that it might, in patience and in love, overcome its sorrows and its challenges, both within itself and from without, and that it might reveal to the world, faithfully though darkly, the mystery of its Lord until, in the end, it will be manifested in full light” (*Chapter 1: The mystery of the Church*; §8).

Augustine: “Above all, great consolations come when those who err are corrected; for those consolations flood the souls of the pious with a joy as great as were the pains that tormented them at the thought that those who erred might be lost. In this fashion the Church proceeds on her pilgrimage in this world, in these evil days: a pilgrimage which began not simply in the time of the corporeal presence of Christ and His apostles, but with Abel himself, the first righteous man, slain by his ungodly brother; and which extends from that time even to the end of this world, amid the persecutions of the world and the consolations of God”. R. W. DYSON (trans., ed.), *Augustine. The City of God against the Pagans* (Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought), Cambridge, 1998, p. 900.

<sup>63</sup> Note 1: *Sermo* 340, 1: PL 38, c. 1483. As reference to: “Therefore, from divine choice the laity have Christ for their brothers who though He is the Lord of all, came not to be served but to serve. They also have for their brothers those in the sacred ministry who by teaching, by sanctifying and by ruling with the authority of Christ feed the family of God so that the new commandment of charity may be fulfilled by all. St. Augustine puts this very beautifully when he says: “What I am for you terrifies me; what I am with you consoles me. For you I am a bishop; but with you I am a Christian. The former is a duty; the latter a grace. The former is a danger; the latter, salvation”” (*Chapter 4: The Laity*; §32). Augustine preached *Sermo* 340 at the anniversary of his bishop ordination and he talked on the burden of the episcopal office. He asks his community to pray for him. He opens the sermon as follows: “Where I'm terrified by what I am for you, I am given comfort by what I am with you. For you I am a bishop, with you, after all, I am a Christian. The first is the name of an office undertaken, the second a name of grace; that one means danger, this one salvation”. ROTELLE (ed.), HILL (trans., notes), *Sermons 3/9 (306-340A)*, *On the Saints*, p. 292.

of Christ—,<sup>64</sup> and she is a model for the Church to keep, similar to a virginal purity, “integral faith, solid hope, sincere love”.<sup>65</sup>

*Gaudium et Spes* declares that the dignity of the human vocation and the desires of the human heart are rooted in it’s being created by God towards God. Here the famous opening sentence of the *Confessiones* is given: “Thou hast made us for Thyself, ..., and our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee”.<sup>66</sup>

Three citations to Augustine occur in the decree on mission activity in the Church, *Ad Gentes*. First, the mission activities of the apostles, who founded the Church and

<sup>64</sup> Note 3: *De sancta virginitate* 6: PL 40, c. 399. As reference to: “Redeemed by reason of the merits of her Son and united to Him by a close and indissoluble tie, she is endowed with the high office and dignity of being the Mother of the Son of God, by which account she is also the beloved daughter of the Father and the temple of the Holy Spirit. Because of this gift of sublime grace she far surpasses all creatures, both in heaven and on earth. At the same time, however, because she belongs to the offspring of Adam she is one with all those who are to be saved. She is “the mother of the members of Christ . . . having cooperated by charity that faithful might be born in the Church, who are members of that Head”. (Note 3) Wherefore she is hailed as a pre-eminent and singular member of the Church, and as its type and excellent exemplar in faith and charity. The Catholic Church, taught by the Holy Spirit, honors her with filial affection and piety as a most beloved mother” (Chapter 8: *The blessed virgin Mary, Mother of God in the mystery of Christ and the Church*; §1: Introduction).

Augustine: “So that woman, and she alone, was both a mother and a virgin, not only spiritually but also physically. She is not spiritually the mother of our head, as that is the Savior himself. On the contrary, she was born spiritually from him, as everyone who believes in him, including her, is rightly called a child of the bridegroom. On the other hand, clearly she is the mother of his members, which is ourselves, since she has cooperated with charity for the birth of the faithful in the Church. They are the members of that head, but she is physically the mother of the head himself”. KEARNEY (trans.), HUNTER, JROTELLE (eds.), *Marriage and Virginitiy*, p. 70-71.

<sup>65</sup> Note 20: *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 13, 12: PL 35, c. 1499. As reference to: “The Church indeed, contemplating her hidden sanctity, imitating her charity and faithfully fulfilling the Father’s will, by receiving the word of God in faith becomes herself a mother. By her preaching she brings forth to a new and immortal life the sons who are born to her in baptism, conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of God. She herself is a virgin, who keeps the faith given to her by her Spouse whole and entire. Imitating the mother of her Lord, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, she keeps with virginal purity an entire faith, a firm hope and a sincere charity” (Chapter 8: *The blessed virgin Mary, Mother of God in the mystery of Christ and the Church*; §3: *On the Blessed Virgin and the Church*; §24).

Augustine preaches in *Tractate* 13, 12 on John 3:29, and quotes 2Cor11:2-3: “For I betrothed you to one man, to present you to Christ as a chaste virgin. [...] But I fear, [...] that just as the serpent led Eve astray with his cunning, so your senses may be corrupted from the chastity which is in Christ”. Augustine comments: “The whole Church is being called a virgin. The members of the Church are diverse”. Some live as virgins. “And these are the Church’s more honorable members. Other members have not kept virginity in the body, but all keep virginity of the mind. What is virginity of the mind? Integral faith, solid hope, sincere love”. EDMUND HILL (trans.), ALLAN D. FITZGERALD (ed.), *Homilies on the Gospel of John 1-40* (The works of saint Augustine: a translation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, 3/12), New York NY, 2009, p. 254.

<sup>66</sup> Note 19: *Confessiones* 1, 1: PL 32, c. 661. As reference to: “Above all the Church knows that her message is in harmony with the most secret desires of the human heart when she champions the dignity of the human vocation, restoring hope to those who have already despaired of anything higher than their present lot. Far from diminishing man, her message brings to his development light, life and freedom. Apart from this message nothing will avail to fill up the heart of man: ‘Thou hast made us for Thyself,’ O Lord, ‘and our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee’” (Part 1: *The Church and man’s calling*; Chapter 1: *The dignity of the human person*; §21).

Augustine: “You arouse us so that praising you may bring us joy, because you have made us and drawn us to yourself, and our heart is unquiet until it rests in you”. BOULDING (trans.), *The Confessions*, p. 39.

who followed the example of Christ, are described in Augustine's words.<sup>67</sup> Second, a citation from *Sermo 267* is used in a note to explain the operation of the Spirit within the Church as the working of the human soul in the body.<sup>68</sup> Thirdly, in another note, concerning the aim of the Church's missionary activity – namely that all humanity together could pray the “Our Father”—, Augustine is cited to formulate this hope.<sup>69</sup> The contexts are somewhat different, while Augustine is writing on the correct love for temporal things, *Ad Gentes* applies this citation on missionary activity.

The documents pertaining to priests frequently refer to Augustine. The decree *Presbyterorum Ordinis* uses Augustine as an authority to explain that the sacrifice of

<sup>67</sup> Note 2: *Enarratio in Psalmum 44*, 23: PL 36, c. 508; CChr 38, p. 510. As reference to: “The Apostles themselves, on whom the Church was founded, following in the footsteps of Christ, “preached the word of truth and begot churches”. (Note 2) It is the duty of their successors to make this task endure “so that the word of God may run and be glorified” (2 Thess. 3:1) and the kingdom of God be proclaimed and established throughout the world” (*Preface*; §1).

Augustine: “The churches are the apostles’ daughters, kings’ daughters. Christ is the “King of kings” (Rev. 19:16) and under him the apostles too are kings, for to them it was said, “You will sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Mt. 19:28). They preached the word of truth, and through it they begot churches, not for themselves but for him”. BOULDING (trans.), ROTELLE (ed., notes), *Expositions of the Psalms*: 33-50, p. 301. Cf. *Presbyterorum Ordinis* 2, 1, §4, Note 1.

<sup>68</sup> Note 10: *Sermo 267*, 4 (PL 38, c. 1231): “The Holy Spirit does in the whole Church what the soul does in all the members of one body”. Cf. Const. Dogm. *Lumen Gentium*, 7 (together with Note 8). As reference to: “Throughout all ages, the Holy Spirit makes the entire Church “one in communion and in ministering; He equips her with various gifts of a hierarchical and charismatic nature,” a giving life, soul —like, to ecclesiastical institutions (Note 10) and instilling into the hearts of the faithful the same mission spirit which impelled Christ Himself. Sometimes He even visibly anticipates the Apostles’ acting, just as He unceasingly accompanies and directs it in different ways” (*Chapter 1*; §6). Augustine delivers *Sermo 267* on Pentecost day, and he preaches that the Holy Spirit is to the Church what the soul is to the human body. “In fact, what the soul is to the human body, the Holy Spirit is to the body of Christ, which is the Church. The Holy Spirit does in the whole Church what the soul does in all the parts of one body”. Thus, separated from the Church (as the Donatists are), one is like an amputated body part, one lacks life. ROTELLE (ed.), HILL (trans., notes), *Sermons 3/7* (230-272B), *On the Liturgical Seasons*, p. 276.

<sup>69</sup> Note 19: *De Sermone Domini in monte 1*, 41: “Let us love what can lead us to that kingdom where no one says, ‘My Father,’ but all say to the one God: ‘Our Father’ (PL 34, c. 1250)”. As reference to: “Finally, by means of this missionary activity, God is fully glorified, ... And so at last, there will be realized the plan of our Creator who formed man to His own image and likeness, when all who share one human nature, regenerated in Christ through the Holy Spirit and beholding the glory of God, will be able to say with one accord: “Our Father.” (note 19)” (*Chapter 1*; §7).

Augustine writes on love of temporal relationships: one should love in his wife and parents that what one will love after resurrection. “Thus it is characteristic of a good Christian to love in one woman the creature of God whom he desires to be transformed and renewed, but to hate corruptible and mortal intimacy and copulation —that is, to love the human being in her but to hate that which makes her a wife”. “The same is to be understood for father and mother and the other ties of blood, that in them we hate the lot of humankind to be born and to die, while loving what can be taken with us to that kingdom where no one says ‘my father,’ but all say *our Father* (Matt 6:9) to the one God; not ‘my mother,’ but all say *our Mother* to *that Jerusalem* (Gal. 4:26); not ‘my brother,’ but ‘our brother’ indifferently to all. Yes, our marriage with Him, once we have all been brought into one will be as to one spouse (2Cor 11:2; Eph/ 5:22) who by the shedding of His blood freed us from the prostitution of this world. The disciple of Christ, therefore, must hate the transient in them whom he wants to come with him into the everlasting. And this hatred will be in proportion to his love of them”. John J. JEPSON (trans., notes), *St. Augustine. The Lord's Sermon on the Mount* (Ancient Christian Writers, 5), Cork, 1948, p. 51-52.

Christ holds a central place in the ministry of the priests. In Christ's sacrifice all the redeemed and saints are offered to God through Christ himself, who offered himself in order that the Church could be his body.<sup>70</sup> As in *Ad Gentes*, *Presbyterorum Ordinis* refers to Augustine to mention the evangelisation efforts of the apostles.<sup>71</sup> The same decree on the life and ministry of priests defines the pastoral charity of the priest's ministry as "a duty of love to feed the Lord's flock".<sup>72</sup> Without giving a reference in a note, *Optatam Totius* writes the following on the spiritual training of priest students: "They should learn to take part with a generous heart in the life of the whole Church in accord with what St. Augustine wrote: 'to the extent that one loves the Church of Christ, to that extent does he possess the Holy Spirit'".<sup>73</sup> Again we are dealing with a

<sup>70</sup> Note 13: *De Civitate Dei* 10, 6: PL 41, c. 284. "The ministry of priests is directed to this goal and is perfected in it. Their ministry, which begins with the evangelical proclamation, derives its power and force from the sacrifice of Christ. Its aim is that 'the entire commonwealth of the redeemed and the society of the saints be offered to God through the High Priest who offered himself also for us in his passion that we might be the body of so great a Head'" (*Chapter 1: The priesthood in the ministry of the Church*; §2).

Augustine: "A true sacrifice, then, is every work done in order that we may draw near to God in holy fellowship: done, that is, with reference to that supreme good and end in which alone we can be truly blessed". "Since, therefore, true sacrifices are works of mercy shown to ourselves or to our neighbours, and done with reference to God; and since works of mercy have no object other than to set us free from misery and thereby make us blessed; and since this cannot be done other than through that good of which it is said, 'It is good for me to be very near to God' (Ps. 73:28): it surely follows that the whole of the redeemed City —that is, the congregation and fellowship of the saints— is offered to God as a universal sacrifice for us through the great High Priest Who, in His Passion, offered even Himself for us in the form of a servant, so that we might be the body of so great a Head. For it was this form that He offered, and in it that He was offered, because it is according to it that He is our Mediator. In this form He is our Priest; in it, He is our sacrifice". DYSON (trans., ed.), *Augustine*, p. 399-400.

<sup>71</sup> Note 1: "Cf. 1 Pt 1:23; Acts 6:7; 12:24. (*The apostles*) preached the word of truth and founded Churches. (St. Augustine, *On Psalms*, 44, 23; PL 36, c. 508)". As reference to: "The People of God are joined together primarily by the word of the living God" (*Chapter 2: The Ministry of Priests; Section 1: Priests' Functions*; §4).  
Augustine. Cf. *Ad Gentes*, *Preface*, §1, Note 1.

<sup>72</sup> Note 23: *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 123, 5: PL 35, c. 1967. This note quotes: "May it be a duty of love to feed the Lords flock". As reference to: "Hence, as they fulfill the role of the Good Shepherd, in the very exercise of their pastoral charity they will discover a bond of priestly perfection which draws their life and activity to unity and coordination. This pastoral charity (Note 23) flows out in a very special way from the Eucharistic sacrifice" (*Chapter 3: The Life of Priests; Section 1: The Vocation of Priests to the Life of Perfection*; §14).

Augustine observes that Jesus asks Peter three times whether Peter loves Him. Jesus commands Peter three times to feed his sheep. "A triple confession is paid back to the triple denial so that his tongue may not give less service to love than to fear and that imminent death may not seem to have drawn out more speech than present life. Let it be the duty of love to feed the Lord's flock if it was the mark of fear to deny the Sheperd. They who feed Christ's sheep with this mind that they wish them to be their own, not Christ's, are convicted of loving themselves, not Christ, out of a desire either of gaining glory or being themselves lords or acquiring possessions, not out of love of obeying and providing help or pleasing God". "Therefore this utterance of Christ so many times empathically repeated, alerts [us] against these who, the Apostle bemoans, seek the things that are their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's. (Phil 3:21.)" JOHN W. RETTIG (trans.), *St. Augustine. Tractates on the Gospel of John 112-24* (The Fathers of the Church, 92), Washington DC, 1984, p. 77-78.

<sup>73</sup> "The students should be so saturated with the mystery of the Church, especially as described by this sacred synod, that, bound to the Vicar of Christ in a humble and trusting charity and, once ordained priests, adhering to their own bishop as faithful helpers and engaging in a common effort with their



small difference in nuance. While *Optatam Totius* is discussing the pastoral ministry of priests, Augustine intends to speak about the office of bishops.

### ALLUSIONS TO AUGUSTINE

Augustine is alluded or referred to in the Councilary documents 36 times.

*Dei Verbum* opens by expressing the wish: “to set forth authentic doctrine on divine revelation and how it is handed on, so that by hearing the message of salvation the whole world may believe, by believing it may hope, and by hoping it may love”. This wish is annotated by a reference to Augustine, which actually only deals with the latter aspect of this wish, namely love. According to Augustine the intention of incarnation is that man, by learning how God loves man, should come to love his/her neighbour and God.<sup>74</sup>

*Dei Verbum* refers to Augustine’s writings to contend, on the one hand, with the divine inspiration and infallibility of Scripture,<sup>75</sup> and on the other hand, the

fellow-priests, they bear witness to that unity that attracts men to Christ. They should learn to take part with a generous heart in the life of the whole Church in accord with what St. Augustine wrote: ‘to the extent that one loves the Church of Christ, to that extent does he possess the Holy Spirit’. The students should understand most clearly that they are not destined for domination or for honors but are given over totally to the service of God and to the pastoral ministry. With a particular concern should they be so formed in priestly obedience, in a simple way of life and in the spirit of self-denial that they are accustomed to giving up willingly even those things which are permitted but are not expedient, and to conform themselves to Christ crucified” (*Chapter 4: The careful development of the spiritual training*; §9).

This quote originates from *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 32, 8, in which Augustine discusses John 7:37-39, against Donatism. “Therefore, we also receive the Holy Spirit if we love the Church, if we are joined together by love, if we rejoice in the Catholic name and faith. Let us believe, brothers, that as much as each one loves Christ’s Church, so much does he have the Holy Spirit”. “Therefore, we have the Holy Spirit if we love the Church; but we love if we are within its unity and love”. RETTIG, St. Augustine, p. 47-48.

<sup>74</sup> Note 1: *De Catechizandis Rudibus* 4, 8: PL 40, c. 316. As reference to: *Preface*; *Article 1*.

Augustine: “If, therefore, Christ came chiefly for this reason that man might learn how much God loves him, and might learn this to the end that he might begin to glow with love of Him by whom he was first loved, and so might love his neighbor at the bidding and after the example of Him who made Himself man’s neighbour by loving him, when instead of being His neighbor he was wandering far from Him; if moreover, all divine Scripture that was written before was written to foretell the coming of the Lord, and if whatever has since been committed to writing and established by divine authority tells of Christ and counsels love, then it is evident that on these two commandments of the love of God and the love of our neighbor depend not merely the whole law and the Prophets (which at the time when the Lord uttered these precepts were as yet only Holy Scripture), but also all the inspired books that have been written at a later period for our welfare and handed down to us”. Joseph P. CHRISTOPHER (trans., notes), *St. Augustine. The First Catechetical Instruction* (Ancient Christian Writers, 2), Westminster (Maryland)/London, 1946, p. 23-24.

<sup>75</sup> Note 5: *De Genesi ad litteram* 2, 9, 20: PL 34, c. 270-271; *Epistula* 82, 3: PL 33, c. 277; CSEL 34/2, p. 354. As reference to: “Therefore, since everything asserted by the inspired authors or sacred writers must be held to be asserted by the Holy Spirit, it follows that the books of Scripture must be acknowledged as teaching solidly, faithfully and without error that truth which God wanted put into sacred writings for the sake of salvation” (*Chapter 3: Sacred Scripture, its inspiration and divine interpretation*; *Article 11*). Augustine deals with the question of the shape of material heaven in *De Genesi ad litteram*. Are natural sciences contradicted by the description of heaven in the Bible? The Bible never errs, but does not always intend to give scientific descriptions. “But the credibility of Scripture is at stake, and as I have indicated more than once, there is danger that a man uninstructed in divine revelation, discovering something in Scripture or hearing from it something that seems to be at variance with

contextuality from which several books of the Bible were composed.<sup>76</sup> Here we have to note a small difference: in the passages referred to in *Dei Verbum* Augustine actually wrote that the authors of the Scriptures did not err, something quite different than the claim that Scripture does not err, while acknowledging, at the same time, that Scripture is a human expression of God.

*Lumen Gentium* expresses the working of the H. Spirit in the Church (like a soul in a body) by referring to Augustine's *Sermo* 268, which is quoted in *Ad Gentes*. This comparison by Augustine is intended to be anti-heretical: all who are outside the Church do not have the Spirit, and are dead, just as a separated body member does not have the soul anymore which makes a body(part) alive. This polemical intent is not present in *Lumen Gentium*.<sup>77</sup> The dogmatic constitution on the Church explains

the knowledge he has acquired, may resolutely withhold his assent in other matters where Scripture presents useful admonitions, narratives, or declarations. Hence, I must say briefly that in the matter of the shape of heaven the sacred writers knew the truth, but that the Spirit of God, who spoke through them, did not wish to teach men these facts that would be of no avail for their salvation". (p. 59). John Hammond TAYLOR (trans., notes), *St. Augustine. The Litteral Meaning of Genesis* (Ancient Christian Writers, 41), New York/Mahwah, 1982, p. 58-60.

*Epistula* 82 is a letter from Augustine to Jerome: "For I admit to Your Charity, I learned to show this reverence and respect only to those books of the scriptures that are now called canonical so that I most firmly believe that none of their authors erred in writing anything". "[...] [books] of the prophets and the apostles, for with regard to their writings it is wicked to doubt that they are free from all error". TESKE (trans.), ROTELLE (notes, ed.), *Letters* 1-99, p. 316.

<sup>76</sup> Note 6: *De civitate Dei* 17, 6, 2: PL 41, c. 537; CSEL 40/2, p. 228; and Note 7: *De doctrina christiana* 3, 18, 26; PL 34, c. 75-76. As reference to: "However, since God speaks in Sacred Scripture through men in human fashion, (Note 6) the interpreter of Sacred Scripture, in order to see clearly what God wanted to communicate to us, should carefully investigate what meaning the sacred writers really intended, and what God wanted to manifest by means of their words. To search out the intention of the sacred writers, attention should be given, among other things, to 'literary forms'. For truth is set forth and expressed differently in texts which are variously historical, prophetic, poetic, or of other forms of discourse. The interpreter must investigate what meaning the sacred writer intended to express and actually expressed in particular circumstances by using contemporary literary forms in accordance with the situation of his own time and culture (Note 7)" (*Chapter 3: Sacred Scripture, its inspiration and divine interpretation; Article 12*).

Augustine explains in *De civitate Dei* that the promises of the Old Testament apply to what they prefigure, and not to what it literally was connected with. When the Old Testament promises eternity for the priesthood, this does not apply to the Jewish priesthood and kingdom, but to the priesthood and kingdom it prefigures. Christ. DYSON (trans., ed.), *Augustine*, p. 785-787.

This is rather a practical application of the general exegetical principle explained in *Dei Verbum*.

Augustine offers rules and considerations for exegesis in *De doctrina christiana*. "Again one has to be on one's guard against supposing that whatever in the Old Testament, with respect to the condition of those times, is not an infamy nor a crime either, even when understood literally and not figuratively, can be transferred also to these times and put into practice in life today". HILL (trans.), ROTELLE (notes, ed.), *Teaching Christianity*, p. 181.

<sup>77</sup> Note 8: *Sermo* 268, 2: PL 38, c. 232, "et alibi". As reference to: "In order that we might be unceasingly renewed in Him, He has shared with us His Spirit who, existing as one and the same being in the Head and in the members, gives life to, unifies and moves through the whole body. This He does in such a way that His work could be compared by the holy Fathers with the function which the principle of life, that is, the soul, fulfills in the human body" (*Chapter 1: The mystery of the Church; §7*).

Augustine: "What our spirit, that is our soul, is to the parts or members of our body, that the Holy Spirit is to the members of Christ, to the body of Christ". Augustine here quotes Eph 4:4: "one body and one spirit". As our body is not coordinated and is actually dead without our soul, people who are separated from the Church lack the Spirit. They have the sacraments, baptism, the creed, but not the



that members of the Church who sin, who do not persevere in charity, only belong bodily to the Church and not in their heart. This is a very Augustinian theme, and is hence substantiated with several references to the bishop of Hippo. Again we have to observe that the Vatican II document rather refers to sinners in general, while Augustine specifically envisaged heretics, i.e. Donatists.<sup>78</sup>

Another very Augustinian idea is that, however all Christians are called to a perfect and holy life, they all are sinners, in constant need for God's grace and merciful forgiveness.<sup>79</sup> Augustine is referred to in the remark that charity should rule

Spirit. They have the outward form, but not the inward Spirit. Augustine is clearly referring to the Donatists. ROTELLE (ed.), HILL (trans., notes), *Sermons 3/7 (230-272B), On the Liturgical Seasons*, p. 279.

<sup>78</sup> Note 12: "Cfr. S. Augustinus, *Bapt. c. Donat.* 5, 28, 39; PL 43, c. 197: Certe manifestum est, id quod dicitur, in Ecclesia intus et foris, in corde, non in corpore cogitandum. Cfr. *ib.*, 3, 19, 26: col. 152; 5, 18, 24: col. 189; *In Io. Tr.* 61, 2: PL 35, c. 1800, et alibi saepe". As reference to: "They are fully incorporated in the society of the Church who, possessing the Spirit of Christ accept her entire system and all the means of salvation given to her, and are united with her as part of her visible bodily structure and through her with Christ, who rules her through the Supreme Pontiff and the bishops. The bonds which bind men to the Church in a visible way are profession of faith, the sacraments, and ecclesiastical government and communion. He is not saved, however, who, though part of the body of the Church, does not persevere in charity. He remains indeed in the bosom of the Church, but, as it were, only in a 'bodily' manner and not 'in his heart'. (Note 12) All the Church's children should remember that their exalted status is to be attributed not to their own merits but to the special grace of Christ. If they fail moreover to respond to that grace in thought, word and deed, not only shall they not be saved but they will be the more severely judged" (*Chapter 2: On the people of God*; §14).

Augustine reacts explicitly against Donatism in *De baptismo*. In 5, 28, 39 he stresses that baptism is only effective in the Church: "Certainly it is clear that, when we speak of within and without in relation to the Church, it is the position of the heart that we must consider, not that of the body, since all who are within in heart are saved in the unity of the ark through the same water, through which all who are in heart without, whether they are also in body without or not, die as enemies of unity". (p. 478.) In 3, 19, 26 he writes that also in the Church, there are sinners (p. 444-445). He repeats in 5, 18, 24 that also in the Church there are baptised people, who however sin: because of these sins, they are dead, but still their baptism is alive. (p. 472.) KING (trans.), HARTRANFT (ed., notes), *Writings in Connection with the Donatist controversy*, p. 367-651.

Augustine preaches on John 13:21-26 in *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 51, 2: "And so Jesus was disturbed in spirit, and he bore witness and said, 'Amen, amen, I say to you, one of you will betray me.'" "One of you" in number, not in merit; in appearance, not in virtue; by bodily commingling, not by spiritual bond; a companion by the joining of his flesh, not by unity of heart; accordingly one who is of you, but will depart from you. For how will what the Lord bore witness to and said, "One of you," be true if that is true which the very same man says in his Epistle whose Gospel this is: "They have departed from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would surely have remained with us"? (1John 2:19.) Therefore Judas was not of them; for he would have remained with them if he were of them. What then is "One of you will betray me" except one of you, who will betray me, will depart from you? For so too he who says, "If they had been of us, they would surely have stayed with us," had already said, "they have departed from us". And in this way both are true, both "of us" and "not of us," in one respect "of us," in another respect "not of us," in respect to the sharing of sacraments, "of us" in respect to the proper designation of their crimes, "not of us". RETTIG (trans.), *St. Augustine. Tractates on the Gospel of John 55-111*, p. 35.

<sup>79</sup> Note 3: *Retractationes* 2, 18: PL 32, c. 637. As reference to: "The followers of Christ [...], by God's gift, they must hold on to and complete in their lives this holiness they have received. [...] Since truly we all offend in many things we all need God's mercies continually and we all must daily pray: 'Forgive us our debts' (Note 3)" (*Chapter 5: The universal call to holiness in the Church*, §40).

Augustine revises his own *De baptismo*: "But wherever in these books I have mentioned 'the Church not having spot or wrinkle,' (Eph 5:27) it should not be interpreted as if it were such now, but rather what is being prepared to be when, indeed, it will appear glorious. For now, because of certain

over all attempts to lead a holy life,<sup>80</sup> and that the counsels given in the Gospel by Christ are a special way for the Church to reach holiness.<sup>81</sup> This constitution also refers to Augustine and his description of Christ as the cornerstone of the Church, and the apostles as its foundations.<sup>82</sup> Deceased Christians intercede with the Father in heaven and this is substantiated with a reference to Augustine (who actually was not speaking about all deceased, but only of martyrs).<sup>83</sup> The constitution, like Augustine, compares the Church with Mary: both are virgin and mother.<sup>84</sup>

ignorances and infirmities of its members, its condition is such that every day the entire Church says: 'Forgive us our debts' (Mt 6:12)". Mary Inez BOGAN (trans.), *St. Augustine. The Retractions* (The Fathers of the Church, 60), Washington D.C., 1968, p. 156. This is a remarkable choice of text. Augustine here corrects his own anti-Donatist writing. The same claim he repeats very frequently in other writings, esp. with an anti-Pelagian intent.

<sup>80</sup> Note 12: *Enchiridion* 121, 32: PL 40, c. 288. As reference to: "For charity, as the bond of perfection and the fullness of the law, rules over all the means of attaining holiness and gives life to these same means. (Note 12) It is charity which guides us to our final end. It is the love of God and the love of one's neighbor which points out the true disciple of Christ". (*Chapter 5: The universal call to holiness in the Church*; §42).

Augustine teaches that the final part of the commandment is charity (1Tm 1:5). "Thus charity is the end of every commandment, that is, every commandment concerns charity. But what is done in fear of punishment or for any carnal reason, and not with reference to that charity which the Holy Spirit pours out in our hearts, is not yet being done as it should be done, although it seems to be done". Ramsey BONIFACE, Michael FIEDROWICZ (eds.), *On Christian Belief* (The works of saint Augustine: a translation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, 1/8) Hyde Park/New York (NY), 2005, p. 342-343.

<sup>81</sup> Note 13: *De sancta virginitate* 15, 15: PL 40, c. 403. As reference to: "Likewise, the holiness of the Church is fostered in a special way by the observance of the counsels proposed in the Gospel by Our Lord to His disciples. (Note 13) An eminent position among these is held by virginity or the celibate state". (*Chapter 5: The universal call to holiness in the Church*, §42).

Augustine explains 1Cor. 7:27: virginity is a counsel/advice, not a commandment, while the prohibition to divorce is a commandment (not obeying it, is a sin). KEARNEY (trans.), HUNTER, ROTELLE (eds.), *Marriage and Virginity*, p. 75-76.

This is not really the content intended by *Lumen Gentium*, rather a practical application of it.

<sup>82</sup> Note 3: *Enarratio in Psalmum* 86, 4: PL 37, c. 1103. As reference to: "And the apostles, by preaching the Gospel everywhere, and it being accepted by their hearers under the influence of the Holy Spirit, gather together the universal Church, which the Lord established on the apostles and built upon blessed Peter, their chief, Christ Jesus Himself being the supreme cornerstone" (*Chapter 3: On the hierarchical structure of the Church and in particular on the Episcopate*; §19).

Augustine explains Ps. 82:4 in *Enarratio in Psalmum* 86, 4: The apostles are the foundations of the Church. The twelve gates of Jerusalem (cf. Rev. 21:12) represent the twelve apostles, united in Christ, the one gate (because Christ is in those twelve gates). (p. 249-250.) The previous paragraph is more relevant than the indicated one. *En. Ps.* 86, 3: on Ps. 82:2-3: Christ as the chief cornerstone, in whom the two walls (the two peoples: circumcised and uncircumcised) are joined together. As cornerstone of the two walls, he is also the cornerstone of the foundations (the apostles and the prophets), and as such He is the foundation of the foundation. (p. 248-249.) BOULDING (trans.), ROTELLE (ed., notes), *Expositions of the Psalms: 73-98*.

<sup>83</sup> Note 4: *Enarratio in Psalmum* 85, 24: PL 37, c. 1095. As reference to: "For by reason of the fact that those in heaven are more closely united with Christ, they establish the whole Church more firmly in holiness, lend nobility to the worship which the Church offers to God here on earth and in many ways contribute to its greater edification. For after they have been received into their heavenly home and are present to the Lord, through Him and with Him and in Him they do not cease to intercede with the Father for us, (Nota 4) showing forth the merits which they won on earth through the one Mediator between God and man, serving God in all things and filling up in their flesh those things which are lacking of the sufferings of Christ for His Body which is the Church". (*Chapter 7: The eschatological nature of the pilgrim Church and its union with the Church in heaven*; §49).

*Sacrosanctum Concilium* stresses that it is Christ himself who baptises through the minister, that He is present in the sacrament, a doctrine Augustine established in his polemics with the Donatists.<sup>85</sup>

*Gaudium et Spes* refers to Augustine for two reasons. The first reason is his teaching concerning the three intrinsic values in marriage, a sacrament instituted by God, which provides mutual help, support, fidelity and the procreation and education of children.<sup>86</sup> The Council Fathers also refer to Augustine regarding the relief of the poor. However, there is a slight difference. *Gaudium et Spes* asks to not merely give out

Augustine preaches on Ps. 85:17 (on resurrection). Paragraph 24 actually does not exist, paragraph 23 is about intercession of martyrs: "Blessed Cyprian was sorrowful in his passion, but consoled now in his crown. Yet even in his consolation there is for him a certain sadness, for our Lord Jesus Christ still intercedes for us, and all the martyrs in his company intercede for us too". BOULDING (trans.), ROTELLE (ed., notes), *Expositions of the Psalms: 73-98*, p. 244.

<sup>84</sup> Note 20: *Sermo* 191, 2, 3; PL 38, c. 1010; "etc.". As reference to: "The Church indeed, contemplating her hidden sanctity, imitating her charity and faithfully fulfilling the Father's will, by receiving the word of God in faith becomes herself a mother. By her preaching she brings forth to a new and immortal life the sons who are born to her in baptism, conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of God. She herself is a virgin, who keeps the faith given to her by her Spouse whole and entire. Imitating the mother of her Lord, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, she keeps with virginal purity an entire faith, a firm hope and a sincere charity" (Chapter 8: *The blessed virgin Mary, Mother of God in the mystery of Christ and the Church*; §3: *On the Blessed Virgin and the Church*; §24).

Augustine preaches *Sermo* 191 on Christmas day. Paragraph 2 deals with Mary's virginity: "a virgin before conceiving, a virgin after given birth". (p. 42.) *Sermo* 191, 3 compares the Church with Mary as virgin and mother: "It was there (being born from a virgin's womb), you see, that the only-begotten Son of God was pleased to join human nature to himself, in order to link to himself as undefiled head an undefiled Church; a Church which the apostle Paul calls a virgin, contemplating not only those in it who are virgins also in the body, but craving the uncorrupted minds of all its members. "For I have betrothed you", he says, "to one husband, to present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (2Cor 11:2). So the Church imitates the Lord's mother —not in the bodily sense, which it could not do— but in mind it is both mother and virgin". (p. 43.) ROTELLE (ed.), HILL (trans., notes), *Sermons 3/6 (184-229Z)*, *On the Liturgical Seasons*.

<sup>85</sup> Note 21: *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 6, 7 [critical edition is not mentioned, CCL 36, p. 56-57]. As reference to: "By His power He is present in the sacraments, so that when a man baptizes it is really Christ Himself who baptizes" (Chapter 1: *General principles for the restoration and promotion of the sacred liturgy*; §7).

Augustine, his sermon on John 1:32, is about Christ's baptism by John. When it is Peter, Paul, and Judas who baptise, it is actually Christ who is baptising. The general context here is Augustine's anti-Donatist sacramentology: holiness of baptism does not depend on the holiness of the minister, since it is Christ who actually is administering the baptism. HILL (trans.), FITZGERALD (ed.), *Homilies on the Gospel of John 1-40*, p. 126-127.

<sup>86</sup> Note 1: *De Bono coniugali* 3-4; 28-32; PL 40, c. 375-376; 394. As reference to: "For, God Himself is the author of matrimony, endowed as it is with various benefits and purposes. (Note 1) All of these have a very decisive bearing on the continuation of the human race, on the personal development and eternal destiny of the individual members of a family, and on the dignity, stability, peace and prosperity of the family itself and of human society as a whole. By their very nature, the institution of matrimony itself and conjugal love are ordained for the procreation and education of children, and find in them their ultimate crown. Thus a man and a woman, who by their compact of conjugal love 'are no longer two, but one flesh' (Matt. 19:6), render mutual help and service to each other through an intimate union of their persons and of their actions. Through this union they experience the meaning of their oneness and attain to it with growing perfection day by day. As a mutual gift of two persons, this intimate union and the good of the children impose total fidelity on the spouses and argue for an unbreakable oneness between them" (Part 2: *Some problems of special urgency*; Chapter 1: *Fostering the nobility of marriage and the family*; §48).

of one's superfluous goods, while they refer to texts of Augustine in which he appeals to distribute one's superfluities.<sup>87</sup>

*Dignitatis Humanae* states that nobody can be forced to become a Christian, and refers to many examples of this doctrine found in the Fathers of the Church, amongst others, Augustine.<sup>88</sup>

Augustine deals in §3 with the various benefits of marriage: "... the Lord confirmed that marriage is something of value, ... It seems to me to be not only because of the procreation of children, but also because of the natural sociability between the different sexes". KEARNEY (trans.), HUNTER, ROTELLE (eds.), *Marriage and Virginit*y, p. 34.

The benefit of mutual fidelity is discussed upon in §4, the good virtues of marriage in §28. A summary of the three goods of marriage is given in §32: "These things, namely, offspring, fidelity and the sacrament, are all good, and because of them marriage is good". KEARNEY (trans.), HUNTER, ROTELLE (eds.), *Marriage and Virginit*y, p. 57.

<sup>87</sup> Note 10: In *Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 50, 6: PL 35, c. 1760; *Enarratio in Psalmum* 147, 12: PL 37, c. 192. As reference to: "On the other hand, the right of having a share of earthly goods sufficient for oneself and one's family belongs to everyone. The Fathers and Doctors of the Church held this opinion, teaching that men are obliged to come to the relief of the poor and to do so not merely out of their superfluous goods" (*Part 2: Some problems of special urgency; Chapter 3: Economic and social life; §48*).

Augustine gives in *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 50, 6, on John 11:55 – 12:11, an explanation of the symbolic meaning of Maria's anointing of Jesus' feet and wiping his feet with her hair. "Wipe with your hair: if you have more than enough, give to the poor and you have wiped the Lord's feet. For hairs seem to be the body's superfluity. For you they are superfluous, but for the Lord's feet, they are necessary. Perhaps on earth the Lord's feet are in need. For about whom except about his members will he say in the end, "When you did it for one of the least of mine, you did it for me"? (Mt 25:40.) You spent your superfluity, but you gave service to my feet". RETTIG, *St. Augustine*, p. 263-264.

Augustine urges, in *Enarratio in Psalmum* 147, 12 on Ps. 147:3, to have merciful generosity towards the needy: "Ask yourself how much he has given you and then pick out what you need; all the rest of your things lie there as superfluities, but for other people they are necessities. The superfluity of the rich is necessary to the poor. If you hold onto superfluous items, then, you are keeping what belongs to someone else". BOULDING (trans.), RAMSEY (ed.), *Expositions of the Psalms: 121-150*, p. 454.

<sup>88</sup> Note 7: *Contra Litteras Petilian*i 2, 83: CSEL 52, p. 112; PL 43, c. 315; cf. C. 23, q. 5, c. 33, (ed. Friedberg, col. 939); *Epistula* 23, 6-8: PL 33, c. 98; *Epistula* 34, 1-3: PL 33, c. 132; *Epistula* 35, 2-4: PL 33, c. 135. As reference to: "It is one of the major tenets of Catholic doctrine that man's response to God in faith must be free: no one therefore is to be forced to embrace the Christian faith against his own will. This doctrine is contained in the word of God and it was constantly proclaimed by the Fathers of the Church" (§10).

Augustine answer to Petilianus: "We neither persecute you, except so far as truth persecutes falsehood; nor has it anything to do with us if any one has persecuted you in other ways, just as it has nothing to do with you if any of your party do likewise; nor do we compel you to defile yourselves, but we persuade you to be cured". KING (trans.), HARTRANFT (ed., notes), *Writings in Connection with the Donatist controversy*, p. 572.

Augustine writes in *Epistula* 23, 6-8, to the Donatist bishop Maximinus, that Augustine postpones to negotiate with the Donatists until the army left Hippo, so in order to have a free discussion without coercion.

Augustine writes in *Epistula* 34, 1-3, to Eusebius, a Catholic layman and Roman official in Hippo, on the Donatist controversy: "God, who sees the secrets of the human heart, knows that, as much as I desire peace among Christians, I am troubled by the sacrilegious actions of those who persevere in its disruption in an unworthy and impious fashion. God knows that this attitude of my mind is directed toward peace and that I am not trying to force anyone involuntarily into the Catholic communion, but to reveal the plain truth to all who are in error. Then, once our ministry has made it evident with God's help, the very truth may be enough to persuade them to embrace and follow her". TESKE (trans.), ROTELLE (notes, ed.), *Letters 1-99*, p. 118.

*Ad Gentes* introduces the topic of Christ's ministry with a reflection on Christ being the mediator between God and humanity, on his divine and human nature. The purpose of the Incarnation is that Christ made humanity to participate in God's nature. For this reason: "The Fathers of the Church proclaim without hesitation that what has not been taken up by Christ is not made whole".<sup>89</sup> The reference made here to *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 23, 6,<sup>90</sup> does fit here, but only vaguely.<sup>91</sup> This *Tractate*, on John 5:30-40, deals with resurrection of body and spirit, and with the whole Christ (as Word, with a rational mind and flesh): "That is the whole Christ; let your soul than rise from wickedness through that which is God, let your body rise again from corruption through that which is man".<sup>92</sup> The same footnote contains a reference to Augustine's *De agone Christi* 22, 24,<sup>93</sup> in order to substantiate that "above all in this way it is evident that the Holy Spirit has not redeemed us, since He has not become flesh".<sup>94</sup> The missionary decree stresses the importance of Pentecost in the mission activity of the Church: a Church which unites all languages and supersedes the divisiveness of Babel.<sup>95</sup> Missionary activity is meant to heal whatever is already present of good, truth and grace, to lift it up to God. Augustine writes something

Here we have to place a critical note. The Council Fathers refer to Augustine's anti-Donatist writings. In the beginning of this controversy he was convinced that all kinds of coercion in religious matters should be avoided. Later on in this controversy, he changed of opinion, and accepted a moderate form of coercion to bring heretical Christians, such as the Donatists, back to the Church (the so-called: *compelle/coge intrare*). Augustine explains in *Epistula* 35, 2-4, to Eusebius, on the Donatist controversy, his position to not accept back in the Catholic communion a Donatist who is unwilling to return. *Epistula* 35, 4: Augustine refuses to accept a girl forced by her father to come back to the Catholic unity, as long as she does not do this from her own free will.

<sup>89</sup> Chapter 1, §3.

<sup>90</sup> PL 35, c. 1585; CChr 36, p. 236.

<sup>91</sup> Note 4.

<sup>92</sup> HILL (trans.), *Homilies on the Gospel of John 1-40*, p. 409-411, p. 411.

<sup>93</sup> PL 40, c. 302.

<sup>94</sup> Note 4. Chapter 1, §3. Augustine reacts against heresies, which argue that Christ did not really have a body, but only a bodily appearance like the H. Spirit only had a bodily appearance. Augustine explains that the Spirit, as dove, assumed the body of a dove but was not born from an egg like Christ was born of a woman. "Now, the reason why the Holy Spirit was not born of a dove, whereas Christ was born of a woman, is this: The Holy Spirit did not come to liberate doves, but to declare unto men innocence and spiritual love, which were outwardly symbolized in the form of a dove. The Lord Jesus Christ, having come to liberate human beings, including both men and women destined for salvation, was not ashamed of the male nature, for He took it upon Himself; or of the female, for He was born of a woman". Robert P. RUSSELL (trans.), *The Christian Combat* (The Fathers of the Church, 2), Washington DC, 1947, p. 309-353, p. 339.

<sup>95</sup> Note 6: *Enarratio in Psalmum* 54, 11: PL 36, c. 636; CChr 39, p. 664 ff.; *Sermo* 271: PL 38, c. 1245; *Sermones* 267, 268, 269: PL 38, c. 1225, c. 1237; *Sermo* 175, 3: PL 38, c. 946. As reference to: "Yet on the day of Pentecost, He came down upon the disciples to remain with them forever (cf. John 14:16). The Church was publicly displayed to the multitude, the Gospel began to spread among the nations by means of preaching, and there was presaged that union of all peoples in the catholicity of the faith by means of the Church of the New Covenant, a Church which speaks all tongues, understands and accepts all tongues in her love, and so supersedes the divisiveness of Babel" (Chapter 1, §4).

Augustine opposes in *Enarratio in Psalmum* 54, on Ps. 54:10, Pentecost to Babel: "Through proud persons human languages were diversified, and through the humble apostles, languages were harmonized; the spirit of pride fragmented language, and the Holy Spirit gathered dispersed languages into one". BOULDING (trans.), ROTELLE (ed., notes), *Expositions of the psalms: 51-72*, p. 65.

similar on the Heavenly City, which does not rescind or destroy the differences among the nations, but directs them all to the same end of earthly peace.<sup>96</sup> Finally, *Ad Gentes* refers to Augustine's notion to place catechumens in the household of God.<sup>97</sup>

Augustine delivered *Sermo 271* on the feast of Pentecost. The pentecostal tongues prefigured the Church as the ultimate answer to the tower of Babel: "I mean, just as after the flood the ungodly pride of men built a high tower against the Lord, and the human race was deservedly divided by languages, so that each nation would speak its own language and thus not be understood by the others; so in a similar way the devout humility of the faithful has brought to the unity of the Church the variety of their different languages; so that what discord had dissipated charity might gather together, and the scattered members of the human race, as of one body, might be attached to their one head, Christ, and so reunited, and fused together into the unity of the holy body by the fire of love". ROTELLE (ed.), HILL (trans., notes), *Sermons 3/7 (230-272B), On the Liturgical Seasons*, p. 298-299.

*Sermones 267-268-269* (with an anti-Donatist tendency) are also delivered on the day of Pentecost: the unity of the Church is expressed in the tongues of all nations, the unity of the Church among all nations is prefigured in the gift of the tongues of all nations on Pentecost.

*Sermo 175* is devoted to Christ as *medicus*. "The Lord [...] applied his death to the preparation of the cure [...]". (p. 266.) After the resurrection, Christ sent the Holy Spirit: "[...] the Holy Spirit came, he filled the disciples, they started speaking with the tongues of all nations; a sign of unity was being enacted in them. I mean, one person spoke then all languages, because the unity of the Church was going to speak in all languages". ROTELLE (ed.), HILL (trans., notes), *Sermons 3/5 (148-183), On the New Testament*, p. 267.

<sup>96</sup> Note 24: *De civitate Dei* 19, 17: PL 41, c. 646. As reference to: "But whatever truth and grace are to be found among the nations, as a sort of secret presence of God, He frees from all taint of evil and restores to Christ its maker, who overthrows the devil's domain and wards off the manifold malice of vice. And so, whatever good is found to be sown in the hearts and minds of men, or in the rites and cultures peculiar to various peoples, not only is not lost, but is healed, uplifted, and perfected for the glory of God, the shame of the demon, and the bliss of men" (*Chapter 1, §9*).

Augustine: "Therefore, for as long as this Heavenly City is a pilgrim on earth, she summons citizens of all nations and every tongue, and brings together a society of pilgrims in which no attention is paid to any differences in the customs, laws and institutions by which earthly peace is achieved or maintained. She does not rescind or destroy these things, however. For whatever differences there are among the various nations, these all tend towards the same end of earthly peace. Thus, she preserves and follows them, provided only that they do not impede the religion by which we are taught that the one supreme and true God is to be worshipped. And so even the Heavenly City makes use of earthly peace during her pilgrimage, and desires and maintains the co-operation of men's wills in attaining those things which belong to the mortal nature of man, in so far as this may be allowed without prejudice to true godliness and religion. Indeed, she directs that earthly peace towards heavenly peace: towards the peace which is so truly such that—at least so far as rational creatures are concerned—only it can really be held to be peace and called such. For this peace is a perfectly ordered and perfectly harmonious fellowship in the enjoyment of God, and of one another in God. When we have reached that peace, our life will no longer be a mortal one; rather, we shall then be fully and certainly alive". DYSON (trans., ed.), *Augustine*, p. 946-947.

<sup>97</sup> Note 7: *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 11, 4: PL 35, c. 1476. As reference to: "Finally, the juridic status of catechumens should be clearly defined in the new code of Canon law. For since they are joined to the Church, they are already of the household of Christ, (*Note 7*) and not seldom they are already leading a life of faith, hope, and charity" (*Chapter 2: Mission work itself; Article 2: Preaching the Gospel and Gathering together the People of God; §14*).

Augustine writes that the catechumens already have the sign of the cross on their forehead, and belong to the household of the Church, but still have to be baptised in order to partake in the eucharist, and that they are—in a way of illustration—like the people of Israel that first had to be brought across the Red Sea before eating manna. "Yes, the fact that catechumens have the sign of the cross on their foreheads means that they now belong to a great household; but let them, from being slaves, become sons". HILL (trans.), *Homilies on the Gospel of John 1-40*, p. 213-215.



The decree on ecumenism *Unitatis Redintegratio* refers to Augustine's plea to continually consider the Donatists as brothers and sisters, to call non-Catholic Christians, Christian and to accept them as brothers.<sup>98</sup>

### VAGUE AND INCORRECT USES OF AUGUSTINE

Besides the differences in nuance and intention between the texts of Augustine himself and the references made by conciliar documents to them —as observed above—, there are also five references made to Augustine in the promulgated documents that are very difficult to link with the original text of his writings.

*Lumen Gentium* refers to *Sermo* 71 within the context of the Church as “a people made one with the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit”, while Augustine preaches in that sermon on the blasphemy against the H. Spirit. Augustine mentions that the H. Spirit gathers the faithful in the unity of the Church, but the context is that the Spirit keeps all blasphemers against the Spirit outside the Church.<sup>99</sup> While *Lumen Gentium* addresses the internal unity of the Church, Augustine is thinking in external terms: heresies *versus* the Church. Regarding the participation of the people of God in Christ's prophetic office, the concept of *sensus fidelium* is introduced. Augustine's *De praedestinatione sanctorum* is quoted, but this citation is not used correctly. *Lumen Gentium* explains the *sensus fidelium* in the following way, with a reference to Augustine: “The entire body of the faithful, anointed as they are by the Holy One, cannot err in matters of belief. They manifest this special property by means of the whole peoples' supernatural discernment in matters of faith when ‘from the Bishops down to the last of the lay faithful’ they show universal agreement in matters of faith and morals”.<sup>100</sup> Augustine actually refers in this quote to the authority

<sup>98</sup> Note 22: *Enarratio in Psalmum* 2, 29: PL 36, c. 299. As reference to: “it remains true that all who have been justified by faith in Baptism are members of Christ's body, and have a right to be called Christian, and so are correctly accepted as brothers by the children of the Catholic Church” (*Chapter 1: Catholic principles on ecumenism*; §3).

Augustine pleads against the Donatists, who wrongly do not consider Catholics as their brethren. Augustine urges to grieve over the Donatists —who are sisters and brothers (who celebrate the same sacraments, reply with the same ‘Amen’), however separated— and to pray for them in order that they would realise their error. BOULDING (trans.), ROTELLE (ed., notes), *Expositions of the Psalms: 1-32*, p. 423-424.

<sup>99</sup> Note 4: *Sermo* 71, 20, 33: PL 38, c. 463. As reference to: “Thus, the Church has been seen as ‘a people made one with the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit’” (*Chapter 1: The mystery of the Church*; §4).

Augustine preached in *Sermo* 71, with Mt. 12:32 as Gospel lecture, on the sin against the H. Spirit. Definition of this sin is in *Sermo* 71, 20: impenitence, being unrepentent. Blasphemy against the H. Spirit is a sin that will not be forgiven. Not the indicated paragraph 20, but the previous paragraph 19 contains the idea of unity by the Spirit: “For it is by the Holy Spirit, who gathers the people of God together into one, that the unclean spirit is cast out, who is divided against himself”. “But, as I have already said more than once, the reason why forgiveness of sins, by which the reign of the spirit divided against himself is overthrown and terminated, the reason why companionship in the unity of the Church of God, outside which no forgiveness of sins occurs, is seen as the proper work of the Holy Spirit (with the Father and the Son, of course, cooperating), is that the Holy Spirit is himself somehow or other the companionship of the Father and the Son”. ROTELLE (ed.), HILL (trans., notes), *Sermons 3 (51-94)*, *On the New Testament*, p. 258 et 267.

<sup>100</sup> Note 8: *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 14, 27: PL 44, c. 980. As reference to: “The holy people of God shares also in Christ's prophetic office; it spreads abroad a living witness to Him, especially by means

of the book of Wisdom. Augustine wants to prove this authority since he quoted Wis 4:11 (“He was carried off so that evil would not change his mind”) to prove the impossibility to remain without sins and others rejected this Biblical argument because they consider the book of Wisdom to be noncanonical. Augustine replies: “Since this is so, the statement from the Book of Wisdom ought not to have been rejected, for that book has merited to be proclaimed by the rank of lectors in the Church of Christ for so many years and merited to be heard by all Christians, from bishops to the least of the lay believers, penitents and catechumens, with veneration for the authority of God”.<sup>101</sup> The perspective is somewhat different. While *Lumen Gentium* deals with doctrinal consensus amongst all the members of the Church, Augustine writes that the book of Wisdom deserved to be heard by all members of the Church. One can argue that the canonicity of the book of Wisdom is based on such a *sensus fidelium*, Augustine however does not state this explicitly.

*Lumen Gentium* stresses the presence of Christ in small local communities of Christians gathered around the Eucharist under the ministry of their bishop. *Contra Faustum* and *Sermo 57* are quoted to substantiate this assertion. These texts indeed—however very generally spoken—refer to the Eucharistic unity of the Church in general (and not to local churches), but do not, however, connect this unity to the episcopal office.<sup>102</sup>

*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, on the institution of the Eucharist during the Last Supper, calls the Eucharistic Sacrifice “a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond

of a life of faith and charity and by offering to God a sacrifice of praise, the tribute of lips which give praise to His name. The entire body of the faithful, anointed as they are by the Holy One, cannot err in matters of belief. They manifest this special property by means of the whole peoples’ supernatural discernment in matters of faith when ‘from the Bishops down to the last of the lay faithful’ they show universal agreement in matters of faith and morals” (*Chapter 2: On the people of God*; §12).

<sup>101</sup> TESKE (trans.), *Answer to the Pelagians. 4: To the Monks of Hadrumetum and Provence*, p. 171.

<sup>102</sup> Note 54: *Contra Faustum* 12, 20: PL 42, c. 26; *Sermo 57*, 7: PL 38, c. 389; “etc. ”. As reference to: “In any community of the altar, under the sacred ministry of the bishop, there is exhibited a symbol of that charity and ‘unity of the mystical Body, without which there can be no salvation’. In these communities, though frequently small and poor, or living in the Diaspora, Christ is present, and in virtue of His presence there is brought together one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church” (*Chapter 3: On the hierarchical structure of the Church and in particular on the Episcopate*; §26).

Augustine, *Contra Faustum*: on Gn. 8:6-11 (Ark of Noah). “The dove was sent out after another seven days and did not return. This signifies the end of the world, when the rest of the saints will no longer be found in the sacrament of hope, by which the Church is united in the present time, when we drink what flowed from Christ’s side, but will already be in the perfection of eternal salvation, when the kingdom will be handed over to him who is God and Father, so that in that clear contemplation of immutable truth we shall not need bodily sacraments”. TESKE, BONIFACE (eds.), *Answer to Faustus, a Manichean*, p. 138.

Augustine, *Sermo 57*: on Matt. 6:9-13 (the Lord’s Prayer), and *Sermo 57*, 7 on Matt. 6:11: “Give us this day our daily bread”. This prayer does according to Augustine not only refer to material (food, clothing), but also to spiritual needs: daily bread necessary for life refers to the Eucharist. For receiving this Eucharist, one has to have the correct disposition, namely unity. “So the Eucharist is our daily bread; but we should receive it in such a way that our minds and not just our bellies find refreshment. You see, the special property to be understood in its unity, so that by being digested into this body and turned into his members we may be what we receive. Then it will really be our daily bread”. ROTELLE (ed.), HILL (trans., notes), *Sermons 3 (51-94), On the New Testament*, p. 112.



of charity” and refers here to *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 6, 13.<sup>103</sup> The general context of *Tractatus* 6, dealing with John 1:32, is the anti-Donatist claim that the holiness of baptism does not depend on the holiness of the minister, since it is Christ who actually is administering the baptism. Paragraph 13, which is referred to in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, does however not deal with the content indicated. The following paragraph 14 however connects baptism, the sacraments and charity, but not in the elaborated sense discussing Christ’s cross and the Church and with the centrality of the Eucharist in all this, as is done in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*.<sup>104</sup>

### COMPARISONS AND OBSERVATIONS

Still a lot of work has to be done. The study of the 9 *schemata*, which were sent and given to the Council Fathers, has to be complemented with a study of the other schemas the *Preparatory Central Committee* had composed. The 9 *schemata* we analysed, however, were crucial *schemata* discussing the most important doctrinal issues, rendering a comparison between these preparatory and the promulgated documents valid. In this perspective, our comparisons, observations and conclusions are however still somewhat provisional. Interesting also for further research would be to reconstruct which theologians in the respective sets of documents were responsible for inserting quotes of Augustine, introducing his ideas (e.g. Henri de Lubac in *De Deposito Fidei Pure Custodiendo* and Joseph Ratzinger in *Dei Verbum*). Further detailed study also has to be devoted to the precise textual and stylistic context of references to Augustine: is it a merely illustrative use or is the theological concept dealt with fundamentally caused by Augustine’s thinking. When the preparatory and promulgated documents present two different ‘theological styles’, how does the presence of Augustine function in all this? Also more thematic comparisons would be interesting, e.g. how is Augustine quoted in the context of ecclesiology, sacramentology, revelation, Scripture, etc. in both sets of documents.

Augustine occurs in both sets of documents in approximately the same number of notes. One could say there was the same degree of need to substantiate the content of the documents with the writings of Augustine. In the promulgated documents, Augustine is completely absent in 7 (of 16), and in the preparatory only in 3 (of 9). As such, he is more equally spread throughout the preparatory documents than throughout the promulgated.<sup>105</sup>

<sup>103</sup> Note 36: *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 6, 13. As reference to: “At the Last Supper, on the night when He was betrayed, our Saviour instituted the Eucharistic sacrifice of His Body and Blood. He did this in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the Cross throughout the centuries until He should come again, and so to entrust to His beloved spouse, the Church, a memorial of His death and resurrection: a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity (Note 36), a paschal banquet in which Christ is eaten, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us” (*Chapter 2: The most sacred mystery of the Eucharist*; §47).

<sup>104</sup> HILL (trans.), FITZGERALD (ed.), *Homilies on the Gospel of John 1-40*, p. 133-134.

<sup>105</sup> The three following schemas (of in total 9 schemas) do not contain references to Augustine:

- *Schema Constitutionis De Sacra Liturgia*.
- *Schema Constitutionis De Instrumentis Communicationis Socialis*.
- *Schema Decreti De Ecclesiae Unitate «Ut Omnes Unum Sint»*.

Augustine is not referred to in the following seven documents (of in total 16 documents):

- *Gravissimum Educationis*.

The preparatory schemas and the promulgated documents refer to Augustine for several topics which are thematically quite similar: God's necessary grace, the grace of Christ's cross, exegetical principles, the importance to study Scripture, teaching on marriage (three *bona*), ecclesiology (body of Christ, presence of sinners in the Church, catechumens as Church members), ecumenism (plea to consider non-Catholic Christians as brothers and sisters), mariology. We also observed some differences in accents. The preparatory documents use Augustine in contexts as original sin, hell, humanity as *imago Dei*, and epistemology, while the promulgated placed Augustine with more emphasis on areas of ministry, evangelisation and mission.

The two sets of documents have, strikingly enough, only four citations in common. *De Fontibus Revelationis* and its later equivalent *Dei Verbum* both quote *sermo* 179, 1 with the same intention: ministers of the word have to listen to God's word themselves.<sup>106</sup> Augustine's doctrine of marriage regarding the three *bona nuptiae* (especially his synthesis in *De bono coniugali* 24, 32) is referred to with the same appreciation in *De Castitate*, *Matrimonio*, *Familia*, *Virginitate* and *Gaudium et Spes*.<sup>107</sup> *De Fontibus Revelationis*<sup>108</sup> and *Dei Verbum*<sup>109</sup> mention *De doctrina christiana*,<sup>110</sup> in order to substantiate the historical contextuality of the composition of the books of the Bible. *De Beata Maria Virgine Matre Dei et Matre Hominum*<sup>111</sup> and *Lumen Gentium*<sup>112</sup> both quote *De sancta virginitate* 6 to express that Mary, being a member of the body of Christ by giving birth to Christ, is also the mother of the members of Christ.

In the preparatory documents, 27 out of 49 are literal citations, whereas in the promulgated documents only 16 out of 56 are literal citations. Compared with the promulgated documents, the preparatory documents seem to be more faithful to Augustine's original context and his intention of the text passages that are referred to. Besides the five very clear examples of 2,3, we observed in our analysis of the promulgated documents at least 11 additional instances where the use of Augustine seems to deviate from his texts.<sup>113</sup> In sum, 15 references are somewhat out of place,

- *Nostra Aetate*.
- *Apostolicam Actuositatem*.
- *Perfectae Caritatis*.
- *Christus Dominus*.
- *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*.
- *Inter Mirifica*.

His absence is striking in the documents *Gravissimum Educationis*, *Perfectae Caritatis* [which moreover contains only one Patristic source: Ambrose, *De Virginitate*, 1, 2, c. 2, n. 15], *Christus Dominus*, because he wrote elaborately on Christian education, the religious life and the episcopal office; perhaps however this absence can be explained by the rather canonical nature of the latter two documents.

<sup>106</sup> *De Fontibus Revelationis* 5, 26, Nota 6. *Dei Verbum* 6, 25, Note 4.

<sup>107</sup> *De Castitate*, *Matrimonio*, *Familia*, *Virginitate* 2, §16, Nota 7. *Gaudium et Spes* 2, 1, §48, Note 1.

<sup>108</sup> *De Fontibus Revelationis* 2, §13, Nota 8.

<sup>109</sup> *Dei Verbum* 3, 12, Note 7.

<sup>110</sup> *De doctrina christiana* 3, 18, 26.

<sup>111</sup> *De Beata Maria Virgine Matre Dei et Matre Hominum* §1, Nota 2.

<sup>112</sup> *Lumen Gentium* 8, §1, Note 3.

<sup>113</sup> *Dei Verbum* Preface, Art. 1, Note 1 deals with faith, hope and love, while *De Catechizandis Rudibus* 4, 8 only deals with love. *Dei Verbum* 3, Art. 12, Note 6 declares that Scripture is inspired and does not

while in the preparatory documents this was only the case for 6 references.<sup>114</sup> From this point of view, one could also conclude that the preparatory schemas remained sometimes closer to Augustine than the promulgated documents.

At this level there is no serious difference in the presence of Augustine in the two collections of documents. He was certainly not absent in the preparatory schemas, on the contrary, he was present, in the same significant way, in the preparatory documents, and sometimes his presence there was more accurate than some very vague allusions made in the promulgated documents. Otherwise put, regarding Augustine, there is a strong continuity between the documents of 1962 and 1965.

On a larger scale, in the 9 here studied preparatory documents there are ca. 230 different references to *Patres* and *Doctores* (of which 49 to Augustine), in the promulgated ca. 330 (of which 57 to Augustine). To make a comparison, Thomas of Aquinas is mentioned 38 times in these preparatory documents, and 25 in the promulgated. Furthermore, Pius XII occurs 451 times in the discussed preparatory schemas and 148 in the promulgated documents. Otherwise put, despite a certain continuity we observed regarding Augustine, in the bigger picture, especially the relation between the respective numbers of Patristic references and references made to, for example, pope Pius XII, certain changes can be discerned.

Regarding the genres of Augustine's writings used in the two sets of documents we can only but observe a very significant difference. In the preparatory schemas, Augustine's dogmatic and polemical writings are clearly in the majority (36 out of 49 references, with four quoted the most frequently, *De civitate Dei* [6 times], *De Trinitate* [5], *Contra Iulianum* [4], *De natura et gratia* [3]), and the pastoral writings in minority (10 references to sermons (*Sermones*, *Enarrationes*, *Tractatus*) and 3 to the *Epistulae*).<sup>115</sup> In the promulgated documents however we see the complete opposite:

err, *De civitate Dei* 17, 6, 2 makes this assertion for the authors of Scripture. *Lumen Gentium* 1, §1, Note 2 deals with predestination and *Sermo* 341, 9, 11 with *Totus Christus*. *Lumen Gentium* 1, §7, Note 8 develops an ecclesiology according to which the Spirit is to the Church as a soul to a body, while Augustine envisages with this comparison in *Sermo* 268, 2 the claim that heretics do not have life anymore. *Lumen Gentium* 1, §8, Note 14/*Lumen Gentium* 2, §14, Note 12 refer to sinners and *De civitate Dei* 18, 51, 2/*De baptismo* 5 28, 39 to heretics. *Lumen Gentium* 7, §49, Note 4 explains the intercession made by the deceased, and Augustine in *Enarratio in Psalmum* 85, 24 refers to the intercession of the martyrs. *Ad Gentes* 1, §3, Note 4 describes Christ's healing and completing of mankind and *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 23, 6 the concept of *Totus Christus*. *Ad Gentes* 1, §7, Note 19 has mission as topic, *De sermone Domini in monte* 1, 15, 42 refers to correct love. *Optatam Totius* 4, §9 talks about the ministry of priests, *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 32, 8 is about bishops. *Gaudium et Spes* 2, 3, §48, Note 10 urges to give more than superfluities, *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 50, 6 and *Enarratio in Psalmum* 147, 12 urges to give from one's superfluities.

<sup>114</sup> As indicated above, the promulgated documents contain also some errors in the correct technical bibliographic references to Augustine.

<sup>115</sup> Preparatory documents: 49 references to Augustine: *Schema Constitutionis Dogmaticae De Fontibus Revelationis: De doctrina christiana* 2, 18, 26; *De consensu evangelistorum* 1, 1; *Sermo* 179, 1; *Schema Constitutionis Dogmaticae De Deposito Fidei Pure Custodiendo: De vera religione* 39, 73; *Confessiones* 9, 4, 6; *Sermo* 141; *De libero arbitrio* 2, 7, 15-15, 39; *De civitate Dei* 8, 10, 2; *De vera religione* 25, 46; *De Trinitate* 14, 8, 11; *De Trinitate* 15, 4, 6; *Confessiones* 1, 1, 1; *De civitate Dei* 12, 1, 3; *Contra Iulianum* 4, 16, 82; *Contra Iulianum* 6, 5, 11; *Contra Iulianum* 1, 3, 9; *Contra Iulianum* 1, 5, 15; *De Genesi ad litteram* 9, 11, 19; *De peccato originali* 24, 28; *De civitate Dei* 16, 8; *De civitate Dei* 16, 9; *De civitate Dei* 21, 23; *De civitate Dei* 22, 30, 1; *Contra Faustum* 14, 4; *De Trinitate* 4, 13, 17; *De Trinitate* 13, 10, 13; *Schema Constitutionis Dogmaticae De Ordine Morali Christiano: De spiritu et littera* 28, 48; *Schema Constitutionis Dogmaticae*

the pastoral genre (28 references to sermons and 4 to letters) are in majority, and the doctrinal/polemical writings in minority (25 out of 57, with four most frequently quoted: *De civitate Dei* [4], *De baptismo* [3], *De bono coniugali* [2], *De sancta virginitate* [2]).<sup>116</sup> Otherwise put, regarding the number of references, Augustine is approximately present, in a similar way, in the preparatory and promulgated documents. His presence however is different: another Augustine is present, the Council Fathers opted to use other aspects of Augustine as a source, substantiation and illustration. Here we notice the most important shift: the promulgated documents no longer primarily consider Augustine as the systematic theologian or even the sharp polemist, but as pastor, ministering to the people of God. The presence of the pastoral writings of Augustine is significant in the promulgated documents. The use of Augustine was conformed to the wish of John XXIII for this Council, namely to be a pastoral Council. Here we have a serious form of discontinuity.

To conclude, our analysis of Augustine's presence at Vatican II offers a splendid case study in the interplay of continuity and discontinuity. In the preparatory documents Augustine and the Fathers were certainly not neglected, but were quoted, in a respectful way, with respect for the original texts and intentions of the authors. In the promulgated documents Augustine remains present, approximately with the same amount of references, however these references sometimes deviate from Augustine's intention or from the original context of the reference. However, both the background and the approach changed: besides Augustine, other Fathers are also referred to in the promulgated documents and in a large number, which is even more

*De Castitate, Matrimonio, Familia, Virginitate: De natura et gratia* 48, 50; *De bono coniugali* 24, 32; *De Genesi ad litteram* 9, 7, 12; *De natura et gratia* 43, 50; *Schema Constitutionis De Sacra Liturgia*: -; *Schema Constitutionis De Instrumentis Communicationis Socialis*: -; *Schema Decreti De Ecclesiae Unitate «Ut Omnes Unum Sint»*: -; *Schema Constitutionis Dogmaticae De Ecclesia: Sermo* 349, 2; *De baptismo* 4, 21, 28; *Enarratio in Psalmum* 85, 15; *Epistula* 209; *Regula ad Servos Dei* 9; *Epistula* 199, 12, 48; *Sermo* 359, 4; *Sermo ad Caesarensis* 5; *Schema Constitutionis Dogmaticae De Beata Maria Virgine Matre Dei et Matre Hominum: De sancta virginitate* 6, 6; *Sermo Denis* 25 (72A), 7; *Sermo* 213, 7; *Sermo Denis* 25 (72A), 8; *Quaestiones Octoginta tres* 11; *De Trinitate* 1, 13, 18; *Sermo* 215, 4; *De natura et gratia* 36, 42; *Epistula* 137, 2, 8; *De sancta virginitate* 3.

<sup>116</sup> Vatican II-documents: 57 references: *Dei Verbum: De Catechizandis Rudibus* 4, 8; *De Genesi ad litteram* 2, 9, 20; *Epistula* 82, 3; *De civitate Dei* 17, 6, 2; *De doctrina christiana* 3, 18, 26; *Questiones in Heptateuchum* 2, 73; *Sermo* 179, 1; *Lumen Gentium*: "S. Augustinus, passim"; *Sermo* 341, 9, 11; *Sermo* 71, 20, 33; *Sermo* 268, 2; *De civitate Dei* 18, 51, 2; *De dono perseverantia* 14, 37; *De praedicatione sanctorum* 14, 27; *De baptismo* 5, 28, 39; *De baptismo* 3, 19, 26; *De baptismo* 5, 18, 24; *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 61, 2; "et alibi saepe"; *Enarratio in Psalmum* 86, 4; *Contra Faustum* 12, 20; *Sermo* 57, 7; *Sermo* 340, 1; *Retractationes* 2, 18; *Enchiridion* 121, 32; *De sancta virginitate* 15, 15; *Enarratio in Psalmum* 85, 24; *De sancta virginitate* 6; *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 13, 12; *Sermo* 191, 2, 3; *Sacrosanctum Concilium: In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 6, 7; *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 6, 13; *Gaudium et Spes: Confessiones* 1, 1; *De bono coniugali* 3-4, 3-4; *De bono coniugali* 23-24, 28-32; *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 50, 6; *Enarratio in Psalmum* 147, 12; *Gravissimum Educationis*: -; *Nostra Aetate*: -; *Dignitatis Humanae: Contra Litteras Petiliani* 2, 83; *Epistula* 23, 6-8; *Epistula* 34, 1-3; *Epistula* 35, 2-4; *Ad Gentes: Enarratio in Psalmum* 44, 23; *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 23, 6; *De Agone Christi* 22, 24; *Enarratio in Psalmum* 54, 11; *Sermo* 271; *Sermo* 267; *Sermo* 268; *Sermo* 269; *Sermo* 175, 3; *Sermo* 267, 4; *De sermone Domini in monte* 1, 15, 42; *De civitate Dei* 19, 17; *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 11, 4; *Presbyterorum ordinis: De civitate Dei* 10, 6; *Enarratio in Psalmum* 4, 23; *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 123, 5; *Apostolicam Actuositatem*: -; *Optatam Totius: In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 32, 8; *Perfectae Caritatis*: -; *Christus Dominus*: -; *Unitatis Redintegratio: Enarratio in Psalmum* 32, 2, 29; *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*: -; *Inter Mirifica*: -.

significant compared with the lesser presence of, for example, pope Pius XII. Also, different genres of Augustine's writings are opted for, namely his pastoral writings.

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# FROM PROVIDENTISSIMUS DEUS TO DEI VERBUM

## THE CATHOLIC BIBLICAL MOVEMENT AND THE COUNCIL RECONSIDERED

### INTRODUCTION

A while ago, when I looked back at the title and subject I had given for this paper, I became a little desperate. For I noticed that I was due to address the Biblical Movement in its entire period between 1907 and 1965. It is commonly known that entire libraries can be filled with this subject, so I decided to limit it a bit. The current paper will mainly focus on the enduring tension between co-existing intransigent and *ressourcement* endeavours during this period. The word ‘co-existing’ is of central importance. Within the context of this book, I particularly wish to point to the ambivalence inherent to the Catholic Biblical Movement before Vatican II, as a factor that might help to understand the ambiguities in conciliar doctrine. Secondly, this paper will not focus on the Catholic Biblical Movement in its doctrinal complexity—for that, I refer to the paper offered by François Nault in this very book—but will rather emphasize both the reports between intransigence and renewal, and the topic of Catholicism’s gradual acceptance of historical-critical method and the role of the Catholic exegete.

The Vatican II debate on exegesis and on the role of the Catholic exegete can hardly be addressed as a *creatio ex nihilo*. It has its roots in the Modernist Crisis at the beginning of the twentieth century<sup>117</sup> and its continuation in the crisis surrounding the *nouvelle théologie* and the neo-modernist controversy of the early 1960s.<sup>118</sup> All of these will have to be addressed in this paper.

In fact, my review of the exegetical debate begins in 1893 with the promulgation of Leo XIII’s encyclical, *Providentissimus Deus*.<sup>119</sup> The goal of that encyclical was to

<sup>117</sup> Amidst the abundant literature available, we wish to point to some crucial studies by Émile POULAT, such as *Histoire, dogme et critique dans la crise moderniste* (Bibliothèque de l’Évolution de l’humanité, 18), Paris, 1996<sup>3</sup> and the aforementioned one by Étienne FOUILLOUX, *Une église en quête de liberté*; More attention to the Anglo-Saxon side of the modernist problematic is found in Thomas M. LOOME, *Liberal Catholicism, Reform Catholicism, Modernism. A Contribution to a New Orientation in Modernist Research*, Mainz, 1979.

<sup>118</sup> On this crisis, and on the role of Louvain professors such as Cerfaux in it, see my monograph, Karim SCHELKENS, *Catholic Theology of Revelation on the Eve of Vatican II* (Brill’s Studies in Church History, 41), Leiden and Boston, 2010.

<sup>119</sup> *Enchiridion Biblicum. Documenti della Chiesa sulla Sacra Scrittura*, (ed.), Alfio FILIPPI and Erminio LORA (Bologna, 1994<sup>2</sup>) (henceforth EB), § 81-134. More background is found in Anthony J. COTTER, *The Antecedents of the Encyclical Providentissimus Deus*, in *CBQ*, 5 (1943), p. 117-124. See also John HAYES (ed.), *Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation*, Vol. 1, p. 324.



promote biblical studies and to provide a response to pressing questions surrounding the value of historical-critical research methods. At the same time, the encyclical addressed a number of dogmatic questions, including the inspiration of the Scriptures, their divine authorship and their infallibility, which I will not address here.<sup>120</sup> On the other hand, the relationship between theologians and the magisterium also constituted a point of discussion. The core question of the modernist era *a fortiori* had to do with the (in)compatibility of the historical-critical approach to the Bible on the one hand, and the “theological” interpretation of the Scriptures on the other.<sup>121</sup> The emergence of historical-critical research in the course of the nineteenth century<sup>122</sup> obliged Roman Catholic authorities to determine their position, especially since it had consequences for theology’s very foundations. The Catholic Church’s response was grafted to the principles of neo-scholasticism.<sup>123</sup> As exegetical *Leitprinzip*, it was presupposed that the Scriptures were (a) inspired by the Holy Spirit and thus (b) infallible. This was then adjoined to (c) the doctrine that refers to God as the original author of the Scriptures,<sup>124</sup> whereby (d) (in line with the scholastic understanding of instrumental causality) the role of the human authors was reduced to that of technical executors. The concepts of inspiration, infallibility and the principle of a *Deus auctor* were thus combined as panels in a triptych, but were clearly distinguished so as to avoid the ancient positions of Lessius and Hanneberg.<sup>125</sup> Within this frame of mind, the Roman Catholic magisterium had evidently understood the emergence the historical-critical method as a threat to dogmatic certitude and understood it as being in line with enlightenment rationalist influences, which had been largely condemned under Pius IX.

While in the neo-scholastic framework the Scriptures were seen as a “collection” of inviolable truths, immune to contingency, an apologetic —often anti-Protestant— tendency led to consider them materially insufficient with respect to the Tradition. The consequences for biblical research are evident. Where exegesis was unable to deal with the contradictions it found in an infallible corpus of Scripture, it could only resort to a harmonising concordism<sup>126</sup> and an exegesis that understood the *sensus*

<sup>120</sup> Christoph THEOBALD, *L'exégèse catholique au moment de la crise moderniste*, in Claude SAVART and Jacques-Noël ALETTI (ed.) *Le monde contemporain et la Bible* (Bible de tous les temps, 8), Paris, 1985, p. 387-439 (389-390).

<sup>121</sup> It is hardly surprising that Marie-Joseph LAGRANGE, *La méthode historique*, Paris, 1904, from the first page onward talks about the reconciliation of “l'exégèse critique et le dogme ecclésiastique”.

<sup>122</sup> Cf. Edouard HOCEDEZ, *Histoire de la théologie au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 3 vols. (Museum Lessianum. Section théologique 43-45), Brussels, 1947-1952, Vol. 3, p. 63-93; Patricia M. McDONALD, *Biblical Scholarship. When Tradition Met Method*, in John DEEDY (ed.), *The Catholic Church in the Twentieth Century. Renewing and Reimagining the City of God*, Collegeville MA, 2000, p. 113-130.

<sup>123</sup> Neoscholasticism was already quite influential at the era of Vatican I, but gained a powerful influx by Leo XIII through the 1879 encyclical *Aeterni Patris*. See Francis COPLESTON, *A History of Philosophy*, 11 vols., New York, 1994, Vol. 9, p. 250, and HOCEDEZ, *Histoire de la théologie*, Vol. 3, p. 351ff.

<sup>124</sup> Robert Bruce ROBINSON, *Roman Catholic Exegesis Since Divino Afflante Spiritu. Hermeneutical Implications*, Atlanta GA, 1982, p. 11.

<sup>125</sup> Henri RONDET, *Vatican I*, Paris, 1962, p. 112-113.

<sup>126</sup> Cf. Jean-Noël ALETTI, *Conclusions*, in Claude SAVART and Jean-Noël ALETTI (ed.), *Le monde contemporain*, p. 517-522.

*litteralis* of Scripture as conveying the meaning of the scriptural text as it was intended by its divine author.<sup>127</sup> *Providentissimus* remained on the surface on most of these domains, reconfirmed a few traditional standpoints and associated itself relatively closely with the doctrinal stipulations of Trent and Vatican I.<sup>128</sup> Although Leo XIII reacted to a notorious article by the Parisian, Maurice d'Hulst,<sup>129</sup> the Modernist Crisis only came into its own in the first decade of the twentieth century. Where Leo XIII had continued to speak of rationalism, Pius X introduced the new term "modernism" in the encyclical *Pascendi dominici gregis* of 1907<sup>130</sup> and in the earlier decree, *Lamentabili*,<sup>131</sup> which had already condemned no less than 65 propositions as modernist and was regarded as a 'new syllabus of errors'. The entire first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was characterised by a 'document storm' on biblical matters.

In 1902, Leo XIII officially established the Pontifical Biblical Commission,<sup>132</sup> which gradually came to function as the magisterium's control apparatus, and strongly aligned itself with intransigent neo-thomist theological currents.<sup>133</sup> The *motu proprio Praestantia Scripturae*<sup>134</sup> followed in 1907, and from 1910 onwards, the magisterium imposed the 'anti-modernist oath' on all Catholic theologians, thereby reinforcing Roman centralism and forcing Catholic exegetes to identify fully with magisterial teaching and authority. Moreover, the oath forced Catholic members of clergy into an allegiance with neo-scholastic thinking and to align exegetical principles with hierarchical requirements. Two whole years earlier, Alfred Loisy, one of the crisis's leading figures, had been condemned after longstanding investigations.<sup>135</sup> Loisy's

<sup>127</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, 1, 10: Quia vero sensus litteralis est quem auctor intendit, auctor autem Sacrae Scripturae Deus est.

<sup>128</sup> EB, p. 180, § 124: Etenim libri omnes atque integri, quos Ecclesia tamquam sacros et canonicos recipit, cum omnibus suis partibus Spiritu Sancto dictante conscripti sunt; tantum vero abest ut divinae inspirationi error ullus subesse possit, ut ea per se ipsa, non modo errore excludat omnem, sed tam necessario excludat et respuat, quam necessarium est, Deum, summam Veritatem, nullius omnino erroris auctorem esse.

<sup>129</sup> As regards the article of Msgr Maurice d'Hulst (1841-1896), then rector at the Institut Catholique de Paris, see Maurice d'HULST, *La question biblique*, in *Le Correspondant*, 134 (1893), p. 201-251. also see Francesco BERETTA, *Monseigneur d'Hulst et la science chrétienne. Portrait d'un intellectuel* (Textes dossiers documents 16), Paris, 1996, p. 99-123. On Maurice d'Hulst's article, also see Christoph THEOBALD, *La Question biblique. De la doctrine de Providentissimus Deus à la réception de l'exégèse historico-critique par Divino Afflante Spiritu*, in Bernard SESBOUÉ and Christoph THEOBALD (eds.), *La parole du salut* (Histoire des dogmes, 4), Paris, 1996, p. 345-382.

<sup>130</sup> Pius X, *Litterae encyclicae Pascendi de modernistarum doctrinis*, in ASS, 40 (1907), p. 622-39.

<sup>131</sup> S. Congregatio Sacrae Romanae et Universalis Inquisitionis, *Decretum Lamentabili quo sub 65 propositionibus reprobantur et proscribuntur praecipui errores reformismi seu modernismi*, in ASS, 40 (1907), p. 470-478.

<sup>132</sup> On the establishing of the Commission in 1902 and its further history, see Albert VANHOYE, *Passé et présent de la Commission biblique*, in *Gregorianum*, 74 (1993), p. 261-75.

<sup>133</sup> In 1905 Pius X replaced the then secretary of the Biblical Commission by the more traditional-minded Belgian benedictine Laurent Janssens (1855-1925). See Olivier ROUSSEAU, 'Sa grandeur Mgr. Janssens O.S.B.', *Revue liturgique et monastique*, 10 (1925), p. 285-289.

<sup>134</sup> EB, p. 272-279, there 276: tum vero maxime quum modernistarum errores, id est omnium haereseon collectum.

<sup>135</sup> See Claus ARNOLD and Giacomo LOSITO (eds.) *La censure d'Alfred Loisy (1903). Les documents des Congrégations de l'Index et du Saint Office*, Rome, 2009.

position, however, was not the only possible way of approaching matters, and a moderate position was proposed by the Dominican, Marie-Joseph Lagrange,<sup>136</sup> who tried to solve matters by developing his own methodological set of tools, leaning on orientalist and contemporary scientific insights, yet criticizing the ‘classical’ idea of inerrancy.<sup>137</sup> Lagrange disputed the instrumentalist approach maintained by the Jesuits since Franzelin<sup>138</sup> and appealed for a modern Thomism, over and against intransigent interpretations of it. On the other side of the spectrum, an influential exponent of the intransigent current of thought was the Belgian Jesuit, Alphonse Delattre.<sup>139</sup> Hardly studied and often neglected by historians in the field of the Catholic biblical movement, he was behind a list of attacks on an “open” school of exegesis in the beginning of the twentieth century and was a close ally of the Benedictine integrist theologian, Laurent Janssens.<sup>140</sup> Delattre had spent a period of study in Beyrouth, was well versed in biblical studies and Assyriology, specialized mainly in Old Testament exegesis, and published several works on Chaldean and Persian history,<sup>141</sup> yet he never quite accepted the historical-critical method as proposed by Lagrange.<sup>142</sup> Like Lagrange, he figured among the first generation of consultants to the Pontifical Biblical Commission. Nevertheless, the two exegetes were far from being allies. While Delattre endorsed the study of antique sources and linguistics, he thought it to be a primordial task for all Catholic exegesis to safeguard revealed doctrinal truths and refused to question them as a result of historical criticism. Therefore, both his exegetical and other writings<sup>143</sup> bear the mark of intransigent apologetics, and Delattre, defending

<sup>136</sup> Marie-Joseph Lagrange (1855-1938), French Dominican friar of the Toulouse province in 1879. He studies theology and oriental linguistics, exegesis and philosophy at Toulouse and Vienna. In 1890 Lagrange founds the *École pratique d'études bibliques* in Jerusalem, training several generations of exegetes there. See Bernard MONTAGNES, *Le père Lagrange, 1855-1938. L'exégèse catholique dans la crise moderniste* (Histoire), Paris, 1995.

<sup>137</sup> Henri MERKELBACH, *L'inspiration des divines écritures*, in *Revue ecclésiastique de Liège*, 6-7 (1910-1912), p. 221-243 and 12-33. Both articles were edited in 1913 as Henri MERKELBACH, *L'inspiration des divines écritures. Questions de principe et questions d'application*, Arras, 1913.

<sup>138</sup> Raymond F. COLLINS, *Introduction to the New Testament*, London, 1983, p. 337. On Franzelin's (1816-1886) life and work, see Peter WALTER, *Johann Baptist Franzelin (1816-1886). Jesuit, Theologe, Kardinal. Ein Lebensbild*, Bosen, 1987.

<sup>139</sup> A short biographical notice is given in É. DE MOREAU, *Delattre, Alphonse*, in *Biographie Nationale*, 29, col. 533.

<sup>140</sup> Nevertheless, it should be mentioned that Delattre highly valued the works of the aforementioned Louvain exegete, Beelen. See the rather hagiographical, but nevertheless interesting, biographical overview in Victor DUBAR, *Le révérend père Alphonse Delattre s.j. (1841-1928)*, in *Savant polémiste*, sine loco, 1928, p. 34-34.

<sup>141</sup> For more biographical information on Delattre, see Victor DUBAR, *Le révérend père Delattre*. See for instance Alphonse J. DELATTRE, *Les chaldéens jusqu'à la formation de l'empire de Nabuchodonosor*, Paris, 1877; *Le peuple et l'empire des Mèdes jusqu'à la fin du règne de Cyaxare*, Brussels, 1883; and *Coup d'oeil sur la civilisation Assyrio-Babyloniene*, Louvain, 1900.

<sup>142</sup> Several interesting references to the positions of Delattre are found in an edition of Lagrange's correspondence with Cormier, see Bernard MONTAGNES (ed.), *Exégèse et obéissance. Correspondance Cormier-Lagrange (1904-1916)*, Paris, 1989.

<sup>143</sup> See, for instance, his attack on ‘Americanism’ in Alphonse J. DELATTRE, *Un catholicisme américain*, Namur, 1898, and a repeated version of it in his article *Encore l'Américanisme. Une planche de salut*, in the Jesuit periodical *Études*, 76 (1898), p. 535. Interesting references on his actions can be found in

the Roman school in the tradition of Johann Baptist Franzelin (1816-1886), would openly attack several Catholic exegetes for being led astray: be it into liberalism, socialism, modernism, americanism, ... or even harnackism.<sup>144</sup>

Known as a polemicist writing dozens of “conservative” pamphlets, Delattre disputed the orthodoxy of exegetical methodology.<sup>145</sup> In 1904, in reaction to Lagrange’s work on the historical method in Catholic exegesis,<sup>146</sup> he published his *Autour de la question biblique*, accusing Lagrange of being a “modernist” in the tradition of Msgr. d’Hulst and of neglecting the doctrinal demands set forth in *Providentissimus Deus*.<sup>147</sup> The subtitle of this book is already revealing: “une nouvelle école d’exégèse et les autorités qu’elle invoque”. This indicates from the start that throughout the history of tension between exegetical intransigentism and renewal characterizing the Catholic Biblical Movement, the recourse to authority is crucial. Delattre’s attacks constituted a prefiguration of the positions that would be taken in Pius X’s *Pascendi* and *Lamentabili*,<sup>148</sup> and immediately illustrate a central difference between the aforementioned ressourcement position and that of Delattre. The issue at stake here is the nature of interpreting authority in early twentieth-century Catholicism. Delattre’s writings and positions were, in many instances, simply identifiable with the magisterium’s positions. In other words: one notices a quasi-identification of theology and Catholic magisterium, both doctrinally and stylistically.

The discussion waned under Benedict XV,<sup>149</sup> only to flare up again under his successor, Pius XI.<sup>150</sup> The absence of negotiations and a general climate of fear brought an uneasy calm to the situation,<sup>151</sup> but the continued ambivalence inherent to Catholic biblical scholarship was far from satisfactory. In exegetical circles, the pioneering work

Gerald P. FOGARTY, *American Catholic Biblical Scholarship. A History from the Early Republic to Vatican II*, San Francisco, 1989, p. 80-81, 88.

<sup>144</sup> See Delattre’s quite aggressive and anti-Protestant stance in his Alphonse J. DELATTRE, *Préludes d’une refutation de l’Harnackisme*, Brussels, 1908.

<sup>145</sup> Luc COURTOIS, Paulin Ladeuze (1870-1940). *Parcours d’un exégète progressiste de l’Université de Louvain au cours de la crise moderniste (1898-1909)*, in *Lettre d’information sur l’histoire des Universités* (1999).

<sup>146</sup> Marie-Joseph LAGRANGE, *La méthode historique, surtout à propos de l’Ancien Testament*, Paris, 1903.

<sup>147</sup> Alphonse J. DELATTRE, *Autour de la Question biblique*. For instance, on p. 210, one finds accusations towards Lagrange sounding: «Par malheur, l’écrivain conçoit l’Écriture comme un ensemble d’écrits remplis d’erreurs qu’il appelle matérielles, mais que les livres inspirés sont censés offrir sous la même rubrique que la vérité pure. L’idée qu’il donne de l’histoire biblique primordiale est digne seulement de l’Écriture interprétée selon la norme du bœuf volant”. Also see p. 344: “Je n’aurai pas eu le temps de faire observer que tout le fait des cent exégètes tant loués dans l’Encyclique *Providentissimus Deus*, est réprouvé, par le R.P. Lagrange en vertu d’un principe qu’il prétend tirer de cette même encyclique!”

<sup>148</sup> S. Congregatio Sacrae Romanae et Universalis Inquisitionis, *Decretum Lamentabili quo sub 65 propositionibus reprobantur et proscribuntur praecipui errores reformismi seu modernismi*, in ASS 40 (1907), 470-478.

<sup>149</sup> Étienne FOUILLOUX, *Une Église en quête*, p. 16-20, talks about a “détente”.

<sup>150</sup> The famous *Manuel Biblique*, which had know several reprints since 1878, was put on the Index in 1923. One year later, Pius XI’s *Motu proprio Bibliorum scientiam* forces all students in exegesis to obtain their license or doctoral degree with the Pontifical Biblical Commission or at the Biblicum, which explains why professors such as Cerfaux had spent a year of study there. EB, p. 510-515 (512, § 509).

<sup>151</sup> A crucial step in that direction is the abolishing of the *Sodalitium Pianum* in 1921. See Émile POULAT, *Intégrisme et catholicisme intégral. Un réseau secret international antimoderniste, la Sapinière 1909-1921* (Religion et sociétés), Tournai, 1969.

of Rudolf Bultmann and his *formgeschichtliche* method quickly spread. The idea that the image of Christ proclaimed by the New Testament did not completely coincide with the historical Jesus, but had its roots rather in the faith context of the early Christian communities. The context in which the said image was transmitted<sup>152</sup> led Bultmann to a number of radical conclusions in his later work. In his *Theologie des neuen Testaments* of 1948,<sup>153</sup> he emerged as the defender of a demythologisation of the language of the New Testament in an effort to understand the message of the biblical narratives at an existential level. Another discussion should be mentioned at this juncture: After the Modernist Crisis, the question of the (in)compatibility of traditional dogmatics and the historical-critical method reappeared on the agenda, albeit in a different form: the so-called *nouvelle théologie*.<sup>154</sup>

Since the first years of the twentieth century, the Dominicans of *Le Saulchoir* had developed a *via media*, which was only clearly committed to writing in 1937<sup>155</sup> by Marie-Dominique Chenu, but had been prepared by the writings of Gardeil.<sup>156</sup> A first and important constatation for our purposes is that Chenu proved to be deeply inspired by the work of Lagrange, to whom he constantly refers.<sup>157</sup> Although this paper will not discuss the *nouvelle théologie* at length, it should be pointed out that a strong “methodological tradition” was present within the French Dominican order, leading to a continuity in the search for a reconciliation of dogmatic thinking with historical criticism. In this fashion, Gardeil, (and later) Chenu and Congar became heirs of Lagrange’s search for renewal in Catholic theology, also in their upkeep of a clear distinction between theology and magisterial discourse. Moreover, the attempts by Gardeil, Chenu and Lagrange to develop a contemporary neo-Thomism highlight two issues: first, that 20<sup>th</sup>-century Thomism is not at all a monolith. And second, that the Biblical Movement and the *nouvelle théologie* movement are intersecting and, on many occasions, simultaneous efforts seeking Catholic renewal. This overlap and shared concern is well expressed in Roger Aubert’s 1954 *La théologie catholique au milieu du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle*:

<sup>152</sup> Rudolf BULTMANN, *Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition*, Göttingen, 1921.

<sup>153</sup> Rudolf BULTMANN, *Theologie des neuen Testaments*, Tübingen, 1948.

<sup>154</sup> Étienne FOUILLOUX, *Une église en quête*; and Tharcisius TSHIBANGU, *Théologie comme science*. Also see GIBELLINI, *La teologia del XX secolo*, p. 173-225.

<sup>155</sup> Much of Chenu’s terminology was owed to the founder of *Le Saulchoir*, and his book Ambroise GARDEIL, *Le donné révélé et la théologie*, Paris, 1910. See Étienne FOUILLOUX, *Le Saulchoir en procès (1937-1942)*, in Giuseppe ALBERIGO et al. (ed.), *Une école de théologie. Le Saulchoir* (Théologies), Paris, 1985, p. 37-59 (42-43).

<sup>156</sup> Marie-Dominique Chenu (1895-1990), French dominican friar. Professor of Church History and regent of *Le Saulchoir* from 1920 to 1942. Later also professor at the Sorbonne and the Institut Catholique de Paris. On Chenu, see Jean JOLIVET, M.D. Chenu. *Médiéviste et théologien*, in *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques*, 81 (1997), p. 381-94.

<sup>157</sup> For the sake of completeness we mention the influence of humanism inspired neo-thomists such as Jacques Maritain (1882-1971) and Étienne Gilson (1884-1978). See Jacques MARITAIN, *Humanisme intégral. Problèmes temporels et spirituels d’une nouvelle chrétienté*, Paris, 1936; and Étienne GILSON, *Christianisme et philosophie*, Paris, 1936. Cf. Étienne FOUILLOUX, *Le Saulchoir en procès*, p. 44-45. More background in Andrea RICCARDI, *Une école de théologie fra la Francia e Roma*, in *Cristianesimo nella Storia*, 5 (1984), p. 11-28 and Gerald A. McCool, *The Neo-Thomists*, Milwaukee WI, 1994.

Deux préoccupations majeures caractérisent la théologie actuelle: désir d'un contact plus étroit avec la Tradition et souci d'une meilleure adaptation au monde moderne. Nous examinerons successivement ces deux aspects. Le premier, ce désir d'un « ressourcement de la théologie au contact de la Source toujours jaillissante qu'est la Parole de Dieu, proclamée et commentée dans l'Église, se manifeste par un triple renouveau: biblique, liturgique et patristique. Quant à l'effort des théologiens pour apporter une réponse inédite et cependant conforme aux principes éternels, aux questions nouvelles posées par les courants d'idées contemporains, il se traduit par l'élaboration de nouveaux chapitres d'une science longtemps considérée comme immobile: théologie du laïcat, théologie des réalités terrestres, théologie de l'histoire.

After the intransigent reactions seen in the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with several condemnations, it is all the more painful to notice that the works of Chenu and others were also placed on the Index in 1942.<sup>158</sup> The double perspective of both simultaneous existence and tension developed from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century onward, up until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, into an enduring phenomenon as well as the strong alignment between hierarchical positions and those proposed by intransigent exegetes. This situation would alter under the reign of Pius XII, paving the way for the debates held at Vatican II.

### DIVINO AFFLANTE SPIRITU AND THE AMBIVALENT POSITION OF PIUS XII

At first, the 1942 condemnations seemed to reconfirm the presupposition that Pius XII<sup>159</sup> was in line with both the intransigent currents and with his predecessor, Pius X, when it came to exegetical matters, yet further developments reveal an altogether more complex picture. In 1943, Pacelli promulgated his encyclical on the Bible and biblical studies, *Divino afflante Spiritu*, which gave way to ample relief from the side of various 'open' Catholic exegetes: why such a tangible sense of relief?

The encyclical, *Divino afflante Spiritu*, which strongly bears the mark of the then rector of the Pontifical Institute, Augustin Bea,<sup>160</sup> opens with a confirmation of the stipulations of Vatican I and *Providentissimus Deus* concerning the infallibility of the Scriptures. As a matter of fact, Pius XII<sup>161</sup> devotes a large amount of attention to the issues surrounding the concept of *Deus auctor*: inspiration and infallibility. Yet it is precisely at this juncture that a number of new perspectives are revealed, and such perspectives had also become viable because of the fact that the generation of cardinals backing up the intransigent current in Rome had slowly vanished. This created space for change within the circles of Roman Catholic authorities and, as a consequence, change in the official doctrines: Where Leo XIII's doctrine of inspiration put all the

<sup>158</sup> Jesus Martín DE BUJANDA, *Index librorum prohibitorum 1600-1966*, Montréal, 2002. This was instigated by Pietro Parente (1891-1986) who had spread a note asking for a condemnation of these works. See Tharcisius TSHIBANGU, *La théologie comme science*, p. 80.

<sup>159</sup> Up until the present day, the best study on Pius XII remains that by Philippe CHENAU, *Pie XII. Diplomate et pasteur*, Paris, 2003, see p. 383-387.

<sup>160</sup> Stjepan SCHMIDT, *Augustin Bea. Der Kardinal der Einheit*, Graz – Vienna – Cologne, 1989, p. 117-122, demonstrates that the German jesuit's hand can be traced to a significant degree. On this, also see Philippe CHENAU, *Pie XII*, p. 385-386.

<sup>161</sup> Joseph G. PRIOR, *The Historical Critical Method in Catholic Exegesis*, Rome, 1999, p. 118-120.



weight on the role of the divine author, Pius XII shifts to a clear appreciation of the human author. In doing so, he introduced the notion of cooperation between the human and the divine, which was dear to the writings of Lagrange, and so lessens the instrumentalist vision of human authorship. The encyclical displays the realisation that instrumental causality cannot reach its final goal —the communication of God’s truth to humanity— without valorizing the mediation by a human author whose person and words are linked inseparably. The notion of human mediation as a constitutional factor in the conveying of God’s message is tantamount: for the first time in magisterial discourse, divine authorship becomes *dependent* upon human authorship and is shaped thereby. The implications for critical scientific study of the Scriptures and the valorisation of contingency and its role in theology are of major importance.

Other than Pius X, backing and aligning himself fully with the positions of Delattre, the notion of dual authorship renders the consciousness, intention and historical locatedness of the human authors relevant in establishing a clear theological understanding of the Scriptures.<sup>162</sup> A positive attitude with respect to the various exegetical tools emerges here, although the encyclical continues to insist on the importance of the *analogia fidei* and fidelity to the teaching authority of the Catholic Church.<sup>163</sup> I will return to this when addressing the period of Vatican II in order to stress the shift between *Divino afflante* and the 1964 Instruction *Sancta Mater Ecclesia*. For now, it is sufficient to point out that apparently, the encyclical by Pius XII largely paved the way for Vatican II and later PBC statements on Catholic exegesis and the role of the exegete. On the other hand, it would be historically unwarranted to conclude that Pius XII’s magisterial teaching is to be regarded as a fully-fledged prefiguration of Vatican II doctrine and discourse.<sup>164</sup>

Before we deal with the similarities and differences —or the continuities and discontinuities, to put it in a more fashionable terminology—, something more needs to be said on the Catholic Biblical Movement in the 1940’s. The insistence on fidelity and obedience to the Catholic hierarchy in conducting scientific exegetical research is linked first and foremost to the desire to salvage exegesis as a “theological” discipline. At this stage, any one-sided interpretation of exegesis as a purely philological question

<sup>162</sup> See EB, § 560: Quapropter catholicus exegeta, ut hodiernis rei biblicae necessitatibus rite satisfiat, in exponenda Scriptura Sacra, in eademque ab omni errore immuni ostendenda et comprobanda, eo quoque prudenter subsidio utatur, ut perquirat quid dicendi forma seu litterarum genus, ab hagiographo adhibitum, ad veram et genuinam conferat interpretationem; ac sibi persuadeat hanc officii sui partem sine magno catholicae exegeseos detrimento neglegi non posse. Non raro enim —ut hoc solummodo attingamus— cum Sacros Auctores ab historiae fide aberrasse, aut res minus accurate rettulisse obiurgando nonnulli iactant, nulla alia de re agi comperitur, nisi de suetis illis nativis antiquorum dicendi narrandique modis, qui in mutuo hominum inter se commercio passim adhiberi solebant, ac reapse licito communique more adhibebantur. Iusta igitur mentis aequitas postulat, ut haec, cum in divino eloquio, quod pro hominibus verbis humanis exprimitur, inveniantur, non magis erroris arguantur, quam cum eadem in cotidiano vitae usu habeantur.

<sup>163</sup> EB, § 551.

<sup>164</sup> This happens in the book by Alexandra VON TEUFFENBACH, *Pio XII tra storia, politica e fede*, Rome, 2008; and elements of such an approach can also be found in a recent volume edited by Philippe Chenaux. On this attitude see Karim SCHELKENS, *Pie XII. Précurseur du Concile Vatican II*, in *Laval théologique et philosophique*, 66 (2010), p. 177-182.

remains out of the question. In this sense too, the encyclical can be said to be an ill-disguised canonisation of Lagrange's search for a balance between historical-critical exegesis and theology.<sup>165</sup> At this juncture, one notices a first shift of balance over and against the Catholic Biblical Movement in the modernist era. Although a diversity of intransigent and renewing attitudes co-existed both then and under Pius XII, an element of change is occurring. To a decreasing extent, the intransigent side of the exegetical landscape is identifiable with the positions of both the Pontifical Biblical Commission and with the official teachings of the Holy See. The full identification recognized under Pius X no longer exists, and a gradual but ongoing process of mutual detachment between all key players (PBC, Papal magisterium, intransigent theology, and *ressourcement* attempts) is set in motion. The result is an increasingly complex situation on all sides and in particular, a growing sense of loss of self-secured actions for the intransigent theologians now forced to respond to their situation. Elements and insights of methodological and theological renewal have slipped into official magisterial teaching, even when the latter does not necessarily distance itself from intransigent theological movements. On the part of the Catholic hierarchy, and ambivalence is felt, and the results of *Divino afflante* can be summarised as follows: exegetes are again permitted to engage in the public confrontation of the historical-critical method *and* dogma, as long as they remain loyal to the faith of the Church. They are warned in this regard that the scholarly and the 'religious' readings of the Scriptures are not mutually exclusive; rather they support and enrich one another. In the years to come, 'open' Catholic exegetes felt officially warranted to employ their scholarly-historiographical *instrumentarium*. The study of language and context were granted a prominent role, and became a part of Catholic theology a good two decades before *Dei Verbum* was officially promulgated. With *Divino afflante*, the Church recognised the methodological primacy of the *sensus literalis*, the "literal sense", as being understood at this juncture in the historical sense, which can be retrieved by the study of language and context. Method is given priority, and exegetes are invited to employ genre criticism as a legitimate tool.<sup>166</sup> Furthermore, exegetes who apply this method have no reason to object to the Catholic *doctrina infallibilitatis*. This is based on the conviction that a lack of historical knowledge introduces doubt over the truth content of certain passages of Scripture. Still, one should avoid the pitfall of a simple identification of Lagrange's methodology with the positions proposed by Pius XII. The encyclical is not altogether unambiguous when defining the mutual relationship between the Catholic theologians and exegetes and the magisterium, and remains within a classical ecclesiological standpoint. Again, and this was already the case during modernism, the relationship with authority is at the heart of the debate.

<sup>165</sup> More info in ENRICO GALBIATI, *I generi letterari secondo il P. Lagrange e la Divino afflante Spiritu*, in *La Scuola Cattolica*, 75 (1947), p. 177-186, see p. 282-292.

<sup>166</sup> JEAN-LOUIS JADOULE, *Les intellectuels catholiques. De la libération au concile Vatican II*, in JEAN PIROTTE and GUY ZÉLIS (ed.), *Pour une histoire du monde catholique catholique au 20<sup>e</sup> siècle. Wallonie – Bruxelles. Guide du chercheur*, Louvain-la-Neuve, 2003, p. 467-486, see p. 470.

In 1950, when *Humani generis*<sup>167</sup> was promulgated, it is hardly surprising that some exegetes felt relieved. Others then felt themselves under attack and read this encyclical through the lense of their own interpretation of *Divino afflante Spiritu*. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, contrasting interpretations of *Divino afflante* were increasingly being spread and gave rise to a polemic between the Pontifical Biblical Institute and the Lateran University, bringing back memories of the Modernist Crisis. Lateran theologians interpreted both aforementioned encyclicals through the lense of Trent, Vatican I, *Providentissimus*, and also *Pascendi Gregis* and *Lamentabili*, claiming a full and simple continuity between all of the aforementioned and attempting to prove the identification between these documents and their own opinions. This way, they clung to the anti-modernist identification of theology and magisterial discourse. But what is more important for this paper is that this controversy illustrates how the contrast between ‘intransigent’ and ‘open’ receptions of the very same magisterial teaching will be of an endemic nature throughout the history of the Catholic Biblical Movement, lasting throughout Vatican II and continuing into the postconciliar era. The issue is: How do we analyse this contrast historically and theologically? For my present purposes, there is no need to trace the neo-modernist controversy in its entirety.<sup>168</sup> Rather this paper will focus on a 1960 article by Luis Alonso-Schökel<sup>169</sup>

<sup>167</sup> PIUS XII, *Litt. Enc. Humani generis de nonnullis falsis opinionibus quae catholicae doctrinae fundamenta subruere minantur*, in AAS, 42 (1950), p. 568-570; 575-578. The encyclical consists of two main parts. The first part of the encyclical the pope appeals to theologians to return to the sources of divine revelation, i.e. the Scriptures and the Tradition. In so doing, Pius XII condemns two ‘false opinions’, namely the argument that the infallible divine significance of the Scriptures is completely masked by their (fallible) human significance, and the idea of symbolic exegesis. The second part of *Humani generis* declares that theologians should account for the sciences —proven facts rather than hypotheses— in so far as they are not in conflict with Catholic doctrine. Reflection on the evolution of the human body was permitted, for example, while the theory of polygenism [with Teilhard de Chardin in the background] was forbidden. In addition, it was permissible to integrate the historical sciences into the study of the bible. *Humani generis* recognises, for example, that the Old Testament contains narrative structures that were subject to cultural influence. In spite of this, they remain the result of divine inspiration and are immune as such to error. It is not permitted to compare such narratives with myths, since the latter are more a product of an inflated imagination than a search for the truth.

<sup>168</sup> More detailed information can be found in the existing literature on the debate: Joseph A. FITZMYER, *A Recent Roman Scriptural Controversy*, in *Theological Studies*, 22 (1961), p. 426-444; Joseph A. KOMONCHAK, *The Struggle for the Council During the Preparation of Vatican II (1960-1962)*, KOMONCHAK and Giuseppe ALBERIGO (ed.), *History of Vatican II*. Vol. 1: *Announcing and Preparing Vatican Council II. Toward a New Era in Catholicism*, Maryknoll – Leuven, 1995, p. 167-356, esp. p. 278-283; Riccardo BURIGANA, *Tradizioni inconciliabili? La ‘Querelle’ tra l’università lateranense e l’istituto biblico nella preparazione del Vaticano II*, in Philippe CHENAUX (ed.), *La PUL e la preparazione del Concilio (Studi e documenti sul Concilio Vaticano II, 1)*, Rome, 2001; Brian W. HARRISON, *The Teaching of Paul VI on Sacred Scripture. With Special Reference to the Historicity of the Gospels*, Rome, 1997, esp. p. 59-72; HARRISON, *On Rewriting the Bible. Catholic Biblical Studies in the 60’s*, in *Christian Order*, 43 (2002), p. 155-178 and HARRISON, *The Encyclical Spiritus Paraclitus in Its Historical Context*, in *Living Tradition*, 60 (1995); Mauro PESCE, *Il rinnovamento biblico*, in Maurilio GUASCO et al. (ed.), *Storia della chiesa*, Vol. XXV/2: *La Chiesa del Vaticano II (1958-1978)*, Milan, 1994, p. 167-216; Gerald P. FOGARTY, *American Catholic Biblical Scholarship. A History from the Early Republic to Vatican II*, New York NY, 1989, p. 291-296. See p. 323; François LAPLANCHE, *La crise de l’origine. La science catholique des Évangiles et l’histoire au XX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris, 2006, p. 459-469; Karim SCHELKENS, *Perceiving Orthodoxy. A Comparative Analysis on the Roman Controversy in Catholic Exegesis (1960-1961)*, in Lieven BOEVE, Mathijs LAMBERIGTS, Terrence MERRIGAN (eds.), *Theology and the Quest for Truth. Historical- and Systematic-theological*

from the Pontifical Biblical Institute called *Dove va l'esegesi cattolica*, and which can be read over and against the general background of the Biblicum's preconiliar votum.<sup>170</sup> Note that the title paraphrases Garrigou-Lagrange's much debated text aimed against the *nouvelle théologie*.<sup>171</sup> In his article, the interpretation of *Divino afflante* is crucial. Moreover, throughout his text, the author plays with the positions of Lagrange and Delattre in their methodological quarrel from half a century before. The author discusses exegetical developments prior to and after 1943, and distinguishes between a "strict" school existing side by side and a more "open-minded" group of exegetes<sup>172</sup> in the entire period. Alluding once again to the Modernist Crisis, he admits that, in some instances, individuals from the latter group had erred but also underlines that others had gradually acquired 'canonical' status. This is not surprising, but what is more interesting is that, methodologically speaking, he does what Lagrange and Loisy were unable to do in their day: he defends an identification of recent magisterial discourse with the positions of the "open school" of exegesis.<sup>173</sup>

*Divino afflante Spiritu*, he claims, entrusted considerable freedom to those who applied themselves to serious critical Bible study. And even *Humani generis* did not react to exegetical errors but rather to theological errors, which were more related to the general standpoint on inspiration and hermeneutics than to the exegetical interpretation of individual texts. Alonso Schökel agrees with Pius XII in that the freedom granted to engage in scientific exegetical research was a freedom '*con limiti e cautele*':<sup>174</sup> while the historical-critical method was permitted, it was not to be treated lightly. Judgements concerning the historicity of a particular biblical passage without sufficient supporting evidence could be very dangerous, especially when they challenged facts that were important for salvation history. The real reason for the crisis in Catholic biblical research was not the use of critical methodologies, but rather their abuse. Immediately, this discourse was severely attacked by Antonino Romeo and Francesco Spadafora in a style that very much resembles Delattre's early

*Studies*, Leuven, 2007, p. 143-164; and Karim SCHELKENS, Anthony DUPONT, *Katholische Exegese vor dem Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzil (1960-1961)*, in *ZKT*, 132 (2010), p. 1-24.

<sup>169</sup> Luis ALONSO SCHÖKEL, *Dove va l'esegesi cattolica?*, in *La Civiltà Cattolica*, 111 (1960), p. 449-460. Close to a year later, J.A. Fitzmyer evaluated the article as follows: "It has the merit of putting the question of modern biblical studies in a perspective which is badly needed. The only way to explain how the "new direction" —the existence of which cannot be denied— has developed is to sketch the matrix in which it had its origin". See Joseph A. FITZMYER, *A Recent Roman Scriptural Controversy*, p. 431.

<sup>170</sup> AD, I/4, p. 121-136. See also Étienne FOUILLOUX, *The Antepreparatory Phase. The Slow Emergence From Inertia (January, 1959 - October, 1962)*, in Giuseppe ALBERIGO and Joseph A. KOMONCHAK (ed.), *History of Vatican II*, Vol. 1., p. 55-166, see esp. p. 137: "[...] the response of the Biblical Institute, which stands out clearly from the entire body of vota. Although they were suspected of serious errors, the exegetes of the Society of Jesus had the courage forcefully to recall three pressing needs: freedom for biblical scholarship, the reform of disciplinary procedures and, above all, a radical change in the way Catholics spoke of Judaism".

<sup>171</sup> Réginald GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE, *La nouvelle théologie, où va-t-elle?* in *Angelicum*, 23 (1946), p. 126-147.

<sup>172</sup> ALONSO SCHÖKEL, *Dove va*, p. 454: "una scuola stretta versus una scuola larga".

<sup>173</sup> ALONSO SCHÖKEL, *Dove va*, p. 455.

<sup>174</sup> ALONSO SCHÖKEL, *Dove va*, p. 457.

twentieth-century writings.<sup>175</sup> The attacks from these Lateran University professors, moreover, were simultaneous with the activities of the preconiliar commissions — one of them drafting the schema *De Fontibus Revelationis*. And, here too, the Lateran's reaction becomes tangible over and against the background of the massive votum and its faculties of theology, philosophy, and canon law.<sup>176</sup> The reason I mention them is that both the preconiliar vota and the public polemic of the early 1960s make clear that both intransigent and renewing currents were both very much present within Roman Catholicism, as they were in 1904, and in 1943.

As becomes clear from the reactions of Antonino Romeo and Francesco Spadafora, anti-modernist discourse is far from vanished, although it had been forced to reposition itself. These authors stress that the suggestion of *Divino afflante* representing a canonisation or crystallisation of the 'open-minded' school is sheer "nonsense". Neither science nor the truth can be divided into 'strict' and 'open-minded', and the light of the truth is self-imposing, apart from individual preferences, and clearly demonstrated in magisterial discourse.<sup>177</sup> Next, and quite significant, several *Biblicum* professors are openly charged with accusations of "modernism". The principle of immutability of method, truth and doctrine, and thus of the supra-historical character of Scripture, is once more repeated. The suggestion of an '*era nuova*' was thus inaccurate and irrelevant.<sup>178</sup>

From the Modernist Crisis onward, and up until the eve of Vatican II, there is an enduring presence of renewing and intransigent currents within the Catholic Biblical Movement. Moreover, up until the Council they remain in an endemic state of opposition. But, after *Divino afflante* and due to the encyclical's ambivalence, both factions consequently warranted their legitimacy by claiming their consistency with Pius XII's teachings. This situation lingered throughout the decade preceding Vatican II, with instances of the Biblical Commission blowing hot and cold<sup>179</sup> right up to

<sup>175</sup> Some thirty years later, Spadafora provided a concise formulation of his problems with S. Lyonnet and M. Zerwick in Francesco SPADAFORA, *La Tradizione contro il Concilio*, Rome, 1989, p. 49: "[...] i due Padri, ascoltati dal S. Ufficio, non poterono negare gli addebiti loro attribuiti: insegnamento erroneo (e articoli) sulla ispirazione, sulla inerranza dei Libri Santi, sulla storicità degli Evangelii".

<sup>176</sup> The votum is found in AD, I/4, p. 169-442. See also FOUILLOUX, *The Antepreparatory Phase*, p. 137-138: "The vota of the Lateran professors are impressive both for their volume and for the impression they give of already being conciliar drafts. [...] What these men had in mind seemed, to say the least, far removed from the *aggiornamento* of which John XXIII was speaking. [...] they in effect sketched a plan as it were to bring four centuries of intransigent Catholicism to a climax, in regard both to the claims of the Roman Church and to protection against the countless dangers, domestic and foreign, that were threatening it". On the importance of the vota, see Alberto MELLONI, *Per un approccio storico-critico ai consilia et vota della fase antepreparatoria del Vaticano II*, in *Rivista di Storia e Letteratura Religiosa*, 26 (1990), p. 556-576. A study on the vota of the roman universities was published by see Andrea RICCARDI, *I 'vota' romani*, in Mathijs LAMBERIGTS, Claude SOETENS (eds.), *À la veille du Concile Vota et réactions en Europe et dans le catholicisme oriental*, Leuven, 1992, p. 146-168.

<sup>177</sup> ROMEO, *L' Enciclica*, p. 406-407.

<sup>178</sup> ROMEO, *L' Enciclica*, p. 409-410.

<sup>179</sup> See for instance the ambivalences on the role of the catholic exegete, still present in the Pontifical Biblical Commission's May 13, 1950 Instruction *Sanctissimus Dominus* (EB § 582-610) a text published only weeks before the apparition of *Humani Generis*. On this document, also see François LAPLANCHE, *La crise*, p. 342-343.

this pope's final words on biblical matters, expressed in a message delivered to the *Congrès International Catholique des Sciences Bibliques*<sup>180</sup> on the occasion of the World Exhibition in Brussels in 1958. This leaves a mark on the situation of Catholic exegesis entering the conciliar realm. The appeal to authority is most interesting, for the shift in papal discourse itself appears to have necessitated a redefining of the relationships between the currents in Catholic biblical scholarship. This becomes tangible from studying papal writings and the Biblical Commission itself. The detachment from explicit alignment with intransigent theologians creates an environment in which the Lateran University position cannot be seen as an official "Roman reaction". From three different "official" sides, a distance is taken from intransigent attacks that under Pius X would have been fully backed by the Catholic magisterium: the preparatory Theological Commission's Subcommittee on the Sources of Revelation; the Supreme Pontiff (i.c. John XXIII); and the Pontifical Biblical Commission:

First, the preparatory subcommittee *On the sources of revelation*. Even when not quite identifying themselves with Alonso-Schökel's "open school", almost all members of this preconconciliar commission openly and clearly distance themselves from the positions defended by the Lateran University and backed by cardinals such as Pizzardo and Ruffini. The subcommittee *De fontibus* attempts very clearly to steer away from these positions.

Second, Pope John XXIII reacts by personally contacting Ernst Vogt, the *Biblicum*'s rector, as well as the editorial office of *la Civiltà Cattolica*.<sup>181</sup> The pope offers his sympathy to the positions of the *Biblicum*, and clearly deprecates the intransigent attacks being carried out. Nevertheless, he does not rehabilitate the two *Biblicum* professors cast aside by the Holy Office —this will be done by Paul VI. Still, somewhat later, John XXIII appoints Vogt as a member of the subcommittee on the sources of revelation as a clear sign of his intentions.

On a third level, the group of consultants to the Pontifical Biblical Commission gather with its secretary, Athanasius Miller, to discuss the whole affair. They too take a clear stance over and against the Lateran University, siding itself clearly with the *Biblicum*, whose rector had already clearly disavowed the Lateran attacks<sup>182</sup> in several publications.

<sup>180</sup> *Allocution de Son Éminence le Cardinal Van Roey et Message de Sa Sainteté le Pape Pie XII*, in Joseph COPPENS, Albert DESCAMPS, Édouard MASSAUX, *Sacra Pagina Miscellanea biblica Congressus internationalis catholici de re biblica*, 2 Vols., Paris – Gembloux, 1959, Vol. 1., p. 14-16, see p. 16: "Depuis le début de Notre Pontificat, en effet, Nous avons eu à coeur de favoriser le développement des études scripturaires, et voici bientôt quinze ans, Nous aimions, par Notre Encyclique 'Divino afflante Spiritu', stimuler de plus en plus dans leurs travaux tous les fils qui s'adonnent à ces études ...".

<sup>181</sup> See Alexandra VON TEUFFENBACH, *Konzilstagebuch Sebastian Tromp s.j. Mit Erläuterungen und Akten aus der Arbeit der theologischen Kommission*. Bd. 1/1-2: (1960-1962), Rome, Editrice Gregoriana, 2006: "Die 6 Februarii 1961: feria II. Mane sueta consulta in S. Off. Post consultam hora 11½ audio Papam telephonice communicasse cum Rectore 'Civiltà Cattolica' et per eum cum rectore Instituti Biblici, Pontificem legisse articulum Prof. Romeo in 'Divinitas' et 'pur non entrando nel merito della causa, avere letto cum dispiacere e disgusto l'articolo'".

<sup>182</sup> Komonchak quotes a *pro-memoria* in which Ernst Vogt laments the attack on the PIB and complains the Romeo's article had been allowed to circulate freely for seven months. When the *Biblicum*'s reaction was finally published, however, further distribution of Romeo's article and that of the PIB was immediately forbidden. KOMONCHAK, *The Struggle*, p. 279, n.419.



### MOMENTS OF CONCILIAR TENSION

All of the above goes to demonstrate that, if Catholic intransigentism is far from vanished on the eve of the Council, it had nevertheless made its own shift. The intransigent forces had lost their immediate and uncritical identification with the Church's central authorities. This "regroupement des forces"<sup>183</sup> had its implications. In some contrast to the era of Pius XII, under the rule of John XXIII, the official instances openly choose sides, and a second shift of balance takes place. This time, a striking tendency of magisterial instances—both the Pontifical Biblical Commission and the Pope himself—siding with theological currents of renewal is noticeable, creating an alliance that will allow for more evolution in the field of Catholic Biblical Scholarship. On top of the fact that much of the openness displayed was well prepared for in milieus of Catholic scholarship in the years preceding Vatican II, the general atmosphere created at the opening of Vatican II proved crucial, certainly for the debate on biblical scholarship. In his diary, Yves Congar wrote on November 5, 1962:

Le climat général fait beaucoup. Aujourd'hui, c'est le climat du concile: climat pastoral, climat de liberté, climat de dialogue, climat d'ouverture. Alors, c'était le climat du St Office et des chaires de collèges romains. On était neutralisé par un code tacite mais puissant, par une pression sociale très forte et contre laquelle on ne réagissait pas jusqu'au point où il eût fallu tout mettre en question.<sup>184</sup>

Against such a climate, the debate was refashioned yet once again. Next, this paper will highlight a few key elements and moments of the conciliar debate in order to link the evolution of the Catholic Biblical Movement with the conciliar event. Firstly, we will address the *Schema de fontibus Revelationis* and utter some thoughts on the debate in the Council's first period. Then, we shall look briefly at the Biblical Commission's 1964 Instruction, *Sancta Mater Ecclesia*, which is devoted to the role of Catholic exegetes. This will constitute an important intermediary step toward the final promulgation of the conciliar constitution on divine revelation, *Dei Verbum*.

With regard to the role of the Catholic exegete, his relationship to the magisterium, and the acceptance of historical-critical method in Catholic theology, the conciliar period is an extremely important and extremely relevant period. Nevertheless, against the afore-sketched background, the schema *De fontibus revelationis*, and in particular its fifth chapter, hardly offers new or surprising elements. Drafted in a very late stage of the development of the schema, the chapter had been written very quickly, and harkens back largely to elements found in *Providentissimus Deus* and *Divino afflante*. Even when the document would become highly controversial with regard to its standpoints on the relationship between Scripture and tradition, its final chapter was given little attention by most council interventions during the November 1962 debates on the schema.

Nevertheless, I wish to address its content briefly. The chapter on the "Use of Sacred Scripture" raises the question of the role of the exegete, especially in the wake of the preceding two chapters on the Old and the New Testament. The schema first

<sup>183</sup> LAPLANCHE, *La crise*, p. 460-464.

<sup>184</sup> YVES CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, Vol. I, présenté et annoté par ÉRIC MAHIEU, Paris, 2002, p. 182.

underlines the importance of the search for the *sensus literalis* (a formal recognition without further determination), but also points to the importance of the theological meaning of the text. Often, it sticks closely to the wording of Pius XII's so differently received encyclical, *Divino afflante*. Exegetes are called upon to respect the Church's tradition of interpretation, and the chapter insists on keeping the theological and literal meaning of the Scriptures together. It represents an appeal to exegetes not to limit themselves to philological criticism, but to engage in theology. On the latter domain however, the Catholic exegete is expected to develop a viewpoint that endeavours to expose the internal cohesion of Catholic doctrine from the beginning to the present day. With all of this, it is striking here that little reference is made in this chapter to the magisterium, and where reference is made, it is not clear how magisterium is to be distinguished from the Tradition, as it also remains unclear how the relationship between the magisterium and the Catholic exegete is to be understood. In sum: the schema gives priority to the idea that exegetes should be theologians, and that their findings should not run counter the magisterial discourse in matters of faith and morals. This, as a result, is ultimately vague, to say the least.

In the conciliar discussion of the schema on the sources of revelation, the main focus was not on exegetical methodology, but rather on the question of the 'sources of revelation', the material sufficiency of Scripture, etc. When looking at the November 1962 debate on the schema, which was very important for the Council, one can notice that chapter five is hardly ever an object of discussion because the Council is led into an impasse between two blocks<sup>185</sup> over the interpretation of revelation as such, and over the question of the two sources. Strikingly, the opposite was true during the meetings of the preconciliar Coordinating Commission. Since the topic of Tradition raised at Vatican II will be addressed by François Nault, this paper will leave it aside and focus on the activities of the newly appointed mixed commission on revelation at its final December 1962 gatherings.<sup>186</sup> Of course, the fact that John XXIII forced the Theological Commission into collaboration with the Secretariat for Unity<sup>187</sup> was, in itself, an important factor at play and again, as with his reaction to the neo-modernist crisis, a public sign of alignment with currents of renewal. Also, many commission members soon realized that in matters of exegesis, the protestant world—present in Rome with the non-Catholic observers invited by the aforementioned Secretariat—provided something of an example.

This provides us with an interesting momentum. On December 7, 1962, the mixed commission's members are faced with the fact that after the painful debates the battle for an acceptance of historical-critical exegesis and for exegetical freedom is not yet

<sup>185</sup> In this sense, it is interesting to read Schillebeeckx' analysis of the relationship between what he calls the 'conservative minority' and the progressive majority bloc. See Karim SCHELKENS, *The Council Notes of Edward Schillebeeckx, 1962-1963*, Leuven, 2011, p. 24-25.

<sup>186</sup> For more background see the pioneer work done by Riccardo BURIGANA, *La Commissione De Divina Revelatione*, in Mathijs LAMBERIGTS, Claude SOETENS, Jan GROOTAERS (eds.), *Les Commissions conciliaires à Vatican II*, Leuven, 1996, p. 27-61.

<sup>187</sup> AS I/3, p. 184-187. On the background of the papal decision, see Karim SCHELKENS, *Cardinal Paul-Émile Léger and the Establishment of the Mixed Commission on Revelation*, in Catherine CLIFFORD, Michael J. ATTRIDGE, Gilles ROUTHIER (eds.) *Vatican II. The Canadian Experience*, Ottawa, 2011.

won. A letter, signed by 19 cardinals and addressed to the pope is distributed:<sup>188</sup> this anonymous document attacks several northern European exegetes and explicitly puts itself in the tradition of Delattre, Romeo and Spadafora, *cum sociis*. With it, several bishops are attacked, as well as the open standpoint adopted by the consultors of the biblical commission. Charges of inconsistency and heresy fly. The document claims to react against “modernism”! The letter was drafted by Ernesto Ruffini, who himself was a member of the Biblical Commission, a fact that makes clear that the split of opinions was present even within the confines of this Papal commission. The discussion as a result of this was very sharp and vivid, and would remain present until 1965. In sum: the tensions between both currents are endemic, even when the players have been replaced by new ones.

One other moment cannot remain unmentioned either, because it is a crucial step towards both *Dei Verbum* and even the 1993 document *On the Use of Scriptures in the Church*. In March 1963, soon after the 1962 quarrel on Ruffini’s letter, a Belgian Franciscan, Béda Rigaux, and his Benedictine compatriot, Jacques Dupont, had—in contact with Bishop Charue—proposed a solution to the enduring tensions between exegetical thought currents:<sup>189</sup> They had suggested that the Biblical Commission publish a clear position as to the issues of historicity, historical-critical methodology and the relationship between the Catholic exegete and the magisterium. After the death of John XXIII, the project was put on hold for a period, but in february 1964, it was again picked up. Finally, on April 21, 1964, *Sancta Mater Ecclesia*, on the historical truth of the Gospels, was signed by Paul VI, and the text clearly had the mark of a series of new exegetes that had been appointed consultors to the Commission only recently: Béda Rigaux, Xavier Léon-Dufour, Rudolf Schnackenburg.<sup>190</sup> This time, the interpretation given to Pius XII’s recommendations was officially pushed into the direction of a broad and open acceptance of historical methodology in exegesis. The Commission insisted that unless the exegete pays attention to the origin and composition of the gospels and makes proper use of all the results of recent research, he will remain unable to comprehend what the sacred writers intended and really said. The Instruction’s clause on “what they really said” is of interest to us. For a start, it is a clear paraphrase of the von Rankian insistence on the need to recover the past “wie es eigentlich gewesen”. This can already illustrate the acceptance of the method, but *Sancta Mater Ecclesia* is even more important and revealing with regard to the role of the exegete and the way he relates to the magisterium—an issue of particular interest for my paper. There is a brief comparison between a passage of *Divino afflante Spiritu* and the *Instructio*, which almost literally cites Pius XII but makes one crucial addition to it that also has ecclesiological bearings.<sup>191</sup> First, Pius XII’s encyclical:

<sup>188</sup> FRANCESCO M. STABILE, *Il cardinale Ruffini e il concilio Vaticano II. Le lettere di un intransigente*, in *Cristianesimo nella Storia*, 11 (1990), p. 83-176, see p. 124-126.

<sup>189</sup> Cf. BURIGANA, *La Bibbia nel Concilio*, p. 276-281.

<sup>190</sup> LAPLANCHE, *La crise de l’origine*, p. 476-478. On the evolution of the Pontifical Biblical Commission see the article by Albert VANHOYE, *Passé et présent de la Commission biblique*, in *Gregorianum*, 74 (1993), p. 261-275.

<sup>191</sup> It should be noted here, that this insertion has been pointed to by others, such as Joseph A. FITZMYER, in his book *The Interpretation of Scripture*. In *Defense of the Historical Critical Method*, New York NY,

Multa igitur remanent, eaque gravissima, in quibus edisserendis et explanandis catholicorum interpretum acumen et ingenium libere exerci potest ac debet, u ad omnium utilitatem, ad maiorem in dies doctrinae sacrae profectum, et ad Ecclesiae defensionem et honorem ex suo quisque viritim conferat.<sup>192</sup>

Against the background of our survey of the reception of the 1943 encyclical, a careful rereading of the last clause in the context of the 1964 document is strikingly relevant. There, we read an almost exact rendering of the 1943 passage, though with a significant insertion:

Multa supersunt eaque gravissima in quibus edisserendis et explanandis exegeta catholicus acumen et ingenium libere exercere potest et debet, ut ad omnium utilitatem, ad maiorem in dies doctrinae sacrae profectum, *ad iudicium magisterii Ecclesiae praeparandum et ulterius fulciendum*, ad Ecclesiae defensionem et honorem ex suo quisque viritim conferat.

The role of the Catholic exegete has become larger still; it has even become constitutive for magisterial teaching which it has to prepare. This inclusion has several effects: First it revises the relationship between the magisterium and Catholic exegetes by a) distinguishing between the two, and b) by offering a space in which magisterial discourse is prepared by theological research. Second, and as a consequence: Magisterial discourse is henceforth bound to the results of critical historical study of the Christian origins, *in casu* the Scriptures, and vice versa. The exegetes are bound to defend the authoritative positions, provided, however, that these positions are well founded and backed by critical study carried out precisely by these Catholic exegetes.

With papal support, the Biblical Commission has now sided fully with an approach once condemned by Pius X. To return to the Council: the 1964 Instruction would find its way into the final teachings of *Dei Verbum's* chapter three, where the distinction between exegetes and the magisterium is maintained and again framed in a dialectical relationship. The Catholic biblical scholars, with respect for the ecclesiastical principles of exegesis, are due to prepare the Church's judgment.<sup>193</sup> At the same time, this gradual shift within the Catholic Biblical Movement from 1893 to 1965 by no means implied the existence of intransigent currents of thought. We should point to the fact that in the period between 1964 and 1965, the *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* organized large attacks on various points of the draft *De divina revelatione*. For instance, Luigi Carli circulated a series of *observations*, attacking once more the positions of the Biblicum, and contestating the contents of the schema *De divina Revelatione*, which had been reworked under Cardinal Bea's supervision.<sup>194</sup> In his remarks, he stressed the supreme authority of Catholic magisterial teaching over and against any recent exegetical insight, and points to the ambiguity raised by historical studies, raising critical thoughts on the aforementioned 1964 Instruction,

2008, p. 45.

<sup>192</sup> See *EB*, § 565.

<sup>193</sup> Cf. the discussion of the place of the historical critical method in catholic exegesis according to *Dei Verbum* and *Sancta Mater Ecclesia* in the book by PRIOR, *The Historical Critical Method*, p. 156-159.

<sup>194</sup> A more elaborate discussion of this attack is found in BURIGANA, *La Bibbia nel Concilio*, p. 367-372.

and warning about suspicious influences in Catholic biblical scholarship.<sup>195</sup> In July 1964, the *Coetus* directed a letter to the pope, asking for his intervention and pleading in favour of a return to a strong identification of Tradition, magisterium and Catholic theology. Both the letter and the conciliar interventions by protagonists such as Carli and Siri stressed the importance of maintaining the absolute inerrancy of Scripture, thereby claiming the Scriptures as being a supra-historical entity which remains above historical criticism. Up until the very eve of *Dei Verbum*'s promulgation, intransigent and *ressourcement* theologies were existant, active, and in a constant situation of opposition. This brings me to some conclusions.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

If anything, I have tried to study the following basic problem in contemporary Vatican II scholarship: when overlooking the 20<sup>th</sup>-century Catholic biblical movement, both currents of *ressourcement* theology and of intransigent approaches are present within Catholicism for the larger part of the century. In fact, both are represented during several subsequent phases ranging from 1) the Modernist Crisis, 2) the preconiliar period, including the interbellum and the post World War Two era, and 3) the era of conciliar preparations, up until 4) the Council itself. In all four phases of the Catholic biblical movement, both milieu's of Catholic renewal and of intransigentism take part in the events and evolutions of the movement and find themselves in a situation of endemic tension.

This raises interesting methodological and hermeneutical questions in a broader perspective: distinguishing the aforementioned subsequent phases, a church historian feels obliged to enter into debate on the adequacy of the theory of paradigm shifts. When dealing with the hermeneutics of Vatican II, or as O'Malley puts it, when trying to comprehend "What Happened at Vatican II",<sup>196</sup> one notices that Kuhn's approach is often used, either explicitly or implicitly. In 1962, just around the opening of the Council, Thomas Kuhn published his work entitled "The structure of scientific revolutions".<sup>197</sup> Ever since, his concept of paradigm shifts has often been applied in order to reach an increased comprehension of Vatican II's significance. Set apart the fact that Vatican II cannot simply be approached as a scientific revolution, and one wonders if this use is warranted, historically speaking. Does not the very notion of a paradigm shift force its applicants into a tunnel vision? The *logic* of 'paradigm shifts' appears to oblige the acceptance of a *chrono-logical* sequence of events. In other words: the idea of distinct and subsequent phases (an early paradigm, a period of transition, and a new paradigm of thought) becomes unavoidable. The necessary introduction of the chronological factor enters one into the realm of the church historian. Looking at all of the above, reconsidering the general conference theme at the end of this survey, and mindful of our emphasis on the "simultaneity" of opposing models of thought, one is inclined to conclude that Kuhn's theory is inadequate —an inclination that is felt even more when taking into account the way in which intransigent theological

<sup>195</sup> AS IV/2, p. 956-963: *Observationes Carli*.

<sup>196</sup> John O'MALLEY, *What Happened at Vatican II*, Cambridge and London, 2008.

<sup>197</sup> Thomas KUHN, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Chicago ILL, 1962.

currents remain present within postconciliar Catholicism. One is challenged to reconsider the 'classic' argument that the event of the Second Vatican Council constituted a moment of transition toward a new paradigm. If at all, at this juncture, the notion of paradigms is applicable, it would seem that for the entire period two distinct yet interwoven and interacting paradigms are present simultaneously and remain present.

Where the theory of paradigm shifts would naturally lead to an insistence on discontinuity, the situation appears much more complex than that. A process of careful discernment might lead one to affirm the existence of a plurality of both continuities and discontinuities, and to set aside the fruitless hermeneutical discussions on discontinuity or continuity. Much could be gained, it seems, from the development of a "hermeneutics of shifting balances", a framework in which a historically warranted attention to the simultaneous existence and interference of several currents of thought is possible. Or, theologically put, one might argue in favour of a legitimate diversity within the Church, both horizontally (synchronic) and vertically (diachronic).

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# THE PRE-CONCILIAR LITURGICAL MOVEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AND THE LITURGICAL REFORM OF VATICAN II

Historians of American Catholicism are unanimous in seeing the continuity between the issues and the goals of the pre-Vatican II liturgical movement in the United States on one side, and the outcomes of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* and the liturgical reform of Vatican II on the other side. Nevertheless, we need a close analysis of the correspondence between the goals of the American liturgical movement, in the preparatory phases of Vatican II, and the concrete reception of the issues of the American liturgical movement during the liturgical reform.

This is especially important now, given the new attention devoted to the liturgical reform also in the United States, after Benedict XVI's decisions on the matter of liturgy and the *motu proprio Summorum Pontificum* (July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2007), and the fact that theologians and historians have somehow taken for granted the long history of the liturgical movement before Vatican II, the fact that Vatican II was the only council to approve a doctrinal document on liturgy, and the patent fact that the council's liturgical reform is the major *reform* in the post-Tridentine Catholic Church after the reform of church discipline in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries.

It is time to help build the bridge between the history of the vast network that we call the "liturgical movement" in the United States and the tumultuous memories of the liturgical reform of the post-Vatican II period.<sup>1</sup>

## THE ROOTS OF THE US LITURGICAL MOVEMENT (1926-)

The liturgical movement in the United States originates from European roots,<sup>2</sup> transplanted through a handful of individuals to the Upper Midwest of the United States in the mid-1920s (one of them, Quasten, had escaped from Nazi-ruled Germany in 1937). The actual date of birth of the liturgical movement is usually identified with the years 1925-1926, and its birthplace is located in the Benedictine Abbey of St. John's

<sup>1</sup> This essay will try to bridge this gap thanks to the wide bibliography already available, but also on the basis of unpublished archival material researched in the *Archivio Segreto Vaticano* (henceforth ASV) in July 2010.

<sup>2</sup> See Maria PAIANO, *Liturgia e società nel Novecento. Percorsi del movimento liturgico di fronte ai processi di secolarizzazione*, Roma, 2000; Olivier ROUSSEAU, *Storia del movimento liturgico*, Roma, 1959 (original French, Paris, 1945); Cipriano VAGAGGINI, *Il senso teologico della liturgia. Saggio di liturgia teologica generale*, Roma, 1957; Bernard BOTTE, *Le mouvement liturgique. Témoignage et souvenirs*, Paris, 1973; Annibale BUGNINI, *La riforma liturgica (1948-1975)*, Roma, 1983; Rita FERRONE, *Liturgy. Sacrosanctum Concilium*, New York NY, 2007. O. ROUSSEAU, *Storia del movimento liturgico*, Roma 1959 ed. or. Paris 1945)

in Minnesota.<sup>3</sup> Virgil Michel (1890-1938), the founder of the movement in the United States and of the journal *Orate Fratres* (from 1951 to the present: *Worship*), had studied in Rome, where he had taken courses from Lambert Beauduin (1924-1925), and then in Louvain where he had taken again courses from Beauduin for the rest of the year.<sup>4</sup> The journal *Worship* began to build a vast network of theologians, parishes, and associations that were advocating, between the late 1920s and the 1930s, a full implementation and development of the first liturgical reforms of Pius X. In proportion to its circulation, *Worship* had an impact much bigger than any other Catholic magazine, especially between 1957 and the post-Vatican II period thanks to Father Frederick McManus.<sup>5</sup> But *Worship* was not an isolated enterprise: in 1929 Fr. Bussard, a St. Paul (Minnesota) priest, conceived the idea of a “Leaflet Missal”, and the initiative took off nationwide in the 1930s and 1940s.<sup>6</sup> In 1942 Joseph F. Stedman published *My Sunday Missal*, which was reprinted several times until 1956.<sup>7</sup> In the same year, that is, 1942, another Midwesterner, Gerald Ellard, published *The Dialog Mass*, followed in 1948 by *The Mass of the Future* and in 1956 by *The Mass In Transition*.<sup>8</sup>

The issues of the liturgical movement, according to Michel, were the role of women in the liturgy, the texts for religious education, the relationship between liturgy and social justice, and especially the full and active participation of the laity. The liturgical movement did not appeal to all American Catholics in the same way: the Midwest—Minnesota, Chicago, and St. Louis—and its cluster of German and Polish Catholic immigrants were the first important centers of the liturgical renewal, and they would remain so until the age of Vatican II. German immigrants were more receptive of the movement than Irish immigrants, and the German Catholic “Zentrale Verein” was the only to give corporate endorsement to the liturgical movement in the United States.

This specific geographical and ethnic background explains the tensions between the devotions of the immigrant Church on one side, and the issues of the liturgical movement on the other. These tensions made the movement focus on the issue of active participation during Mass, thus eliminating from the goals of the movement some issues that were close to the heart of its founders. In a way, it can be said that the liturgical movement in the United States had less theological aspirations than in

<sup>3</sup> Keith PECKLERS, *The Unread Vision. The Liturgical Movement in the United States of America, 1926-1955*, Collegeville MN, 1998.

<sup>4</sup> Paul MARX, *Virgil Michel and the Liturgical Movement*, Collegeville MN, 1957.

<sup>5</sup> Mark S. MASSA, *The American Catholic Revolution. How the Sixties Changed the Church Forever*, New York, 2010, p. 15-28.

<sup>6</sup> For the relationship between St. John’s Abbey and the local church in Minnesota see Marvin O’CONNELL, *Pilgrims to the Northland. The Archdiocese of St. Paul, 1840-1962*, Notre Dame, 2009, p. 451-460.

<sup>7</sup> Joseph F. STEDMAN, *My Sunday Missal. With New Features Listed on Page 480 and Complete Pulpit Text of All Epistles and Gospels from the New Authorized Translation of the New Testament*, Brooklyn, NY, 1942. About Stedman see John W. O’MALLEY, *What Happened at Vatican II*, Cambridge MA, 2008, p. 74.

<sup>8</sup> Gerald ELLARD, *The Dialog Mass, A Book for Priests and Teachers of Religion*, with a preface by the Most Reverend Michael J. CURLEY, New York, Toronto, 1942; Gerald ELLARD, *The Mass of the Future*, Milwaukee, 1948; Gerald ELLARD, *The Mass in Transition*, Milwaukee, 1956.

Europe: “As in Europe, the American movement was fostered by Benedictines, but unlike its European counterpart, it was not overly academic or theological in nature. Rather, it was fundamentally a pastoral, grassroots development within the Church. The promoters were convinced that liturgy possessed a transformative power for social change. The movement reached the very heart of American Catholic society.”<sup>9</sup>

On the other hand, the pace of the reform, which was accepted by the local hierarchy and implemented locally, was much more steady in the US than in Europe. In 1947 the Liturgical Conference of the bishops of the United States considered incorporating more English in the ritual activities of the community, and in 1952 a tentative brief was completed.<sup>10</sup> In the early 1950s the push for more English in the liturgy became visible, thanks to the “Vernacular Society”, derived from the “English Liturgy Society of England” and founded in Denver, after the liturgical week of 1946 (changing its name from the previous “St. Jerome Society”). In 1953 the “Vernacular Society” had 2,753 members, among them 41 bishops.<sup>11</sup>

Overall, the pre-Vatican II history of the liturgical movement in the United States between 1926 and 1960 is the story of a “pedagogy of participation”, with the *missa recitata* or dialogue mass at the forefront.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, for the liturgical movement in the United States, the preparation for Vatican II coincided with a turning point in the long story of the relationship between Catholicism and American culture: from the “Depression-era religious expressions”, to the end of “ghetto Catholicism” with World War II, to the “Cold War devotionism” (the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart, the Family Rosary Crusade, the Block Rosary), and to the cultural and social tensions within the Catholic community during and with the suburbanization and the “white flight” from inner cities in the 1950s and the 1960s.<sup>13</sup>

### THE JOURNAL “WORSHIP” IN THE PRE-CONCILIAR ERA (1953-1962)

The more important source of the ideas of the liturgical movement in the United States was undoubtedly the journal *Worship*. Starting in 1926 with the title *Orate Fratres*, this journal represented and developed the major ideas of the liturgical movement before, during and after Vatican II.

<sup>9</sup> PECKLERS, *The Unread Vision*, p. 43.

<sup>10</sup> See Joseph P. CHINNICI, *The Catholic Community at Prayer 1926-1976*, in James M. O'TOOLE (ed.), *Habits of Devotion. Catholic Religious Practice in Twentieth-Century America*, Ithaca and London, 2004, p. 9-87. For a comparison with the case of Québec, see Gilles ROUTHIER, *Les avants de la constitution sur la liturgie au Canada francophone*, in *Questions Liturgiques* 87 (2006), p. 233-263 and Gilles ROUTHIER, *Le mouvement liturgique au Québec. Attentes et espérances de l'aggiornamento conciliaire*, in Gilles ROUTHIER (ed.), *Vatican II au Canada. Enracinement et réception*, Montréal, 2001, p. 129-161.

<sup>11</sup> See Hans Alexander REINHOLD, *Understanding the Mass*, in *Bulletin of the Vernacular Society* (May 1954), in ASV, Conc. Vat. II, 1386: “The vernacular movement as I understand it begs our bishops and pastors to ask the Holy See for the following: that communication between altar and pew be developed to its fullness and that it be direct, not via reading of translations. In other words: we desire to have in English the priest’s message to us, that is: all sung (or recited) collects, the epistle, the gospel and, if at all possible, the preface and the Lord’s prayer. We also would like to sing in our mother tongue the Gloria, Credo, Sanctus and Agnus Dei and, where there is no choir, hymns —good ones— for the introit, graduale, offertory and Communion (a processional during the people’s communion)”.

<sup>12</sup> CHINNICI, *The Catholic Community at Prayer*, p. 39.

<sup>13</sup> CHINNICI, *The Catholic Community at Prayer*, p. 62.

A question very much at the center of *Worship* between the 1950s and Vatican II was the reception and implementation of the liturgical reforms of the pontificate of Pius XII. In 1953 the journal welcomed the reform about the Eucharistic fasting and the evening Mass. The author of the article, H.A Reinhold, remembered: “Six, seven years ago you were called disobedient and out of step with the Church, a crack-pot, a liturgical zealot, a radical, for advocating these same causes.” Reinhold defined the Eucharistic decrees “a tremendous step forward”, but he also acknowledged that many other problems remained:

The vernacular and how much of it, the reforms of Holy Thursday and Good Friday, the very much ignored reform at the parish level of ‘first’ Communion, the misery of evening services, dialog and congregational Mass, the English breviary for the clergy, some form of adapted divine office for all religious and for the laity in general, an American hymnal, the offertory, the processions at the introit and Communion, the creation of a good biblical and dogmatic catechism for converts as well as for children which will do justice to the ‘new approach’ signalized by Bl. Pius X, by the encyclicals on the Mystical Body and the liturgy, and by the resurgence of the Scriptures.<sup>14</sup>

This enthusiasm for Pius XII’s reforms did not blind the American liturgical movement from the need to take further steps. The liturgical needs of the local churches in America, facing the fact that “priests were getting scarce and vocations evaporate in training at a terrific rate”, pushed Reinhold to express his “dream” for deacons active in the pastoral and liturgical ministry. Reinhold confessed: “I am sure I won’t see it carried out in this generation, but I feel in my old bones something of the kind is needed.” Reinhold meant deacons “not only in a decorative role at solemn Mass, to give the celebrant a greater foil”.<sup>15</sup>

In the mid-1950s the tone of the liturgical movement in the United States was set in order to solidify the previous liturgical reforms, between Pius X and Pius XII. In early 1954, *Worship* published an article by Cardinal Giacomo Lercaro on the need for “active participation”, underlining a clear link between the liturgical movement and Abbot Guéranger, Pius X’s *motu proprio Tra le sollecitudini* (1903), the apostolic constitution of Pius XI *Divini cultus* (1928), and Pius XII’s *Mediator Dei* (1947).<sup>16</sup> Pius XII’s liturgical encyclical was remembered in one issue of *Worship* on its tenth anniversary in 1957 by one of the leaders of the liturgical movement in the United States, Martin Hellriegel, who did not indulge in dreaming of further steps in the liturgical reforms.<sup>17</sup> But starting in 1954, the longing for the succeeding reforms were clearly in the minds and in the articles of the authors of *Worship*. A clear item on the agenda was concelebration, which was the subject of many articles.

<sup>14</sup> Hans Alexander REINHOLD, *The New Eucharistic Decrees*, in *Worship*, 27 (1953), p. 187-190. About the German-born Hans Emil Alexander Reinhold, see Julia A. UPTON, *Worship in Spirit and Truth. The Life and Legacy of H.A. Reinhold*, Collegeville MN, 2009.

<sup>15</sup> Hans Alexander REINHOLD, *Yearnings of a Reformer*, in *Worship*, 27 (1953), p. 353-355.

<sup>16</sup> Cardinal Giacomo LERCARO, *Active Participation. The Basic Principle of the Pastoral-Liturgical Reforms of Pius X*, in *Worship*, 28 (1954), p. 120-128. About Cardinal Lercaro see Enzo LODI, *Pensiero e esperienza liturgica*, in Angelina ALBERIGO (ed.), *Giacomo Lercaro Vescovo della chiesa di Dio (1891-1976)*, Genova, 1991, p. 81-97.

<sup>17</sup> Martin B. HELLRIEGEL, *Mediator Dei 1947-1957*, in *Worship* 32 (1957), p. 2-7.

In 1954 Howell (taking over for Reinhold for the column “Timely Tract”) argued for the need for a more widespread granting of the permission to celebrate “sacramental concelebration”:

One feels that it would be fitting that the priests should wear priestly vestments, that they should be grouped about the altar (*versus populum* one hopes), should make their gestures in common, and should communicate, standing, under both kinds. That would make it perfectly clear that they are a veritable *presbyterium* acting with one consent and hierarchically in a manner quite distinct from the laity who simply ‘assist’ and communicate, kneeling, under one kind.<sup>18</sup>

On concelebration, Diekmann reported from the international liturgical study meeting of Louvain (September 1954), sponsored by the Abbey of Mont César in Belgium, the Centre de Pastorale Liturgique in Paris, and the Liturgisches Institut in Trier, with two topics on the agenda: the advisability of a several-year cycle of scriptural readings for Sundays and feast days, and concelebration. Concerning the first, Diekmann noted: “no elaborate argumentation seems necessary to establish that the inspired word of God is no longer playing its divinely intended role in the spiritual formation of our people.” On concelebration, Diekmann was more cautious, but nevertheless encouraged by the result of the study meeting, on one hand underscoring the fact that concelebration has already been part of the history of liturgy, on the other side mentioning that this issue was close to the attention of the local churches and the bishops in the United States, and possibly not remote from the wishes of the Holy See itself.<sup>19</sup>

More Scripture in the liturgy was another issue. In 1954 *Worship* published an article, submitted by “a missionary”: “the *urgency* of the whole problem of a more extensive use of Scripture can be proposed perhaps most convincingly from the missionary standpoint.” The anonymous author of the article mentioned the liturgical congress of Lugano of 1953 and the third petition of the congress that the people might sing in their mother tongue the ordinary parts of a sung Mass, saying that this privilege had already been granted to two Indonesian bishops and an African bishop: “but what the missions obtain may, in the course of time, also be granted to other parts of the Church, more especially if the pastoral needs of the latter can be shown to resemble those of mission areas properly so called”.<sup>20</sup>

The connections between the liturgical dimensions of the missionary activity of the Church and the demands from the liturgical movement in the United States were multifaceted: more Scripture in the Mass was one among many issues, another was the “dialogue Mass.” In a series of three articles *Worship* offered its readers a strong case in favor of a mass with more active participation of the faithful. In a rather technical presentation of the “dialogue Mass” (form A) and the “high rule Mass” (form B), Howell started a debate that took into account sound liturgical tradition and practical considerations about the need to educate the laity in the pew to respond

<sup>18</sup> Clifford HOWELL SJ, *Concelebration*, in *Worship*, 28 (1954), p. 89-93.

<sup>19</sup> Godfrey DIEKMANN, *Louvain and Versailles*, in *Worship*, 28 (1954), p. 537-545.

<sup>20</sup> [A Missionary,] *More Scripture*, in *Worship*, 28 (1954), p. 508-516.

in the “dialogue Mass”.<sup>21</sup> But the issue of the changing nature of post-World War II Catholicism in America and the liturgical movement was much deeper than the uncertainty about the ability of the people in the pew to participate in the dialogue mass. In the first issue of *Worship* of 1958, Andrew Greeley pointed out one of the major challenges which prevented the liturgical revival from realizing its full potential: “the vast cultural gap which exists between Roman liturgy as a means of expression and communication and the industrial culture of urban America”. Greeley explained the consequences of the vast differences between the liturgy and mass culture, and saw four possible solutions: “the maintenance of the status quo, the abandonment of modern civilization, the complete change of liturgy, or some combination of the last two”. The first and the second were not an option, in Greeley’s view, and therefore he advocated the fourth one: “to change modern civilization while at the same time modifying the liturgy. Such a solution will not satisfy those who like simple answers, but it seems to be the course which the Holy See has adopted”.<sup>22</sup>

The issue of the need for a comprehensive liturgical reform as such was a common theme in the decade before the announcement of Vatican II. One of the American ways to look at the liturgical reform was the idea of “liturgy as education” and the “formative power of liturgy”. In 1954 Drinkwater elaborated on an essay published in *Orate Fratres* (October 1949) by J.A. Jungmann. Drinkwater criticized the far too optimistic ideas of some advocates of the liturgical movement, especially the idea of the liturgy as a natural and total way to educate Christians - “Are they not living in a kind of pleasant ivory tower? Can they expect anybody to join them there, except a few fellow escapist?” —but only to emphasize “the present jejune bone-dry theological lecture-room-type way of presenting the faith to the bored faithful”.<sup>23</sup> But *Worship* was at the forefront of the request of the American liturgical movement for a renewal. In 1954 George Tavard explained some basic principles of the role of liturgy in theology and remarked on the link between access to Scripture and active participation:

New attempts to bring the liturgy to the people —or rather, to bring the people to the liturgy— should take account of two leading principles. In the first place [...] it is in the liturgy itself that the faithful ought to find their key to the meaning of Scripture. In the second place, since tradition is really included in the liturgy of which it is no more than an aspect, the laity’s participation in the liturgy ought to open their mind to their own positive share in the transmission of tradition.<sup>24</sup>

The liturgical movement in the United States was focused on the pastoral and cultural needs of the American faithful, but it did not refrain from seeking help from liturgical experts in Europe. In 1955 *Worship* published an essay by Annibale Bugnini (editor of the journal *Ephemerides Liturgicae*) who offered a short history of the liturgical reforms and a rationale for the forthcoming reform: “The Church has never been estranged, least of all in worship, from the practical needs of men. The

<sup>21</sup> Clifford HOWELL SJ, *What Form of Dialogue Mass*, in *Worship*, 31 (1957), p. 566-570.

<sup>22</sup> Andrew GREELEY, *Mass Culture Milieu*, in *Worship*, 33 (1958), p. 19-26.

<sup>23</sup> F.H. DRINKWATER, *An Education in Itself*, in *Worship*, 28 (1954), p. 452-459.

<sup>24</sup> George TAVARD, *Some Remarks on the Liturgy as Tradition*, in *Worship*, 28 (1954), p. 466-471.



adaptation of worship has been equal to the spiritual profit intended to be drawn from it.” Bugnini remembered the reforms of the fourth century (abandoning Greek for Latin), the reform of Gregory the Great and of St. Pius V: “from the middle of the last century the need for a ‘general liturgical reform’ began to make itself felt. It found its echo at the Vatican Council, which, however, did not have time to be concerned with this reform; nor was Leo XIII deeply concerned with it”.<sup>25</sup>

The peculiar role of the liturgical movement in the Church of the United States, at the center of the effort of Catholics to get out of the “ghetto”, was evident in the defense of the movement from the accusations of parochialism and single-issue mentality. In his 1957 article published in *Worship* Reinhold departed from a fact: “The liturgists have been blamed for many things ever since the movement started in the era before the First World War”. In the wake of the many accusations moved against the movement by the so-called “*beati possidentes*”, Reinhold was confident: “With time and Rome on our side we can weather this storm and wait in patience.” The issue was that new enemies, other than the “usual” conservatives, were accusing the liturgical movement of not emphasizing the social action aspects of their being a Catholic movement: desegregation, racism, secularism, communism and fascism. Reinhold responded declaring the special course of action of the liturgical movement, but stressing the link between the liturgical movement and the rest of the changing nature of American Catholicism, this time calling to action the rest of the Catholic Church in the United States:

While it is not our task as liturgists to be spokesmen of the Social Action Department of the NCWC, or agents of the Christian Family Movement, a completely aloof attitude of this magazine towards their departmental concerns would justify the suspicion that we are a group of cloud gazers or worse; while their indifference to popular participation in the most noble manifestation of our faith—in its theological order— would leave them open to the charge of stopping up the best source and fountainhead of the living waters that feed their own garden.<sup>26</sup>

On the other side, in the social activity of Catholicism in the United States, the liturgical movement engaged the new spiritual needs of American Catholics in the period between the end of the “ghetto” and the beginning of the mainstream.<sup>27</sup> The symbolic figure of Thomas Merton provided *Worship* with a long article about “liturgy and spiritual personalism”, in which the best-selling Trappist monk from Kentucky stressed the “political”. that is, public aspect of liturgical life. Merton called “zealots” the ones whose zeal “makes the simple and ordinary Christian afraid of Liturgy with a capital L, and drives him back into the no man’s land of devotions and nondescript meditations”. Merton read the cultural situation of American Catholicism in parallel with the debate about liturgy, and gave a striking assessment:

<sup>25</sup> Annibale BUGNINI, *Why a Liturgy Reform?*, in *Worship*, 29 (1955), p. 562-569.

<sup>26</sup> Hans Alexander REINHOLD, *Is the Liturgy a Panacea?*, in *Worship*, 32 (1957), p. 12-16. About Reinhold’s quest for justice in connection with liturgy see Julia UPTON, *Worship in Spirit and Truth*, p. 65-74.

<sup>27</sup> About Merton and the culture of post-World War II Catholicism in the US, see Mark S. MASSA, *Catholics and American Culture*. Fulton Sheen, Dorothy Day, and the Notre Dame Football Team, New York, 1999, p. 38-56.

The pseudo-liturgists are not the only zealots. Perhaps in America they are not even a significant minority, compared with the mob of pseudo-personalists. If individualism and subjectivism are so widely suspect among us, there is perhaps a very good reason for it. We live in a climate of individualism. But our individualism is in decay. Our tradition of freedom which, as a matter of fact, is rooted in a deeply Christian soil, and which in itself is worthy of the highest respect and of undying loyalty, has begun to lose its genuine vitality. It is becoming more and more a verbal convention rather than a spiritual conviction.<sup>28</sup>

This example of Merton's attack against "the zealots" shows how close the relationship was between the elite of the liturgical movement and the culture of well-read and even better-published Catholics, who were very much at ease both with the need for dialogue with mainstream American society and with the vital counter-cultural dimension of Catholicism in the United States. Between 1960 and 1962 the preparation of Vatican II necessarily involved more the leaders of the liturgical movement than the grass-roots members.

### THE LITURGICAL MOVEMENT IN THE US AND THE LITURGICAL PREPARATORY COMMISSION OF VATICAN II (1959-1962)

There is a direct link between the ideas and the insights of the leaders of the liturgical movement in the United States and the contribution of American Catholic theology to the preparation of Vatican II. The liturgical movement in the United States was not surprised by the fact that one of the major issues of Vatican II would be the liturgical reform.<sup>29</sup> But there was also a visible gap between the vibrancy of the movement in its ability to organize itself and the slow response of the bishops in embracing the ideas of the liturgical movement as their own ideas.

Soon after 25 January 1961, when Cardinal Cicognani sent a letter to the national bishops' conferences asking them about the existence of "national liturgical commissions",<sup>30</sup> the archbishop of Cincinnati, Karl Alter (chairman of the administrative board, NCWC), replied that from 1959 the "Episcopal Moderator of our Liturgical Commission for the Hierarchy of the United States" was bishop James Henry Griffiths, auxiliary bishop of New York.<sup>31</sup> But after this reply from Alter, the response to the questionnaire about the activities of the liturgical commissions in the

<sup>28</sup> Thomas MERTON, *Liturgy and Spiritual Personalism*, in *Worship*, 34 (1960), p. 494-507.

<sup>29</sup> About the history of the debate within the preparatory liturgical commission, see Maria PAIANO, *Il rinnovamento della liturgia. Dai movimenti alla chiesa universale*, in Giuseppe ALBERIGO and Alberto MELLONI (eds.), *Verso il Concilio Vaticano II, 1960-1962. Passaggi e problemi della preparazione conciliare*, Genova, 1993, p. 67-140.

<sup>30</sup> Draft of the letter by Bugnini to Cicognani in Vatican Secret Archives (henceforth: ASV), Conc. Vat. II, 1364. Enclosed to the letter there was a questionnaire (to be sent back to Rome before December 31, 1963) with four questions about the activity of these commissions: 1) "De Commissionis Liturgicae Constitutione" (date of foundation, statute); 2) "De actuositate commissionis liturgicae" (director, instructions, norms); 3) "De actione liturgica in natione aut regione" (liturgical groups, journals, liturgical publishing houses, national liturgical conferences, liturgical education in seminaries); 4) "De commissionibus liturgicis dioecesanis" (diocesan liturgical commissions and their activities).

<sup>31</sup> Letter of Archbishop Karl Alter to Cardinal Cicognani, February 1<sup>st</sup>, 1962, in ASV, Conc. Vat. II, 1364.

United States never came to Rome —not even after a second letter dated 23 August 1961.<sup>32</sup>

But the liturgical debate in the US Catholic Church was far from inactive during the preparation of Vatican II. Even *Time* magazine covered the matter (in an issue of 28 April 1961), by reporting on the embarrassment caused by the decision of the Roman Congregation for the Rites to “demote” St. Filomena on the very same day when Cardinal Cushing of Boston consecrated the new church of St. Filomena in Dover (Massachusetts) —the first Catholic church in the town. Cardinal Cushing had to rededicate the church as “the Church of the Most Precious Blood;” as he told the press afterward: “It was a difficult job. It was like telling the Irish there was no St. Patrick.”<sup>33</sup>

It there was a gap between the level of activity of the liturgical movement and the American bishops, that gap was much narrower than in other countries. Already before the announcement of Vatican II, the bishops had responded to the openings of the pontificate of Pius XII and to the movement: in 1958 the NCWC (the conference of Catholic bishops in the United States) had formed the “Episcopal Committee for the Liturgical Apostolate.” But after the announcement of the council the movement had a more effective impact. In 1959 the “20<sup>th</sup> North American Liturgical Week” was held at Notre Dame (with 3,000 participants - 12 bishops, 1,200 priests, and 250 seminarians), chaired by Fr. George Shidel, C.S.C., and Fr. Michael Mathis, C.S.C.<sup>34</sup> Cardinal Lercaro of Bologna was one of the guest speakers at this meeting, where Frederick McManus was elected president of “The Liturgical Conference.” In August 1961 the National Liturgical Conference, held in Oklahoma City, was dedicated to an examination of the link between the Bible, life, and worship, and 4,000 faithful (including twelve bishops) took part.<sup>35</sup>

But the liturgical movement in the United States was effective in letting its voice be heard during the preparation of Vatican II also in Rome and in the official preparatory commission for the liturgy. Members of the commission were John

<sup>32</sup> See ASV, Conc. Vat. II, 1364. During those same weeks, on September 20, 1961, Bugnini informed Felici that the liturgical preparatory commission had sent “al nostro consultore P. Dubois il disappunto per la pubblicazione del Referendum dei canadesi, apparso in *Revue eucharistique du clergé* (64<sup>e</sup> année, n. 9, sept. 1961, p. 470-483)”. Father Dubois justified his actions before Rome by saying that the *Revue eucharistique du clergé* had published the dossier because requested to do that by the bishop of the diocese of Nicolet, Martin, and because the bishops’ conference of Canada had already published the *vota* of the German bishops, and finally because “l’épiscopat et le clergé de notre pays aimaient savoir ce que les canadiens avaient demandé. Comme je ne croyais trahir aucun secret, je n’ai pas pensé vous consulter avant de rédiger cet article”: ASV, Conc. Vat. II, 1356.

<sup>33</sup> In ASV, Conc. Vat. II, 1356.

<sup>34</sup> Michael Mathis, a priest of the order of the Holy Cross, established summer programs in liturgy at Notre Dame in the summer of 1947. From these summer programs grew the University’s graduate degree programs in liturgical studies, the Notre Dame Center for Liturgy (established in 1970), and the annual Pastoral Liturgy Conferences (sponsored by the Center since 1971): see <http://liturgy.nd.edu/>

<sup>35</sup> Letter of Frederick McManus (sent from “The Liturgical Conference”, 3428 Ninth Street, NE, Washington DC) to Bugnini, September 4, 1961: “Habuius ‘Hebdomadam Liturgicam’ 21-25 Augusti in, in Civitate Oklahoma, sub auspice Exc.mi Domini Victoris J. Reed. Thema erat Scriptura, Vita Christiana, et Liturgia: ‘Bible, Life, and Worship’. 4000 sacerdotes, sorores, et fideles laici interfuerunt, duodecim episcopi inclusis”: ASV, Conc. Vat. II, 1376 (p. 1376).

Quasten, Godfrey Diekmann OSB, and Frederick McManus. John Quasten (1900-1987) was a German-born patrologist, who had to leave Germany in 1937 because the Nazi regime withdrew his *venia legendi* at the University of Münster, and —thanks to the intercession of Cardinal Pacelli— in 1938 he was offered an extraordinary (in 1941 ordinary) position at the Catholic University of America (in Washington, D.C.) in ancient Church history, patrology, and Christian archeology.<sup>36</sup> Diekmann (1908-2002), the sixth of eight children of German emigrés from Westphalia, had been editor of *Worship* (formerly *Orate Fratres*) beginning in 1938, taught theology at St. John's University (Collegeville, Minnesota) and retired in 1995.<sup>37</sup> McManus (1923-2005), priest of the archdiocese of Boston, received his JCD from the Catholic University of America with a dissertation on the history of the Roman Congregation of the Sacred Rites in 1954; in 1956 he was a member of the Boston delegation for the Assisi-Rome Congress; in 1958 he became a member of the faculty of the School of Canon Law at The Catholic University of America (and he worked as its dean between 1967 and 1973); in 1959 he was named editor of *The Jurist* and elected President of The Liturgical Conference at the Liturgical Week in Notre Dame (reelected in 1964); after Vatican II McManus became the real soul of the post-Vatican II liturgical movement in the United States.<sup>38</sup>

All of the American members of the liturgical preparatory commission had a considerable impact on the debate within the commission. McManus was a member of the subcommissions “*De calendario recognoscendo*” and “*De lingua latina*”, and Diekmann of the subcommissions “*De fidelium participatione in Sacra Liturgia*” and “*De Liturgiae aptatione ad traditiones et ingenium populorum*”.<sup>39</sup> In February 1961, in a series of observations on the use of modern languages in byzantine liturgies, McManus enclosed a report by Maximos IV Saigh (dated Cairo, February 5th, 1960: “Note on the Use of Modern Languages in the Byzantine Liturgy”) and the declarations of two Eastern Catholic bishops on the same issue —Agagianian and of a “Fr. John Archimandrite” (published in *Worship* XXV Dec. 1960, 63-65). McManus quoted also the *votum* of the Catholic University of America,<sup>40</sup> in order to make his case in favor of the vernacular language in the liturgy:

<sup>36</sup> From 1945 to 1949 Quasten was dean of the department of theology and in 1960 he received the “Cardinal Spellman Award of the Catholic Theological Association of America” for his theological work. In 1964 Paul VI appointed him consultant of the “*Consilium ad exsequendam*”: see Patrick GRANFIELD, *John Quasten. A Biographical Essay*, in Patrick GRANFIELD und Josef A. JUNGMANN (eds.), *Kyriakon. Festschrift Johannes Quasten*, 2 Vols., Münster, 1970, Vol. 2, p. 921-923; Norbert M. BORENGÄSSER, *ad vocem*, in *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon*, 15 (1999), 1187-1192: <http://www.bautz.de/bbkl/q/quasten.shtml>

<sup>37</sup> See Kathleen HUGHES, *The Monk's Tale. A Biography of Godfrey Diekmann, O.S.B.*, Collegeville MN, 1990. By Godfrey DIEKMANN see, among others, *Come, Let Us Worship*, London, 1962.

<sup>38</sup> See Mark S. MASSA, *The American Catholic Revolution*, p. 15-28. Among the publications by Frederick McMANUS, *The Ceremonies of the Easter Vigil*, Patterson NJ, 1953; *The People's Holy Week*, Patterson NJ, 1956; *Pontifical Rite of the Restored Order of Holy Week*, translated and with an introduction by McManus, Patterson NJ, 1958.

<sup>39</sup> ASV, Conc. Vat. II, 1365: minutes of the meeting of the preparatory liturgical commission of November 1960, where all the US members were absent.

<sup>40</sup> *Votum* of the Catholic University of America (Washington, D.C.), in ASV, Conc. Vat. II, 1365: “*Patrum deliberationi proponimus: a) regulam quae in usu Ecclesiarum Orientalium recepta et pro*

Mihi videtur utile, immo necessarium esse addere vota vel votorum summarium Episcoporum qui veri doctores et pastores Ecclesiarum mentem Ecclesiae Christi manifestant ne labores Commissionis Antepreparatoriae et consultationes vanae sint. In Actis iam publicatis sunt multa vota *pro* usu lingua patriae in S. Liturgia —non solum Episcoporum Germaniae, Galliae, Hiberniae, sed etiam *Italiae, Hispaniae, Lusitaniae*. In votis Episcoporum Civitatum Foederatarum Americae [USA]: 38 mentionem rei huius fecerunt, de quibus: 4 retentioni linguae Latinae faverunt, 34 usui ampliori linguae patriae faverunt —23 in Missa, 9 in administratione sacramentorum etc., 11 in Officio divino, 10 generatim in S. Liturgia.

McManus finally quoted the request of the “Liturgical Conference” of August 1956, voiced through bishop John Christopher Cody (bishop of London in Ontario, Canada, between 1950 and 1963) on the use of the vernacular language: “Ut, ad agendam virtutem pastoralem Missae catechumenorum, haec pars Missae lingua populi celebrentur... Ut sacerdotibus ministerio actuoso laborantibus concedatur facultas recitandi Breviarium lingua materna, his de causis: a) pro unitate Ecclesiae [...]; b) pro utilitate sacerdotum [...]; c) pro praedicatione sacerdotum [...]; d) pro propagatione fidei”.<sup>41</sup>

In April 1961, Bugnini sent the members of the preparatory liturgical commission of Vatican II a document about the “adaptatione liturgiae ad ingenium et traditiones populorum”, whose first author was John Quasten. That text affirmed the local bishops as the best judges of the adaptation (episcopi enim, qui in contactu immediato cum fidelibus proprii territorii munere apostolico funguntur, iudices maxime qualificati sunt tum de modo tum de mensura aptationis expetendae) together with the bishops’ conferences (quaestiones de aptatione in Conferentiis regionalibus Episcoporum ordinentur). Most of all, *adaptatione* should be about the use of vernacular languages instead of Latin (tamquam cardo tempestivae aptationis liturgicae sine dubio considerandum est problema linguae vernaculae, cui secundum indigentiam nostrorum temporum notabilior latior usus concedendus est praesertim in Missa ubique terrarum, sed maxime et urgentissime in Missionibus. Sine nitida solutione huius problematis, tota aptatio liturgica manca et inefficax manebit).<sup>42</sup>

During the summer of 1961 the first version of the liturgical constitution was ready and the American members reacted with observations. All of the American members expressed their appreciation of the work done, with some *iuxta modum*. In paragraph 28 McManus wished a “Placet, sed verba ‘et approbante Sancta Sede’ substituantur per ‘sub auctoritate Sanctae Sedis’ (Praevia approbatio S. Sedis non semper requiritur)”. In paragraph 30, Diekman pushed for more trust in the authority of the bishops’ conferences:

eis a Sede Apostolica agnita est, ut scil. actiones liturgicae ad incrementum pietatis populi in lingua vernacula celebrentur, ad Ecclesiam Latinam extendendam, versione tamen unaquaque ab auctoritate competenti ecclesiastica approbata. Cf. Pius XI, audientia 20 februarii 1929; Pius XII, ep. Encycl. *Mediator Dei*, AAS, 39 (1947), p. 545; Theodorus Balsamon, in Migne, P.G., CXXXVIII, 957-958”. See also Frederick R. McMANUS, *Preconciliar Vota of the Faculty of Canon Law —The Catholic University of America - February 1960*, in *The Jurist*, 57 (1997), p. 457-48.

<sup>41</sup> The observations of McManus, from the Catholic University of America in Washington D.C., February 12th, 1961, in ASV, Conc. Vat. II, 1360.

<sup>42</sup> April 1961: ASV, Conc. Vat. II, 1370.

Melius dicendum: 'Ut aptatio cum necessaria circumspectione fiat, Conferentia Episcopalis facultate, intra certos *et bene circumscriptos limites*, gaudeat, si necessitas *vel animorum utilitas* exigit... [...] Talia experimenta perutilia essent non tantum in regionibus missionariis, sed ubicumque quaestio est de aptatione. Si paragraphus hic retineatur sub n. 30, forsitan addatur: *Talis facultas etiam concedatur Conferentis Episcopalibus regionum non-missionarium, praesertim si in istis regionibus Catholici minoritatem constituunt populi.*

In paragraph 48 McManus desired a more open-ended declaration of Vatican II about the liturgical reform: "*Non placet* declaratio voti quae videtur portam claudere et limites rigidos statuere —forsitan usque ad concilium generale post II Vaticanum." On the prayer of the hours at paragraph 55, McManus gave his placet, "cum additione: *'et valde commendatur pietati omnium Christifidelium'*". But also Diekmann had a strong and long objection to paragraph 63 about the overly idealistic interpretation of the document drafted by the liturgical commission concerning the relationship between liturgical reform and monastic prayer:

Omnino non placet. Hodie etiam monachi in monasteriis degentes, approbante et urgente Sancta Sede, operibus apostolatus adstricti sunt, eg. in scholis. Ideo omnino ridiculus est commendare, tamquam normam, praxim quae et in monasteriis strictissimae clausurae, sine operibus ullis apostolatus, nimis onerosa esset, et nullibi nunc observatur, neque per saecula observata est (uti in Declaratione admittitur: nam simpliciter desunt libri pro officium divinum in omnibus eius partibus cantando). Talis commendatio tunc tantum sensum haberet, si officium (eg. Monasticum) drastico modo abbreviretur - quod quidem nemo suggerit. Si cantus uti norma omnimodo declarandus est, forsitan Votum exprimi posset hoc modo: *'Commendatur, ut officium divinum in choro vel in communi cantetur, saltem quoad Vesperas cotidianas et, diebus dominicis et festivis, etiam quoad alias partes Officii magis convenientes.* Et tunc Declaratio Voti consequenter mutetur.

Both Diekmann and McManus asked for a more clear and courageous paragraph on the vernacular language for chapter IV, paragraph 65: "Si quaestio de lingua non explicite tractetur in votis de sacramentis et sacramentalibus, saltem in Proemio mentionis digna est" (Diekmann), "Mihi videtur necessarium esse canonem de usu linguae vernaculae" (McManus).<sup>43</sup>

The American members of the liturgical commission were not the only ones pushing the agenda of the liturgical movement before the council. A very active part of the movement in the United States was the "Vernacular Society", whose president, Colonel K. Ross-Duggan, in August 1962 wrote to Bugnini to advocate the vernacular in the liturgy. Colonel K. Ross-Duggan, whose "undiplomatic touch" was well known to other more cautious activists of the liturgical movement,<sup>44</sup> lamented that after John XXIII's *Veterum Sapientia* "the dead hand of many centuries had established concentration on the use of Latin with resultant silence on the part of the majority of layfolk in the Catholic world. Hence it came to be taken for granted in conservative circles that *more* Latin and *less* mother tongue was the accepted thing." Ross-Duggan even informed Bugnini about —and even asked Bugnini to take part in— an ongoing "mailing campaign to members and prospective members of the Vernacular Society"

<sup>43</sup> *Responsiones* to the *Constitutio* of August 10th, 1961, in ASV, Conc. Vat. II, 1375.

<sup>44</sup> PECKLERS, *The Unread Vision*, p. 64.



and a “petition for an English liturgy” (to be subsequently submitted to Msgr. Felici) with the following appeal:

Responding with joy to the assurance that an expression of the hopes and wishes of the laity regarding the sacred liturgy would be welcomed by officials of the Ecumenical Council, we, undersigned, respectfully submit the following petition: ‘That in English speaking countries, specifically in the United States of America, for the greater instruction and devotion of the faithful, permission be granted for the use of the English language in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass (other than the strictly priestly prayers) and in the Sacraments and Sacramentals’. With a fervent tribute of our loyalty and devotion, we prayerfully present this petition.<sup>45</sup>

### “THE AMERICAN VIEW” AND THE EARLY RECEPTION OF THE LITURGICAL REFORM (1963-1968)

The attitude of the American bishops during the first and second sessions of the council on the liturgical debate was in favor of the liturgical reform and in general often leaning towards a “via media” in the issue of the continuity/discontinuity with the previous liturgical tradition. Positions within an episcopate as large as the United States bishops were diverse. Cardinals Spellman (New York) and McIntyre (Los Angeles) and archbishop Hallinan (Atlanta) were clearly on different sides of the debate, Spellman, McIntyre and Ottaviani being among the most vocal opponents of changes to the order of the mass and to the canon. But when Hallinan recruited, on 19 November 1962, a significant number of bishops from the United States, it became clear that the majority of the bishops were in favor of the liturgical reform and of the schema debated on the floor of St. Peter’s.<sup>46</sup> It also became clear that the North American bishops were not “Latin-minded” and that Hallinan represented a wide basis of a Catholic Church waiting and already preparing for this reform.<sup>47</sup>

Young and inexperienced bishops also advocated an issue more typical of senior clergy in the United States, given the almost 50-year-long history of the liturgical movement in America. In his observations about the liturgical schema, the newly appointed bishop of Boise (Idaho), Sylvester Trainen, observed:

<sup>45</sup> ASV, Conc. Vat. II, 1386. Ross-Duggan letter to Bugnini mentioned many cases of concession of the vernacular in the liturgy: among them, the one granted by the bishops of Marquette on March 10th, 1962: “Thomas L. Noa, D.D., Bishop of Marquette, Michigan, has given his imprimatur to the *Community Mass Book* arranged by the Liturgical Commission of the Diocese of Marquette, Michigan. The book contains full explanation of a Community Mass with short Latin responses and Pater Noster; English recitation of the Gloria; Apostles’ Creed at the Credo; Sanctus; Agnus Dei and Domine non sum dignus. There is provision for vernacular hymns at Entrance, Offertory; Communion and Recessional. There are also Latin chants for High Mass”.

<sup>46</sup> Hallinan wrote a short text in which he stressed that the bishops of the United States wished to vote on chapter I of the schema during the first session, and 132 bishops signed the petition: see Mathijs LAMBERIGTS, *The Liturgy Debate*, in Giuseppe ALBERIGO (ed.), *History of Vatican II*, Vol. 2, English version edited by Joseph A. Komonchak, Maryknoll – New York, 1997, p. 107-166, esp. p. 153. See also O’MALLEY, *What Happened at Vatican II*. About Hallinan, see Thomas J. SHELLEY, *Paul J. Hallinan. First Archbishop of Atlanta*, Wilmington, DEL, 1989.

<sup>47</sup> See Paul J. HALLINAN, *An American View*, in *Worship*, 37 (1963), p. 547-550.

As one of the Junior Bishops who will be attending the Second Session of the Second Vatican Council in September, I hesitate to make a petition or offer any suggestions. However, perhaps on the other hand it would be unwise for me to remain silent on something which I feel is important. With all due reverence then to Your Eminence [Cardinal Cicognani, Secretary of State] and acknowledging my own youth, I would like to say that I would be much in favor of having the Council Fathers be given a chance to vote on a proposition that would allow the priests to have an option of reciting the Divine Office in the vernacular language. I would like to see the priests able to make this choice merely for the sake of their own personal devotion if they felt that this would add to their devotions. Perhaps it is not possible at this date, but I also feel that it would add much to the progress of the sessions of the Council if there were some kind of an instantaneous translation of the speeches into the four or five major languages. I am able to understand the Fathers, when they speak in Latin, if they speak distinctly and slowly. However, it is quite a strain to do this for several hours at a time. I have spoken with many other bishops who feel this same way. With sentiments of deep esteem and with best wishes, I remain very sincerely yours in Christ, Sylvester Trainen.<sup>48</sup>

The issue of the breviary was another issue typical of the bishops of the United States, as we see from the letter of the auxiliary bishop of Lansing (Michigan), Michael Green, to the liturgical commission of Vatican II: “the feelings of the clergy throughout the Diocese about the possibility of having the Breviary recited in the vernacular [...] I dare to say that the one question asked most frequently was ‘Will we be able to recite the Breviary in the vernacular?’ [...] I might add, too, that in my travels around the country I found a similar anxiety on the part of almost every priest with whom I came in contact”.<sup>49</sup> On the other side, clearly not everyone was satisfied with the success of the liturgical movement, worrying about the possible “over-rating” of the pastoral effectiveness of the liturgical reform:

The ‘liturgical movement’ has been suggesting changes in the rite of celebrating Holy Mass that appear to be too drastic. It is easy to change without improving, to reject ceremonies long honored and loved by our people for the sake of others that have little merit beyond their newness. We question the over-emphasis on the ‘lay priesthood’ and on forms of togetherness of priest and people that tend to lessen the sacrificial character of the Mass in favor of a sacrificial meal. In the United States Protestant sects have found this form of church services fails to increase attendance by their adherents, while Catholic churches that stress the sacrificial character of the Mass are always crowded on Sundays. Rites and ceremonies are externals and religious are now tending to over-rate their pastoral effectiveness. Nor are ceremonies patterned by religious for their chapels always the best suited for Christians living in the world and attending Mass in large and crowded churches.<sup>50</sup>

But the overall reception of the liturgical debate and of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* was overwhelmingly positive. The journal *Worship* prepared the reception and the translation into action of the liturgical constitution through a long and detailed

<sup>48</sup> Letter of Sylvester Trainen, bishop of Boise (Idaho), August 9th, 1963, in ASV, Conc. Vat. II, 1384.

<sup>49</sup> Auxiliary bishops of Lansing (Michigan) Michael Green, letter of August 20th, 1963, (a few days after the meeting of the US bishops in Chicago), in ASV, Conc. Vat. II, 1384.

<sup>50</sup> Bishop Henry Joseph Grimmelsmann (bishop of Evansville, Indiana), letter to the liturgical commission, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 1963, in ASV, Conc. Vat. II, 1384.

commentary by McManus (170 pages in three parts).<sup>51</sup> The generally enthusiastic tone of the commentary was otherwise careful in offering a balanced and open-ended interpretation of the text of the constitution, for example, about the use of the vernacular language—an issue that received comments as long and detailed as no other part of the constitution (12 pages for SC 36 and 12 pages for SC 54). The interpretation of the passage on the liturgical language was clearly directed towards a differentiated application of the documents depending on the local demands of the liturgical movements: “The purpose of this article [36] may be described as the widespread introduction of the vernacular languages, but in such a way as to respect the liberty of those areas where thus far there has not been any broad movement toward the use of the mother tongues. The article appears as a compromise between those who would retain the Latin language in the Roman rite and the other rites of the Western Church, and those who would on principle use the vernacular languages exclusively”.<sup>52</sup>

McManus represents a special example, but from the analysis of the literature about the early reception of the liturgical constitution and the start of the liturgical reform there is no doubt that the beginning of the liturgy of Vatican II in the United States marked a turning point in the appreciation of the council by US Catholics: “The Catholic sixties began in 1964, which was when the first (and arguably most dramatic) implementation of the reforms of the Second Vatican Council (the reform of the celebration of the Mass) reached American shores”.<sup>53</sup> A minority of opponents of the liturgical reform became visible from the very beginning of the application of the reform in the Advent of 1964, but for a long time in the United States this minority remained sociologically marginal and culturally estranged, not less than the experience shared by similar traditionalist groups in Europe. After the implementation of the reform of the celebration of the Mass, in the United States a Catholic Traditionalist Movement was born just eight weeks after the beginning of the reform—ironically enough, by a Belgian-born priest in the Baltimore diocese, Father Gommar de Pauw.<sup>54</sup> But it is fair to tell that in drawing the line between “conservative Catholics” and “Vatican II Catholics” in the United States, the liturgical reform did not play a fundamental role, at least until the beginning of the post-Vatican II.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>51</sup> See Frederick R. McMANUS, *The Constitution on liturgy. Commentary. Part One*, in *Worship*, 38 (1964), p. 314-374; *Part Two*, in *Worship*, 38 (1964), p. 450-498; *Part Three*, in *Worship*, 38 (1964), p. 515-565.

<sup>52</sup> McMANUS, *The Constitution on liturgy. Commentary. Part One*, in *Worship*, 38 (1964), p. 350-351.

<sup>53</sup> MASSA, *The American Catholic Revolution*, p. XIII.

<sup>54</sup> Among the opponents of the liturgical reform there was the former archbishop of Portland in Oregon (until 1974), as we can see from his letter to the journal of the Lefebvrians in Italy: Robert Joseph DWYER, *Una cattedrale devastata*, in *Si sì, no no*, n. 3 (1978), p. 2, quoted in Roberto de MATTEI, *Il Concilio Vaticano II. Una storia mai raccontata*, Torino, 2010, p. 576-577.

<sup>55</sup> Richard John NEUHAUS, *The Catholic Moment*, San Francisco, 1987, p. 63-64.

## CONCLUSIONS

### THE LITURGICAL REFORM IN THE US AS A BRIDGE TOWARDS THE REFORMS OF VATICAN II

It is accurate to see a fundamental coherence and consistency between the issues of the liturgical movement and the reform made possible by Vatican II and the liturgical reform that began with *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. As Jay Dolan put it: “The goals of the liturgical movement that reformers had promoted since the 1930s were finally realized”.<sup>56</sup> Dolan is far from alone in his assessment of the liturgical reform as a fruit of the liturgical movement and also of the liturgical movement in the United States. Mark Massa has recently emphasized the success of the liturgical reform in the US: “despite scattered evidence of frustration, disaffection, and wistful yearning for the old Mass, the widespread fears of rejection and nonreception among the faithful appeared to be unfounded. Most North American Catholics overwhelmingly —and surprisingly quickly— came to support what would come to be known as the new Mass”.<sup>57</sup>

Unfounded and delusional as the nostalgia of the liturgy of the “good old days” might be, the time of “Vatican II triumphalism” has passed, and now also the advocates of the council try to give a more nuanced and more comprehensive appreciation of the fruits of the liturgical reform. In his recent history of the American faithful, James O’Toole has emphasized the not only chronological coincidence between the liturgical reform and the crisis of devotional life, but he also acknowledged that, in general, American Catholics favored the new Mass.<sup>58</sup> In fact, it can be argued that the Catholic Church in the United States saw a wide acceptance of the liturgical reform especially until 1967-1968, when other socio-cultural factors came into play, as Chinnici has effectively explained: “the ‘piety void’ occasioned by the collapse of Cold War devotional life occurred precisely because the devotions themselves had encoded a social world that no longer existed”.<sup>59</sup>

The sociology of the liturgical reform cannot be separated from the deep, theological motives of the reform and liturgy’s role as a bridge towards the whole “thing”, that is, Vatican II —a council that at the beginning of the liturgical reform, in late 1964, was still underway. From a theological point of view, Dolan saw in the liturgical reform an important passage in US Catholics’ understanding of Vatican II: “The vast majority of Catholics went along with the changes and in time began to understand why it all had taken place”.<sup>60</sup> The theology of the council and the

<sup>56</sup> Jay P. DOLAN, *In Search of an American Catholicism. A History of Religion and Culture in Tension*, New York, 2002, p. 193.

<sup>57</sup> MASSA, *The American Catholic Revolution*, p. 15.

<sup>58</sup> James M. O’TOOLE, *The Faithful. A History of Catholics in America*, Cambridge MA – London, 2008, p. 199-221. For the case study of the diocese of Pittsburgh, see Timothy KELLY, *The Transformation of American Catholicism. The Pittsburgh Laity and the Second Vatican Council, 1950-1972*, Notre Dame IN, 2009.

<sup>59</sup> CHINNICI, *The Catholic Community at Prayer*, p. 83.

<sup>60</sup> Jay P. DOLAN, *The American Catholic Experience. A History from Colonial Times to the Present*, Notre Dame – London, 1992, p. 430.

liturgical reform made room for new ways of expressing the spirituality of Catholics. From the point of view of the history of the spirituality of American Catholics, James McCartin has identified with the period of the liturgical reform the passage from a prayer as crusade to a prayer that “becomes secular”, between the rise of “spiritual Catholicism” and the “fast-declining ideal of ‘institutional Catholicism’”.<sup>61</sup>

Between institutional Catholicism and spiritual Catholicism nostalgia works now, at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, much better towards for the former. Not surprisingly, during this last decade at least, a few voices in American Catholicism have also become more audible in their calling for a “reform of the reform” of Vatican II.<sup>62</sup> This phenomenon is part of the ethnically diverse and ideologically divided landscape of contemporary American Catholicism. But there is no way that the advocates of the “reform of the reform” can justify their wishes by saying that the council betrayed the expectations of the liturgical movement, nor that there is a substantial difference between the issues of the liturgical movement and the results of the liturgical reform.

### VATICAN II AND THE EUROPEAN ROOTS OF THE LITURGICAL MOVEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

We can clearly see the continuity between the issues of the liturgical movement *tout court* and the liturgical movement in the United States. The pre-Vatican II liturgical movement advocated the pastoral nature of the liturgy, the importance of liturgy for the missions, the use of the vernacular language, and the Eucharistic concelebration.<sup>63</sup> But the complexity of the sociological landscape of American Catholicism and its diverse national-ethnic origins provides the history of the liturgical reform with elements that are unknown in the history of modern European Catholicism. If the emphasis on the vernacular language was an old and common request from America,<sup>64</sup> the emphasis on the “dialogue mass” had been for a long time

<sup>61</sup> James P. McCARTIN, *Prayers of the Faithful. The Shifting Spiritual Life of American Catholics*, Cambridge MA and London, 2010, p. 101.

<sup>62</sup> See James LIKODIS and Kenneth D. WHITEHEAD, *The Pope, the Council, and the Mass. Answers to the Questions the ‘Traditionalists’ Are Asking*, preface by H. Lyman Stebbins, W. Hanover, Mass., 1981; Ralph M. MCINERNEY, *What Went Wrong with Vatican II. The Catholic Crisis Explained*, Manchester, N.H., 1998, p. 116, and Ralph M. MCINERNEY, *Liturgy in the true spirit of Vatican II*, in *AD2000 14/2* (March 2001), p. 20; George WEIGEL, *The Courage to Be Catholic. Crisis, Reform, and the Future of the Church*, New York, 2002, p. 186-189; Romanus CESSARIO, *The Sacraments of the Church*, in Matthew L. LAMB and Matthew LEVERING (eds.), *Vatican II. Renewal Within Tradition*, New York NY, 2008, p. 129-146; Kenneth D. WHITEHEAD, *Mass Misunderstandings. The Mixed Legacy of the Vatican II Liturgical Reforms*, South Bend, Ind., 2009. *Contra*, see John BALDOVIN, *Reforming the Liturgy. A Response to the Critics*, Collegeville MN, 2008; Massimo FAGGIOLI, *Sacrosanctum Concilium and the Meaning of Vatican II*, in *Theological Studies*, 71 (2010), p. 437-452.

<sup>63</sup> See André HAQUIN, *Le mouvement liturgique dans l’église catholique (19<sup>e</sup>-20<sup>e</sup> siècle)*, in Carlo BRAGA and Alessandro PISTOIA (eds.), *Les mouvements liturgiques. Corrélations entre pratiques et recherches*, Roma, 2004, p. 19-34.

<sup>64</sup> In 1946 it was founded the “St. Jerome Society” (secretary John Ross-Duggan), and in 1952-54 the initiative for some portions of the liturgy in English was pushed by the Vernacular Society and some US bishops; in June 1954 came the approval from Rome.

a conflicting issue between German-speaking immigrant advocates of the reform and immigrant devotions more typical of Tridentine Catholicism.<sup>65</sup>

The expectations of the liturgical movement in the United States matched the ones from the European liturgists (the “dialogue mass”, the use of the vernacular language), but it added at least one particular issue typical of the North American Catholic landscape and its background in Midwestern Catholicism with strong monastic ties: the participation in the liturgy of the hours, and the connection between the liturgical movement and social justice. The first issue, advocated especially by William Busch and Gerald Donnelly, argued that the liturgy of the hours belongs to the whole Church. The foundation of the “League of the Divine Office” was intended to show the social-communitarian character of Christianity, to lead people into the current of Church’s life, and to show a less egocentric form of prayer.<sup>66</sup> The second issue, liturgical movement and social justice, was part of the effort of the American faithful to exit from “ghetto Catholicism” of blue-collar workers and European immigrants, and make it more open to American culture and, at the same time, consistent with the genuine *counter-cultural* feature of American Catholicism. Already in the late 1920s Virgil Michel’s idea of liturgical movement was drawing on the ideas of Orestes Brownson about the relationship between Catholicism and American culture during the age of the Civil War,<sup>67</sup> that is, anti-individualism and equality of men and women: “In Michel’s opinion, one of the limits of the earlier European liturgical movement was that it lacked the justice dimension. While Beauduin was an obvious exception to this, Michel’s thesis was accurate”.<sup>68</sup> H.A. Reinhold’s articles in *Orate Fratres* (and later, in *Worship*) drew upon his contact with Dorothy Day and his advocacy for interracial justice.

What was typical of the cultural and theological identity of the pre-Vatican II liturgical movement in the United States was the history of the struggle of US Catholics—the “immigrant Church”—to be accepted in American culture, especially in the 50 years before Vatican II: the “roaring Twenties”, the Great Depression, the role of Catholic Action and Dorothy Day’s *Catholic Worker*. The particularity of the liturgical movement in the United States should be remembered—especially its unique geographical roots in the Midwest and the Upper Midwest and ethnic German origins: “It was Germans and German-Americans who were the first to grasp the intrinsic connection between liturgy and social justice. The movement, then, was more successful in the middle west, than on the east or west coasts, not because the area was more Protestant, but because it was more German”.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>65</sup> “The liturgical movement in this country has always maintained a cautious reserve on the subject of popular devotions [...] Liturgists have usually felt that popular devotions can pretty take care of themselves without any special help from the liturgical movement”: Andrew GREELEY, *Popular devotions. Friend or Foe?*, in *Worship*, 33 (1959), p. 569-573. The first “missa recitata” was celebrated in 1928 in St. Louis (MO) by the Sodality of Our Lady, mostly thanks to the work of Martin Hellriegel.

<sup>66</sup> See Daniel SHANAHAN, *The History and Reception of the Divine Office in Sacrosanctum concilium Among the Laity in the United States*, in *Cistercian Studies Quarterly*, 43 (2008), p. 161-175.

<sup>67</sup> See DOLAN, *In Search of an American Catholicism*, p. 47-70; John McGreevy, *Catholicism and American Freedom. A History*, New York, 2004, p. 43-90.

<sup>68</sup> PECKLERS, *The Unread Vision*, p. 134.

<sup>69</sup> PECKLERS, *The Unread Vision*, p. 283.



This particularity had to reckon not only with the dynamic of the marketplace of religions in America,<sup>70</sup> but also the with the momentous history of a Catholicism thriving and changing between World War II and the 1960: a cultural and social universe far more promising and hopeful than the Catholic ghetto celebrated in Elia Kazan's movie *The Waterfront*.<sup>71</sup> The chronological coincidence between the liturgical reform of Vatican II and the end of the ghetto helped bridging the gap within the liturgical movement in the United States between the more theological Benedictine line and the line advocating "active participation" not in opposition to popular devotions.

### THE ISSUES OF THE LITURGICAL MOVEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AND THE LITURGICAL REFORM

The liturgical reform in the United States was met by almost unanimous support. The journal *Worship*, thanks to Frederick McManus especially, kept nourishing American Catholics about the riches of the "new Mass" during and after the conclusion of Vatican II:<sup>72</sup> "Frederick McManus played a crucial role, arguably *the* most crucial role played by any single individual, in mediating the extraordinarily positive reception of the new Mass in the United States".<sup>73</sup>

If it is true that the liturgical debate and the beginning of the reform were satisfying for the liturgical movement, the reform could not embrace all of the issues coming from the movement in the United States. But it is also clear that the liturgical movement grew in its consciousness of the theological stakes of the reform: from the 1930s to the 1950s and finally to the era of Vatican II, the ecclesiological impact of the liturgical reform became more clear to the advocates of the liturgical reform assumed in its pastoral value: "The basis for liturgical renewal was a new theology of the Church. It was a more biblical, less institutional, type of theology, which emphasized the spiritual nature of Catholicism. Its focus was Jesus Christ, not the saints; its chief prayer was the Mass, not the novena; it encouraged a social spirit, rather than individualism; it sought to foster community, rather than isolation; it stressed the public quality of religion, not the private".<sup>74</sup>

In this respect, it is clear that while the bishops supported the agenda of the liturgical movement in its more suitable parts not only for the pastoral and theological renewal of the liturgy, but also for the "marketing" of American Catholicism, less visible support came from the bishops before and at Vatican II for the special link seen by the advocates of the movement between liturgical renewal and social justice. They remained part of the background, of the "political" understanding of conciliar

<sup>70</sup> See Roger FINK and Rodney STARK, *The Churching of America, 1776-2005. Winners and Losers in Our Religious Economy*, New Brunswick NJ, 2005<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>71</sup> See James T. FISHER, *On the Irish Waterfront. The Crusader, the Movie, and the Soul of the Port of New York*, Ithaca NY, 2009.

<sup>72</sup> See Teresa BERGER, *Die nachkonziliare Liturgiereform in den USA*, in Martin KLOCKENER and Benedikt KRANEMANN (eds.), *Liturgiereformen. Historische Studien zu einem bleibenden Grundzug des christlichen Gottesdienstes*, Münster, 2002, p. 951-964.

<sup>73</sup> MASSA, *The American Catholic Revolution*, p. 25.

<sup>74</sup> DOLAN, *The American Catholic Experience*, p. 392.

Catholicism, able to enter the mainstream of American culture. In this sense, the disappearing of this element of the liturgical renewal from the liturgical debate at Vatican II was concealed on one side by the early beginning of the liturgical reform, in late 1964, *concilio durante*, and on the other side by the diverting of these calls for social justice coming from politically active Catholicism following the “civil rights movement”, which was gaining momentum exactly during the same years of debate and preparation of the liturgical reform in which Catholics played a significant role.

On the other hand, the outcomes of the liturgical reform gave way to the issues of the theological and cultural views of the US liturgical movement in its monastic and non-Irish roots, forcing the other national Catholic identities of the American “immigrant Church” to catch up with the novelty of a reform whose Christocentrism was pushing aside the Tridentine devotions of the national and local saints supposed to meet “the emotional and moral needs of a population that had emigrated”.<sup>75</sup>

### RESSOURCEMENT, RAPPROCHEMENT, RENEWAL: THE US CASE AS A SIGNIFICANT FACET OF THE LITURGICAL REFORM OF VATICAN II

The five-volume *History of Vatican II* edited by Giuseppe Alberigo provided new information about the key role of the liturgical debate within the council and about the dynamics of the preparatory and conciliar liturgical commissions.<sup>76</sup> Nevertheless, a few studies on *Sacrosanctum concilium* published almost concurrently with the *History* focused on an alleged “ideological” continuity between the early 20<sup>th</sup> century liturgical movement and *Sacrosanctum concilium*, and thus they overlooked the impact of the constitution on Vatican II as such. The main allegation brought against the liturgical movement is, in brief, that it prepared the liturgical reform not on the basis of a profound theological rationale (*ressourcement*, *rapprochement*, renewal), but on the mere basis of the need to “reconquer” a Christian society on the verge of falling into the hands of secularization and modernity after the shock of the French Revolution and the liberal culture of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The anti-modern and “ideological drive” of the liturgical movement still needs to be convincingly demonstrated for the European case. But that is certainly not the case for the American liturgical movement, in which the issue at stake was certainly not the reaction against secularization, especially in the United States embedded in the political, cultural, and devotional environment of the Cold War in the 1940s and 1950s, and in a Church that was thriving. In this respect, the case of the liturgical movement and of the liturgical reform in America proves essential in understanding the real nature of Vatican II and its goals. Belittling the value of the liturgical reform for the Church in the United States means belittling the history of Catholicism

<sup>75</sup> Robert A. ORSI, *The Madonna of the 115<sup>th</sup> Street. Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880-1950*, New Haven – London, 1985, p. 163.

<sup>76</sup> Maria PAIANO, *Il rinnovamento della liturgia. Dai movimenti alla chiesa universale...*; Mathijs LAMBERIGTS, *The Liturgy Debate*, in Giuseppe ALBERIGO (ed.), *History of Vatican II*, English version edited by Joseph A. KOMONCHAK, Vol. 2: *The Formation of the Council's Identity, First Period and Intersession, October 1962–September 1963*, Maryknoll NY – Leuven, 1997, p. 107-166; Reiner KACZINSKY, *Toward the Reform of the Liturgy*, in *History of Vatican II*, Vol. 3: *The Mature Council, Second Period and Intersession, September 1963–September 1964*, p. 192-256.

in 20<sup>th</sup> century United States and its transition from the “immigrant Church” to a Church at ease both with its cultural and counter-cultural message.

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## THE LITURGICAL MOVEMENT IN GERMANY AND THE LOW COUNTRIES

“Die liturgische Bewegung geht es um die Vertiefung christliches Lebens”<sup>1</sup> With this sentence, Theodor Maas-Ewerd, a great connoisseur of the liturgical movement in Germany, makes clear that the basic insight of the promoters of the liturgical movement was that liturgy has to do with a promotion and deepening of Christian life, Christian life being much more than a functional, juridically based participation in rites, celebrated by the priest, without real involvement of the faithful or consequences for one’s daily life. To put it a bit more bluntly: going to mass challenges and inspires the faithful and thus requires the active participation of all the faithful in it. Therefore, it is not something typical for the Roman Catholic Church, but is also present in the Protestant Churches, where this striving toward participation of the faithful is the result of a reaction against the overemphasis on the preaching as the essence of the celebration.<sup>2</sup> In any case, the concern for the celebration of Christian life is the essence of the liturgical movement. In that sense, it is much more the result of practical experiences than of theological insights. In this line-of-thought, theology clearly comes after the liturgical experiences of the faithful. The liturgical movement can certainly be considered as a stimulus of, among others, the study of the Bible or the Fathers, but is probably not its foundation, as suggested by Cardinal Frings in 1962.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Theodor MAAS-EWERD, *Liturgische Bewegung (LB)*. Vol. I: *Katholische Kirche*, in *LThK*<sup>3</sup> 6, cc. 992-993, c. 992.

<sup>2</sup> Hans-Christoph SCHMIDT-LAUBER, *Liturgische Bewegung*. Vol. II: *Kirchen der Reformation*, in *LThK*<sup>3</sup> 6, cc. 993-994 (with further literature).

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Frings’ interview *Le concile et la pensée moderne*, in *Documentation catholique*, February 18, 1962, c. 266, quoted in Étienne FOUILLOUX, ‘Mouvements théologico-spirituels et concile (1959-1962)’, in Mathijs LAMBERIGTS and Claude SOETENS (eds.), *À la veille du Concile Vatican II. Vota et réactions en Europe et dans le catholicisme oriental*, Leuven, 1992, p. 185-199, p. 185 with a critical comment of Fouilloux; see p. 186-187.

### ITS ORIGINS<sup>4</sup>

The beginning of the liturgical movement is most often connected to the lecture of Dom Lambert Beauduin (1873-1960)<sup>5</sup> at the Catholic Congress of Malines of 1909, a lecture entitled *La vraie prière de l'Église*.<sup>6</sup> This is the case not only for Belgium or the Netherlands, but also for Germany.<sup>7</sup> In this speech, held within the context of a conference, organized by Catholic Action, Beauduin stressed that liturgy should be something in which the whole faithful community should be involved, in fact the second element of Pius X's *motu proprio*, *Tra le sollicitudini*, from November 22, 1903, the first being a plea in favour of the promotion of Gregorian chant. Indeed, *Tra le sollicitudini* mainly dealt with church music and the idea of active participation of the faithful, although this was long awaited for in France for example, it was still only mentioned in passing.<sup>8</sup> The technical term *actuosa participatio* was not even present in the official Latin text. It was only mentioned in the Italian text of Pius X, in fact an instruction which was initially intended for the Diocese of Rome:<sup>9</sup> *attiva partecipazione*.<sup>10</sup> In his *motu proprio*, Pius X wanted to make a tribute to Dom Prosper-Louis-Pascal Guéranger (1805-1875),<sup>11</sup> promoter of a Benedictine reform movement, during his youth a good friend of de La Mennais, later an Ultramontanist and in this context a great promoter of the Roman liturgy and Gregorian chant.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The literature about the liturgical movement is abundant; see, e.g., the surveys of Olivier ROUSSEAU, *Histoire du mouvement liturgique*, Paris, 1945; ROUSSEAU, *Rond het jubileum van de Liturgische Beweging – 1909-1959*, in *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*, 43 (1959), p. 345-361; André HAQUIN (ed.), *Le centenaire du Mouvement liturgique de Louvain. Congrès liturgique de Ciney 2-3 octobre 2009*, in *Questions Liturgiques*, 91 (2010), p. 5-96. At the very beginning, some of the promoters of liturgy preferred to speak about liturgical renewal in stead of liturgical movement. See Theodor MAAS-EWERD, *Was wollte die Liturgische Bewegung? Zu den liturgischen Entwicklungen in den Jahren zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen*, in *Erbe und Auftrag*, 69 (1993), p. 223-246, p. 227-228.

<sup>5</sup> The best biography on Dom Beauduin is, without any doubt, Raymond LOONBEEK and Jacques MORTIAU, *Un pionnier. Dom Lambert Beauduin (1873-1960). Liturgie et Unité des chrétiens*, 2 Vols. Louvain-la-Neuve, 2002. It should be said that, long before Beauduin started his action, many changes in liturgy were underway, as is made clear in Rousseau's *Histoire du mouvement liturgique*.

<sup>6</sup> For an analysis, see, among others, André HAQUIN, *Dom Lambert Beauduin et le renouveau liturgique*, Gembloux, 1970, p. 92-109.

<sup>7</sup> Victor LEEMANS, *Over Romano Guardini*, s.l., 2005, p. 193-221, p. 204. This part of Leemans' book is a slightly revised version of his *Romano Guardini (1885-1968) en de liturgie*, in *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*, 69 (1985), p. 322-337.

<sup>8</sup> Jean-Yves HAMELINE, *L'intérêt pour le chant des fidèles dans le catholicisme français d'Ancien Régime et le premier mouvement liturgique en France*, in *La Maison-Dieu*, 241 (2005: *La participation active*), p. 29-76.

<sup>9</sup> For the details, see Jozef LAMBERTS, *L'évolution de la notion de "participation active" dans le mouvement liturgique du vingtième siècle*, in *La Maison-Dieu*, 241 (2005), p. 79-80; 84-86.

<sup>10</sup> Paul DE CLERCK, *Actieve deelname. Liturgiehistorisch overzicht van Pius X tot Vaticanum II*, in Jozef LAMBERTS (ed.), *De actieve deelname aan de liturgie herbekeken. Honderd jaar na Pius X en veertig jaar na het Concilie*, Leuven, 2004, p. 15-39, p. 17-19.

<sup>11</sup> The literature about Guéranger is abundant; see, e.g., André HAQUIN, *Dom Lambert Beauduin et le congrès des œuvres catholiques de Malines. À l'occasion du centenaire du Mouvement liturgique belge (1909-2009)*, in *Questions Liturgiques*, 91 (2010), p. 18-36, see p. 19, n. 4 for further references.

<sup>12</sup> With regard to Solesmes' important contribution to the revaluation of the Gregorian Chant, see, e.g. Jean-Paul PENSON, *Les restaurations du chant grégorien à travers l'histoire*, in Paul CADRIN and Gilles ROUTHIER (eds.), *La liturgie en quête de sa musique*, Montréal-Paris, 2007, p. 11-45, esp. p. 38-40.



Guéranger was convinced that a return to the sources would be the optima course for the liturgical life.<sup>13</sup> Guéranger, as is known, was a strong opponent of French local liturgies and experiments.<sup>14</sup> He did not really like the rather popular way in which people celebrated liturgical events. He clearly aimed at a restoration of the liturgy, certainly not a reform.<sup>15</sup> Guéranger's *Année liturgique* was meant as a liturgical teaching, not only for the Benedictines, but also for priests and well educated laity, in other words the intellectual elite.<sup>16</sup> I mention this because his view on the liturgical renewal is only one side of the coin, the other being the popular liturgical movement as promoted by Pius Parsch c.s. Between these two approaches, there will be, up to the time of the council, a difference which, in a sense, would also characterize the conciliar debates.<sup>17</sup> However, both have their roots in the Romantic return to the "Christian" Middle Ages.<sup>18</sup>

### DOM BEAUDUIN : A SECULAR PRIEST BECOMES A BENEDICTINE

In 1906, Beauduin joined the Benedictine abbey of Keizersberg (Louvain).<sup>19</sup> This abbey is to be situated within the context of the German Benedictine movement. In 1863, Beuron was reopened by Solesmes. Beuron founded Maredsous (Belgium) in 1872 and it was Maredsous that started with a new community at Leuven in 1899.<sup>20</sup> Beuron started with a Benedictine community at Maria Laach. Although the protest of the Protestants was rather vehement, the emperor, Wilhelm II, did not intervene,<sup>21</sup> but rather supported the new community, proof that the emperor appreciated or at

<sup>13</sup> See also Martin KLÖCKENER, *La dynamique du mouvement liturgique et de la réforme liturgique. Point communs et différences théologiques et spirituelles*, in *La Maison-Dieu*, 260 (2009/4), p. 69-109, p. 74-76.

<sup>14</sup> In this regard, see the critical remarks of Anselm ROBEYNS, *Bedenkingen bij een half-eeuwfeest*, in *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*, 43 (1959), p. 365-374, p. 366.

<sup>15</sup> See KLÖCKENER, *La dynamique*, p. 76-77.

<sup>16</sup> HAQUIN, *Dom L. Beauduin et le congrès*, p. 20.

<sup>17</sup> It is interesting to see that during Vatican II the abbot of Solesmes will become a member of the conservative *Coetus internationalis partium*, a group animated by, among others, Msgr. Marcel Lefebvre; see Joseph FAMERÉE, *Bishops and Dioceses and the Communications Media (November 5-25, 1963)*, in Giuseppe ALBERIGO and Joseph A. KOMONCHAK (eds.), *History of Vatican II. Vol. III: The Mature Council. Second Period and Intersession. September 1963-September 1964*, Maryknoll-Leuven, 2000, p. 170-171.

<sup>18</sup> So Floridius RÖHRIG, *Pius Parsch und die biblisch-liturgische Erneuerung im historischen Kontext*, in Winfried BACHLER, Rudolf PACIK, Andreas REDTENBACHER (eds.), *Pius Parsch in der liturgiewissenschaftlichen Rezeption. Klosterneuburger Symposion 2004* (Pius-Parsch-Studien. Quellen und Forschungen zur Liturgischen Bewegung, B. 3), Würzburg, 2005, p. 19-26, p. 19. See also KLÖCKENER, *La dynamique*, p. 69-109.

<sup>19</sup> On the influence of the then prior of the Abbey, Columba Marmion (1858-1923), an Irishman, see François WERNERT, *Dom Lambert Beauduin et sa vision de la "pastorale liturgique"*, in *La Maison-Dieu*, 260 (2009/4), p. 17-35, p. 20-22

<sup>20</sup> Maredsous already started with the promotion of liturgical ideas in 1882; the *Messenger des fidèles* (predecessor of the *Revue bénédictine*), founded by Dom van Caloen (1853-1932) in 1884, wanted "to rapprocher les fidèles de l'Église leur Mère; leur faire goûter et les leur faisant connaître, les traditions, les enseignements, les rites de l'Église"; see Bernard CAPELLE, *Rapport sur le mouvement liturgique belge en Wallonie*, in *Les Questions Liturgiques et Paroissiales*, 15 (1930), p. 228-240, p. 229.

<sup>21</sup> See Albert HAUSSLING, *Kirchliche Erneuerung aus dem Geist der Liturgie. II. Die betende Kirche*, in *Erbe und Auftrag*, 68 (1992), p. 22-33, p. 22.

least accepted Roman Catholicism. All abbeys would become centres of renewal of monastic life, Gregorian chant, sacred art and the biblical and spiritual liturgy. Especially at Keizersberg, the abbey Beauduin will join in 1906, emphasis was put on historical, biblical and theological deepening of liturgical understanding.

Before entering the abbey, Beauduin had been a priest of the diocese of Liège and then joined the newly founded *Aumôniers du Travail*, a congregation that was wholeheartedly supported by Bishop Doutreloux (1837-1901), for it was a congregation that worked among the working-class and attempted to spread the Christian message in a group which seemed to be lost for the Church.<sup>22</sup> In other words, Beauduin was actively involved in pastoral work for young labourers.<sup>23</sup> This engagement among the workers was the reason why Cardinal Mercier asked Beauduin to take the floor at the 1909 conference of Catholic Action at Malines.<sup>24</sup> The title of Beauduin's Malines conference, *La vraie prière de l'Église*, made very clear what he had in mind, a 'no' to a juridical approach, to suffocating rubrics, a 'yes' to the real encounter with God. The title can also be read as a critique about the many devotions that had overrun true sacramental life.<sup>25</sup> Many of the concerns of the liturgical movement were present in his speech: renewal of liturgical life, promotion of the unity of the Church (liturgy as a "puissant lien d'union"), liturgy as community building and education, translation of the Latin texts and diffusion of them in the vernacular, in order that the faithful would understand what was being prayed. In other words, more than several of his successors, Beauduin was motivated by a pastoral concern.<sup>26</sup>

From the very beginning, Beauduin was confronted with resistance, which also came from within his own order. The Benedictine J. Picard anonymously published a critique on Beauduin's ideas in the Catholic journal *La patriote* (September, 1912), a

<sup>22</sup> Olivier ROUSSEAU, *Rond het jubileum van de Liturgische Beweging – 1909-1959*, in *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*, 43 (1959), p. 345-361, p. 349-350.

<sup>23</sup> LOONBEEK and MORTIAU, *Un pionnier, Dom Lambert Beauduin (1873-1960)*, p. 26-37.

<sup>24</sup> That holding such a speech was not evident, has been made clear by ROUSSEAU, *Rond het jubileum van de Liturgische Beweging*, p. 346-347.

<sup>25</sup> HAQUIN, *Dom L. Beauduin et le congrès*, p. 24-25. However, it should be said that devotional practices at home were very much promoted. It goes without saying that the faithful, stimulated to implement such practices at home, were not really invited to be actively involved in the liturgical celebrations. In a sense, they continued to do in the Church what they were expected to do at home. In the regions under discussion, the veneration of the Holy Heart of Jesus is a good example. It was used by Catholics in France, Germany, and the Netherlands as a means to show their own identity in times of crisis; statues could be found in every house; paintings were made of it, and the neo-gothic style certainly created a sympathy for these practices; see Louis VAN TONGEREN, *From Liturgical Movement to Liturgy on the Move: the Reform of the Liturgy and the Development of Liturgical Studies in the Roman Catholic Netherlands in the Twentieth Century*, in VAN TONGEREN, Marcel BARNARD, PAUL POST and Gerard ROUWHORST (eds.), *Patterns and Persons. A Historiography of Liturgical Studies in the Netherlands in the Twentieth Century*, Leuven, Paris, Walpole MA, 2010, p. 25-68, p. 29-31. Justified as Beauduin's critique might be, it was, in the context of the time, rather revolutionary and thus vulnerable to critique.

<sup>26</sup> His approach is sometimes characterized as "Demokratisierung der liturgie"; see RÖHRIG, *Pius Parsch*, p. 20, with reference to Balthasar FISCHER, *Das "Mechelner Ereignis" vom 23 September 1909*, in *Liturgisches Jahrbuch*, 9 (1959), p. 203-219. See also LAMBERTS, *L'évolution de la notion de "participation active"*, p. 91. With regard to the several concepts Beauduin used when speaking about the liturgical renewal, see, e.g. WERNERT, *Dom Lambert Beauduin et sa vision*, p. 22-25; see also KLÖCKENER, *La dynamique du mouvement liturgique et de la réforme liturgique*, p. 79-80 (with further literature).

journal published in Brussels.<sup>27</sup> According to these critiques, the liturgical movement was considered to be a threat to popular devotions. Moreover, the critics had the impression that the movement was elitist. The Jesuits criticized the holistic character of the liturgical spirituality, so characteristic for the Benedictines and considered it as a rival to their own Ignatian spirituality.<sup>28</sup>

In his development of a liturgical movement, Beauduin was ambitious, perhaps too ambitious. Indeed, Beauduin's attempt to develop a liturgical institute would fail, even though he wanted leading theologians to be involved in it. The following names read as a programme: Mgr. Batiffol, the Bollandist Delehaye, Prof. Cauchie, founder of the *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*, Mgr. Callewaert, famous liturgist and president of the Seminary of Bruges, Dom Berlière, founder of the Monasticon Belge, Dom Morin, famous editor of patristic texts. The project failed because of financial reasons but also because of the indiscretions of Mgr. Callewaert, part time professor at the Louvain theological faculty. As a result of these indiscretions, the university of Louvain immediately organized a course on liturgy,<sup>29</sup> and the idea to create a liturgical institute had to be postponed momentarily. A successful initiative was the creation in 1910 of *Les Questions liturgiques*<sup>30</sup> and the *Liturgisch Tijdschrift*, the latter being administered by the abbey of Affligem.<sup>31</sup> After an interruption of 4 years (WW I), both would continue from 1919 onwards.

Partly because of the critique as mentioned above, Beauduin wanted to make clear that he was simply implementing what he considered to be the programme of Pius X.<sup>32</sup> In 1914, he published his book *La piété de l'Église. Principes et faits*. On the cover of this book, he put Pius X's quote about active participation, thus making clear to the reader whose ideas he was following. The book was a complaint about the ignorance and complete alienation of the faithful with regard to the liturgy.<sup>33</sup> In this regard, one should remember that at the time of Pius X, it was a widely spread custom that the faithful received the communion apart from the Eucharist or at the beginning of the Eucharist. In other words, communion and Eucharist were separated. After the Great War, Dom Beauduin left for Rome, where he became professor of ecclesiology. The German abbey of Maria Laach took over the lead, but one should immediately add that the interest in liturgy was growing everywhere in Europe and the United States.

<sup>27</sup> Beauduin's reaction was published in *Questions Liturgiques*, 2 (1911-1912), p. 529-536; with regard to Picard, see LOONBEEK-MORTIAU, *Un pionnier, Dom Lambert Beauduin (1873-1960)*, p. 136-137.

<sup>28</sup> See ROUSSEAU, *Rond het jubileum van de Liturgische Beweging*, p. 354-355; HAQUIN, *Dom L. Beauduin et le congrès*, p. 31-33.

<sup>29</sup> HAQUIN, *Dom L. Beauduin et le congrès*, p. 29-30.

<sup>30</sup> After World War I, it will get a new title: *Questions Liturgiques et Paroissiales*. Up to 1924, the revue seems to be meant for the clergy only. However, the subtitle *Revue réservée pour le clergé* will disappear in 1925.

<sup>31</sup> The *Liturgisch tijdschrift* was in fact the successor of *Het Kerkelijk Leven*, the Dutch translation of *La vie liturgique*, started in 1909; see Joseph VAN DER SPEETEN, *Het volksmisboek van de abdij Affligem (1915-1965)*, in *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*, 67 (1983), p. 309-317, p. 309.

<sup>32</sup> With regard to Beauduin's ideas about a liturgical renewal under the guidance of Rome, see, e.g. WERNERT, *Dom Lambert Beauduin et sa vision*, p. 28-29.

<sup>33</sup> Lambert BEAUDUIN, *La piété de l'Église*, Louvain, 1914, p. 17.

One of the initiatives undertaken by the promoters of the active participation of the faithful was the development of the personal missal. In such a missal, the liturgical texts were offered in translation in order to help the faithful to understand what was said by the priest in Latin. The idea was certainly not new.<sup>34</sup> What was new, however, was that the personal missal was comprehensive.<sup>35</sup> The promoters of this missal were of the opinion that it should be of help for a liturgy with dialogue in it, a concept and term that seems to be used for the first time in 1914.<sup>36</sup> During the first years, the idea was confronted with much resistance, as one can read in the articles and books published by the promoters of the idea. Moreover, during the inter-bellum period, the idea of the common priesthood of the faithful, which could have been the theological underpinning of the active participation of the faithful, was not approved, let alone accepted. Indeed, at that time, priesthood and ministry were not yet distinguished and the idea of the common priesthood of the faithful was considered to be a threat for the sacrament of the priesthood, which was at the time described in terms of “consecration power”.<sup>37</sup>

### DEVELOPMENTS IN BELGIUM

By way of introduction, it should be said that, from the very beginning, the liturgical movement was wholeheartedly supported by Cardinal Mercier who, in line with the intuitions of Pius X, stressed the importance of liturgical chants, active participation in the Eucharist and the like.<sup>38</sup> But what were considered to be the main problems the liturgical movement was confronted with? The first complaint was about the absence of an adequate liturgical education. Liturgical training in the seminaries should be more than an introduction into the rubrics.<sup>39</sup> Liturgical training in primary and secondary schools seemed, generally speaking, to not exist.<sup>40</sup>

Especially after WW I, a central role in the development of the ideas of the liturgical movement was played by journals such as *Questions liturgiques et paroissiales*<sup>41</sup> and the *Liturgisch Tijdschrift*, both resuming in 1919. While *Questions liturgiques* was edited by Keizerberg, the *Liturgisch Tijdschrift* was the work of the abbey of Affligem, now responsible for both editorial work and administration. Also, the title had changed: *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie (Journal for Liturgy)*.<sup>42</sup> Up to the beginning of the Second World War, the journal was confronted with quite a number of challenges. During the

<sup>34</sup> One may think of the missal, published by Anselm Schott (1843-1896) in 1883; see Albert HAUSSLING, *Einhundert Jahre “Schott”. Anselm Schott und sein Messbuch*, in *Erbe und Auftrag*, 59 (1983), p. 342-352; for other examples, see KLÖCKENER, *La dynamique du mouvement*.

<sup>35</sup> DE CLERCK, *Actieve deelname*, p. 20. Schott was indeed mostly used by intellectuals; see RÖHRIG, *Pius Parsch*, p. 19-20.

<sup>36</sup> RÖHRIG, *Pius Parsch*, p. 19-20.

<sup>37</sup> DE CLERCK, *Actieve deelname*, p. 25-26.

<sup>38</sup> See HAQUIN, *Dom Lambert Beauduin et le renouveau liturgique*, p. 81-109.

<sup>39</sup> CAPELLE, *Rapport sur le mouvement liturgique belge en Wallonie*, p. 235.

<sup>40</sup> CAPELLE, *Rapport sur le mouvement liturgique belge en Wallonie*, p. 235-236.

<sup>41</sup> In 1970, the title will be changed into *Questions Liturgiques*.

<sup>42</sup> See AMBROOS VERHEUL, *Hoe de abdij Affligem in de liturgische beweging kwam*, in *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*, 43 (1959), p. 362-364.

Great War, in 1915 was founded the Federation of Liturgical Associations (Federatie van Liturgische Verenigingen in Nederland), which had started its own journal, the *Monthly for Liturgy* (*Maandschrift voor Liturgie*) —the journal was soon free of charge—,<sup>43</sup> later called *Our Liturgical Journal* (*Ons Liturgisch Tijdschrift*). Also in Belgium, a series of liturgical journals came into existence after the Great War. The abbey Saint-André at Loppem started with its *Bulletin Paroissial Liturgique*,<sup>44</sup> and its Dutch pendant (*Liturgisch parochieblad*). Given the fact that the abbey at Loppem was mainly a French-speaking community, the Dutch edition was handed over to the Dutch speaking abbey Saint Peter at Steenbrugge. The journal —its name was changed in 1941 into *Church and People* (*Kerk en Volk*), after World War II joined the ranks of *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*, just like *Eucharistisch Tijdschrift*. This journal was founded by the Premonstratensian abbey of Tongerlo in 1922. In other words, there was, between the two World Wars, much interest in liturgy, but collaboration between the different abbeys did not really seem to be a concern of those who took the initiative, something that evidently would change after World War II. In any case, it should be stressed that in a rather small country such as Belgium, the journals *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*, *Questions liturgiques*, and *Bulletin Paroissial Liturgique* remained key players within the context of the liturgical movement up to Vatican II.

As already mentioned above, the publication of personal missals played an essential role in the spread of the liturgical movement. In this regard, Belgium played an important role.<sup>45</sup> Promoters of this type of missal were abbeys such as Keizersberg (Louvain), Clervaux (Luxembourg), Affligem (Brabant) and publishers such as Desclée and Brepols.<sup>46</sup> The missal of Affligem, for the first time published by Dom Franco de Wyels in 1915,<sup>47</sup> became a huge success, a proof that the initial resistance soon had disappeared (already in 1930, the 75.000<sup>th</sup> copy was published).

Another way in which the liturgical movement tried to correct the ignorance in *liturgicis* was the organization of liturgical weeks, and this from the very beginning. Indeed, already in 1910, such a week was organized at Louvain. For the inter-bellum period we count 24 Dutch-language study weeks, organized both in Belgium and the Netherlands and clearly in close collaboration between the two countries. In the organisation of such weeks, the Norbertine abbey of Tongerlo (province of Antwerp

<sup>43</sup> H. LAUWAERT, *Verslag over de methoden van Liturgische Actie in Nederland*, in *Les Questions Liturgiques et Paroissiales*, 15 (1930), p. 261-272, p. 263.

<sup>44</sup> This journal was very successful and had in 1930 about 7500 subscriptions; see CAPELLE, *Rapport sur le mouvement liturgique belge en Wallonie*, p. 235. After World War II, the title of the journal was changed into *Paroisse et Liturgie*. The subtitle *Revue d'action pastorale et liturgique* can be read as a program.

<sup>45</sup> LAMBERTS, *L'évolution de la notion de "participation active"*, p. 94-95.

<sup>46</sup> See, e.g., THIERRY MAERTENS, *Le mouvement liturgique en Belgique*, in *Lumen Vitae*, 10 (1955), p. 413-420 (415). It is amazing to see how many publishers were involved in the spread of liturgical books during the interbellum; see the examples as given by Modest VAN ASSCHE, *Verslag over de Liturgische beweging in Vlaanderen* in *Les Questions Liturgiques et Paroissiales*, 15 (1930), p. 215-227 (221), and CAPELLE, *Rapport sur le mouvement liturgique belge en Wallonie*, p. 234-235.

<sup>47</sup> With regard to the origin, development and international spread of this so-called *Volksmisboek*, see VAN DER SPEETEN, *Het volksmisboek van de abdij Affligem*, p. 310-317; other successful initiatives were the *Zondagmisboek* (Keizersberg and Affligem) and the so-called *Liturgische Volksbibliotheek*, with publications about the Holy Week, the Liturgy for the deceased, only to mention a few; see VAN ASSCHE, *Verslag over de Liturgische beweging in Vlaanderen*, p. 220-221.

but during the period under consideration still part of the Archdiocese of Malines-Brussels) was of great importance. Further, the abbey played a stimulating role in the so called “Misweken” (Mass weeks). The idea was to react against disinterest and ignorance *in liturgicis*. In a sense, it was a kind of training programme for the faithful in the parishes, explaining to them the basics of liturgy. One gets the impression that less study weeks were organized in the French-speaking part of the country, most of them having been organised in Louvain.<sup>48</sup> Another initiative, in fact the result of the publication of *Divini cultus* (1928), was the organisation of “parochieweken” (“parish weeks”, an initiative that wanted to increase the active participation of the faithful in the liturgy).<sup>49</sup> In any case, much time and energy was invested in liturgical formation. In this formation, liturgical associations played a crucial role. Hundreds of these associations were created for priests, professors in theology, choirs, acolytes, sextons.<sup>50</sup> Some of them already existed before 1909. Needless to say that coordinating associations became a necessity (such associations were founded in 1915 in the Netherlands,<sup>51</sup> 1928 in Belgium).<sup>52</sup> One can say that during the inter-bellum period practically every group, involved in the liturgy, had its own organization.<sup>53</sup> These organisations continued to exist after World War II.

But, at least in this period, it remained a mostly religious orders issue. Although this survey might give the impression that the main actors in the Belgian liturgical movements were religious, one should mention that also a few secular priests were interested in this movement, the most important being Mgr. C. Callewaert, president of the Major Seminary of Bruges, sometimes described as the leader of a movement for which Keizersberg was the start.<sup>54</sup> Already in 1907, thus before the real start of the liturgical movement, he had founded a liturgical study group of priests. The group was concerned about how the faithful could be given a solid liturgical formation. In 1913/14, Callewaert published an article about the active participation of the faithful.<sup>55</sup> Among the Flemish secular clergy, it was, at least in the period between the two World Wars, certainly the clergy of Bruges that showed the most interest in the liturgical renewal.<sup>56</sup> In the French-speaking part of the country, several initiatives

<sup>48</sup> Erik Godfried FEYS (ed.), *Liturgisch Tijdschrift – Tijdschrift voor Liturgie: een liturgisch panorama 1910-1946*, Affligem, 1986, p. 224-225.

<sup>49</sup> For the details, see LAMBERTS, *L'évolution de la notion de “participation active”*, p. 100-101.

<sup>50</sup> Still in 1930, one could hear complaints about lack of formation of the sextons and the acolytes in order to be able to fully participate in the liturgical movement; see VAN ASSCHE, *Verslag over de Liturgische beweging in Vlaanderen*, p. 222-223.

<sup>51</sup> Diocesan liturgical associations were already founded in 1911 and 1912; see LAUWAERT, *Verslag over de methoden van Liturgische Actie in Nederland*, p. 262.

<sup>52</sup> There were two committees, one Dutch and one French, who seemingly well worked together; see CAPELLE, *Rapport sur le mouvement liturgique belge en Wallonie*, p. 238-239.

<sup>53</sup> FEYS, *Liturgisch Tijdschrift – Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*, p. 225-227.

<sup>54</sup> VAN ASSCHE, *Verslag over de Liturgische beweging in Vlaanderen*, p. 218-219.

<sup>55</sup> With regard to Callewaert's impressive bibliography, see *De geschriften van Mgr. C. Callewaert*, in *Sacris Erudiri*, 1 (1948), p. 353-379; concerning other protagonists of the movement among the secular clergy in Belgium, see ROBEYNS, *Bedenkingen bij een half-eeuwfeest*, p. 371-372.

<sup>56</sup> VAN ASSCHE, *Verslag over de Liturgische beweging in Vlaanderen*, p. 219; FEYS, *Liturgisch Tijdschrift – Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*, p. 207.



were taken, especially with regard to Gregorian chant. Other initiatives were, e.g., the *Journée liturgique paroissiale* in Liège, explicitly intended for both clergy and laity. Its aim was to stimulate the active participation of all in the liturgical services, although one still gets the impression that the direction was expected to be in the hands of the clergy.<sup>57</sup>

The liturgical movement was, from its very beginning, clearly related to Catholic Action.<sup>58</sup> In a period of crisis (1936), the then bishop of Liège related both the liturgical movement and Catholic Action to the struggle against Marxism, combining the *ora* of the liturgy with the *labora* of the Catholic apostolate. Although the bishop considered prayer more important than apostolate, he was of the opinion that both belonged to the essence of the Church's mission. Both had to do with the social duties of the members of the Church. The bishop was aware of the tensions between the two: often people engaged in the Catholic apostolate were considered as not really being of help for the life of the parishes. However, the Catholic Youth Movements were, according to the bishop, excellent places for the liturgical training of the youth.<sup>59</sup> Given the authoritarian spirit of the time, it will be no surprise that the bishop stressed the importance of absolute obedience of the laity to the hierarchy.<sup>60</sup> Lay people involved in Catholic Action should implement what was ordered by the hierarchy. Mgr. Kerkhofs of Liège — a great supporter of the liturgical movement —<sup>61</sup> considered both liturgical movement and Catholic Action as valuable instruments in the struggle against Marxism.<sup>62</sup> Both could be fruitful for the Christian life, at least if lay people perfectly obeyed the ecclesiastical hierarchy.<sup>63</sup> Anyway, during the interbellum there was lay interest in the liturgical developments, but it only became visible in areas such as music — although still in 1930, people complained about the slowness with regard to this musical renewal<sup>64</sup> — and architecture.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>57</sup> CAPELLE, *Rapport sur le mouvement liturgique belge en Wallonie*, p. 232-233.

<sup>58</sup> One should not neglect the impact of Pius XI's introduction of the Christ the King feast, which both on the level of the relation between Church and World and the lay apostolate played an important role; see, e.g. Michael QUINSKY, *Das II. Vatikanum in der Pfarrgemeinde. Der Freiburger Pfarrer und Theologe Eugen Waltzer (1906-1990) zwischen Liturgischer Bewegung und Konzilsrezeption*, in *Freiburger Diözesan-Archiv*, 128 (2008), p. 161-203 (167).

<sup>59</sup> The number of liturgical initiatives as taken by the Catholic organizations, is really impressive, although not always completely successful; see VAN ASSCHE, *Verslag over de Liturgische beweging in Vlaanderen*, p. 224-225; CAPELLE, *Rapport sur le mouvement liturgique belge en Wallonie*, p. 237-238. One should also mention two spiritual movements, the Association of the Holy Heart and the Eucharistic Crusade.

<sup>60</sup> With regard to this topic, see also the vivid description of Célestin CHARLIER, *Réforme liturgique et renouveau biblique*, in *La Maison-Dieu*, 66 (1961), p. 10-35 (24).

<sup>61</sup> CAPELLE, *Rapport sur le mouvement liturgique belge en Wallonie*, p. 239.

<sup>62</sup> Louis-Joseph KERKHOFS, *Liturgie en katholieke actie*, 21 (1936), p. 311-325.

<sup>63</sup> Concerning both the idea of subordination of the laity and the needed co-ordination by the hierarchy, see, e.g., Émile GUERRY, *Action catholique*, in *Catholicisme*, 1 (1948), p. 98-101, c. 98.

<sup>64</sup> See VAN ASSCHE, *Verslag over de Liturgische beweging in Vlaanderen*, p. 216-217, on p. 223. The author explicitly complained about the quality of the singing in Church: much work was needed in order to ameliorate this part of the liturgical celebration.

<sup>65</sup> VAN ASSCHE, *Verslag over de Liturgische beweging in Vlaanderen*, p. 223; FEYS, *Liturgisch Tijdschrift – Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*, p. 210-211.



After the death of Mgr. Callewaert in 1943, the liturgical movement seemed to have come to a stand still, while challenging initiatives were taken in patristics such as the start of the series *Corpus christianorum*,<sup>66</sup> an initiative of the Benedictine Dekkers of Saint Peter's abbey of Steenbrugge, but also in exegesis (cf. the start of the *Colloquium Biblicum Lovaniense*).<sup>67</sup> When in 1951, an alternative Easter celebration was made possible, less than 10% of Flemish parishes participated in it. In the Diocese of Bruges, before the war a centre of the liturgical movement, only 6 parishes were willing to make use of it.<sup>68</sup> At the time, there was no "direct" reason to change the winning team on the episcopal level, nor among the clergy. On the surface, all things seemed to be right, although the number of seminarians was declining.<sup>69</sup> At the time, "Catholic Flanders" was rather rural. Its piety was described as traditional, sentimental, individualistic and utilitarian.<sup>70</sup> The parochial clergy was not very open for the liturgical developments.<sup>71</sup> Although it is true that, as part of the implementation of *Mediator Dei*, in the dioceses liturgical commissions were erected in order to promote the active participation of the faithful and control the liturgical rules, during the first years of their existence, dioceses seemed to do what they thought that was appropriate,<sup>72</sup> coordination being absent.

However, already in 1947, the then editor-in-chief of the *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie* warned of the threat of de-christianization and how Christians should react,<sup>73</sup> something which in Catholic Flanders became very visible, e.g., in the Diocese of Ghent where, in 1954, nearly 20% of the population attended mass on a regular basis.<sup>74</sup> In other words, there were people who were aware of the changes that were

<sup>66</sup> Mathijs LAMBERIGTS, *Corpus Christianorum (1947-1955). The Laborious Journey from Dream to Reality*, in *Sacris Erudiri*, 51 (1998), p. 15-41.

<sup>67</sup> It goes without saying that initiatives like these —one should also mention e.g. the foundation of the French series *Sources chrétiennes*— have to be directly related to the encyclical *Divino Afflante Spiritu*.

<sup>68</sup> Ambroos VERHEUL, *Liturgische verwezenlijkingen in Vlaanderen*, in *Universitas-Schriften*, 4, p. 94.

<sup>69</sup> Dirk CLAES, *Theologie in tijden van verandering. De theologische faculteit te Leuven in de twintigste eeuw (1900-1968)*, Leuven, 2004.

<sup>70</sup> See L. LARDOT, *Voies et moyens dans la paroisse rurale*, in *Paroisse et Liturgie*, 9 (1954), p. 404-405.

<sup>71</sup> MAERTENS, *Le mouvement liturgique en Belgique*, p. 418-419.

<sup>72</sup> MAERTENS, *Le mouvement liturgique en Belgique*, p. 416-417. With the foundation of the ICLZ (Interdiocesan Centre for the Liturgical Care of Souls) in 1958, the needed national consultative structure came into existence.

<sup>73</sup> *Ons standpunt*, in *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*, 31 (1947), p. 1-9. One gets the impression that within the Benedictine line of the liturgical movement, a journal such as *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie* is very much aware of the "katabasis"-element in liturgy and thus stresses more than, e.g., the Solesmes-approach, that God comes to all human beings, not only to the clergy and the intellectuals. It might be interesting to examine in detail the differences within the Benedictine line of the liturgical movement and relate them to specific contexts. See in this regard, Jan Hendrik WALGRAVE, *Moderne problemen der geloofsopvoeding bij onze ontwikkelden in Streven*, 9 (1942), p. 277. In any case, the awareness that the Church was going to be confronted with a crisis was present everywhere; see, e.g., for France, Henri GODIN and Yvan DANIEL, *La France, pays de mission?*, Paris, 1943.

<sup>74</sup> Zie Mathijs LAMBERIGTS, Msgr. Calewaert, *Bishop of Ghent and Sacrosanctum Concilium*, in Doris DONNELLY, Joseph FAMERÉE, Mathijs LAMBERIGTS, and Karim SCHELKENS (eds.), *The Belgian Contribution to the Second Vatican Council*, Leuven, Paris, Dudley MA, 2008, p. 611-632 (613). Needless to say that in the French speaking part of the country, especially in the industrialized regions (Liège, Charleroi, Mons), the situation was even worse.

underway and that held a plea for appropriate strategies.<sup>75</sup> But their voices were not really heard.

Collaboration between secular and religious clergy was still at an initial stage. Conferences such as the one on Eucharist and life in the parishes could be organised without any contribution of the laity,<sup>76</sup> partly because conferences were organized during the week, when lay people had to do their job. The programme of these liturgical conferences was such that only clergy took the floor.<sup>77</sup> It should be said that in the period 1945-1960 a series of changes was underway and this on the political (growing democratization), social and economic level (the progress in welfare due to the Marshall Project). Initially, the bond between the liturgical movement and Catholic Action remained rather closed.<sup>78</sup> But in Belgium, like everywhere, changes were underway: growing democratization of education resulted in the creation of a new generation of Christian intellectuals who had other ideas about obedience to the ecclesiastical hierarchy than their predecessors. The new generations lay people were interested in more than the building of churches or liturgical chants.<sup>79</sup>

From 1946 onwards, the Dutch theologian Ambroos Verheul (1916-2005), a monk at the abbey of Affligem, and a doctor of theology at the Louvain University (1946) with a dissertation on Paul,<sup>80</sup> first prior (1968) and then abbot of the abbey of Keizersberg (1974),<sup>81</sup> would play an active role in the liturgical movement. In that year, he became the secretary of the *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie* (the *Journal of Liturgy*). A year later, a series of Flemish and Dutch liturgical journals agreed to become part of the said journal, the journal thus becoming the official organ of the liturgical movement in the Low Countries.<sup>82</sup> As a result, the redaction of the journal was extended with liturgical experts from both the Netherlands and Belgium: for the first time, structural cooperation between Flanders and the Netherlands seemed to find its way. In the first issue of 1947, Verheul anonymously published his viewpoint. Much of what he proposed would be resonated in the encyclical *Mediator Dei et hominum*.

<sup>75</sup> Already in 1943, A. Dondeyne, one of the most influential thinkers at the K.U. Leuven, held a plea in favour of a thorough revision of Catholic theology and sharply criticized the unworldliness of both theology and the philosophy, on which it was based; see his article *Katholieke problemen van deze tijd*, in *Streven*, 8 (1942), p. 97-110 (107). On this intriguing priest and professor, promoter of the responsibility of Christian intellectuals in the societal life of Belgium, see my *De opvattingen van Albert Dondeyne (1901-1985) over tolerantie en godsdienstvrijheid. Hun relevantie voor de 21<sup>ste</sup> eeuw*, in Bart RAYMAEKERS and Gerd VAN RIEL (red.), *Hoe dichtbij is de toekomst? Lessen voor de eenentwintigste eeuw*, Leuven, 2005, p. 83-112.

<sup>76</sup> *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*, 1 (1957).

<sup>77</sup> Jan GROOTAERS, *De liturgische hernieuwing. Haar ontwikkeling en haar betekenis*, in *De Gids op maatschappelijk gebied*, 48 (1957), p. 351-376 (369).

<sup>78</sup> See, e.g., A. HANSSENS, *Liturgie en Katholieke Actie*, in *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*, 32 (1948), p. 97-109.

<sup>79</sup> See GROOTAERS, *De liturgische hernieuwing*, p. 352.

<sup>80</sup> Ambroos VERHEUL, *De charismatische opvatting van het apostelschap bij den H. Paulus*, Leuven, 1946.

<sup>81</sup> In 1968, the Catholic University of Louvain was split into two sections: a Dutch and a French-speaking one. Founded by the abbey of Maredsous and much supported by the French-speaking bourgeoisie of Louvain, the abbey's position had become very difficult after the split. That explains why the Dutch Verheul first became prior, then abbot of Keizersberg.

<sup>82</sup> MAERTENS, *Le mouvement liturgique en Belgique*, p. 413.

According to Verheul, the liturgy should be considered as the heart and the fountain of life. It should be fruitful for theology, taking into account contemporary sensitivities in order to become relevant for the faithful of today. In this regard, Verheul explicitly referred to the need of adaptation of liturgy to the needs of the missions (missionary congregations in Belgium were abundant and the number of regular clergy vocations would constantly increase up to the opening of the Council, and this in a period that one could see a gradual decline of the number of vocations to the secular priesthood).<sup>83</sup> Moreover, Verheul emphasized that liturgy should be directed to the “mass of faithful”, in other words, that it should not be elitist. Further, Verheul continued, Christians should be made aware of the importance of a community spirit, discovering that the whole Church’s life is involved in it. The openness to the Symbol and the Word were other issues of concern. Finally, Verheul concluded, through the realisation of these aspects, liturgy will contribute to ecumenism.

Was the liturgical movement in Flanders before the Second World War mostly the work of religious, especially Benedictines,<sup>84</sup> this will change after the War. Indeed, one gets the impression that the interaction between the secular and religious becomes more intense, at least since the middle of the 1950s.<sup>85</sup> Moreover, the need for permanent formation of the professors of liturgy found its expression in the yearly study days held at Louvain since 1954.<sup>86</sup> From 1956, the tradition to organise liturgical conferences was again taken up by the abbeys of Affligem and Tongerlo.<sup>87</sup> Meanwhile, the German *Gemeinschaftsmesse* had found its way in Dutch-speaking Belgium.<sup>88</sup> The same happened in French-speaking Belgium, where, under the influence of France, somewhat hesitantly, the use of the vernacular found its way.<sup>89</sup> In any case, in Belgium, like everywhere, the recognition of the value of the vernacular in the liturgical chant received an important impulse due to the publication of the encyclical *Musicae sacrae disciplina* of Pius XII (promulgated on Christmas Day, 1955).

<sup>83</sup> See also ROBEYNS, *Bedenkingen bij een half-eeuufest*, p. 366 who criticizes the too European character of the liturgy and deplores the fact that the missions never got the occasion to develop their own liturgy.

<sup>84</sup> Something the Benedictines themselves deplored; see CAPELLE, *Rapport sur le mouvement liturgique belge en Wallonie*, p. 232.

<sup>85</sup> See FEYS, *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie. Een liturgisch panorama 1947-1985*, in FEYS, *Liturgisch Tijdschrift/Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*, p. 476-481.

<sup>86</sup> With regard to other initiatives, see FEYS, *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie: een liturgisch panorama 1947-1985*, p. 500.

<sup>87</sup> See Peter D’HAESE, *Terugblik op de na-oorlogse liturgische congressen*, in *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*, 67 (1983), p. 318-329 (318-319).

<sup>88</sup> See D’HAESE, *Terugblik*, p. 320-321. It is interesting to see that what was already well received in Germany, the singing of songs in the vernacular, was still an aspect of surprise in Flanders. For a good survey of the history of this *Gemeinschaftsmesse*, see Stephan K. LANGENBAHN, *Jenseits und diessets der Liturgischen Bewegung. Materialien und Marginalien zur Frühgeschichte der “Gemeinschaftsmess” im deutschsprachigen Raum von 1912 bis 1920*, in *Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft*, 46 (2004), p. 80-105.

<sup>89</sup> MAERTENS, *Le mouvement liturgique en Belgique*, p. 419

### DISCOVERY OF THE LAITY

In the 1950s, the interest of the laity in the liturgy was growing. While, during the first years after World War II, liturgical conferences were organized for priests and religious, evidently during the week (an extra handicap for the laity to participate), this would change in the second half of the 1950s.<sup>90</sup> It was the result of a growing awareness about the laity's responsibility. The central idea was that every believer is a member of a local community.<sup>91</sup> Therefore, people came to realise that the celebration of the liturgy was a social activity. This awareness clearly came to the floor during the organisation of the First National Congress for Lay Apostolate, held at Louvain in December, 1956. The enormous interest was experienced as a surprise. The participants were mostly adults, showing a deep concern about religious topics. The group not only consisted of members of organisations, but also of people, only engaged in the local parishes. The engagement of both groups made the conference a pastoral/theological event. Their active presence made clear that there was a growing group of laypeople that became aware of the meaning of baptism and being children of God. The congress seemed to be the recognition that a layperson is not a second-class Christian. Moreover, the one who is first confronted with the dialogue between Christianity and the contemporary world is the layperson, who, in the family, the job, the use of his/her free time, comes into close contact with the world, in fact is part of this world, which was, generally speaking, no longer experienced as Christian world. How could Christians offer a testimony of their faith in a world that claimed to be autonomous and doing this without becoming a stranger in his/her own world, suffering from a "Christian inferiority-complex". The lay person is in fact the first who is involved in the growth of the Kingdom of God in this world, in this "mixed world". During this congress, the problem that most dominated the congress was that of education and liturgical life. With regard to the latter, it became clear that people were longing for a more vivid and fresh contact with the Bible and the liturgy related to it. Liturgy should not be the privilege of experts, but something all should be involved in and live from. Laypeople at the congress did not ask for apologetic defence material but for spiritual nourishment. Priests recognised that they had, for a long time, underestimated the laity, and that clerical humility was needed. The congress made clear that a rather large elite was ready to serve and that many youngsters, averse from organisational tactics and constraints, were willing to engage on behalf of the Church. During the conference, people criticized the fact that organisations, once started as a reaction against paralysing conservatism, now seemed to be tempted to develop a similar defensive and protective attitude.<sup>92</sup> However, it should be said that important initiatives such as the creation of a Catechetical Centre in Antwerp, the centre *Lumen Vitae* in Brussels or also the renewal of the Higher Institute for Religious

<sup>90</sup> *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*, 1957, 1.

<sup>91</sup> See GROOTAERS, *De liturgische hernieuwing*, p. 352.

<sup>92</sup> See the report of Cyriel CERPENTIER, *Verjaardag – geen verjaring. Het Leuwens Congres in hoofdpijnen geschetst*, in *De Maand*, 1 (1958), p. 22-27. Cyriel Cerpentier (1908-1994) was a Redemptorist, well known for his conferences and sermons. He showed much interest in the spiritual training of the laity.

Sciences at Louvain in many cases were training centres for the laity, although not yet directed by the laity.

Historical research also played an important role in the rediscovery of the laity's responsibility and involvement in *liturgicis*. A series of historical studies made clear that during the first centuries of Christianity the relation between hierarchy and laity could be described in terms of collaboration, while, since the edict of Milan (313) this relation developed in the direction of an antithesis: clergy versus laity, the latter considered to be the weaker ones.<sup>93</sup>

It should be said that the liturgical movement, since World War II, was part of a broader process in which new theological approaches, thorough renewal of catechetics, and liturgical care of souls interacted with each other. Moreover, the movement benefited from the war: imprisoned priests had been urged to celebrate the sacraments outside the "sacral" context, but in brotherhood with the other imprisoned faithful, a remarkable event indeed.<sup>94</sup>

Although one gets the overall impression that the period 1945-1962 can be described as the acme of the liturgical movement, already in 1961, Thierry Maertens, monk of the abbey of Saint André (Zevenkerken, near Bruges) warned of a decline of it. In 1961, he published a book, entitled *Les risques de plafonnement du Mouvement Liturgique*, a book in which he warned for a possible standstill of the movement.

### THE GERMAN SITUATION

In Germany, like elsewhere, the liturgical movement was in a sense prepared by historical research.<sup>95</sup> In the midst of the Great War (1915), Hermann Platz (1880-1945), a layman, philosopher and philologist, one of the founding fathers of the German liturgical movement, later a promoter of a Christian Europe with France and Germany as central axes, also one of the editors of the ecumenically inspired journal *Una Sancta* (1925-1927),<sup>96</sup> in the 1930s a strong opponent of Hitler (in 1935, Platz lost his position as professor at the University of Bonn) published an article in the German Catholic avant-garde journal *Hochland*, entitled *Die Sehnsucht nach dem Organischen im Lichte unserer Liturgie*. In this article he emphasized that liturgy is the theocentric cosmos towards which all souls, starving to death in an anthropocentric world, are longing. In 1921, Platz published a second, augmented, edition of his book *Krieg und Seele* (first published in 1916) under the title *Krieg und Liturgie*, a significant change and a proof that interest in liturgy within new contexts was in the air. It is suggested that Hermann Platz discovered his interest in liturgy when he attended a liturgical retreat for lay people in the Abbey of Maria Laach —this abbey already organised in 1913 during the Holy Week a retreat for young university students—,<sup>97</sup> a retreat

<sup>93</sup> Jan GROOTAERS, *De taak van de leek in de liturgie*, in *De Liturgie en de Hedendaagse Mens. Derde liturgische studiedagen (Antwerpen, 21-24 juli 1958)* (Tijdschrift voor Liturgie), p. 61-82 (62ff.).

<sup>94</sup> *Les leçons d'un Stalag*, in *La Maison-Dieu*, 1 (1945) p. 64-73.

<sup>95</sup> André HAQUIN, *Le mouvement liturgique dans l'Église catholique (19<sup>e</sup>-20<sup>e</sup> s.)*, in Carlo BRAGA and Alessandro PISTOIA (eds.), *Les mouvements liturgiques. Corrélations entre pratique et recherches*, Rome, 2004, p. 19-34 (27).

<sup>96</sup> Because of its ecumenical character, the journal was already forbidden by Rome in 1927.

<sup>97</sup> HAQUIN, *Le mouvement liturgique dans l'Église catholique (19<sup>e</sup>-20<sup>e</sup> s.)*, p. 27.

preached by the then newly ordained abbot of the place, Ildefons Herwegen (1874-1946).<sup>98</sup> Other lay people, attending this retreat were Heinrich Brüning (1885-1970), chancellor from 1930 to 1932, strong opponent of the Nazi's, leaving the country in 1934, when his life was seemingly at risk, and Robert Schuman (1886-1963), again an adversary of the Nazi's, a committed Christian and one of the founding fathers of the European Community.<sup>99</sup> In other words, among those laymen, engaged in a renewal of liturgical life, one can find future leading politicians.

The liturgical movement as developed by the Benedictines of Maria Laach, Beuron and Seckau, was deeply influenced by the idea that liturgy was unchangeable given (needless to repeat that the German Benedictines had ties with Solesmes). The faithful had to be elevated to it. Such an idea of renewal and deepening of the Christian religious life presupposed education and constituted, in a sense, a prerogative for the clergy and lay intellectuals.<sup>100</sup> Maria Laach therefore first and foremost attempted to promote its liturgical ideas among people who had studied at the universities and were prepared in order to guide the common people. At the time, at least within the German context, people were not thinking of a liturgical reform *in sensu stricto*.<sup>101</sup> Although the use of German translations of Latin text was not excluded (the German translations intended to be so literal that one also speaks of the Deutsche Gregorianik), emphasis was put on the fact that the liturgy as such was untouchable and unique,<sup>102</sup> something research, especially of the Fathers, should underpin.<sup>103</sup> Abbeys such as Maria Laach considered it as a "principe inviolable, de s'en tenir le plus possible aux cérémonies et aux rites, tels qu'ils sont prescrits par la Sacrée Congrégation des Rites".<sup>104</sup> The use of Latin was considered to be the expression of the unity of the German Churches with Rome<sup>105</sup> and as a medium in

<sup>98</sup> With regard to Herwegen's view on the spiritual life of intellectuals in relation to liturgy, see HAUSSLING, *Kirchliche Erneuerung aus dem Geist der Liturgie*, p. 26. In passing, it should be said that one of the leading historians of liturgy in Germany, K. Mohlberg (1878-1963), studied at the Catholic University of Louvain at the time Beauduin was promoting the liturgical movement at Keizersberg, where Mohlberg lived at the time. With regard to the interest of German intellectuals in the liturgical movement, see, e.g., Stephan GEIGER, *Die religiöse Bewegung unter den Akademikern. Ihr Sinn, ihr Wollen, ihr Erfolg*, in *Theologie und Glaube*, 16 (1924), p. 491-501.

<sup>99</sup> See Franz HENRICH, *Die Bünde der katholischen Jugendbewegung. Ihre Bedeutung für die liturgische und eucharistische Erneuerung*, München, 1968, p. 63.

<sup>100</sup> Theodor MAAS-EWERD, *Was wollte die Liturgische Bewegung? Zu den liturgischen Entwicklungen in den Jahren zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen*, in *Erbe und Auftrag*, 69 (1993), p. 223-246 (233-234). In 1930, the monks of Maria Laach explicitly stated that with regard to the liturgical movement, Germany (in this case Maria Laach) "ne tend pas à saisir directement la masse des fidèles"; see Albert HAMMENSTEDTE, *Rapport sur le mouvement liturgique en Allemagne*, in *Les Questions Liturgiques et Paroissiales*, 15 (1930), p. 294-307, on p. 303. Otherwise than suggested by the title, Hammenstede mainly discussed the views of Maria Laach.

<sup>101</sup> See Johannes WAGNER, *Das Anliegen der Liturgiereform von Pius X. bis zum Codex Rubricarum* (1960), in *Liturgisches Jahrbuch*, 11 (1961), p. 142-157 (147).

<sup>102</sup> The defense of Hammenstede of the positions of Odo Casel; HAMMENSTEDTE, *Rapport sur le mouvement liturgique en Allemagne*, p. 300-301.

<sup>103</sup> HAMMENSTEDTE, *Rapport sur le mouvement liturgique en Allemagne*, p. 301-302.

<sup>104</sup> HAMMENSTEDTE, *Rapport sur le mouvement liturgique en Allemagne*, p. 296.

<sup>105</sup> HAMMENSTEDTE, *Rapport sur le mouvement liturgique en Allemagne*, p. 297-298.



order to resist Protestantism, in 1930 described as willing to destroy all Latin aspects because of their reference to Rome. By its adherence to Rome, the Catholic Church was, according to Beuron, able to resist the “hérésie moderne” of nationalism.<sup>106</sup>

In 1920, Romano Guardini (1885-1968), who, as is known, had a great impact on the liturgical movement in Germany, came into contact with the youth movement Quickborn (Burg Rothenfels).<sup>107</sup> This contact will result in a profound relation between the liturgical movement and the German Catholic youth movement.<sup>108</sup> Guardini had discovered the mystery of the liturgy during a visit to the Abbey of Beuron in 1906.<sup>109</sup> Once ordained a priest in 1910, he was upset about the way liturgy was celebrated: he was saying mass while the faithful were praying the rosary. It is true that Guardini was not a liturgist in the strict sense of the word.<sup>110</sup> However, his in 1918 published booklet *Vom Geist der Liturgie*, became a huge success. It is sometimes considered as the start of the liturgical movement in Germany.<sup>111</sup> It was many times reprinted and translated into several other languages. Through his Benedictine friend Kunibert Mohlberg, Guardini's reflections about liturgy had come into the hands of Herwegen, who published Guardini in the first issue of the series *Ecclesia Orans*. In his book, Guardini emphasized the importance of a living liturgy, related to human beings' life.<sup>112</sup> For Guardini, it was of the utmost importance that the whole community should participate in it. He also insisted on interaction between religion and culture. He criticised the utilitarian use of religion (e.g. to pray in order to deserve a reward; indulgences as a help to receive forgiveness for punishments in purgatory). He described Liturgy as “Spiel”.<sup>113</sup> In line with Pius X he emphasized that one should not pray during mass, but should pray the mass, an idea he developed in a booklet, published in 1920: *Gemeinschaftliche Andacht zur Feier der heiligen Messe*. The booklet presented a simplified German translation of the ordinary of the mass and created space for dialogue between the leader in prayer, the left and right side in the Church and the whole community. It was suggested that the priest should read the first and second readings and the Gospel in German (after the unavoidable reading of these Scriptural texts in Latin). The booklet was meant for the youth. They should be actively involved in praying mass, although one should immediately add that it was an interaction between the leader in prayer and the community, the priest for the most

<sup>106</sup> HAMMENSTEDE, *Rapport sur le mouvement liturgique en Allemagne*, p. 299.

<sup>107</sup> With regard to this movement, see, e.g., *Die Bünde der katholischen Jugendbewegung*, p. 56-138.

<sup>108</sup> MAAS-EWERD, *Was wollte die Liturgische Bewegung?*, p. 237.

<sup>109</sup> ROMANO GUARDINI, *Berichte über mein Leben. Autobiographische Aufzeichnungen aus dem Nachlass*, hrsg. von FRANZ HENRICH, Düsseldorf, 1984, p. 87-88. See also LEEMANS, *Over Romano Guardini*, ch. 4: *Romano Guardini (1885-1968) en de liturgie*, p. 193-221, p. 194-195.

<sup>110</sup> THEODOR MAAS-EWERD, *Anwalt des liturgischen Anliegens. Guardini und die liturgische Bewegung*, in Walter SIEDEL (ed.), *Christliche Weltanschauung. Wiederbegegnung mit Romano Guardini*, Würzburg, 1985, p. 163.

<sup>111</sup> MAAS-EWERD, *Was wollte die Liturgische Bewegung?*, p. 235.

<sup>112</sup> GUARDINI, *Vom Geist der Liturgie*, p. 1.

<sup>113</sup> See the remarks of W. DIRKS, *Guardini als Führer zur Liturgie*, in *Liturgisches Jahrbuch*, 10 (1960), p. 202-210, p. 204. In this regard, Guardini worried about the fact that the Church was not really able to reach the male human beings for the participation in the liturgy; see GUARDINI, *Vom Geist der Liturgie*, p. 17.



part of the mass, being isolated. However, what is important is the concern that the faithful pray the mass, not attended the mass. The booklet was a huge success and a bit less than 500.000 copies were spread throughout Germany.<sup>114</sup> Needless to say that due to the success of his books Guardini became an important representative of the liturgical movement. However, due to his engagement in the Quickborn-movement at Burg-Rothenfels, he not only reached many youngsters, but was also criticised because the “success” at Burg-Rothenfels was experienced in the parishes as a kind of alienation of the youth from their parishes, something which was evidently not the goal of Guardini. Burg-Rothenfels was indeed meant as place where people were given the possibility to recover the essence of Christian life.<sup>115</sup> Further, soon the views of Guardini and the German monastic centres of liturgy became different, the latter not really liking Guardini’s sympathy for popular devotion.<sup>116</sup> In other words, as with regard to so many aspects of his life, Guardini’s positions were criticized, among others by Benedictines such as Odo Casel (1886-1948; monk of Maria Laach), Casel, being an *ex professo* liturgist.<sup>117</sup>

It should be said that the use of the vernacular in the liturgy was a great concern within the German-speaking countries. The so-called *Gemeinschaftsmesse* was introduced. Given the fact that the priest was obliged to pray whisperingly all the texts in Latin (except the part he was expected to sing in the *Missa in cantu celebrata*), an intercessor read the lectures and some of the prayers said by the priest in German. Moreover, in the sung mass, the *Ordinarium* and the *Proprium* were replaced by German songs. Proposals for such *Gemeinschaftsmesse* had been developed by individuals such as Guardini (1917; 1920), Parsch (1923), Kramp (1924), Wolker (1928), and the Abbey of Maria Laach (1924). In 1928, a German unity text was available for the ordinary of the mass: the Kyrie, Gloria, Creed, Holy Holy, Lamb of God and the *Ite missa est*. This type of mass was not only successful in Germany but was taken over in other countries. The mass with the people will become the prototype for the Eucharist in Germany after Vatican II. At that moment intercessors will, evidently, disappear.

Like Guardini, Pius Parsch (1884-1954) opted for an approach different in comparison to that of the Benedictines. This Augustinian Canon at Klosterneuburg in Austria —his impact in the countries under discussion is such that one cannot overlook this intriguing figure—,<sup>118</sup> was deeply influenced by the liturgical work of the Abbey of Beuron, the Vienna pastoral theologian H. Swoboda, and the work among

<sup>114</sup> LEEMANS, *Over Romano Guardini*, p. 205-207.

<sup>115</sup> See the examples given in LEEMANS, *Over Romano Guardini*, p. 214-215.

<sup>116</sup> LEEMANS, *Over Romano Guardini*, p. 209-211. At the same time, people in parishes were very much influenced by Guardini’s approach; see, e.g., with regard to the experiments in Freiburg, QUISINSKY, *Das II. Vatikanum in der Pfarrgemeinde*, p. 168. The Beuron Benedictine HAMMENSTEDTE, *Rapport sur le mouvement liturgique en Allemagne*, p. 304 does not reject the personal devotions, but considers them as not comparable with the participation in the Eucharist.

<sup>117</sup> Already in 1921, Casel had founded the *Jahrbuch für Liturgie*.

<sup>118</sup> With regard to the impact of World War I on Parsch’s ideas about liturgy, see, e.g. Jozef LAMBERTS, *Pius Parsch (1884-1954) en het ‘Volksliturgisch apostolaat’*. Een terugblik 70 jaar na de eerste ‘Gemeenschapsmis’, in *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*, 77 (1993), p. 151-162 (152-154); on his influence in Germany, see HAMMENSTEDTE, *Rapport sur le mouvement liturgique en Allemagne*, p. 294-295.

the academic youth in Vienna.<sup>119</sup> Also Pius X's promotion of the active participation of the laity in the liturgy played a role. During World War I, he came into contact with all societal classes and thus discovered what the faith of the common faithful was all about.<sup>120</sup> He became a promoter of the use of the vernacular in the liturgy,<sup>121</sup> partly because he was of the opinion that the use of Latin was too often meant for an elitist minority of intellectuals,<sup>122</sup> but was a hindrance for the common people.<sup>123</sup> For Parsch, two elements were crucial: "*Verstehen; Aktive Teilnahme*".<sup>124</sup> Like in the case of Beauduin, his main concern was the promotion of a pastoral liturgical approach, rooted in the Bible—for Parsch, Bible and Liturgy always went hand in hand—,<sup>125</sup> and the means used were quite similar: liturgical gatherings, in which the Eucharist was explained, the great Feasts of the Church were prepared and the like.<sup>126</sup> Journals such as *Lebe mit der Kirche* were founded, aiming at educating all, also the simple people.<sup>127</sup> As a pastor, he soon became aware of the need to engage all people in the liturgy: the liturgical movement should not be limited to clergy and academics, "sie sollte auch Gemeingut des Volkes werden".<sup>128</sup> Parsch emphasized that all, even the simplest faithful, should actively participate in the liturgy.<sup>129</sup> For him, the liturgical movement was the movement of all people (cf. *volksliturgische Bewegung*).<sup>130</sup> It was considered to be a reaction against individualism.<sup>131</sup> Liturgy should be the cornerstone of the life in parishes, an idea that later was taken over by the liturgical movements in Germany and France.<sup>132</sup> He insisted that the liturgy was more than liturgical customs. He even was of the opinion that the people's movement had the right to disobey the liturgical laws if these were a hindrance for renewal. In other words, the faith of the people becomes the norm for liturgy. Liturgy has to descend to the level of

<sup>119</sup> See PIUS PARSCH, *Die liturgische Aktion in Österreich*, in *Les Questions Liturgiques et Paroissiales*, 15 (1930), p. 351-363 (352).

<sup>120</sup> RÖHRIG, *Pius Parsch und die biblisch-liturgische Erneuerung im historischen Kontext*, p. 21.

<sup>121</sup> It might well be that Parsch' intuitions about a "lived" liturgy were the result of a dissatisfaction with what was taught at the time in seminaries and universities. In any case, the similarities with what was promoted by the *nouvelle théologie* are striking.

<sup>122</sup> LAMBERTS, *Pius Parsch (1884-1954)*, p. 157.

<sup>123</sup> PARSCH, *Die liturgische Aktion in Österreich*, p. 358-359.

<sup>124</sup> PARSCH, *Die liturgische Aktion in Österreich*, p. 358.

<sup>125</sup> RÖHRIG, *Pius Parsch und die biblisch-liturgische Erneuerung im historischen Kontext*, p. 21; see p. 24-25.

<sup>126</sup> See PARSCH, *Die liturgische Aktion in Österreich*, p. 352. It should be said that Parsch in no way depreciated the Benedictine approach, although he was very much aware of the many differences; see the comparison on p. 357.

<sup>127</sup> PARSCH, *Die liturgische Aktion in Österreich*, p. 356.

<sup>128</sup> PARSCH, *Die liturgische Aktion in Österreich*, p. 353; with regard to the Christological and ecclesiological background of this conviction, see Boles J. KRAWCZYK, "Der neue Laientyp" – christologische und ekklesiologische Grundlagen der aktiven Teilnahme der Laien an der Liturgie nach Pius Parsch, in BACHLER, PACIK, REDTENBACHER (eds.), *Pius Parsch in der liturgiewissenschaftlichen Rezeption*, p. 140-163.

<sup>129</sup> With regard to the initiatives as taken within this context, see PARSCH, *Die liturgische Aktion in Österreich*, p. 354-355; see also LAMBERTS, *Pius Parsch*, p. 154-155.

<sup>130</sup> See PARSCH, *Die liturgische Aktion in Österreich*, p. 354-355.

<sup>131</sup> KRAWCZYK, "Der neue Laientyp", p. 152-153.

<sup>132</sup> KRAWCZYK, "Der neue Laientyp", p. 154-155.

the faithful, even in case this results in a conflict with ecclesiastical norms. Already in 1922, he celebrated the so-called *Chormesse* at Klosterneuburg. For Parsch, it was the logical step from reflection to action.<sup>133</sup> It was the first “*volksliturgische*” Eucharist in the German-speaking world. This “*Gemeinschaftsmesse*” was characterized by the following elements: it is a read mass in which the choir, a lector and eventually a prayer leader collaborate and in which people pray and sing those parts, meant for them. In 1925, he published his influential *Volksliturgisches Apostolat*. Parsch was a great promoter of a liturgy related to the concrete life of the community and based upon a biblically inspired liturgical spirituality.<sup>134</sup> In the view of the Augustinian Canon, liturgy should be celebrated within the context of grace in stead of that of law. In liturgy, the faithful should experience a relation with a loving and forgiving God, much more than with a demanding and forbidding God. The community mass gradually became a *Betsingmesse*, a partly sung Eucharist, in which German songs were sung. In passing, it should be said that the idea of active participation in Austria had already found its way in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. At the time, it was a reaction against Gregorian chant, disapproving the idea that the celebration of the Eucharist reminded more the idea of a concert.<sup>135</sup> The *Betsingmesse* became internationally known when on September 10, 1933, during the Vienna “*Katholikentag*” 200.000 people celebrated Mass under the direction of Pius Parsch. The then Cardinal of Vienna, Mgr. Innitzer ordered that this type of mass should be celebrated every month in every parish of his diocese. Soon other dioceses in Austria and Germany followed. The active participation mostly was on the level of the singing of the German *proprium* and the Latin *ordinarium* songs (Gloria, Creed, Sanctus and the like). For Parsch, Latin is a hindrance both for the understanding of the liturgy and even for these of the songs: “Der Lateinische Choral kann nur in ganz beschränkter Masse unseren heutigen Katholiken zugemutet werden, er ist heute und auch in absehbarer Zukunft nicht der active Gesang des christlichen Volkes”. For that reason, Parsch was of the opinion that both the *missa cantata* (the High Mass) and the choir mass (*missa recitata*) were too difficult for the ordinary people and thus opted for the celebration of the High Mass in the form of the *Betsingmesse*, considering the *missa recitata* as appropriate for small, intellectually well developed circles.

Indeed, for Parsch and the many who would follow him, active participation of the faithful, the reading of prayers and lectures in the vernacular, they all contributed more to the celebration of the Eucharist than the Latin church music with its cerebral features. Although Parsch always maintained that his own approach was inspired by the liturgical movement —Parsch was thinking of the liturgical spirit, training and the study of the history of liturgy— one should admit that it is quite different in comparison to the Benedictine line. For the Benedictines the people have to ascend,

<sup>133</sup> PARSCH, *Die liturgische Aktion in Österreich*, p. 353-354.

<sup>134</sup> See Norbert HÖSLINGER and Theodor MAAS-EWERD (eds.), ‘Mit sanfter Zähigkeit’. Pius Parsch und die biblisch-liturgische Erneuerung, Klosterneuburg, 1979.

<sup>135</sup> Barbara KRÄTSCHMER, *Die deutsche Singmesse der Aufklärung unter Berücksichtigung der Deutschen Hochämter von Johann Michael Haydn*, in *Singende Kirche*, 33 (1986), p. 11-17; for the Netherlands, where one finds a different approach, see VAN TONGEREN, *From Liturgical Movement to Liturgy on the Move*, p. 31-32.

for Parsch, the liturgy has to descend.<sup>136</sup> Parsch was well aware of the importance of subjective piety in the life of the faithful and thus stressed that it was important to work gradually. Parsch, more than the Benedictine line, was confronted with the hesitations of the bishops towards the movement and the indifferentism of the majority of the clergy.<sup>137</sup> He also deplored that nuns were not really involved in the movement, for they could, according to Parsch play a role in the liturgical education of the faithful.<sup>138</sup>

In the 1930s, the liturgical movement was flourishing as an essential cornerstone of the pastoral movement. It was an element in the Roman Catholic Church's resistance against the Nazi repression of ecclesiastical associations and youth movements.<sup>139</sup> As a result, there was a shift from the "*Vereinsseelsorge*" towards die "*Pfarrseelsorge*": since 1933, the liturgical renewal among the youth took place in the daily life of parishes.<sup>140</sup> However, the resistance of both secular clergy and religious against this renewal, a resistance that was supported by the Nazi regime, should not be underestimated.<sup>141</sup> The need for the use of the vernacular became more and more urgent. Already in 1939, the Diocese of Aachen obliged the clergy to use German for baptism, marriage, funerals, communion for the sick, the last sacraments, apostolic blessing and the prayers of the dying people. Also, elsewhere in Germany, bilingual rituals were used and the translation of Parsch was widely spread. However, several priests were of the opinion that the liturgy of the time was not really a great help for a true liturgical pastorate. Moreover, when the Nazis tried to roll back Christianity into church buildings, many attempted to make of the liturgy a replacer of Catholic Action. As a result, some criticized the liturgical movement.<sup>142</sup> Guardini felt the need to react and protect the realisations of the movement and asked Bishop Albert Stohr of Mainz to discuss the problem within the German episcopate, a discussion that would ultimately result in the creation of a liturgical commission in 1940.<sup>143</sup>

At the end of the 1930s, the German liturgical movement was confronted with a crisis, for many, including Rome, were of the opinion that the liturgical

<sup>136</sup> This rather globalizing remark does not sufficiently do justice to what sometimes happened in concrete situations. In this regard, one may think of the Belgian-Dutch journal *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie* that, under the direction of the Benedictine A. Verheul, also paid attention to the "descending" line; see his *Ons standpunt*, p. 2-3.

<sup>137</sup> See his complaints as early as 1930; PARSCH, *Die liturgische Aktion in Österreich*, p. 358-359.

<sup>138</sup> PARSCH, *Die liturgische Aktion in Österreich*, p. 360-361.

<sup>139</sup> With regard to the German bishops' reaction to this type of suppression, see Augustinus REINECKE, *Jugend zwischen Kreuz und Hakenkreuz. Erinnerungen und Erlebnisse, Ereignisse und Dokumente*, Paderborn, 1987, p. 259-262.

<sup>140</sup> MAAS-EWERD, *Was wollte die Liturgische Bewegung?*, p. 240-241.

<sup>141</sup> MAAS-EWERD, *Was wollte die Liturgische Bewegung?*, p. 241 (with further literature); RÖHRIG, *Pius Parsch und die biblisch-liturgische Erneuerung im historischen Kontext*, p. 22-23.

<sup>142</sup> See J. LAMBERTS, *Een belangrijke verjaardag. 'Mediator Dei et hominum' verscheen 50 jaar geleden*, in *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*, 81 (1997), p. 413-430 (414) (with further literature); see also HAQUIN, *Le mouvement liturgique dans l'Église catholique (19<sup>e</sup>-20<sup>e</sup> s.)*, p. 29-30. For a detailed description of the crisis, see Theodor MAAS-EWERD, *Die Krise der Liturgischen Bewegung. Studien zu den Auseinandersetzungen um die 'liturgische Frage' in Deutschland und Österreich von 1939 bis 1944*, Regensburg, 1979.

<sup>143</sup> With regard to Guardini's intervention with Albert Stohr, see Romano GUARDINI, *Ein Wort zur liturgischen Frage*, Mainz, 1940.

“innovators” were endangering the sound liturgical life. In the midst of the Second World War, Rome sent a letter to the Primate of the German Church, Cardinal Bertram, in which Rome made clear that it would intervene in case the liturgical problems in Germany would not find a solution. Guardini, being asked for advice, underlined that the faithful needed and deserved to be introduced into the liturgical life of the Church.<sup>144</sup>

On January 11, 1943, the German bishops were asked by Rome to write a report on the liturgical situation in “Great Germany”. A week later, the Archbishop of Freiburg, Conrad Gröber, published a letter in which he criticized the new ecclesiology (the Church as *corpus Christi mysticum* in stead of *societas perfecta*)<sup>145</sup> the common priesthood of the faithful, Eucharist as a meal of the faithful, the growing interest in the study of the Bible, the ecumenical movement, and the like.<sup>146</sup> The majority of the German bishops did not share Gröber’s ideas, which were not only a critique of the liturgical developments, but also of ecumenical openness, Christocentrism and the like. Moreover, the archbishop was not very pleased with the relativization of neo-scholasticism.<sup>147</sup> Gröber’s critique thus made clear that the liturgical movement could not be isolated from other developments in the Roman Catholic Church.

On April 10, 1943, Cardinal A. Bertram of Breslau sent, on behalf of the German episcopate, the report, asked for by Rome, to Rome. Moreover, he asked to reform the breviary and the Roman Ritual. He also asked some permissions, such as the *Gemeinschaftsmesse*, the *Betsingmesse* and the *Deutsches Hochamt*.

The encyclical *Mystici Corporis* of June 1943 can be read as a reaction concerning the ecclesiology. However, it also deals with topics, related to the liturgy, such as the common priesthood of all the faithful and the increase of the frequent communion. The encyclical explicitly recognizes that the community of the faithful has to play its role in the offering of Christ’s sacrifice to the Father. At the same time, the encyclical makes clear that one should not reduce the priest’s function to that of a representative of the community, in other words, according to the pope, one must respect the sacramental priesthood.<sup>148</sup> The pope is also critical concerning those who so much stress the common prayer of the Church that they seem to neglect or underestimate the private pious practices: personal prayer remains important, the pope maintains.<sup>149</sup> The day before Christmas, December 24, 1943, the German bishops received a letter from the secretary of state, Cardinal Maglione, in which the importance of the liturgical movement for the religious and pastoral life was recognized. The *Gemeinschaftsmesse* and the *Betsingmesse* received approval, while the *Deutsches Hochamt* “benignissime” was tolerated.<sup>150</sup> The document also made clear that changes in liturgy on one’s own authority and disobedience to the local

<sup>144</sup> LEEMANS, *Over Romano Guardini*, p. 217-218

<sup>145</sup> An idea that was very much promoted during Vatican I.

<sup>146</sup> See MAAS-EWERD, *Die Krise der Liturgischen Bewegung*, p. 540-560.

<sup>147</sup> See QUINSKY, *Das II. Vatikanum in der Pfarrgemeinde*, p. 168.

<sup>148</sup> AAS, 35 (1943), p. 232-233.

<sup>149</sup> AAS, 35 (1943), p. 235.

<sup>150</sup> For the text, see *Ephemerides Liturgicae*, 62 (1948), p. 285-290.

bishop were condemned. Moreover, every public debate about liturgical matters was forbidden. In passing, it should be said that on September 30, 1943, the encyclical *Divino Afflante Spiritu* was published, a document that will be considered as the charter for academic Bible study.<sup>151</sup> The encyclical *Mystici Corporis* (1943) gave important impulses to the liturgical developments, especially when dealing with the common priesthood of the faithful and the promotion of frequent communion.<sup>152</sup>

After the Second World War, drastic migrations changed radically the composition of the German population. West Germany, heavily destroyed at the end of the war, was confronted with the arrival of 12 million refugees, coming from Poland, Hungary and the like. After the war, the theological ideas as developed at the abbey of Maria Laach found their way into France, the Netherlands and Francophone Belgium. The Eucharist was less and less the place where a doctrine was explained, and became more and more a place where the mystery was experienced. In this regard, it is interesting to see that while the missal these during decades was considered as an appropriate means for the promotion of an active participation of the faithful and as such belonged to the essentials of the liturgical movement, this means that in the 1950s it became considered as an hindrance for the community Eucharist, for it was considered to promote individualism. Germany can be described as the motor for the growing use of the vernacular in other countries. The German Ritual of 1950 became the model for other countries.

In this regard, one should mention the name of Joseph Jungmann (1889-1975), whose book *Missarum sollemnia* deeply influenced the theological reflection concerning the “ressourcement” and renewal of the liturgy. Meanwhile, Odo Casel had published his *Das Christliche Kultmysterium* (1932), in which he explained that the memory of Jesus’ life and death as mystery are present in language and signs (*verbum atque sacramentum*). In other words, the Eucharist is not a mere repetition of Jesus’ life, but a commemorating and celebrating of his salvific acts, so that they become actual salvation mysteries. In other words, they are an elaboration of God’s grace. In passing it should be said that the reception of the encyclical *Mediator Dei* was less positive in the region under discussion than in Belgium and the Netherlands. Parsch’s reaction was negative: he considered the encyclical as an attack against his liturgical work.<sup>153</sup>

<sup>151</sup> It goes without saying that the two movements are closely connected to each other and that the challenges for one of the two in a sense also attach to the other; see CHARLIER, *Réforme liturgique et renouveau biblique*, p. 10-35.

<sup>152</sup> This idea was already developed by Jungmann as early as 1939; however, Msgr. Gröber, bishop of Freiburg, had been opposed to this idea; LAMBERTS, *L'évolution de la notion de “participation active”*, p. 103-104.

<sup>153</sup> THEODOR MAAS-EWERD, *Zur Reaktion Pius Parschs auf die Enzyklika “Mediator Dei”*, in HÖSLINGER and MAAS-EWERD (eds.), *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, p. 199-214; see also Alberto GRILLO, *Der Liturgiebegriff bei Pius Parsch und seine Stellung im Rahmen der Liturgischen Bewegung des 20. Jahrhunderts. Die “unaktuelle” Aktualität einer pastoralen und “volkstümlichen” Perspektive*, in BACHLER, PACIK, REDTENBACHER (eds.), *Pius Parsch in der liturgiewissenschaftlichen Rezeption*, p. 200-203. In any case, recent literature has made clear that Parsch’s critical attitude to the encyclical was well justified; for this literature, see p. 203-206, and esp. n. 17.



Through the theological work of people like Jungmann, Hugo Rahner and Lucien Cerfaux, the interest in a theology of the community was stimulated, in which the place of the people of God and its role in the liturgy, a crucial issue of the liturgical movement, were rethought. An important role in the liturgical reflection in Germany was played by a liturgical institute founded at Trier. After the war, the institute developed contacts with the CPL at Paris. The contacts resulted in the organisation of yearly conferences, the first being held in 1951.<sup>154</sup> Soon, under the impulse of the two institutes, the scope was broadened. In 1953, the conference was organized at Lugano. Here, the Archbishop of Bologna, Lercaro held a plea in favour of the use of the vernacular. Also for Germany, the many congresses played an important role in the promotion of a growing interest in liturgy, especially among the officials. These congresses were also important fruitful meeting places for the leading liturgists of the time.

Just before the opening of the Council, great promoters of the liturgical movement such as Professor Balthasar Fischer of the Liturgical Institute of Trier started to warn against too wild expectations about liturgical reforms. Fischer held a plea in favour of prudence and against liturgical chaos,<sup>155</sup> a sign that the promoters of the liturgical movement were of the opinion that it had reached its final goal.

### THE NETHERLANDS

The liturgical movement in the Netherlands in some regards differed from that in Belgium.<sup>156</sup> The protagonists were diocesan clerics and religious,<sup>157</sup> active in parishes, deaneries or on the level of the diocese.<sup>158</sup> The liturgical movement was more imbedded in daily church life than in Belgium, partly because it had its origin in the seminaries: future priests received their training here and their professors were often engaged in the diocesan liturgical associations.<sup>159</sup> As a result, it had, especially before World War II, a more diversified character. In any case, in this period it was mostly a spiritual movement, lacking the needed academic background.<sup>160</sup> The movement was considered to be an adequate means against the growth of socialism and

<sup>154</sup> For a survey, see Siegfried SCHMITT, *Die internationalen liturgischen Studientreffen 1951-1960. Zur Vorgeschichte der Liturgiekonstitution*, Trier, 1992.

<sup>155</sup> See *La Maison-Dieu*, 2 (1962), p. 6-9 (April 16).

<sup>156</sup> In this regard, the fact that the survey as presented by Petra VERSNEL-MERGAERTS, *Van rubriekenjager tot wetenschappelijk grensganger. Wordingsgeschiedenis van de liturgiewetenschap (1900-1967) aan de katholieke theologische opleidingen in Nederland in zes portretten*, Groningen, 2005 only offers the biography of one Benedictine, is revealing.

<sup>157</sup> However, influential congregations such as the Redemptorists did not share the enthusiasm for the liturgical movement; see VERSNEL-MERGAERTS, *Van rubriekenjager tot wetenschappelijk grensganger*, p. 283-284.

<sup>158</sup> Lucas BRINKHOFF, *Nederland*, in *Liturgisch Woordenboek*, Roermond, 1965-1968, Ke-Z, k. 1866-1879, col. 1874.

<sup>159</sup> VERSNEL-MERGAERTS, *Van rubriekenjager tot wetenschappelijk grensganger*, p. 358.

<sup>160</sup> Petra J. VERSNEL-MERGAERTS, *Tendensen in de Liturgische Beweging en de liturgiewetenschap van de twintigste eeuw*, in *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*, 94 (2010), p. 234-250 (235-236; 240-241).



secularisation in the country,<sup>161</sup> and as a help in the Catholic emancipation process<sup>162</sup> As early as 1910, one will find a series of names of people involved in the movement. A name that regularly returns is that of F. van Beukering (1869-1938), for years dean of the parish of Rotterdam.<sup>163</sup> He was aware of the problems liturgy at the time was confronted with: ignorance, Latin as a problem, lack of interest and the like. At the same time, he was convinced that liturgy lay at the heart of the Christian matter. Referring to early Christianity, he made clear that active participation and the use of the vernacular were simply the rule in the early Church.<sup>164</sup> As pastor he was able to concretise his liturgical ideas when building a new church in Rotterdam (consecrated in 1930), a church building which was an adequate translation of his liturgical ideas and in which he, with the explicit permission of his bishop, was allowed to celebrate mass with his face in the direction of the faithful, a practice already well known in Maria Laach and at Rothenfels.<sup>165</sup> He was of the opinion that the social problems of his time could be solved through the promotion of the liturgy in the parishes.<sup>166</sup> Van Beukering was active as speaker at the Liturgical weeks, among others those organised in Leuven; he wrote several articles for journals such as *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*, held conferences for the radio from 1925 on.<sup>167</sup> Finally, he paid much attention to the practical implementation of the liturgy.<sup>168</sup> Other important promoters during the inter-bellum period were the Dominican L. Verwilt (1879-1940),<sup>169</sup> the Franciscan E. Bruning (1892-1958),<sup>170</sup> and the Jesuit O. Huf (1882-1950).<sup>171</sup> At the seminaries and the Faculty of Theology (Catholic University of the Nijmegen) there was a

<sup>161</sup> VERSNEL-MERGAERTS, *Van rubriekenjager tot wetenschappelijk grensganger*, p. 84-85.

<sup>162</sup> VERSNEL-MERGAERTS, *Van rubriekenjager tot wetenschappelijk grensganger*, p. 82-83; 352-353 makes clear that there is an inner link between the liturgical movement and the creation of Catholic self-confidence in the Netherlands.

<sup>163</sup> E. MANDERS, *Beukering, F.C. van*, in *Liturgisch Woordenboek*, Roermond, 1958-1962, A-Ke, k. 258; Jozef LAMBERTS, *Een pionier van de Liturgische Beweging: pastoor F.C. van Beukering (1869-1938)*, in *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*, 72 (1988), p. 165-169; Richard BOT, *Zingt allen mee. 65 jaar Liturgische en Kerkmuzikale Beweging in Nederland. Een liturgie-documentaire studie naar de ontwikkeling en het liturgisch functioneren van de rooms-katholieke kerkmuziek in Nederland van 1903 tot en met 1969 onder invloed van de idealen van de Liturgische Beweging*, Tilburg, 2003, p. 435-451; VAN TONGEREN, *From Liturgical Movement to Liturgy on the Move*, p. 35-41.

<sup>164</sup> VAN TONGEREN, *From Liturgical Movement to Liturgy on the Move*, p. 36-37.

<sup>165</sup> VAN TONGEREN, *From Liturgical Movement to Liturgy on the Move*, p. 39-41.

<sup>166</sup> MANDERS, *Beukering*, k. 258.

<sup>167</sup> With regard to the structural collaboration between the Federation of Liturgical Associations and the Catholic Radio Station, see LAUWAERT, *Verslag over de methoden van Liturgische Actie in Nederland*, p. 264-265.

<sup>168</sup> FEYS, *Liturgisch Tijdschrift – Tijdschrift voor Liturgie. Een liturgisch panorama 1910-1946*, p. 207-208. Given the limits in time and space, we cannot discuss all contributions to the liturgical movement in both the Netherlands and Belgium; for further details, see FEYS, p. 208-209.

<sup>169</sup> See VERSNEL-MERGAERTS, *Van rubriekenjager tot wetenschappelijk grensganger*, p. 174-178.

<sup>170</sup> Lucas BRINKHOFF, *Bruning, Eliseus*, in *Liturgisch Woordenboek*, Roermond, 1958-1962, k. 334-335; M. HOONDEERT, *Eliseus Bruning (1892-1958): A Church Musicologist*, in L. VAN TONGEREN, M. BARNARD, P. POST & G. ROUWHORST (eds.), *Patterns and Persons. A Historiography of Liturgical Studies in the Netherlands in the Twentieth Century*, Leuven-Paris-Walpole, MA, 2010, p. 261-283.

<sup>171</sup> See VERSNEL-MERGAERTS, *Van rubriekenjager tot wetenschappelijk grensganger*, p. 82-88.

growing (academic) interest in the study of liturgy.<sup>172</sup> The liturgical movement was, from the very beginning well organised and, as mentioned above, already in 1915 there existed a federation of liturgical associations in the Netherlands (*Federatie van Liturgische Verenigingen in Nederland*).<sup>173</sup> There was interaction with the Belgian liturgical movement, Keizersberg being a source of inspiration for the Dutch liturgical movement.<sup>174</sup> Dutch liturgists participated in conferences, organised in Belgium, and in fact regularly took to the floor. In any case, up to the beginning of World War II, Belgium remained an important source of inspiration for the Dutch liturgical movement.<sup>175</sup>

From its very beginning, the movement cooperated in close relation with the official Episcopal organisations. The directives of bishops and pope were carefully followed,<sup>176</sup> even although one got the impression that there was some discrepancy between the Episcopal praise of the liturgical work and the factual support of it.<sup>177</sup> Liturgical congresses were organized such as the one at Breda (1911). More than 400 people were present and a Flemish participant wrote in his report that he was surprised that so many women (half of the audience) were present. He also mentioned the presence of the press,<sup>178</sup> at least two indications that women and presence of press were absent at meetings of Belgian liturgists. In any case, in several dioceses existed local committees for liturgical action, often under the guidance of a chaplain in collaboration with lay people.<sup>179</sup> The aims are very similar to what one can find in other countries: to offer a more appropriate liturgical training to the priests and religious; to stimulate growing awareness among the faithful of the importance of liturgy. Like elsewhere, the liturgical movement was confronted with resistance, both of the clergy and of the faithful, the first worrying about their primacy in liturgy, the second happy with their devotional practices and the use of the personal missal.<sup>180</sup>

Already in 1920, a commission for liturgical publications for the people was created, which in a sense centralized the many diocesan initiatives.<sup>181</sup> The liturgical movement also made efforts in order to spread liturgical knowledge among non-Catholics. Under the impulses of the *St-Gregorius-vereniging* (the St. Gregory Association), special attention was paid to the promotion of Gregorian chant.<sup>182</sup> At

<sup>172</sup> See the survey of VERSNEL-MERGAERTS, *Van rubriekenjager tot wetenschappelijk grensganger*, a gold mine of information about the liturgical developments in the Netherlands.

<sup>173</sup> BOT, *Zingt allen mee*, p. 320-327.

<sup>174</sup> VAN TONGEREN, *From Liturgical Movement to Liturgy on the Move*, p. 33.

<sup>175</sup> BRINKHOFF, *Nederland*, k. 1874.

<sup>176</sup> LAUWAERT, *Verslag over de methoden van Liturgische Actie in Nederland*, p. 270-272. One should not forget that the Roman-Catholic hierarchy was only restored in the Netherlands in 1853. The commitment to both pope and bishops played an important role in the identity building of the Catholics in the Netherlands. VAN TONGEREN, *From Liturgical Movement to Liturgy on the Move*, p. 28-29.

<sup>177</sup> BRINKHOFF, *Nederland*, col. 1875.

<sup>178</sup> Zie BOT, *Zingt allen mee*. p. 120.

<sup>179</sup> LAUWAERT, *Verslag over de methoden van Liturgische Actie in Nederland*, p. 267-268.

<sup>180</sup> See Lodewijk J. ROGIER, *In vrijheid herboren*, p. 656; 825.

<sup>181</sup> LAUWAERT, *Verslag over de methoden van Liturgische Actie in Nederland*, p. 264-265.

<sup>182</sup> LAUWAERT, *Verslag over de methoden van Liturgische Actie in Nederland*, p. 266-267.

the same time, it should be said that this association was not really in favour of the use of the vernacular for liturgical songs. It was only accepted in parishes where people were not able to organize Gregorian masses.<sup>183</sup> This is not to say that the association was opposed to the active participation of the faithful in the liturgy, but it should be done in Latin, as was requested by Pius XI.<sup>184</sup> In this regard, one should be aware of the fact that the initial promoters of Gregorian chant were the Benedictines of Oosterhout, an abbey founded as refuge for the French monks who had to leave their abbey in Wisques (France). Their approach was very much influenced by Solesmes. The ideals as promoted by the St. Gregory Association with resistance from the St. Cecilia school of Church music, the latter clearly a promoter of the vernacular in Church music. As a result, what, at the beginning of the century was experienced as something new (Gregorian chant), soon was considered as conservative, for not taking into account the growing awareness of and sympathy for songs in the vernacular.<sup>185</sup>

An important impetus for the liturgical movement was the introduction of the Mass weeks, an idea developed in Flanders, and taken over in the Netherlands. Liturgical education was part of the religious instruction in Catholic schools, but did not immediately result in the promotion of active participation in the liturgy.<sup>186</sup>

The interest in liturgy was developed in discussion with what happened in Germany. The developments in Germany before World War II, especially with regard to the *Gemeinschaftsmesse* and the *Betsingmesse* were openly discussed in Catholic newspapers such as the *Maasbode*. The people in the Netherlands clearly did not share the enthusiasm of their German neighbours. In this regard, one should of course mention the role of the St. Gregory Association. Moreover, quite a number of conversions such as those of the author Héléne Nolthenius or the later bishop of Rotterdam, Philippe Bär, were partly the result of their admiration for the Roman Catholic liturgy and its beauty.<sup>187</sup> This explains why, because of the implementation of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, many converts, disappointed, will leave the Roman Catholic Church, thus making clear that external elements more than a profound understanding of the Catholic liturgy had stimulated them, something one cannot say about Bär, for whom the discovery of Chevetogne, Belgium, not only meant a deep appreciation of the authentic Benedictine liturgical insight, but also resulted in a growing sensitivity for ecumenism.

As stated above, many initiatives were taken before World War II, but one sometimes is looking in vain for some coherence. The *Dutch Federation of Liturgical Associations* in the Netherlands had started with its own journal. Soon, the Norbertines of Heeswijk started with the journal *The Sacrifice* (in fact the continuation of the *Tijdschrift van de Aartsbroederschap der H. Mis van Eerherstel*). The Fathers of the Holy

<sup>183</sup> BOT, *Zingt allen mee*, p. 120-121.

<sup>184</sup> See *Divini cultus*, in AAS, 21 (1929), p. 33-41, p. 40; see also LAMBERTS, *L'évolution de la notion de "participation active"*, p. 99-100.

<sup>185</sup> VAN TONGEREN, *From Liturgical Movement to Liturgy on the Move*, p. 38-39.

<sup>186</sup> LAUWAERT, *Verslag over de methoden van Liturgische Actie in Nederland*, p. 269-270.

<sup>187</sup> See Judith DE RAAT, *Naar een groter huis. Portret van Mgr. Philippe Bär*, in Marjet DERKS, Peter NISSEN and Judith DE RAAT (eds.), *Het licht gezien, bekeringen tot het katholicisme in de 20ste eeuw*, Hilversum, 2000.

Sacrament of Brakkenstein (near Nijmegen) founded the journal *SS. Eucharistia*. In other words, in the Low Countries there were, at the time, too many journals and this explains that, also because of the problems of World War II, the Belgian *Liturgisch Tijdschrift* really came into trouble.

During the Second World War, an attempt was made to coordinate the liturgical initiatives, but it partly failed.<sup>188</sup> In 1946, an international liturgical conference was organised at Maastricht.<sup>189</sup> It was an initiative of great liturgists such as Brinkhoff and the Jesuit Schmidt (1912-1982). 500 people participated. The conference made clear that the two lines of the liturgical movement still existed: pleas in favour of a liturgy in the vernacular were squared to interventions emphasizing more professionalisation with regard to the (Gregorian) Church chant.<sup>190</sup> However, the conference became the start of a growing collaboration. Proposals such as that about better coordination of activities related to liturgy and church music were made. Several liturgical journals decided to collaborate: the Dutch *Ons Liturgisch Tijdschrift* decided to join the *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*. The conference contributed to better collaboration between secular priests and religious en among the religious themselves. In any case, this conference would be the starting point of a more scientific and a better pastoral and organisational underpinning of the liturgical life and celebration. Only the St. Gregory-Association refused.<sup>191</sup> During the conference, pleas were held in favour of bringing the liturgy closer to the faithful, or as one of the speakers said: “Le problème de la Liturgie populaire, de la Liturgie tout court, me semble donc l’un des très graves problèmes de l’heure.” “Notre Liturgie non dans sa substance certes, mais dans certaines de ses formes extrinsèques est morte. Elle est morte dans sa langue”. “Si donc le mouvement liturgique se limitait à certaines classes intellectuelles et sociales, il trahirait sa mission”.

It had become clear that there was a gap between liturgy and the faithful. Also, it became clear that the speakers were in favour of the idea that the liturgy had to come to the people not the other way around. At the same time, the conference made clear that there were still people who were of the opinion that the laity only had a marginal role to play in the Eucharistic celebration, something which, in comparison to Belgium and Germany, at least after World War II, is a bit surprising. However, one of the other great Dutch liturgists, explicitly referring to Pius XI’ *Divini cultus*, stressed that the role of the people in the liturgical celebration was essential. Bruning, the one I am referring to, made clear that the singing by the congregation belonged to the essence of the liturgical celebration.

The creation of an Interdiocesan Liturgical Secretariat in 1952 resulted in better collaboration with Belgium. It was also an important step of the liturgical movement before Vatican II. The *Society for Liturgical Studies*, founded by G. Laudy and A. Verheul, stimulated the study of the liturgy and really contributed to the deepening

<sup>188</sup> Lucas BRINKHOFF, *Dom Dr. Ambroos Verheul en Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*, p. 14-15.

<sup>189</sup> *Verslagboek van het internationaal liturgisch congres gehouden te Maastricht van 27 juli tot 2 augustus 1946*, Maastricht-Vroenhoven, not dated.

<sup>190</sup> BOT, *Zingt allen mee*, p. 122-123 (with further literature).

<sup>191</sup> FEYS, *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie. Een liturgisch panorama 1947-1985*, p. 476-481.

of the liturgical life.<sup>192</sup> It also became a means for the development of contacts with colleagues at home and abroad.<sup>193</sup> Research was promoted. Liturgy became more and more a discipline in its own right, certainly still dominated by the historical approaches, but with a growing awareness of the importance of liturgical practice based on biblical, theological and daily life perspectives.<sup>194</sup> The yearly conferences were an ideal opportunity for exchange and reflection. In 1956, the dioceses of Utrecht, Groningen and Breda started with the Dutch Community Mass, in fact a copy of the German *Gemeinschaftsmesse*.

In the Netherlands, earlier than in the other countries under consideration, the number of parish councils was growing. In these councils, not only were financial questions discussed, but also elements such as the appropriate time for liturgical celebrations and ecclesiastical exercises. It goes without saying that this active involvement in parish life also resulted in a growing awareness that training of lay people (also intellectually trained lay people) was needed.<sup>195</sup> Like in Belgium, people were of the opinion that, without a good theological training, lay people cannot fill in an adequate way their responsibilities as Christians in the places they have to work. Insight in faith and the living of the faith request adequate formation. Without theological training a layperson is not able to discover the right relation between science and faith, world and Church. In this context, an interesting initiative of the Norbertines of Berne-Heeswijk should be mentioned. Here, some fathers started in 1948 with liturgical study days for teachers. Topics such as liturgy, Eucharist, the ecclesiastical year, baptism, Bible and liturgy, active participation and Eucharist and the youth were discussed.<sup>196</sup> The aim was clear: developing a liturgical sensitivity among those who were expected to introduce the youth into Christian life and mystery. In any case, there was a growing insight that all are members of the Church, all give the Church its image, not only the hierarchy and the clergy. In other words, the laity is also responsible for the Church.<sup>197</sup> Further, new developments such as the approved alternative Easter celebration of 1951 were extremely well received in the Netherlands: about 65% of the parishes made use of it.

The Netherlands, just like Belgium, was really a country of missionaries. It goes without saying that this link also played a role in the development of universal liturgical sensitivities. This became clear during a conference on Mission in Nijmegen-

<sup>192</sup> See L. VAN TONGEREN, *Fifty Years of the Dutch Study Group 'The Society for Liturgical Studies'*, in *Questions liturgiques*, 87 (2006), p. 161-178.

<sup>193</sup> VERSNEL-MERGAERTS, *Tendensen in de Liturgische Beweging en de liturgiewetenschap van de twintigste eeuw*, p. 245-246.

<sup>194</sup> VAN TONGEREN, *From Liturgical Movement to Liturgy on the Move*, p. 47. With regard to the important role of Jan Prein in the development of liturgical scholarship, see Petra VERSNEL-MERGAERTS, *Jan Prein (1901-1957). A Pioneer of Liturgical Scholarship*, in VAN TONGEREN, BARNARD, POST, and ROUWHORST (eds.), *Patterns and Persons*, p. 313-337.

<sup>195</sup> See, e.g., *Ons standpunt*, p. 5-7.

<sup>196</sup> FEYS, *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie. Een liturgisch panorama 1947-1985*, p. 500.

<sup>197</sup> Bernard DELFGAAUW, *Theologische week te Nijmegen*, in *De Maand*, 1 (1958), p. 64-65.

Uden (the Netherlands).<sup>198</sup> Missionaries not only asked for the use of the vernacular but also held a plea in favour of a complete reformation of the mass. Universality necessarily implied diversity; maybe more important than such pleas was the fact that people like Cardinal Gracias of India, so influential during the Council, were present and took the floor, at a meeting that rightly can be described as an emancipating one: Third World Church leaders took the floor and held pleas in favour of a development of an “indigenous” theology, for this receiving not only the full support of first world theologians, but often also the ammunition: an “European” Christendom became more and more a universal Christendom.<sup>199</sup>

### ROMAN SURVEILLANCE

All these things happened under the surveillance of Rome, a surveillance which was often supportive, sometimes critical, but always inspired by the conviction that it is Rome that must take the lead when it comes to decisions. Moreover, the list of decisions of Pius XII with regard to liturgy is impressive and revealing. In 1950, he ratified the new German ritual and that of several other countries.<sup>200</sup> Bilingual rituals were already approved in 1941, especially in Africa and India. The encyclical *Mediator Dei* (1947) was interpreted as an approval of the liturgical movement and is today described as an important step towards the constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. Mentors of the liturgical movement qualified it at the time as their *Magna Charta*.<sup>201</sup> However, a careful reading of this encyclical reveals that the pope both praises and admonishes, clearly hinting at the crisis in the German liturgical movement. Moreover, the encyclical also makes explicitly clear that in the Roman Catholic Church, it is Rome that decides what is good, acceptable, permissible or deserves disapproval. After World War II, the power of decision was, more than before, the right and responsibility of the hierarchy, as becomes clear in the many initiatives of Pius XII.<sup>202</sup> Logical as it might be, it is precisely this tension between what people experience at the grass roots level and what is approved by Rome that will result in the difficult and complicated implementation of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*.<sup>203</sup> The encyclical emphasizes the importance of active participation in

<sup>198</sup> For the acts, see *Missions et liturgie*. That both in Asia and Africa a concern for the adaptation of the liturgy to the local culture existed, is made clear in, among others, Paul PULLIKKAN and Mathijs LAMBERIGTS, *The Vota of the Indian Bishops and their Participation in the Liturgy Debate during the Second Vatican Council*, in *Questions liturgiques*, 78 (1997), p. 61-79; A. NJOKU-M. LAMBERIGTS, *Vatican II. The Vota of the Anglophone West African Bishops concerning the Sacred Liturgy*, in *Questions Liturgiques*, 81 (2000), p. 89-121. Already in 1947, the author of *Ons standpunt*, p. 5 emphasized that the Western liturgy was quite foreign to the human experiences of Christian in e.g. China and Japan.

<sup>199</sup> See Gilles ROUTHIER, *La liturgie aux prises avec un monde et une Église en mutation*, in *La Maison-Dieu*, 260 (2009), p. 153-181, see p. 156-158.

<sup>200</sup> Johannes Andreas JUNGSMANN, *Liturgie vivante*, in *Paroisse et Liturgie*, 3 (1956), p. 175; thematic issue Assise-Rome of *La Maison-Dieu*, nrs. 47/48, 1956 (both for France and Italy).

<sup>201</sup> Ambrosius VERHEUL, *De Magna Charta der liturgische beweging*, in *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*, 32 (1948), p. 4-16.

<sup>202</sup> ROUTHIER, *La liturgie aux prises*, p. 154-155.

<sup>203</sup> Mathijs LAMBERIGTS, *The Liturgy Debate*, in ALBERIGO and KOMONCHAK (eds.), *History of Vatican II. Vol. II: The Formation of the Council's Identity. First Period and Intersession (October 1962-September 1963)*,



the liturgy, while at the same time appreciating the idea that liturgy is also a form of meditation and devotional practices, thus reconciling new insights and issues, going back to a previous period, and then disapproved by the promoters of the liturgical movement. The encyclical remains rather vague about the common priesthood of the faithful and its relation to the participation in the sacrifice. In other words, the theology of the common priesthood of the faithful has not yet found its way in Rome. The encyclical also deals with the missal as a help to follow the Mass, invites the bishops to order properly the liturgical action, expresses the wish that in every diocese a liturgical commission will be created in order to promote the liturgical apostolate. The encyclical clearly emphasises that Latin as language must be used for it is a clear and remarkable sign of unity. The pope does not deny that the use of the vernacular might be useful with regard to some rites, but explicitly states that a decision about this matter only can be taken by the Holy See.<sup>204</sup> In other words, the permission to use the vernacular is the right of the Holy See. More important is that it is the pope who puts this issue on the agenda.

At the same time, it should be stressed that what a pope writes and decides are not always coincidental. Indeed, one week after the publication of *Mediator Dei*, Rome approved the Latin-French ritual.<sup>205</sup> In 1950, Germany received the approval of its *Collectio Rituum*, an important step in the use of the vernacular. In 1951, Pius XII restored the Easter Saturday Vigil. Many other papal decisions could be mentioned, e.g. the simplification of the rubrics of the breviary and the missal in 1955, the revision of the celebration of the Holy Week in the same year,<sup>206</sup> the encyclical *Musicae Sacrae Disciplina* (again 1955), a document dealing with the essence and the design of Church Music.<sup>207</sup> In the same period the English-Latin *Collectio* was introduced. The Trier-Paris connection, resulting in the Lugano conference of 1953, offered the Diocese of Lugano the joy to be the first diocese that received the approval of a Latin-Italian ritual in 1956. In other words, important as the region I discussed might have been, everywhere, many things were underway in the 1950s. The list of the participants in the liturgical Congress of Assisi (1956), rightly described as a first pinnacle of the liturgical movement,<sup>208</sup> makes this clear. However, it should also be reminded that the famous Congress of Assisi ended with a speech of Pius XII in Rome, in which he both insisted on the duty to use Latin in the liturgy and expressed critical reservations

p. 107-166.

<sup>204</sup> DE CLERCK, *Actieve deelname*, p. 27-30.

<sup>205</sup> Bilingual rituals had already been approved for Africa and Asia in 1941, a proof that Rome was aware of the problems the Latin liturgy caused in non-European contexts.

<sup>206</sup> J. LOEW, *Bemerkingen bij de "Ordo Hebdomadae Sanctae Instauratus"*, in *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*, 40 (1956), p. 18-28.

<sup>207</sup> See, e.g., E. BRUNING, *Musicae Sacrae Disciplina. Beschouwingen over de nieuwe encycliek van Paus Pius XII over de kerkmuziek*, in *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*, 40 (1956), p. 70-77.

<sup>208</sup> It is interesting to see that giants of the liturgical movement such as J.A. Jungmann, B. Capelle, O. Rousseau and cardinal Bologna took the floor at this conference, at which about 1400 people participated; see *Témoignage Chrétien*, October 5, 1956. See also JUNGSMANN, *Liturgie vivante*, p. 175. Worth to be consulted is the thematic issue of *La Maison-Dieu*, nrs. 47/48 about the Assisi-Rome meeting.



with regard to concelebration.<sup>209</sup> Both aspects seem to be supported by later decisions such the instruction of the Congregation of the Rites (September 3, 1958) and the apostolic constitution of February 24, 1962, the latter stressing again the irreplaceable role of Latin.<sup>210</sup> It goes without saying that precisely these topics will be subject to debate at the Council.<sup>211</sup>

The Roman decisions as taken between 1947 and 1958 seem to support the Benedictine line of the liturgical movement, neglecting or at least not sufficiently understanding that the pastoral liturgical movement was becoming more and more important. In fact, not every parish was able to meet the standards as requested for the Gregorian sung high mass. Moreover, the existing official rubrics were experienced as a hindrance for a truly liturgical development. It also should be said that at the time the Benedictine line only seemed to reach a small elite, able to understand Latin and familiar with the liturgical language and its symbolic power. Most of the people were not able to really participate in such “high level” liturgy. Of course, people referred to the missal, but, given the developments in liturgical reflection, what was once a help, now turned out to be a hindrance.

At the same time, it should be said that people probably overestimated what could be done in the Council. Already in 1961, the German liturgist Balthasar Fischer (1912-2001) warned one of his students of unrealistic expectations and private initiatives that could result in relativism with regard to the liturgy of the time.<sup>212</sup> In his diary, Romano Guardini wrote on May 26, 1953: “Die liturgische Bewegung hat zuerst die restaurative Phase durchlaufen (Solesmes); dann die akademische (Maria Laach, Beuron, Akademikerverband); dann die realistische (Rothenfels, Leipziger Oratorium, Klosterneuburg)”.<sup>213</sup> It might well be that what once was a *mimum* programme, at the eve of the Council was to be the *maximum*.<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>209</sup> Pius XII's speech was not only a support for the liturgical movement; it was also a speech full of warnings and appeals to respect the hierarchical order *in liturgicis*. DE CLERCK, *Actieve deelname*, p. 33-34.

<sup>210</sup> FOUILLoux, 'Mouvements théologico-spirituels' et concile (1959-1962), p. 195-196.

<sup>211</sup> LAMBERIGTS, *The Liturgy Debate*, p. 107-166

<sup>212</sup> See Balthasar FISCHER, *Que faut-il attendre du concile? Lettre à un jeune curé*, in *La Maison-Dieu*, 66 (1961), p. 6-9.

<sup>213</sup> Quoted in GRILLO, *Der Liturgiebegriff bei Pius Parsch*, p. 191.

<sup>214</sup> GRILLO, *Der Liturgiebegriff bei Pius Parsch*, p. 195.



# THE CONCILIAR SCHEMA DE DEPOSITO FIDEI ON “DOCTRINAL PROGRESS”

AN ANALYSIS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF PRECONCILIAR THEORIES OF DOGMATIC DEVELOPMENT

## INTRODUCTION

The problem of dogmatic development led to one of the most obvious trials of strength that have taken place between neo-scholasticism and a new theological approach, from the end of the 1930s onwards.<sup>1</sup> As the fact of dogmatic development raised the question of history and contingency in the domain of theology, it heavily discomfited a-historical Neo-Scholasticism and its logical theories of dogmatic development. No logical device was able to cover the facts that history brought to light.<sup>2</sup> In contrast, the fact of dogmatic development opened up possibilities for ‘new’ —or ‘anti-intellectualist’— theologians to revise standard Neo-Scholastic conceptions of revelation, faith, tradition, the Church or theological epistemology and methodology as to offer more plausible accounts of concrete cases of dogmatic development (especially in the field of mariology).<sup>3</sup> As the problem of dogmatic development was thus the sore point of Neo-Scholastic theology in its struggle against new approaches to theology in the 1940s and 1950s, it is interesting to find out how it was dealt with in the ante-preparatory and preparatory phase of the Second Vatican Council, taking into consideration the mainly Neo-Scholastic mould of the texts produced in this period.

In what follows, we will start with a discussion of two outstanding examples of the ‘new’ approaches to dogmatic development. Firstly, this begins with the theory of Louis Charlier, which caused a major shock among Neo-Scholastic theologians at the end of the 1930s. He was condemned in 1942, and continued to arouse vehement opposition in the 1950s and early 1960s. Secondly, the theory of Henri de Lubac is discussed as one of the most thorough expressions of the new theological approach to dogmatic development and as a criterion to assess to what extent these new approaches had been taken into account in the discussions on dogmatic development in the ante-preparatory and preparatory phases of the Council. Next, the teaching of Pius XII on dogmatic development is analyzed on the basis of the encyclical *Humani generis* and the bull *Munificentissimus Deus*. It will be argued that this teaching is

<sup>1</sup> Ted Mark SCHOOF, *A Survey of Catholic Theology 1800-1970*, Eugene, 2008, p. 159.

<sup>2</sup> Jan WALGRAVE, *Unfolding Revelation. The Nature of Doctrinal Development* (Theological Resources, 4), London, 1972, p. 334.

<sup>3</sup> See for instance the plausible defense of the definability of the Assumption by Henri Rondet, a Jesuit from the school of Fourvière: Henri RONDET, *La définibilité de l'Assomption*, in *Études Mariales. Bulletin de la Société Française d'Études Mariales*, 6 (1948), p. 59-95.

the principal source for the doctrine on dogmatic development in *De Deposito Fidei*. Finally, we will trace the theme of dogmatic development in the ante-preparatory and preparatory documents of the Second Vatican Council; this is from the *vota* of the Council down to chapter V (*De progressu Doctrinae*) of schema II of *De Deposito Fidei pure custodiendo*. In the conclusion, we will try to assess the continuity and discontinuity between the doctrine on dogmatic development in the ante-preparatory and preparatory documents of the Second Vatican Council on the one hand, and the preconciliar approaches (*Nouvelle théologie*, Neo-Scholastic theology, and teaching of Pius XII) on the other.

## 'NEW' APPROACHES TO DOGMATIC DEVELOPMENT

### THE THEORIES OF LOUIS CHARLIER O.P. AND HENRI DE LUBAC S.J. AND THE SURROUNDING CONTROVERSIES

In 1951, the Gregorian University organized a "theological week" on the question of the progress of Catholic doctrine.<sup>4</sup> This question had become the focal point of theological interest due to two recent magisterial documents: *Humani generis* and *Munificentissimus Deus*. In *Humani generis*, the dogmatic relativism of new theological approaches was reproved, but at the same time a continuous progress of doctrine was acknowledged. The definition of the Bodily Assumption of the Mother of God, defined as dogma in the bull *Munificentissimus Deus*, was a manifest and instructive example of such a dogmatic development. In his opening lecture at the conference, Maurizio Flick, a professor at the Gregorian University, offered a *status quaestionis* on the problem of dogmatic development in contemporaneous theology.<sup>5</sup> Dogmatic development is indeed a problem, so Flick explained, because one has to determine in what way the fullness of apostolic times or the objective close of revelation with the death of the last apostle can be reconciled with the gradual development of Christian dogma, the undeniable reality of which was again proved by the recent dogmatization of the Assumption. With regard to the ways to explain this development, Flick distinguished two divergent tendencies in modern theology: the one 'intellectualist' and the other 'anti-intellectualist'. In reference to Bartholomé Xiberta,<sup>6</sup> the later redactor of chapter five (*De progressu Doctrinae*) of *De Deposito Fidei*, Flick asserted that the fundamental difference between 'intellectualist' and 'anti-intellectualist' theologians regards the notion of revelation.<sup>7</sup> 'Intellectualist' theologians conceive revelation as the communication of a doctrine by God. As a consequence, dogmatic development is to be understood as a progress in the knowledge of this doctrine, a progress that can never lead to the formulation of new dogmas that do not have a

<sup>4</sup> *Lo sviluppo del dogma secondo la dottrina cattolica. Relazioni lette nella seconda Settimana teologica 24-28 Settembre 1951*, Rome, 1953.

<sup>5</sup> Maurizio FLICK, *Il problema dello sviluppo del dogma nella Teologia contemporanea*, in *Lo sviluppo del dogma secondo la dottrina cattolica. Relazioni lette nella seconda Settimana teologica 24-28 Settembre 1951*, Roma, 1953, p. 5-23.

<sup>6</sup> On Xiberta, see *infra*.

<sup>7</sup> Maurizio FLICK, *Il problema*, p. 9-10.

(logical) bond with what was known explicitly from the beginning. According to Flick, this ‘intellectualist’ tendency was still common and dominant among Catholic theologians at the beginning of the 1950s.

In contrast, the revelation theology of ‘anti-intellectualist’ theologians is marked by the emphasis on the ontological reality of the new life that has been given to the Church in Christ. Consequently, dogmatic progress takes place independent of the growth of this life in the Church, and it is expressed in formulations that do not have a logical relation with each other. All these formulations refer to the same reality, which is ever more perfectly experienced and assimilated in the history of the Church. As representatives of this “anti-intellectualist doctrine”, Flick discussed the theories of Charlier and de Lubac.<sup>8</sup>

To translate the distinction of Flick into a more generally accepted terminology today, one could say that Charlier and de Lubac elaborated so-called ‘theo-logical’—instead of ‘anti-intellectualist’—theories of dogmatic development as opposed to ‘logical’ theories.<sup>9</sup> Although theological theories have their early origins in the ideas of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century theologians like Johann Adam Möhler, John Henry Newman and Maurice Blondel, it is only at the end of the 1930s that the controversies that would lead to a definitive break-through in the ‘theological’ solution began. They were stirred up by Louis Charlier’s *Essai sur le problème théologique* (1938).<sup>10</sup>

One of the main goals of Charlier in writing his *Essai* was precisely to provide a satisfying solution to the problem of dogmatic development, as the logical approach of Neo-Scholastic theology was highly deficient. Scholasticism was, by its very nature, unable to accept a real development of dogma. Charlier realized that a revised theology of revelation was indispensable to a more fruitful approach towards the problem. He urged to abandon the exclusive conceptualistic approach of revelation as the communication of a number of truths for the benefit of a notion of revelation as the reality of the self-giving God in Christ, present in the Church. Revelation is then completed when the Church is founded, because revelation is nothing else than God giving himself to us in Christ in the mystery of the Incarnation, of which the mystery of the Church is a continuation. This means that the reality of divine revelation—God revealed in Christ—came to us by means of the Church. The revealed given is in the Church, in its life and preaching (and not in the sources of revelation). Our divine faith directs itself to the revealed that is actually present in the Church and is expressed infallibly by the magisterium.<sup>11</sup>

Given the inextricable bond between revelation and Church, dogmatic development has to be understood against the background of the process of growth in the life of the Church, which is nothing less than a development of the reality of

<sup>8</sup> FLICK, *Il problema*, p. 18-20.

<sup>9</sup> The distinction between ‘logical’ and ‘theological’ theories of dogmatic development was introduced by the Louvain theologian René Draguet (1896-1980) in *L'évolution des dogmes*, in Maurice BRILLANT and M. NÉDONCELLE (ed.), *Apologétique. Nos raisons de croire. Réponses aux objections*, Paris, 1937, p. 1166-1192.

<sup>10</sup> WALGRAVE, *Unfolding Revelation*, p. 338.

<sup>11</sup> Louis CHARLIER, *Essai sur le problème théologique* (Bibliothèque Orientations. Section scientifique, 1), Thuillies, 1938, p. 66-70.

revelation in the Church.<sup>12</sup> With this growth of the “*donné-révéle-réalité*” corresponds a growth of the “*donné-révéle-connaissance*”. The development of knowledge is thus possible because the Church in its living faith not only reaches the extrinsic formulation, but through this formulation touches upon the reality of God’s gift itself. The Church possesses the *sensus Christi*. It is the mission of the magisterium of the Church to define the inner growth of revelation in precise, but always analogous terms. Thus, the Church’s preaching is the expression of the Church’s faith that exists in a continuous intuitive contact with the revealed.<sup>13</sup> In other words, the process of dogmatic development is not to be conceived as a process of conceptual deduction, but as an inductive process: the knowledge of the Church grows through its mystical perception or intuition of the revealed reality with its proper life and mysterious law of development.

It is obvious that from a traditional viewpoint on dogmatic development, the views of Charlier were very disturbing for two main reasons. Firstly, although Charlier acknowledged that, following the death of the Apostles, there could be no further public revelation, he refused to restrict development of doctrine to an increase in subjective appropriation —the crucial tenet of Neo-Scholastic theologians. Instead, for Charlier, there was a mysterious development and growth of the revealed deposit in the Church.<sup>14</sup> Secondly, this progress is determined by the divine logic of the reality of revelation itself, which is wrapped in mystery and which only becomes clear to human knowledge in so far as God himself plays a part in the processes of human thought. Ultimately, then, the development of dogma cannot be registered either by deductive thought or by strictly historical research, but only by the Church’s consciousness of faith.<sup>15</sup> For these two reasons, Charlier was strongly opposed by Neo-Scholastic theologians accusing him of continuing revelation, irrationalism and mysticism.

In his commentary on the formal condemnation of the *Essai sur le problème théologique* by the Holy Office,<sup>16</sup> Pietro Parente<sup>17</sup> denounced Charlier’s refusal to restrict dogmatic development to a progress in knowledge, by linking it to the modernist idea of continuous revelation, as condemned in the encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*.<sup>18</sup> The other controversial thesis of Charlier —human logic cannot

<sup>12</sup> “Toute la réalité divine grandit, en tant que donnée, en tant qu’assimilée, en tant qu’il y a croissance du Christ dans son Église, dans la mesure où celle-ci s’identifie à Lui”. CHARLIER, *Essai*, p. 70.

<sup>13</sup> CHARLIER, *Essai*, p. 71.

<sup>14</sup> HANS BOERSMA, *Nouvelle Théologie and Sacramental Ontology. A Return to Mystery*, Oxford, 2009, p. 218.

<sup>15</sup> SCHOOF, *A Survey*, p. 203.

<sup>16</sup> On 6 February 1942, the *Essai sur le problème théologique* was put on the Index. See *Decretum. Proscriptio librorum* in AAS, 34 (1942), p. 37.

<sup>17</sup> At that time, Pietro Parente (1891-1986) was *consultor* of the H. Office. In 1959 he was appointed as *Assessor*. As such he wrote the *propositum* of the H. Office for the Council.

<sup>18</sup> “Tenent [Chenu and Charlier] enim a Deo revelata inconstantia esse et mutabilia ac perpetuo augeri, non solum in mente christifidelium qui ea apprehendunt, sed etiam in seipsis. [...] Quod sane idem est ac si dicatur haberi mutationem et progressum non solum in mente hominum revelationem accipientum, sed in ipsis doctrinis revelatis, quam certe sententiam in modernistis reprobavit Encyclica *Pascendi*”. Pietro PARENTE, *Annotationes*, in *Periodica de re morali, canonica, liturgica*, 31 (1942), p. 184-188 (187).

always interrelate 'new' dogmas with earlier tenets— was most vehemently attacked by Charles Boyer. Between 1940 and 1957, he wrote several articles to defend the idea that the logical method of development<sup>19</sup> alone preserves the immutability of dogma, thereby denouncing the dangerous association of Charlier with anti-intellectualism and mysticism.<sup>20</sup>

In reaction to the criticism on Charlier, de Lubac, for his part, exposed the flaws of the Neo-Scholastic approach to dogmatic development. At the same time, he opened up some fruitful perspectives to tackle the problem. In *Le problème du développement du dogme*,<sup>21</sup> De Lubac completely undermines the two fundamental tenets of the Neo-Scholastic approach to dogmatic development. These are, firstly, the conception of dogmatic development as a progress of our knowledge about the revealed given, and secondly, the presupposition of a logical bond between the new dogma and the original revelation. De Lubac will show that these tenets are both based on a deficient conception of revelation.

With regard to the conception of dogmatic development as a progress in knowledge, de Lubac demonstrates the indefensibility of the crucial argument of Neo-Scholastic theologians that the truth of a new dogma is not new *in itself* (*quoad se*), as it was contained in the original deposit. Therefore they maintain that the new truth is only new *in relation to us* (*quoad nos*). It is not the dogma itself that has progressed, only the knowledge we have of it. For De Lubac though, the idea of a truth that is at once revealed, but nevertheless subsists independent of the knowledge of the one to whom it was communicated, has no real sense. Therefore a theory of dogmatic development has to give an account of the *aporia* that the *knowledge* of revelation is unchangeable, and yet it is also liable to development. Neo-Scholastic theologians fail to do so, as they conceive dogmatic development as a progress within explicit knowledge. They reduce revelation to a certain number of explicitly known formulas, playing before the mind the role of major premises leading to explicitly known conclusions. But these conclusions are decidedly new, and therefore, their definition as dogmas leads to a progress in revelation.

De Lubac points out that the *aporia* can be overcome by revising the conception of revelation. Revelation was not first of all a series of propositions, but a Person, Jesus Christ, the incredible rich object of revelation, "le Tout du dogme".<sup>22</sup> This whole of

<sup>19</sup> Boyer defines doctrinal development as a logical operation by which a certain truth appears to be contained in another truth that was already held with certainty. "Insomma, lo sviluppo della dottrina si riduce, attraverso diverse occasioni e vari influssi, ad un'operazione logica per cui una verità determinata appare contenuta in un'altra, che già si teneva con certezza". Charles BOYER, *Lo sviluppo del dogma*, in *Problemi e orientamenti di teologia dommatica*, Vol. 1, Milan, 1957, p. 357-386 (357). For a discussion of Boyer's theory on dogmatic development, see John GALVIN, *A Critical Survey of Modern Conceptions of Doctrinal Development*, in *Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Meeting of the Catholic Theological Society of America*, Washington, 1950, p. 45-63 (58-59).

<sup>20</sup> See especially Charles BOYER, *Qu'est-ce que la théologie? Réflexions sur une controverse*, in *Gregorianum* 21 (1940), p. 255-266.

<sup>21</sup> Henri DE LUBAC, *Le problème du développement du dogme*, in *Recherches de science religieuse*, 35 (1948), p. 130-160. For an English translation, see Henri DE LUBAC, *The Problem of the Development of Dogma*, in Henri DE LUBAC, *Theology in History*, San Francisco CA, 1996, p. 248-280.

<sup>22</sup> DE LUBAC, *Le problème*, p. 157.



dogma is not susceptible to any increase. The first Christians had a concrete and living perception of Christ; they had a grasp of all of dogma, as they knew it *per modum unius* in Christ. In Christ, all has been given and revealed to us in one stroke. All later particular dogmas are abstractions separated from the total revelation; they are coins constituting more distinct parts of a treasure already possessed in its entirety. So, there is a development from an implicit, global intuition to explicit knowledge of faith. But this development is never a pure and simple progress: “Let us acknowledge that development is not only progress, but is always and at the same time decay”.<sup>23</sup> The revealed truth surpasses us; each light acquired with respect to it is the cause of a new and more profound obscurity. The *development* of dogma has a totally different nature than the *progress* that is accomplished in the human sciences.<sup>24</sup> For this reason, de Lubac dislikes the use of the word *progress* to refer to dogmatic development.

With regard to the logical bond, de Lubac points to the fact that the phenomenon of development is far more complex than the problem of theological conclusions, logically linked to original revelation. Given the intrinsically supernatural and mysterious character of revealed truth, it is impossible to transpose the whole dogmatic fact of development onto the plane of the logical process proper to the human mind. The laws of human logic ought not to be applied universally, without precautions and without correctives, to a mystery. Our concepts must be revised and adapted to the revealed truth, which is the norm.<sup>25</sup>

In an article in 1951,<sup>26</sup> de Lubac again touched upon the issue of the concepts of faith, which was at the heart of the controversy surrounding the *nouvelle théologie*. As revelation is first and foremost the manifestation of a Person,<sup>27</sup> the Catholic truth will always go beyond its conceptual expression.<sup>28</sup> “Without doubt”, so de Lubac argued, “the Catholic knows well that the formulas themselves that the Church proposes to him are very inadequate with respect to their object—which means that they are imperfect but not that they are inaccurate—for he is himself on the way, not at the end”.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, “the mystery shatters all the rational frameworks [...] in which we seek

<sup>23</sup> “Sachons reconnaître que le développement n’est pas seulement progrès, mais qu’il est toujours et en même temps décadence” Henri DE LUBAC, *Corpus Mysticum. L’eucharistie et l’Église au Moyen Âge. Étude historique*, Parijs, 1944, p. 270.

<sup>24</sup> DE LUBAC, *The Problem*, p. 264-265.

<sup>25</sup> GALVIN, *A Critical Survey*, p. 56.

<sup>26</sup> Henri DE LUBAC, *La doctrine du Père Lebreton sur la Révélation et le dogme d’après ses écrits antimodernistes*, in Henri DE LUBAC, *Théologie dans l’Histoire. II. Questions disputées et résistance au nazisme* (Théologie), Paris, 1990, p. 108-156. English translation: Henri DE LUBAC, *The Doctrine of Father Lebreton on Revelation and Dogma According to His Anti-Modernist Writings*, in Henri DE LUBAC, *Theology in History*, San Francisco, 1996, p. 317-365.

<sup>27</sup> “The person of Jesus is not revealed uniquely by means of formulas, that he himself taught to his apostles. Once again, very far from it! It is that, in his very being, he is Word, Logos, Verbum. ‘He is the substantial revelation’”. DE LUBAC, *The Doctrine of Father Lebreton*, p. 327.

<sup>28</sup> SCHOOF, *A Survey*, p. 205.

<sup>29</sup> DE LUBAC, *The Doctrine of Father Lebreton*, p. 323. De Lubac supports this tenet with a quote from Léonce de Grandmaison, SJ: “Words are important here only to the degree in which their meaning, actually received, expresses sufficiently a truth that precedes them, surpasses them and will always transcend them”.

to enclose it".<sup>30</sup> For Neo-Scholastic theologians though, the concepts of faith had absolute validity, as the revelation in Christ was only communicated to us in human concepts, and the relationship of those concepts with the reality of salvation was guaranteed by God's authority.<sup>31</sup> Only one year before de Lubac wrote his article, the encyclical *Humani generis* (1950) had taught the immutable value of some, "adequately true" concepts of faith, sanctioned by the ecumenical councils.<sup>32</sup> The idea that the mysteries of faith can only be expressed by means of "approximately true" and always mutable concepts was brought in connection with dogmatic relativism.<sup>33</sup> De Lubac's article was censured by the Jesuit censors in Rome (among them, Eduard Dhanis)<sup>34</sup> declaring that its doctrine was false, Modernist, contrary to the Vatican Council and to the encyclical *Humani generis*. The censors in question forbade the publication of the text<sup>35</sup>.

To summarize, the Neo-Scholastic detractors of Charlier and de Lubac reproved the 'theo-logical' approach to dogmatic development for three main reasons. First of all, as this approach refused to conceive dogmatic development as a "progress" of the understanding of revelation ('subjective' development of dogma), it seemed to undermine the homogeneity or substantial immutability of dogma, thus allowing for objective development or continuing revelation. Secondly, in the eyes of Neo-Scholastic theologians, the 'new' approach appeared to be an abdication of human reason, leaving the development of doctrine to the vague mystical experience of the Church. Finally, the emphasis on the inadequacy of the human concepts to express the object of faith was linked to dogmatic relativism, as denounced in *Humani generis*.

<sup>30</sup> DE LUBAC, *The Doctrine of Father Lebreton*, p. 350.

<sup>31</sup> SCHOOF, *A Survey*, p. 206.

<sup>32</sup> "[...] sed ea quae communi consensu a catholicis doctoribus composita per plura saecula fuere ad aliquam dogmatis intelligentiam attingendam, tam caduco fundamento procul dubio non nituntur. Nituntur enim principiis ac notionibus ex vera rerum creaturarum cognitione deductis; in quibus quidem deducendis cognitionibus humanae menti veritas divinitus revelata, quasi stella, per Ecclesiam illuxit. Quare mirum non est aliquas huiusmodi notiones a Concilio Oecumenico non solum adhibitae, sed etiam sancitae esse, ita ut ab eis discedere nefas sit". *Humani Generis*, in AAS, 42 (1950), p. 566-567.

<sup>33</sup> "Quod idcirco etiam fieri posse ac debere audaciores quidam affirmant, quia fidei mysteria numquam notionibus adaequate veris significari posse contendunt, sed tantum notionibus "approximativis", ut aiunt, ac semper mutabilibus, quibus veritas aliquatenus quidem indicetur, sed necessario quoque deformatur. [...] Patet autem ex iis, quae diximus, huiusmodi molimina non tantum ducere ad 'relativismum' dogmaticum, quem vocant, sed illum iam reapse continere; cui quidem despectus doctrinae communiter traditae eorumque vocabulorum, quibus eadem significatur, satis superque favet". *Humani Generis*, p. 566.

<sup>34</sup> At the time of the ante-preparatory period of the Second Vatican Council, Eduard Dhanis would write a *votum* on doctrinal progress on behalf of the Gregorian University. De Lubac was convinced that this *votum* was directed against the views he had expounded in his article of 1951. See Henri DE LUBAC, *Carnets du Concile*, Vol. 1., Paris, 2007, p. 51: "J'ai recopié, à la Grégorienne, les deux *Vota* rédigés par le P. Dhanis, préfet des études, pour la commission théologique pré-conciliaire. Ce sont les *Vota* n° 3 et 4: «De declaranda indole revelationis» et «De immutabilitate veritatis et progressu dogmatico». [...] Ces deux *Vota* sont dirigés directement contre le P. Lebreton, le P. de Grandmaison et moi-même; bien entendu, ils déforment totalement notre pensée; ils reproduisent exactement les censures rédigées par le P. Dhanis contre mon étude sur le P. Lebreton".

<sup>35</sup> DE LUBAC, *The Doctrine of Father Lebreton*, p. 317.

## THE TEACHING OF PIUS XII ON DOGMATIC DEVELOPMENT

At the First Vatican Council, the doctrinal value of the authority of the magisterium was reinforced at the expense of theology. In the decennia after Vatican I, the claim of the magisterium to govern (*jurisdictio*) the doctrinal side of life of the Church was enforced.<sup>36</sup> The theology of the magisterium underpinning this turn of events was elaborated by theologians of the 'Roman School' at the Jesuit's Gregorian University.<sup>37</sup> One of their most distinguished members, Louis Billot, wrote, circa 1900, that the means of knowing what is to be believed is the authority of the living magisterium, defining this magisterium as the "power of authentically proposing and defining revealed truth".<sup>38</sup>

This line of thought reached its apex in 1950 with the encyclical of Pius XII, *Humani generis*. The doctrinal authority is exclusively granted to the "living magisterium":

Along with these sacred sources [Scripture and Tradition] God has given his church the *living magisterium*, too, in order to illustrate and develop those truths which are contained only obscurely and, as it were, implicitly, in the deposit of faith. Moreover the divine redeemer has entrusted this deposit for its authentic interpretation, not to each of the faithful, nor even to theologians, but only to the magisterium of the Church.<sup>39</sup>

For the first time the expression "magisterium vivum" is used here in a magisterial document. The living magisterium of the Church is a re-expression and development of a revelation that was given once and for all, in apostolic times. This living magisterium is also described in *Humani generis* as "*norma proxima fidei*;" it is to be given precedence with regard to knowledge about revelation, which was only entrusted to the magisterium of the Church for its authentic interpretation. It is taken for granted that the correct understanding of revealed truth depends more upon the special charism or supernatural light promised by the Divine Saviour only to his lawful representatives than upon the human endowments of mental capacity, culture and study.<sup>40</sup> Without the guidance of the magisterium, theology is unable to cope with the incommensurable Majesty of the revealed truth.<sup>41</sup> This implies that in dogmatic development, the role of the magisterium is all-decisive. It is the exclusive mission of the magisterium to illustrate and develop those truths which are contained implicitly in the deposit of faith.

Then what is the role of theology in dogmatic development? It is twofold: preparing the definition and justifying it afterwards. Before a definition, the results

<sup>36</sup> Giuseppe ALBERIGO, *The Authority of the Church in the Documents of Vatican I and Vatican II*, in Piet F. FRANSEN (ed.), *Authority in the Church*, Leuven, 1983, p. 119-145.

<sup>37</sup> Especially J.B. Franzelin, D. Palmieri, C. Mazella, L. Billot and T. Zapelena. For an overview of their theology of the magisterium see T. Howland SANKS, *Authority in the Church. A Study in Changing Paradigms* (Dissertation Series, 2), Missoula, 1974.

<sup>38</sup> Quoted in SANKS, *Authority*, p. 79-80;

<sup>39</sup> *Humani generis*, in AAS, 42 (1950), p. 569. The English translation is taken from Luigi CIAPPI, *Magisterium of the Church and Sacred Theology*, in Anthony D. LEE (ed.), *Vatican II. The Theological Dimension*, Washington, 1963, p. 196-210, there p. 200.

<sup>40</sup> CIAPPI, *Magisterium of the Church*, p. 200.

<sup>41</sup> Max SECKLER, *Die Theologie als kirchliche Wissenschaft nach Pius XII und Paul VI*, in *Theologische Quartalschrift*, 149 (1969), p. 232.

of theological research are of great use and advantage for the magisterium. For Pius XII, the goal of theology consisted in preparing new definitions, while the ideal of the magisterium consisted in defining.<sup>42</sup> Yet the magisterium was not considered as being bound by the results of theology, but as making its own independent decisions under the assistance of the Holy Spirit.<sup>43</sup> After the close of the process of dogmatic development, it is the task of theology to show how a doctrine is contained in the sources of revelation in the sense in which it has been defined by the magisterium of the Church.

Two days after the publication of *Humani generis* (12 August 1950), Pius XII announced his intention to define the Assumption. The teaching of *Humani generis* on the nature of the magisterium in relation to theology made the definition possible. In *Munificentissimus Deus* the encyclical's theology of the magisterium is confirmed and applied. In the bull, written by Giuseppe Filograssi, SJ,<sup>44</sup> the revealed character of the Assumption is demonstrated on the basis of the unanimous consensus of the actual ordinary magisterium of the Church and not on theological arguments.<sup>45</sup> The new truth is the result of the progressive manifestation of the content of revelation by the infallible *magisterium*, seeing ever more clearly and completely the content of scripture and oral tradition.

## THE DOCTRINE OF DOGMATIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE ANTE- PREPARATORY AND PREPARATORY DOCUMENTS OF THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

### THE ANTEPREPARATORY DOCUMENTS: THE PRECONCILIAR VOTA

Considering the close links between the Holy Office and the Theological Commission in general and the subcommission *De Deposito Fidei* in particular, it is appropriate to start with the proposal (*propositum*) of the Holy Office dating from March 1960, a document that was explicitly offered as a future doctrinal draft.<sup>46</sup> It is interesting to note that the *propositum* was written by Pietro Parente,<sup>47</sup> who

<sup>42</sup> Il semblait sous Pie XII que le but de la théologie fût de préparer des 'définitions' et que l'idéal du magistère fût de définir». Yves CONGAR, *Église et papauté* (Cogitatio fidei, 184), Paris, p. 309.

<sup>43</sup> SECKLER, *Die Theologie*, p. 229.

<sup>44</sup> Filograssi was professor exegesis at the Gregorian University.

<sup>45</sup> "Itaque ex ordinarii Ecclesiae Magisterii universali consensu certum ac firmum sumitur argumentum, quo comprobatur corpoream Beatae Mariae Virginis in Caelum Assumptionem —quam quidem, quoad caelestem ipsam 'glorificationem' virginalis corporis almae Dei Matris, nulla humanae mentis facultas naturalibus suis viribus cognoscere poterat— veritatem esse a Deo revelatam [...]. *Munificentissimus Deus*, in AAS, 42 (1950), p. 756-757. Cf. Carlo COLOMBO, *La costituzione dogmatica 'Munificentissimus Deus' et la teologia*, in *La Scuola Cattolica*, 79 (1951), p. 77.

<sup>46</sup> Étienne FOUILLOUX, *The Antepreparatory Phase. The Slow Emergence from Inertia* (January, 1959 – October, 1962), in Giuseppe ALBERIGO and Joseph A. KOMONCHAK (eds.), *History of Vatican II*, Vol. 1: *Announcing and Preparing Vatican Council II. Toward a New Era in Catholicism*, Maryknoll – Leuven, 1995, p. 151. For the *propositum* see *Acta et documenta Concilio oecumenico Vaticano II apparando; Series prima (antepreparatoria)*, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1960-1961, Vol. III: *Proposita et monita ss. Congregationum Curiae Romanae*, 1960, p. 3-17. (Henceforth: ADA, III).

<sup>47</sup> As said earlier, Parente had been appointed to Assessor of the H. Office in 1959.

had proven himself in the preceding years as the unremitting opponent of Charlier's approach to dogmatic development.<sup>48</sup>

In Parente's *propositum*, the first chapter deals with fundamental questions. The four questions that are mentioned will more or less make up the first four chapters of the later schema *De Deposito Fidei*.<sup>49</sup> In the question on revelation, the Holy Office asks that an accurate notion of revelation be confirmed against modernist theories. No mention is made here of dogmatic development, found in chapter five of *De Deposito Fidei*. Yet, the question of dogmatic development is brought up further on in the proposal, in the context of an incisive attack on the new theology, reproved by *Humani generis*. In chapter three (*De potestate ecclesiae discriminatim*) in the first subsection (*De magisterio*), a paragraph is devoted to the relationship between theology and magisterium. In *Humani generis*, the subordination of theology to the magisterium was explicitly prescribed. Consequently, contempt of scholastic theology ran counter to directives of the magisterium and thus disagreed with the requested subordination.<sup>50</sup> Therefore we read in the *propositum*: "Revindicatio theologiae scholasticae contra insidias Theologiae novae (*Humani generis*)".<sup>51</sup> This demand is immediately followed by the suggestion to deal with dogmatic evolution and the value of dogmatic formulae.<sup>52</sup> So, what is particularly striking in this *propositum* is that the problem of dogmatic development is brought up, firstly, in an ecclesiological section on the magisterium (instead of in the fundamental-theological section on revelation), and secondly, in the context of a polemic struggle against the *nouvelle théologie*.

The discussion of dogmatic development in the synopsis of the *Vota* of the bishops (July 1960) is almost identical to that of the *propositum* of the Holy Office.<sup>53</sup> This is hardly surprising, knowing that this synopsis was also drawn up within the Holy Office by Michel Leclercq.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Parente wrote the officious comment on the condemnation of Charlier's *Essai sur le problème théologique* in 1942. Even in a article of 1954, Parente attacked the views of Charlier. See PIETRO PARENTE, *La giustificazione teologica della definizione dogmatica dell'Assunzione*, in Carlo BALIC (ed.), *Echi e commenti della proclamazione del dogma dell'Assunzione*, Roma, 1954, p. 9-25. See especially p. 16.

<sup>49</sup> These four questions are: *De Veritate*, *De Deo*, *De Deo Creante et Elevante* and *De Divina Revelatione*.

<sup>50</sup> See *Humani generis*, in AAS, 42 (1950), p. 567: "Utique, pro dolor, rerum novarum studiosi a scholasticae theologiae contemptu ad neglegendum, ac vel etiam ad despiciendum facile transeunt ipsum Magisterium Ecclesiae, quod theologiam illam sua auctoritate tantopere comprobant".

<sup>51</sup> ADA, III, p. 9

<sup>52</sup> "De evolutione dogmatum (obiectiva, subiectiva); de valore formulae dogmaticae". ADA, III, p. 9

<sup>53</sup> See section D ("De Apostolatu Ecclesiae"), subsection 1 ("De Verbo Divino praedicando et de S. Magisterio"): "De S. Theologia (de Fide et Ratione, de evolutione Dogmatum); damnandi errores relativismi, modernismi. Synopsis eorum quae circa materiam fidei et morum in episcoporum votis inveniuntur". Centre for the Study of Vatican II (henceforth CSVII), *Archives conciliaires de Gérard Philips*, 51, Synopsis eorum quae circa materiam fidei et morum in Episcoporum votis invenitur, s.d.

<sup>54</sup> Joseph A. KOMONCHAK, *The Struggle for the Council During the Preparation of Vatican II (1960-1962)*, in Giuseppe ALBERIGO and Joseph A. KOMONCHAK (ed.), *History of Vatican II*, Vol. 1: *Announcing and Preparing Vatican Council II. Toward a New Era in Catholicism*, Maryknoll – Leuven, 1995, p. 229. See also Riccardo BURIGANA, *Progetto dogmatico del Vaticano II. La commissione teologica preparatoria (1960-1962)*, in Giuseppe ALBERIGO and Alberto MELLONI (eds.), *Verso il Concilio Vaticano II (1960-1962). Passaggi e problemi della preparazione conciliare*, Genova, 1993, p. 163: "Per struttura e contenuto dipendeva fortemente dal voto del S. Ufficio, dal quale riprendeva letteralmente alcune frasi".

In the *Analyticus conspectus* of the *Vota* of bishops and prelates (February 1961) ample attention is given to the problem of dogmatic development, all in the subsections of chapter six of *De Ecclesia*. As in the *propositum* of the Holy Office and the Synopsis of the *Vota* of the bishops, dogmatic evolution is first of all mentioned in the context of a subsection on the magisterium.<sup>55</sup> Somewhat remarkably, it is requested here that, next to the mission of the magisterium, also the mission of the *sensus fidei* should be made known, since it is through this *sensus fidei*, by the hierarchy and the faithful together, that the revealed deposit is guarded. It is added that in this way the progress of dogma could be explained more aptly.<sup>56</sup> So we notice here a reaction against an overly unilateral emphasis on the role of the magisterium in dogmatic development.

The next subsection is devoted entirely to "dogmatic evolution"<sup>57</sup> and contains six items. Four of them are requests for further investigation and clarification with regard to the doctrine of dogmatic evolution in general,<sup>58</sup> the value and interpretation of dogmatic formulas,<sup>59</sup> the homogeneity of dogmatic evolution<sup>60</sup> and the relation between modern philosophical concepts and dogmas.<sup>61</sup> The last two items are requests to reiterate former teaching on the absolute value of the sense of dogmas<sup>62</sup> and on the value of dogmatic definitions.<sup>63</sup>

It is interesting to note the contradictory tendency of subsections 16 and 17, both still relating to the theme of dogmatic development. Subsection 16 is titled *De novis definitionibus dogmaticis*, combining five *vota* and requesting further dogmatic definitions of, for instance, the principal chapters of the encyclicals *Pascendi* and *Humani generis*.<sup>64</sup> Subsection 17, on the other hand, is titled *De inopportunitate novarum definitionum dogmaticarum*, combining no less than ten *vota*. Here, the dangers of new dogmatic definitions are indicated, for instance, with regard to the

<sup>55</sup> Namely, subsection 14: *De Magisterio Ecclesiae*.

<sup>56</sup> "Praeter munus Magisterii pandatur etiam munus 'sensus fidei', per quem a S. Hierarchia et a fidelibus coniunctim depositum revelatum custoditur. Ita aptius explicare potest dogmatis progressus". *Acta et documenta Concilio oecumenico Vaticano II apparando; Series prima (antepraeparatoria)*, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1960-1961, Appendix Voluminis II: *Analyticus conspectus consiliorum et votorum quae ab episcopis et praelatis data sunt*, 1, 1961, p. 61. (Henceforth: ADA, II/1).

<sup>57</sup> This is subsection 15, titled *De evolutione Dogmatum*.

<sup>58</sup> "Pressius examinetur doctrina de evolutione dogmatum". ADA, II/1, p. 61.

<sup>59</sup> "Agatur de valore et interpretatione formularum dogmaticarum". ADA, II/1, p. 61.

<sup>60</sup> "De homogenea evolutione dogmatica tractando, opportunum esset explicare quomodo sub infallibili assistentia Spiritus Sancti fiat successiva fidelis explanatio veritatis divinitus revelatae et reapse immutabilis, ne quis acatholicorum talem evolutionem interpretari adhuc valeat ad modum intolerabilis innovationis". ADA, II/1, p. 61-62.

<sup>61</sup> "Uberius investigetur utrum aliqua possibilitas satis fundata appareat adumbrandi conceptus et expressiones philosophicas tum dogmatibus explicandis sufficienter aptas, tum sic dictae scientiae modernae satis acceptas". ADA, II/1, p. 62.

<sup>62</sup> "Concilium iterum declaret sensum dogmatum habere valorem absolutum infinite transcendentem *symbolicam* veritatum moralium". ADA, II/1, p. 62.

<sup>63</sup> "Urgeatur valor definitionum dogmaticarum, perfectibilium quidem at irreformabilium, nec de uno sensu in alium sese evolventium". ADA, II/1, p. 62.

<sup>64</sup> See ADA, II/1, p. 62-63.



relation with separated churches.<sup>65</sup> One *votum* also points to the negative effect of new dogmatic definitions *within* the Catholic world, as after a definition, doctrinal progress goes forth in a unique and partial sense, while other aspects of a dogma are neglected or overlooked.<sup>66</sup>

Finally, the theme of dogmatic development is dealt with in the *vota* of the Gregorian University. The fourth *votum* is titled “De immutabilitate veritatis revelatae et progressu dogmatico”<sup>67</sup> and is written by Eduard Dhanis. This rather extensive *votum* is composed of two parts, corresponding to the characteristic nature of the fundamental problem of dogmatic development—that is, the holding together of the immutability of dogma and its development. The first part of the *votum* deals with the immutability of dogma. Here, Dhanis defends in particular the immutability of the concepts of faith on the basis of scholastic conceptualism against what was designated by *Humani generis* as “dogmatic relativism” or the questioning of the value of some traditional concepts of faith to voice actual Christian experience. Dhanis calls to mind that the human intellect, with its accommodated concepts, can represent for itself certain things about God and the divine mysteries that are simply true (“simpliciter vera”), and therefore, they always need further correction; nor are these concepts, after the mentioned accommodation, to be assumed as approximations, partly in concord with divine objects and partly contradicting them.<sup>68</sup> The underlying assumption is that of an unbreakable bond between the taught doctrine and the concepts by which this doctrine is expressed. Some of these concepts were confirmed to such a degree that is not allowed to dissociate oneself from them. In other words, Dhanis repeats the doctrine of *Humani generis* with regard to the objective value of the concepts of faith.

So, on the one hand, one should hold on to the immutability of the concepts of faith. On the other hand though—and this is the second part of the *votum*—, the Council should declare that there is a progress of the revealed truth in the Church. Dhanis distinguishes two kinds of progress. Firstly, there are many things that are contained *implicitly* in the revealed deposit (Tradition and Scripture) that in the course of time are more and more explicitly taught by the living magisterium of the

<sup>65</sup> “Ne afferantur novae definitiones dogmaticae in Concilio, utpote unioni cum fratribus separatis periculosae” and “Ne nova dogmata proponantur nisi antea caute perspecta sit eorum praesens utilitas et necessitas atque eorum effectus in nostris relationibus cum fratribus separatis”. ADA, II/1, p. 63-64.

<sup>66</sup> ADA, II/1, p. 65. Cf. Henri DE LUBAC, *Catholicism. A Study of Dogma in Relation to the Corporate Destiny of Mankind*, London, 1950, p. 164-165: “For if, as the whole history of the Church shows and as the doctors, from the first centuries onwards, are fond of pointing out, heresy is an occasion of progress for orthodox doctrine, there follows in its train the danger that this progress may be onesided and the occasion in its turn—history proves this as well—of further error. [...] A reinforced sector of the walls is not the whole city won!”.

<sup>67</sup> *Acta et documenta Concilio oecumenico Vaticano II apparando. Series prima (antepreparatoria)*, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1960-1961, Vol. IV: *Studia et vota universitatum et facultatum ecclesiasticarum et catholicarum*, I-1, 1961, p. 12-13. (Henceforth: ADA, IV/I-1).

<sup>68</sup> “Humanus intellectus suis notionibus debite accommodatis (per viam negationis et excellentiae) sibi repraesentare potest quaedam, eaque determinata, de Deo divinisque mysteriis quae sint simpliciter vera, quaeque proinde neque indigeant ulteriore semper correctione, nec post praefatam accommodationem adhuc assumenda sint ut approximationes partim concordantes cum divinis obiectis partimque contradicentes eis”. ADA, IV/I-1, p. 12.



Church.<sup>69</sup> Secondly, various things in the revealed deposit are only signified by representations and expressions that are to a certain point *confused*; afterwards they are more distinctly proposed as to be believed by the same living magisterium.<sup>70</sup> Here again, Dhanis's proposal echoes faithfully the doctrine of *Humani generis* on doctrinal progress.<sup>71</sup> He suggests that this doctrine can be prudently ratified by the authority of the Council.<sup>72</sup>

To conclude, the analysis of the theme of dogmatic development in the *vota* results in three major findings. Firstly, doctrinal development is mostly brought up in sections, compiling requests regarding the magisterium of the Church. In documents drafted by members of the Holy Office, dogmatic development is mentioned in a polemic context of struggle between scholastic theology and *nouvelle théologie*. The new approach to theology is associated with dogmatic relativism and insubordination to the teaching of the magisterium. Secondly, and closely connected, by associating dogmatic development with the authority of the (living) magisterium, the *vota* on doctrinal progress joined together with the doctrine of *Humani generis*. Finally, there is also a clear concern and wish that the council would take a clear positive doctrinal stand with regard to the question of dogmatic development.

### THE PREPARATORY DOCUMENTS

After analyzing the theme of dogmatic development in the *vota*, we can now focus on the preparation of a text on this issue in the Theological Commission. By July 13, 1960, the secretary of the commission, Sebastian Tromp, SJ, a professor at the Gregorian University and *consultor* to the Holy Office, had prepared outlines for three schemata, one of which was the precursor of the schema *De Deposito Fidei*.<sup>73</sup> This first draft of Tromp consists of three parts: the *Proemium*, the *Quaestiones generales* and the *Quaestiones particulares*.<sup>74</sup> The general questions are nine in number, of which the last one concerns dogmatic development: "Nulla revelatio novarum veritatum post clausum depositum fidei".<sup>75</sup> This is more or less the opposite of the proposition that revelation was not completed with the Apostles, condemned by the

<sup>69</sup> "Primo enim complura, quae in revelationis deposito —apostolica Traditione et Scriptura— latebant implicita, per saecula magis magisque explicite docentur a vivo Magisterio Ecclesiae, quod suum munus custodis et interpretis totius veritatis revelatae exercet, Spiritu Sancto Ecclesiam dirigente in plenam illius veritatis possessionem". ADA, IV/I-1, p. 13.

<sup>70</sup> "Praeterea varia quae in revelato deposito nonnisi per repraesentationes expressionesque quadantenus confusas significabantur, postea ab eodem vivo Magisterio distinctius credenda proposita sunt". ADA, IV/I-1, p. 13.

<sup>71</sup> See *Humani generis*, in AAS, 42 (1950), p. 569: "Una enim cum sacris eiusmodi fontibus Deus Ecclesiae suae Magisterium vivum dedit, ad ea quoque illustranda et enucleanda, quae in fidei deposito nonnisi obscure ac velut implicite continentur".

<sup>72</sup> "Notio progressus, quo implicite revelata fiunt explicita, iam habetur in Encyclica *Humani generis*; potest prudenter etiam a Concilii auctoritate sanciri". ADA, IV/I-1, p. 13.

<sup>73</sup> Brendan J. CAHILL, *The Renewal of Revelation Theology (1960-1962). The Development and Responses to the Fourth Chapter of the Preparatory Schema 'De Deposito fidei'*, Rome, 1999, p. 22.

<sup>74</sup> See Sebastian TROMP, *Konzilstagebuch mit Erläuterungen und Akten aus der Arbeit der Theologischen Kommission*, ed. Alexandra VON TEUFFENBACH, Band I/2 (1960-1962), Rome, 2006, p. 821.

<sup>75</sup> TROMP, *Konzilstagebuch*.

Decree *Lamentabili* as ‘modernist’.<sup>76</sup> Yet, this negative, polemic approach of dogmatic development is deemed insufficient by Tromp himself. At the meeting of the prior subcommission, the *commissio praevia*, on July 21, 1960, he asked that the concept of true Catholic dogmatic progress be described more accurately.<sup>77</sup> But as Tromp was of the opinion that *De Deposito* would present those salvific truths that were being neglected or distorted today,<sup>78</sup> he assumed that the positive doctrine on dogmatic development would get a place within the schema *De Fontibus*,<sup>79</sup> but in reality, this schema was elaborated as a text on exegesis.

During the meeting of the *commissio praevia*, the Dominican father, Luigi Ciappi, Master of the Sacred Palace, was assigned to prepare the outline of the schema *De Deposito Fidei* —i.e. the *schema compendiosum* for the first plenary session of the Theological Commission that was held on October 27, 1960. Ciappi’s outline followed closely the outline that had been prepared by Tromp in July. This means he also adopted Tromp’s nine general topics, of which the ninth one stated there is no revelation at all of new truths after the close of the deposit of faith. Ciappi added that this is a certain doctrine of faith. The deposit is objectively closed, but open to interpretation and explication or dogmatic progress.<sup>80</sup>

After the first session, the work of developing the outlines into schemata was entrusted to different subcommissions for each schema. The subcommission for the schema *De Deposito Fidei* was further divided into eleven subcommissions, each one treating a specific topic.<sup>81</sup>

In the spring of 1961, the first redactions of what is now chapter four (on revelation and faith) and chapter five (on dogmatic progress) of *De Deposito Fidei* were presented by respectively Edouard Dhanis and Bartholomeus Xiberta.<sup>82</sup> Closely engaged in the redaction of chapter five were also Tromp, Ciappi—the president of the subcommission *De Deposito Fidei*—, and Edouard Dhanis. Between April 22, 1961 and June 10, 1961, four sessions of the subcommission *De Deposito Fidei* were devoted to the subsequent revisions of Xiberta’s draft. The sixth redaction of *De progressu Doctrinae* was inserted as chapter five in the schema *De Deposito Fidei pure custodiendo*, printed in July 1961

<sup>76</sup> This is proposition 21: “Revelatio, obiectum fidei catholicae constituens, non fuit cum Apostolis completa”. *Lamentabili*, in ASS 40 (1907), p. 473.

<sup>77</sup> See the protocol of this meeting: “Rogatum fuit, ut accuratius discreberetur conceptus verus catholicus progressus dogmatici”. Sebastian TROMP, *Konzilstagebuch*, p. 826.

<sup>78</sup> KOMONCHAK, *The Struggle*, p. 231.

<sup>79</sup> “Quod ad schema de fontibus spectat, iure putat [L. Cerfaux] latius dicendum esse de traditione et de evolutione dogmaturum. Non intellego quomodo ultimum punctum omissum sit in Schemate de Fontibus. Nam die 21 Julii post schemata discussa, ego ipse dixi addi debere quastionem de evolutione dogmatica”. Sebastian TROMP, *Konzilstagebuch mit Erläuterungen und Akten aus der Arbeit der Theologischen Kommission*, Alexandra VON TEUFFENBACH (ed.), Band I/1 (1960-1962), Rome, 2006, p. 93.

<sup>80</sup> CSVII, *Archives conciliaires de Gérard Philips*, 50, Prot. 4/60 Pontificia Commissio Theologica pro Concilio Oecumenico Vaticano II (4 schemata compendiosa: *De Ecclesia*, *De Fontibus*, *De Deposito*, *De Ordine morali*), s.d.

<sup>81</sup> CAHILL, *The Renewal*, p. 28.

<sup>82</sup> Bartholomeus Xiberta (1897-1967) was a Carmelite and former professor dogmatic theology in Madrid and Rome. In his capacity of professor dogmatic theology, Xiberta published in 1949 an introduction to theology (*Introductio in sacram theologiam*, Matrity, 1949). From 1957 onwards he was assistant general of the Carmelite Order. In July 1960 he was appointed as *consultor* to the Preparatory Theological Commission.

and subsequently sent to the members of the Theological Commission for discussion at the third plenary session of the Theological Commission in September 1961.<sup>83</sup>

Before analyzing the fifth chapter on doctrinal progress, it is worthwhile to focus our attention first on the previous chapter on revelation and faith (“De Revelatione et Fide”) written by Dhanis.<sup>84</sup> This chapter opens with the definition of revelation as “locutio Dei attestantis”. The emphasis is on revelation as doctrine which has been handed on to the Church. With regard to dogmatic development, paragraph 22 is of special interest, warning against a recent form of relativism that questions the adequacy and permanence of traditional doctrinal concepts: “They dangerously depart from the truth who think that the propositions and concepts by which revealed truths are communicated are incapable of declaring the divine realities in a simply true way, although assuredly incompletely and imperfectly, and indeed that they must be considered as approximations always mutable and always needing to be corrected anew, just as either a certain higher sense of the mystery which is believed or the rising of a new form of human thinking demands”.<sup>85</sup> What is hinted at is, of course, the fundamental discussion about the concepts of faith, in which the whole of the ‘new’ theology was involved.<sup>86</sup> A footnote explains that this form of dogmatic and theological relativism has been reproved by Pius XII in *Humani generis*.<sup>87</sup> As mentioned earlier, Dhanis had already brought up this point in the first part of his *votum* on “The immutability of the revealed truth and dogmatic progress”. According to de Lubac, paragraph 22 was conceived by Dhanis so that the Council would condemn him.<sup>88</sup> Anyway, it is worthwhile noting that this fundamental issue of the late 1940s on the concepts of faith and dogmatic relativism, referred to by Dhanis in his *votum* on dogmatic development, was not taken up in chapter five on doctrinal progress, but was included in the chapter on revelation written by Dhanis.

The title of chapter five, *De progressu Doctrinae*, is already revealing. The chosen terminology to address dogmatic development manifests a certain conception of revelation and of the nature of its unfolding in history. It is clear that the notion of revelation as a doctrine, as expounded in chapter four, is further developed here. Revelation is the doctrine of faith that is handed on to the Church as a precious deposit, the human understanding of which progresses throughout the ages. Talking about the “progress of doctrine” tends to narrow the scope to an intellectual process, a

<sup>83</sup> CSVII, *Archives conciliaires de Gérard Philips*, 308, Constitutio De Deposito Fidei pure custodiendo, C.T. 7/61:56, 1961.

<sup>84</sup> CSVII, *Archives conciliaires de Gérard Philips*, 308, p. 13-20.

<sup>85</sup> Periculose etiam a vero discedunt qui sentient enuntiationes et conceptus quibus veritates revelatae communicantur, impares esse ad res significandas modo simpliciter vero, etsi utique incompleto et imperfecto; sed habendos esse ut approximationes semper mutabiles semperque denuo corrigendas prout postulet sive altior quidam sensus mysterii quod creditor, sive ortus novae formae humanae cogitationis”. CSVII, *Archives conciliaires de Gérard Philips*, 308, p. 14-15. The English translation is based on Cahill’s translation of paragraph 22 in schema I of *De Deposito Fidei*. See CAHILL, *The Renewal*, p. 273.

<sup>86</sup> SCHOOF, *A Survey*, p. 203.

<sup>87</sup> “Ea est relativismi dogmatici et theologici forma quae reprobatur a Pio XII in Encycl. *Humani generis*”. *Constitutio*, p. 20.

<sup>88</sup> DE LUBAC, *Carnets*, p. 37; 50-51. Cf. Yves CONGAR, *Mon journal du concile*, Vol. 1, Paris, 2002, p. 77-78.

purely subjective progress in human understanding of the revealed doctrine, whereas “development of tradition” or even “development of dogma” can have a broader meaning. To compare: Chapter two of *Dei Verbum*, treating the issue of dogmatic development, is titled: “The transmission of divine revelation”.<sup>89</sup>

Already, the title of the chapter on dogmatic development thus indicates that no account is taken of the ‘new’ theological perspective that not only the ‘doctrine’ but also the ‘reality’ of revelation continues to live in the Church.<sup>90</sup> that the whole life of the Church, that the whole tradition develops (theory of Charlier), nor that knowledge of revelation is first intuitive, concrete and encompassing, before it is expressed into doctrine, to the effect that every new doctrinal formulation is not only progress, but at the same time also decay (theory of de Lubac).

The text of *De progressu Doctrinae* is divided into four sections. In the first section (“Thesaurus veritatis a Christo accipiendus est”), the objective completion of revelation with the Apostles is stressed. Obviously there is a reference to proposition 21 of *Lamentabili*,<sup>91</sup> the only magisterial text that officially attests the doctrine on the close of the revelation with the Apostles. Here, the text reads that “the treasure of truth [...] completed by the Apostles [...] cannot grow further, but is to be preserved faithfully by the Church as a precious deposit”.<sup>92</sup>

The second section (“Custodiendi thesauri fidei ratio”) elaborates on the nature of this preservation. It is said that that treasure of faith cannot be preserved effectively and fruitfully by merely conserving books and repeating words, but by the living magisterium (“viventis magisterio”), by which the Church truly directs faith and morals. Next, four reasons of this more than sterile conversation of the deposit by the magisterium are summed up: two positive ones (a genuine intelligence of the revealed things and the piety of the Christians leading to a deeper investigation of the riches of Christ) and two negative or defensive ones (first of all the impugnation of errors and secondly the necessities and newly arisen questions of the times). “For this reason, the council teaches that a persistent, pious and sober investigation is demanded by the nature itself of the sacred magisterium”.<sup>93</sup> The “sedulam et piam atque sobriam inquisitionem” of course refers back to chapter four of *Dei Filius*, where the possibilities and limits of speculative theology are described.<sup>94</sup> In the last paragraph

<sup>89</sup> See SACROSANCTUM OECUMENICUM CONCILIUM VATICANUM II, *Constitutiones. Decreta. Declarationes*, Typis polyglottis Vaticanis, 1966, p. 428.

<sup>90</sup> Edward SCHILLEBEECKX, *Revelation and Theology*, London-Melbourne, 1967, p. 82.

<sup>91</sup> “Revelatio, obiectum fidei catholicae constituens, non fuit cum Apostolis completa”.

<sup>92</sup> “[...] thesaurum veritatis [...], postquam per Apostolos [...] completus fuit, augeri amplius non possit, sed tamquam pretiosum depositum ab Ecclesia fideliter custodiendus sit. *Constitutio*, p. 21.

<sup>93</sup> “idcirco Sancta Synodus docet ipsa natura sacri magisterii postulari sedulam et piam atque sobriam inquisitionem”. *Constitutio*, p. 21. In the final redaction of *De progressu Doctrinae*, the necessity of theological investigation for the magisterium to fulfill its mission, is toned down: “Quamobrem docet Sancta Synodus ipsam naturam sacri magisterii *secum ferre* et investigationem revelationis fontium, et sedulam ac piam sobriamque ipsorum fidei mysteriorum perscrutationem”. CSVII, *Conciliar Documents TPV-collection*, Schemata constitutionum et decretorum de quibus disceptabitur in Concilii sessionibus. Series Prima, 1962, p. 45.

<sup>94</sup> “Ac ratio quidem, fide illustrata, cum sedulo, pie et sobrie quaerit, aliquam, Deo Dante, mysteriorum intelligentiam eamque fructuosissimam assequitur, tum ex eorum, quae naturaliter cognoscit, analogia,

of this second section, it is pointed out that this investigation is limited to scrutinizing and explicating the latent riches in revelation.<sup>95</sup>

The third section (“Progressus doctrinalis affirmatio”) truly deals with the problem of dogmatic development. “For the reasons mentioned in the earlier section, the Sacred Synod acknowledges and professes that a true progress of doctrine is accomplished in the Church of Christ, so much so that even new definitions of truth would be worth to be held; but declares only this progress legitimate, that results from an increase of human knowledge about revelation, in this way that every doctrine delivered by the Church, is upheld by the authority of Jesus Christ”.<sup>96</sup> So, dogmatic development is limited to progress in human knowledge about revelation; it is merely a development *quoad nos*. It is significant that the possibility of proceeding with new solemn definitions is left open, although —as we have seen earlier—<sup>97</sup> there were strong requests to exclude the exercise of this authority.<sup>98</sup>

The fourth section deals with the value of private revelations (“Privatarum revelationum valor”). But this section does not fit in well here, and later on, in the second schema of *De Deposito Fidei*, the paragraph on private revelations will be elaborated into a separate chapter (chapter six).

If we have a look at the references used to underpin the text, we find that most of them originate from the magisterial documents promulgated by Pius XII: *Humani generis*, *Mystici Corporis* and *Munificentissimus Deus*, followed by the Constitution *Dei Filius* of the First Vatican Council and magisterial texts issued by Pius X (*Pascendi*, *Lamentabili*) and Pius IX (*Syllabus errorum*, *Eximiam tuam* (against Günther), and *Ineffabilis Deus*). Two references date back to Christian Antiquity: the letter *Licet inter varias* of Gelasius I and the letter *Quantum presbyterorum* of St. Simplicius.<sup>99</sup>

As already mentioned, this redaction of *De progressu Doctrinae* was discussed during the third plenary session of the Theological Commission (September 25, 1961). Two *animadversiones* are worthwhile mentioning. Firstly, the Spanish Jesuit, Joaquin Salaverri, complained that what is said in this chapter seems to restrict doctrinal progress to evolutions coming about by the transition from implicit to explicit, while it is necessary to convey something about the progress obtained by

tum e mysteriorum ipsorum nexu inter se et cum fine hominis ultimo”. *Conciliorum oecumenicorum decreta*, ed. Giuseppe ALBERIGO, et al., Rome, 1962, p. 784.

<sup>95</sup> “Quae inquisitio mentes a divina revelatione nullatenus avellit; nam eo non tendit ut divinitus tradita humanis inventis transformet et substituat, sed ut divitias in ipsa revelatione scrutetur atque declaret, iis sane viis quae connexionem cum revelatis adamussim servent”. *Constitutio*, p. 21.

<sup>96</sup> “Quapropter Sancta Synodus agnoscit et profitetur in Ecclesia Christi verum doctrinae progressum peragi, adeo ut etiam novae definitiones veritatis haberi valeant; sed illum tantum legitimum declarat, qui incrementum humanae de revelatis cognitionis ita sequatur, ut omnis doctrina ab Ecclesia tradita Christi Iesu, [...], auctoritate fulciatur”. *Constitutio*, p. 21.

<sup>97</sup> See our discussion of subsection 17 (“De inopportunitate novarum definitionum dogmaticarum”) of the *Analyticus conspectus*.

<sup>98</sup> Antonino INDELICATO, *Lo schema ‘De deposito fidei pure custodiendo’ e la preparazione del Vaticano II*, in *Cristianesimo nella storia*, 11 (1990), p. 309-355, there p. 316.

<sup>99</sup> *Constitutio De Deposito*, p. 22-23.

deduction of theological conclusions.<sup>100</sup> This objection draws attention to the fact that the typical Neo-Scholastic model used to explain dogmatic development —i.e. by means of theological conclusions (the virtually revealed) logically inferred from a revealed premise (the formally revealed) with the help of a premise of reason— is completely absent.<sup>101</sup> It is true that one can discern in the text, a certain preference for speculative theology as the privileged instrument of the magisterium to fulfill its mission of investigating the riches of revelation, but the Neo-Scholastic terminology to describe the role of speculative theology in dogmatic development, is completely omitted. In this regard, it is also interesting to mention, secondly, the objection of Eduard Dhanis to the text. Dhanis precisely criticizes the too unilateral emphasis on speculative theology, pointing to the fact that the nature of the magisterium also demands an investigation of the sources of revelation. Therefore he suggest to insert “investigationem revelationis fontium” before “sedulam et piam atque sobriam inquisitionem”.<sup>102</sup>

In October 1961, Tromp and Ciappi revised the text in the light of the amendments accepted by the subcommission and approved by the plenary. This text, Schema I, was then sent to the Central Preparatory Commission.<sup>103</sup> Chapter five of Schema I is almost identical to the text approved by the Theological Commission on September 25, 1961. The only addition concerns the remark of Dhanis, giving more weight to positive theology in the process of dogmatic development.

Chapters four and five were discussed together in the Central Preparatory Commission on January 22, 1962. The official statement by Cardinal Ottaviani, President of the Theological Commission, is rather instructive in order to grasp the tendency of chapter five, *De progressu doctrinae*, that it is of a rather ambiguous nature. Ottaviani explains that with this chapter, the Theological Commission asks the Fathers of the Council to confirm, firstly, the things proclaimed by the First Vatican Council on the part of reason in developing supernatural truth, and secondly, the things proclaimed by *Humani generis* on the tight connection between magisterium and theology.<sup>104</sup> Indeed, as in *Humani generis*, the primordial role in

<sup>100</sup> “Ea quae in hoc capite dicuntur de progressu doctrinae videntur restringi ad eos gressus qui fiunt per transitum ab implicite ad explicitum. Oportet etiam aliquid insinuare de progressu qui obtinetur per deductionem conclusionum theologiarum”. CSVII, *Archives conciliaires de Gérard Philips*, 314, C.T. 7/61: 62 Animadversiones in Consitutionem de Deposito Fidei pure custodiendo, s.d.

<sup>101</sup> The most famous example of this kind of ‘logical’ or ‘dialectical’ theories is the standard work of de Spanish Dominican Francisco Marin Sola on dogmatic evolution: FRANCISCO MARIN SOLA, *L’Évolution homogène du dogme catholique*, Fribourg, 1924.

<sup>102</sup> “Idcirco Sancta Synodus...”. Haec verba cum voce “sobria”, cum allusione ad textum Concilii Vaticani I, cum contextu sequenti, videntur applicari *solī theologiae speculativae*. Quod fuerit nimis unilateralis; namque natura Magisterii postulat etiam *indagationem fontium revelationis*. Propterea propono ut scribatur: “Idcirco Sancta Synodus docet ipsa natura sacri magisterii postulari tum investigationem revelationis fontium, tum ipsorum mysteriorum sedulam et piam atque sobriam inquisitionem”. *Animadversiones*.

<sup>103</sup> KOMONCHAK, *The Struggle*, p. 242.

<sup>104</sup> “Commissio Theologica hoc altero capite Constitutionis humiliter petit a Patribus Conc. Vatic. I ut confirmentur ea quae Conc. Vatic. I perpulchre edixit de rationis parte in excolenda veritate supernaturali; insuper quae leguntur in Litt. Encycl. *Humani generis* de necessitudine inter Sacrum Magisterium et theologiam”. *Acta et documenta Concilio oecumenico Vaticano II apparando; Series*



dogmatic development is granted here to the living magisterium, making use of theology as a kind of auxiliary science. Theology is done under the authority and guidance of the magisterium, and in a certain way, theology makes itself beholden to the magisterium.<sup>105</sup>

Next, Ottaviani explains the standard problem of dogmatic development: on the one hand, the deposit of the doctrine of faith is completed with the Apostles and cannot increase anymore. Ottaviani stresses, with good reason, that the objective close of revelation is asserted in all three paragraphs (29, 30 and 31) on doctrinal progress in chapter five.<sup>106</sup> At the same time, it is solemnly affirmed in the text that doctrinal and theological progress, not only dogmatic, is to be fostered.<sup>107</sup> Therefore, only progress in intelligence of dogmas is admitted.<sup>108</sup> Doctrinal development is [thus] principally obtained by the acts of the magisterium of the Church, to which theologians add to by labor, either by positive theology or speculative theology, either previously, concomitantly or consequently.<sup>109</sup> In other words, Ottaviani perfectly formulates the conception of dogmatic development in the teaching of Pius XII.

In the ensuing *animadversiones*, no fundamental criticism is uttered. According to Cardinal Ruffini, the distinction between objective and subjective progress is not clear enough in the text,<sup>110</sup> and is thereby supported by five other members of the commission.<sup>111</sup> Cardinal Alfrink makes this objection more concrete: instead of talking about “*verum doctrinae progressum*”, he suggests to write “*in doctrinae revelatae cognitione verum progressum peragi*”.<sup>112</sup> The wording “*novae definitiones veritatis revelatae*” also arouses critique. Three members, including Cardinal Léger (the others are Cardinal Richaud and Cardinal Larraona), want an explicit reminder that new definitions are not new revelations nor newly revealed truths. Cardinal König advises not to speak about “*novae definitiones veritates*”, but about “*novi aspecti*” that

*secunda (praeparatoria)*, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1964-1995, Vol. II: *Acta Pontificiae commissionis centralis praeparatoriae concilii oecumenici Vaticani II*, 2, 1967, p. 332. (Henceforth: ADP, II/2).

<sup>105</sup> Theology is done *ex delegatione* by the magisterium. See SECKLER, *Die Theologie*, p. 227.

<sup>106</sup> “Proinde, in par. 29, 30 et 31, assertitur depositum doctrinae fidei seu thesaurum veritatis revelatae, a Christo ipso Apostolis communicatum et ab ipsis completum ac Ecclesiae sive verbo sive scripto traditum, amplius in seipso augeri non posse”. *Animadversiones*.

<sup>107</sup> “At simul rite affirmatur progressum doctrinalem, cum dogmaticum tum proprie theologicum, fovendum esse sive quoad veritates credendas sive quoad veritates etiam in praxi deducendas”. *Animadversiones*.

<sup>108</sup> “Quapropter unice tantum admittitur progressus in intelligentia dogmatum et in vita christiana veritatibus fidei magis ac magis conformanda”. *Animadversiones*.

<sup>109</sup> “Doctrinalis autem progressus maxime obtinetur per acta Magisterii Ecclesiae, cui adlaborant, sive praevis, sive concomitanter sive consequenter, viri catholici, qui sunt cultores theologiae quae vel positiva vel speculative seu scholastica nuncupatur”. *Animadversiones*.

<sup>110</sup> “Bene et clare distinguendum esse existimo *inter progressum obiectivum et progressum subiectivum*: progressus obiectivus ullus non datur, *subiectivus vero satis multus et frequens habetur*”. *Animadversiones*, p. 333. Instead of “augeri amplius non possit” Ruffini suggests: “augeri *obiective* nec amplius possit”. See *Acta et documenta Concilio oecumenico Vaticano II apparando; Series secunda (praeparatoria)*, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1964-1995, Vol. IV: *Acta subcommissionum commissionis centralis praeparatoriae*, III/1, 1994, p. 365. (Henceforth ADP, IV/III/1).

<sup>111</sup> Namely Cardinals Pla y Deniel, Richaud, Traglia, Larraona and Archbishop Silva Santiago.

<sup>112</sup> ADP, II/2, p. 344.



are implicitly contained and not well known before,<sup>113</sup> a wording that brings to mind de Lubac's thinking on dogmatic development.

All these remarks and critiques are related to the problem of objective and subjective development. This finding is a bit odd because the text on doctrinal progress arose precisely from the concern to clarify the distinction between objective and subjective development (i.e. the concern of Parente). A second major critique concerns the ambiguity of the text. Alfrink, for instance, demands that the crucial paragraph 31 on doctrinal progress would be conceived more clearly, as he admits not to understand the second part of the paragraph.<sup>114</sup> Archbishop Viktor Bazin qualifies this article as being unclear, giving room to ambiguity.<sup>115</sup>

Chapters four (*De Revelatione et Fide*) and five (*De progressu Doctrinae*) were put to a vote, which was overwhelmingly positive: 44 members voted *Placet*, 18 voted *Placet iuxta modum*, and only one voted *Non placet*.<sup>116</sup>

According to the regulations of the Central Preparatory Commission, Tromp and two other theologians prepared a Response to the Observations made in the Central Preparatory Commission. On March 23, Tromp submitted the Response of the Theological Commission to the Observations made concerning the *Prooemium* and chapters 1-5 to the Subcommittee on Amendments. To meet the fundamental request to assert more clearly that objective increase ("augmentum obiectivum") is excluded, the Theological Commission proposes to add "in seipso" before "augeri amplius non possit".<sup>117</sup> To compare: in 1942, Parente had phrased Charlier's views by saying that "revelata [...] perpetuo augeri, [...] etiam in seipsis". In other words, with regard to the question of objective/subjective dogmatic development, the doctrine of *De Progressu Doctrinae* manifests itself as the exact opposite of the condemned doctrine of Charlier. The wording "verum doctrinae progressum" in paragraph 31 is changed into "verum in doctrina fidei intellegenda et proponenda progressum". The last sentence of this paragraph is strongly revised to pronounce even stronger the immutability of the deposit in itself, in which every newly proposed truth has to be contained at least implicitly.<sup>118</sup> To conclude, the inserted changes are far from substantially transforming the text, as they only give a clearer expression to what had always been the fundamental tendency of the text since the beginning, being the distinction between objective and subjective development, of which only the latter is acknowledged as legitimate. At the same time, the rather controversial wording that "etiam novae definitiones veritatum revelatarum haberi valeant" is maintained.

<sup>113</sup> "Pag. 17, lin. 1. Sermo est "novae definitiones veritatis", cur non etiam "novi aspectus" qui implicite continentur et antea non tam bene cognoscebantur?". *ADP*, II/2, p. 341.

<sup>114</sup> "Num. 31 (de progressu doctrinali) clarius videtur concipiendus. Fateri debeo me secundam partem huius paragraphi non intelligere". *ADP*, II/2, p. 343.

<sup>115</sup> "Hic numerus non est clarus et locum dat ambiguitati". *ADP*, II/2, p. 346.

<sup>116</sup> CAHILL, *The Renewal*, p. 81.

<sup>117</sup> *ADP*, IV/III/1, p. 383.

<sup>118</sup> "... qui in incremento humanae dumtaxat cognitionis de revelatione consistit, non verum in ipsius depositi augmento. Illud enim in seipso immutatum permanent, cum quaelibet veritas noviter proposita, saltem implicite ibidem contineatur, ideoque auctoritate divina fulciatur". *ADP*, IV/III/1, p. 384.

In April 1962, the Subcommittee on amendments decided to accept the Response of the Theological Commission and required no further amendments. In July 1962, the final schema of *De Deposito Fidei*, Schema II, was sent to the Council Fathers.

### CONCLUSIONS

The problem of dogmatic development was an issue of intense theological debates, especially in the 1940s, in the context of the controversy surrounding the *nouvelle théologie* and the imminent dogmatization of the Assumption. Charlier and de Lubac, both of whom criticized the rationalism of Neo-Scholastic 'logical' theories as narrowing down the complexity of revelation and dogmatic development, advanced the most controversial new approaches to dogmatic development. Furthermore, they both in their own way undermined the traditional solution for the crucial problem of dogmatic development: the holding together of the substantial immutability of dogma with its undeniable development. This solution consisted of limiting dogmatic development to a progress in our human understanding of revelation (development *quoad nos*), while revelation in itself had to be conceived as an immutable deposit (immutability *quoad se*). Charlier refused to conceive of revelation as an object contained in the sources of revelation, the study of which would enable us to increase our knowledge of revelation. For Charlier, development was also objective, since the knowledge of revelation increased together with the reality of revelation within the Church. De Lubac, for his part, rejected the distinction between objective and subjective revelation because of the objectivity of the subjective order and because the objective order is in close correlation with the subjective order, thus making the distinction between *revelatio quoad se* and *quoad nos* meaningless.

With regard to this issue of objective and subjective development, the redaction history of chapter five, *De Progressu Doctrinae*, of the schema *De Deposito Fidei pure custodiendo* manifests a great continuity, from the *propositum* written by Parente in March 1960 down to the final schema sent to the Fathers in July 1962. Ever since 1942 (the condemnation of the *Essai sur le problème théologique*), Parente had accused Charlier on several occasions of teaching continuous revelation. This previous history can possibly explain why Parente in his *propositum* brought up the issue of dogmatic development in a polemic context (the struggle against the *nouvelle théologie*), urging a focus on the distinction between objective and subjective evolution. Tromp takes up this problem, giving it a negative formulation in his first draft, of which the ninth point reads that there is no revelation after the close of the deposit of faith. Ciappi in his turn adopts it in the *schema compendiosum*, adding only that, although the deposit is objectively closed, it is also open to interpretation and explication or dogmatic progress. In the redaction of Xiberta, the objective close of revelation is stressed in all three paragraphs, and doctrinal progress is explicitly limited to an increase in human understanding of revelation. The somewhat controversial expression "novae definitiones veritates" caused several Fathers in the Central Preparatory Commission to urge for an even more explicit acknowledgment of the objective close of revelation. In the final schema, the emphasis on this doctrine is the most striking feature of the text.

The other conspicuous feature of *De progressu Doctrinae* is the role granted to the “living magisterium” in dogmatic development: dogmatic development is presented as the exclusive domain of the living magisterium, while theology as a subservient auxiliary science takes part in the mission of the magisterium to scrutinize and declare the revealed deposit. Although it was made discretely clear in earlier drafts that for this mission the magisterium relied especially on speculative theology — instead of on positive theology—, the text is nonetheless far from adopting the strict Neo-Scholastic approach to dogmatic development. The typical terminology of Neo-Scholastic ‘logical’ theories on dogmatic development is totally absent: no mention of development by means of theological conclusions, not a word about the ‘formally’ and the ‘virtually’ revealed, nor of the ‘logical’ bond between ‘new’ definitions and earlier tenets of faith. The major theological source for the doctrine on dogmatic development in *De Deposito Fidei* is definitely the theology of the ‘Roman School’ on the doctrinal authority of the magisterium, which was also at the basis of *Humani generis* and *Munificentissimus Deus*. At the same time, the general tendency of the *vota*, the produced texts, and the ensuing discussions with regard to dogmatic development during the ante-preparatory and preparatory phase of the Council is that of a clear opposition against the ‘new’ theological approaches to the problem.

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## VERS UN CONCILE PASTORAL ?

LA RÉCEPTION (OU NON-RÉCEPTION) DE LA THÉOLOGIE DE CHENU ET DE CONGAR AU COURS  
DE LA PHASE PRÉPARATOIRE DU CONCILE

### INTRODUCTION

Dans un rapport en vue du futur concile, rédigé au mois d'août 1959 pour M<sup>gr</sup> Jean-Julien Weber, archevêque-évêque de Strasbourg, le dominicain Yves Congar, « exilé » dans la capitale alsacienne, écrit :

Le soussigné, prêtre en 1930, a dû étudier très sérieusement, en 1935, les réponses à une enquête menée pendant 3 ans par la *Vie intellectuelle* sur les causes de l'incroyance moderne. Une conclusion s'est imposée à lui, dès ce moment : pour autant que nous sommes pour quelque chose dans l'incroyance moderne, le fond de la question est *ecclésiologique*. Il faut remonter, à travers des siècles où l'Église a pris, dans la société et à ses yeux, des formes juridiques d'autorité et de prestige, des attitudes 'paternalistes', il faut, disons-nous, remonter au sens ecclésial des Pères et du Nouveau Testament<sup>1</sup>.

Le texte continue en évoquant le parcours théologique de Congar depuis les années 1930, faisant ainsi le lien entre les mouvements préconciliaires et Vatican II. C'est le même lien que Congar établit encore le 24 septembre 1960 dans la lettre qu'il envoie aux membres de la Commission Théologique (CT) dont il est devenu consultant<sup>2</sup>. Dans ce document, Congar résume la théologie qu'il a élaborée dans les

<sup>1</sup> Paris, Archives dominicaines de la province de France (désormais ADPF), *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0404, Yves CONGAR, *Rapport sur ce qui semble souhaiter d'envisager dans le Concile*, 4-6/8/1959, p. 5 — je remercie le fr. Michel Albaric OP, archiviste de la province de France, pour son soutien précieux. Dans son article *Réponse à l'enquête sur le Concile*, dans *Esprit*, (décembre 1961), p. 691-700 (695), Congar exprime les mêmes idées publiquement. Charles MOELLER, *Die Entstehung der Konstitution, ideengeschichtlich betrachtet*, dans Guilherme BARAÚNA (dir.), *De Ecclesia. Beiträge zur Konstitution «Über die Kirche» des Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzils*, Freiburg, 1966, p. 71-105, 75, situe les paragraphes concernés de cet article dans l'histoire de l'évolution de la pensée ecclésiologique. Sur «l'incroyance moderne» que Congar considère comme un problème *ecclésiologique*, voir désormais Dorothea WELTECKE, «Der Narr spricht: es ist kein Gott.» *Atheismus, Unglauben und Glaubenszweifel vom 12. Jahrhundert bis zur Neuzeit*, Frankfurt am Main, 2010. La dimension historico-théologique évoquée dans le rapport de 1959 et dans l'article de 1961 détermine en fait le travail ecclésiologique de Congar tel qu'il est conçu dès les années 1930 avec ses confrères du Saulchoir Marie-Dominique Chenu et Henri-Marie Féret dans le cadre d'un projet d'écrire une «histoire de la théologie», voir Michael QUISINSKY, *Geschichtlicher Glaube in einer geschichtlichen Welt. Der Beitrag von M.-D. Chenu, Y. Congar und H.-M. Féret zum II. Vaticanum*, Münster, 2007, p. 45-171. Voir aussi QUISINSKY, *Geschichtlicher Glaube*, p. 254-263 pour les attentes de Congar et Chenu exprimées avant Vatican II concernant le concile.

<sup>2</sup> «De Ecclesia. Les études poursuivies surtout depuis plus de trente ans permettent une déclaration plus intégrale de la doctrine 'De Ecclesia'» (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0059, Yves CONGAR, *Conformément à l'invitation qui m'en a été faite...*, 24/9/1960, p.4). S'ensuit un résumé très dense

décennies passées et en tire des conclusions en vue du concile. Si pour Congar, le fond de la question de l'incroyance et *mutatis mutandis* de la foi dans le monde moderne est ecclésiologique, son horizon de réponse est tout sauf une spécialisation technique. Au contraire, dans le cadre d'un programme de travail avec Marie-Dominique Chenu et Henri-Marie Féret établi au début des années 1930, il veut « penser l'Église à partir des hommes et pour les hommes<sup>3</sup> », percevant l'Église comme une « *realitas complexa*<sup>4</sup> », c.-à-d. une réalité divino-humaine dans une histoire du salut qui se concrétise dans les histoires innombrables des vies humaines. Cette intuition profonde, qui d'ailleurs ne mène pas immédiatement à une ecclésiologie systématique, s'inspire dans ses différents étapes et apprentissages — certes non exclusivement — d'une théologie de l'Incarnation qui permet de penser le divin et l'humain de manière chalcédonienne, à la fois comme unis et distincts. Chenu s'efforce dès 1936/37, dans son manifeste *Une école de théologie : le Saulchoir*, de discerner et interpréter des *signes des temps* qu'il appelle à l'époque « lieux » théologiques en actes, pour la doctrine de la grâce, de l'incarnation, de la rédemption<sup>5</sup>. Suite à Chenu, Congar met en œuvre une ecclésiologie qui est une expression de la théologie pratiquée au Saulchoir, théologie conçue comme intelligence de la foi dans toutes ses dimensions. S'il y a une réception de cette théologie à Vatican II et après le concile, l'intérêt principal de réceptions pareilles réside dans le fait qu'ainsi, l'Église se met au service de la *foi*, relation vivante, dans la grâce, entre Dieu et les hommes.

Une éventuelle réception ou non-réception de la théologie de Congar et de Chenu dans la période préparatoire est beaucoup plus difficile à saisir que pendant la période conciliaire. Si l'on compare le contenu des nombreux articles publiés et conférences tenues entre 1959 et 1962 par les deux théologiens avec le contenu des *schematas* préparés<sup>6</sup>, on peut croire que cette réception n'existe que de manière accidentelle<sup>125</sup>.

des acquis de ces études qui sont, en grande partie, enracinées dans les différents mouvements préconciliaires. Pour ce document, voir aussi CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, I/23 (17 et 18 septembre 1960); les réactions des autres membres conciliaires sont documentées dans les lettres gardées aux archives de la province dominicaine de France (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0062-0078). Pour la réaction de Sebastian Tromp, voir aussi Riccardo BURIGANA, *Progetto dogmatico del Vaticano II. La commissione teologica preparatoria (1960-1962)*, dans Giuseppe ALBERIGO, Alberto MELLONI (dir.), *Verso il Concilio Vaticano II (1960-1962). Passaggi e problemi della preparazione conciliare* (Testi e ricerche di scienze religiose, NS 11), Gênes, 1992, p. 141-206, 162 n. 66 et Alexandra VON TEUFFENBACH (dir.), *Konzilstagebuch Sebastian Tromp SJ mit Erläuterungen und Akten aus der Arbeit der Theologischen Kommission. II. Vatikanisches Konzil, T. I/1 (1960-1962)*, Rome, 2006, p. 83 (28. Septembre 1960) avec n. 43.

<sup>3</sup> Joseph FAMERÉE, Gilles ROUTHIER, *Yves Congar*, Paris, 2008, p. 198.

<sup>4</sup> FAMERÉE et ROUTHIER, *Yves Congar*, p. 184.

<sup>5</sup> Marie-Dominique CHENU, *Une école de théologie. Le Saulchoir. Avec les études de Giuseppe Alberigo, Etienne Fouilloux, Jean Ladrière et Jean-Pierre Jossua*, Paris, 1985, p. 142. Pour la notion de *signes des temps*, voir CHENU, *Les signes des temps – Réflexion théologique*, dans Yves CONGAR, Michel PEUCHEMAURD (dir.), *L'Église dans le monde de ce temps. Constitution pastorale «Gaudium et spes»*, T. 2: *Commentaires*, Paris, 1967, p. 205-225. Après Vatican II, Chenu dira que ce n'est pas seulement le concile, mais le monde contemporain qu'il faut comprendre à partir des années 1930, plus exactement à partir de la crise économique de 1929. Cf. *Un théologien en liberté. Jacques Duquesne interroge le Père Chenu*, Paris, 1975, p. 66.

<sup>6</sup> À titre d'exemple, qu'il suffise de mentionner le premier tome de Yves CONGAR, *La Tradition et les traditions. Essai historique*, Paris, 1960 ou les articles repris plus tard dans Yves CONGAR, *Sainte Église*.

Chenu regrette dans ses remarques *Sur la rédaction des deux premiers schematas* que ceux-ci « ne répercutent aucunement, ni en doctrine, ni en accent, l'éveil missionnaire qui depuis vingt ans surtout fait retrouver à l'Église sa nature profonde, selon la mission du Christ<sup>8</sup> ». Suite à la lecture des remarques de Chenu sur les *schematas* préparés, Congar écrit juste avant le concile :

Dans beaucoup de cas, les critiques que vous et moi pouvons faire avaient été faites dans les travaux de la Comm. théol. ; les rédacteurs en avaient un peu tenu compte, mais peu. La Com th était sous le signe du 'Nec nominetur in vobis'. La Com. centrale a dû déjà demander des corrections, car sur plusieurs points, les textes sont assez changés par rapport au dernier état que j'en ai connu dans la Commission. Il y aura, au Concile, une opposition entre l'esprit de la Curie et l'esprit de l'Église du grand large. Mais, maintenant, la parole est à l'eccllesia (...) A bientôt, à Rome... : drôle de rencontre....!<sup>9</sup>.

En ce qui concerne son propre rôle, Congar affirme le 4 novembre 1962 être « étonné maintenant de n'avoir pas été plus critique sur les textes de la commission centrale, alors que je les estimais médiocres et, sur certains points, mauvais<sup>10</sup> ». Congar juge sévèrement les résultats de ces travaux préparatoires qui font défaut d'une réception de la théologie du renouveau en phase avec les *mouvements* : « Les schémas préparés sont superficiels, scolaires, trop philosophiques, trop négatifs : c'est comme

*Études et approches ecclésiologiques* (Unam Sanctam, 41), Paris, 1963; *Pour une Église servante et pauvre*, Paris, 1963. Voir aussi le jugement exprimé dans CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, I/4 (juillet 1960). En ce qui concerne Chenu, ses recueils de 1964 contiennent également des articles significatifs de l'époque préconciliaire: Marie-Dominique CHENU, *La parole de Dieu*, T. 1: *La foi dans l'intelligence* et T. 2, *L'Évangile dans le temps*, Paris, 1964.

<sup>7</sup> Voir p. ex. une remarque de René Laurentin: « (...) il me paraît important que l'on se manifeste là-dessus, ne serait-ce que pour les Acta » (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0170 et 0171, lettre de Laurentin à Congar, 17/2/1962).

<sup>8</sup> Marie-Dominique CHENU, *Sur la rédaction des deux premiers Schemata*, cit. d'après ID., *Notes quotidiennes au Concile. Journal de Vatican II (1962-1963). Édition critique et introduction par Alberto Melloni*, Paris, p. 608 n. 3.

<sup>9</sup> ADPF, *Fonds Chenu*, s.n., lettre Congar à Chenu, 4/9/1962 en réponse à une lettre de Chenu du 2 septembre 1962 (copie dans ADPF, *Fonds Chenu*) dans laquelle il compare le rapport de Congar de 1960 aux *schematas*. Le *fonds Chenu* est en cours d'inventarisation, c'est pourquoi je ne mentionne pas de numéro des documents. Au moment de ma consultation, les documents relatifs au concile se trouvent dans des boîtes intitulées *Vatican II* et *Schema XIII*.

<sup>10</sup> CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, I/181 (4 novembre 1962). Ce jour, après avoir participé au *Domus Mariae* à une réunion entre théologiens du Concile, le dominicain, entre-temps nommé *peritus*, revient sur le travail de la commission théologique préparatoire dont il était consultant. Il évoque cinq raisons qui pourraient expliquer son bilan négatif: son idée que les textes soumis aux consultants étaient quasi-définitifs et qu'on ne pouvait plus changer que des détails; la différence qu'il établit entre ces textes et la «pensée vivante», plus importante que les documents; le rôle très peu influent des consultants, réduits à l'état de «figurants»; en revanche, le rôle très puissant de Sebastiaan Tromp; le climat général, marqué par le «Saint-Office» et la théologie romaine. Si ma contribution doit se concentrer sur la perspective de Congar, on verra, pour la perspective de Tromp, VON TEUFFENBACH (dir.), *Konzilstagebuch Sebastian Tromp*, p. 11-65. Les jugements et réactions souvent unilatéraux et parfois même brutaux de Congar envers Tromp dans son *Journal du Concile* expriment un malaise profond dans la mesure où, dans les yeux de Congar, Tromp incarne le «système» face auquel il se sent impuissant. Les mises en gardes de von Teuffenbach rapellent à juste titre de ne pas sous-estimer la dimension émotionnelle des discussions théologiques.

s'il n'y avait pas eu quarante ans de travail biblique, théologique et liturgique<sup>11</sup> ». Ces remarques contrastent avec le bilan de Congar à la fin du concile quand il affirme qu'il a « beaucoup fait pour préparer le concile, élaborer, rayonner les idées que le concile a consacrées », et quand il donne une liste impressionnante de documents conciliaires auxquels il a collaboré<sup>12</sup>. De son côté, Chenu, après le concile, exprime sa joie de constater que *Lumen gentium* inscrit l'Église dans une vision dynamique de l'histoire du salut et de l'histoire concrète, et que, en plus, *Gaudium et spes* soit une sorte de deuxième constitution sur l'Église qui permette, grâce à son approche à la fois dogmatique et pastorale, de vivre et de penser la foi chrétienne en phase avec le monde moderne qui ne cesse de changer<sup>13</sup>.

En comparant ces évaluations de 1962 et 1965, peut-on conclure que la phase préparatoire est marquée par une non-réception et la période proprement conciliaire par une réception de la théologie de Congar et de Chenu ? Pareil résumé, si justifié qu'il puisse paraître à première vue, reste trop superficiel. Dans la mesure où l'on peut établir un lien entre la « marque » de Congar sur le Concile Vatican II<sup>14</sup> et son œuvre préconciliaire, le cas de la réception ou non-réception de sa théologie est un exemple privilégié pour saisir quelques enjeux de la réception des développements préconciliaires, tout en contribuant ainsi à clarifier l'identité propre de la période préparatoire. Car même si Congar, avant le concile, « était témoin de l'élaboration de projets qui n'allaient pas faire aboutir ce à quoi il avait consacré sa vie au cours des vingt dernières années<sup>15</sup> », il a poursuivi à travers des articles, conférences et participations aux colloques son travail « d'éveilleur<sup>16</sup> » qui ne restait pas sans effets à Vatican II.<sup>17</sup> Cela est aussi le cas de Chenu, mais sa situation marginalisée fait que

<sup>11</sup> CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, I/181 (4 novembre 1962); de même, I/233s. (17 novembre 1962).

<sup>12</sup> CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, II/510 (7 décembre 1965).

<sup>13</sup> Parmi ses nombreuses publications sur Vatican II, voir surtout Marie-Dominique CHENU, *Un peuple messianique. Constitution de l'Église*, chap. 2, no. 9, dans NRT, 89 (1967), p. 164-182; id., *Une constitution pastorale de l'Église*, dans id., *Peuple de Dieu dans le monde*, Paris, 1966, p. 11-34 (à l'origine une conférence tenue lors de l'élaboration de *Gaudium et spes*); id., *De commercio inter Ecclesiam et mundum secundum constitutionem «Gaudium et spes»* n. 44, dans *Acta congressus internationalis de theologia Concilii Vaticani II, Romae 26 septembris – 11 octobris*, Rome, 1968, p. 648-651.

<sup>14</sup> Joseph FAMERÉE, *Lecclesiologie d'Yves Congar avant Vatican II. Histoire et Église. Analyse et reprise critique*, Leuven, 1992, p. 400.

<sup>15</sup> FAMERÉE et ROUTHIER, *Yves Congar*, p. 42.

<sup>16</sup> FAMERÉE et ROUTHIER, *Yves Congar*, p. 42. Ce terme est également appliqué à Chenu par Joseph DORÉ, *Un itinéraire-témoin, Marie-Dominique Chenu*, dans Pierre COLIN (dir.), *Les catholiques français et l'héritage de 1789. D'un centenaire à l'autre (1889-1989)*, Paris, 1989, p. 313-339, 338. Pour une illustration de ce rôle de Congar voir p. ex. l'article *Préparez le Concile dans votre paroisse avec le Père Congar*, o.p., dans la brochure publicitaire EDITIONS DU CERF, *Lettre de Jéricho*, 4 (juin 1960), p. 15.

<sup>17</sup> Dès l'annonce du concile, Congar publiait, le 15 février 1959, dans les *Informations catholiques internationales*, son article *Les conciles dans la vie de l'Église*, repris dans CONGAR, *Sainte Église*, p. 303-325. Parmi d'autres titres, voir p. ex. Yves CONGAR, *Une, sainte, catholique et apostolique*, dans *Un concile pour notre temps. Journées d'études des Informations catholiques internationales*, Paris, 1962, p. 225-252) ou encore son article *La signification théologique du concile*, dans *Le Monde*, (6 septembre 1962), mis en contexte par Philippe CHENAUX, *Les intellectuels français face au Concile*, dans Étienne FOUILLOUX (dir.), *Vatican II commence... Approches francophones*, Leuven, 1993, p. 275-287, 279s. Dans un échange de lettres avec Hans Urs von Balthasar, chargé par le conseil scientifique du *Johann-Adam-Möhler-Institut* de préparer un ouvrage collectif sur la dimension œcuménique du concile,



l'auteur d'*Une école de théologie : le Saulchoir* a plutôt le rôle d'un inspirateur d'arrière-plan que celui d'un acteur de premier plan<sup>18</sup>.

Si Congar dit au début de son journal conciliaire qu'il croit « aux personnes, à l'initiative personnelle<sup>19</sup> » — tout en voyant la nécessité de structurer le travail résultant de ces initiatives —, le concile sera aussi largement marqué par des *pensées théologiques* et par des *structures institutionnelles*. Personne ne saurait mieux le rappeler que Chenu, proche de l'école des *Annales* qui favorisait une histoire des mentalités et des conjonctures sociales.<sup>20</sup> Ne voulant pas interpréter le concile à partir de la seule théologie de Chenu et de Congar, notre examen minutieux de la réception ou non-réception de leur théologie a pour but de dégager quelques caractéristiques et enjeux herméneutiques et théologiques de la période préparatoire. Ainsi, cette étude de cas ne peut apporter que quelques morceaux de mosaïque, qui peuvent sensibiliser à des enjeux théologiques et procéduraux de la période préparatoire. Pour cela, il est utile dans un premier temps de « glisser de la théologie aux théologiens<sup>21</sup> », tout en continuant dans un deuxième temps en glissant de nouveau du théologien à la théologie telle qu'elle est conditionnée idéellement et structurellement. Si ce procédé, situé plus au niveau des soubassements du travail préparatoire qu'au niveau de la surface, semble trouver sa légitimation dans le caractère même de la participation de Congar au concile, il risque de laisser et les historiens et les théologiens sur leur faim<sup>22</sup>. Il trouve sa justification dans le caractère historico-théologique non seulement de l'œuvre de Chenu et de Congar, mais de la notion même de réception, tant *par* le concile que *du* concile.

## DE LA THÉOLOGIE AUX THÉOLOGIENS

### DES RÉCEPTIONS DE LA THÉOLOGIE CONGARIENNE PAR LA CT ?

Avant de glisser aux théologiens, il convient de saisir de manière exemplaire la portée de la réception ou la non-réception d'une proposition par une commission préconciliaire.

Congar — seul auteur francophone prévu dans la liste de Balthasar qui se lit comme un *Who is who* des œcuménistes allemands — évoque en avril 1959 les différentes initiatives prises dès l'annonce du concile [dont l'article des *I.C.I* et ses projets pour le colloque de Chevetogne (voir ci-bas)] (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 399-402).

<sup>18</sup> Dans une lettre à Chenu du 7 septembre 1962 (ADPF, *Fonds Chenu*), M<sup>sr</sup> Garrone retient la proximité des remarques de Chenu et de Congar sur le concile et affirme que les deux rejoignent les intentions de beaucoup de théologiens et d'évêques. D'autres évêques français expriment leur accord général avec Chenu et l'invitent à envoyer des notes (p. ex. M<sup>sr</sup> Marty, 6 septembre 1962, M<sup>sr</sup> Villot, 10 septembre 1962).

<sup>19</sup> CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, I/1, p. 11 (juillet 1960) (c'est moi qui souligne).

<sup>20</sup> Pour le concile, voir notamment CHENU, *Vie conciliaire de l'Église*, p. 371-383.

<sup>21</sup> Étienne FOUILLOUX, *Les théologiens romains à la veille de Vatican II*, dans Jean-Dominique DURAND (dir.), *Histoire et théologie. Actes de la Journée d'études de l'Association française d'histoire religieuse contemporaine*, Paris, 1994, p. 137-160, 137.

<sup>22</sup> Pour les regards croisés d'historiens et d'ecclésiologues, voir Hervé LEGRAND, *Relecture et évaluation de l'Histoire du Concile Vatican II d'un point de vue ecclésiologique*, dans Christoph THEOBALD (dir.), *Vatican II sous le regard des historiens. Colloque du 23 septembre 2005 Centre Sèvres – Facultés jésuites de Paris*, Paris, 2006, p. 49-82.

Un premier exemple : pendant les vives discussions autour du chapitre de *membris* lors de la session de la CT au mois de septembre 1961, la proposition de Congar est acceptée d'ajouter dans le titre l'adjectif *militantis* à *Ecclesiae* pour préciser que le *schema* parle dans ce chapitre disputé de l'Église comme réalité historique et concrète<sup>23</sup>. En effet, cette précision — pour Congar lourde de sens<sup>24</sup> — peut servir de base pour une clarification de certaines questions disputées à la suite de *Mystici Corporis*. Cet ajout peut également ouvrir une brèche dans une ecclésiologie rationaliste et juridique, ainsi qu'inaugurer une réception des expériences des mouvements préconciliaires, car il permet, p. ex. à partir de la théologie du laïcat développée par Congar, mais aussi par une discussion du terme même, d'exploiter les enjeux de ce caractère « militant » d'une manière prospective<sup>25</sup>. Certes, un mot ajouté ou tracé peut changer le sens d'un texte. D'ailleurs, Congar admira l'« art inouï » de Gérard Philips d'insérer une idée importante « par l'adjonction d'un mot<sup>26</sup> », et d'une certaine manière, lui-même a réussi à introduire ainsi, avec Chenu et M<sup>gr</sup> Marty, la notion du peuple « messianique » dans *Lumen gentium* 9<sup>27</sup>. Mais chaque ajout n'ayant pas la même densité et n'influençant l'interprétation du texte que selon son contexte, on ne saurait ni surestimer une seule expression ni limiter à quelques expressions la notion de « réception ».

Un deuxième exemple : pour la réunion de la CT du 15 au 23 novembre 1961, Congar est invité à préparer un *votum de oecumenismo* qui retient l'attention de Johannes Witte, rédacteur du chapitre en question<sup>28</sup>. Cependant, une réception de la théologie de Congar est loin d'être assurée<sup>29</sup>. Même si l'on peut alors trouver des traces

<sup>23</sup> *Relatio Secretarii de consensu plenario tertio com. theologiae Romae habito, diebus 18-30 Septembris a.D. 1961 (29 septembre)* (Leuven, Centre for the Study of the Second Vatican Council Archives [désormais CSVII], *Fonds Philips*, 0074), p. 20 — je remercie le Dr. Karim SCHELKENS pour son aide précieuse dans les archives du *Centre for the Study of the Second Vatican Council* de la K.U.Leuven. Au sujet mentionné dans le document que je viens de citer, voir aussi Stefano ALBERTO, « *Corpus Suum mystice constituit* » (LG 7). *La Chiesa Corpo Mistico di Cristo nel Primo Capitolo della «Lumen Gentium»*. *Storia del Testo dalla «Mystici Corporis» al Vaticano II con riferimento alla attività conciliare del P. Sebastian Tromp S.J.* (Eichstätter Studien, NF, 37), Regensburg 1996, p. 142s. Et VON TEUFFENBACH (dir.) *Konzilstagebuch Sebastian Tromp*, 1/2, p. 719. Voir aussi ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0249, *Animadversiones membrorum et consultorum in constitutionem De Ecclesia*, 13/8/1961 pour des remarques de Congar concernant la réception de ce chapitre par les non-catholiques (*ibid.*, 1), la justification de la nécessité de l'Église par Eph 4,4-6, le rôle du Saint-Esprit (p. 3), la prise en considération de l'ecclésiologie orthodoxe (p. 4 et 5).

<sup>24</sup> Voir p. ex. Yves CONGAR, *Jalons pour une théologie du laïcat*, Paris, 1953, p. 550.

<sup>25</sup> Dans ses observations pour la réunion de la Commission centrale du 8 mai 1962 (AD II/2,3, 986-1115), le C<sup>al</sup> Frings proposera de remplacer l'expression *Ecclesia militantis* par *Ecclesia in via constituta* ou *Ecclesia in terris ambulans*, alors que les cardinaux Döpfner, Bea et Alfrink suggèrent l'expression *Ecclesia peregrinans* (mis en contexte par Stefano ALBERTO, « *Corpus Suum mystice constituit*, p. 179). *Lumen gentium* 14 gardera ce dernier terme. On retiendra aussi l'intervention du M<sup>gr</sup> Hurley, insistant sur la dimension de « la vie » (AD II/2,3, 1018).

<sup>26</sup> Yves CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, 1/398.

<sup>27</sup> Michael QUISINSKY, *Les PP. Chenu, Congar et Féret engagés dans Vatican II. Du Saulchoir à l'Église du concile*, dans *Mémoire dominicaine*, n° 25, Paris, 2010, p. 141-174, 162-165.

<sup>28</sup> ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0190, Yves CONGAR, *Votum R. P. Congar «De oecumenismo»*, 18/10/1961 (YC 0304 pour la version ronéotypée par la Commission théologique).

<sup>29</sup> Ainsi, Tromp reproche à Witte d'avoir dépassé ses compétences en invitant Congar (*Konzilstagebuch Sebastian Tromp*, p. 303 (13 octobre 1961)). En plus, Tromp dit que Congar pourrait alors bien assister aux réunions concernant des questions œcuméniques, mais pas aux autres réunions, dont il nie ainsi

de la théologie œcuménique congarienne dans les textes discutés lors de cette session de la CTP<sup>30</sup>, Congar n'y verrait guère une réception communément acceptée par les membres de cette commission de son intuition profonde, à savoir de situer l'Église dans l'histoire afin de pouvoir aborder, à la fois historiquement et dogmatiquement, des questions œcuméniques dans un vaste horizon eschatologique<sup>31</sup>.

Un troisième exemple : Congar, depuis longtemps attentif à la théologie et à l'ecclésiologie orientales, fait la connaissance de M<sup>gr</sup> Maksym Hermanjuk<sup>32</sup> lors des travaux de la phase préparatoire<sup>33</sup>. Le 28 septembre 1961, Hermanjuk prend la parole en faveur d'un gouvernement plus collégial de l'Église et se réjouit du soutien de Congar<sup>34</sup>. De ces rencontres naît une collaboration entre Congar et Hermanjuk : le 6 mars 1962, Congar « rédige quelque chose dans le sens qu'il (Hermaniuk) désire<sup>35</sup> ». Non sans difficultés, et appuyé par la critique exprimée dans la Commission centrale par le patriarche Maximos IV Sayegh<sup>36</sup> d'un *schema* qui « ne peut pas être proposé au

la dimension œcuménique tout en réduisant celle-ci à une question subordonnée et séparée : «Dixi Patrem Congar, si scribat *votum* de oecumenismo, sessionibus de oecumenismo assistere posse: non amplius». De son côté, après avoir reçu le *votum* de Congar, Gagnebet se voit « autorisé à vous inviter » pour une session d'études au mois de novembre où Congar peut « mettre à profit (sa) connaissance de ce problème difficile » (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0178, lettre de Gagnebet à Congar, 21/10/1961).

<sup>30</sup> Riccardo BURIGANA, Maria PAIANO, Giovanni TURBANTI, Mauro VELATI, *La messa a punto dei testi. Le commissioni nella fase preparatoria del Vaticano II*, dans FOUILLOUX (dir.), *Vatican II commence*, p. 28-53, 37.

<sup>31</sup> Exposées dans une lettre de Congar à Witte, 5 décembre 1961 — je remercie le P. Jared Wicks d'avoir attiré mon attention sur cette lettre. On la trouve aussi dans ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0311. Des remarques semblables se trouvent dans CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, 1/81 (22 novembre 1961).

<sup>32</sup> Voir Karim SCHELKENS et Jaroslav SKIRA (dir.), *Council diaries of Metropolitan Maxim Hermaniuk* (Eastern Christian Studies), Leuven, 2011.

<sup>33</sup> Vu l'éloignement géographique, le métrope de l'éparchie de rite ukrainien de Winnipeg (Canada) a plutôt fait une lente entrée dans les travaux préparatoires. Le 18 septembre 1961, le dominicain français est le premier qui figure sur la liste fort intéressante des théologiens rencontrés par Hermanjuk lors de la session de la commission (SCHELKENS et SKIRA (eds.), *Council diaries Hermaniuk*, 18 septembre 1961).

<sup>34</sup> «Fr. Tromp (...) was very much against this idea; supporting me: Fr. Häring, Fr. Congar, and other experts present.» (SCHELKENS et SKIRA (dir.), *Council diaries Hermaniuk*, 28 septembre 1961).

<sup>35</sup> «Constitution de Magisterio (Colombo). Piolanti (...) voudrait que les évêques assemblés en concile dépendent du pape *fontaliter* (...) Par contre, Mgr Hermaniuk propose (...) une vue des choses dont il pense très justement qu'elle tendrait la main à certains Orthodoxes» (CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, 1/91, 6 mars 1962); cf. aussi CSVII, *Council diaries Hermaniuk*, 6 mars 1962: «The Leuven delegates and the Germans supported this proposal immediately. The French —Fr. Gagnebet O.P.— was opposed, but for example Fr. Congar— was in support.» Voir aussi Umberto BETTI, *La dottrina sull'episcopato del concilio Vaticano II. Il capitolo III della Costituzione dommatica Lumen gentium* (Spicilegium Pontificii Athenaei Antoniani, 25), Rome, 1984, p. 46s.

<sup>36</sup> Trois jours plus tard, Congar éprouve une «immense joie», car la proposition de Hermanjuk, situant l'infailibilité pontificale dans une vision collégiale de l'épiscopat, «a été admise» par la sous-commission (CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, 1/96 (9 mars 1962)). Dans une lettre à Carlo Colombo (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0089, 27/4/1962), Congar constate que son *votum* «rédigé hâtivement(...) le lendemain de l'intervention si intéressante de Mgr Hermaniuk» et «remis au P. Gagnebet» n'a été communiqué à personne. Dans le même sens, il écrit à Maximos IV Sayegh le même jour (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0419, lettre de Congar à Maximos, 27/4/1962) en réponse à YC 0420, lettre de Maximos à Congar, 20/4/1962, lettre dans laquelle le patriarche réagit vivement contre la «théorie, à notre sens inadmissible, du 'Pape source dernière unique de tout pouvoir dans

Concile<sup>37</sup> », la notion de collégialité fait ici timidement son chemin. Elle implique une ouverture possible sur le plan œcuménique et dans des sujets à la fois dogmatiques et pastoraux tels que celui des Églises locales. En cela, on peut voir émerger une manière, certes très prudente, de compléter, grâce à l'aide discrète de la théologie de Congar, l'enseignement de Vatican I.

Si importants qu'ils puissent être, ces trois exemples d'une « réception » démontrent les limites de cette méthode de recherches, à savoir de chercher des ajouts introduits à l'initiative de Congar dans les *schemata*, ces « textes de compromis<sup>38</sup> ». Sans prendre en considération le contexte institutionnel et personnel de la commission et le sous-bassement théologique des enjeux, l'identification de l'auteur d'une expression ne suffit pas pour mesurer la portée d'une réception ou d'une non-réception<sup>39</sup>. Ceci vaut *a fortiori* quand il s'agit d'une commission au sein de laquelle plusieurs ecclésiologies sont présentes, ou mieux : juxtaposées<sup>40</sup>. Car selon le point de vue, on peut alors constater soit que le *schema de Ecclesia* élaboré par la CT ne montre pas de trace d'une réception du renouveau préconciliaire<sup>41</sup>, soit que le concile n'est qu'une sorte de réception des travaux préparatoires<sup>42</sup>. Pour éviter ce genre d'impasses, il semble utile de faire maintenant un pas en arrière en « glissant aux théologiens », pour saisir, à travers eux, les enjeux théologiques et procéduraux de la réception.

#### QUELQUES ENJEUX THÉOLOGIQUES D'UNE RÉCEPTION À LA LUMIÈRE DE LEURS ACTEURS

Ne pouvant pas, en réalité, comparer entre eux tous les théologiens ayant participé au concile, je me limiterai à une comparaison exemplaire des positions de Congar et de quelques théologiens importants. Leurs contacts lors de la période préparatoire révèlent les enjeux théologiques en question.

l'Église' et —«connaissant votre compétence en la matière»—demande le soutien de Congar à ce sujet. Ce contact entre Maximos IV et Congar, marqué par une convergence des positions, est mis en contexte par Joseph A. KOMONCHAK, *The initial debate about the Church*, dans FOUILLOUX (dir.), *Vatican II commence*, p. 329-352, 337.

<sup>37</sup> Mot conclusif de son intervention fulgurante le 8 mai 1962 dans la Commission centrale (AD II/3, p. 1059-1066, 1066).

<sup>38</sup> Pour cette dimension des textes préparatoires, voir Karim SCHELKENS, *Catholic Theology of Revelation on the Eve of Vatican II. A Redaction History of the Schema De fontibus revelationis (1960-1962)*, Leiden, 2010, p. 255.

<sup>39</sup> Ceci dit, il existe une différence entre l'ajout d'une expression qui introduit un aspect nouveau d'un côté et, de l'autre côté, le remplacement d'un terme par un autre dans le but de préciser un énoncé ou de laisser ouverte la possibilité d'une discussion ultérieure.

<sup>40</sup> Alberto MELLONI, *Ecclésiologie al Vaticano II (autunno 1962-estate 1963)*, dans Mathijs LAMBERIGTS, Claude SOETENS, Jan GROOTAERS (dir.), *Les commissions conciliaires à Vatican II* (Instrumenta theologica, 18), Leuven, 1996, p. 91-179, 95.

<sup>41</sup> MELLONI, *Ecclésiologie al Vaticano II*, p. 99.

<sup>42</sup> Alexandra VON TEUFFENBACH, *Die Bedeutung des subsistit in (LG 8). Zum Selbstverständnis der katholischen Kirche*, München, 2002, p. 394.

## Congar et les théologiens de la CT

### *Sebastian Tromp : une réception du renouveau à l'épreuve de *Mystici Corporis**

Le jésuite néerlandais Sebastian Tromp fait partie des nombreux théologiens qui, dans les années 1920 et 1930, se consacrent au motif de l'Église Corps du Christ<sup>43</sup>. Congar, dans sa recension du livre *Corpus Christi quod est Ecclesia*<sup>44</sup>, reconnaît que celui-ci est extrêmement riche, mais il croit pouvoir ramener à une proposition le sens du livre : « L'Église, réalité spirituelle à qui l'Esprit du Christ donne l'être, est une seule chose avec l'Église hiérarchique visible, laquelle est le Corps mystique lui-même, organisé ». La recension de Congar est loin d'être négative<sup>45</sup>, mais quelques remarques désignent finement des lignes de convergence et de divergence entre son œuvre et celle de Tromp. Puisque ce sont les mêmes lignes qu'on peut discerner pendant la période préparatoire de Vatican II, cela montre que les enjeux théologiques de cette période remontent aux années 1930 et au-delà. Le point de clivage entre les ecclésiologies de Tromp et de Congar est la manière de concevoir le lien entre l'Église visible et invisible, qui détermine, en outre, la conception de la papauté et de la hiérarchie, la définition des membres de l'Église, les possibilités de l'œcuménisme et le statut épistémologique d'autres lieux théologiques que celui du magistère. Parmi les remarques critiques de Congar, retenons-en deux qui renvoient à de futurs enjeux de Vatican II. D'abord, on retient sa mise en valeur de l'eschatologie, et en rapport avec elle, son plaidoyer pour un ressourcement ecclésiologique qui intègre les acquis récents de l'exégèse et des recherches sur les Pères. Cela permettrait aussi de mieux saisir le mystère de l'Incarnation et de la Croix, ainsi que le rapport de cette dernière avec l'Église dont ce mystère est l'origine<sup>46</sup>. Dans la période préparatoire, les différences théologiques entre Tromp et Congar se manifestent à la fois dans le style et dans le contenu de leur théologie<sup>47</sup>. Quant au contenu, Congar ne cesse de se plaindre que Tromp « ramène tout à sa thèse unique : *Ecclesia catholica est sola Ecclesia ; est Corpus*

<sup>43</sup> Sebastian TROMP, *Corpus Christi quod est Ecclesia*, T. 1: *Introductio generalis*, Rome, 1937. Pour l'ecclésiologie de Tromp, voir Stefano ALBERTO, « *Corpus Suum mystice constituit* », p. 49-54. Voir les p. 42-49 pour une vue d'ensemble de la théologie du Corps mystique.

<sup>44</sup> Yves CONGAR, *Bulletin d'ecclésiologie* [1937], dans CONGAR, *Sainte Église*, p. 502. Voir Sebastian TROMP, *Corpus Christi quod est Ecclesia*, T. 1: *Introductio generalis*, Rome 1937. En 1953, Congar revient à la deuxième édition de ce livre : « Dans la perspective traditionnelle ancienne, il ne suffit pas de dire, avec le P. Tromp (*Corpus Christi quod est Ecclesia*, Rome, 2<sup>e</sup> éd., 1946, p. 102 s., 122 s., 127, 167 s.) : 'Viatoribus, Corpus Christi mysticum est Ecclesia Romana', mais il faut dire : 'Viatoribus post Christum et Apostolos, Corpus Christi mysticum est Ecclesia Romana'. Là encore, l'enjeu est de taille, comme en témoignent les remarques de Congar sur l'histoire de l'ecclésiologie (Congar évoque l'évolution ecclésiologique depuis Bellarmin et Canisius jusqu'au pontificat de Pie XII et son encyclique *Mystici Corporis*).

<sup>45</sup> Ainsi il salue, d'un côté, « une restauration de la métaphore en la valeur théologique qu'un saint Thomas n'avait pas manqué de lui reconnaître (I<sup>a</sup>, 1, 9) : toutes ces notions d'Épouse, Temple spirituel, voire de Corps mystique, sont de l'authentique donné théologique qui, pour n'être pas entièrement réductible à des catégories claires et rigoureuses, n'en est pas moins d'une inépuisable et irremplaçable richesse » (CONGAR, *Bulletin d'ecclésiologie*, p. 503).

<sup>46</sup> CONGAR, *Bulletin d'ecclésiologie*, p. 503.

<sup>47</sup> Congar commente le style trompien après un entretien avec le secrétaire de la Commission théologique, voir CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, I/41 (16 novembre 1960).

*Christi mysticum*<sup>48</sup> ». Cela renvoie à l'encyclique *Mystici Corporis* de 1943, rédigé sous l'influence de Tromp<sup>49</sup>. Selon Congar, l'encyclique propose « une synthèse très ample et très fortement charpentée, sans qu'on puisse dire, évidemment, qu'elle ait assumé tous les aspects du mystère<sup>50</sup> ». P. ex., elle reste une expression latine de ce mystère, n'intégrant pas la tradition orientale. Dans l'histoire du catholicisme du 20<sup>e</sup> s., l'encyclique est elle-même une certaine réception de l'émergence du motif du Corps mystique dans le contexte d'un renouveau ecclésial et ecclésiologique dès les années 1920, et elle conditionne dorénavant toutes les possibilités éventuelles d'une réception de ce renouveau<sup>51</sup>. Pour Congar, elle est le point de départ de ce qu'il appellera plus tard une « re-réception<sup>52</sup> ». Pour la direction que les travaux préparatoires pouvaient prendre, le positionnement des acteurs conciliaires face à *Mystici Corporis* s'avère crucial. Si pour Congar, l'encyclique est une étape intermédiaire dans un processus de réception du renouveau dogmatique et pastoral, pour Tromp, au contraire, elle est

<sup>48</sup> CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, I/81 (21 novembre 1961). Pour ses reproches, voir p. ex. son commentaire sur plusieurs enjeux théologiques et herméneutiques: voir aussi I/82 (22 novembre 1961).

<sup>49</sup> Congar salue que Pie XII insiste sur l'aspect visible et juridique de l'Église pour éviter le danger d'aboutir à une surestimation de l'Église invisible (Yves CONGAR, *Peut-on définir l'Église? Destin et valeur de quatre notions qui s'offrent à le faire* (1961), dans ID., *Sainte Église*, p. 21-44, 28). Ne pouvant pas dresser le bilan de la réception de *Mystici Corporis* par Congar, je me contente de renvoyer à ce texte représentatif.

<sup>50</sup> CONGAR, *Peut-on définir l'Église?*, p. 30.

<sup>51</sup> Dans un tout autre contexte, cette double dimension de *Mystici Corporis* comme réception d'un mouvement par un document papal et réception d'un document papal par un mouvement caractérise l'œuvre symptomatique pour l'interférence entre dogme et pastorale de Constantin Noppel SJ, voir Michael QUINSKY, *Die Pfarrei zwischen Kirche und Gesellschaft. Historische und theologische Perspektiven auf das Werk von Constantin Noppel SJ (1883-1945)*, dans *Freiburger Diözesan-Archiv*, 126 (2006), p. 163-193.

<sup>52</sup> Yves CONGAR, *Les théologiens, Vatican II et la théologie*, dans CONGAR, *Le Concile de Vatican II. Son Église Peuple de Dieu et Corps du Christ. Préface de René Rémond*, Paris, 1984, p. 79-90, 83. Dans un rapport pour la CT, Congar exprime son avis que « c'est de ce concept qu'il faut partir: Corpus Christi mysticum réalité surnaturelle, supposant les relations mystiques avec le Christ comme Chef et le Saint-Esprit comme âme, mais assumant la valeur imprescriptible de 'Société', en même temps que les valeurs de 'Peuple de Dieu' et de 'Communion'. » (CONGAR, *Conformément à l'invitation qui m'a été faite*, 6). Voir aussi Olivier ROUSSEAU, *Die Konstitution im Rahmen der Erneuerungsbewegungen in Theologie und Seelsorge während der letzten Jahrzehnte*, dans Guilherme BARAÚNA (dir.), *De Ecclesia. Beiträge zur Konstitution «Über die Kirche» des Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzils*, T. 1, Freiburg, 1966, p. 25-44, 25s.; Jérôme HAMER, *L'Église est une communion*, Paris, Cerf, 1962; J. Eileen SCULLY, *The Theology of the Mystical Body of Christ in French Language Theology 1930-1950 — a review and assessment*, dans *Irish Theological Quarterly*, 58 (1992), p. 58-74; Antonino INDELICATO, *Difendere la dottrina o annunciare l'evangelo. Il dibattito nella Commissione centrale preparatoria del Vaticano II* (Testi e ricerche di scienze religiose, NS, 8), Gênes, 1992, p. 242ss. (Indelicato, p. 243 n. 54 renvoie au rôle des recensions congariennes pour une prise en considération des évolutions ecclésiologiques de la période en question). Parmi les contributions préconciliaires de Congar sur la notion de *peuple de Dieu*, voir p. ex. CONGAR, *Peut-on définir l'Église?*, p. 22-26 (voir aussi p. 37-40 pour la notion de *communion*). À la fin du concile, voir ID., *L'Église comme peuple de Dieu*, dans *Concilium*, 1 (1965), p. 15-32. Aussi, il propose de compléter la doctrine de l'encyclique par une exposition du sens donné au motif du Corps du Christ dans l'œuvre paulinienne (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0324, Yves CONGAR, *Animadversiones in Cap. de Ecclesiae Natura*, 2/3/1962, 7). Selon Congar, ceci inclut les aspects anthropologiques et sotériologiques. Surtout, le motif du Corps du Christ serait ainsi moins considéré en lui-même, mais dans son rapport vital au Christ.



plutôt un point d'arrivée qu'un point de départ<sup>53</sup>. Par conséquent, pour le jésuite, une réception de la théologie du renouveau au-delà de ce qui est dit dans l'encyclique n'est peut-être pas exclue d'avance, mais peu nécessaire. Le dominicain, de son côté, tout en tirant profit de la réception de cet enseignement papal — qui pour lui n'est pas à confondre avec la théologie de Tromp<sup>54</sup> —, voit et la nécessité de nouveaux apprentissages ecclésiologiques à la fois pastoraux et dogmatiques, et celle d'intégrer ces apprentissages dans un ressourcement de l'ecclésiologie dans la Tradition au-delà de l'héritage de Vatican I<sup>55</sup>.

Si Congar ne peut pas accepter la thèse trompienne dans la mesure où elle ne permet guère de réception positive de l'ecclésiologie sous-jacente aux « mouvements » et enrichie par eux, il soutient, lors des travaux préparatoires, une proposition de Tromp concernant l'ordre des *schemata* qu'il juge la meilleure des propositions faites<sup>56</sup>. Cette proposition exprime l'unité des différents articles dont il faut traiter et permet de penser la dimension « dynamique » de l'Église, dimension que Congar dit tout de suite ne pas vouloir surestimer, mais qu'il voit fondée dans la Révélation et dans la volonté salvifique de Dieu. Certes, la vue d'ensemble que Congar souhaite est différente de celle imaginée par Tromp<sup>57</sup>.

<sup>53</sup> BURIGANA, *Progetto dogmatico*, p. 171s.

<sup>54</sup> Voir p. ex. sa conversation avec Labourdette le 28 septembre 1961 (CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, I/77).

<sup>55</sup> Dans son rapport du 24 septembre 1960, Congar inscrit *Mystici Corporis* non seulement dans l'histoire des mouvements à partir de 1925, mais il considère aussi l'encyclique comme un complément pour Vatican I, apogée dans un développement vers exclusivité des pouvoirs hiérarchiques commencé au 14<sup>e</sup> s. et renforcé depuis la Réforme et les Lumières. «Ce fut au point que le premier schema 'De Ecclesia' proposé au Concile du Vatican en 1870, et rédigé par Schrader, qui commençait par 'Ecclesia est Corpus Christi mysticum', fut très mal accueilli par les Pères (...) L'Encyclique *Mystici Corporis* du 29 juin 1943 a été, dans ces conjonctures, un document décisif. Pie XII y assumait toute la substance du traité *De Gratia Capitis*, toute la substance d'une considération christologique et surnaturelle du mystère. Mais il identifiait le concept de *Corpus Christi Mysticum* et celui de l'Église comme société visible, organisée et hiérarchique. L'objection des Pères du Concile de 1870 recevait une réponse» (Yves CONGAR, Conformément à l'invitation qui m'a été faite, p. 5s.).

<sup>56</sup> ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0131, Yves CONGAR, *Animadversiones de Systemate quo ordinanda sunt ea quae fuerunt Commissioni Theologicae subjecta seu De ordine servando*, 13/12/1960.

<sup>57</sup> En renvoyant à une prise de position de Philips lors de la session du 26 novembre 1960, Congar profite de l'occasion de ses *animadversiones* pour s'adresser contre «alicujus 'Positivismi ecclesiologici'» (Yves CONGAR, *Animadversiones de Systemate*, p. 2) et pour plaider au contraire pour une ecclésiologie intégrant la dimension missionnaire, eschatologique et —sans utiliser le terme— messianique. Dans le cas de cette dernière dimension, enracinée dans une vision englobante de l'économie du salut centrée dans le Christ, son plaidoyer préfigure les futures activités conciliaires de lui-même et de Chenu. «Inter causas cur homines a religione vel Ecclesia discesserunt, haec mihi summa videtur: saepius doctrinam necnon obligationes cultus morumve proposuimus seorsum a spe Regni Dei consummationisque eschatologicae. Eodem tempore, e contra, doctrinae philosophicae seu sociales modernae (e.g. Hegelianismus, Marxismus) hominibus eschatologiam quasi laicizatam et mere humano-cosmicam praedicabant, ab eaque majorem suam vim recipiebant. Homines magis vivunt de spe quam de dogmate puro, vel, ut melius dicam, de fide vivunt quae sit simul et spes... Sequitur quod debemus integrum Dei Propositum evolvere a Genesi usque ad Apocalypsim, a creatione usque ad eschatologiam consummationem, aplectens factum centralem Christi sese per Ecclesiam et in Ecclesia principium vitae pro mundo constituentem» (3 s.). Pour la dimension messianique, voir Yves CONGAR, *Un peuple messianique. Salut et libération* (Cogitatio Fidei, 85), Paris, 1975, et les titres mentionnés dans n. 13.



*Rosaire-Marie Gagnebet : une réception du renouveau théologique et pastoral dans le cadre d'une réception du magistère*

Après sa nomination comme consultant de la CT, Congar se voit, avec Henri de Lubac<sup>58</sup>, comme des « *hapax* dans un texte dont le contexte me semble si orienté dans le sens conservateur !<sup>59</sup> » Si ceci en dit long sur l'influence qu'il attribue à sa présence au sein de cette commission, une autre remarque est révélatrice de sa déception quant à la ligne théologique qui y est prépondérante : « Sans cesse, dans l'Église, il y a l'étalage — attirant — et il y a le magasin. L'étalage annonce Lubac, mais le magasin contient Gagnebet<sup>60</sup> ». Pour Congar, le nom de son confrère Rosaire-Marie Gagnebet, secrétaire de la commission des études de l'ordre dominicain, est directement lié à ses épreuves des années 1950, au moment de la crise des prêtres-ouvriers qui le conduisit à l'éloignement forcé du Saulchoir. Le dominicain toulousain, professeur de théologie dogmatique à l'*Angelicum*, était dès les années 1950 collaborateur du St-Office<sup>61</sup>. Chargé par celui-ci de deux « conversations » avec Congar le 14 et 18 décembre 1954, Gagnebet a été selon celui-ci « le plus fraternel qu'il était possible d'être<sup>62</sup> ». Certes, Gagnebet « estime qu'il y avait des choses à mettre en ordre en France<sup>63</sup> ». P. ex. il se réjouit que Congar n'ait pas de contacts étroits avec les prêtres-ouvriers, tandis que ce dernier regrette au contraire de ne pas les voir assez<sup>64</sup>. Si l'on considère les prêtres-ouvriers comme la face visible de l'*iceberg*<sup>65</sup>, ces deux approches ecclésiologiques différentes de Gagnebet et de Congar révèlent des implications fondamentales concernant les rapports entre histoire et présent, dogme et pastorale, magistère et vie chrétienne, Église et société. Lors d'un examen de conscience à Rome, Congar regrette une mise à l'écart de la réception du renouveau ecclésial et ecclésiologique telle qu'elle se fait dans sa réflexion théologique<sup>66</sup>. En ce qui concerne les « conversations », la position de Gagnebet peut être résumée ainsi : « Il faudra qu'à l'avenir je (Congar, MQ) dise plus expressément certaines choses. Que je dis, d'ailleurs, mais pas assez. Et

<sup>58</sup> Pour une comparaison entre de Lubac et Congar, cf. Michael QUISINSKY, *Aggiornamento – aber wie? Die Konzilstheologen Henri de Lubac SJ und Yves Congar OP zwischen «nouvelle théologie» und Konzilsrezeption*, dans FZPhTh (à paraître).

<sup>59</sup> CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, I/18 (juillet 1960).

<sup>60</sup> CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, I/18.

<sup>61</sup> ROBERT CHRISTIAN, s.v., dans David BERGER, Jürgen VIJGER (dir.), *Thomistenlexikon*, Bonn, 2006, p. 186-188.

<sup>62</sup> Yves CONGAR, *Journal d'un théologien (1946-1956). Présenté et annoté par Etienne Fouilloux avec la collaboration de Dominique Congar, André Duval et Bernard Montagnes*, Paris, 2000, p. 319 et 324; pour l'ensemble de ses « conversations » (le terme est du C<sup>sl</sup> Ottaviani, cf., p. 299) avec Gagnebet voir p. 309-333. On retrouve ce caractère fraternel lors de la période préparatoire, voir Yves CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, I/69 (23 septembre 1961).

<sup>63</sup> CONGAR, *Journal d'un théologien*, p. 311.

<sup>64</sup> S'il dit que « cela aurait été l'honneur de ma vie d'être leur serviteur doctrinal », Congar n'hésite pas de dire que les prêtres-ouvriers « ont manqué de théologiens et de théologie » (CONGAR, *Journal d'un théologien*, p. 318).

<sup>65</sup> FRANÇOIS LEPRIEUR, *Quand Rome condamne. Dominicains et prêtres-ouvriers*, Paris, 1989.

<sup>66</sup> LEPRIEUR, *Quand Rome condamne*, p. 302-306.

aussi que je me réfère davantage ‘au Magistère’ : ce que je fais aussi, mais pas assez<sup>67</sup> ». Gagnebet ne se montre pas complètement insensible aux tentatives congariennes d’approfondir l’ecclésiologie, mais pour lui, chaque tentative en la matière doit partir du magistère et de ses énoncés, tandis que Congar regrette une réception autosuffisante des expressions du magistère des 150 dernières années, qui ne permet pas une réception de ce qui germe dans les mouvements du renouveau<sup>68</sup>. Lors de la préparation du concile, l’autorité du magistère reste le souci principal d’un courant théologique représenté par Gagnebet<sup>69</sup>. Cependant, force est de constater que ce défenseur du magistère n’hésite pas à critiquer Jean XXIII quand celui-ci, par exemple dans son fameux discours *Gaudet Mater Ecclesiae*, exerce ce magistère autrement que ne l’avait fait Pie XII, du moins selon l’interprétation des universités romaines<sup>70</sup>.

En ce qui concerne une éventuelle réception de la théologie de Congar et de Chenu au moment de Vatican II, Gagnebet ne sera donc pas le premier ni à la souhaiter ni à la soutenir. Si les rapports rédigés par Gagnebet lors de la phase préparatoire et au début du concile laissent entendre qu’il « prolonge au début des années 1960 la petite guerre commencée à la fin des années 1930 contre le Saulchoir de Marie-Dominique Chenu<sup>71</sup> », le dominicain romain, d’abord critiqué par Congar<sup>72</sup>, mais

<sup>67</sup> LEPRIEUR, *Quand Rome condamne*, p. 310. Passant en revue les grandes publications de Congar, Gagnebet reprend cet argument (p. 315).

<sup>68</sup> Voir aussi Yves CONGAR, *L’Ecclésiologie de la Révolution française au Concile de Vatican sous le signe de l’affirmation de l’autorité*, dans RSR, 48 (1960), p. 77-114. Gagnebet remercie Congar de cet article et en demande deux exemplaires pour la CT (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0123, lettre de Gagnebet à Congar, 9/1/1961). Dans une lettre à Dhanis du 12 octobre 1961 (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0228), Congar déplore que la « somme des enseignements pontificaux » que rassemblent les *schemata* est trop marquée par des condamnations et des mises en garde contre les différents aspects du renouveau.

<sup>69</sup> CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, I/234 (17 novembre 1962).

<sup>70</sup> En résulte une situation ambiguë lors de la phase préparatoire, cumulant, du côté de Gagnebet, une non-réception de la théologie de Congar au nom du magistère avec une non-réception du magistère de Jean XXIII au nom de la théologie romaine consacrée sous le pontificat de Pie XII. Du côté de Congar, l’autorité du magistère n’est aucunement niée, mais pour lui, c’est —non sans difficultés: car si cela n’est pas le seul aspect sous lequel il juge le pontificat roncallien, Congar exprime dès le mois de juillet 1960 sa déception face au décalage entre les gestes et paroles de Jean XXIII d’une part et sa manière de gouverner d’autre part (CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, p. 55. (juillet 1960))—le magistère même qui invite à élargir, au-delà des évolutions depuis le 19<sup>e</sup> s., les notions et les fondements de la réflexion ecclésiologique en dialogue avec le monde moderne. Voir Étienne FOUILLOUX, *Du rôle des théologiens au début de Vatican II. Un point de vue romain*, dans Alberto MELLONI, Daniele MENOZZI (dir.), *Cristianesimo nella storia. Saggi in onore de Giuseppe Alberigo* (Testi e ricerche di scienze religiose, 18), Bologna, 1996, p. 279-311 (304s). Pour une ecclésiologie « romaine », voir Fermina ÁLVAREZ ALONSO, *La posizione del Laterano sui problemi ecclesiologici nella fase preparatoria del Concilio*, dans Philippe CHENAUX (dir.), *L’università del Laterano e la preparazione del Concilio Vaticano II. Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi (Città del Vaticano, 27 gennaio 2000)* (Studi e documenti sul Concilio Vaticano II, 1), Rome, 2001, p. 67-80. Pour l’exercice du magistère, voir Goffredo ZANCHI, *Da Pio XII a Giovanni XXIII. Modalità diverse dello svolgimento del ministero papale*, dans Gianni CARZANIGA (dir.), *Giovanni XXIII e il Vaticano II. Atti degli Incontri svoltisi presso il Seminario vescovile di Bergamo 1998-2001*, Cinisello Balsamo, 2003, p. 24-50.

<sup>71</sup> FOUILLOUX, *Du rôle des théologiens*, p. 311.

<sup>72</sup> *Konzilstagebuch Sebastian Tromp*, I/117 (16 novembre 1960).

qui lui reconnaît aussi quelques ouvertures théologiques<sup>73</sup>, devient néanmoins pour celui-ci un homme-clé, le premier partageant des informations avec le second en plus de lui permettre d'exprimer son opinion dans la sous-commission qu'il dirige<sup>74</sup>.

*Gérard Philips : une réception défiante de la vie ecclésiale qui défie l'ecclésiologie*

Au sein de la sous-commission *de Ecclesia*, présidée par Gagnebet, Congar est chargé de rédiger un *votum* sur les laïcs<sup>75</sup>. De son côté, Gérard Philips, dont le livre influent sur le laïcat « correspond<sup>76</sup> » à ses propres *Jalons pour une théologie du laïcat*, est responsable du chapitre sur les laïcs. Pour Congar, ce chapitre devrait être intégré dans le *schema* entier à l'instar d'une « tunica inconsutilis<sup>77</sup> ». Si la plupart des membres de la CT pouvaient souscrire à cette revendication, Philips, rédacteur du chapitre sur les laïcs, fut le premier à affirmer que les membres de la commission sont loin d'être unanimes sur les solutions avancées sur les différentes questions abordées par le *schema*, qui diffèrent selon les positions des différents théologiens. S'appuyant en outre sur des exemples ecclésiologiques, Philips décrira, après la première session conciliaire, « deux tendances dans la théologie contemporaine<sup>78</sup> ». Dans la mesure où ce diagnostic résulte aussi de sa participation aux travaux préparatoires, on devine le défi devant lequel Philips se trouve en rédigeant un chapitre sur les laïcs qui à la fois veut recevoir la théologie du laïcat enraciné dans les mouvements du renouveau et doit s'intégrer dans le *schema* ecclésiologique tel qu'il est en train d'être élaboré<sup>79</sup>.

<sup>73</sup> CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, I/69 (23 septembre 1961). Aussi, Congar apprécie au plus haut degré que Gagnebet différencie clairement entre son opinion théologique personnelle et ce qu'il faut, selon lui, inscrire dans le *de ecclesia* (I/91 (6 mars 1962)). Voir aussi des remarques positives dans sa lettre à Carlo Colombo du 27 avril 1962 (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0089).

<sup>74</sup> CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, I/182 (4 novembre 1962). Voir aussi I/233 (17 novembre 1962). Pour sa part, Gagnebet affirme « pour l'ensemble être d'accord avec vous, à part quelques détails ou nuances » (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0158, lettre de Gagnebet à Congar, 11/5/1961).

<sup>75</sup> «De Laicis quaesivimus votum a Rev.mo P. Congar, qui modo conciso exposuit quae in libro suo 'Jalons pour une théologie du laïcat' continentur» (CSVII, *Fonds Philips* 66, Marie-Rosaire GAGNEBET, *Relatio de laboribus factis et faciendis in subcommissione De Ecclesia*, 15/2/1961), 2. Voir aussi ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0244, Yves CONGAR, *Relatio de laboribus factis et faciendis in subcommissione De Ecclesia*, dans *Relatio Secretarii Conventus* 27 aprilis 1961, p. 3-5, 4. Tromp l'avait mis en garde: «Una vero com voto velis adnectere synthesim eorum quae Tibi definienda vel opportuna docenda videntur, clare, breviter, concinne redactam ad modum Constitutionum Concilii Vaticani I, ut videre est in notissimo 'Enchiridion Symbolorum' P. Denzinger» (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0226, lettre de Tromp à Congar, 26/11/1960).

<sup>76</sup> Gérard PHILIPS, *Le rôle du laïcat dans l'Église* (Cahiers de l'Actualité religieuse), Paris, 1954 et la recension de Congar reprise dans PHILIPS, *Sainte Église*, p. 671s. (citation 671).

<sup>77</sup> Yves CONGAR, *Votum de Laicis eorumque loco in Ecclesia*, 10/12/1960; je cite d'après la version ronéotypée par la Commission théologique: CSVII, *Fonds Philips*, 155. Selon p. 7, ceci inclut aussi une prise en considération de certains acquis du mouvement liturgique.

<sup>78</sup> Gérard PHILIPS, *Deux tendances dans la théologie contemporaine*, dans *Nouvelle Revue Théologique*, (1963), p. 225-238. Après avoir analysé l'article et les réactions reçues par Philips à ce sujet, FOUILLOUX, *Du rôle des théologiens*, p. 284s., remarque que les seules réactions négatives venaient de Sebastian Tromp et Rosaire-Marie Gagnebet, y voyant une illustration de la «petite révolution accomplie aux yeux de ses principales victimes» (p. 283) lors de la première session.

<sup>79</sup> AD II/3,1, p. 154-162.

Dans son *votum*, Congar passe en revue les grandes lignes de sa théologie du laïcat. Comme le montre son livre-phare *Jalons pour une théologie du laïcat*<sup>80</sup>, cela implique rien de moins que ce que l'on peut appeler une théologie de l'histoire, mettant l'histoire entre la Création et la Rédemption en relation avec la volonté salvifique de Dieu<sup>81</sup>. C'est donc le monde qui est l'horizon de l'Église et, à partir de cet horizon, l'ecclésiologie montre que la mission de l'Église doit être réalisée par tous les membres de l'Église, laïcs et prêtres<sup>82</sup>. Établir la situation de l'Église par rapport au monde, ce qui exige, dans l'idéal, une « ecclésiologie totale »<sup>83</sup>, revient à démontrer ecclésiologiquement le caractère pastoral de toute action et de toute réflexion chrétienne qui se fait dans et par l'Église. Car comme le dit Congar en guise de conclusion, l'ecclésiologie est enracinée dans une vision christologique de l'histoire et du monde<sup>84</sup>, l'Église étant « *Sacramentum Salutis universae* »<sup>85</sup>.

Congar atteste au chapitre rédigé par Philips qu'il « rejoint assez exactement mes idées et mon propre papier »<sup>86</sup>. Puisque ce chapitre a de grandes implications sur toute l'ecclésiologie du *schema*, les « trois énormes défauts »<sup>87</sup> qu'il diagnostique dans l'ensemble du *schema* affectent inversement aussi la portée du chapitre *De Laicis*. Comme le chapitre *De laicis* le montre, une réception des acquis des mouvements du renouveau présuppose un certain horizon ecclésiologique, de même qu'elle nuancera à son tour toute ecclésiologie en la situant plus dans l'histoire vécue de la foi de l'Église. En même temps, cela exige un autre rapport entre la doctrine et la pastorale que celui qui est présupposé par certains membres de la CT selon qui cette commission

<sup>80</sup> Pour une mise en perspective voir FAMERÉE, *L'ecclésiologie*, p. 167-218.

<sup>81</sup> CONGAR, *Jalons*, 133ss. et al. Pour la « théologie de l'histoire » selon Congar, voir Jean-Pierre JOSSUA, *Le père Congar. La théologie au service du peuple de Dieu* (Chrétiens de tous les temps, 20), Paris, 1967, p. 174, et Charles MACDONALD, *Church and World in the Plan of God. Aspects of History and Eschatology in the Thought of Père Yves Congar op* (Regensburger Studien zur Theologie, 27), Frankfurt, 1982. Pour la « théologie de l'histoire » selon le trio Congar, Chenu et, avec des nuances, Féret, voir Michael QUINSINSKY, *Geschichtlicher Glaube*, p. 172-230.

<sup>82</sup> CONGAR, *Votum de Laicis*, p. 6.

<sup>83</sup> CONGAR, *Jalons*, p. 13. On peut avancer l'hypothèse qu'il s'agit là d'une transformation en ecclésiologie de l'idée d'une *histoire totale* dans l'école des *Annales*.

<sup>84</sup> Aspect crucial à propos duquel Philips retiendra que la théologie de Congar est une clé de lecture pour *Lumen gentium* (Gérard PHILIPS, *L'Église et son mystère au II<sup>e</sup> concile du Vatican. Histoire, texte et commentaire de la Constitution Lumen Gentium I, T. 1*, Paris, 1967, p. 110 avec n. 45, où il renvoie à l'article paru pendant les travaux préparatoires Yves CONGAR, *Le Christ, chef invisible d'Église visible d'après saint Paul*, dans Humbert BOÜESSÉ, Jean-Jacques LATOUR (dir.), *Problèmes actuels de Christologie*, Bruges, 1961, p. 367-391).

<sup>85</sup> Yves CONGAR, *Votum de Laicis*, p. 8.

<sup>86</sup> Yves CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, 1/57 (24 août 1961). Selon Riccardo BURIGANA, Maria PAIANO, Giovanni TURBANTI, Mauro VELATI, *La messa a punto dei testi. Le commissioni nella fase preparatoria del Vaticano II*, dans FOUILLoux (dir.), *Vatican II commence*, p. 28-53, 33, le chapitre rédigé par Philips est celui qui sort le plus du cadre de la théologie romaine; voir aussi INDELICATO, *Difendere la dottrina*, p. 246s.; BURIGANA, *Progetto dogmatico*, p. 174. Cependant, les réflexions fondamentales de Congar qui touchent une théologie de l'histoire ne se trouvent guère dans la 5<sup>e</sup> rédaction (14 novembre 1961) (ADPF, Fonds conciliaire Congar, YC 0312).

<sup>87</sup> Le *schema* est, selon lui, trop scolastique et trop scolaire, comparable à un *syllabus* se contentant de citer des documents pontificaux depuis le 19<sup>e</sup> s., et finalement n'est pas inspiré par l'idée œcuménique (CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, 1/57ss. (24 août 1961)).

aurait seule, à l'exclusion de la commission sur l'apostolat des laïcs, la compétence en matières dogmatiques<sup>88</sup>.

## Congar et d'autres (futurs) acteurs conciliaires

### *Le Cardinal Augustin Bea et Johannes Willebrands : une réception souhaitée*

Vu le caractère souvent embryonnaire des structures de dialogue, les activités œcuméniques de l'époque préconciliaire étaient marquées par des contacts personnels, d'ailleurs situés dans l'ensemble du mouvement œcuménique par le C<sup>al</sup> Bea lors de la discussion par la Commission centrale du chapitre *de oecumenismo* le 20 juin 1962<sup>89</sup>. Ainsi, le chemin de Congar croisa celui du néerlandais Johannes Willebrands qui avait créé la *Conférence catholique sur les questions œcuméniques* en 1952. Après une rencontre le 13 mai 1952<sup>90</sup>, Congar note dans son journal que Willebrands et Thijssen ont « reçu l'approbation expresse des PP. Tromp, Boyer et Bea<sup>91</sup> » pour ce projet<sup>92</sup>. Que le Cardinal Bea affirme qu'il faille élaborer une théologie pour les nouveaux problèmes montre que la réception des intuitions œcuméniques situe l'ensemble de la doctrine et de la pastorale dans une nouvelle perspective<sup>93</sup>.

<sup>88</sup> Joseph A. KOMONCHAK, *Le combat pour le Concile durant la préparation*, dans Giuseppe ALBERIGO, Étienne FOUILLOUX (dir.), *Histoire du Concile Vatican II (1959-1965)*, T. 1: *Le catholicisme vers une nouvelle époque. L'annonce et la préparation (janvier 1959 – octobre 1962)*, Paris, 1997, p. 185-397, 349. Si concrètement, cette affirmation vise le secrétariat Bea, l'enjeu épistémologique concerne aussi d'autres instances préconciliaires. Voir le plaidoyer de Congar, suite à un entretien avec Tromp, non seulement pour la collaboration entre différentes institutions conciliaires, mais aussi —liée à cela— pour la valeur dogmatique de facteurs historiques et pastoraux (CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, I/41s. (16 novembre 1960)). De la même manière, Congar, à l'occasion d'un entretien avec M<sup>sr</sup> Larrain, regrette qu'il n'y ait aucune collaboration entre la Commission théologique et la Commission pour les laïcs dont l'évêque du Chili est membre (I/44s., 23 janvier 1961). Voir en revanche les remarques de M<sup>sr</sup> Dubois à propos du chapitre sur les laïcs dans le *de Ecclesia*: ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0337, Marcel DUBOIS, *Animadversiones in Cap. de Laicis*, 26/2/1962, p. 1.

<sup>89</sup> AD II/2,4, p. 802s. (voir p. 802, le cardinal nomme aussi le centre dominicain *Istina* dont Congar est un pilier).

<sup>90</sup> Avec son confrère Christophe-Jean Dumont du centre d'études *Istina*. Pour les rapports entre Dumont et Willebrands voir aussi l'article Karim SCHELKENS, *L'«affaire de Rhodes» au jour le jour. La correspondance inédite entre J.M.G. Willebrands et Ch.-J. Dumont*, dans *Istina* 54, (2009), p. 253-277.

<sup>91</sup> CONGAR, *Journal d'un théologien*, p. 214. Si les néerlandais voient une sorte de *kairos* pour leur projet, Congar «frémi(t) intérieurement» et fait «une objection très grave. Je crois qu'on partirait dans l'équivoque. Eux pensent 'œcuménisme'. Les PP. Boyer, Tromp, Bea, et Rome en général, pensent: exposé des prérogatives du Saint-Siège et activité d'exposé de la nécessité du retour sans condition à Rome. C'est autre chose. Nous sommes d'accord sur la fin finale, mais non sur la fin prochaine de l'activité unionique». Selon Stjepan SCHMIDT, *Augustin Bea. Der Kardinal der Einheit*, Graz, 1989, p. 427, n. 10, le «secrétariat Bea» pouvait s'appuyer en grande partie sur la *Conférence catholique des questions œcuméniques*, à la fois sur le plan des travaux et sur le plan des personnes.

<sup>92</sup> Puisque Congar qualifie Tromp et Boyer de manière plus favorable que Bea, Étienne Fouilloux remarque, dans CONGAR, *Journal d'un théologien*, p. 214, note 169 que «Congar ne connaît pas Bea, mais on sait ce qu'il pense de Boyer et de Tromp!» Voir cependant Theo SALEMINK, *Introduction. Willebrands the Ecumenist 1958-1961*, dans SALEMINK (dir.), *«You will be called repairer of the breach». The diary of J.G.M. Willebrands 1958-1961* (Instrumenta theologica, 22), Leuven, 2009, p. 1-29, 4, qui parle de l'enthousiasme de Bea et de la réticence de Tromp.

<sup>93</sup> Mauro VELATI, *La proposta ecumenica del segretariato per l'unità dei cristiani*, dans Giuseppe ALBERIGO, Alberto MELLONI (dir.), *Verso il Concilio Vaticano II (1960-1962). Passaggi e problemi della preparazione*

Si Congar n'était que tardivement en contact direct avec le C<sup>al</sup> Bea lui-même<sup>94</sup>, ses contacts avec Willebrands pendant la période préparatoire étaient d'autant plus importants. Dès le 7 février 1959, Willebrands et Congar discutent de sujets qui seront importants au cours de Vatican II<sup>95</sup>. En outre, l'entretien porte sur un texte du dominicain sur la « Seigneurie du Christ<sup>96</sup> », sujet très débattu au sein du *Conseil Œcuménique des Églises* et qui, à travers des interventions de Lukas Vischer, influencera considérablement l'élaboration de *Gaudium et spes*<sup>97</sup>. Les deux théologiens esquissent aussi une journée d'études à Chevetogne dont les actes publiés sous le titre *Le Concile et les Conciles*<sup>98</sup> réunissent des études fort importantes pour la conscience conciliaire émergente. Ils participent aussi à une conférence œcuménique à Gazzada en septembre 1960 au sujet de l'« unité dans la diversité », conférence au cours de laquelle le C<sup>al</sup> Bea fera connaissance de Willem A. Visser't Hooft<sup>99</sup>. Ces activités, bien que non reçues par des membres éminents de la CT, ont contribué au cours de la période préparatoire à l'élargissement et à la consolidation du tissu des contacts. En ce qui concerne Willebrands, il critique de plus en plus directement son compatriote Tromp, qui à son tour est de plus en plus ouvertement aux antipodes du C<sup>al</sup> Bea<sup>100</sup>. Pendant la période préparatoire cependant, Congar saisit parfaitement l'enjeu théologique du refus par Ottaviani et Tromp de créer une commission mixte avec le secrétariat pour la promotion de l'unité des chrétiens sous la direction de celui qui est devenu le C<sup>al</sup> Bea<sup>101</sup>. Willebrands rejoint les regrets de Congar concernant le manque de vue d'ensemble dans les travaux préparatoires et le « cloisonnement » des différents organes, ce qui arrange fort bien quelques membres de la CT, mais qui va à l'encontre du lien entre la doctrine et la pastorale proposé par les deux œcuménistes<sup>102</sup>. Une

*conciliare* (Testi e ricerche di scienze religiose, 11), Gênes, 1993, p. 273-350, 290 (à propos de *de membris*).

<sup>94</sup> Congar fait la connaissance du cardinal lors d'une première audience le 5 mars 1962 (CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile, I/90*), voir aussi SCHMIDT, *Augustin Bea*, p. 691, qui s'appuie sur des extraits du journal conciliaire de Congar (voir p. 661 n. 78).

<sup>95</sup> *Diary Willebrands*, p. 75ss., 7 et 9 février 1959.

<sup>96</sup> Yves CONGAR, *La Seigneurie du Christ sur l'Église et le monde*, dans *Istina*, 6 (1959), p. 131-166.

<sup>97</sup> Charles MOELLER, *Die Geschichte der Pastoralkonstitution*, dans *LThK.E.*, 3 (1968), p. 241-279, 251.

<sup>98</sup> *Le Concile et les Conciles*, Paris, 1960; de Yves CONGAR, *Primauté des premiers conciles œcuméniques*, p. 75-109 et *Conclusion*, p. 285-334.

<sup>99</sup> Voir la description enthousiaste dans *Diary Willebrands*, 209s. (22 septembre 1960); voir aussi SCHMIDT, *Augustin Bea*, p. 426ss. Pour Congar, la bénédiction papale pour cette rencontre d'œcuménistes longtemps suspects est « un miracle dans l'Église. » *Diary Willebrands*, p. 212 (29 septembre 1960). Voir aussi le 30 septembre 1960 pour « Congar's fantastic lecture ».

<sup>100</sup> Theo SALEMINK, *Introduction*, p. 17s. Voir aussi *Diary Willebrands*, 267 (23 et 24 février 1961). *Konzilstagebuch Sebastian Tromp*, p. 179.

<sup>101</sup> A. KOMONCHAK, *Le combat*, p. 325ss. Voir aussi VON TEUFFENBACH, *Einführung*, p. 61; voir aussi INDELICATO, *Difendere la dottrina*, p. 290; BURIGANA, *Progetto dogmatico*, p. 203.

<sup>102</sup> *Diary Willebrands*, p. 248 (22 décembre 1960) et CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile, I/58* (24 août 61). Après une (la) rencontre avec Willebrands du 12 juillet 1961, Congar écrit à Jean XXIII en mettant en lien son parcours œcuménique depuis 1929 et le concile d'un côté ainsi que la « téléfinalité » œcuménique du concile et le besoin d'une collaboration entre les différentes commissions de l'autre (voir la lettre à la p. 55, n. 5). Ceci dit, Congar prenait au sérieux le secret imposé aux consultants, éprouvant un certain malaise devant la proposition de son confrère Hamer de faire circuler ce *votum* au sein du Secrétariat pour l'Unité des chrétiens (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0146, lettre de



fois la manière de travailler de la CT bousculée par le concile, les conditions d'une réception des évolutions préconciliaires, de leurs acquis et de leur dynamique propre, changeront considérablement<sup>103</sup>.

*M<sup>gr</sup> Jean-Julien Weber et M<sup>gr</sup> Léon-Arthur Elchinger – une réception dialogale de la vie ecclésiale en attente d'une réception par le concile*

Si pour Congar, l'évêque français de la CT, M<sup>gr</sup> Dubois (Besançon), ne semble pas être un acteur de la réception du renouveau ecclésial<sup>104</sup>, plusieurs évêques français témoignent leur sympathie pour le dominicain, dont M<sup>gr</sup> Marty, archevêque de Reims, qui estime dès la phase préparatoire que l'Église entre dans une « ère conciliaire<sup>105</sup> ». Congar trouve un soutien particulier auprès des évêques strasbourgeois. Après avoir accueilli Congar à Strasbourg en 1956<sup>106</sup>, l'archevêque-évêque Jean-Julien Weber, un bibliste qui a gardé un souvenir vivant des enjeux de la crise moderniste<sup>107</sup>, sollicite le dominicain dès 1959. Lors de la nomination de Congar comme consultant, il se dit « très heureux de votre nomination, à condition que vous soyez consulté ». Plus encore qu'avec Weber, c'est avec son coadjuteur dynamique Léon-Arthur Elchinger que Congar va travailler tout au long du concile<sup>108</sup>. Ce prélat propose aussi les services de Congar, par exemple au C<sup>al</sup> Bea<sup>109</sup>. Vivement intéressé par la relation entre foi et culture, Elchinger est aussi en contact avec Marie-Dominique Chenu<sup>110</sup>.

Hamer à Congar, 28/10/1961; ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0145, lettre de Congar à Hamer, 6/11/1961).

<sup>103</sup> Pour la période préconciliaire voir MELLONI, *Ecclésiologie al Vaticano II*, p. 99, et VELATI, *La proposta*, 284-290.

<sup>104</sup> En remerciant Congar pour son rapport envoyé aux membres de la CT, il précise: « Peut-être sur ceci ou cela nous ne sommes pas complètement d'accord » (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0070, lettre de Dubois à Congar, 6/11/1960, de manière semblable dans ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0140, lettre de Dubois à Congar, 26/12/1961 (YC 0140)). Voir aussi le résumé d'une rencontre des membres français de la CT à Besançon: CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, I/53 (27/28 mars 1961).

<sup>105</sup> CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, I/54 (6-9 avril 1961).

<sup>106</sup> FAMERÉE, *L'ecclésiologie*, p. 227.

<sup>107</sup> Jean-Julien WEBER, *Au soir d'une vie. Témoignages. Des remous du modernisme au renouveau conciliaire*, Paris, 1970 et Yves CONGAR, *Un évêque raconte sa vie*, dans *Le Monde*, 17 novembre 1970, p. 24.

<sup>108</sup> Bernard XIBAUT, *M<sup>gr</sup> Léon-Arthur Elchinger. Un évêque français au Concile*, Paris, 2009, p. 137-143. 263-316. Congar envoyait également les documents destinés pour M<sup>gr</sup> Weber à M<sup>gr</sup> Elchinger.

<sup>109</sup> QUINSKY, *Geschichtlicher Glaube*, 296 n. 17.

<sup>110</sup> QUINSKY, *Geschichtlicher Glaube*, p. 143ss. Pour un « programme de travail » commun à Vatican II voir ADPF, *Fonds Chenu*, s.n., lettre d'Elchinger à Chenu, 8/9/1962. Pour la prise en considération d'autres niveaux de réception voir Archives diocésaines de l'archevêché de Strasbourg [désormais ADAS], *Fonds Elchinger*, lettre de Chenu à Elchinger, 22/10/1962: « Tous sont d'accord en principe sur le rôle du témoignage des laïcs dans et pour les travaux du Concile; mais que le travail conciliaire rende efficace ce rôle, sous peine d'en rester à un bla-bla-bla qui ne créerait qu'une fausse 'bonne conscience' ». – Mes remerciements vont à l'archiviste, M. Jean-Louis ENGEL. Pour le rôle du *sensus fidelium* voir en outre Peter WALTER, *Bischöfliche Leitungsvollmacht – Ohnmacht des Gottesvolkes? Zum «sensus fidelium» als verdrängtem locus theologicus*, dans Thomas HERKERT, Karsten KREUTZER, Tobias LICHT (dir.), «...in voller Wahrheit Vorsteher des Volkes». *Der Dienst des Bischofs im Wandel*, Freiburg, 2007, p. 23-40.



Malgré une évidente réception de la théologie du Saulchoir par le coadjuteur de Strasbourg — ou mieux : une influence mutuelle entre Congar et Elchinger<sup>111</sup> —, ce dernier consulte plusieurs théologiens et est un esprit indépendant et créatif. Outre le contenu de ses nombreuses interventions *in aula* souvent très substantielles<sup>112</sup>, c'est sa méthode de travail qui permet une réception du renouveau théologique représenté par Chenu et Congar. À partir de 1963 et inspiré par la dynamique conciliaire, il sera au centre d'un groupe d'évêques de la région apostolique Est — M<sup>gr</sup> Claude Flusin (St-Claude), M<sup>gr</sup> Pierre Boillon (Verdun), M<sup>gr</sup> Paul Joseph Schmitt (Metz) — qui prépare et prolonge les discussions conciliaires lors de rencontres avec des théologiens. Congar y joue un rôle de premier plan, de même que son confrère du Saulchoir, Henri-Marie Féret, qui a formé dans les années préconciliaires, avec Chenu et Congar, un « trio » dont le but était de situer la théologie et l'Église dans l'histoire<sup>113</sup>. Dans le parcours conciliaire de Congar, M<sup>gr</sup> Elchinger représente au mieux ce type d'évêques qui assument leur responsabilité doctrinale et pastorale dans le dialogue ouvert. Ceci dit, ce genre de dialogue théologique dépend largement des relations personnelles. Dans la période préparatoire, ce dialogue n'est pas structuré de manière institutionnelle mais se développe au fur et à mesure selon la conjoncture conciliaire. Dans ce sens-là, on peut l'inscrire dans la dynamique spirituelle de Vatican II. S'il en est une expression pour ainsi dire *affective* dès la phase préparatoire, il n'en devient un facteur *effectif* qu'après l'ouverture du concile. La réception du renouveau théologique au niveau épiscopal reste en quelque sorte en attente tant que les évêques diocésains ne peuvent pas assumer leur magistère collégial comme pères conciliaires.

### *Le C<sup>al</sup> Julius Döpfner – une réception au-delà des frontières*

Sans pouvoir faire un inventaire complet d'une éventuelle réception de la théologie de Congar et de Chenu par les évêques et théologiens étrangers<sup>114</sup>, mentionnons néanmoins deux épisodes révélateurs de la réputation de Congar au-delà des frontières linguistiques, et qui préparent une réception très complexe dès le début du concile. D'un côté, et pour des raisons qu'on pourrait soupçonner d'être tactiques, le C<sup>al</sup> Döpfner<sup>115</sup>, dans une conversation avec le C<sup>al</sup> Ottaviani, de qui il

<sup>111</sup> Voir la question pertinente de Bernard XIBAUT, *Mgr Léon-Arthur Elchinger*, p. 139 : « Qui est au service de qui? ».

<sup>112</sup> Alain MICHEL, *L'épiscopat français au deuxième Concile du Vatican*, dans *Le deuxième Concile du Vatican (1959-1965). Actes du colloque organisé par l'École française de Rome en collaboration avec l'Université de Lille III, l'Istituto per le scienze religiose de Bologne et le Dipartimento di studi storici del Medioevo e dell'età contemporanea de l'Università di Roma-La Sapienza (Rome 28-30 mai 1986)*, Rome, 1989, p. 281-296 (284).

<sup>113</sup> Michael QUINSKY, *Henri-Marie Féret OP (1904-1992). Auf dem Weg zu einer «konkreten und geschichtlichen Theologie»*, dans Thomas EGGENSBERGER, Ulrich ENGEL (dir.), *Mutig in die Zukunft. Dominikanische Beiträge zum Vaticanum II*, Leipzig, 2007, p. 65-103.

<sup>114</sup> Voir par exemple la lettre de Thomas Challis OP, théologien d'un évêque australien et qui demande des conseils de lecture : ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0165, lettre de Challis à Congar, 26/5/1962.

<sup>115</sup> Vu le rôle du C<sup>al</sup> Döpfner (Berlin, puis Munich), ses archives conciliaires sont de première importance. On se référera aux excellents travaux de Guido TREFFLER, Peter PFISTER (dir.), *Erzbischöfliches Archiv München. Julius Kardinal Döpfner. Archivinventar der Dokumente zum Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzil (Schriften des Archivs des Erzbistums München und Freising, 6)*, Regensburg, 2004; Guido TREFFLER (dir.), *Julius Kardinal Döpfner. Konzilstagebücher, Briefe und Notizen zum Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzil*

veut obtenir la nomination de Rahner comme membre de la CT, qualifie ce dernier comme « weniger avantgardistisch<sup>116</sup> » que Lubac et Congar, déjà membres de la dite commission. D'un autre côté, dès le 31 janvier 1962, le cardinal munichois propose au même Ottaviani une refonte du *schema de deposito fidei pure custodiendo* afin de « continuer et compléter » dans l'idée même de Vatican II ce qu'il y « di realmente buono » dans le *schema*. En son nom et en celui du C<sup>al</sup> Frings, Döpfner propose un « nuovo redattore », et plus exactement, on pourrait « pensare per esempio al P. Congar, a Mons. Gerard Philipps (sic), o al Rev. Carlo Colombo<sup>117</sup> ». Dans un rapport sur les travaux de la Commission centrale soumis à la conférence épiscopale allemande lors de sa réunion du 28 au 30 août 1962, Döpfner ne mentionne pas Congar, mais quelques remarques laissent deviner qu'une réception de sa théologie pourrait aider à donner au concile la direction que Döpfner souhaite<sup>118</sup>. Quelques semaines plus tard, Congar lui communiquera le texte du *message au monde* dont Chenu est à l'origine<sup>119</sup>. En matière ecclésiologique, les « relations franco-allemandes » deviendront, au-delà des différentes accentuations des théologiens des deux bords du Rhin, un facteur de réception de premier ordre.

### DES THÉOLOGIENS À LA THÉOLOGIE

Après avoir présenté quelques enjeux théologiques à travers des relations personnelles de Congar, il convient maintenant de « glisser des théologiens à la théologie ». La question *de membris* est particulièrement instructive quant aux enjeux sous-jacents des réceptions — et des non-réceptions — de la période préparatoire. Au croisement des périodes préparatoire et conciliaire, le *message au monde* montre comment les conditions d'une réception changent.

### DE MEMBRIS : UNE QUESTION DISPUTÉE

#### Des impasses révélatrices d'une réception complexe

Dans les années préconciliaires, la discussion sur la notion de membres de l'Église (*de membris*) était un « vrai champ de bataille<sup>120</sup> ». Sujet de divergences graves à

(Schriften des Archives des Erzbistums München und Freising, 9), Regensburg, 2006 (par la suite, je mentionnerai le nombre d'inventaire selon les indications dans Guido TREFFLER, *Einleitung*, dans TREFFLER, Peter PFISTER (dir.), *Erzbischöfliches Archiv München*, p. 15-25, 25: Erzbischöfliches Archiv München [désormais EAM], Kardinal-Döpfner-Archiv, Konzilsakten n°).

<sup>116</sup> Je cite cette notice qui se trouve dans les archives de l'archevêché de Berlin (DAB V/7-11-3) d'après Treffler (dir.), *Julius Kardinal Döpfner*, p. 124s.

<sup>117</sup> EAM, Kardinal-Döpfner-Archiv, Konzilsakten 73, Entwurf und Ausfertigung eines Schreibens Döpfners an Alfredo Ottaviani, 31/1/1962.

<sup>118</sup> EAM, Kardinal-Döpfner-Archiv, Konzilsakten 2807, Notizen Döpfners über den Verlauf der Sitzung der Fuldaer Bischofskonferenz..., 28-30/8/1962 (voir notamment ses caractérisations des différents groupes d'influence ainsi que son jugement sur le *de Ecclesia*).

<sup>119</sup> EAM, Kardinal-Döpfner-Archiv, Konzilsakten 1192, Schreiben von P. Yves Congar OP, Strassburg, Frankreich, an Döpfner, 21/9/1962 et la réponse de Döpfner, 1197, Schreiben Döpfners an P. Yves Congar OP, Strassburg, Frankreich, 26/9/1962.

<sup>120</sup> CONGAR, « *Lumen gentium* » n° 7, *L'Église corps mystique du Christ vu au terme de huit siècles d'histoire de la théologie du corps mystique*, dans CONGAR, *Le Concile de Vatican II*, p. 137-161, 156.

l'intérieur de la CT<sup>121</sup> et donnant lieu à des contradictions dans le *schema* présenté au concile<sup>122</sup>, la question de *membris* est particulièrement instructive dans la mesure où elle « met en jeu la nature même du Concile<sup>123</sup> ». En cela même, la discussion autour de *de membris* permet de saisir quelques enjeux des travaux préparatoires, mais plus encore quelques limites d'une éventuelle réception de la théologie du renouveau et leurs implications par la CT<sup>124</sup>.

La discussion sur le chapitre de *membris* du *Schema de Ecclesia* montre non seulement l'hétérogénéité de la CT, mais aussi les divergences entre, d'une part, les forces dirigeantes de cette Commission, et, d'autre part, le secrétariat Bea, ainsi que quelques cardinaux influents de la Commission centrale tel que le C<sup>al</sup> Liénart, en contact avec Congar<sup>125</sup>. Ceci mène à une conception étroite de la méthode et de

<sup>121</sup> Gagnebet en parle rapidement dans une lettre à Congar, tout en évoquant que le schéma préparé par Lattanzi est « loin de nous satisfaire » (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0124, lettre de Gagnebet à Congar, 3/3/1961). Congar écrira après le concile que pendant les « travaux de la Commission théologique préparatoire (...) et malgré la présence très active du P. S. Tromp, à ces travaux, la question de *membris* telle qu'elle était formulée dans l'encyclique avait paru problématique et sa solution sans issue » (Yves CONGAR, *D'une « ecclésiologie en gestation » à Lumen gentium* (Chap. I et II), dans ID., *Le Concile de Vatican II*, p. 123-136, 128); Heribert SCHAUF, *Der Werdegang der Aussagen über die Kirchengliedschaft in den Arbeiten der Vorbereitenden Theologischen Kommission des Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzils*, in Walter BRANDMÜLLER, Herbert IMMENKÖTTER, Erwin ISELOH (dir.), *Ecclesia militans. Studien zur Konzilien- und Reformationgeschichte. Remigius Bäumer zum 70. Geburtstag gewidmet*, T. 1: *Zur Konziliengeschichte*, Paderborn, 1988, p. 491-551 (Schauf publie plusieurs documents inédits, sans cependant documenter les discussions dans la sous-commission de *Ecclesia*); ALBERTO, « *Corpus Suum mystice constituit* », p. 140. Voir aussi INDELICATO, *Difendere la dottrina*, p. 244s.; BURIGANA, *Progetto dogmatico*, p. 169s.

<sup>122</sup> Francesco GEREMIA, *I primi due capitoli della «Lumen gentium». Genesi ed elaborazione del testo conciliaire*, Rome, 1971, p. 31. Voir aussi p. 26-32 pour les « diversità di concezioni ecclesiologicalhe », dont la question de *De membris* est, selon lui, un exemple parmi d'autres.

<sup>123</sup> Christoph THEOBALD, *La réception du concile Vatican II*, T. 1: *Accéder à la source*, Paris, 2009, p. 213.

<sup>124</sup> Suite aux divergences mentionnées, le 12 avril 1961, Tromp présente un texte qui servira de base de travail pour la session de la sous-commission de *Ecclesia* du 6 au 15 juillet 1961 et de la session plénière de la CT du 18 au 30 septembre 1961. Tandis que pour Tromp, le chapitre de *membris* est l'occasion d'exprimer l'identité entre le Corps Mystique et Église, Congar plaide pour une approche plus différenciée, entre autres pour ne pas décevoir les attentes catholiques et œcuméniques déclenchées par l'annonce du concile par Jean XXIII. Dans son *votum*, il regrette que l'encyclique *Mystici Corporis* dise peu de choses sur la relation des non-catholiques à l'Église, sur leur salut éternel, et, dans le cas des baptisés, sur leur vie chrétienne. Dans ce sens-là, l'encyclique, pour lui, est insuffisante et si Vatican II ne dira pas plus sur ce qu'il appelle « nos frères séparés », il prévoit: « Maxima esset deceptio, intra et extra Ecclesiam! » (CSVII, *Fonds Philips*, 0123, Yves CONGAR, *De Ecclesia, Quomodo exponi exprimique possit nexus inter homines extra Ecclesiam visibilem extantes et Corpus Mysticum*, 18 mai 1961, p. 1). Comme Philips et Lécuyer, il souhaite exprimer à la fois l'unique réalité fondamentale de l'Église Corps du Christ et une certaine dualité de ses dimensions spirituelles et institutionnelles qui sont certes intimement liées. Pour Philips voir ALBERTO, « *Corpus Suum mystice constituit* », p. 144s.; concernant le de *membris* voir aussi l'accord exprimé dans une recension rédigée par Congar en 1936 du livre de Gérard PHILIPS, *De heilige Kerk* (De wetenschappelijke Bibliotheek), Malines, 1935 dans ID., *Sainte Église*, p. 489.; pour Lécuyer voir le compte rendu de Leclercq du 25 mai 1961 dans *Konzilstagebuch Sebastian Tromp*, I/2, p. 857: « Lécuyer = cf. Congar, de duplici sensu vocis Ecclesiae – Sed (Tromp) prasens caput supponit praecedentia, et quidem quod Ecclesia iuridica est corpus mysticum ».

<sup>125</sup> Voir les documents dans CSVII, *Fonds Philips* et KOMONCHAK, *Le combat*, p. 325ss. ainsi que le résumé d'une discussion avec Schauf, qui défend les thèses de Tromp, dans *Diary Willebrands*, 243s. (8 décembre 1960). Voir aussi un texte envoyé aux cardinaux Liénart et Richaud: « *De Ecclesia. De*

l'horizon théologiques, excluant les renouveaux œcuméniques et exégétiques<sup>126</sup>. Les enjeux théologiques sont de taille : ainsi, le problème d'une insuffisante distinction entre non-baptisés et baptisés non-catholiques implique bien évidemment toutes les questions œcuméniques — et par là même ecclésiologiques — auxquelles Congar s'est consacré depuis les années 1930<sup>127</sup>. Quant à elle, la question de *membris* implique toutes les questions liées à la compréhension du salut et de son rapport avec l'histoire concrète dont l'Église fait partie.

Les propositions de son *notum* sur le *de membris* sont un exemple parlant de la manière dont Congar essaie de traduire son « programme de travail conciliaire » de 1959 dans un processus de rédaction de textes dont il croit ne pouvoir apporter que quelques modifications<sup>128</sup>. Pour dépasser les étroitesse, la notion de « Corps mystique », au centre des textes préparatoires qu'il commente en 1961, devrait être comprise dans le sens de « sacramentum salutis, 'mysterium' salutis ». Pour Congar, le « perfectum sacramentum universalis salutis hominum, et etiam mundi » est constitué « in Ecclesia catholica Romana<sup>129</sup> ». Dans ce sens, Congar plaide pour une prise en considération des recherches ecclésiologiques récentes et mentionne à titre d'exemple la notion de « Ursakrament<sup>130</sup> ». En général, on devrait se servir de

membris. Beaucoup d'évêques avaient demandé qu'on précisât mieux la question des membres. Le schéma préparé par la C.T. contient de très bonnes choses, mais le P. Tromp s'est refusé à ce qu'on allât plus loin que la lettre, insatisfaisante, de l'encyclique *Mystici Corporis*. Il eût pourtant été facile de le faire. J'avais proposé — et j'avais l'accord total du P. Gagnebet et d'autres membres —, de dire: *Ecclesia et Corpus Mysticum sunt idem subjectum. Sed exprimunt subjectum hoc sub diversis aspectibus et conceptibus: conceptus 'Corporis Christi' et conceptus 'Ecclesiae' non eadem omnino dicunt, quod satis patet...* Ainsi, on ne peut parler exactement de la même manière de membres du Christ et de membres de l'Église: car Église dit une visibilité que ne dit pas Corps mystique... (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0183, Yves CONGAR, *Quelques points qui semblent encore insatisfaisants dans les Schemata préparés par la Commission Théologique*, p. 1 – exemplaire avec la mention « envoyé le 28 avril 1962, avec une lettre personnelle, au card. Liénart et au card. Richaud. Au Ier ai joint mon *notum* du 8 mars 62; au second, le rapport Laurentin sur la propriété»). Pour la position mentionnée de Gagnebet voir aussi ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0089, lettre de Congar à Carlo Colombo, 27/4/1962.

<sup>126</sup> Ainsi, Congar regrette l'absence d'exégètes dans la sous-commission de *Ecclesia*: «Doleo exegetas, quantum scio (!), vocem suam non satis misisse in nostra Submissione, specialiter cum ageretur de ipsa (biblica) notione Corporis Christi» (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0324, Yves CONGAR, *Animadversiones in Cap. De Ecclesiae natura*, 2/3/1962, p. 7). De manière semblable dans ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0326, Yves CONGAR, *Animadversiones membrorum et consultorum in constitutionem de matrimonio et familia*, 22/2/1962, p. 2. Après la première période conciliaire, les évêques argentins reprennent à leur compte la définition congarienne de la théologie œcuménique dans leurs *emendationes* sur le *De oecumenismo* (AS II/5, p. 912-918, 914).

<sup>127</sup> Voir à ce sujet Monika Maria WOLFF, *Gott und Mensch. Ein Beitrag Yves Congars zum ökumenischen Dialog*, Frankfurt a.M., 1990; Hervé LEGRAND, *Yves Congar (1904-1995). Une passion pour l'unité. Note sur ses intuitions et son herméneutique œcuménique*, à l'occasion du centenaire de sa naissance, dans *Nouvelle Revue théologique*, 126, (2004), p. 529-554.

<sup>128</sup> Ce qui explique sans doute des remarques ironiques de Laurentin («... ne sont *reapse* membres de l'Église que ceux qui paient le dénier de culte. La Vierge, les saints, les enfants encore incapables de professer la foi, les catéchumènes sont exclus...»), qui se demande pourquoi Congar est si prudent (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0280, lettre de Laurentin à Congar, 30/8/1961).

<sup>129</sup> CONGAR, *Quomodo*, p. 8. Pour ce document dans le contexte des travaux de la Commission théologique, voir ALBERTO, «*Corpus Suum mystice constituit*», p. 145ss.

<sup>130</sup> Sans le mentionner, Congar renvoie, en utilisant ce terme, à Otto SEMMELROTH, *Die Kirche als Ursakrament*, Frankfurt, 1953. Voir pour une mise en contexte Günther WASSILOWSKY, *Universales*

la notion du « Corpus mysticum » d'une manière très responsable, « magis pastoralis, minus iuridicus<sup>131</sup> ». On trouve aussi dans son *voluntum* ce qu'on peut considérer comme une clé de sa pensée ecclésiologique, à savoir le lien évoqué entre l'histoire du salut et la vie ecclésiale dans l'histoire du monde<sup>132</sup>. Dans ce but, Congar se contente de se rallier à une proposition de Schmaus qui ouvre un horizon théologique à partir duquel une réception progressive, *par le Concile* et à sa suite, des acquis de la théologie du renouveau ne sera au moins pas exclue<sup>133</sup>. Ceci dit, la réception *par Congar* des ouvertures rendues possibles dès le début du concile élargiront son ecclésiologie en direction vers une théologie des religions non-chrétiennes<sup>134</sup>.

### Réceptions et non-réceptions, re-réceptions et nouveaux horizons de réception

Le *voluntum de membris* de Congar a-t-il influencé la suite des travaux de la sous-commission de *Ecclesia* et à travers elle ceux de la CT ? Vu l'histoire de la période préparatoire, la vraie question semble être ailleurs, et elle est composée de plusieurs aspects. Premièrement, si les divergences au sein de la CT permettaient à ses membres de se rendre compte des différents enjeux de la question de *membris*, le texte résultant de ce type de processus d'élaboration risquait fortement de juxtaposer des positions plutôt que les intégrer dans une vue d'ensemble. Il risquait par là de ne pas être à la hauteur de ces enjeux. Or, sur le plan herméneutique, on peut postuler que chaque théologien, si radical soit-il (qu'on pense au théologien de Washington, plutôt isolé

*Heilssakrament Kirche. Karl Rahners Beitrag zur Ekklesiologie des II. Vatikanums* (Innsbrucker theologische Studien, 59), Innsbruck, 2001, p. 158-164. À la p. 163s., Wasilowsky constate un consensus scientifique en ce qui concerne la compréhension de l'Église comme sacrement entre Volk, Ratzinger, Schmaus, de Lubac, Congar, Schillebeeckx et Smulders, mais renvoie aux tâches de clarifier les raisons pour lesquelles ces théologiens ont adopté cette notion et d'examiner les différentes lignes de réception mutuelle. En ce qui concerne Congar, la raison peut bel et bien être cherchée dans le diagnostic formulé dès 1935 et repris en 1959. Hervé LEGRAND (*Relecture*, p. 64s.) démontre pourquoi le concile n'a pas adopté le terme *Ursakrament* mais est plutôt parti de l'horizon eschatologique et missionnaire pour démontrer la sacramentalité de l'Église.

<sup>131</sup> CONGAR, *Quomodo*, 18/5/1961, p. 9. On peut aussi y trouver, à l'état embryonnaire, les contributions congariennes aux décrets UR et AG, ce qui renvoie à la tâche d'une herméneutique conciliaire soucieuse d'établir des liens entre les différents documents conciliaires.

<sup>132</sup> «Optime manifestarentur arctae relationes existentes inter quaestionem de membris Ecclesiae et quaestionem de salute hominum. Ecclesia poneretur Salutis Arca unica, in quantum sacramentum salutis exstat. Bene monstrarentur homines salvos fieri participando bonis Novi Foederis, quorum Ecclesia Arca est et velut depositum» (p. 9); cf. aussi l'*emendatio* de Weber (AS II/1, 295) et ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0334, Yves CONGAR, *Animadversiones in Cap. de Oecumenismo*, 3/3/1962, p. 2.

<sup>133</sup> CONGAR, *Quomodo*, p. 9.

<sup>134</sup> Voir ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0088, lettre de Congar à Goossens, 11/4/1963. Dans cette lettre au secrétaire de la conférence épiscopale du Congo, Congar exprime son malaise face aux insuffisances d'une théologie du *voluntum Ecclesiae* et «pose la question» si l'on ne pourrait pas penser «à un pur salut eschatologique et au rattachement, ou plutôt à la pleine incorporation à l'Église eschatologique, au Royaume, des hommes à qui Dieu rendrait alors selon leurs œuvres, sans qu'ils aient été membres, d'aucune façon, de l'Égliseterrestre». Pour les ouvertures rendues possibles par l'ecclésiologie de Vatican II voir p.e. Claude GEFFRÉ, *Unterwegs zu einer «interreligiösen Theologie»*, dans ZMR, 91 (2007), p. 16-28, 17.

dans la CT, Joseph C. Fenton<sup>135</sup>!) renvoie à un enjeu qui mérite au moins d'être compris comme tel. Face aux horizons de questions en jeu, l'ecclésiologie de Congar renvoie à la perspective à la fois universelle et toujours concrète dans laquelle des pistes de réponses doivent être abordées : la question du salut concerne l'*histoire* avec un « h » minuscule autant que l'*Histoire* avec un « H » majuscule. Deuxièmement, même si ce texte de la CT avait été approuvé par le concile, le manque d'intégration des différents points de vue dans une vue d'ensemble aurait pu se révéler comme une base insuffisamment large pour répondre aux attentes des évêques du monde entier qui se préparaient au concile. Troisièmement, on voit une certaine *re-réception* par Congar des idées centrales des documents de la commission : il s'efforce d'intégrer ses propres *desiderata* théologiques non pas en premier lieu en critiquant ce que, à la suite de *Mystici Corporis*, la théologie magistérielle affirme, mais en démontrant que ces affirmations sont insuffisantes et demandent à être complétées par d'autres perspectives. Il cite notamment la dimension anthropologique et sotériologique présente dans l'œuvre paulinienne et la dimension exprimée par la notion si chère à Congar de *Peuple de Dieu*<sup>136</sup>.

<sup>135</sup> R. SCOTT APPLEBY, John H. HAAS, *The Last Supernaturalists. Fenton, Connell and the Threat of Catholic Indifferentism*, dans *U.S. Catholic Historian*, 13 (1995), p. 23-48, 308.; cf. aussi SCHELKENS et SKIRA (dir.) *Council diaries of Metropolitan Maxim Hermaniuk*, (29 septembre 1961). Son ecclésiologie exclusiviste semble être le contraire des horizons ouverts p. ex. par CONGAR, *Vaste monde, ma paroisse. Vérité et dimensions du salut*, Paris, 1959 (pour la question du salut voir aussi CONGAR, *Le Concile, l'Église et «les Autres»*, dans *Lumière et Vie*, 45 (1960), p. 69-92). Fenton et Congar partagent au moins une intuition fondamentale, même si la réalisation est très différente, à savoir l'unité des différents chapitres du de Ecclesia. Ainsi, Fenton affirme: «On that point certainly the old boy (Congar, MQ) is quite right.» En continuant, il évoque un problème fondamental: «It is very difficult to tell exactly how the old fellow intended to divide his material.» (CSVII, *Journal Fenton* 28 décembre 1960). Les commentaires de Fenton cités ici portent sur CONGAR, *Votum de Laicis*. Fenton reproche Congar de n'être bienveillant qu'avec les «frères séparés»: «Charity within the Church, love of members for each other; this is certainly not the strong point of Congar or his group. They advocate all kinds of gentleness for "separated brethren," but they seethe with uncharity towards the Catholics they regard as "integristes."» (CSVII, *Journal Fenton*, 28 décembre 1960). Cette position peut bel et bien être perçue comme caricaturale quand on voit ce que Congar a dit et écrit ailleurs à propos de la catholicité, et aussi dans la mesure où Congar s'efforce, après Vatican II, de comprendre les intentions des «intégristes» (voir seulement Yves CONGAR, *La crise dans l'Église et Mgr Lefebvre*, Paris, 1975). Si en plus, Fenton insinue que Congar est moderniste, cela montre l'enjeu d'une réception ou non-réception de la théologie de Chenu et de Congar: loin d'avoir trouvé des réponses suffisantes, pendant la période préparatoire, les questions non résolues de ce que Chenu appelle dès 1931 une «crise de croissance» (Marie-Dominique CHENU, *Le sens et les leçons d'une crise religieuse*, dans *La Vie intellectuelle*, 13 (10 décembre 1931), p. 356-380, 358). Pour le rapport entre modernisme et Vatican II, voir Jürgen METTEPENNINGEN, *Nouvelle théologie – New Theology. Inheritor of Modernism, Precursor of Vatican II*, London, 2010; pour l'interprétation théologique voir aussi la discussion entre Otto WEISS et Friedrich Wilhelm GRAF, documentée dans Hubert WOLF (dir.), *Antimodernismus und Modernismus in der katholischen Kirche. Beiträge zum theologieggeschichtlichen Vorfeld des II. Vatikanums*, Paderborn, 1998.

<sup>136</sup> Après le concile, Congar attribue un progrès décisif dans la période en question non pas à ses propres initiatives, mais à l'introduction par Philips, qui —selon lui sous l'inspiration du dogmaticien de Trèves, Ignaz Backes— avait œuvré pour l'introduction de l'idée du peuple de Dieu dans le *De Ecclesia* (CONGAR, *D'une «ecclésiologie en gestation»*, p. 129 —voir aussi les *vota* de Backes du 24 janvier 1961 et 25 février 1961 (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0230 et 0231). Retraçant à partir de là l'histoire de rédaction de *Lumen gentium* après 1962, Congar regrette certes que ses «efforts pour obtenir 1. un plus large exposé du peuple de Dieu dans l'*histoire du salut*; 2. l'introduction d'un paragraphe sur les Juifs



## Horizons de réception au carrefour des périodes préparatoires et conciliaires

Si dans la période préparatoire la question de *membra* est dominée par Tromp et par sa concurrence avec Bea, l'entrée en jeu des évêques diocésains — préluée par la présence de plusieurs cardinaux et évêques dans la Commission Centrale<sup>137</sup> — ne sera efficace qu'avec le début du concile. Si Gagnebet regrettera bientôt un « véritable *hiatus* entre commissions conciliaires et commissions préparatoires<sup>138</sup> », Congar, contrairement à des théologiens comme Karl Rahner et Joseph Ratzinger, au début du concile, ne veut pas substituer les *schemata* préparés<sup>139</sup>. Or, pendant la première session, les évêques diocésains ont pu prendre le rôle qui leur revenait dans un concile. Ainsi, M<sup>gr</sup> Elchinger s'est fait remarquer en outre par son intervention du 1<sup>er</sup> décembre 1962 comparant *l'Église d'hier à l'Église d'aujourd'hui*<sup>140</sup>. En contact étroit avec le coadjuteur de Strasbourg, Congar participe à une rencontre des évêques de la région apostolique Est au mont Ste-Odile du 22 au 25 janvier 1963. Quand ce groupe s'appête à discuter la notion et la mission de l'Église, Congar reprend ses arguments développés pendant les travaux préparatoires<sup>141</sup>. Mais la discussion va vers de nouvelles perspectives : suite à une suggestion de M<sup>gr</sup> Boillon de « mettre la perspective du Corps du Christ dans le devenir », Congar y voit un moyen d'exprimer la manière dont les non-catholiques de tous les temps sont membres du Corps du Christ : « Les protestants ou les païens de bonne foi seront du Corps du Christ eschatologiquement<sup>142</sup> » de même que « tous les justes de tous les temps<sup>143</sup> ». Ainsi, il espère retrouver le sens de la Tradition et

dans le chapitre» n'aient que «très modestement aboutis», mais se félicite que Vatican II ait largement dépassé les limites de *Mystici Corporis*. C'est dans ce contexte d'une vision de l'histoire du salut qu'il renvoie d'ailleurs au caractère «non exclusif» du fameux *subsistit in* (p. 133s.). Pour ses propositions concernant un paragraphe sur les juifs voir CONGAR, *Animadversiones in Cap. de Oecumenismo*, p. 20.

<sup>137</sup> Voir les encouragements du C<sup>al</sup> Richaud : ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0175, lettre de Richaud à Congar, 7/12/1961. Le 16 avril 1962, Congar écrit à Witte qu'«il est probable que la Commission centrale, ou les évêques, y introduisent des changements, surtout après avoir pris connaissance des textes du Secrétariat : ce que nous n'avons jamais fait...» (YC 0332). Voir YC 0477, lettre de Hurley à Congar, 12/4/1962 (l'archevêque de Durban était membre de la Commission centrale).

<sup>138</sup> FOUILLOUX, *Du rôle des théologiens*, p. 308.

<sup>139</sup> En fait, il se demande s'il n'y a pas «un peu d'esprit de revanche chez ces théologiens qui ne faisaient pas partie de la CT préparatoire»; en plus, il craint qu'en cas de refus des schémas préparés, c'est à nouveau la CT qui sera responsable de les refaire : «c.-à-d. qu'on demande à Brutus de corriger Brutus...» (CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, 1/181 (4 novembre 1962). Ici, il faudrait nuancer le jugement de VON TEUFFENBACH, *Konzilstagebuch Tromp*, p. 65.

<sup>140</sup> AS 1/4, 147s., Pour le rôle de cette intervention voir Gérard PHILIPS, *Die Geschichte der dogmatischen Konstitution über die Kirche «Lumen gentium»*, dans *LThK.E*, 1 (1966), p. 139-155, 140.

<sup>141</sup> En outre, contrairement à ce qu'il identifie comme position de Tromp, l'Église est certes le Corps mystique du Christ, «mais pas sous le même état, pas sous le même angle» (ADAS, *Fonds Elchinger*, Discussion avec le P. Congar, Mont Sainte-Odile 24 janvier 1963, p. 12). Pour cet argument dans les discussions *in aula* voir l'intervention du C<sup>al</sup>, mise en contexte par les interventions des cardinaux Frings, Döpfner et Bea, ainsi que celle de Mgr Blanchet de l'*Institut Catholique de Paris*, cf. Gérard PHILIPS, *Die Geschichte der dogmatischen Konstitution*, 140.

<sup>142</sup> PHILIPS, *Die Geschichte der dogmatischen Konstitution*, p. 14.

<sup>143</sup> Congar commente ici les mots déjà mentionnés dans sa recension de 1937 : «Le Père Tromp note bien 'viatoribus Corpus Christi est Ecclesia Catholica Roman'. Viatoribus. Mais cela a l'inconvénient de trop couper l'Église terrestre de l'Église céleste. C'est contre cela que j'avais écrit mon article 'Ecclesia



développe, à partir de ce ressourcement, une notion eschatologique et christologique de l'Église<sup>144</sup>. Comme le montre l'échange approuvé par les évêques entre Congar et Féret, également présent à cette rencontre, dans une ecclésiologie pareille se rejoignent ressourcement et renouveau, tradition et contemporanéité, doctrine et pastorale<sup>145</sup>. Si l'un des résultats de la rencontre alsacienne, la *Progression proposée pour un schéma d'Église*, publié dans les actes conciliaires<sup>146</sup>, n'a pas joué un rôle primordial dans les travaux des commissions romaines et des réunions allemandes<sup>147</sup>, on y trouve néanmoins un certain nombre d'aspects théologiques désormais inscrits dans *Lumen gentium*<sup>148</sup>. La question de *membris*, quant à elle, est reprise dans une perspective nouvelle, c.-à-d. pour décrire de manière positive le rôle des fidèles à l'intérieur de l'Église qui est communion, plutôt que pour expliquer de manière négative qui n'est pas membre de l'Église. Si le chemin vers LG n'est pas achevé, le christocentrisme des énoncés sur les membres de l'Église dans la *Progression*, lu à la lumière de l'ensemble de ce texte, prépare néanmoins les horizons ouverts grâce à la constitution sur l'Église<sup>149</sup>.

ab Abel, l'Église comportant tous les justes de tous les temps (...) Alors le Père Tromp dit bien 'viatoribus'. C'est embêtant parce que la grande idée traditionnelle, on peut dire unanime au point de vue tradition, c'est que le Corps du Christ justement est une unité complète de la terre et du ciel et de tous les justes». L'article mentionné est Yves CONGAR, *Ecclesia ab Abel*, dans Heinrich ELFERS, Fritz HOFMANN (dir.), *Abhandlungen über Theologie und Kirche* (Mélanges Karl Adam), Düsseldorf, Patmos, 1952, p. 79-108. Dans le *schema* présenté le 30 septembre 1963 (AS II/2,1, p. 215-281), on reprend et précise le motif cher à Congar de l'homme comme *image de Dieu* (Col 1,15): «Haec congregatio iustorum a Sanctis Patribus Ecclesia universalis vocatur, 'quae ab Abel iusto ad ultimum electum' colligitur» (voir p. 216), et l'on renvoie à l'article mentionné de Congar (p. 222). Chenu approuve cette perspective (ADPF, *Fonds Chenu*, s.n., Marie-Dominique CHENU, *Schema De Ecclesia*. Observation générale, s.d. (2<sup>ème</sup> session)) qu'on retrouve finalement dans LG 2.

<sup>144</sup> En renvoyant à Thomas d'Aquin, Congar évoque dans un aperçu des grandes stations de l'ecclésiologie: «Donc on envisageait le Corps Mystique sous l'angle de l'influence du Christ, pas du tout sous l'angle 'tromprien' et (celui de) Pie XII de la visibilité, de l'organisation» (ADAS, *Fonds Elchinger*, Discussion avec le P. Congar, Mont Sainte-Odile 24 janvier 1963, p. 23); pour l'encyclique *Mystici Corporis* voir p. 24s.

<sup>145</sup> Voir aussi ADAS, *Fonds Elchinger*, Suggestions du R. P. Féret. Mont Sainte-Odile, vendredi 25 janvier 1963, p. 1.

<sup>146</sup> AS II/1, p. 503-508 (*Remarques générales*) et 508-518 (*Progression proposée pour un schéma de l'Église*). Il est intéressant de voir que Hanjo Sauer et Günther Wassilowsky attribuent ce texte à Congar (voir avec des informations supplémentaires QUINSKY, *Geschichtlicher Glaube*, p. 313 n. 105).

<sup>147</sup> ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0486, lettre de Volk à Congar, 4/1/1963. Pour la réunion des évêques allemands du 5 et 6 février 1963, voir p. ex. EAM, Kardinal-Döpfner-Archiv, Konzilsakten 445 (lettre de Mgr Elchinger) et 3432 (notices de Döpfner). De son côté, Piet Smulders demande s'il peut participer à la réunion au mont Sainte-Odile afin de mieux pouvoir conseiller les évêques d'Indonésie (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0483, lettre de Smulders à Congar, 14/1/1963).

<sup>148</sup> QUINSKY, *Geschichtlicher Glaube*, p. 318-327.

<sup>149</sup> Voir AS, p. 514s. en lien avec p. 508. Si le texte est moins marqué par la notion de l'Église-sacrement, il inscrit l'Église dans l'histoire du salut et par là dans l'histoire humaine. Voir aussi *l'animadversio* d'Elchinger AS II/1, 656-661, 656s. La note datée «2<sup>ème</sup> session» de ADPF, *Fonds Chenu*, Marie-Dominique CHENU, *Schema De Ecclesia*. De *membris Ecclesiae* (cap. I, n. 9), soutenant la position du C<sup>al</sup> Bea, veut situer la question dans la perspective de la grâce et du sacrement «telle que la présente le N.T.». Dans une autre note datée «2<sup>ème</sup> session», Chenu se réjouit des améliorations du schéma remanié et prélude ainsi les lignes directrices de *Lumen gentium*.

Dans la mesure où les réunions comme celle du mont Sainte-Odile font partie de la « deuxième préparation<sup>150</sup> » de Vatican II, elles se font pour ainsi dire au croisement des phases préconciliaires et conciliaires<sup>151</sup>. Pour sa part, la rencontre alsacienne est emblématique en tant que concertation dialogale qui peut, grâce à la dynamique conciliaire, recevoir ce qui a germé ecclésialement et ecclésiologiquement depuis les années 1930. Dans les engagements multiples de Congar, les efforts de Philips, plus en phase avec les travaux préconciliaires, et les tentatives des allemands, prônant un nouveau départ, trouvent un certain lien, même si la *Progression* en tant que telle n'a pas trop influencé directement les travaux romains, allemands et louvanistes<sup>152</sup>. Mais la réception magistérielles des acquis du renouveau se fait désormais dans une dynamique conciliaire soucieuse d'aller au-delà ce qu'on a pu considérer comme des étroitesse de la réception de *Mystici Corporis*. En ce qui concerne la question disputée, Congar dira après Vatican II que le concile, dans *Lumen gentium* 7 en lien avec le *subsistit* de *Lumen gentium* 8, ne reprend pas l'identification stricte entre Église catholique et Corps mystique à l'instar de l'encyclique de Pie XII et « évite de dire que seuls les catholiques sont membres du Corps mystique<sup>153</sup> ». De son côté, Alois Grillmeier analyse dans une note introductive de son commentaire de LG 14<sup>154</sup> la question de *membris* et démontre la signification dogmatique du remplacement du terme même par les expressions *incorporari* et *coniunctum esse*. Le fait que ce changement résulte de l'« idée de base d'une 'Ecclesia signum salutis universale'<sup>155</sup> » révèle — au-delà d'une remarque sans doute un peu patriotique de Grillmeier<sup>156</sup> — une parallèle théologique avec le *votum* de Congar de 1961<sup>157</sup>. Ne voulant pas pousser plus loin la recherche

<sup>150</sup> Jan GROOTAERS, *Le concile se joue à l'entracte. La « seconde préparation » et ses adversaires*, dans ALBERIGO et FOUILLOUX (dir.), *Histoire du Concile Vatican II (1959-1965)*, T. 2, p. 421-614.

<sup>151</sup> C'est ce qui montre p. ex. un texte fort intéressant de Congar qui essaie de traduire les acquis de la théologie du renouveau, mais aussi les questions débattues lors de la période préparatoire, dans une conception dynamique, missionnaire, historique, divino-humaine dialectique, eschatologique (pour ne nommer que les aspects les plus importants) de l'Église (ADPF, *Fonds Congar*, YC 0684, Yves CONGAR, Remarques et propos sur la proposition du Mystère de l'Église, 1/2/1963).

<sup>152</sup> Coïncidence du calendrier, mais fait extrêmement significatif, Congar arrive au Mont-Ste-Odile en rentrant d'une rencontre à Leuven. Avant même la fin de la réunion alsacienne, il part en direction de Mayence, où M<sup>re</sup> Volk organise les travaux allemands pour une refonte du *schema de Ecclesia* en vue de la réunion de la conférence épiscopale (QUISINSKY, *Geschichtlicher Glaube*, 315). Pour les tentatives d'harmonisation des différentes alternatives, voir surtout ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0487, lettre de Congar à Daniélou du 27/1/1963 où Congar affirme qu'il voit « mal le texte actuel du De membris passer au concile...!!! ».

<sup>153</sup> CONGAR, « *Lumen gentium* » n° 7, p. 160. Voir aussi CONGAR, *D'une « ecclésiologie en gestation »*, p. 134. ID., *Situation ecclésiologique au moment de « Ecclesiam suam » et passage à une Église dans l'itinéraire des hommes*, dans ID., *Le concile de Vatican II*, p. 7-32, 18.

<sup>154</sup> Alois GRILLMEIER, *Kommentar zum Zweiten Kapitel*, dans *LThK.E*, 1 (1966), p. 176-207, 194-198.

<sup>155</sup> GRILLMEIER, *Kommentar zum Zweiten Kapitel*, p. 198.

<sup>156</sup> Selon le jésuite allemand, la proposition de remplacer le terme de *membris* a été faite dès la réunion de la conférence épiscopale allemande du mois de février 1963, préparé par les ecclésiologues autour de M<sup>re</sup> Volk, Rahner, Grillmeier et Semmelroth.

<sup>157</sup> CONGAR, *Quomodo*. Ce changement de terminologie coïncide avec la tendance de la pensée de Congar, comme le suggère Hamer en commentant le *votum* du secrétariat Bea sur le *de membris*: « vous verrez combien nous vous avons 'exploité'. Un mot simplement: je crois que le terme de 'membre' dans le débat théologique actuel engendre plus de confusion que de lumière. C'est une raison pour

concernant les auteurs de tel ou tel changement intervenu entre les *schemata* du 12 avril 1963 et du 3 juillet 1964, qu'il suffise de résumer que le changement de mise en perspective et l'ouverture d'un nouvel horizon de réponse aide à débloquent la question *de membris* au sein d'un mouvement plus global de réceptions multiples<sup>158</sup>. Les requêtes des théologiens conciliaires français et allemands se rejoignent dans une symbiose qui n'exclut pas les différentes accentuations pendant le concile. Certes, c'est encore une autre histoire que celle de retracer les différentes influences sur le schéma *de Ecclesia* jusqu'à la version finale de *Lumen gentium* et d'interpréter la constitution dogmatique à la lumière des horizons ouverts. Comme l'exemple *de membris* renvoie à la multitude des influences directes et indirectes, textuelles et idéelles, personnelles et structurelles, on se gardera aussi de voir l'histoire de *Lumen gentium* comme une réception pure et simple de la théologie de Congar<sup>159</sup>. Cependant, l'exemple alsacien donne droit à conclure que dans ce processus de dialogue et d'apprentissage que sera la réception par Vatican II de la théologie du renouveau, la théologie de Congar, mais aussi celle de Chenu, pouvait contribuer à exprimer et conceptualiser, favoriser et dynamiser un renouveau dogmatique et pastoral. Pour mesurer le chemin parcouru entre la préparation et la fin du concile, laissons la parole à Congar. Pendant la préparation d'une « conférence Lacordaire » donnée le 8 mai 1962 à Dijon à l'invitation de Féret, il note :

Entre le Concile tel qu'il se prépare et le concile tel qu'on le souhaite, (...) il existe une tension. Et cela fait partie de la condition terrestre de l'Église, qui est militante, non seulement dans le monde, mais à l'intérieur d'elle-même. Sa vie vérifie un régime de tensions fécondes<sup>160</sup>.

En ce sens, les tensions lors de l'élaboration des textes conciliaires ont été fécondes, car la vision du concile,

celle de *Lumen gentium*, a été résolument d'histoire du salut, finalisée par l'eschatologie. Et cela, pas seulement parce que le concile a assumé le meilleur des études bibliques, patristiques, théologiques des trente années qui l'ont précédé, mais parce qu'il a été un concile pastoral ; doctrinal, certes, mais dans une visée pastorale et mené par des pasteurs. Ceux-ci ne pouvaient se suffire de répéter des thèses purement spéculatives, exprimant un pur 'en

l'abandonner, provisoirement du moins» (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0188, lettre de Hamer à Congar, 2/4/1961). En ce qui concerne le motif de l'incorporation, voir aussi les emendations de Weber et Elchinger (AS II/I, 296).

<sup>158</sup> Rien que pour le chapitre en question, les Relations de singulis numeris, dans AS III/I, p. 170-178, en part. 174-178 impliquent un élargissement considérable d'horizon.

<sup>159</sup> Voir pour ses regrets au sujet d'une prise en considération insuffisante de ses intuitions p. ex. dans ID., *D'une «ecclésiologiqueen gestation»*, p. 133: même s'il se félicite de voir équilibrée la notion de Corps du Christ par celle de peuple de Dieu. S'il a réussi en outre à introduire, avec Chenu et M<sup>gr</sup> Marty ainsi qu'avec le soutien de M<sup>gr</sup> Elchinger et d'autres évêques, l'idée du peuple messianique dans LG 9 (p. 135), Congar exprime aussi ses regrets que ce terme, déjà introduit dans la constitution pastorale et dans le décret sur les missions, y a disparu lors des nombreux remaniements de ces documents.

<sup>160</sup> Voir ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0363, s.d., notices de préparation. La conférence, apparemment tenue en plusieurs lieux, et qui explicite cette idée centrale en la situant dans un tour d'horizon fort suggestif, est publiée dans Yves CONGAR, *Le Concile, ses préparations, ses espoirs* (Cahier Lacordaire, 16), Dijon, 1962. Congar a gardé les extraits des journaux qui témoignent de l'intérêt porté à sa conférence (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0354, 0358, 0365, 0367).

soi' ; ils parlaient de l'Église concrètement engagée dans le monde et l'histoire des hommes. C'est seulement en rejoignant ce monde et cette histoire que le christianisme serait événement dynamique<sup>161</sup>.

Et si Congar précise que cette dynamique du christianisme est, selon *Gaudium et spes* 11 et 40, marquée par la réciprocité avec le monde<sup>162</sup>, on retrouve là une intuition fondamentale, qu'il partage avec Chenu et qui reste un défi, consistant à mettre l'ecclésiologie au service de la foi<sup>163</sup>.

## LE MESSAGE AU MONDE

### UNE RÉCEPTION DU RENOUVEAU QUI PERMET UNE « DEUXIÈME PRÉPARATION » DE VATICAN II

Le changement de perspective et l'ouverture des horizons que nous venons de diagnostiquer pourraient aussi être qualifiés de « conversion<sup>164</sup> ». Il montre que la réception conciliaire de la théologie de Congar et de Chenu, préparée pendant la période préconciliaire, est à la fois une *condition* pour une nouvelle mise en relation entre dogme et pastorale et son *expression*. Si la théologie de Chenu n'a pas eu une influence directe sur les travaux préparatoires, une initiative du dominicain, vivement soutenue par son confrère Congar, mène au premier document conciliaire, le *message au monde*, qui exprime au mieux le passage de la période préconciliaire à la période conciliaire. Pour ce document, l'idée de Chenu est venue après la lecture des *schemata* préconciliaires qu'il juge décevants. Préparé avec le soutien de Congar, Rahner, Küng, Elchinger, Weber et d'autres<sup>165</sup>, le message n'aurait sans doute pas été possible sans la réaction négative envers les *schemata* préparés — autrement dit : leur non-réception. En revanche, malgré des changements par rapport au texte initial, la pensée préconciliaire de Chenu, à travers ce message, permet aux pères conciliaires une première expression de la réception de cette nouvelle relation entre doctrine et pastorale rendue possible par Jean XXIII<sup>166</sup>. Quant aux contributions salicétaines au concile, elles seront amplifiées et approfondies par la dynamique conciliaire<sup>167</sup>.

<sup>161</sup> CONGAR, *Situation ecclésiologique au moment de «Ecclesiam suam»*, p. 27s.

<sup>162</sup> CONGAR, *Situation ecclésiologique au moment de «Ecclesiam suam»*, p. 29s. Voir pour quelques réflexions, inspirées en outre par la théologie de Lieven BOEVE, reprenant cette idée : Michael QUINSKY, *Can Tradition (Not) Change? Truth in the History between God and Humanity*, dans *ETL*, 86 (2010), p. 107-136.

<sup>163</sup> Hervé LEGRAND, *Le statut pluridisciplinaire de l'ecclésiologie. Une requête de «Lumen Gentium» 8: «l'Église, réalité complexe, faite d'un double élément humain et divin»*, dans *Science et Esprit*, 59 (2007), p. 333-349, 334.

<sup>164</sup> LEGRAND, *Relecture*, p. 55.

<sup>165</sup> André DUVAL, *Le message au monde*, dans FOUILLOUX (dir.), *Vatican II commence...*, p. 105-118; Gilles ROUTHIER, *Note de recherche. Un tournant de Vatican II*, dans *EHR*, 64 (1998), p. 71-79; Peter HÜNERMANN, *Der Text. Werden – Gestalt – Bedeutung. Eine hermeneutische Reflexion*, dans *LThK.Vat II*, 5 (2006), p. 5-101, 35s.

<sup>166</sup> Marie-Dominique CHENU, *Le message du Concile au monde (1962)*, dans CHENU, *La Parole de Dieu*, T. 2, p. 639-645, 640.

<sup>167</sup> Voir en outre la liste que Congar donne de sa collaboration aux textes conciliaires.

Avec le *message au monde*, dont l'histoire laisse apparaître d'ailleurs à la fois les convergences et divergences entre Chenu et Congar<sup>168</sup>, le concile se met « à la dimension du monde », contribuant ainsi à une nouvelle relation entre les dimensions pastorale et dogmatique. Le *message* renvoie aux interférences entre plusieurs niveaux du dialogue, comme par exemple celles des discussions très complexes et détaillées au sein des commissions dont Congar a désormais l'habitude et des visions apportées par Chenu. En ouvrant un nouvel horizon, le *message au monde* a contribué à libérer le passage vers ce qui allait devenir, entre autres, une réception de la théologie de Chenu et Congar par le concile. Cependant, il fait apparaître aussi des divergences au sein de la majorité conciliaire qui s'apprête à recevoir les acquis de la théologie du renouveau, ce qui prélude des conflits autour de la réception de l'*aggiornamento* après Vatican II<sup>169</sup>.

#### AU-DELÀ DE CHENU ET CONGAR – ENJEUX HERMÉNEUTIQUES D'UNE RÉCEPTION (OU NON-RÉCEPTION) MISE EN CONTEXTE

Si « le fond de la question [de l'incroyance] est ecclésiologique », comme Congar l'avait affirmé en 1959, pour les théologiens du Saulchoir, l'horizon de la réponse doit correspondre à la mission de l'Église: être dans le monde et pour le monde afin de témoigner de l'Évangile en actes et en paroles, vivre avec le monde dans et de la grâce du Dieu-Créateur et Sauveur devenu homme et présent dans l'Esprit Saint. Pour Chenu et Congar, l'*aggiornamento* de Vatican II sera effectivement à la hauteur de la vocation divino-humaine de l'Église. Or les morceaux de mosaïque que constituent les cheminements de la période préparatoire vers cet horizon montrent la complexité des enjeux *personnels*, *idéels* et *structurels*. Récapitulons quelques éléments d'analyse. Pour Congar, la période préparatoire était une période charnière qui lui a montré à la fois les insuffisances et la nécessité de structures institutionnelles. Loin de contester la présence de la théologie intransigeante<sup>170</sup>, son souci était certes l'ouverture de nouveaux horizons, mais ceci en trouvant des moyens d'intégration du plus grand nombre possible. Pour Chenu, la période préparatoire s'est déroulée loin de la vie ecclésiale et de la réflexion théologique à la hauteur du temps. Avant de répondre d'une manière ou d'une autre à la question d'une éventuelle réception ou non-réception de la théologie de Congar et de Chenu, il convient de mesurer la portée de la complexité de cette période. Sur le plan *personnel*, nous avons vu que les acteurs d'une éventuelle réception ou non-réception sont marqués par des

<sup>168</sup> QUINSKY, *Les PP. Chenu, Congar et Féret engagés*, p. 155ss.

<sup>169</sup> Si CHENU, *Le message*, interprète le message selon quelques-unes des grandes lignes de sa théologie, d'autres acteurs conciliaires issus du renouveau théologique sont plus réticents, p. ex. Henri de LUBAC, *Carnets du Concile*, I/104 (10 octobre 1962). Pour les divergences de plus en plus remarquables entre Congar et de Lubac, voir QUINSKY, *Aggiornamento – aber wie?*

<sup>170</sup> Sur le rôle de la théologie trop facilement appelée « intransigeante », on verra les réflexions de Congar après une discussion avec Hans Küng, qui est d'une toute autre mentalité que celle-ci: CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, I/465ss. (12 octobre 1963). Après avoir affirmé que « l'Église catholique est faite aussi d'Ottaviani et de (...) Tromp », Congar passe en revue ses activités depuis les années 1930. S'il ne nie pas la valeur de l'impatience d'un Küng, personnellement, il croit « profondément aux délais, aux étapes nécessaires ». Vu le « chemin fait en trente ans », il se réjouit que, grâce à Vatican II, « ma conviction était vraie ».

concepts théologiques qu'ils avaient élaborés pendant plusieurs décennies. Sur le plan *idéel*, les différentes positions ecclésiologiques renvoient à des questions disputées qui surgissent à l'intérieur des conceptualisations ecclésiologiques, ainsi que dans leurs rencontres; en même temps, l'interconnexion des différentes questions devient de plus en plus cruciale. Au plan *structurel*, la période en question était marquée par le fonctionnement concret des institutions et organismes chargés de préparer le concile. L'exemple de *membris* a montré que les structures préconciliaires pouvaient certes être un lieu d'échange théologique. Cependant, pour avoir pu être un véritable dialogue, cet échange semble avoir été *structurellement* trop limité par les *personnes* et *idées* représentées à titres divers à l'intérieur de la CT, de même que les différents lieux de débat étaient trop séparés les uns des autres<sup>171</sup>. Ainsi, dans son ensemble, ce dialogue n'était pas à la hauteur de cette « nouvelle conscience herméneutique fondée sur l'*unité intrinsèque de la doctrine et de la pastorale* » inaugurée par Jean XXIII.

On pourrait se demander si, dans la période préparatoire, la réception se fait en partie par ce qui au début n'est qu'une réaction, mais qui par là même introduit *ex negativo* quelques sujets brûlants dans le débat. Évidemment, on constate l'absence d'une certaine base commune, non pas tellement au niveau des réponses, mais déjà au niveau de l'horizon des questions. Or, les *schematas* préparés étaient marqués non seulement par leur texte, mais aussi par des sujets non explicités et des sujets absents. La déroute des *schematas* préparés pendant la période conciliaire semble trouver une explication dans leur réception insuffisante de la vie de l'Église qui résulte de leur enracinement insuffisant dans l'ensemble de l'Église<sup>172</sup>.

Ceci dit, on aurait tort d'accuser la CT ou ses membres de toutes les insuffisances de la période préparatoire. Certes, les commissions conciliaires, en revanche, représentaient mieux les différents courants au sein de l'Église et pouvaient se baser sur un processus de dialogue beaucoup plus développé que leurs corollaires préconciliaires. Mais avant tout, on peut se demander, si, en général, dans l'herméneutique conciliaire, on a déjà suffisamment mesuré le *statut épistémologique des commissions dans un événement conciliaire*<sup>173</sup>. Car pour l'herméneutique conciliaire, il faut prendre

<sup>171</sup> Pour les enjeux de cette séparation ou non-séparation voir Giuseppe RUGGIERI, *Tempi dei dibattiti, tempo del concilio*, dans Maria Teresa FATTORI, Alberto MELLONI (dir.), *L'evento e le decisioni. Studi sulle dinamiche del concilio Vaticano II* (Testi e ricerche di scienze religiose, nuova serie, 20), Bologna, 1997, p. 441-463 (444).

<sup>172</sup> Pour cette réflexion voir aussi LEGRAND, *Relecture*, p. 80.

<sup>173</sup> Si les réflexions herméneutiques de Peter Hünermann méritent certainement une discussion approfondie, elles ont l'avantage de sensibiliser pour (à) la dimension textuelle de Vatican II, Hünermann qualifiant le concile dans son ensemble d'« atelier de texte (Textwerkstatt) » (HÜNERMANN, *Der Text*, 99s). Voir aussi HÜNERMANN, *Redécouvrir le « texte » passé inaperçu. À propos de l'herméneutique du concile*, dans Alberto MELLONI, Christoph THEOBALD (dir.), *Vatican II. Un avenir oublié*, Paris, 2005, p. 229-258; HÜNERMANN, *Il « testo »*. *Un complemento all'ermeneutica del Vaticano II*, dans Alberto MELLONI, Giuseppe RUGGIERI (dir.), *Chi ha paura del Vaticano II*, Rome, 2009, p. 85-105. Des études de cas qui se consacrent au rôle des textes conciliaires pour la vie de l'Église « sur le terrain » (voir p.e. Michael QUISINSKY, *Seelsorge zwischen Buchstabe und Geist des Konzils. Das II. Vatikanum im Spiegel der Zeitschrift „Lebendige Seelsorge“*, dans *Kirchengeschichte – Frömmigkeitsgeschichte – Landesgeschichte. Eine Festschrift für Barbara Henze*, Remscheid, 2008, p. 201-219) pourraient être utiles dans les discussions autour de l'herméneutique de Hünermann (voir à ce sujet p. ex. Christoph THEOBALD, *Mise en perspective. Transmettre l'histoire de Vatican II ouflet commenter ses textes? Un débat nouveau sur la réception du Concile*, dans THEOBALD (dir.), *Vatican II sous le regard*, p. 3-23, 8-15 et Massimo



en considération que les documents conciliaires ne sont pas seulement des *textes de compromis*, comme on l'a souvent dit, mais des *textes de commissions*. Les questions de la rédaction et de la nature de ces textes sont ainsi situées dans la contingence la plus humaine de l'événement de la foi et dans la foi qu'est le concile.<sup>174</sup> Pour les membres des commissions, le défi n'était rien de moins que de rédiger des textes qui sont une réception *de* la vie ecclésiale, et qui par là même permettent une réception *par* la vie ecclésiale. Pour les recherches sur le concile et son interprétation, il faut alors se poser sur le plan des *structures* les questions de la légitimité canonique et ecclésiologique des commissions, sur le plan des *personnes* leur représentativité théologique et régionale, et sur le plan *idéal* leur profondeur spirituelle et pastorale. Sur le plan *herméneutique* enfin, il faut se demander quels sont les rapports entre, d'un côté, les textes conciliaires rédigés par une commission, et, d'un autre côté, la réalité divine vers laquelle les textes tendent, ainsi que la réalité humaine qu'elles expriment<sup>175</sup>, l'expression de la foi étant soumise aux grandeurs et faiblesses de la condition humaine<sup>176</sup>. Dans sa théologie de la conciliarité, Congar insistait sur la différence entre l'événement conciliaire en tant que tel et d'autres formes de représentativité, ce qui aide aussi à mettre en lumière les chances et les limites de la période préparatoire. L'expérience conciliaire à Vatican II a rappelé la dimension synodale de la vie de l'Église en général. Au-delà d'un clivage entre théologie intransigeante ou de renouveau, les insuffisances de la période préparatoire sont ainsi une expression d'un problème encore plus profond, à savoir celui du rapport entre continuité et discontinuité qui n'existe en fait pas de manière abstraite. Si Vatican II a pu être l'occasion d'une dispute autour du rapport entre continuité et discontinuité, l'examen de sa période préparatoire peut alors faire surgir la question de savoir si le meilleur moyen de permettre à la continuité de la foi de s'épanouir n'est pas de créer des forums qui permettent de prendre en considération

FAGGIOLI, *Die kulturelle und politische Relevanz des II. Vatikanischen Konzils als konstitutiver Faktor der Interpretation*, dans Peter HÜNERMANN (dir.), *Exkommunikation oder Kommunikation? Der Weg der Kirche nach dem II. Vatikanum und die Pius-Brüder*, Freiburg, 2009, p. 153-174).

<sup>174</sup> Un exemple parmi beaucoup: dans une lettre au secrétaire de la conférence épiscopale du Congo, Congar décrit la refonte du *schema de Ecclesia* sous la direction de Gérard Philips tout en décrivant les inconvénients d'un procédé pareil pourtant nécessaire (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0088, lettre de Congar à Goossens, 11/4/1963). Goossens répond en disant qu'il a bien utilisé les documents envoyés par Congar, mais a «cru plus prudent et délicat» de ne pas indiquer la source (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0478).

<sup>175</sup> Ceci en prolongement de l'interprétation par Gilles ROUTHIER, *Orientamenti per lo studio del Vaticano II come fatto di ricezione*, dans FATTORI et MELLONI (dir.), *L'evento*, p. 465-499, 478 de quelques écrits ecclésiologiques de Congar.

<sup>176</sup> Ainsi, Ottaviani, après avoir demandé «abstinere a subtilioribus», clôt une discussion sur la question «De membris» en invoquant la limite de temps qui est dépassé et à une fatigue générale (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0283, Sebastian TROMP, *Relatio de Consensu secundo plenario Commissionis Theologicae habito diebus 13-16 Febr. 1961 in aedibus Vaticanis*, juin 1961, p. 5). De son côté, Witte demande à Congar de préparer un petit texte, suite à une remarque de ce dernier, sur «la nature profonde de l'unité des choses divines» (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0333, lettre de Witte à Congar, 10/4/1962) (cf. Eph 4,1-6). Congar répond que c'est «en effet très difficile de l'introduire dans un texte qui a été conçu autrement». Il renvoie à deux corrections faites grâce à Lécuyer et Salverri qui «donnent une petite satisfaction à ma demande. En tous cas, je n'ai absolument ni le temps, ni la liberté d'esprit, d'improviser, en si peu de temps, un texte que vous recevrez après la bataille...» (ADPF, *Fonds conciliaire Congar*, YC 0332, lettre de Congar à Witte, 16/4/1962).



les discontinuités inévitables des expressions de la foi<sup>177</sup>. Evidemment, de tels forums doivent être spirituellement nourris par la Parole de Dieu et par cette contemporanéité eschatologique même qui est la Révélation de Dieu en Jésus Christ dans le Saint Esprit. D'un point de vue intransigeant, il s'agissait, dans la période préparatoire et au-delà, d'éviter toute sorte de discontinuité. Dans la perspective de Congar et de Chenu, la vraie discontinuité consiste cependant juste dans cette attitude intransigeante qui, pour défendre ses buts concrets, rompait avec la continuité de quelques principes fondateurs de la vie et de la pensée chrétiennes au profit d'une ecclésiologie réduite à la préhistoire et l'interprétation de Vatican I. L'exemple de Chenu et de Congar avant et pendant le concile révèle donc une situation paradoxale : d'un côté, un organe institutionnel comme l'est une commission conciliaire a besoin d'une dynamique spirituelle qui la dépasse pour traduire une réception de la vie ecclésiale dans des textes, d'un autre côté, une dynamique spirituelle, en l'occurrence conciliaire, a besoin d'organes institutionnels tels que les commissions pour traduire une réception dans des textes. Bien entendu, à la lumière de ce paradoxe apparent, l'opposition entre *lettre* et *esprit* apparaît comme une alternative aussi fautive que celle entre *continuité* et *discontinuité*. Le concile, lui, loin de vouloir être la réception d'une seule école de théologie, était par sa nature même, dans ses réceptions multiples, ce cadre dans lequel, selon Benoît XVI, un discours a pu voir le jour où l'ensemble est plus que les différentes parties et où les contributions individuelles ont créé une « dynamique de l'ensemble<sup>178</sup> ». Toujours selon l'ancien *peritus*, c'est dans l'ensemble de la communion rassemblée qu'est né quelque chose de nouveau que personne ne peut réclamer pour soi-même. Dans la mesure où les structures dans la période préparatoire n'étaient pas à la hauteur de cela, elles posent la question de structures adéquates qui, en dehors d'un événement conciliaire, permettent une articulation entre toutes les continuités et discontinuités qui font légitimement partie de la foi dans l'histoire.

Le défi que cela constitue pour la pensée chrétienne ne concerne pas seulement des expressions théologiques, mais la notion même de théologie<sup>179</sup>. On se rappelle

<sup>177</sup> Au sujet de la théologie du *schema* préparé, HÜNERMANN, *Theologischer Kommentar zur dogmatischen Konstitution über die Kirche Lumen gentium*, dans *HThK. Vat II*, 2 (2004), p. 263-582, 297, commente ses insuffisances : « Hier macht sich offensichtlich bemerkbar, dass die mittelalterlichen begrifflichen Differenzierungen nie in moderne Begrifflichkeit übertragen wurden—etwa in die Begrifflichkeiten der modernen Institutionenlehre—, um so die alten Unterscheidungen in ihrer Bedeutung verständlich zu machen ».

<sup>178</sup> Voir Joseph RATZINGER, *Geleitwort*, dans Thomas WEILER, *Volk Gottes – Leib Christi. Die Ekklesiologie Joseph Ratzingers und ihr Einfluss auf das Zweiten Vatikanische Konzil. Mit einem Geleitwort von Joseph Kardinal Ratzinger*, Mainz, 1997, p. XIII-XIV (XIII) : « ... wie vielschichtig der Werdegang der Konzilstexte gewesen ist. Der Einsatz vieler einzelner auf den verschiedensten Ebenen gehörte dazu. In solchem Zusammenwirken reifte eine Aussage, in der das Ganze wesentlich mehr ist als die einzelnen Teile und das Besondere jedes einzelnen eingesenkt ist in eine ihn überschreitende Dynamik des Ganzen, die auch sein Eigenes verwandelt und in eine nicht von ihm kommende Synthese hineingeformt hat. Nach dem Beitrag eines einzelnen zu suchen, bedeutet zugleich, dieses Dramas ansichtig zu werden, in dem das Mühen des einzelnen nicht umsonst ist, aber doch im Miteinander der versammelten Gemeinschaft Neues wird, das keiner für sich reklamieren kann. »

<sup>179</sup> Voir par exemple FOUILLOUX, *Du rôle des théologiens*, p. 303, pour la position de Gagnebet, pour qui « l'enseignement conciliaire appartient de droit à la théologie comme science, c.-à-d. comme explicitation rationnelles des positions du magistère. »

que pour Chenu, la théologie est certes une science de la foi, mais avant tout une science de la *foi* dans sa réalité divino-humaine<sup>180</sup>. Pour Congar et Chenu, la réponse ecclésiologique à la question posée par Congar en 1959 devrait donc, dans toutes ses dimensions, correspondre à l'axiome *fides non terminatur ad enuntiabile sed ad rem*<sup>181</sup>, c.-à-d., dans une certaine mesure, à cette histoire entre Dieu et les hommes qui commence avec la Création et qui est destinée au plérôme. La réception même apparaît par là comme une dimension essentielle de la vie de l'Église, dans le sens où celle-ci est la transmission d'une foi vivante<sup>182</sup>. Aussi n'est-il peut-être pas un hasard que Congar, ce théologien du concile, fut aussi un théologien de la *Tradition* et, surtout après Vatican II, de la *réception*<sup>183</sup>. C'est ainsi que Vatican II est un concile à la fois dogmatique et pastoral, donnant un sens renouvelé à ces deux termes. La chance se dessine de cette interférence permanente, qui ne fait que commencer, d'une « traduction » mutuelle de la pastorale en doctrine et de la doctrine en pastorale. L'Église est, comme le dira le concile, le sacrement — signe et instrument — qui, par la grâce, représente et accompagne cette histoire entre Dieu et les hommes dans le monde. C'est en s'ouvrant à cet horizon fondamental, ayant sa source dans l'Incarnation du Fils et sa présence réelle dans l'assistance du Saint-Esprit, que l'*aggiornamento* de Vatican II a mis en œuvre une relation interdépendante de la doctrine et de la pastorale<sup>184</sup>. Le but de cette mise en relation permanente entre doctrine et pastorale n'est autre que de proposer et d'engendrer, accompagner et nourrir la foi. C'est par là même que l'Église, réunie en concile, peut mettre en œuvre une réponse au problème de l'incroyance diagnostiqué par Chenu et Congar dès les années 1930. Il est vrai qu'après le concile, la question de l'incroyance et de la foi s'est transformée et radicalisée. La réception de Vatican II se jouera dans un tout autre contexte que la réception *par* Vatican II. Que l'Église puisse penser et vivre, au sujet des nouvelles et anciennes questions concernant *la foi*, des horizons de réponses et des ouvertures de perspectives, n'est pas le moindre résultat de ce concile « à la dimension du monde ».

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<sup>180</sup> Marie-Dominique CHENU, *La théologie, est-elle une science?*, Paris, 1957.

<sup>181</sup> Dès ses premiers écrits (voir Marie-Dominique CHENU, *Contribution à l'histoire du traité de la foi. Commentaire historique de la Ila Ilae, q. 1, a. 1* [1923], dans CHENU, *La parole de Dieu*, T. 1, p. 31-50, 49), cette phrase est un *leitmotiv* dans la pensée chenusienne.

<sup>182</sup> ROUTHIER, *Orientamenti*, p. 465.

<sup>183</sup> À ce sujet, il est intéressant de mettre en rapport Yves CONGAR, *La Tradition et les traditions*, T. 1: *Essai historique*, Paris, 1960 et T. 2: *Essai théologique*, Paris, 1963 avec ID., *La réception comme réalité ecclésiologique*, dans RSPT, 56 (1972), p. 369-403.

<sup>184</sup> Michel FÉDOU, *Le Concile Vatican II. Un enjeu d'interprétation*, dans THEOBALD (dir.), *Vatican II sous le regard*, p. 137-157, 154. Si à p. 148, Fédou renvoie à juste titre au rôle un peu négligé de l'Esprit Saint dans les textes de Vatican II en comparaison avec l'évocation de Jésus Christ, il convient de rappeler que pour la théologie de Congar et, en outre grâce à elle, pour la théologie catholique dans son ensemble, Vatican II était l'occasion d'une ouverture pneumatologique. Ainsi, l'article Yves CONGAR, *La pneumatologie dans la théologie catholique*, dans RSPT, 51 (1967), p. 250-258, se lit comme un immense programme de travail postconciliaire – qui fait surgir comme non moindre question si l'*esprit du Concile* ne devrait pas en premier lieu être cherché et pensé dans sa relation à l'*Esprit Saint*!

## FROM MOVEMENT TO DOCUMENT

### VATICAN II'S RECEPTION OF THE PRECONCILIAR CATHOLIC ACTION MOVEMENT

#### INTRODUCTION

For many within the Roman Catholic Church, the Second Vatican Council is regarded as a crucial, in the eyes of some even revolutionary, step inaugurating the importance of the laity within the Church. In this regard, Vatican II is—and rightly so—understood as a moment of renewal. However, this openness towards the vast majority of Church members did not come unexpectedly, but was well prepared for during the preconciliar era on both the official and the non-official levels of the Roman Catholic Church. The present contribution wishes to examine precisely the transition from the preconciliar lay movements (with a focus on the Catholic Action movement) into the conciliar realm. We will trace the continuities and discontinuities of a pre-conciliar lay movement—Catholic Action—and present the different editorial steps of the document, indirectly presenting the opinions on the nature of Catholic Action shifted into it by the draft's authors.

The article consists of two parts: within the first part, we will present the development of Catholic Action from its Italian origins to the beginning of Vatican II. Giving this general overview, we would like to see the regional peculiarities and different types of the movement as well. In the second part, the relevant sections on Catholic Action found within two subsequent drafts of *Apostolicam Actuositatem* are presented, followed by an analysis of the final version of the document.<sup>1</sup>

#### FROM LAY MOVEMENTS TO A CONCILIAR DOCUMENT

*Apostolicam Actuositatem*, the Second Vatican Council's "Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity", was anticipated and prepared by several pre-conciliar lay movements of the twentieth century or even earlier. The Germany based Kolping movement,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The most significant studies and commentaries on the Decree *Apostolicam Actuositatem* are those by Franz HENGSBACH, *Das Konzilsdekret über das Apostolat der Laien*, Paderborn, 1967; Achille GLORIEUX, *Histoire du décret 'Apostolicam Actuositatem' sur l'apostolat des laïcs*, in Yves CONGAR, *L'apostolat des laïcs*, Paris, 1970; Guido BAUSENHART, *Theologischer Kommentar zum Dekret über das Apostolat der Laien Apostolicam Actuositatem*, in Peter HÜNERMANN and Bernd Jochen HILBERATH (eds.), *Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzil*, Vol. 4, Freiburg, 2005, p. 5-123.

<sup>2</sup> Christian FELDMANN, *Adolph Kolping*, Freiburg, 1991; and Hans Joachim KRACHT, *Priester, Pädagoge, Publizist im Dienst christlicher Sozialreform. Leben und Werken aus den Quellen dargestellt*, Freiburg, 1993. For the broader context and background, see Herbert HÖMIG (ed.), *Katholiken und Gewerkschaftsbewegung 1890-1945*, Paderborn, 2003.

the Legion of Mary,<sup>3</sup> the Young Christian Workers,<sup>4</sup> the Catholic Action and *Pax Romana*<sup>5</sup> all provided the background, directly or indirectly, for the drafting of the document. Within the broader framework of the relationship between the pre-existing lay movements and Vatican II's *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, the role of Catholic Action was by far the most important aspect of the various developments that took place.<sup>6</sup>

### QU'EST-CE QUE L'ACTION CATHOLIQUE ?

"What is Catholic Action?"<sup>7</sup> Yves Marie Congar asked himself this question in a subtitle of his famous *Lay People in the Church*.<sup>8</sup> He was not the only one who posed this set of questions: is it an organization or a movement? Is it a national or international phenomenon? As one attempts to define its nature or to delimit its boundaries, we can see immediately that it is a complex question of the pre-conciliar period, now brought into the conciliar arena.

The first thing one should remark when talking about Catholic Action is that it cannot be regarded as a monolith. The movement itself has a rich, interesting internal plurality, both on the diachronic (understood differently from age to age) and the regional level (differing from country to country).<sup>9</sup> The term "Catholic Action", almost exclusively written with capital letters, was often used to designate the whole range of Catholic lay activities within the Catholic Church, but seemingly covers a whole range of organizations and activities. However, from the beginning of the 1920s, one notices a more limited use, and the term already began to refer to a more concrete, national, Italian lay organization under the control of the hierarchy.<sup>10</sup> In this regard, one should distinguish between 'catholic action' and 'Catholic Action'.<sup>11</sup> Also, in order to tackle the diachronic aspect, we will be using a timeline. This is necessary because, for instance, in Italy the activity of lay movements developed gradually in the last three decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and without the separation of the different steps the issue becomes more unclear instead of clarified. Thus, the first section of our timeline incorporates roughly the period from 1870 —the closing

<sup>3</sup> Robert BRADSHAW, *Frank Duff. Founder of the Legion of Mary*, Bay Shore, NY, 1991.

<sup>4</sup> Michael de la BÉDOYÈRE, *The Cardijn Story. A Study of the Life of Monseigneur Joseph Cardijn and the Young Christian Workers' Movement which he Founded*, London, 1958.

<sup>5</sup> See the somewhat outdated book by Guillaume DE WECK, *Pax Romana (1887-1921-1946): histoire de la confédération internationale des étudiants catholiques*, Fribourg, 1946.

<sup>6</sup> Felix RAABE, *Die Katholiken und ihre Verbände in der Zeit der Weimarer Republik*, in Erwin GATZ (ed.), *Geschichte des Kirchlichen Lebens in den Deutschsprachigen Ländern seit dem Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts*, Freiburg-Basel-Wien, 2008, p. 210.

<sup>7</sup> Yves CONGAR, *Lay People in the Church*, Westminster, MA, 1967, p. 362.

<sup>8</sup> Jeremiah NEWMAN, *What is Catholic Action*, Dublin, 1958.

<sup>9</sup> D. J. GEANEY, *Catholic Action*, in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Farmington Hills, 2003, p. 277.

<sup>10</sup> John POLLARD, *The Participation of the Laity in the Apostolate of the Hierarchy: Pius XI's Attempt to Impose the Italian Model of Catholic Action on the Worldwide Church in the 1930s'* (Lecture presented at KADOC, Leuven, Febr. 14, 2010), p. 4.

<sup>11</sup> It is crucial to distinct the two as it will be explained later on because English does not make any distinction. On this way the clarifications become unclear. The fact that the language plays a role in the understanding of c(C)atholic a(A)ction is confirmed by Gianfranco POGGI, *Catholic Action in Italy*, Stanford, CA, 1967, p. 21.

of Vatican I—<sup>12</sup> to the pontificate of Pius XI (1921). Nevertheless, in these early years, the activities of Catholic laity were not yet called “Catholic Action”. It was not a structured organization yet, so, logically its name was not and should not be written with capitals, as it is often done. In the second stage (from the beginning of Pope Pius XI's reign to the 1930s), various lay organizations were developing in almost every European country due to a complex historical-political process. In Italy, somewhere between the second and the third decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a national lay organization was born under the name of *Azione Cattolica Italiana* (ACI). From this time on, it became a more specific lay organization, and as such, its name must be written with capitals.

In a third stage (from the 1930s up until 1945) we can speak about Catholic Action as both a national and an international lay organization, due to the activity of the hierarchy, with the clear aim of raising the organization to an international level.<sup>13</sup>

Finally then, a fourth stage will include the period between the end of World War II and the preparation of the Second Vatican Council (1945-1959).<sup>14</sup> Notwithstanding the fact that we offer a schedule and mark subsequent phases, one should realize that in several countries the schema could differ according to the actual social and political situation, though the movement mainly developed within the aforementioned stages. In what follows, we will not offer a detailed presentation of the first two stages, remaining only on the surface —nevertheless, they are indispensable in understanding the links between the origins of the *Azione Cattolica Italiana* (ACI) and the international Catholic Action.

### THE FIRST STAGE – ORIGINS OF ACI, OR THE PERIOD OF INDEPENDENT LAY MOVEMENTS

The laity started to be more and more active in Roman Catholicism all around Europe, already from the beginning of the modern era. This evolution became increasingly obvious especially during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>15</sup> In that era, Catholic lay organizations popped up in several countries with the intention make the Catholicism visible in the whole of society. These associations were, for instance, the *Asociación Católicos* in Spain, *Jeunesse ouvrière chrétienne* in France<sup>16</sup> and Belgium, the *Pius Verein*, the *Katholischer Verein* and the *Kolping* movement in German speaking territories,<sup>17</sup> the *Società della Gioventù Cattolica Italiana*, the *Opera dei Congressi e Comitati Cattolici* and the *Federazione Universitaria Cattolica Italiana*

<sup>12</sup> For a broad overview of Papal Social teaching with sufficient attention to Catholic Action and its evolution, see Michael J. SCHUCK, *That They Be One. The Social Teaching of the Papal Encyclicals 1740-1989*, Georgetown, 1991.

<sup>13</sup> John POLLARD, *Catholicism in Modern Italy: Religion, Society and Politics since 1861*, London & New York, 2008, p. 82. Also see Giacomo DE ANTONELLIS, *Storia dell'Azione Cattolica*, Milan, 1987.

<sup>14</sup> We can not give sharp borders of the different stages for every country, simply because national, political and social issues differ in every case. However this timeline tries to follow the main transformations and milestones of the history of Catholic Action.

<sup>15</sup> Keenan B. OSBORNE, *Lay Ministry in the Catholic Church*, New York, 1993, p. 564-517.

<sup>16</sup> Joseph DEBÈS and Émile POULAT, *L'appel de la JOC, 1926-1928*, Paris, 1986.

<sup>17</sup> RAABE, *Die Katholiken*, p. 201-206.

(FUCI) in Italy,<sup>18</sup> the *Association Catholique de la Jeunesse Belge* in Belgium<sup>19</sup> and so on. Usually, such organizations worked parallel with each other, and their territorially based activities would stop at the border of their respective countries or, in some cases, at linguistic borders.<sup>20</sup>

Touching upon the aspect of territoriality, it has to be said that each country had its own particular background where lay organizations developed. The rise of lay organizations in Italy was, for example, the Catholic response to the process of *Risorgimento*, striving for a unified Italian State, and in that sense was quite special.<sup>21</sup> Catholic action (written in small characters) at that time was a common name in Italy for the variety of organizations taking part in all kinds of charity and evangelization work within the Catholic Church.<sup>22</sup>

Pope Pius X already started using the expression “catholic action” in official curial documents during the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century —without using capital letters.<sup>23</sup> On the other hand, the constant fear of modernism slowed down the development of Catholic lay movements during the reign this pope. Thus, instead of development, one could even speak of a process of regression. Pius X went as far as dissolving the *Opera dei Congressi*, one of the first and strongest Italian lay movements, and then reorganized its remaining fragments, putting it under stronger clerical control.<sup>24</sup> The issue remains that “catholic action” described at that time a range of formally unconnected lay movements, and not a unified organization.<sup>25</sup> Matters changed under his successor, Benedict XV, who formally reorganized the Italian lay movements by uniting them under one single directive board,<sup>26</sup> consisting of the four presidents of the national organizations and under the chairmanship of the head of the *Unione Popolare*.<sup>27</sup> This point marks a transition from “catholic action”,

<sup>18</sup> POLLARD, *Catholicism*, p. 94. For the Italian situation, and in particular for the 1950's and the episcopate of the then Milan archbishop Giovanni Battista Montini, we wish to point to the study of Eliana VERSACE, *Montini e l'apertura a sinistra. Il falso mito del 'vescovo progressista'*, Milan, 2007, p. 137-141. This book illustrates well how the future council pope Paul VI was very much aware of the importance of terminological issues —e.g. the distinction between ‘partecipazione’ and ‘collaborazione’— that will remain on the agenda until the final redaction of *Apostolicam Actuositatem*.

<sup>19</sup> Françoise ROSART and Thierry SCAILLET, *Entre jeux et enjeux. Mouvements de jeunesse catholiques en Belgique 1910-1940*, Louvain-la-Neuve, 2002, p. 21. Also see Lucie BRAGARD et al., *La Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne. Wallonie Bruxelles, 1912-1957*, Brussels, 1990.

<sup>20</sup> It is very important to make this differentiation because in after-war Europe the situation of minorities was much more aggravated than before and borders of nation-states differed from the language borders. Cf. Michael MANDELBAUM, *The New European Diasporas. National Minorities and Conflicts in Eastern Europe*, New York, 2000.

<sup>21</sup> POLLARD, *The Participation of the Laity*, p. 2.

<sup>22</sup> POLLARD, *Catholicism*, p. 35.

<sup>23</sup> *Editae saepe*, in ASS, 37 (May 26, 1910), p. 357-380, see p. 377. Also see *Il fermo proposito*, in AAS, 2 (June 11, 1905), p. 741-767, see p. 741-743.

<sup>24</sup> POLLARD, *Catholicism*, p. 67.

<sup>25</sup> The subtitle of encyclical *Il fermo proposito* (On Catholic Action in Italy, to the Bishops of Italy) also can confirm our argument that the issue at that time was only an Italian one.

<sup>26</sup> The intention to unite the different lay organizations appeared already in the encyclicals *Editae saepe* and *Il fermo proposito*.

<sup>27</sup> Gianfranco POGGI, *Catholic Action*, Stanford CA, 1967, p. 19.

as a collective name for different religious lay activities and organizations, to “Italian Catholic Action”, as one single national lay organization.

### TOWARDS A SINGLE NATIONAL LAY ORGANIZATION: 1920S-1930S

The reorganization under Pope Benedict XV yielded a formally connected national lay organization in Italy by the time of Pope Pius XI's election in 1922: the *Azione Cattolica Italiana* (ACI). Although it had been reorganized from ‘above’, it had not been significantly stimulated under Benedict XV. That situation changed drastically after the election of Pius XI, who started to promote the ACI. Pius XI's devotedness to the organization even led to the nickname “Pope of the Action”.<sup>28</sup> Here too, an evolution can be sensed: at the beginning of his pontificate he still mentioned catholic action in his *Ubi Arcano Dei*<sup>29</sup> (1922) as a “group of movements, organizations and works [...] which passes under the name of ‘catholic action’ [...]”.<sup>30</sup> Thus, we can infer that, despite his predecessor's creation of a common directive board for the Italian lay organizations to formally unite them, these did not totally merge into one monolithic block, but in fact, they remained more or less independent under the overarching structure of the ACI, and this even after the election of Pius XI.<sup>31</sup> The grey zone of a transformation from formally connected, but still independent, lay organizations to a strong, unitary, national lay organization lasted into the mid of 1920s.

As Fascism grew stronger, becoming the prevailing power of the Italian secular state after 1924, the Italian Catholic Church became more and more neglected within civil society, despite the efforts of Pope Pius XI to protect the interests of Catholics. For the ACI, the hardest period, and likewise so for the whole of Italian Catholicism, was the period between 1929 and 1931. The 1929 *Reconciliatio* —originating from the Lateran Treaties signed in that year— did not improve the situation of Catholic youth and workers' organizations within the Italian State. On the contrary, the pacts reinforced fascist political forces in Italy, and as a result, the encyclical *Non abbiamo bisogno* was promulgated in 1931, attacking Mussolini's attempts to downsize the importance of Catholic Action movements in Italy and attempting to redirect its members into state-governed fascist youth movements.<sup>32</sup> Significantly, it was precisely this occurrence when the name of “Catholic Action” first appeared with capital letters in magisterial teaching.<sup>33</sup> In order to defend the ACI from the continuing attacks of fascism, Pius XI tied the organization closer to the Roman Catholic hierarchy,

<sup>28</sup> Christopher O'DONNELL, *Apostolate*, in *Ecclesia. A Theological Encyclopedia of the Church*, Collegeville MI, 1996, p. 19.

<sup>29</sup> *Ubi Arcano Dei*, 54: “Huc denique pertinet omnium eorum summa, seu complexio, institutorum, consiliorum, et operum quae nomine actionis catholicae, Nobis carissimae, perhibentur”. See AAS, 14 (December 23, 1922), p. 693.

<sup>30</sup> In the original (Latin) version of this document and also in the original text of the encyclicals edited by Pius X the term ‘catholic action’ was never written in capital letters. Unfortunately the English translation of the encyclical uses everywhere capital letters i.e. Catholic Action, this way causing unnecessary confusion.

<sup>31</sup> Gianfranco POGGI, *Catholic Action*, p. 21-22.

<sup>32</sup> John POLLARD, *The Participation of the Laity*, p. 2.

<sup>33</sup> Here the English translation correctly capitalizes “Catholic Action” because the original Italian text capitalizes the phrase on the forty-eight occasions it uses it. Cf. AAS, 23, (14 May, 1937), p. 285-312.



reinforcing its centralization. The effect of this process was a worsened situation for lay leaders within the ACI. They increasingly came under clerical control, and more and more these lay leaders were excluded from the directorial board of the organization.

#### FROM THE NATIONAL TO THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL: THE 1930S UNTIL 1945

As we have seen above, the situation of the Italian Catholic Action and the nature of the movement were specific. The ACI was born within Italian society, and it consequently bore the particularities of this society. The encyclicals *Non abbiamo bisogno* and *Mit brennender Sorge* had already spoken about Catholic Action in a larger context, mentioning separately the ACI and Catholic Action “in all parts of the world”.<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, Pius XI did not promote lay organizations only for the sake of evangelization of secular societies. He had a restoration plan in mind, as his motto proclaimed at the time of his election: *restaurare omnia in Christo*. Not only did he try to revitalize and restore the Catholic character of society, but he also sought to restore the prestige and influence of the hierarchy, as it had been a century before.<sup>35</sup>

It is also noteworthy that Pius XI gradually encompassed all kinds of lay activities within Catholic Action, a tendency inherited from his predecessors (Pius IX, Pius X, Benedict XV);<sup>36</sup> but, in order to realize this unification of lay organizations under the single umbrella of Catholic Action, the pope accelerated the process. Now, the spread of Catholic Action made use of the pre-existing lay organizations in every country, copying the Italian example. Hence, “Catholic Action” shifted into an international unification process, integrating territorially existing lay movements under clerical direction. The paradox of strict hierarchical leadership for a lay movement soon became a constant source of problems and tensions. According to Rosemary Goldie, a witness to the metamorphosis of the position of the laity within Catholic Church, both the ACI and Catholic Action were put increasingly under clerical leadership.<sup>37</sup>

The Papacy also used the ACI as an example to follow in other countries,<sup>38</sup> and throughout the 1930s, the unification process of lay movements under the name of Catholic Action was catalyzed. The whole conception followed the Italian example. Nevertheless, the success formula of a model in one society does not necessarily imply its success in other societies. In the 1940s, two factors negatively influenced the development of Catholic Action: firstly, the political situation (i.e. World War II) and secondly, the election of Pius XII. When Pacelli was elected Pope in 1939, he soon adopted a stance which discarded the last lay leaders of the ACI.<sup>39</sup> A double intention lay behind this approach: on the one hand, his attempts to safeguard the

<sup>34</sup> *Non abbiamo bisogno*, 5, in AAS, 23 (May 14, 1937), p. 287.

<sup>35</sup> POLLARD, *Catholicism*, p. 93.

<sup>36</sup> Guido BAUSENHART, *Theologischer Kommentar zum Dekret über das Apostolat der Laien* in Peter HÜNERMANN and Bernd Jochen HILBERATH (eds.), *Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzil*, Freiburg-Basel-Wien, 2005), vol. 4, p. 21.

<sup>37</sup> Rosemary GOLDIE, *From a Roman Window*, Blackburn, 1998, p. 6.

<sup>38</sup> See Philippe CHENAUX, *Pie XII. Diplomate et Pasteur*, Paris, 2003; BAUSENHART, *Theologischer Kommentar*, p. 21; RAABE, *Die Katholiken*, p. 211.

<sup>39</sup> POGGI, *Catholic Action*, p. 26.

movement from fascist influence or fascism, and on the other hand, his authoritarian approach of Church leadership.<sup>40</sup>

The results were striking, for instance, with regard to internal debates on various topics. During the war years, the ACI was unable to reach unanimous opinions regarding defense or issues like racial laws. And, even if this contribution is not the proper place to address the question of the Church's role in the wartime persecution of the Jews, we must admit that even if the officially organized opposition within Catholic Church might have been stronger, laity, religious and clergy took personal initiative to help those under persecution. Quite often, members of the ACI actively took part in the resistance during the war, especially during the Nazi occupation of 1943.<sup>41</sup> Some active resistance groups in Italy, affiliated with the ACI had guns in their possession after the end of World War II and felt forced to hide their weapons from civil authorities because of the serious risk of partisan takeover. Since partisans were either communists or socialists, namely the enemies of the Church, the ACI members tried to maintain their firearms in order to oppose a possible communist takeover.<sup>42</sup>

### THE POST-WAR PERIOD: PREPARING FOR VATICAN II?

After World War II, horizons were at once opened and closed for Catholic laity. Horizons were opened through the North-Atlantic region (Western Europe and North-America) regarding freedom of conscience, speech and assembly. However, horizons became increasingly closed for Catholic laity behind the Iron Curtain and everywhere under the Stalinist regime, including East Germany, the Baltic States, Ukraine, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria.<sup>43</sup> Catholics, regardless of being the majority religion or the minority, suffered under the communist reign, which prohibited any religious activities organized by lay organizations, and seriously attacked the Catholic Church as a whole, closing all of its official activities within society. The communist leadership sought total control of the whole society. Such system tends to dominate and reduce the most private sphere of the person to uniformity. Thus, the Church, as a strongly structured and organized institution, bothers and hinders the regime's development. Beyond the stereotyped portraits of the situation of Western and Eastern blocks, we should admit that the Church was often still working and fulfilling important tasks (except for the periods of persecutions, which returned time and again). Unfortunately, the severities gradually stopped the activity of the laity within the boundaries of the Church; this is also because lay people often proved to be more vulnerable than priests living in celibacy. In order to avoid the harassment of the authorities, local priests became responsible for almost all the problems of the parish. But, it is crucial to see that it was not the hierarchy who

<sup>40</sup> POGGI, *Catholic Action*, p. 27-28.

<sup>41</sup> POLLARD, *Catholicism*, p. 107.

<sup>42</sup> POLLARD, *Catholicism*, p. 110.

<sup>43</sup> GUSTAV WEIGEL, *The Final Revolution*, Oxford, 1992, 65. On the situation behind the Iron curtain, several excellent articles are found in the volume edited by JAN BANK and LIEVE GEVERS (eds.), *Religion under Siege*. Vol. II: *Protestant, Orthodox and Muslim Communities in Occupied Europe (1939-1950)*, Leuven, 2007.

shut out the laity from the decision-making process, but the political system that tried to alienate the laity from the Church.

The perspectives of the laity also changed significantly within the democratic countries during the post-war period, especially in the 1950s.<sup>44</sup> At the same time, the background also changed in Italy. We can accept that the war and especially the pressure of the Italian fascism stopped the development of the ACI during and prior to the war: however, we have to admit that even if these factors had negative influence on its development, they did not destroy the organization. The ACI was not seriously injured at the end of the war, whereas other competing movements, mainly fascist, were in ruins. The ACI was present in all 24,000 Italian parishes, and its activities and operational nature were proved by the result of the Italian parliamentary elections.<sup>45</sup> The ACI had a serious role in rebuilding Italian society, being the largest institution to successfully survive the war. The image of the papacy and Pope Pius XII reached its peak in the 1950s, due to his strong leadership within both the Church and the Church in Italy. It was so influential that John Pollard states that the “Papacy was the church in Italy after the war”.<sup>46</sup> This centralized Church policy had its effect: in the post-war period, the ACI was so closely linked to the hierarchy that the ACI was dwarfed by the hierarchy, which was embodied within the pope himself.<sup>47</sup> The initial movement had now evolved into a puppet-on-a-string and had proven useful in cases where the magisterium needed a structural means to convince Catholics to vote for Christian Democrats instead of Communists or socialists, for example. The ACI operated with minimal autonomy, having minimal decision-making capacities in its work organizing events, such as meetings and conferences. Noteworthy are the three international lay conferences organized under the ACI auspices in Rome in 1951, 1957 and 1963, which often were led by theologians strongly tied to the Roman Curia.<sup>48</sup> Nevertheless, the issue of the role of the laity remained on the agenda, and as such, these conferences foreshadowed the work of Vatican II on the lay apostolate, particularly the work within the Commission for the Apostolate of the Laity.<sup>49</sup> In the next part of this article, we will look more closely at the period of John XXIII’s pontificate and the way in which Vatican II receives the preconciliar developments of Catholic Action.

<sup>44</sup> Achille GLORIEUX, *Histoire du décret ‘Apostolicam actuositatem’ sur l’apostolat des laïcs*, in Yves CONGAR (ed.), *L’Apostolat des laïcs*, Paris, 1970, p. 93.

<sup>45</sup> POGGI, *Catholic Action*, p. 29.

<sup>46</sup> POLLARD, *Catholicism*, p. 109.

<sup>47</sup> The Italian Catholic Church was so much under the influence of the Pope that it did not even have Bishops Conference until 1953 and some 110 dioceses out of 320 were under the direct leadership of the Pope. See POLLARD, *Catholicism*, p. 114.

<sup>48</sup> *Actes du 1<sup>er</sup> Congrès Mondial pour l’Apostolat des Laïques*, Rome, 1952, vol. 1; *Former des Apôtres – Documents du Deuxième Congrès Mondial pour l’Apostolat des Laïcs*, Rome, 1959, vol. 3. An interesting reaction to these congresses is found in Ferdinand KLOSTERMANN, *Die Problematik des Laienapostolats nach dem Zweiten Weltkongress in Rom*, in *Theologisch-praktische Quartalschrift*, 106 (1958), p. 89-104.

<sup>49</sup> On the importance of the ‘paving of the way in the preconciliar era, also see Rosemary GOLDIE, *L’avant-concile des ‘Christifideles laici’ (1945-1959)*, in *RHE*, 88 (1993), p. 131-172.

## VATICAN II'S SCHEMATA AND CATHOLIC ACTION

After a mere four months into his pontificate,<sup>50</sup> Pope John XXIII set up an antepreparatory commission on May 17, 1959, under the direction of the then Secretary of State, Cardinal Domenico Tardini (15 December 1958 - 30 July 1961). This new structure had the task of organizing the work of the Council. All members of the commission<sup>51</sup> represented a Roman dicastery,<sup>52</sup> and the commission's work would pave the way until 5 June 1960, when John XXIII created, along with nine other commissions, the Commission for the Apostolate of the Laity in his *Motu proprio Superno Dei nutu*.<sup>53</sup> For the Catholic lay movement, this provides a crucial and historical moment. Out of the ten commissions founded, the one dedicated to the laity was the last and presumably the most unique one. The preconciliar Commission on the Lay Apostolate was set up at the special request of John XXIII and, more strikingly, it was the single commission not to have an "official" counterpart in the list of Roman curial congregations, and in that sense, it provided something of a novelty. The commission was charged with various general issues concerning the lay apostolate and religious-social questions, central among them being the role and place of "Catholic Action". Also, one of the most important questions was, at that time, to what extent is the lay apostolate subjected to the hierarchy.<sup>54</sup>

Over six years of work (three years of preparation and three years for the conciliar period itself), several *schemata* on the lay apostolate were drafted and redrafted. Thanks to the conciliar minutes and documentation, we know of five subsequent versions of this document, which finally would become *Apostolicam Actuositatem*.<sup>55</sup> Another element that cannot be neglected is the value attached to the subject from the outset of Vatican II. This is illustrated by the fact that the first draft numbered almost two hundred pages and that it was designed as a future *constitution* rather than a *decree*. In comparison, the schema's final version consisted of a mere 24 pages. It is a surprising difference, and tracing the document's itinerary will reveal how the Council's view on the laity changed seriously at the end of the period. Such changes manifested themselves in the transition from a hierarchical to a baptismal ecclesiology or in the presence of lay members at the Council, in contrast to the solid counterview of the fathers at the beginning of the Council, etc.<sup>56</sup> Nevertheless, to examine all of the *schemata* with regard to Catholic Action surpasses the capacities of this article. We have chosen rather to focus on three drafts that can illustrate the

<sup>50</sup> Giuseppe ALBERIGO, *A Gesture of Serene Boldness*, in Joseph A. KOMONCHAK and Giuseppe ALBERIGO (eds.) *History of Vatican II*, Leuven, 1995, Vol. 1, p. 44.

<sup>51</sup> G. Ferretto, P. Sigismondi, A. Samoré, A. Coussa, C. Zerba, P. Palazzini, A. Larraona, D. Staffa, E. Dante, P. Philippe.

<sup>52</sup> ADA I, p. 22-23.

<sup>53</sup> Étienne FOUILLOUX, *Vatican II, an Isolated Event?* in KOMONCHAK and ALBERIGO (eds.), *History of Vatican II*, Vol. 1. p. 153.

<sup>54</sup> Joseph A. KOMONCHAK, *Introduction: The Papal Vision of the Council*, in KOMONCHAK and ALBERIGO (eds.), *History of Vatican II*, Vol. 1. p. 198.

<sup>55</sup> AAS, 52 (1960), p. 435-436.

<sup>56</sup> Joseph A. KOMONCHAK, *Toward an Ecclesiology of Communion*, Joseph A. KOMONCHAK and Giuseppe ALBERIGO eds., *History of Vatican II*, Leuven, 2003, vol. 4, p. 19-20.

most important changes made in the course of the conciliar event: the initial *schema* (1961); then the second version of the schema, presented to the fathers in 1964; and finally the penultimate version of 1965, before it was promulgated in November 1965).

### THE FIRST SCHEMA<sup>57</sup>

Before proceeding, we wish to point to the fact that the defining of Vatican II's agenda is, in itself, of significant importance for us. In contrast to former councils, such as Trent and Vatican I, this ecumenical council did not have a pre-given agenda, neither was the agenda defined from above. Other councils in the history of the Church were called together in order to discuss a specific issue, usually dogmatic or biblical problems.<sup>58</sup> This, however, was not John XIII's intention when he convened Vatican II; there was only an invitation letter to the Council sent and a public appeal made to all the bishops asking them to describe their ideas, concerns, and problems worthy of discussion at the Council. As a result, the bishops sent thousands of *vota* to Rome. In the ante-preparatory period, this material was collected and organized according to topic and served generally as the foundation of the first *schemata* of the documents. The first part of the first draft prepared by the Commission on the Laity consisted of different fundamental ideas on the laity without an exact definition (*notiones generales*).<sup>59</sup> The text simply enumerated the different kinds of lay apostolates which stood in relation to the hierarchy.<sup>60</sup> Some questions arose regarding the priority of Catholic Action and its relationship to the Holy See, which, in the first chapter, was seen as a unifying organization, covering most of the lay movement's issues. In that sense, the initial schema on the Lay Apostolate already granted quite a prominent position to the notion of Catholic Action. This will be developed further on in the draft.

The second part of the text dealt with the actual apostolate of the laity (*De apostolatu laicorum in actione ad regnum Christi directe provehendum*). Among the forms of direct apostolate, Catholic Action was mentioned as the primordial one. For those activities done under the direction of the hierarchy, they gave a more restricted scope. Activities outside this boundary were simply defined as activities in other (different) forms.<sup>61</sup> Here, different methods of activities and various areas where lay activity could be exercised were also mentioned.<sup>62</sup>

The third part of the schema presented the activities of charity.<sup>63</sup> Firstly, the members had to clarify the relation between those activities of charity that were promoted by the state, and those that were not. Here too, the opinions differed.

<sup>57</sup> ADP II/IV p. 468-520, 565-597.

<sup>58</sup> Hubert JEDIN, *Kleine Konziliengeschichte*, Freiburg-Basel-Wien, 1977, p. 9.

<sup>59</sup> ADP II/IV p. 472-475.

<sup>60</sup> KOMONCHACK, *Introduction*, p. 198.

<sup>61</sup> ADP II/IV, p. 497.

<sup>62</sup> ADP, II/IV p. 497.

<sup>63</sup> ADP, II/IV p. 565-573.

Secondly, the question was whether it is necessary to put the whole charitable activity of the Church under Roman direction.<sup>64</sup>

The last part of the document —*De apostolatu laicorum in actione sociali*—<sup>65</sup> was the best structured and most coherent piece of the draft. It defended the right of the Church to remedy society according to the salvific plan of Jesus Christ. This closing part looked like a summary of Catholic social teaching. Here, there were fewer opposing view points, but a moot question arose: to what extent, if any, does the laity need to be involved in confessionally mixed or neutral associations in the struggle for a righteous society?<sup>66</sup>

Let us return then to Part II of the draft. After the description of the general principles of the laity's commitment to the Catholic Church, Part II contained a separate section on Catholic Action in particular. If we take into account the importance of the organization in the period between World War II and Vatican II,<sup>67</sup> one is hardly surprised to find that Catholic Action is mentioned in a relative prominent place, before topics like charitable works and social action. The second part was divided into two distinct subparts: the first *titulus* dealt with the forms of the apostolate (*Tit. I – De formis quibus hic apostolatus organizatur*);<sup>68</sup> the second *titulus* addressed the moods and borders (*Tit. II – De diversis modis et saeptis*).<sup>69</sup> The first *titulus* included the chapter on Catholic Action:

Cap. I            *De apostolatu laicorum in variis Ecclesiae communitatibus*

Cap. II           *De Actione Catholica*

Cap. III          *De aliis formis apostolatus ad Regnum Christi directe provehendum*

The chapter on Catholic Action set out with a general observation on the apostolic aims and activity of the laity in the decades before the Council, mentioning the close unity with the hierarchy that should characterize the works of the laity. Even when it remains true that this introduction gave an appreciative exposition of lay activity within organizations, expressions like “*arctiorem cum Hierarchia coniunctionem servantes*” reappear time and again. This is despite the fact that the relationship between the hierarchy and the laity was already clarified within the first general part of the text, where a whole chapter was dedicated to this important issue (*Pars I, Tit. I, Cap. 2: De relatione ad hierarchiam*).<sup>70</sup> Also, in the second chapter of Part II, it is recognized that there are other organizations of the same kind (*similes institutiones*), even older ones. The phrasing of the text states that even if the different lay organizations are following different methods, they fall under the single name of Catholic Action (*sub uno tamen nomine Actionis Catholicae veniunt*).<sup>71</sup> This is quite revealing: the fact that Catholic

<sup>64</sup> This was a crucial issue because the centralizing example of COPECIAL was not encouraging: it was established to co-ordinate the work of the laity on international level but it was struggling especially under the last years of Pius XII. Cf. Rosemary GOLDIE, *From a Roman*, p. 23.

<sup>65</sup> ADP II/IV, p. 574-597.

<sup>66</sup> KOMONCHACK, *Introduction*, p. 199.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. *Actes du 1<sup>er</sup> Congrès; Former des Apôtres*.

<sup>68</sup> ADP II/IV, p. 495-499.

<sup>69</sup> ADP II/IV, p. 499-517.

<sup>70</sup> ADP II/IV, p. 476-477.

<sup>71</sup> ADP II/IV, p. 497.

Action has risen above other organizations in the *schema* proves that the politics of the Holy See—especially those of Pius XI and Cardinal Pizzardo, promoting the establishment of Catholic Action in all the catholic regions and uniting other lay organizations under the flag of Catholic Action, according to the Italian model—have not only proven to be successful, but were also well received in the milieu of the preconiliar commission on the Lay Apostolate. The first draft of the text already recognized that the unification of lay organizations under the closer direction of the hierarchy was promoted from the highest level before the Council. The text of this draft clearly follows that policy by expressing that Catholic Action is the organization that bore rich fruits for the Kingdom of Christ. By inserting the phrase “*cum aliis apostolicis inceptis*”, it is also stressed that other apostolic undertakings can bear rich fruits as well; the text probably tried to incorporate the opinion of those who were against the exclusiveness of Catholic Action. The authors of the text were obviously unable to decide whether or not there is absolute primacy of Catholic Action in the field of lay activity because the subsequent sentences return to the idea that Catholic Action is the recognized and developing organization in our age.

Number 8 of the *schema* starts to present the characteristics or marks of Catholic Action. According to this number, the characteristics are set up by the Council, taking into consideration the documents of former popes and bishops. The *schema*'s phrasing here is interesting because it does not simply enumerate the characteristics of Catholic Action, but presents several marks which together constitute Catholic Action: “[...] *placet Sacrosanctae Synodo [...] notas indicare, quarum concursu et cumulate acceptione Actio Catholica constituuntur [...]*”.<sup>72</sup> It is important because in this sense, the defined characteristics have to exist. Otherwise, even if only one characteristic is missing, one can not speak about Catholic Action. These characteristics can be summarized as follows:

1. The goal of lay organizations is to sanctify every human person and to edify the mystical body of Christ.
2. Lay people assume their responsibilities and make use of their experience in directing their own organizations.
3. Lay people act in a united manner in order to express the Church as a community and to render its apostolate more effectively.
4. Lay people act at all times and in every case under the direction of the hierarchy, and the hierarchy sanctions the *collaboration* by an explicit mandate.

Also important is the fact that up until the final draft of the conciliar document, these four characteristics will be upheld, even if their interpretation and explanation is subject to considerable development throughout the conciliar process. In our contribution, we will follow the evolution of these four marks of Catholic Action with constant reference to the preconiliar notion of Catholic Action and the way in which this is positively or negatively received. According to the first characteristic, the aims of the Church and that of the organization which runs under the name of Catholic Action are identifiable. These common interests are twofold: first, to sanctify every human person, and second, to edify the mystical body of Christ. Under

<sup>72</sup> ADP II/IV, p. 497.



the second mark, the text reaffirms that lay people have to collaborate closely with the Catholic hierarchy. When reminded of Pius XI's definition of lay apostolates as participating in the apostolate of the hierarchy, the word "collaboration" may seem strange at first sight. Nevertheless, we have to take into account the existing opinions before the Council. Pius XI preferred participation, but Pius XII used "collaboration", offering more space to the laity to play their own role.<sup>73</sup> In this sense, the Leuven theologian Gerard Philips points out that there is a difference between the two: collaboration means the joint work of two equal parties, and the consent of both sides is indispensable. Participation does not mean the same thing and refers to a more instrumentalist view of the laity within the movement: even though instruments are necessary for the tasks at hand (such as a pen needed for producing a text), one does not need the consent of the instruments for this act.<sup>74</sup> In a neo-scholastic understanding, the "instrument can 'participate' in the action of the principal agent without 'collaborating' with it".<sup>75</sup> Thus, as Philips helps to point out, using the word *collaboration* connotes a conception of the laity as equal partners in the task at hand. Given this analysis, one should concede that under Pius XII, a certain openness towards the laity was reinstalled, theoretically at least, and is now picked up by the preconciliar commission.<sup>76</sup>

When we analyze these affirmations, it is obvious that the laity might have a relative freedom within lay organizations, collaborating with the hierarchy as an equal party because of the connotation of equality that is inherent to the word "collaboration". On the other hand, the laity has to assume its responsibility and bring its experience in managing its organizations and implementing its plans of action. According to the text, the lay faithful have to collaborate with the hierarchy in a manner proper to themselves: *iuxta modum proprium*.<sup>77</sup> The text does not clarify what the proper manner is. The third mark expresses the importance of lay people acting in a united manner, not only to make visible the community of the Church, but also to make the activity itself more effective. This very first schema includes that the laity act not only individually, but in a united manner as well.<sup>78</sup>

The last characteristic affirms that the activity of the laity has to be under the constant direction of the hierarchy, regardless of whether the laity is working voluntarily or is invited by the hierarchy. This point shows that the authors of the first schema did not miss any opportunities to express what they considered to be an essential element proper to lay movements: namely, to act closely together with or under the direction of the hierarchy. Although this principle is true inasmuch as the hierarchy and the laity do not pursue different goals, and although the 'collaborative' perspective is clearly present, in reading this first *schema*, one gets the feeling that it is overemphasized. Expressions like *arctiorem cum Hierarchia coniunctionem servantes*;

<sup>73</sup> Gerard PHILIPS, *The Role of the Laity in the Church*, Cork, 1957, p. 119.

<sup>74</sup> PHILIPS, *The Role of the Laity*, p. 120.

<sup>75</sup> PHILIPS, *The Role of the Laity*, p. 120.

<sup>76</sup> PHILIPS, *The Role of the Laity*, p. 121.

<sup>77</sup> ADP II/IV, p. 497.

<sup>78</sup> ADP II/IV, p. 497.

*collaborantes iuxta modum proprium cum Hierarchia; Laici [...] agunt sub superiore [...] Hierarchiae* appear time and again.<sup>79</sup>

The text reinforces the role of the hierarchy, saying that the hierarchy has the prerogative to sanction the collaboration of the laity with the hierarchy. It is said as well that a mandate has to be given by the hierarchy to the laity for apostolic work. These words, however, seem to be in tension with, if not, in contradiction to, the idea articulated in a prior sentence, where the document accepts the volunteer work of the laity (*laici, sive sponte sese offerentes sive invitati ad actionem*).<sup>80</sup> At this point, one should not forget the debate regarding the principle of mandate, because it too was as debated, like the problem of cooperation-collaboration. Both Philips and Congar take up this question about whether the laity or lay organizations need an explicit right to take up apostolic work or whether they can do this kind of work as unbidden volunteers. Both theologians conclude their argumentation with a rejection of the need for an explicit mandate, because it is through baptism that all Christians receive the command of apostolic work (Matt 28, 19-21), rendering superfluous any further mandate.<sup>81</sup>

Reflecting on the words of Pope John XXIII in his encyclical *Princeps Pastorum*,<sup>82</sup> the next sentence, no. 9, speaks about the different forms of Catholic Action. The text allows for a certain variety of structures within the organizations, taking into account the specificities of different regions and peoples. This passing exhibition of accommodation, however, is short-lived. Immediately after granting this flexibility, it is clearly expected from Catholic Action organizations to work in a united manner with each other on diocesan, national and international levels (no. 10). The last point of this section (no. 11) concludes with some recommendations or appeals.<sup>83</sup> The phrasing of this section, however, is ambiguous: "*Sacrosanctum concilium has institutiones, quae hodierni exigentiis apprime respondent, enixe commendat; sacerdotes et laicos, qui in ipsis adlaborant, invitat ut magis magisque notas proprias Actionis Catholicae ad effectum adducant, et cum omnibus aliis apostolatus formis semper fraternae in Ecclesia cooperentur.*"<sup>84</sup> Until this sentence, it was clear that wherever the text speaks about lay organizations, one had to understand Catholic Action under that term. But here, according to the text, the Council commends those organizations which answer in the highest degree to the exigencies of our age. Whether these would be organizations other than Catholic Action is not yet clear (in this draft). After a semicolon, both priest and lay people are urged to implement the characteristics of Catholic Action

<sup>79</sup> ADP II/IV, p. 497-498.

<sup>80</sup> ADP II/IV, p. 498.

<sup>81</sup> CONGAR, *Lay People*, p. 270 and PHILIPS, *The Role of the laity*, p. 125-130. It is important, however, to mention that Congar argues more freely than Philips. There are several reasons for this, such as the fact the fact that Congar was always more on the lookout for an adaptation of theology to the contemporary context, but also due to their different situation: Congar was protected by his religious order but Philips was a priest of the diocese of Liege.

<sup>82</sup> AAS, 51, p. 856.

<sup>83</sup> ADP II/IV, p. 498.

<sup>84</sup> ADP II/IV, p. 498.

heretofore articulated and to cooperate with all other forms of apostolate on fraternal grounds.

At this point, the text draw to one's attention two important things: the other forms of apostolate and the word 'cooperation'. It is not clear to what the other forms of apostolate refer, but it looks like something external to Catholic Action. This phrasing suggests that the authors accept that Catholic Action can/should/must not unite all and every form of apostolate. It is crucial that the word *cooperation* appears here for the first time. From this text, we tend to see that there is collaboration between hierarchy and laity, but there should be cooperation between Catholic Action and other forms of apostolate, if these forms exist at all. The last phrase urges bishops to take into account the specificities of their own dioceses and, if it is possible, to promote Catholic Action organizations when they establish more adequate forms of apostolate: "[...] *aptiores formas statuendo*." One might ask immediately: what did they mean under the more adequate forms of apostolate? But unfortunately, the phrasing remained vague.

Having summarized the section of the first schema on Catholic Action, we can say that the text was juridical and the superiority of the hierarchy was frequently mentioned. Catholic Action is proclaimed as single, officially accepted and promoted lay organization. Some other unspecified forms of lay apostolate may also exist.

### THE SCHEMA OF 1964

There is a considerable difference between the first draft of the document on the laity and the draft presented to the fathers in 1964. The most obvious change is the length and the nature of the schema: the first schema in 1962 was prepared as a constitution (*Schema constitutioni de apostolatu laicorum*)<sup>85</sup>. Nevertheless, the schema of 1964 was already a draft for a future decree (*Schema decreti de apostolatu laicorum*).<sup>86</sup> The abbreviation happened only after several directives by the Central Commission.<sup>87</sup> The new schema was not simply shortened, but the whole logic of the text was changed. We still remember that in the very first schema the first main section started with the chapter, "The laity in the apostolate of the Church" (*Laici in apostolatu Ecclesiae*) and this was immediately followed by "The relation with the hierarchy" (*De relatione ad hierarchiam*). In the schema of May 1964, this order was profoundly changed: consisting of five chapters, the old system of sectioning (*Pars I, Titulus I, Caput 2*) is omitted. Only the chapters with Roman numbers appear, and every chapter treats different topics divided by Arabic numeration. A general introduction —*Prooemium*— opens the schema, and five chapters follow, closing with

<sup>85</sup> ADP II/IV, p. 468-520, 565-597.

<sup>86</sup> AS IV/II, p. 368-381. More details on the drafting of this document are found in Maria Teresa FATTORI, *La commissione De fidelium apostolatu e lo schema sull'apostolato dei laici (maggio 1963-maggio 1964)*, in FATTORI and Alberto MELLONI (eds.), *Experience, Organisations and Bodies at Vatican II*, Leuven, 1999, p. 299-328.

<sup>87</sup> It is important to mention that after the debate of the fist schema in the Central Commission the wordiness and length of the first draft appeared several times; however, the serious abbreviation started only in 1963.

a final exhortation —*Exhortatio finalis*. The five chapters sum up 21 points in all. The chapters are ordered as follows:

- On the apostolic vocation of the laity (*De laicorum vocatione apostolica*)
- On the communities and the cycles of life (*De communitatibus et vitae ambitibus*)
- On the goals to be reached (*De finibus assequendis*)
- On the forms of associations (*De formis associativa*)
- On the order to serve (*De ordine servando*)

The treatment of Catholic Action appears only in Chapter IV, no. 16. Whereas it was dealt with quite early on in the previous schema, the second schema presents Catholic Action only in the fourth chapter, depriving it of its predominant spot. If we take into account that the positioning of the chapters was affected by the conscious deliberation of the Council fathers, then we can also assert that the change of this schema is now keeping pace with the development of the whole Council. The most prominent proof of this development was the change in the later schema of the Constitution *Lumen Gentium*: the chapter “On the people of God” was put *before* the chapter “On the hierarchy”.<sup>88</sup> In Vatican II’s ecclesiological debate, a clear option was taken in favor of a “baptismal” ecclesiology. Constructing the Church’s nature upon the Sacrament of Baptism had immediate consequences for the position of the laity. For, no longer did Roman Catholic ecclesiology start ‘from above’; on the contrary, the point of departure would become the ‘People of God’, consisting of all those baptized at its initial level: the laity. Thus, because the document on the laity was shaped and informed by the ideas and ecclesiological concepts expressed in the drafts of *Lumen Gentium*, the consequent adjustments in *Apostolicam actuositatem* are not unsurprising. The redaction of the draft on the laity was not only made dependent upon that of the schema *de ecclesia*, the draft on the laity was also becoming one of the initial moments of the reception of Vatican II’s ecclesiology. In this sense, the complexity of the process of reception was increasing: not only did the draft on the laity constitute an element of (partial) reception of preconciliar doctrine, but it also received Vatican II doctrines, even before the end of the Council. That said, we can now return to the text on Catholic Action. The new section of the *schema* on Catholic Action became increasingly concise and coherent. All in all, the “new” section is clearly recognizable and mainly based on the first schema. Indeed, the two texts —the old and the new— run parallel to one another, despite some changes. The beginning of the section on Catholic Action (no. 16), which recognizes the merits of the laity in an organized manner, remained essentially unchanged. There were only stylistic and some grammatical changes: *coaduno* was replaced with *congrego* (two synonyms for bringing together) and the syntax was altered.<sup>89</sup> The principle that the organized forms of the laity have to preserve a close unity with the hierarchy remained untouched as well.

The second sentence incorporated the second and the third sentences of the first schema. The role of Catholic Action remained underlined, but the phrasing paints

<sup>88</sup> КОМОНЧАК, *Toward an Ecclesiology*, p. 21.

<sup>89</sup> AS IV/II, p. 377.

the following picture:<sup>90</sup> firstly, lay movements are a result of various *individual lay organizations* which, despite working according to their own methods, bore much fruit. Gradually, under the influence and support of episcopal promotion, they were put under the banner of "Catholic Action". This is a rather different approach. The portrait sketched in this new draft is much closer to the early history of lay organizations and harkens back to a 'low church' model of the lay movement's self-organization. The first *schema* did not explain this historical background and thereby stuck with the Catholic Action model found in the period immediately preceding Vatican II, which accepted a hierarchically structured ecclesiology. This, much in line with the general picture of Vatican II's ecclesiological debate, was now left behind, and the focus shifted to the initiative of the local laity, adopting *Lumen Gentium's* baptismal ecclesiology. The last part of this rather long sentence remained unchanged, proclaiming those characteristics which constitute Catholic Action: "*harum notarum concursu et cumolata acceptione constituuntur [..]*".<sup>91</sup>

The first four characteristics changed considerably in the new schema. In the new phrasing, the name of Catholic Action disappeared, thus enlarging the rights of an apostolate that disregarded the boundaries of Catholic Action, which aimed at the sanctification and evangelization of the people. The idea of acting together with the hierarchy remained, but the word *collaborantes* was replaced with the word *cooperantes*, making it even clearer that the hierarchy and the laity are partners joining together in efforts. Due to the different connotations of the words pointed out by Gerard Philips, this was a significant alteration. The rest of the second point remained the same, while the third point of the first schema safeguarded and included the laity's option of undertaking singular actions in the apostolic work, saying that "*laici agunt non solum singuli sed uniti [..]*".<sup>92</sup> The new version omitted the "*non solum singuli sed*" and only the "*laici agunt uniti [..]*"<sup>93</sup> remained, eliminating the possibility of individual work. This can be regarded as a setback because the opportunity of personal initiatives in apostolic work had an important role in several preconconciliar curial documents, an option no longer followed within the conciliar context.

The most obvious changes appeared, however, in the clarification of the fourth characteristic, when the text speaks on the supremacy of the hierarchy. The new formulation no longer treated the laity as being invited by the hierarchy to the work of the apostolate but through the word *vocati* implicitly recognized the *vocation proper to the lay person* for apostolic work. The affirmation that lay people are acting under the superior direction of the hierarchy, whether said lay people work as volunteers or have a vocation to apostolic work, nevertheless remained. But here, the word *collaboration* was also changed to *cooperation*. The closing sentence of the fourth mark no longer obliged the hierarchy to give an explicit mandate to the laity for apostolic work, but it was transformed into an opportunity: "*hierarchiae potest hanc cooperationem etiam*

<sup>90</sup> AS IV/II, p. 377.

<sup>91</sup> AS IV/II, p. 377.

<sup>92</sup> ADP II/IV, p. 497.

<sup>93</sup> AS IV/II, p. 378.

*per explicitum mandatum sancire*.<sup>94</sup> The last sentence of the revised schema did not direct bishops to promote Catholic Action exclusively, but rather gave bishops the option to support already emerging forms of the lay apostolate. Beginning with this version, the implementations of these four characteristics of the apostolate were much more important than the uniqueness of Catholic Action. In sum, we can say that this version of the schema approaches the whole issue of Catholic Action from a more practical and less juridical point of view; crucial to this is the fact that the ecclesiological foundations of the doctrine were beginning to shift. The authors of the text clearly gave up the official and exclusive promotion of Catholic Action, and they permitted the substitution of Catholic Action with other forms of the apostolate, directing the bishops to take into account the peculiarities of their own diocese.

### THE SCHEMA OF 1965

During the summer of 1965, a new *schema* was drafted after the debate in the aula. Since *Apostolicam actuositatem* had been brought up for a vote on November 18, one is inclined to think that the last schema was practically identical to the official document itself. The text as a whole, however, was undergoing changes up until the last days before its promulgation. Still, the section on Catholic Action remained unaltered throughout the last debates.<sup>95</sup> Thus, the section of which we are speaking is, at least materially, equal to the section's last version as it appeared in the *Apostolicam actuositatem* under no. 20.<sup>96</sup>

The final *schema* of 1965 consisted of six chapters with thirty-three points. The name of Catholic Action appears three times in *Apostolicam actuositatem* 20 and nowhere else in the entire document. One should admit that this is a serious change, taking into account that in the parallel text of the first *schema*, Catholic Action appeared no less than nine times. Not only did the text change, but the sectioning as well: the thematic numbering was changed, (a year earlier, Catholic Action was treated under no. 16 and, in 1965, under no. 20) and a brand-new chapter, the sixth, was added to the text.<sup>97</sup>

The introductory part of *Apostolicam actuositatem* no. 20 did not differ seriously from the earlier (1964) version because only one word was added to the sentence: *persecuuntur*.<sup>98</sup> With this addition, the enlarged text presented that lay organizations "pursue aims that are properly apostolic".<sup>99</sup> The following sentence practically narrates in past tense the merits of Catholic Action and those organizations which "have born rich fruit for Christ's kingdom".<sup>100</sup> Nevertheless, it is puzzling that the deliberately chosen term *cooperatio*<sup>101</sup> is rendered as 'collaboration' in Norman

<sup>94</sup> AS IV/II, p. 378.

<sup>95</sup> MAURO VELATI, *Completing the Conciliar Agenda*, in KOMONCHACK and ALBERIGO (eds.), *History of Vatican II*, Vol. 5, p.264.

<sup>96</sup> NORMAN P. TANNER ed., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, London, 1990, Vol. 2.

<sup>97</sup> *Schema decreti De apostolatu laicorum*, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1965, p. 43-45.

<sup>98</sup> *Schema decreti De apostolatu laicorum*, p. 43.

<sup>99</sup> NORMAN P. TANNER, *Decrees*, p. 994.

<sup>100</sup> TANNER, *Decrees*, p. 994.

<sup>101</sup> HENGSBACH, *Das Konzilsdekret*, p. 110-111.

Tanner's English edition, when 'cooperation' would be the more straightforward translation. In light of Gerard Philips' explanation, this rendering becomes all the more crucial and, consequently, problematic. The third sentence experienced the most far-reaching changes. In the exposition above, it was shown that in the first and the second *schemas* that this section described four characteristics of Catholic Action—Catholic Action being the only form of lay apostolate (first *schema*), or almost the only form (*schema* of 1964). In the final draft, however, the sentence was rephrased so as to no longer present the characteristics of Catholic Action, but only the marks of the lay apostolate more generally. This is a crucial alteration from the viewpoint of Catholic Action because the authors of the *schema*, here, abandoned the principle of defining lay organizations exclusively in terms of Catholic Action.

The phrase articulating the interchangeability of Catholic Action with other forms of lay apostolate was the closing sentence in the 1964 version. But in the newest version, this principle was voiced *before* the enumeration of the four characteristics. There was, of course, a certain logic behind switching the principle's locus. In the earlier version, the four cumulative characteristics constituting Catholic Action were punctuated by this principle of interchangeability, rendering the core of the section describing Catholic Action incoherent. Now, with the principle being stated from the outset, it was clear that what followed applied to all lay apostolates, hence making the entire text more coherent.

With regard to the four marks of the lay apostolate, there were only minor corrections in the last version: cases or conjunctions were changed, sometimes the syntax, but without any substantial change to the meaning of the text. However, the subsequent sentence was rephrased in the sense of giving higher authority to Catholic Action than other organizations, whereas the version of 1964 placed the other forms of apostolate on par with Catholic Action, saying that if the characteristics are realized, the organization may have different structures according to regions and peoples. In light of the closing sentence, it is superfluous to reaffirm that: "*Organizationes in quibus hae notae [...] reperiuntur, [...] re vera Actio Catholica censendae sunt*".<sup>102</sup>

This was a serious setback that, unfortunately, influenced the results achieved up to this point. The whole sentence seems alien to the general tenor of the rest of the text, n° 20. The new closing sentence reaffirms the equivalence of Catholic Action with other lay organizations, recommending again the mentioned organizations (*has institutiones*);<sup>103</sup> but one can not see clearly what the text means under *these organizations*: Catholic Action, or other than Catholic Action, or both types.

## CONCLUSION

Having had a closer look at the contemporary history of the lay apostolate and particularly that of Catholic Action till the end of the Second Vatican Council, one can make some fundamental observations. First of all, it is probably not an exaggeration to affirm that the conception of lay people's apostolic work—whether solitary or organized—during the 20<sup>th</sup> century was marked by continuous

<sup>102</sup> *Schema*, p. 44.

<sup>103</sup> *Schema*, p. 44.



development. Moreover, it is obvious that Catholic Action was promoted by the bishops in order to centralize lay organization under the direction of the hierarchy. Nevertheless, Catholic Action was a unifying organ of different previously existing lay organizations from different continents around the world.

The Second Vatican Council, due to the personal initiative of John XXIII, decided to speak about the lay apostolate in a separate document. Even though the resulting decree was originally planned as a constitution,<sup>104</sup> a conciliar document, nonetheless, dealt explicitly with the laity—the first in the history of the Church.

Based on an analysis of the different *schemata*, we can conclude that during the work of the Council, there was a profound change in the approach to the laity. Due to the shift in point-of-view, the Catholic Action section of the document underwent a profound development from a quasi-juridical to an exemplary text, displaying the basic intuitions of *Lumen Gentium's* ecclesiology. The document on the Lay Apostolate cannot be properly read or understood without a genuine comprehension of the overarching ecclesiological model developed and promulgated by the Council. Interestingly enough, this was best felt when tracking the changes in the text's explanation of the origins of Catholic Action, returning to its basic intuitions and practices that originated from the initiative of lay people. Yet, here too, the issue of the Council's reception of preconciliar movements reveals its complexity. Despite the obvious developments made, the final version of the mentioned section on Catholic Action (*Apostolicam actuositatem* 20) in some aspects still stuck to the principle of a strong and unified system of lay organization under the direction of the hierarchy.<sup>105</sup> An ambiguity is sensed in the final document, leaving room for various interpretations of Catholic Action in the postconciliar realm.

Istvan CSONTA  
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<sup>104</sup> ADP II/IV, p. 468-520 and p. 565-597.

<sup>105</sup> An ambiguity also pointed to in the study of Hubert FILSER, *Das Dekret über das Laienapostolat Apostolicam Actuositatem*, in Franz Xaver BISCHOF and Stephan LEIMGRÜBER (eds.), *Vierzig Jahre II. Vatikanum. Zur Wirkungsgeschichte der Konzilstexte*, Würzburg, 2004, p. 252-279. The issue of the reception of the decree is also studied in Elfriede GLAUBITZ, *Der christlichen Laie. Vergleichende Untersuchung vom Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzil zur Bischofssynode 1987*, Würzburg, 1995.

# LA RÉCEPTION DANS LE PREMIER DE ECCLESIA DES MOUVEMENTS DE RENOUVEAU PRÉCONCILIAIRE

## INTRODUCTION

Il n'est pas facile de traiter de manière globale le schéma *De Ecclesia* élaboré par la Commission théologique préparatoire<sup>1</sup>. Il s'agit d'un schéma très composite, élaboré par plusieurs sous-commissions, chaque partie étant confiée à des rédacteurs n'ayant pas forcément la même orientation théologique et n'appartenant pas toujours à la même école théologique. Qu'ont en commun, par exemple, le chapitre VI, *De laicis*, rédigé largement par G. Philips, le chapitre IX, *De relationibus inter Ecclesiam et Statum*, chapitre rédigé par Gagnebet et où on peut déceler l'influence du traité de droit public ecclésiastique d'Ottaviani<sup>2</sup>, et le chapitre I, «*De Ecclesiae militantis natura*», où l'on devine l'influence de Tromp? La seule comparaison des références mises en œuvre dans ces différents chapitres nous conduit à des conclusions étonnantes. Ainsi, dans les notes du chapitre I, en plus des six citations scripturaires, on trouve 65 références à l'Écriture réparties dans 41 des 50 notes que comporte le chapitre, sans compter les références à la patristique<sup>3</sup>, à la scolastique<sup>4</sup>, aux conciles<sup>5</sup> et au magistère pontifical<sup>6</sup>, dont sept références à *Mystici corporis*. En comparaison, le chapitre IX est quant à lui complété par 101 références au magistère des papes, en particulier de Grégoire XVI (*Mirari vos*), Pie IX (*Quanta cura* et le *Syllabus*), Léon XIII (*Sapientiae christianae, Immortale Dei*), Pie X (*Vehementer nos, Pascendi*), Pie XI (*Ubi arcano* et *Quas primas*) et Pie XII, et quatre références à l'Écriture (on en trouvait déjà trois dans le texte même). Pas surprenant que le cardinal Ottaviani ait déclaré, dans sa *relatio* introductive à la discussion de ce chapitre en Commission centrale préparatoire que les principes proposés dans la Constitution furent exposés par les souverains pontifes

<sup>1</sup> Je prends pour référence sa version publiée dans les *Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani II* [AS], Vol. I, pars IV, Rome, 1971, p. 12-121.

<sup>2</sup> Voir Alfredo OTTAVIANI, *L'Église et la cité*, Rome, 1963, et *Compendium iuris publici ecclesiastici ad usum auditorum s. theologiae*, Rome, Typis poliglottis vaticanis, 1954.

<sup>3</sup> Clément d'Alexandrie, Eusèbe, Jean Chrysostome et Augustin.

<sup>4</sup> On compte aussi trois références à Thomas d'Aquin.

<sup>5</sup> En plus d'une référence au *Catéchisme* du concile de Trente et deux autres à la Profession de foi tridentine, on trouve une référence au concile de Trente et une autre à Vatican I.

<sup>6</sup> En particulier à Léon XIII (huit références aux encycliques *Statis Cognitum*, *Sapientiae Christianae* et *Divinum Illud*).

Léon XIII, Pie X et Pie XII<sup>7</sup>. Comme l'écrit de manière succincte M.-B. Borde dans une livraison récente de la *Revue thomiste*, « ce texte représentait un résumé de la doctrine exposée par les papes, de Benoît XIV à Pie XII en passant par Léon XIII, S. Pie X et Pie XI<sup>8</sup> ».

Je n'ai pas parlé ici du schéma *De Beata*, agraphé pour ainsi dire au *De Ecclesia*, qui en avait constitué un moment le cinquième chapitre (entre le mois de juillet 1961 et son envoi aux Pères) et qui comporte, depuis sa troisième rédaction (14 juillet 1961 – Arricia) pas moins de 21 pages de notes (contre six pages de texte) qui renvoient principalement aux enseignements pontificaux et très peu à l'Écriture, sans compter les deux pages de *praenotanda*, ce qui faisait dire à son promoteur, le P. Balic, qu'il n'y avait dans son texte aucun énoncé que l'on ne put trouver dans un texte pontifical<sup>9</sup>.

Si Antonio Acerbi avait examiné le schéma *De Ecclesia* lors de sa première présentation au concile (1<sup>er</sup> décembre 1962) plutôt que la constitution dogmatique *Lumen gentium* promulguée au terme des discussions, ce n'est pas un *Due ecclesiologie*<sup>10</sup> qu'il nous aurait servi, mais probablement un *quattro* ou *cinque ecclesiologie*, *ecclesiologies* qu'il nous faudrait ensuite caractériser, notamment en fonction de leurs sources et de leur orientation théologique.

À première vue, au chapitre des sources, on serait porté à conclure que si le *De Ecclesia* reçoit quelque chose, c'est peut-être davantage l'enseignement magistériel des papes du 19<sup>e</sup> et de la première moitié du 20<sup>e</sup> s. que les mouvements de renouveau qui travaillaient comme un ferment le corps ecclésial au cours de la période pré-conciliaire. Ainsi, le jugement de Congar, de Lubac, Philips, Colombo et Laurentin, qui siégeaient comme experts dans cette Commission, serait exact. Relisant les schémas élaborés par la Commission théologique préparatoire du concile, Congar observait :

C'est très scolastique, et même très scolaire. C'est beaucoup plus une série de chapitres d'un bon manuel. [...]

C'est un résumé des documents pontificaux depuis un siècle : une sorte de *syllabus* de ces documents, y inclus les DISCOURS de Pie XII. Cela a l'inconvénient d'accentuer la dénonciation des erreurs que ces documents ont successivement dénoncées. [...] Mais surtout, la SOURCE n'est pas la Parole de Dieu : c'est l'Église elle-même, et même l'Église réduite au pape [...]

C'est très peu biblique (sauf le *De laicis* et quelques morceaux du *De ordine Morali*). L'Écriture ne vient guère qu'en citation ornementale, par mode d'une certaine solennité du style et par conformité à un genre littéraire. On n'a pas *CHERCHÉ* ses déterminations comme à

<sup>7</sup> Voir «Relatio Em.Mi. P. D. Alfredi Card. Ottaviani Praesidis Commissionis theologiae», AD, II, II, *Acta pontificiae commissionis centralis praeparatoriae Concilii oecumenici Vaticani II*, Pars IV, Sessio septima: 12-19 Iunii 1962, Rome, Typis polyglottis vaticanis, 1968, p. 684.

<sup>8</sup> Marie-Bruno BORDE, *La relation entre l'Église et la société civile*, dans *Revue thomiste*, «L'herméneutique de Vatican II», janvier-mars 2010, p. 199.

<sup>9</sup> Voir aussi ce qu'en disait le cardinal Ottaviani dans sa *relatio antedisciplinatioem* à la Commission centrale préparatoire: «In Constitutione proceditur ex S. Scriptura, Patribus, et doctrina S. Magisterii, et nil affirmatur quod non ex doctrina Summorum Pontificum superet omne dubium.» AD, II, II/IV, p. 773. Pour une histoire de la rédaction du *De Beata*, voir Ermanno M. TONIOLO, *La Beata Maria Vergine nel Concilio Vaticano II*, Rome, Centro di cultura Mariana «Madre della Chiesa», 2004.

<sup>10</sup> Voir *Due ecclesiologie. Ecclesiologia giuridica ed ecclesiologia di comunione nella «Lumen gentium»*, Bologne, 1975.

la source de toute détermination prétendant à être normative. Les déterminations sont acquises et elles le sont dans les encycliques, discours et *effata* divers des papes, de Pie IX à Pie XII. La source, c'est l'Église. Je vois là l'aboutissement tragique du mouvement dont j'ai dessiné l'histoire dans ma *Tradition*. Il y a actuellement une véritable dualité dans le comportement romain. D'un côté, les papes proclament que la source et la règle de tout est l'Écriture et la Tradition, et qu'ils ne font, eux, que la garder et l'interpréter. Mais, d'un autre côté, ils agissent, et ils veulent qu'on agisse — et ils font tout, avec une puissance implacable, pour qu'on agisse — comme si eux-mêmes étaient la source<sup>11</sup>.

Le jugement du P. de Lubac n'est pas différent. Au cours des travaux de la Commission théologique préparatoire, il notera :

On peut dire, [...], qu'il y a deux sortes de théologiens ; les uns disent : relisons l'Écriture, saint Paul, etc. ; scrutons la Tradition ; écoutons les grands théologiens classiques ; n'oublions pas de faire attention aux Grecs ; ne négligeons pas l'histoire ; situons dans ce vaste contexte et comprenons d'après lui les textes ecclésiastiques ; ne manquons pas non plus de nous informer des problèmes, des besoins, des difficultés d'aujourd'hui, etc. — les autres disent : Relisons tous les textes ecclésiastiques de ces cent dernières années, encycliques, lettres, discours de circonstance, décisions prises contre tel ou tel, *monita* du Saint-Office, etc. ; de tout cela, sans en rien laisser perdre ni en corriger le moindre mot, faisons une marqueterie, poussons un peu plus loin la pensée, donnons à chaque assertion une valeur plus forte ; surtout, ne regardons rien au dehors ; ne nous perdons pas dans de nouvelles recherches sur l'Écriture ou la Tradition, ni a fortiori sur des pensées récentes, qui nous feraient risquer de relativiser notre absolu. — Seul le théologien de la seconde espèce est considéré comme « sûr » dans un certain milieu<sup>12</sup>.

Ces deux auteurs s'accordent sur une chose : le trait distinctif de ces textes n'est pas à trouver d'abord dans les diverses thématiques théologiques abordées (la participation des laïcs à la vie de l'Église, la sacramentalité de l'épiscopat, la juridiction respective du pape et des évêques, l'Église comme corps mystique, l'appartenance à l'Église, ou la reconduction de la théorie de la société parfaite), ni même dans la position prise en ces diverses matières, mais avant tout dans la manière de construire le discours, ce qui semble en mesure d'en déterminer le contenu. En effet, tous les chapitres, même ceux qui semblent davantage accordés aux mouvements de renouveau du 20<sup>e</sup> s., sont construits de la même manière, soit à partir des enseignements pontificaux, plutôt qu'à partir d'une relecture de l'Écriture et des textes patristiques. On aurait là un premier clivage, qui rejoint un peu celui relevé plus tard par G. Philips dans son fameux article<sup>13</sup>, pour nous aider à discerner la réception par le concile, en sa

<sup>11</sup> Yves CONGAR, *Mon journal du Concile*, Paris, 2002, t. 1, (24 août 1961), p. 57 et 59. Sa troisième critique était de constater que, dans ces schémas, « Il n'y a RIEN d'œcuménique ». (p. 57) Voir le jugement de Gérard Philips qui recoupe celui de Congar, p. 49.

<sup>12</sup> Henri DE LUBAC, *Carnets du concile*, T. 1, Paris, 2007, p. 53. Plusieurs autres passages de ses carnets font écho à cet extrait : « Tout l'essentiel, dans cette commission théologique, est fait par un petit groupe de théologiens romains. [...] Ils savent leur métier, mais peu de choses en plus. On sent chez eux une certaine indifférence à l'égard de l'Écriture, des Pères, de l'Église orientale ; un manque d'intérêt et d'inquiétude à l'égard des doctrines et des courants spirituels actuels contraires à la foi chrétienne ». (p. 34) Voir aussi p. 86 et 115.

<sup>13</sup> La distinction est ici entre théologie « notionnelle » et théologie « réelle ». Voir Gérard PHILIPS, *Deux tendances dans la théologie contemporaine. En marge du II<sup>e</sup> Concile du Vatican*, dans *Nouvelle Revue*

phase préparatoire d'abord, en sa phase conciliaire ensuite, de ce qui s'était élaboré dans l'Église catholique au cours de la première moitié du 20<sup>e</sup> s. Aussi, il apparaît plus approprié, plutôt que d'examiner la réception des encycliques *Mystici corporis* ou *Mediator Dei* dans le schéma *De Ecclesia*, ou des encycliques développant l'enseignement pontifical sur la participation ou la collaboration des laïcs à l'apostolat de la hiérarchie, d'examiner la forme du discours des différents schémas.

S'interroger sur la réception des mouvements de renouveau préconciliaire dans le *De Ecclesia* exige donc que l'on précise la question, et cette précision nous entraînera à distinguer entre différents plans: thématiques, formes du discours, etc. Toutefois, auparavant, il nous faut préciser de quels mouvements préconciliaires l'on parle. Dans sa célèbre conférence de Gênes sur « Le Concile et la pensée moderne », le cardinal Frings (on sait maintenant que cette conférence avait été préparée par J. Ratzinger), après avoir situé le concile sur l'horizon du « monde idéologique d'aujourd'hui », terminait en évoquant les mouvements de renouveau à l'intérieur du catholicisme à la veille de Vatican II. Il observait

que notre siècle est caractérisé par deux grands mouvements charismatiques [...] Il y a, d'une part le mouvement marial [...] Et, d'autre part, il y a le mouvement liturgique [...] Le mouvement liturgique a, de plus, suscité de son côté une quantité d'autres mouvements: à sa suite, on en est venu à une redécouverte de l'Église qui s'est exprimée dans une littérature sur l'Église d'une richesse inouïe et qui se développe toujours; puis, de là, à une redécouverte de l'Écriture sainte et des Pères de l'Église; et cela à son tour a conduit à de nouvelles possibilités de dialogue avec les communautés chrétiennes séparées, dialogue qui avec le Secrétariat pour l'union des chrétiens est désormais profondément ancré dans le magistère de l'Église<sup>14</sup>.

Cette première topographie laisse dans l'ombre certains mouvements, notamment l'apostolat des laïcs ou l'Action catholique et le mouvement missionnaire, pour me limiter à ces deux-là qui ont cependant une grande importance pour l'ecclésiologie. De plus, on pourrait s'interroger sur la séquence que développe le cardinal Frings, plaçant en dépendance du mouvement liturgique le renouveau biblique et patristique.

Ensuite, il nous faut nous demander comment l'on peut vérifier la réception de ces mouvements dans les schémas conciliaires: est-ce au plan méthodologique, au plan thématique, des idées ou du contenu, au plan de la perspective ou de l'orientation du texte, au plan du style de discours, de la rhétorique du texte ou de la forme d'expression de la doctrine, au plan des références? Enfin, il nous faut identifier quels sont les lieux de cette réception? Il nous faut donc bien poser la question si nous voulons arriver à quelques résultats significatifs.

Comme je le disais plus haut, il me semble que l'intérêt principal n'est pas dans une analyse thématique ou une analyse de contenu, même si le travail d'analyse à ces

*théologique*, 85 (1963), p. 225-238. Ailleurs, il distinguera entre « la théologie juridique notionnelle et une théologie de la révélation ouverte qui tient compte du travail scientifique moderne » ou deux conceptions: « la conception angoissée qui veut à tout prix conserver les positions établies, et la tendance qui veut apporter le message évangélique aux hommes ». Voir Karim SCHELKENS (dir.), *Carnets conciliaires de M<sup>gr</sup> Gérard Philips secrétaire adjoint de la Commission doctrinale*, Leuven, 2006, p. 114.

<sup>14</sup> Josef FRINGS, *Le Concile et la pensée moderne*, dans *Documentation catholique*, 59/1370 (1962), col. 266.

différents plans n'est pas sans intérêt. Je crois que la première bataille a eu lieu sur le terrain de la méthode et du style de discours, entendus au sens large pour désigner le *modus loquendi*, et que le choix d'une méthode d'élaboration du discours a eu par la suite un effet sur la perspective du texte, l'orientation du discours, son style, sa forme d'expression et sa rhétorique. Ultimement, un changement de méthode a conduit à une évolution du contenu et à une avancée dans les idées mises en avant.

### LA NON-RÉCEPTION D'UN STYLE

Lors de sa brève *Relatio ante-disceptationem*, le cardinal Ottaviani attire déjà l'attention sur le style : ceux qui ont préparé le schéma, dit-il, ont eu le souci que celui-ci soit le plus pastoral possible, biblique et accessible au plus grand nombre, non scolastique (académique), mais dans une forme actuelle et compréhensible par tous. Je dis cela car je m'attends à entendre la litanie habituelle des Pères conciliaires : le schéma n'est pas œcuménique ni pastoral, il est scolastique et négatif, et autres choses du même genre<sup>15</sup>. Se concentrent dans ce petit paragraphe, quatre traits servant à caractériser ce schéma à partir du style du discours et de sa forme : discours académique ou scolastique, discours pastoral, discours œcuménique, et discours à tonalité biblique. Curieusement, comme dans la discussion qui suivra, le cardinal Ottaviani n'insiste pas sur le contenu de la doctrine proposée dans le schéma (ce que fera un peu la *relatio* Franic qui suivra), mais essentiellement sur le style, comme du reste le P. Rouquette dans sa chronique de la revue *Études* qui résume ainsi les huit jours de débat sur le *De Ecclesia* : « On lui a reproché d'avoir le ton d'une dissertation scolastique, de manquer d'ouverture œcuménique, de n'avoir pas de base scripturaire<sup>16</sup> ». Par la suite, la discussion gravitera essentiellement autour de ces éléments, même si s'y ajouteront d'autres motifs. Certes, on parlera un peu de la présentation de l'Église comme corps mystique, de collégialité des évêques, du laïcat. Toutefois, les contenus sont presque rejetés dans l'ombre ou sont relégués au second plan, la question principale qui oriente tout ce débat demeurant celle du style du discours (*modus loquendi*) ou de la méthode. La question principale est finalement celle posée par Jean XXIII lors de son discours inaugural : comment proposer la doctrine à nos contemporains ?

Commençons par la non-réception d'un style. Celui-ci serait propre aux conciles, comme on le dira lors du débat, et il consiste à présenter la doctrine dans des termes techniques et à définir<sup>17</sup>. Ce style rejeté est aussi celui qui caractérisait l'ecclésiologie depuis l'élaboration des premiers traités : une approche juridique de la réalité ecclésiastique. Enfin, ce style dont on veut prendre ses distances est celui qui a marqué la théo-

<sup>15</sup> «Cura eorum qui praepraverunt schema fuit, ut quam maxime pastorale esset, biblicum et etiam accessibile captui etiam multitudinum, non scholasticum sed potius forma quadam actualiter ab omnibus comprehendenda. Dico haec quia exspecto audire solitas litanias Patrum Conciliarium: non est oecumenicum, est scholasticum, non est pastorale, est negativum et alia huiusmodi». AS I/IV, p. 121. Les autres citations de cette section sont tirées de la même source. Nous en indiquerons la page entre parenthèses.

<sup>16</sup> Voir Robert ROUQUETTE, *La fin d'une chrétienté. Chroniques I*, Paris, p. 261.

<sup>17</sup> Sur le style des conciles précédents, on verra en particulier John W. O'MALLEY, *Vatican II. Did anything Happen?*, dans *Theological Studies*, 67 (2006), en particulier p. 19-21 (repris dans David G. SCHULTENOVER, (dir.), *Vatican II. Did anything Happen*, New York NY, 2007, sp. p. 68-72); Christoph THEOBALD, *La réception du concile Vatican II. T. I: Accéder à la source*, Paris, 2010, p. 57-117.

logie au cours des derniers siècles : style néoscolastique et de la théologie des manuels. Ces trois manières d'exposer la doctrine sont clairement rejetées par plusieurs Pères.

D'une part, on veut tourner le dos à un style conciliaire. Ainsi, reprenant l'indication de Jean XXIII, l'Abbé général de Downside, Christopher Butler, « espère qu'aucun dogme ne sera défini, mais, qu'en concile, un nouveau mode d'exprimer » la doctrine sera élaboré, un mode qui correspond à la fermentation présente aujourd'hui dans la théologie et qui est signe de la vitalité de l'Église, et un mode qui répond au critère de l'adaptation aux circonstances (p. 389).

D'autre part, les critiques sont nombreuses à l'égard d'un des traits caractéristiques de l'ecclésiologie, le juridisme. En effet, comme le souligne Congar dans son histoire de l'ecclésiologie, depuis le Moyen Âge, l'Église s'est pensée à partir de la catégorie de société et à partir de son opposition au monde, ce dernier étant dominé par l'affrontement entre deux puissances, et l'Église se considérant comme pouvoir rival de l'État avec la prétention d'exercer une juridiction sur la cité. De plus, l'Église, comme le monde, s'est conçue comme domaine d'une autorité<sup>18</sup>. C'est donc ce mode d'expression de la doctrine de l'Église que dénonce M<sup>gr</sup> De Smedt (Bruges) dans sa charge contre le « triomphalisme, le cléricalisme et le juridisme », décochant une flèche contre le « style pompeux et romantique auquel nous ont habitués certains textes de l'*Osservatore romano* ou certains documents romains. Ce style, dit-il, n'est pas congruent avec la réalité et le statut réel du peuple de Dieu... (p. 142-144). Cette intervention aura un grand écho et les qualificatifs utilisés par l'évêque de Bruges pour caractériser le style du schéma seront repris par le patriarche Maximos IV qui relève que « ce triomphalisme n'a pas de fondement dans l'Évangile » avant de souligner que « ce caractère purement juridique de l'Église fausse la véritable notion de l'Église du Christ » (p. 295-296). Le juridisme, en particulier, sera pris à parti. En plus de Maximos IV, un autre évêque oriental, M<sup>gr</sup> Hakim, le dénoncera<sup>19</sup>. Pour lui, le schéma « est conçu uniquement dans des catégories juridiques, et le corps mystique lui-même est réduit aux seules réalités visibles. [...] Le *réalisme* de la théologie grecque est atrophié par le *juridisme* du schéma » dont il donne des exemples (p. 359). Ce reproche n'est cependant pas le fait des seuls orientaux. Ainsi, M<sup>gr</sup> Émile Blanchet observe que la notion d'évêque est presque exclusivement juridique et, du même souffle, il plaide pour que la théologie de l'épiscopat procède des données de la révélation et de la tradition des Pères<sup>20</sup>. En effet, une présentation exclusivement juridique, rappelle pour sa part M<sup>gr</sup> D'Souza, donne l'impression que l'Église est une société autocratique et rigide. De plus, cette manière d'en parler confirme une opinion fautive quant à la véritable nature de l'Église (p. 385).

Dans ce premier ensemble de la critique du style juridique du schéma, est déjà proposé, positivement, un autre jeu de référence : la patristique, notamment la

<sup>18</sup> Voir Yves CONGAR, *L'Église de saint Augustin à l'époque moderne*, Paris, 1970, en particulier le chapitre XV, ici p. 462-463.

<sup>19</sup> Voir aussi l'intervention de M<sup>gr</sup> Ghattas (Thèbes) qui « propose que ce schéma soit au moins profondément remanié dans une esprit plus réellement traditionnel », après avoir fait appel à « la tradition de nos Églises d'Orient » (p. 377).

<sup>20</sup> Pour cette partie de son intervention, voir les p. 234-235. On verra aussi à ce sujet les réflexions de M<sup>gr</sup> Méndez Arceo (p. 339).



tradition d'Orient, et les catégories de la Révélation. Quelques Pères, cependant ont relevé le gant et se sont opposés à cette critique du caractère trop juridique du schéma. C'est le cas du cardinal Browne pour qui, « sans droit et sans loi, nous ne pouvons vivre en ce monde, pas même dans l'Église. La charité elle-même ne peut subsister sans lois et sans justice » (p. 232). La réponse la plus systématique vient sans doute de l'évêque d'Aquila, M<sup>gr</sup> Stella qui reprend l'une après l'autre les accusations pour les réfuter (p. 356-357).

On veut aussi rompre avec le style en vigueur dans la théologie des manuels. On trouve plusieurs interventions en ce sens, notamment celle de M<sup>gr</sup> Méndez Arceo (Cuernavaca) pour qui les questions traitées en concile ne doivent pas l'être comme elles le sont dans les livres et sous une forme scolaire (p. 339), réflexion poursuivie par M<sup>gr</sup> Philbin (Dumensis et Connorensis) qui remarque que le but poursuivi n'est pas d'écrire un traité de théologie, comme c'est le cas dans le présent schéma avec ses numéros interminables (p. 342). Le schéma doit au contraire avoir une tonalité mystique, pastorale et missionnaire<sup>21</sup>. L'intervention de M<sup>gr</sup> Georges Hakim (Ptolémée) comporte une ample réflexion sur la forme d'expression que devrait adopter ce schéma et, de manière plus générale, le concile. Pour lui, on devrait « retrouver dans le schéma sur l'Église, non pas les textes de nos manuels classiques d'antan, si exacts puissent-ils être [...] Nous demanderions que l'on parle le langage de notre siècle, [...] et que, en bref, on nous parle comme Jean XXIII, comme l'Évangile. [...] Un tel langage serait compris de tous, chrétiens et même non chrétiens » (p. 358). M<sup>gr</sup> Kozlowiecki (Lusaka) abondait dans le même sens, abordant directement la question du style. Pour lui, il n'était pas nécessaire que la langue soit difficile ou compliquée avec des phrases longues (p. 208).

### LA RECHERCHE D'UN NOUVEAU STYLE

Peu de Pères donnent un *satisfecit* au schéma tel qu'il se présente. Si le cardinal Ruffini considère que l'argument est à la fois théologique et pastoral [...], selon une doctrine vraiment catholique (p. 127), d'autres considéreront que le mode d'expression de la doctrine mis en œuvre dans le schéma est insuffisant et défectueux. Toutefois, on n'arrive pas facilement à décrire et à dessiner les traits de cette « forme pastorale » exigée par notre temps et à laquelle avait fait allusion Jean XXIII dans son discours d'ouverture. À défaut de modèle, dans cette recherche de ce nouveau style, le *Nuntio ad omnes homines* fait figure de modèle, au moins pour le cardinal Bea. Ce message ne s'adresse pas simplement aux professeurs de théologie, ni aux prêtres, ni même aux seuls fidèles catholiques, mais à tous les chrétiens et à tous les hommes, et il leur expose la doctrine du Christ sous un mode intelligible et acceptable (p. 229).

Dans cette recherche, nous le verrons par les interventions lors du débat, il n'y a pas simplement l'indication de Jean XXIII que nous rencontrerons régulièrement, mais probablement aussi l'influence en profondeur du mouvement missionnaire qui traverse la première moitié du siècle, et du mouvement de renouveau de la catéchèse par le courant kérygmatic, qui tous deux agissent probablement à la manière des eaux

<sup>21</sup> Pour son intervention, AS I/IV, p. 341. Voir aussi l'observation de M<sup>gr</sup> Buckley, préposé général des S.M.: « Schema de Ecclesia quod sit pastorale et oecumenicum, debet in sua structura inserere ideam individuae personae eiusque libertatis... » (p. 355).

souterraines, même si cela n'apparaît pas explicitement. Cela transparait notamment dans l'intervention de M<sup>gr</sup> Huyghe (Arras) qui réclame que la doctrine énoncée par le concile soit imprégnée d'un esprit évangélique, esprit ouvert et réellement catholique, esprit missionnaire, et esprit d'humilité et de service. Pour lui, il n'est pas suffisant de réformer le schéma. Encore faut-il y introduire un nouvel esprit. Dans tout le schéma, poursuit-il, on présente l'Église comme une puissance à laquelle doivent se soumettre toutes les nations et tous les hommes (p. 196). Derrière cette intervention, on sent tout le renouveau pastoral français de l'après-guerre et les expériences missionnaires qui sont conduites en France à la suite de la lettre pastorale du cardinal Shuard « France pays de mission » et de la création de la mission de France.

La référence à Jean XXIII, figure d'autorité qui cautionne les appels au renouveau, est fréquente. C'est le cas du cardinal Léger qui constate que la mentalité des pères conciliaires a été rénovée au cours des deux derniers mois, sur les indications du pape. Il faut renouveler désormais la mentalité de l'Église (p. 182-183). Sa remarque est reprise par Denis Hurley (Durban) qui propose que, au cours de l'intersession, toute la préparation du concile soit reprise, sous la direction d'une nouvelle commission centrale « *ad mentem Summi Pontificis clare exponere...* » (p. 197). Toutefois, la réflexion de Hurley sur le mode d'expression ne s'arrête pas là. Elle est ample et profonde, et contient de nombreux éléments. Pour lui, le concile n'a pas été convoqué pour définir des vérités anciennes, mais pour renouveler l'action pastorale de l'Église (p. 198). L'office pastoral consiste à proposer aux hommes la vérité suivant un mode qui ne consiste pas en une simple adaptation du vocabulaire et de la forme d'expression, mais dans une manière de parler qui ne soit pas scolaire ni juridique et qui manifeste de l'amour pour Dieu et les hommes (p. 198). Ce mode d'expression requiert que la doctrine se saisisse de questions qui répondent réellement aux interrogations qui concernent leur fin suprême. La vérité ne doit pas être diminuée ou changée, mais scrutée grâce à un retour aux sources et rénovée de manière à ce qu'il ne s'agisse pas d'une doctrine vraie en soi, mais destinée aux hommes auxquels elle est adressée. Une doctrine actuelle et efficace, apte à satisfaire les justes requêtes et les questions des hommes. Notre discours ne doit pas seulement exprimer quelque chose de vrai, mais dire quelque chose qui concerne les hommes de ce temps. Il faut se rappeler l'adage « *Quidquid recipitur secundum modum recipientis recipitur* ». Le concile doit donner une nouvelle impulsion à la prédication de l'Évangile dans le monde d'aujourd'hui. Pour prêcher l'Évangile aux Grecs, Paul fit usage de la langue grecque. Les docteurs médiévaux firent usage de concepts et du vocabulaire scolastique pour exprimer la vérité chrétienne, etc.<sup>22</sup>

Cela fait partie de la tradition de l'Église d'adapter sa prédication aux divers peuples et aux temps. Le concile de Trente a produit un nouveau type d'évêque, non suivant le modèle féodal du Moyen Âge ou le modèle humaniste de la Renaissance, mais suivant un modèle pastoral et ajusté aux nécessités de la société post-tridentine. Quant à nous, nous sommes envoyés à un monde très différent : un monde qui n'est pas, à la différence du monde post-tridentin, attaché aux principes de la religion, mais qui ne s'en soucie guère, un monde

<sup>22</sup> Pour son intervention, voir AS I/IV, p. 198. Voir aussi M<sup>gr</sup> Rabban qui constate que le schéma fait usage d'expressions traditionnelles et familières aux étudiants, mais moins heureuses lorsqu'il s'agit d'exprimer la vérité et de la rendre acceptable (p. 237).

qui travaille aux problèmes de la vie humaine sur terre et à son évolution. Nous sommes appelés à être pasteurs des hommes de ce monde-là et, pour cela, au besoin, recourir à un nouveau mode de parler. Ce monde nouveau requiert des pasteurs d'un nouveau type, pas moins « doctrinaires » que les pasteurs de Trente, qui ne se contentèrent pas d'annoncer la doctrine en soi mais de répondre aux questions des hommes. Que Dieu fasse qu'une nouvelle génération de pasteurs émerge du concile Vatican II, comparable à la génération tridentine, mais qui convient pleinement aux hommes de ce siècle (p. 199).

Toutefois, cette recherche d'un nouveau style, plus pastoral, ne convainc pas tout le monde. On n'est pas prêt à renoncer sans combat à un style conciliaire séculaire et à rayer d'un trait de plume le schéma préparé par la Commission. L'intervention de Marcel Lefebvre est emblématique. Pour lui, on ne peut poursuivre, en un seul texte, des fins aussi diverses sinon opposées : exposer la doctrine et extirper les erreurs, d'une part, et favoriser l'œcuménisme et présenter la vérité à tous les hommes, d'autre part. Nous sommes pasteurs, poursuit-il, et nous savons que nous parlons différemment aux laïcs et aux prêtres. Comment définir la doctrine de manière à ne pas donner prise aux erreurs de ce temps et, en même temps, à la rendre intelligible à tous ? Après avoir fait référence au discours inaugural de Jean XXIII qui avait rappelé que cette doctrine avait été transmise « dans sa plénitude avec cette précision de termes et de concepts qui a fait la gloire particulièrement du Concile de Trente et du premier Concile du Vatican », il propose d'exprimer la doctrine sous un mode dogmatique et scolastique pour les experts, et de la présenter sous un mode plus pastoral pour l'édification des autres<sup>23</sup>. Ainsi, croit-il, le concile aura inculqué aux futurs pasteurs un amour de la saine doctrine transmise dans son intégrité.

Prenant la parole immédiatement après et répondant presque mot-à-mot à cette proposition, l'évêque auxiliaire de Strasbourg, M<sup>sr</sup> Elchinger, réfléchit à ce que veut dire doctrinal et pastoral. Si l'on dit qu'il ne faut pas confondre une constitution pastorale avec une exhortation spirituelle destinée aux fidèles, il faut ajouter que les fidèles attendent du concile une présentation du « mystère de l'Église » qui rejoigne les questions d'aujourd'hui, et non seulement les fidèles catholiques, mais aussi ceux qui n'appartiennent pas à l'Église romaine. Nonobstant l'opportunité d'une déclaration doctrinale dans une forme quasi théologique, nous avons besoin d'une annonce doctrinale directement pastorale, sous la forme d'un document spécial, pour dire aux hommes d'aujourd'hui qu'ils sont appelés et aimés de l'Église du Christ. Ceci dit, il demeure que la présentation doctrinale destinée aux théologiens et aux évêques doit être elle aussi pastorale, l'intention pastorale n'étant pas simplement quelque chose surajoutée à une explication doctrinale, mais ce qui doit animer et orienter l'exposé doctrinal de manière à ce que les hommes puissent aimer la vérité et accéder à Dieu (p. 147).

Dans ces diverses interventions, la question des destinataires, question récurrente dans ce débat, et la référence au temps présent, exprimée par l'adverbe « aujourd'hui » et les qualificatifs « de ce temps » ou « de notre temps », sont à l'avant-plan. De plus, on l'a vu, le spectre des destinataires s'élargit considérablement, suivant l'exemple des

<sup>23</sup> Pour son intervention, voir AS I/IV, p. 144-145. Voir aussi la reprise de cette idée dans l'intervention de M<sup>sr</sup> Thomas Holland qui propose la rédaction d'un document à caractère kérygmatic, où les vérités seraient exposées dans un style fluide, expurgé de toutes expressions techniques (p. 247).

encycliques de Jean XXIII. Il ne s'agit pas simplement des catholiques et des chrétiens, ou, pour l'Occident, des athées, mais également de tous les hommes, ce qui fournit déjà le programme du concile. Ainsi, pour M<sup>gr</sup> D'Souza (Nagpur), la proposition de la doctrine doit être faite sous un mode intelligible, non seulement pour les théologiens, mais aussi pour tous les fidèles, pour tous les chrétiens, mêmes pour ceux qui sont hors de l'Église. Pour lui, les Pères conciliaires doivent avoir sans cesse en vue ceux qui sont hors de l'Église (p. 384-385).

Dans cette discussion sur la méthode de présentation de la doctrine, le cardinal Gracias (Bombay) fait entendre une tonalité particulière. Certes, reconnaît-il, il convient d'être attentif, comme on le rappelle, aux frères séparés; plus encore aux orthodoxes qu'aux protestants, les premiers ne représentant que cent-onze millions d'adhérents, alors que les seconds en comptent deux-cent-neuf millions. Beaucoup plus nombreux encore sont les musulmans, les hindouistes et les bouddhistes (en Inde seulement les hindouistes sont au nombre de 370 millions) qui ont une littérature propre et un système philosophique et théologique original. S'il n'est pas possible que le concile détermine un mode définitif de présentation, il peut assurément recommander certaines méthodes de présentation de la doctrine. Pourquoi, se demande-t-il, ne pas faire, avec les écrits théologiques et philosophiques du bouddhisme et l'hindouisme, ce que Thomas a fait avec Aristote et Augustin avec Platon<sup>24</sup>.

Cependant, ce désir de s'adresser à tous les hommes, sous le mode d'une annonce kérygmaticque ne convainc pas tout le monde. Par exemple, Jubany Arnaud précise clairement que le schéma n'est pas une exhortation pastorale à l'adresse de ceux qui sont considérés comme hors de l'Église. La question se pose alors de savoir s'il veut définir de nouvelles vérités ou simplement redire des vérités qui sont déjà le patrimoine de l'Église. Dans ce cas, il doit s'abstenir de prendre position sur des questions débattues entre écoles de théologiens (p. 201 ss.).

### QUELQUES PROPOSITIONS DE RENOUVEAU

Au-delà des refus ou des prises de distance, au-delà des interrogations qui expriment une recherche sans parvenir à une proposition claire quant au style à adopter, le débat offre un certain nombre de propositions pour renouveler le *modus loquendi*. Ces propositions sont souvent liées aux mouvements de renouveau préconciliaire : les mouvements biblique, patristique et œcuménique.

Ainsi, le débat illustre la réception par les Pères des mouvements bibliques ou patristiques et leur geste reprend en quelque sorte celui caractéristique de la « Nouvelle théologie », *ad fontes*. En effet, plusieurs Pères considéreraient que le schéma faisait un usage déficient de l'Écriture sainte. C'est le cas, par exemple, du cardinal Döpfner et de M<sup>gr</sup> Volk (p. 184 et 387-388). De son côté, M<sup>gr</sup> Denis Hurley (Durban), réclamait que le schéma présente une théologie rénovée par la Sainte Écriture, la patristique et l'histoire ecclésiastique (p. 198). Pour sa part, le cardinal Frings observait que, dans les six pages de citations du chapitre IV, on ne trouve à peu près rien des Pères grecs, et peu de choses des Pères latins et du Moyen Âge. À peu près toutes les citations sont du dernier siècle. Il observait la même chose à la lecture des chapitres VI à VIII : toutes

<sup>24</sup> On verra son intervention à la p. 177 et la longue note 27 des p. 179 et 180.

les références sont du 20<sup>e</sup> s., excepté une citation du Pape Innocent III, une de St-Thomas d'Aquin, et une du concile de Trente. C'est sensiblement la même chose dans les autres chapitres de la constitution. Je me demande, ajoutait-il, si cette manière de procéder est juste, universelle, scientifique, œcuménique, catholique, au sens grec du terme, « *Katholon* », c.-à-d. quelque chose en mesure de tout saisir et qui s'intéresse à tout. En ce sens, on peut se demander si un tel *modus procedendi* est vraiment catholique » (p. 219). Un tel défaut, ajoute-t-il, et c'est là une remarque particulièrement intéressante, n'atteint pas simplement l'extérieur des choses, mais affecte la doctrine elle-même, ce qu'il illustre par des exemples, notamment l'interprétation que fait le schéma d'un passage de l'Écriture (« *unus panis, unum corpus sumus* »), qui est lue de manière plus juridique et sociologique que théologique. Il demande, en finale, que le texte soit amendé en profondeur au cours de l'intersession de manière à le rendre plus catholique (p. 220).

Cette intervention de Frings sera reprise par d'autres Pères, notamment le cardinal Bea qui relève au passage que les sources auxquelles renvoie le chapitre VII (*de magisterio*) se limitent aux cent, sinon aux deux cents dernières années. M<sup>fr</sup> Hakim y fait aussi référence, constatant que « le *De Ecclesia* ne tient pas compte de la pensée orientale. [...] dans les quelques 300 notes et renvois de ce schéma, qui tiennent près de la moitié des pages, ajoute-t-il, seuls 5 renvois font mention des Pères Grecs ». Et de dénoncer à son tour l'absence de catholicité de cette pensée : « Et pourtant, l'Église catholique n'a-t-elle pas intérêt à s'enrichir de cette pensée, qui fait partie de son patrimoine, à être vraiment catholique et donc plus ouverte au dialogue œcuménique ? » (p. 359). Avec le cardinal Florit et M<sup>fr</sup> Blanchet, ces Pères réclament que l'on ait davantage recours aux sources patristiques, orientales en particulier (p. 299).

Du reste, qu'elle soit explicite ou non, la référence à l'ecclésiologie des Pères de l'Église est sous-jacente à toutes les interventions qui réclament que l'Église soit considérée comme mystère et pas simplement comme société. Le lien entre patristique et approche mystérique de l'Église est d'ailleurs fait par Hakim (p. 359) et le cardinal Lefèvre (p. 371). Cet appel à la notion de mystère n'est pas non plus étranger au mouvement liturgique, ce dernier étant très lié au renouveau de l'ecclésiologie.

Le cardinal Bea reviendra également sur la question du rapport aux sources (Écriture et Tradition, en particulier la plus ancienne), en se posant la question « *Quid de modo proponendi doctrinam ?* ». Pour lui, il ne s'agit pas d'ajouter à l'infini des renvois à l'Écriture qui ne seraient que décoratifs, mais de développer la pensée à partir de l'Écriture. Pour lui, le caractère pastoral du document est manifesté dans le mode même de l'exposé (p. 229). C'est aussi l'avis de M<sup>fr</sup> Devoto (Guyanne), pour qui la présentation de l'Église dans la Bible n'est pas de nature essentialiste, mais existentielle (p. 250), ou de M<sup>fr</sup> Ancel (Lyon) qui suggère un recours direct à la manière de parler de l'Évangile (p. 380). L'utilisation de l'Écriture dans le schéma est aussi critiquée par H. Volk, pour qui le « *modus loquendi schematis nostri valde differt a modo loquendi Sacrae Scripturae* » (p. 388). De son côté, M<sup>fr</sup> Blanchet, en plus de réclamer une théologie de l'épiscopat consonante avec l'Écriture, reproche au schéma de ne pas faire un usage rigoureux de l'Écriture<sup>25</sup>.

<sup>25</sup> Pour son intervention, voir p. 235. Voir aussi l'intervention de M<sup>fr</sup> Hakim qui réclame un retour « aux sources apostoliques ». (p. 360)

Le caractère œcuménique est également très prégnant, d'abord dans l'intervention de D. Hurley (p. 198), mais c'est sans doute le Patriarche Maximos IV qui donne la plus grande leçon à ceux qui sont réticents à l'égard de l'œcuménisme. Après avoir démontré l'unilatéralité de l'exposé doctrinal du schéma et, par conséquent, son caractère incomplet et partial, il semonce « une certaine école [qui] traite les problèmes théologiques, jusqu'à les défigurer, quitte ensuite à accuser l'œcuménisme de vouloir atténuer la vérité et de chercher des compromis dans la Foi. De tels compromis, personne n'en veut, ni les œcuménistes catholiques, ni nos frères orthodoxes ou protestants. Ce que nous demandons et ce qu'ils demandent, c'est que toute la vérité révélée soit dite et non pas une partie de la vérité, et qu'elle soit dite avec exactitude » (p. 296).

### CONCLUSION

Au vu de ce premier débat sur le *De Ecclesia*, tout l'enjeu semble résider dans cette alternative: allait-on affirmer en premier lieu le mystère de l'Église ou fixer l'attention uniquement sur son caractère sociétaire et hiérarchique, sa dimension visible et extérieure? En d'autres termes, allait-on la définir à partir de la catégorie philosophique et juridique de société ou à partir de son mystère? La question n'est donc pas de savoir si le schéma reçoit ou non l'ecclésiologie du corps mystique, ou l'enseignement des encycliques sur le laïc, ou les développements sur le ministère épiscopal. Elle est beaucoup plus profonde et relève de la façon d'élaborer un discours ecclésiologique: la méthode, les sources, la finalité, etc. En effet, bien que plusieurs reconnaissent que le schéma opérait avec la notion de « corps mystique », qui « faisait précisément l'objet d'une joyeuse découverte », notait Congar<sup>26</sup>, il leur semblait qu'elle était interprétée en un sens juridique étranger à ce que présente l'Écriture. Il faut donc situer ailleurs que dans l'émergence de nouvelles thématiques la réception des mouvements préconciliaires.

Certains se sont demandé si les divergences relevées au cours de ce débat sur le *De Ecclesia* relevaient seulement de la forme ou de la doctrine elle-même. Pour le cardinal Bacci, « *non agitur de substantia, sed de forma* » ou « *non in doctrina catholica [...], sed in modo tantum quo eadem doctrina proponi debeat* » (p. 231). Il a en partie raison, mais en partie seulement. C'est là que l'on retrouve le lien qui unit de manière indissociable le mode d'élaboration du discours et son contenu, ou la forme d'expression et la substance. Le choix des concepts, de la méthode, des sources et des destinataires n'est pas innocent quant au contenu du texte élaboré. Comme le reconnaissait Congar, « la porte par laquelle on entre dans une question décide des chances d'une heureuse ou moins heureuse solution. Les concepts qu'on utilise alors sont largement déterminants pour la suite<sup>27</sup> ». Suivant que l'on réfléchit à partir du concept de « société » ou de « mystère », suivant que les sources mises en œuvre sont les encycliques du dernier siècle ou l'Écriture et la patristique, que les destinataires sont les chrétiens comme les

<sup>26</sup> Il note qu'« il est paru, dans les années 1920-1925, autant d'articles sur le Corps mystique que dans les vingt années précédentes; il en est paru, en 1930-1935 cinq fois plus qu'en 1920-1925 », voir Yves CONGAR, *Ministère et communion ecclésiale*, Paris, 1971, p. 11. Congar renvoie à Joseph BLUETT, *The Mystical Body. A Bibliography, 1890-1940*, dans *Theological Studies*, 3 (1942), p. 260-289.

<sup>27</sup> *Mon cheminement*, p. 17-18.

non-chrétiens et pas seulement les théologiens, etc., le texte produit est porteur, en final, d'une « substance » différente, ou conduit à l'élaboration d'une doctrine un peu différente.

Dans son article sur « Deux tendances dans la théologie contemporaine. En marge du II<sup>e</sup> Concile du Vatican », G. Philips distinguait entre la théologie notionnelle et réelle, distinction que l'on retrouvait à l'époque dans d'autres publications. Ainsi, par exemple, P. Vallain distinguait entre une « théologie conceptuelle, rationnelle, rationaliste même », et une « théologie vivante, renouvelée par les sources... cohérente avec la mentalité d'aujourd'hui, plus traditionnelle...<sup>28</sup> ». Pour sa part, R. Laurentin distinguait entre deux écoles théologiques :

L'une pense notions et normes, elle met tout son soin à leur donner une netteté irréfragable, et si possible, univoque. Pour elle, la théologie a pour tâche de promouvoir des formules dogmatiques irréfutables, de réduire les zones d'obscurité où s'exerce encore librement la discussion théologique. Elle supporte mal ces hésitations peu conformes à la nature monolithique de la vérité. Aussi est-elle portée à définir et à condamner. [...]

L'autre école pense Histoire du Salut et Annonce aux hommes de la « Bonne Nouvelle » c.-à-d. de l'Évangile. Elle tient à garder contact avant tout avec cette source jaillissante inépuisable. D'où l'importance que prend en elle [...] le ressourcement, c.-à-d. le culte du retour aux sources [...]

Quant à la racine de la divergence, elle est double. Il y a ceux qui sont entrés dans la voie du ressourcement et ceux qui n'y entrent pas<sup>29</sup>.

On le voit, déjà à l'époque du concile, on avait saisi que la réception des renouveaux préconciliaires dépassait la simple question thématique. Ce qui est en jeu, c'est une méthode théologique et un *modus loquendi* déterminé, en amont, par le ressourcement et, en aval, par les destinataires à qui on veut s'adresser. Ce recadrage de la discussion sur la théologie, sa méthode et sa finalité, a l'avantage de poser autrement le problème et de nous éloigner des catégories « progressistes » et « traditionalistes » pour la désignation des protagonistes. Cela pose également en d'autres termes la question de la continuité, qui ne porte pas d'abord sur les enseignements de Vatican II mais sur un style théologique.

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<sup>28</sup> *Rythmes du monde*, 1 (1963), p. 53.

<sup>29</sup> René LAURENTIN, *L'enjeu du concile. Bilan de la première session*, Paris, 1963, p. 29-34.





## THE STRUGGLE FOR NOSTRA AETATE

THE “QUAESTIONE EBRAICA” FROM 1960-1962 : ISSUES AND INFLUENCES

### I

On June 5, 1960 Pope John XXIII formally brought to a close the antepreparatory period of the Second Vatican Council (1959-60) and began the preparatory phase. On that day he established commissions, secretariats and an overarching Central Preparatory Commission, that would oversee the council’s planning. The ideas that had been solicited the year prior, from the worldwide church —bishops, religious superiors, theologates, and seminaries— for discussion at the Council were studied and topics were drawn-up and assigned to the preparatory bodies. Absent from among them though was anything related to the relations of the Catholic Church with the Jewish people.

The history of *Nostra Aetate* is well known. It has been chronicled many times by those who were there at the beginning, during the time of the establishment of the Vatican’s Secretariat for Christian Unity in 1960, and by researchers and historians of the Council since.<sup>1</sup> The story begins in June 1960 and finishes in October 1965. It follows a vicissitudinous path not unlike the other conciliar texts, undergoing redrafting and revising, being the subject of discussions and debates, and also, at times, the center of controversy and internal conciliar polemics. There is, however, an element to the history of *Nostra Aetate* that is unique to it among the documents of Vatican II. Its history, especially during the preparatory period of the Council, is closely tied to the political interests of a national body —the State of Israel, which at the time was only a little more than a decade old.

The history of *Nostra Aetate* from June 1960 to June 1962 was heavily influenced by secular politics that were interwoven into the internal development of the document within the Church itself. During this time, there were those within the Church who actively supported the document for theological reasons and for the purpose of overcoming the Church’s long-standing anti-Jewish tradition. There were those for whom relations with the Jews were not important and who were neither supportive

<sup>1</sup> Cf. John M. OESTERREICHER, *Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions*, in Herbert VORGRIMLER (ed.), *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, Vol. 3, New York NY, 1967, p. 1-137; Augustin BEA, *The Church and the Jewish People. A Commentary on the Second Vatican Council’s Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions*, London, 1966; Thomas STRANSKY, *The Foundation of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity*, in Alberic STACPOOLE (ed.), *Vatican II Revisited by Those Who Were There*, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1986, p.62-87; as well as the more current and detailed presentation in Giuseppe ALBERIGO and Joseph A. KOMONCHAK (ed.), *History of Vatican II*, Vols. 1-5, Maryknoll – Leuven, 1995-2006.

nor obstructive. And there were those who were opposed to it —some because the idea of a positive statement on the Jews was too new (“Was Catholic theology prepared for it?”),<sup>2</sup> others because relations with the Jews had political implications for the Church in the Middle East. At the same time, though, there were also those outside of the Church who supported it for reasons of political gain. In fact this was the most influential factor that led to the document’s downfall in spring 1962, raising the question as to whether the council would even have a statement on the Jewish people. As Cardinal Augustin Bea would later say to the Council Fathers regarding the schema being dropped from the conciliar agenda in June 1962: the reason was not because of “ideas or doctrine” but “solely for the infelicitous political circumstances at the time.”<sup>3</sup>

This paper examines the issues and influences, especially through the lens of individuals, in the support of and resistance to what was known at the beginning—in June 1960—as simply the “*Quaestione ebraica*”. The period of study is the two years from June 1960 to June 1962. During this time, I consider Pope John XXIII’s attitude to the Jewish question, and the outlook of the two main figures of the Secretariat for Christian Unity (SCU):<sup>4</sup> the Cardinal President, Augustin Bea, and his Secretary, Johannes Willebrands. I also look at the one who was the first to raise the Jewish Question as a possible topic for the Council: the 20<sup>th</sup> century, French Jewish historian, Jules Isaac. Without Isaac, there may likely have been no document on the Jews at Vatican II. Finally, and most significantly, I look at Israeli politics and the persistent attempts on the part of the Israeli Foreign Ministry during this time to “breach the Vatican gates, politically speaking.”<sup>5</sup> The result is a moment in the study of Vatican II that reveals a conflation of issues: theological, historical, and political both within the Vatican, and between nations: the State of Israel and the City State of the Vatican and bears witness to the influence of political interest on theological efforts.

## II

Pope John XXIII was sympathetic to the Jews. In the decades before his election as Pope, he had been Apostolic Nuncio to France and before that, Apostolic Delegate in Turkey and Greece. During this time, he became aware of tragedy that was happening to the Jews under the Nazi regime and worked with others to save those condemned to deportation and the death camps.<sup>6</sup> On Good Friday 1959, during the first Holy

<sup>2</sup> Thomas STRANSKY, *Holy Diplomacy. Making the Impossible Possible*, in Roger BROOKS (ed.), *Unanswered Questions. Theological Views of Jewish Catholic Relations*, Notre Dame IN, 1988, p. 57.

<sup>3</sup> Augustin BEA, *De Catholicorum Habitudine ad Non Christianos et Maxime ad Iudaeos in Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani II*, II/V (18 November 1963), Vatican, 1973, p. 481. Cited hereafter as AS.

<sup>4</sup> Pope John XXIII created the Secretariat on June 5, 1960 as one of the preparatory bodies of the upcoming Council. Cf. Pope John XXIII, *Superno Dei Nutu*, in *The Pope Speaks*, 6 (Summer 1960), p. 240-243.

<sup>5</sup> Uri BIALER, *Cross on the Star of David. The Christian World in Israel’s Foreign Policy, 1948-1967*, Bloomington IN, 2005, p. 57.

<sup>6</sup> Alberto MELLONI, *Fra Istanbul, Atene e la Guerra. La missione di A. G. Roncalli (1935-1944)*, Genova, 1992, p. 258-268 and 275-279; Cf. also Angelo Giuseppe RONCALLI, *La mia vita in Oriente. Agende del*

Week after his election, he eliminated the adjective “perfidious” from the prayer for the Jews.<sup>7</sup> Clearly he recognized the offensiveness of these words to the Jewish people. Perhaps more importantly though was his recognition of the influence that the prayers had had in perpetuating an anti-Jewish sentiment within the Catholic Church. Two other gestures during his pontificate also demonstrate his affection for the Jewish people.<sup>8</sup> During an audience with some Jews in October 1960, the Pope greeted them —arms wide open— with the words “I am Joseph, your brother!” The other occurred in March 1962, when Pope John found himself passing in front of a synagogue in Rome. He reached out of the car and blessed a group of Jews who were leaving the building. A rabbi, who witnessed it, later wrote: “...the Jews surrounded him and applauded him... enthusiastically. It was in fact the first time in history that a Pope had blessed Jews and it was perhaps the first real gesture of reconciliation”.<sup>9</sup>

Equally important in discerning the Pope’s attitude toward the Jews was his meeting with the elderly, French, Jewish historian, Jules Isaac in late spring 1962. On June 13, eight days after the start of the preparatory period, the Pope received the 82-year-old Isaac in a private audience. Isaac was a scholar who had spent much of his later life studying the cause of anti-Semitism. He was well known in France as the author of a multi-volume manual of history studied by generations of secondary students in that country. Isaac had felt personally the pain of anti-Judaism many times in his own life, but none so acutely as when he lost his wife, his daughter, and son-in-law in the Holocaust.<sup>10</sup> After the war, he discovered he had a mission. He had to do what he could to eliminate the anti-Jewish hatred he had discovered within Christianity. He soon realized that in order for change to take place in the Catholic Church, it must start at the top “...and an idea ripened and took root in him.”<sup>11</sup> He later explained that Pope John XXIII’s election and his call for a Council had given him a new sense of hope: “For the first time, contrary to what I had thought prior to then, I considered the possibility of an approach at the highest level”.<sup>12</sup> Through the encouragement of friends and the local bishop of Aix-en Provence, where he lived, he secured an audience with the Pope. For him, the goal of the meeting was clear: “the revision of Christian teaching about the Jews”.<sup>13</sup>

*delegato apostolico*. Vol. 2: 1940-1944, Valeria MARTANO (ed.), Bologna, 2008, p. XVI-XVIII.

<sup>7</sup> Loris CAPOVILLA, *Lettere 1958-1963*, Rome, 1978, p. 484.

<sup>8</sup> José Oscar BEOZZO, *The External Climate*, in Giuseppe ALBERIGO and Joseph KOMONCHAK (ed.), *History of Vatican II*, Vol. 1, New York, 1995, p. 395.

<sup>9</sup> Elio TOAFF, *Perfidi guide – fratelli maggiori*, Milan, 1987, p. 219-220.

<sup>10</sup> Here I am following the account of the meeting as recorded in Stjepan SCHMIDT, *Augustin Bea. The Cardinal of Unity*, New York, 1992, p. 33ff.

<sup>11</sup> Maria VINGIANI, *Jules Isaac. Il promotore de dialogo ebraico-cristiano a venti anni della morte*, in *Ecumenismo Anni '80. Atti XXI Settimana di formazione ecumenica 1983*, Verona, 1984, p. 332, as cited in SCHMIDT, *Augustin Bea*, p. 333.

<sup>12</sup> Jules ISAAC, *Le Vatican et nous*, in *Arche*, 69 (October 1962), p. 30, as cited in Stjepan SCHMIDT, *Augustin Bea*, p. 333.

<sup>13</sup> SCHMIDT, *Augustin Bea*, p. 333.

Isaac met with Pope John early in the afternoon on June 13.<sup>14</sup> He began by introducing himself as a “non-Christian, a promoter of the Jewish-Christian Friendship association in France (*l’Amitié Judéo-Chrétienne de France*), and as a very deaf old man.” He found the Pope to be, as he described, “simplicity personified.” He thanked the Pope for the things he had already done for Jews and described the “great hope” that the Pope had already raised “in the hearts of the people of the Old Testament.” But Isaac wondered to himself: How in the few minutes he had, could he make the Pope understand “the spiritual ghetto to which the church had gradually consigned the biblical Israel?” According to Isaac’s research there were two currents in the Catholic Church in the late 1950s/early 1960s regarding its relations with the Jews. The one Isaac labeled a “teaching of contempt” that had arisen over the centuries resulting in a system of “restrictions, exclusions, humiliations and servitude”<sup>15</sup> toward the Jewish people. The other was a newer “purifying counter-current”, which sought to rectify the wrongs committed throughout history. To his mind, if a voice could come from the highest point in the Church —its head— condemning this “teaching of contempt” it would go far to help Jewish-Christian relations. At the end of the meeting Isaac suggested the setting up of a sub-commission charged with the task of studying the ‘Jewish Question’. The Pope responded by saying that he’d been thinking of that from the beginning of their meeting. Isaac departed asking the Pope if he could “take away some grain of hope” that something might be done. The Pope responded, “You have the right to more than hope” and invited Isaac to take the next step and contact C<sup>al</sup> Augustin Bea.<sup>16</sup>

It would be difficult to overestimate the importance of that meeting on June 13, both for the document on the Jews but also subsequently, for relations between Jews and Roman Catholics. It was pivotal. Loris Capovilla, Pope John’s personal secretary, later wrote, “Until that day, it had not crossed John XXIII’s mind that the Council should also deal with the Jewish question and anti-Semitism”. From that day on, however, the Pope was firmly behind the idea.<sup>17</sup>

Two days later, on June 15, Jules Isaac met with C<sup>al</sup> Bea for more than an hour. He found him open and intelligent, and an excellent speaker of French who spoke frankly about the problems between Jews and Christians. Bea too, was deeply interested in the Jews. In 1962, Bea had prepared an article on the Jewish people for publication in an Italian Jesuit review. However, the Vatican Secretary of State asked him not to publish it for fear that it would upset the Arab governments that were sensitive to anything that might be considered supportive of Israel. Bea conceded. Twenty years later, however, C<sup>al</sup> Willebrands, who was the first Secretary of the Secretariat for Christian Unity under Bea, retrieved and presented it. Willebrands called the article a “very valuable guide” to Bea’s personal thinking about the Jews in the early 1960s.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>14</sup> The following comes from Jules ISAAC, *Autobiographical Report of Meeting with Pope John XXIII*, in *SIDIC*, 3(1968), p. 10-12; Cf. also Jean TOULAT, *Juifs, mes frères*, Paris, 1962, p. 152.

<sup>15</sup> Jules ISAAC, *The Teaching of Contempt. Christian Roots of Anti-Semitism*, New York, 1964, p. 35.

<sup>16</sup> SCHMIDT, *Augustin Bea*, p. 336.

<sup>17</sup> SCHMIDT, *Augustin Bea*, p. 336.

<sup>18</sup> Johannes WILLEBRANDS, *Cardinal Bea’s Attitude to Relations with the Jews – Unpublished Details*, in *Atti del Simposio Card. Agostino Bea*, Rome, 1983, p. 79.

Two sections in particular illustrate Bea's fondness for them. He wrote that even in their suffering, the Jewish people continue to be bearers of divine revelation and valuable instruments of God's merciful design.<sup>19</sup> Christians owe "the duty of charity" to this people. They are "our ancestors according to the Spirit". We are indebted to them as "to those who have given us life" but so much more so since "the gifts we have received from God through his people are greater, more public, more decisive, being spiritual and supernatural..."<sup>20</sup>

Bea spent the months after this meeting with Isaac reflecting on the Jewish question. On September 14, 1960, after his summer holidays, he wrote to the Pope asking to have a personal meeting with him about "certain questions concerning the Secretariat for Christian Unity" and especially "the question concerning relations with the Jews and Catholics, on which I am frequently consulted".<sup>21</sup> Four days later, on September 18, he met with Pope John, who formally entrusted him with the responsibility for relations with the Jews.<sup>22</sup>

Bea was not unaware of the complications that might arise in relation to the Council dealing with the Jewish question, especially within the Jewish world itself. Thus a month later, on October 26, 1960, Bea met with Nahum Goldmann, President of the World Jewish Congress (WJC) to inform him that the Pope had put the question of Christians and Jews on the agenda of the Council and had charged him with the task of dealing with it.<sup>23</sup> The World Jewish Congress had been suggested to Bea as the body most representative of the diversity of global Judaism. It was thus thought to be a good partner for him. Bea acknowledged that there would be opposition, even among his colleagues in the Curia. However, he was determined to do all that he could in order to bring about a positive outcome at the Council. He said that the first step must be for Jewish organizations to submit a memorandum to the Secretariat, indicating their interest in having the Jewish-Catholic matter on the Council's agenda. He asked Goldmann to try to produce a united Jewish front as comprehensive as possible, in order to avoid having many different groups involved in different ways with different interests. Goldmann told him that it would not be easy. Jewish orthodoxy for example would not support the idea of discussions with Catholics. Nevertheless, Goldmann promised Bea that he would do his best and would keep in touch.

The WJC's President moved swiftly and gathered together, in New York City on December 8 that year, rabbis from the various streams of Judaism —Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform.<sup>24</sup> Some were opposed on the grounds that theological dialogue with Christians violated Jewish religious law. One among them, however, was not opposed to cooperation on societal issues and therefore did not object to a "secular" agency like Goldmann's to provide Bea with secular Jewish wishes. Others

<sup>19</sup> WILLEBRANDS, *Cardinal Bea's Attitude*, p. 81.

<sup>20</sup> WILLEBRANDS, *Cardinal Bea's Attitude*, p. 82.

<sup>21</sup> From Bea's papers concerning the Council, as cited in SCHMIDT, *Augustin Bea*, p. 336.

<sup>22</sup> BEA, *The Church*, p. 22.

<sup>23</sup> Nahum GOLDMANN, *Staatsmann ohne Staat. Autobiographie*, Cologne/Berlin, 1970, p. 378-379, as cited in SCHMIDT, *Augustin Bea*, p. 337-8.

<sup>24</sup> Thomas STRANSKY, *Nostra Aetate. An Insider's Story*, in Neville LAMDAN and Alberto MELLONI (eds.), *Nostra Aetate. Origins, Promulgation, Impact on Jewish-Catholic Relations*, Berlin, 2007, p. 38ff.

were concerned that the Council would be a subtle way of proselytism, especially since the office in charge had the words “promoting the unity of Christians” in its official Latin title (*Secretariatus ad unitatem Christianorum promovendam*). The influential rabbi, Abraham Heschel, however, took the view that “no religion is an island” and “dialogue with the Catholic Church is necessary”. He called on responsible, competent Jews to take the risk.

At the same time that Bea was consulting with the Jews and Jewish leaders were debating the pros and cons of cooperation with the Vatican, M<sup>re</sup> Willebrands was busy setting up the newly formed Secretariat for Christian Unity. Willebrands had learned the news of his appointment when Radio Vaticana announced it on June 28, 1960, three weeks after the start of the preparatory period.<sup>25</sup> The Dutchman was an obvious choice because of his deep commitment to Christian unity and his involvement in the “Catholic Conference on Ecumenical Questions”.<sup>26</sup> Much of his time in these early days was spent setting up the Secretariat, helping in the selection of members and consulters and making contacts in the Vatican in order to ensure smoother relations with the other offices in preparation for the Council.

It is important to draw attention to Willebrands’ attitude to the Jews in the years leading up to the preparatory period in order to consider whether or not he would have been a proponent or an obstacle to a text on the Jews. In this respect, Willebrands’ recently published diary from the years 1958-1961 is an important resource.

In short, Willebrands’ attitude to relations with the Jews appears to have been less enthusiastic than that of Bea.<sup>27</sup> In the early 1950s, he was chairperson of a local Catholic ecumenical commission in the Netherlands called the Saint Willibrord Society. Under his chairmanship, a “Catholic Council for Israel” was established in the Netherlands as a branch of this society. Willebrands was anxious about this Council. Its work was not just about theology, but also about politics and the newly formed State of Israel. In 1957, the group published a book, which challenged the classical anti-Jewish theology. Willebrands wrote in support of Judaism in the preface, but he also wrote that fulfillment would only come to the Jews when they recognize “that Jesus is the Christ”.<sup>28</sup>

It is noteworthy that, in his diary from 1958-1961, there is no mention of some of the most significant advancements in the relations between Jews and Christians even though he would certainly have known about them. For example, he does not mention the fact that on Good Friday, 1959, Pope John XXIII eliminated the ancient prayer for the perfidious Jews from the liturgy. Neither does he mention the important meeting of John XXIII with Jules Isaac on June 13, 1960. In his diary, his attention to the Jews

<sup>25</sup> Willebrands wrote in his diary that day: “In the afternoon, the KNP calls me: Radio Vaticana has announced my appointment as Secretary of the Secretariat for Christian Unity. I don’t know anything about this. It’s more than likely that this announcement is true... Radio Vaticana is usually trustworthy with this type of information.” Theo SALEMINK (ed.), *You will be Called Repairer of the Breach.* *The Diary of J.G.M. Willebrands 1958-1961*, Leuven, 2009, p. 172.

<sup>26</sup> The Conference was established in 1952 as a collaborative venture between European Catholic bishops and theologians interested in Christian Unity. It prepared the way for the establishment of the Secretariat for Christian Unity in 1960.

<sup>27</sup> For an analysis of Willebrands’ early views on Judaism, see SALEMINK (ed.), *You will be Called*, p. 19-22.

<sup>28</sup> Josephus COOLS, et al., *Het mysterie van Israël*, Utrecht, 1957, p. 8.



is scant, despite the question of the Jews being the purview of the Secretariat of which he was the Secretary. He mentions visiting M<sup>gr</sup> John Oesterreicher on September 8, 1960, who would meet with him three days later, on September 11, to discuss the “question of Israel”. When that meeting was held, the only thing he records is that two offered up names of competent consultants (Oesterreicher, Paul Démann, and someone from Jerusalem: Bruno Hussar, Joseph Stiassny, Leo Rudloff).<sup>29</sup> At a meeting of the Catholic Conference for Ecumenical Questions in Gazzada on September 21, 1960, three days after Pope John XXIII charged the Secretariat with responsibility for the Jewish question, Willebrands’ diary is silent regarding his thoughts on the matter, despite Bea being present at the meeting with him. When the Secretariat held its first plenary meeting on November 14-15, 1960—the meeting at which Bea first announced to the members and advisors, the Secretariat’s responsibility for the Jewish question—not a word appears in the diary about this. The same is true for the second plenary meeting February 7-9, 1961, when the first report on the Jews is presented. Willebrands’ interest and attention to the Jewish question seems only to come after the start of the Council in 1962.<sup>30</sup>

It is difficult to decipher clearly from this, Willebrands’ attitude towards the Jewish question at this time. It would be hasty to conclude that he was hostile to the idea of a text on the Jews. At the same time there are no signs to show that he was supportive of one. His diary is saturated with evidence that he was deeply involved during this time with matters dealing with the unity of Christians. It is likely that Willebrands sees dialogue with the Jews at this time as a non-issue, one that detracts from the Secretariat’s main task of ecumenism.

The Secretariat held its first plenary meeting from November 14-15, 1960, in Rome.<sup>31</sup> It was then that Bea announced to the members and advisers present that John XXIII had entrusted what he called the “*Quaestione ebraica*” to that office. He emphasized though that it was a special papal mandate and that the Pope had explicitly requested that it be “*sub secreto*”.<sup>32</sup> Since the Cardinal had not yet decided how to proceed on this matter, Gregory Baum offered to produce a short survey on the question to present at the Secretariat’s next plenary meeting.

As Thomas Stransky wrote, in Rome “a secret is either not worth keeping or too good to keep”.<sup>33</sup> Whether through members of the Secretariat or through an interview with a Jewish journalist in which Cardinal Bea had disclosed details that were to have been confidential, details which the journalist was not to have published, or through Bea’s earlier meeting with Nahum Goldmann of the World Jewish Congress, or through some other channel, the Arab world was soon aware that the Secretariat was working on a text on the Jews. The document was to have been “purely religious”. However, “in the Middle East religious politics and political religion

<sup>29</sup> SALEMINK (ed.), *You will be Called*, p. 206.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. LEO DECLERCK, *Les Agendas conciliaires de Mgr. Willebrands, secrétaire du Secrétariat pour l’Unité des Chrétiens*, Leuven, 2009.

<sup>31</sup> I am following here primarily the history of the text as presented in OESTERREICHER, *Declaration*, p. 17-42.

<sup>32</sup> STRANSKY, *Nostra Aetate*, p. 33.

<sup>33</sup> STRANSKY, *Nostra Aetate*, p. 33.

is the norm. ‘Purely religious’ is an oxymoron”.<sup>34</sup> For the Arab world, this theological document was in fact a political one; anything positive about the Jews must also be—at the least implicitly— recognition and support for the state of Israel. Therefore, in response, great efforts were made to clarify that the Jewish question had to do with “the inner life of the church” and not with diplomatic relations between Israel and the Vatican. Nevertheless, the Arab newspapers would not let the issue rest, resulting in slanders and occasional threats against Christians living the Middle East.

By now, the Israeli government had been alerted to the fact that the Vatican was preparing a document on the Jews for the upcoming Council. In 2005, Israeli scholar and professor of International Relations at Hebrew University, Uri Bialer, published a book entitled *Cross on the Star of David*.<sup>35</sup> In it, he draws upon recently declassified Israeli archival material to examine Israel’s foreign policy in relation to Christianity in the years 1948-1967. Two chapters are devoted to Israel foreign policy and the Vatican in the years leading up to and during the Council. In particular, he highlights Israel’s persistent attempt to establish diplomatic ties with the Vatican during this time.<sup>36</sup> Some of these details are important for understanding the development of the Jewish question, especially in relation to support for and opposition to it, operating alongside the work of the Secretariat.

Israel had already recognized the power the Vatican had in influencing Catholics worldwide and realized that if it could establish diplomatic ties with the Vatican, it would have a powerful ally in the Middle East. In the eyes of the Israeli government at the time, religious support for Judaism was tantamount to political support for Israel, and this shaped its foreign policy.

In early January 1957, the Israeli government sent Maurice Fischer to Rome to try to establish relations with the Vatican. Fischer had previously served as Israel’s representative in France in the late 1940s and he was currently deputy director-general of Israel’s Foreign Ministry. Israel already had a diplomat for Italy in Rome, Eliahu Sasson. Sasson’s approach to diplomacy, however, was thought to be too confrontational for the delicate touch needed at the time. After all, as Bialer wrote, this move in 1957 was “essentially Israel’s first official and significant attempt to establish formal political contact through independent action at the Vatican”.<sup>37</sup> Fischer arrived in Rome and sought out Cardinal Tisserant, Secretary of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, who promised Fischer that he would raise the subject of Israel at his next meeting with the Pope, who at the time was Pius XII. Fischer then requested a meeting with the Vatican Secretary of State, Domenico Tardini. Tardini though denied his request out of concern for retaliatory action against Catholic institutions in the Middle East if the fact of their meeting was made known.

Israel soon learned that the Vatican Secretariat of State and especially Tardini were hostile to it. Towards the end of 1957, the Israeli Foreign ministry received a report, which highlighted the anti-Israeli sentiment in the Vatican’s Secretariat of

<sup>34</sup> STRANSKY, *Nostra Aetate*, p. 33.

<sup>35</sup> BIALER, *Cross on the Star*.

<sup>36</sup> BIALER, *Cross on the Star*, p. 52-90.

<sup>37</sup> BIALER, *Cross on the Star*, p. 57.

State. During a meeting between the French Ambassador to the Vatican and Tardini, Tardini said: "I have always been convinced that there was no real need to establish that state... that its creation was a grave mistake on the part of the Western states and that its existence is a constant source of danger of war in the Middle East. Now that Israel exists, there is of course no possibility of destroying it, but every day we pay the price of this mistake".<sup>38</sup>

Israel's hopes were renewed in autumn 1958 with the death of Pius XII and the election of John XXIII. The government knew that before becoming Pope, Giuseppe Roncalli had been on good terms with Israeli representatives in Istanbul during WWII when Roncalli had been Apostolic Delegate to Greece and Turkey and further that he had assisted in the rescue of Jews. He had also been on friendly terms with Maurice Fischer when Roncalli was Apostolic Nuncio of France and Fischer was Israel's Minister in Paris. Moreover, the new Pope had replied to a cable of congratulations from Israeli president Yitshak Ben-Zvi. After poring over the content of the Pope's reply, Israeli intelligence concluded that "letters were not sent to countries with which the Vatican was unwilling to establish relations". It therefore symbolized, "if not the offering of a hand, at least... the offering of fingertips".<sup>39</sup> At the same time though the Vatican Secretary of State had not changed. Instead, Tardini, who had been acting-head, became the head. In addition, the newly elected John XXIII made Tardini a Cardinal in December 1958. These two latter moves, Israel thought, would likely strengthen his power in the Vatican. Nevertheless, Jerusalem was emboldened overall by the election of the new Pope and Fischer was dispatched once again.<sup>40</sup>

Already there were signs that Pope John was sympathetic to Israel. Before arriving in Rome, Fischer received some hopeful news from Tisserant who had raised the question of Israel at his first meeting with John XXIII. Tisserant had gained the impression that the Pope's response was "encouraging" and that he was "ready to study the problem".<sup>41</sup>

Fischer met with John XXIII in early February 1959. The meeting was friendly and personal; they began by recalling their days together in Paris. The Pope said that Fischer knew him to be a man who supports anything that brings people closer together and is opposed to anything that separates them. He was fully in favour of promoting understanding between the Vatican and Israel. However, Fischer needed to understand that even the Pope could not make decisions alone. He needed to consult. Fischer then made a concrete suggestion. He asked the Pope to appoint an apostolic vicar in Israel who would oversee Catholic affairs in that country and maintain contact with that government. The Israeli government did not accredit the current apostolic representative. The Pope promised to consider the problems presented with sympathy and respect. Fischer asked if the Pope would arrange a

<sup>38</sup> BIALER, *Cross on the Star*, p. 58.

<sup>39</sup> BIALER, *Cross on the Star*, p. 60.

<sup>40</sup> BIALER, *Cross on the Star*, p. 59.

<sup>41</sup> BIALER, *Cross on the Star*, p. 60.

meeting with Tardini. The Pope agreed. As they parted the Pope said to Fischer: “you would receive immediate satisfaction if I listened to my heart”.<sup>42</sup>

Fischer met with Tardini, who began by complaining about Israel’s the negative attitude towards Christians in the Holy Land. However, the outcome of the meeting was positive. The Vatican had decided to respond favourably to the request for an apostolic vicar in Israel. This move though, Tardini emphasized, should not be regarded as the Vatican establishing diplomatic relations with Israel. He told Fischer that Israel should view this as a “great achievement”. “The Church is accustomed to moving slowly”, Tardini said, “and here we have progressed with giant steps since the new Pope took office”.<sup>43</sup> Little though had changed in the attitude of Tardini. In a remark to Tisserant, he said “there is no possibility of contact or negotiations with the killers of God”.<sup>44</sup>

By the end of the year, Jerusalem was looking for new ways to advance their interests. They decided to devote more time to a new initiative that had taken shape earlier in the year. The project was to “set up a disguised Israeli representation in Rome in the form of an ‘Institute for the Study of Jewish-Christian Relations’ whose real assignment would be to collect precise and up-to-date information on the Catholic Church, to foster relations with key figures at the Vatican, and to supply current information on Jewish and Israeli affairs to clerics”. Dr. Haim Wardi of Israel’s Ministry of Religious Affairs would lead the Institute and it would be officially affiliated with the World Jewish Congress so as to conceal the fact that Israel was behind it.<sup>45</sup>

During most of 1960, Israeli Foreign relations with the Vatican were occupied with a plan by Eliahu Sasson, Israel’s ambassador to Rome.<sup>46</sup> In February, a representative of a group inside the Vatican had approached Sasson. The group —led by Alfredo Ottaviani, of the Vatican’s Holy Office— was looking to remove Tardini from office because of his objections to establishing diplomatic relations with Israel. The Holy Office was interested in allying with Israel in order to block the growing ties between the Arabs and the Soviet Union. However, the effect would serve more than just this interest within the Vatican. According to Sasson’s contact, the Pope —who the Ottaviani group referred to as “the old man”— had already given his “100 percent” positive response to the idea of diplomatic recognition. As Bialer writes: “[Sasson’s] reports contain colourful descriptions of intrigues within the Vatican around the plotting of the Ottaviani group and its various supporters and the ‘raging struggle between the Holy Office and the State Secretariat’”.<sup>47</sup> Sasson wrote: “...not only does one hand not know what the other is doing, but that sabotage, subversion, scheming, and lies play a central part in relations between these offices and their approach to most problems. The Pope himself, despite his goodness of heart and good intentions, is to a certain degree weak charactered and, because of his advanced age, has begun to

<sup>42</sup> BIALER, *Cross on the Star*, p. 61-62.

<sup>43</sup> BIALER, *Cross on the Star*, p. 63.

<sup>44</sup> BIALER, *Cross on the Star*, p. 64.

<sup>45</sup> BIALER, *Cross on the Star*, p. 65-66.

<sup>46</sup> BIALER, *Cross on the Star*, p. 66-71.

<sup>47</sup> BIALER, *Cross on the Star*, p. 69.

suffer from loss of memory, which the people around him are exploiting for their own purposes".<sup>48</sup> In the end though, the plan fell apart; the Vatican declared that "the time was not yet ripe"; Israel cancelled the plan for the Jewish-Christian Institute in Rome, and in June 1960 Fischer replaced Sasson as ambassador in Rome.

Israel's approach to the Vatican in the early 1960's could be described as an attempt to influence the Church in its anti-Jewish theological stand, in order to rework its official opposition to Israel and to increase the possibility of diplomatic recognition.<sup>49</sup> In doing so it exploited growing pressure both inside and outside the Church for Rome to do something about relations with the Jews as a result of the Holocaust. According to Bialer, Israeli experts knew well that this would not directly result in the Church establishing diplomatic relations with Israel. However, they certainly hoped it would further their interests.

The Israeli Foreign Ministry was supportive of Jules Isaac's meeting with John XXIII in June 1960. In preparation for his audience on June 13, Jules Isaac approached the Israeli embassy in Rome on his own initiative "for advice on how to present the matter to the Holy See and what arguments to cite".<sup>50</sup> The Foreign Office advised him to ask the Pope for three things: i) that any statement that might be interpreted as offensive to the Jewish people be erased from the manuals of instruction; ii) that a subcommittee be established to examine the contents of the manuals; and, iii) that the Pope make a public statement announcing that these steps were being taken. Despite not all of these requests being fulfilled, Isaac's audience was deemed a success in Israel. More importantly though, the very fact of the audience and the Pope's positive response was seen by the embassy in Rome as signs that the Vatican was prepared to revise its anti-Judaic position. This, it was thought, "could have an indirectly positive impact on the state of relations between the Vatican and Israel".<sup>51</sup>

At the same time, various Jewish organizations and individuals were becoming invested in the Jewish question. It was well known that Orthodox Jews and organizations were opposed to dialogue with the Catholic Church. However, groups such as B'nai B'rith, the World Jewish Congress and various reform groups were supportive. Bialer claims that several Jewish organizations sent missions to Rome and submitted lengthy memoranda to the Vatican. Jewish Professor, Zwi Werblowsky, who taught at Hebrew University at the time claimed that all of these were written by Catholics and not Jews since no Jewish experts on the subject could be found.<sup>52</sup>

In the meantime, the Secretariat for Christian Unity was continuing its work. Gregory Baum's short survey on the "*Quaestione ebraica*" was presented at the second plenary meeting held in Ariccia in early February 1961. At the same gathering, two others members were appointed to the Secretariat for Christian Unity's sub-

<sup>48</sup> BIALER, *Cross on the Star*, p. 69

<sup>49</sup> BIALER, *Cross on the Star*. p. 72.

<sup>50</sup> BIALER, *Cross on the Star*. p. 73.

<sup>51</sup> BIALER, *Cross on the Star*, p. 74.

<sup>52</sup> If this claim is accurate then more work is necessary studying the contributions of Jewish scholars to the two "Catholic" reports submitted to Rome, one by the Institute of Judaeo-Christian Studies in the United States in June 1960, the other by a group that met in Apeldoorn, Netherlands in late summer 1960. For more information on these reports, see OESTERREICHER, *Declaration*, p. 9-17

commission for Jewish questions to assist Baum: Leo Rudloff and John Oesterreicher. George Tavard would soon join the group, too. Since there was enough interest in Baum's survey, Oesterreicher was asked to prepare a study on behalf of the sub-commission for the next plenary meeting. This study, prepared for the third plenary session of the Secretariat, in April 1961 in Ariccia, would form the first text on the Jews. It was entitled "*Quaestiones de Iudaeis*".<sup>53</sup> The proposal was discussed, debated, revised and reworked at the following two plenary sessions, in Bühl, Germany, in August 1961 and again in Ariccia at the end of November 1961, where it was eventually abandoned.

Oesterreicher attributes its downfall to contrary forces both outside the Church and inside the Church. Outside the Church the public and press perceived the counter-movements of the Arab governments as a main obstacle. Inside the Church, according to Oesterreicher the "theologians were not prepared for it in their own minds".<sup>54</sup> As Thomas Stransky noted, in the almost two thousand year history of the Church there had hardly been any development in the Church's teaching on "the mystery of the Jewish existence... nothing on the relationship of the Church and Synagogue".<sup>55</sup> It was the neglected topic, "the Cinderella of theology".<sup>56</sup> George Tavard, too, echoed this sentiment almost 55 years later. To his mind "the Catholic hierarchy was not ready for such a departure from past views of Judaism by Christians".<sup>57</sup>

After abandoning this first attempt, the plenary moved quickly at this same meeting to prepare and adopt another much shorter draft entitled "*Decretum de Iudaeis*", with the additional help of Belgian bishop Emiel Joseph De Smedt, Secretary of the Secretariat, M<sup>gr</sup> Johannes Willebrands (now Bishop) and M<sup>gr</sup> Francis Davis.<sup>58</sup> With the completion of this schema, the preparatory work for the document on the Jews was finished. The schema would be sent in due time to the Council's Central Preparatory Commission for approval and distribution. Everyone anticipated that the schema would be on the conciliar agenda for the first session in autumn 1962.

Uri Bialer reports that on the Israeli side, around the same time, an interesting proposal came forth from a Jewish professor at Basel University named Ernst Ehrlich. Ehrlich was an active member of a group called the Jewish Christian-Understanding Association and the director of the Western European office of B'nai B'rith. Ehrlich contacted Prof. Zwi Werblowsky and told him that he had met with Cardinal Bea in the summer of 1961, and who agreed to consider any memorandum submitted to him if done properly. Fischer had made it clear that in accordance with Israel's approach to the Vatican at the time, Jews were only to be involved behind-the-scenes in preparing a document; the document itself was to be submitted as a "purely Catholic document,

<sup>53</sup> Oesterreicher provides a detailed description of this first text in OESTERREICHER, *Declaration*, p. 22-32.

<sup>54</sup> OESTERREICHER, *Declaration*, p. 38.

<sup>55</sup> STRANSKY, *Holy Diplomacy*, p. 57.

<sup>56</sup> OESTERREICHER, *Declaration*, p. 39.

<sup>57</sup> GEORGE TAVARD, *Nostra Aetate. Forty Years Later*, in Michael ATTRIDGE (ed.), *Jews and Catholics Together. Celebrating the Legacy of Nostra Aetate*, Ottawa, 2007, p. 46.

<sup>58</sup> The full English text of this first schema can be found in OESTERREICHER, *Declaratio*, p. 40; also, Philip A. CUNNINGHAM, Norbert J. HOFMANN, and Joseph SIEVERS, (ed.), *The Catholic Church and the Jewish People: Recent Reflection from Rome*, New York, 2007, p. 191-192.

signed solely be Catholic theologians”.<sup>59</sup> Bea had asked for a list of Jewish “demands” that could serve as a basis of a Church document. The approach had three advantages: first the Council would receive an “even-handed and responsible document”; second, the memo would be Christian and not Jewish, at least officially speaking, even though it was practically a joint composition; and, third, it would eliminate the need for other Jewish groups and memoranda. Ehrlich claimed that “All of the “hurly-burly of the Jewish organizations... will vanish in a puff of smoke and... Bea... can then turn them down with a clear conscience and tell them that there is no more need for anything to be done since preparation of a basic memo is already underway”.<sup>60</sup> Ehrlich was ready and invited Werblowsky to meet him in Paris in late November to begin work.

The proposal was supported by the foreign office, who saw three advantages: Israel was interested to be involved in this significant event; the plan had been construed in such a way that Israel’s involvement was sure to be kept discreet; and there were fewer Jewish organizations involved, which minimized the risk that one or more may act irresponsibly. Werblowsky was convinced that if they could change Catholic theology to be friendlier to the Jews, this would undoubtedly have an impact on political relations.

At the end of November, five Jews and seven Catholics were invited to attend a two-day meeting in Paris.<sup>61</sup> Bialer is not explicit about who the seven Catholics were but did say that all of them were on side with Bea and all were present. Only two Jews came, though, Ehrlich and Werblowsky. The document drafted represents the fruits of Israel’s first attempt to operate directly within the Vatican’s theological policymaking circles.<sup>62</sup> Bialer says that the “participants soon discovered that Cardinal Bea’s office had already drafted the document, which was more or less complete”.<sup>63</sup> Their task was restricted to editing, amplifying and refining. Werblowsky’s main point at the meeting was that the problem was not just an indelicate statement here and there. The Council needed a complete, unequivocal and binding declaration. And he suggested four major amendments.<sup>64</sup> Bialer describes the Paris meeting as having had a “highly positive impact”. Cardinal Bea voiced no objection to the final document. But at the same time, it was clear to Israeli diplomats that the proposal would still undergo extensive revisions.

It would therefore seem as though there were others than just those of the Secretariat for Christian Unity who were waiting with anticipation for the June

<sup>59</sup> BIALER, *Cross on the Star*, p. 75.

<sup>60</sup> BIALER, *Cross on the Star*, p. 75.

<sup>61</sup> Bialer reports that they met “in the last week of November”. The “last week” of November 1961 was November 26 – December 2 (Sunday – Saturday). Moreover, according to Bialer’s notes Werblowsky wrote a report to Fischer, dated Thursday, November 30, so presumably the meeting was finished by then. The timing of this meeting is curious, since the Secretariat for Christian Unity was holding its fifth plenary meeting in Ariccia (November 27 – December 2) at exactly the same time.

<sup>62</sup> BIALER, *Cross on the Star*, p. 76.

<sup>63</sup> More research is necessary to know which “Bea draft” this was: “*Quaestiones de Iudaeis*” or “*Decretum de Iudaeis*”. Both were in existence at the fifth plenary meeting of the Secretariat.

<sup>64</sup> BIALER, *Cross on the Star*, p. 76.



meeting of the Central Preparatory Commission to approve the “*Decretum de Iudaeis*”. The Israeli Government was also looking forward to its approval as a step toward closer relations between Jews and Catholics and in turn the possibility of stronger diplomatic relations with the Vatican.

In spring 1962, though, the Israeli government’s strategy to remain quiet and behind-the-scenes ran aground.<sup>65</sup> Nahum Goldmann got restless and tried to revive the 1959 proposal to have an Institute for the Study of Jewish-Christian Relations in Rome with Dr. Haim Wardi of the Ministry of Religious Affairs at its head. The Foreign Ministry was reluctant. It feared that too much publicity might hamper the progress already made. Nevertheless, Foreign Minister Golda Meir agreed with the condition that Wardi was only there “to listen”. The plan was approved in late May 1962. However, Goldmann’s instructions to Wardi implied a more active role. He was “to deal with all problems pertaining to the imminent Ecumenical Council in his capacity as representative of the World Jewish Congress.” Soon the whole plan began to unravel. The Israeli newspaper, *Ma’arvi*, published an interview with Joe Golan, an advisor on Arab affairs for Nahum Goldmann. Golan referred to Wardi’s appointment as being “at” the Vatican. Therefore, what was supposed to have been officially presented as an appointment “in Rome” was presented as “at the Vatican”. From the perspective the Foreign Ministry the effect was disastrous. Orthodox Jews in the US and England were outraged at the possibility of a Jew participating in the Council. Arab ambassadors to the Vatican were angered. And, reportedly, threats were made towards Catholics in countries like Egypt and Iraq. According to Israeli reports, the Vatican Secretariat was convinced that the publicity of Wardi’s appointment was part of a “nefarious” Israeli plot, coordinated with Goldmann, to bring an observer through the back door and exploit the Council for its own political gain. Fischer received reports informing him that the affair, which had become known as the “Wardi Affair” “has provided our enemy, M<sup>gr</sup> Samoré (the spiritual heir of C<sup>al</sup> Tardini) [and Secretary of the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs since 1953] with the opportunity of breaking his silence” and demanding that the Vatican’s Secretariat, under Secretary Amleto Cicognani, who had been elected the year before, veto the Jewish problem at the Council “due to the appointment of an Israeli government official as representative of the World Jewish Congress at the Vatican”.<sup>66</sup>

The Central Preparatory Commission, indeed, removed the schema on the Jews from the agenda on June 20, 1962. It was said at the Commission “since disagreements between Jews and Arabs in our time are well known, the suspicion of political intent, or of favouring the one or other side, easily arises; false rumours to this effect are already being spread”.<sup>67</sup> The chair, C<sup>al</sup> Cicognani, then expressed his objection to the schema in a more personal way, “It would be a waste of time to recall our connections with the Jewish people: Christ our Lord himself was of that people, and we hold to the Old Testament as well as the New. But we should stick to the purpose of the

<sup>65</sup> For an account of the “Wardi Affair” see BIALER, *Cross on the Star*, p. 77-78.

<sup>66</sup> BIALER, *Cross on the Star*, p. 77.

<sup>67</sup> *Acta et documenta Concilio oecumenico Vaticano II apparando; Series secunda (praeparatoria)*, II/4, Vatican, 1969, p. 21.

Council at which the Church desires solemnly to affirm its faith and to strengthen its apostolate. And why this particular decree? If a decree on the Jews, why not one on the Muslims? They certainly boast of their descent from father Abraham".<sup>68</sup>

Thus ends the history during the preparatory period of what started almost exactly two years earlier as simply the "*Quaestione ebraica*", developed into the draft text "*Quaestiones de Iudaeis*" and finished as "*Decretum de Iudaeis*". The official minutes of the Central Preparatory Commission do not include the schema "*Decretum de Iudaeis*" text. Of this time in the history of the decree, Thomas Stransky wrote: "secular diplomacy and its blunderings seemed to be winning." But there was a price. The Israeli ambassador to Italy found doors previously open now closed "until further notice." Jewish delegations need not apply for papal audiences.<sup>69</sup> An American Jewish source at the time reported that there "has been a drastic change in the attitude towards the Jews" and that "they mistrust us and are deeply suspicious of our conduct".<sup>70</sup>

Historian Anna Caponera visited the Vatican Secret Archives a few years ago and reviewed the *Nostra Aetate* papers of the Secretariat for Christian Unity. She concluded that the history of the declaration, especially in the early years "was replete with difficulties that lay not so much on a theological level but more on the political consequences of the historical moment".<sup>71</sup>

### III

Looking back over the two-year period, one can conclude that the central question in 1960 was how to redress the centuries-old tradition of anti-Judaism that had developed within the Christianity. So obvious was this tradition at the time that Jules Isaac was able to recognize and label it a "teaching of contempt" toward Jews and Judaism. He would write that it was comprised of "deep-seated prejudices and of the most odious habits of mind, heart and tongue".<sup>72</sup> His goal was to remind Christianity of its Jewish origin and to purge Christianity of its religious anti-Semitism. At the same time, he also perceived a change occurring within Catholicism, such that there were now two currents: this long-standing, vitriolic anti-Jewish one; and a new one that sought to purify the Church and to rectify the wrongs committed throughout history. At the same time, there was a corresponding issue that was not yet apparent to Isaac nor presumably to the Pope or to those in the Secretariat for Christian Unity in 1960, namely, the extent to which any movement within the Church in support of Jews and Judaism was inextricably linked to political issues within the Middle East. In the minds of Arab leaders, support for the Jews theologically was tantamount to support for the State of Israel, a politically contentious international issue at the time. Any move on the part of the Church in support of the Jews would result in resistance for political reasons. Thus there were two forces to overcome and one that needed to

<sup>68</sup> BIALER, *Cross on the Star*, p. 77

<sup>69</sup> STRANSKY, *Nostra Aetate*, p. 42.

<sup>70</sup> BIALER, *Cross on the Star*, p. 78.

<sup>71</sup> ANNA CAPONERA, *Papers of the Secretariat for Christian Unity on Nostra Aetate*, in Neville LAMDAN and Alberto MELLONI (ed.), *Nostra Aetate*, p. 56.

<sup>72</sup> ISAAC, *The Teaching*, p. 35.

be strengthened in order that the schema see the light of Council floor: on the one hand religious anti-Semitism within Christianity and political opposition to Israel needed to be overcome; on the other hand, the “purifying counter-current” needed to be developed.

Support for the Jews was evident at the time among some of the most powerful individuals in the Vatican. Pope John XXIII was in favour of a schema on the Jews. Whether it was related to a general commitment he held for value of humanity, or for specific theological reasons—such as those found in Scripture—of Christianity’s relationship to Judaism, or as a penitential attempt to rectify the wrongs committed against Jews by Christians throughout history, the reason is unclear. What is clear is his affection for the Jews, as shown by his many acts of kindness towards them over the years, and by his support for the Jewish question, especially after his meeting with Jules Isaac.

Augustin Bea’s support was more theologically articulated. Turning to the unpublished paper that he wrote on the Jews in 1962, we see that he considers them, even in their suffering, to be bearers of God’s revelation to the world. Christians ought to change their attitudes towards the Jews for Christians are indeed indebted to Jews. Through Jesus of Nazareth, a first-century Palestinian Jew, the Jewish people have given Christians life. But Bea speaks even more broadly saying that the Jews have given gifts to Christians that are greater, more public, more decisive—gifts that are spiritual and supernatural.

Bea was also strategic in his approach to advancing the Jewish question. He knew of the diversity and complexity of modern Judaism. In the early 1960’s there were approximately thirteen million Jews in the world. Twenty-five percent of them lived in Europe. However, two of the most powerful centers of Judaism were in the United States and in Israel.<sup>73</sup> He sought contact with an organization—the World Jewish Congress—that could act as a representative of that diversity and he remained open to collaboration with the Jews throughout the entire drafting of the schema. Also noteworthy is the fact that two of the four original drafters of “*Quaestiones de Iudaeis*” were Jews who had converted to Christianity. And Bea had appointed them.<sup>74</sup>

Jan Willebrands was also an important and influential person within the Vatican Curia. As already mentioned, he appears to have been neither an advocate for, nor an obstacle to developing relations with the Jews during the preparatory period. There is no evidence to suggest that he was working “behind-the-scenes” with those who were opposed to the idea, like the Secretary of State, Domenico Tardini. Indeed, Willebrands’ diary shows that he is not at all supportive of Tardini, or others like him.<sup>75</sup> Instead, it is probable that his attention during this time was focused on the unity of Christians, not on the relations with non-Christians. Among the Jews who encouraged deeper relations with Catholics, were many individuals like Jules Isaac, Ernst Ehrlich, and Zwi Werblowsky whose interests were personal, academic, and

<sup>73</sup> BEOZZO, *The External Climate*, p. 393.

<sup>74</sup> The members of the original drafting team were Leo Rudloff; George Tavard; John Oesterreicher; and Gregory Baum. Both Oesterreicher and Baum were Jews who has converted to Christianity.

<sup>75</sup> For a summary of how Willebrands felt about Tardini, Cardinal Alfredo Ottaviani, and Sebastian Tromp, see SALEMINK (ed.), *You will be Called*, p. 17 -18.

even theological. Their primary motivation appears to have been to assist Catholics in removing the anti-Jewish accretions that had developed in their own tradition and to help them to return to a proper understanding of their historical relationship with Jews, as found in Scripture.

Of course, the government of the State of Israel was strongly supportive of a statement on the Jews. This though was part of a larger political plan to establish diplomatic ties with the Vatican—a state that had its “citizens” all around the world. In this sense, the Vatican would undoubtedly be a powerful ally. Certainly there were those in government offices who were—in the same way as Isaac, Ehrlich, Werblowsky and others—supportive for personal and theological reasons. Just as there were those who were opposed for theological reasons. Orthodox Judaism, for example, was known to have been against dialogue with Christians. Nevertheless, broadly speaking the approach on the part of the government, especially the Foreign Ministry office, was deliberate: promote the schema in order to strengthen political ties.

At the same time there was also intransigence, resistance to change, and even outward opposition to the Jewish question. Stransky wrote that, even at that time, many wondered whether the Jewish question came too late, or too soon.<sup>76</sup> On the one hand, given the massacre of the Jews during the mediaeval Crusades, the hounding of the Inquisition, the denial of civil rights, the imposed ghettos, the horror of the Holocaust, was the question too late? On the other hand, given that there was no apparent preparation for it within Catholic theology, was it too early? Would the bishops even accept it as a topic for the Council? This latter sentiment haunted the drafters of “*Quaestiones de Iudaeis*” and the Secretariat as they prepared and discussed the text. And finally, it was the key factor in deciding not to proceed with that first text and instead to develop the much shorter and more theologically restrained “*Decretum de Iudaeis*”.

Those most vociferously opposed were the foreign diplomats and political leaders of Arab countries in the Middle East. The controversial establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 was still fresh in the air and the sides were vying for influential partners. Symbolically, if not practically, the Vatican would be a significant partner for Israel regardless of whether it came in the form of diplomatic relations or religious *rapprochement*. We must remember that religious politics and politicized religion was the norm in the Middle East. There is no such thing as pure religion or pure politics. The Catholic Bishops of the Middle East were also aware of the political significance of the Jewish question, and they feared retaliation and persecution of the Catholics in their dioceses. Later, during the conciliar period, they would exercise a decisive influence over the final form of the Declaration.

Finally, there was the attitude of the powerful Vatican Secretariat of State under Secretaries Domenico Tardini and later Amleto Cicognani. In the case of Tardini, there is evidence that his opposition to the Jewish question was related on some level to religious anti-Semitism, especially if one recalls his remark to Tisserant where he refers to the Jews as “killers of God”. For him the founding of the State of Israel was

<sup>76</sup> STRANSKY, *Nostra Aetate*, p. 55.

a mistake that all must now pay for. Cicognani too, was unsupportive of the Jewish question, offering his acerbic, unsolicited comment that the Jewish question was a waste of time.

#### IV

This analysis of issues and influences through the lens of individuals shows three things. First, it shows that the Church was at the threshold of change in 1960 with regards to its teaching on the Jews. There were two forces at work, the two “tendencies” of Jules Isaac. One force was to resist or refuse change and maintain its traditional stance towards the Jewish people. The other was to overcome this tradition and move into the future. In summer 1962, it appeared as though the former had dominated the latter. Second it shows the complexity of the many competing influences operating within the Vatican in preparation for the Council. If one considers alone, the stances taken by officials such as Tardini and Cicognani and compares them to those taken by Bea and John XXIII, one begins to see the internal polemics that characterized the preparatory period of Vatican II. Finally, it must be said that the history of *Nostra Aetate* is ‘*sui generis*’ in its history when compared to the other conciliar texts. No other Vatican II document was so closely tied to the political interests of a government. Thus politics—both within the Vatican and operating on the Vatican—have to be taken into consideration in any proper examination of the history and theology of the Declaration.

The period 1961-1962 was an important one for the Church in its relationship with the Jewish people. It was a time for the Church to look back over its history and to recognize and take hold of the anti-Semitism within its own tradition. Then when it attempted to remedy this tradition, it was an opportunity to look around and to see the many individuals and influences emerge and to learn where the challenges and obstacles but also the opportunities were. Many lessons were learned in these two years that in 1963, the following year, would reorient the drafting committee and set it on the proper path that would lead finally to *Nostra Aetate*.

Michael ATTRIDGE  
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# LA RÉCEPTION DES AUTEURS PROTESTANTS COMME MARQUEUR D'UN AFFRONTEMENT CULTUREL À L'INTÉRIEUR DU CHAMP RELIGIEUX CATHOLIQUE AU MOMENT DU CONCILE

L'EXEMPLE DE L'ESPACE THÉOLOGIQUE NORD-AMÉRICAIN

## INTRODUCTION

Entre intransigeance et renouveau, la réception des grands auteurs protestants du 20<sup>e</sup> s. est un des marqueurs d'une ligne de force qui polarise le champ religieux catholique, et fait du concile, *a minima*, le temps d'un affrontement. C'est ce que nous nous proposons de montrer en étudiant l'espace théologique des années 1950-1960 en Amérique du Nord, et plus particulièrement en nous attachant à repérer dans cet espace les théologiens qui sont aussi les experts au concile.

Par « grands auteurs », nous entendons ceux que René Marlé appelle « les grands maîtres ayant inauguré un nouvel âge de la théologie évangélique<sup>1</sup> », Karl Barth, Rudolf Bultmann, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Paul Tillich, qui ont permis aux théologiens catholiques de s'engager dans une reformulation de leur propre pensée. L'accueil, le débat, le refus, ou l'indifférence à ces penseurs constituent autant d'attitudes qui permettent de se représenter une cartographie de l'espace théologique étudié. En somme, c'est un « entre-soi » catholique perturbé par un « avec-l'autre » protestant qui est l'objet observé, à l'intérieur de l'espace théologique. Cet espace lui-même est fortement bousculé, c'est le moins qu'on puisse dire, par le concile, qui opère une rupture majeure des « habitus » institutionnels et individuels.

## LA RÉCEPTION DES AUTEURS PROTESTANTS : QUELQUES MARQUEURS

### UN INDICATEUR DE MESURE AVANT LE CONCILE : LA PLACE DES AUTEURS PROTESTANTS DANS LES PRINCIPALES REVUES THÉOLOGIQUES ÉTATS-UNIENNES

Nous proposons ici une étude circonscrite à quatre revues états-uniennes, *American Ecclesiastical Review*, *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, *Theological Studies* et *The Thomist*. Il est à noter qu'aucune des quatre revues ne dispose d'un index des auteurs cités, et ne permet donc de construire un indicateur « quantitatif » homogène. L'analyse de ces revues sur la période 1940-1974 se fait en comparant quatre agrégats, ou ensembles d'articles, qui dessinent un faisceau de questions théologiques : la pensée protestante, bien sûr, mais également la question « des deux théologies », la place du thomisme, et enfin le débat autour de la philosophie existentielle. Ces quatre thèmes, ou fil conducteurs, n'occupent pas une place équivalente dans la production théologique.

<sup>1</sup> RSR, 65 (1967), p. 257-287.

Il est à noter que l'on entend pensée protestante dans un sens large ici, puisqu'il s'agit de fait de toute présentation catholique soit d'un auteur protestant, soit d'un point de la doctrine protestante, soit d'une recension d'un ouvrage protestant ou bien explicitement consacré au protestantisme. Ainsi entendu, le protestantisme dont il est question est un thème qui apparaît plus souvent que le thomisme<sup>2</sup>.

Quatre thèmes majeurs dans l'espace théologique défini par les revues catholiques nord-américaines																
	AER				CBQ				TS				TT			
	T1	T2	T3	T4	T1	T2	T3	T4	T1	T2	T3	T4	T1	T2	T3	T4
1940-1950	0	16	5	19	0	0	1	0	2	18	3	36	5	33	1	2
1951-1960	0	3	5	11	0	0	0	18	2	3	4	40	12	47	1	9
1961-1964 (70)	5	9	4	2 (31)	0	0	0	16	4	4	3	50	4	41	1	11
1971-1974	-	-	-		0	0	0	6	0	5	1	7	6	33	0	3
Total par revue	5	28	14		0	0	1	40	8	30	11	133	27	154	3	25
	T1				T2				T3				T4			
Total par thème	40				212				29				230			

\*(T1 – Thème 1 : l'existentialisme ; T2 – Thème 2 : le thomisme ; T3 – Thème 3 : les deux courants théologiques ; T4 – Thème 4 : le protestantisme)

Sans surprise, *The Thomist*<sup>3</sup>, éditée par la maison d'études dominicaine de Washington DC, consacre l'essentiel de sa production à l'étude de St. Thomas (154 articles ou recensions dont le titre renvoie explicitement à l'Aquinate entre 1939, année de la création de la revue, et 1974). Mais alors que la revue ne s'intéresse absolument pas aux penseurs protestants, 27 articles sont consacrés à l'existentialisme. À l'inverse, parmi ces quatre thèmes, le protestantisme arrive en tête dans les trois autres revues. On a bien conscience de comparer ici des revues dont les méthodes et les finalités ne sont pas homogènes, mais cela donne une idée de la façon dont le débat avec le protestantisme intervient à l'intérieur du champ des préoccupations propres à chaque revue.

Ainsi, si *The Thomist* ne consacre que 25 items au protestantisme, mis à part deux articles de fond sur Tillich, c'est exclusivement par des recensions d'ouvrages catholiques de type apologétique. Parmi les 40 occurrences que l'on trouve dans *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, et les 133 dans *Theological Studies*, il en va tout autrement : il s'agit la plupart du temps de débattre des options exégétiques et théologiques des

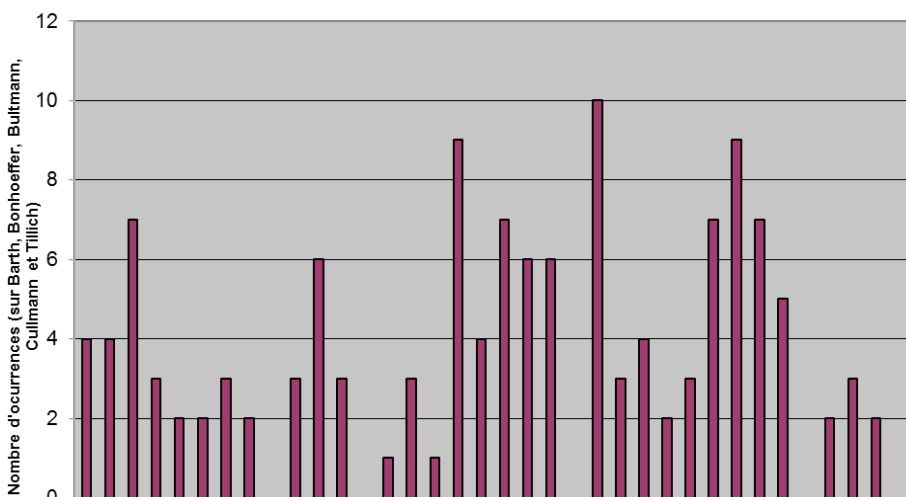
<sup>2</sup> On ne doit bien sûr pas être totalement dupe de ce calcul : beaucoup d'articles dont le titre n'évoque pas St. Thomas ou le thomisme restent, sur le fond, une mise en œuvre du thomisme. Une analyse qualitative des articles sur la période, pour impossible qu'elle soit, changerait sans doute cette hiérarchie —il n'en reste pas moins que ce premier comptage que nous avons effectué indique un agrégat sur le protestantisme dont le poids est considérable.

<sup>3</sup> Sous-titrée «revue trimestrielle spéculative».



grands auteurs protestants. Quant à l'*American Ecclesiastical Review* (32 occurrences<sup>4</sup>), elle aborde le protestantisme par le biais de l'œcuménisme, présenté jusqu'en 1964 comme un appel à la conversion pour les « chrétiens séparés ». Si l'on étudie les auteurs, on observe une fréquentation des auteurs protestants irrégulière et inégale : pour 117 occurrences au total, Bultmann arrive en tête (50), suivi de Karl Barth (24), Oscar Cullmann (21), Paul Tillich (15) et Dietrich Bonhoeffer (7). La progression est constante à partir du milieu des années 1950, et atteint son apogée pendant les années 1960 avant de chuter<sup>5</sup>.

### L'étude des auteurs protestants dans *Theological Studies*



Sur le fond, *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* se présente d'abord comme une revue exégétique, mais les commentaires théologiques<sup>6</sup> qu'on y trouve légitiment sa prise en compte<sup>7</sup>. Sur les 28 articles ou recensions, mêmes brèves, consacrés par la revue à des auteurs protestants, 11 concernent Bultmann. Le premier article situe d'emblée le débat sur la question de la réception comme dialogue. En 1957, David Stanley s.j., du séminaire de Toronto, écrit sur « Rudolf Bultmann : un défi contemporain pour les théologiens catholiques<sup>8</sup> ». S'il n'omet pas d'adresser au lecteur catholique un avertissement qui semble rédhibitoire, « il est assez évident que la plupart

<sup>4</sup> Nous avons ici considéré la revue à « l'époque Fenton », c.-à-d. jusqu'à son départ, annoncé en décembre 1963. Ce départ marque un tournant assez radical pour la revue, à la fois sur le plan de la ligne éditoriale et des contributeurs.

<sup>5</sup> 42 articles dans les années 1950, 46 dans les années 1960, 12 entre 1971 et 1974.

<sup>6</sup> Cette revue est la revue de la *Catholic Biblical Association of America*, fondée à la CUA en 1940.

<sup>7</sup> À l'inverse, comme son nom l'indique, *Theological Studies* est une revue de théologie – mais quatre de ses premiers articles sur le protestantisme sont consacrés à l'étude des genres littéraires dans les évangiles, selon Bultmann.

<sup>8</sup> CBQ, 19 (1957), p. 347-355.

des affirmations de Bultmann sont inadmissibles du point de vue catholique. Sa conception d'un kérygme démythologisé coupe tout lien entre 1957 et les années de la vie du Christ ... » (p. 353), la suite invite évidemment à découvrir cet auteur : « Mais du côté positif, Bultmann nous donne une théologie de la révélation qui mérite notre attention. Il a resitué à sa juste place le thème de la révélation et de la Parole de Dieu et leur insertion dans l'histoire (...) De plus, on doit louer Bultmann pour son effort de re-présenter le message de Dieu à l'homme moderne. C'est un devoir auquel le prédicateur ou enseignant en religion d'aujourd'hui ne peut échapper » (p. 353-354). Au passage, ces louanges semblent tellement contradictoires avec l'avertissement initial qu'on peut s'interroger sur la fonction initiale de celui-ci.

Joseph Hardon s.j., en 1961, dans une recension de *Ce monde et au-delà*, autre ouvrage de Bultmann, est enthousiaste : « Il est regrettable qu'il ait fallu attendre si longtemps pour disposer en anglais des sermons de Bultmann. Ils montrent avec une clarté remarquable les aspects positifs de sa théologie et permettent d'équilibrer heureusement ce qui peut apparaître comme des excès dans ses écrits scientifiques<sup>9</sup> ». En 1962, en 1964, en 1965, en 1969 encore, on trouve des articles conséquents sur Bultmann et les post-bultmanniens. Dans une de ses recensions, sur un ouvrage de Charles W. Kegley, *La théologie de Rudolf Bultmann*, de 1966<sup>10</sup>, Raymond Brown<sup>11</sup> situe Bultmann parmi les plus grands. « Dans sa préface à ce volume l'éditeur écrit : 'Bultmann a l'insigne honneur d'avoir identifié et façonné quasiment toutes les questions que les savants contemporains ont à affronter'. C'est certainement vrai (...) Le flot des publications récentes concernant la pensée et les théories de Bultmann témoigne de façon éloquente de cela. (...) il se peut bien que, parce qu'il a été un tel catalyseur dans l'ordre de la pensée théologique, il se situe parmi les théologiens les plus influents de tous les temps ».

De même, en 1969, Bertil E. Gartner, en présentant un compte-rendu de l'ouvrage collectif dirigé par Thomas O'Meara, op, et Donald M. Weisser, op : *Rudolf Bultmann dans la pensée catholique*, publié à New York en 1968, reconnaît la dette de la théologie à l'égard du théologien allemand : « La question de Bultmann concernant la démythologisation, concernant l'homme comme centre de la religion et concernant l'existentialisme comme cadre approprié pour transmettre à l'homme moderne le kérygme ont eu la plus grande influence qui soit sur le débat théologique des dernières décades, et c'est pourquoi il est légitime de discuter de son impact sur la pensée catholique aussi. L'éditeur évoque Vatican II comme « *la reconnaissance critique par le catholicisme du problème herméneutique pour aujourd'hui* » et comme étant sur la même ligne que l'herméneutique bultmannienne » (Vol. 31, p. 596-597).

<sup>9</sup> CBQ, 19 (1957), p. 512.

<sup>10</sup> CBQ, 28 (1966), p. 151-153.

<sup>11</sup> Futur membre de la commission biblique pontificale, entre 1973 et 1979, et 1997 et 1998.

## UN INDICATEUR DE MESURE APRÈS LE CONCILE :

LA PLACE DES AUTEURS PROTESTANTS DANS LES LIEUX DE FORMATION  
THÉOLOGIQUE AMÉRICAINS

Nous nous proposons ici de procéder à partir d'un autre échantillon, celui des catalogues publiés par différents lieux de formation. On retiendra comme lieux la *Catholic University of America* (Washington DC), soutenue par la conférence épiscopale états-unienne, un séminaire interdiocésain, celui de *St Joseph - Dunwoodie* (NY), un lieu de formation jésuite (*Fordham University*, NY) et un lieu dominicain (*Pontifical Faculty of the Immaculate Conception*, Washington DC).

Jusqu'en 1965, le catalogue des enseignants comme des cours, dans tous ces lieux, repose sur les normes posées par *Deus Scientiarum Dominus*, de Pie XI (mai 1931), et n'inclut aucun cours ou enseignement explicitement construit sur un dialogue avec les pensées protestantes. Ainsi à la CUA, le catalogue de 1963-1964, rédigé en latin, est encore organisé selon ce schéma<sup>12</sup> : théologie fondamentale (cours d'apologétique sur la révélation divine, ecclésiologie catholique — cours donné par Msgr. Fenton<sup>13</sup>, qui enseigne à la CUA depuis 1938, et la quitte en 1965) ; théologie dogmatique (le Verbe Incarné, la Rédemption, le Pêché originel, la Grâce, Marie, les sacrements) ; théologie morale (essentiellement par le dominicain Merkelbach) ; écriture sainte et droit canonique, histoire de l'Église. Dans les cours électifs, on trouve déjà en 1965 des ateliers de pratique pastorale (fondements théologiques, monde de la médecine, psychologie).

Le catalogue de 1966-1967, rédigé en anglais, garde la même structure, mais inclut des cours aux contenus très différents : une majeure en théologie fondamentale et dogmatique est proposée en « œcuménisme », de même qu'un cours sur le développement de la doctrine et de la théologie. Un cours sur « la connaissance humaine de Jésus-Christ, approche comparative » est proposé par Carl J. Peter, professeur assistant de théologie dogmatique, recruté en 1964 (Ph.L et STD de l'université Grégorienne, Ph.D de l'Université St-Thomas-d'Aquin) : il distingue « la théologie biblique des faits », en s'appuyant sur des auteurs protestants (Schweizer, Cullmann, Bultmann, Robinson), et « la théologie systématique de l'interprétation » (étude de Galtier-Parente-Diepen, Rahner, Vogtle, Lonergan<sup>14</sup>). Une autre majeure, en théologie morale, sous la responsabilité de Charles Curran (STD Université Grégorienne et Université du Latran), qui vient d'être recruté à la CUA comme professeur de théologie morale, propose un séminaire de lecture sur la pensée protestante contemporaine en éthique (discutant des auteurs suivants : Luther, Calvin, Barth, Niebuhr, etc.<sup>15</sup>).

Le catalogue de 1968-1969 reconduit le cours de Carl J. Peter, qui fait également un séminaire sur le concile de Trente et l'œcuménisme, mais c'est David Tracy

<sup>12</sup> CUA catalogue 1963-1964, p. 25.

<sup>13</sup> En caractère gras les noms des experts au concile Vatican II. Pour Fenton comme pour beaucoup d'autres, on peut notamment se rapporter à *The American Catholic Who's Who*, 1960 and 1961, Vol. 14, Michigan. Ou bien à *The Official Catholic Directory*, édition annuelle de 1960, par exemple.

<sup>14</sup> CUA, catalogue 1966-67, p. 26.

<sup>15</sup> CUA, catalogue 1966-67, p. 28.

(STL Université Grégorienne, Instructeur en théologie dogmatique) qui reprend un séminaire de recherche, « la problématique contemporaine de la méthodologie théologique dans la théologie protestante » (étude historique des méthodes de Schleiermacher, Kierkegaard, Barth, Bultmann, Cullmann et Tillich<sup>16</sup>).

On retrouve un basculement similaire si l'on étudie de près les catalogues du « séminaire du Cardinal Spellman<sup>17</sup> », St. Joseph seminary, à Dunwoodie (Yonkers, New York). On trouve en 1966-67 un cours d'exégèse du Nouveau Testament, par Myles Bourke (STD CUA, SSL Institut Biblique Pontifical), intitulé: « Le problème du Jésus historique », étude des écrits des post-bultmanniens sur la 'nouvelle quête du Jésus historique' et la réaction d'autres auteurs. On trouve également un cours de « Théologie de l'œcuménisme », assuré par Robert Kennedy (JUD Université du Latran). On trouve également un séminaire « Théologie protestante contemporaine », consacré à l'étude de Barth, Bultmann, Tillich, par James Connolly (Ph.D Fordham University<sup>18</sup>). Le contenu du cours précise qu'il s'agit d'étudier l'état actuel de la théologie protestante, y compris la question de la sécularité et les théologiens de « la mort de Dieu ».

En 1967-68, Joseph Komonchak (STL Université Grégorienne) inaugure un cours sur « Théologie de la révélation et foi », en proposant une approche comparée entre les théologies catholique et protestante. La même année, avec Msgr Austin Vaughan (STD Université Grégorienne) et James Connolly, il conduit un séminaire de « théologie œcuménique », avec l'étude de la théologie protestante et des principales dénominations protestantes. James Connolly de son côté reconduit son cours sur Barth, Bultmann et Tillich. Richard Dillon (STL Université Grégorienne, SSL Institut Biblique Pontifical) organise un séminaire sur « le problème du Jésus historique », incluant l'étude de Bultmann, Käsemann, Bornkamm, Robinson.

En 1969-1970, son séminaire d'écriture sainte porte sur l'évangile selon Jean et s'appuie sur la lecture de Bultmann. A partir de 1970-71, le signifiant « protestant » disparaît largement des intitulés. Les questions adressées à la théologie semblent changer de provenance.

À noter que Myles Bourke, pour un article sur les récits de l'enfance chez Matthieu (*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, 22 - avril 1960) et Richard Dillon (pour un article dans la revue du séminaire, *Dunwoodie Review*, 1 (1961) concernant les mêmes récits de l'enfance, mais chez Luc) ont tous les deux été accusés de « bultmannisme » par Ottaviani, et défendus par leur archevêque de tutelle, le Cardinal Spellman<sup>19</sup>.

L'université jésuite de Fordham University (Bronx, New York) n'est pas vraiment dans la même situation que ses homologues. Si on y enseigne bien la théologie, en particulier depuis 1953, année où est créée une formation sur quatre ans conduisant à l'obtention d'un « Bachelor » en Théologie, la Graduate School ouvre un Master of

<sup>16</sup> CUA catalogue 1968-1969, p. 52-53.

<sup>17</sup> Pour reprendre l'expression de Thomas J. SHELLEY, *Francis Cardinal Spellman and His Seminary at Dunwoodie*, dans *Catholic Historical Review*, 80 (1994), p. 282-298.

<sup>18</sup> St Joseph's seminary, catalogue 1966-1968, p. 19.

<sup>19</sup> Thomas J. SHELLEY, *Francis Cardinal Spellman*, p. 282-298 – pour cet épisode, précisément à la page 287: « I have complete confidence in you and consider you a great asset to St. Joseph's Seminary ».

Arts en théologie seulement en 1963, et c'est à partir de 1967 que les étudiants ayant obtenu une moyenne minimale de B+ peuvent envisager un doctorat. Dès 1963, le cours de christologie d'Alfred Corbo (STL St Mary's; MA CUA) absorbe les pensées de Bultmann et de Cullmann<sup>20</sup>. Le même cours est offert en 1965-66, et s'y ajoute le cours de Myles Bourke d'« Introduction au Nouveau Testament », proposant une introduction aux méthodes historico-critiques. À partir de l'automne 1966, M. Ryan assure pour le Fordham College un séminaire sur « Le protestantisme moderne. Étude de la théologie protestante au 20<sup>e</sup> s. ; Bart, Bultmann, Brumer, Tillich, Niebuhr », en alternance avec le Professeur Healey, quand Charles Giblin s.j. (SSL, SSD Institut Biblique Pontifical) assure un cours sur « La théologie de Paul Tillich ». Au printemps 1968, Henri Bouillard s.j. est professeur invité et offre un séminaire sur Karl Barth. John Macquarrie (Ph.D Université de Glasgow, lui-même protestant), en 1967-68, intitule son séminaire « Rudolf Bultmann » ; il y étudie les problèmes de l'interprétation du Nouveau Testament à la lumière de la critique des formes et de l'existentialisme. Il travaille sur « Les herméneutiques post-bultmanniennes », et John Dwyer s.j. (STL Woodstock, Dr. Theol. Tübingen) sur « Paul Tillich ». La plupart de ces cours, sauf les séminaires d'invités, sont reconduits en 1968-69. En 1969-70, Donald Moore s.j. (STL Woodstock, STD Strasbourg) aborde « Les penseurs protestants modernes. Une enquête sur la théologie protestante au 20<sup>e</sup> s. et la réponse des théologiens catholiques ». Richard Dillon travaille sur l'Évangile selon Marc à partir des auteurs allemands Wrecke, Bultmann, Holtzmann. En 1971, c'est au tour de Doris Donnelly de travailler sur les « Théologiens protestants modernes », avec une insistance particulière sur les concepts de foi et de communauté.

C'est aussi pour son édition de 1965-1966 que le catalogue de la maison d'études dominicaines à Washington, DC, *Pontifical Faculty of the Immaculate Conception*, passe à la langue vernaculaire. Il faut attendre la publication des *Normae quaedam ad Constitutionem Apostolicam Deus Scientiarum Dominus* du 20 mai 1968 pour que le catalogue mentionne explicitement un dialogue théologique de fond (même si le programme de cette année-là se présente comme un programme de transition). « Théologie et science moderne » propose « une approche comparée des théologies catholique et protestante sur des questions telles que la vie, l'évolution, Dieu, la nature ». Un séminaire sur « Paul Tillich et le renouveau de la théologie catholique<sup>21</sup> » jouxte un cours sur les « Premières théories protestantes de l'Eucharistie » (*ibid.*, par Donahue). Un cours sur la « reconceptualisation de Dieu » s'attache à montrer les directions prises par la théologie contemporaine lorsqu'elle dialogue avec le pragmatisme, la phénoménologie et l'existentialisme, et prévoit des lectures de Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Bultmann, Robinson.

Cet échantillon de lieux de formation est certes limité, mais il permet une lecture dans des espaces très différents de par leurs appartenances institutionnelles, leurs places dans le dispositif ecclésial et leurs histoires respectives. Pourtant, ces quatre lieux sont marqués par une très forte convergence dans leur offre de formation au lendemain du concile, au point que l'on peut dire qu'il y a un avant et un après Vatican

<sup>20</sup> Fordham University, *The Graduate School of Arts and Science, Catalogue*, p. 107.

<sup>21</sup> *PFIC Catalogue 1968-1969*, Hill, p. 20.

Il dans le rapport à la pensée protestante, un changement préparé par des années de réception.

## L'AFFRONTLEMENT CULTUREL DANS LA SPHÈRE CATHOLIQUE

### LA QUESTION DES « DEUX THÉOLOGIES » DANS LES REVUES

« Le thomisme et la nouvelle théologie<sup>22</sup> », en 1950, présente les termes d'un débat qui est constant jusqu'au moment du concile. « Une fois que les frontières de l'Europe furent ouvertes après la libération, on put vite constater qu'un nouvel élément était entré en scène (...) Cette nouvelle philosophie reçut le nom d'existentialisme. Maintenant, c'est aussi un fait de l'histoire que peu de philosophies viennent au monde sans avoir une influence, tôt ou tard, sur la science théologique ; aussi il était naturel que le thomisme, non sans un certain degré d'appréhension, attende de pouvoir mesurer l'impact de cette philosophie sur la pensée catholique. Cela était d'autant plus important dans le cas présent qu'une école florissante d'existentialistes catholiques existait déjà en France et dans quelques autres pays. Dès 1946 des controverses dans plusieurs revues ecclésiastiques rendirent manifeste le fait que ces appréhensions étaient plus que justifiées (cf. Labourdette, op, « La Théologie et ses sources », *Revue Thomiste*, 56 (1946), p. 353-371, et J. Daniélou, « Les orientations présentes de la pensée religieuse », *Études*, 249 (Avril 1946<sup>23</sup>) ».

Théologie incertaine, selon Greenstock, la nouvelle théologie n'en est pas moins identifiable par ses représentants : « plusieurs de ses partisans en chef sont maintenant bien connus de nous tous » (et de citer Bruno de Solages, « Pour l'honneur de la théologie », in *Bulletin de Littérature Ecclésiastique*, 48 (1947), p. 65-84, article dans lequel se trouvent les noms des principaux tenants de ce courant). À ces personnes on se doit d'ajouter « quelques publications dans les séries *Sources Chrétiennes*, *Collection Théologie* et *Unam Sanctam* » (où Henri Bouillard est désigné comme un des plus radicaux dans la contestation du thomisme<sup>24</sup>).

« Le problème principal auquel nous sommes confrontés est tout simplement celui de deux manières contraires d'envisager la relation entre révélation et raison. Soit la raison est l'instrument dans le développement de la vérité révélée, soit la vérité révélée est l'instrument de la raison. (...) C'est pourquoi, en matière de conclusions théologiques, on n'a pas affaire à des séries de probabilités, mais à de strictes conclusions dans la forme de jugements qui correspondent à la vérité ontologique contenue dans les principes révélés (...). De tous ces points de vue nous parvenons à une seule et même conclusion, à savoir que c'est la vérité de la foi qui joue un rôle actif dans l'acte théologique de la raison, utilisant la vérité naturelle pour développer le contenu latent dans la révélation, et l'utiliser comme un strict instrument au sens thomiste de ce mot. Pour cette raison ces conclusions théologiques sont plus certaines qu'aucune vérité

<sup>22</sup> David Lee GREENSTOCK, *Thomism and the new Theology*, dans *The Thomist*, 13 (1950), p. 567-596. L'article est écrit avant la publication d'*Humani Generis*, et publié après sa publication.

<sup>23</sup> GREENSTOCK, *Thomism*, p. 567. Voir H. LABOURDETTE, *La Théologie et ses sources*, dans *Revue Thomiste* 56 (1946), p. 353-371, et Jean DANIELOU, *Les orientations présentes de la pensée religieuse*, dans *Études*, 249 (1946).

<sup>24</sup> GREENSTOCK, *Thomism*, p. 571-572.

seulement naturelle ne saurait l'être, parce qu'elles sont réduites, en dernière analyse, à un principe plus grand que la raison naturelle, un principe surnaturel et divin qui informe tout ce qui est humain dans l'acte théologique, lui conférant une nouvelle valeur surnaturelle<sup>25</sup> ».

En somme, selon Greenstock, au cœur de la méprise des nouvelles théologies, il y a cette volonté de s'adapter à leur époque, ce qui leur fait ignorer que la vérité ontologique contenue dans la révélation informe à ce point la foi et la raison théologique qu'elle ne peut produire que des conclusions théologiques certaines, uniques, stables dans ses formes, celles-là même qu'a formulées le thomisme dans l'histoire, et qui explique l'attachement des papes à cette unique philosophie. Ainsi, « quand l'Église utilise un certain vocabulaire philosophique dans ses définitions dogmatiques, elle exerce réellement son jugement infailible quant à la valeur de tels termes pour exprimer le sens profond d'une vérité divinement révélée (...) [ces termes qu'elle utilise] n'appartiennent plus à l'ordre humain ou naturel, mais reçoivent une approbation surnaturelle de ces mêmes vérités divines qu'ils servent à exprimer<sup>26</sup> ».

En 1963, Anthony Lee, rédacteur en chef de *The Thomist*, dresse un portrait de la bataille menée autour du concile<sup>27</sup>. Il soulève le problème de « l'anti-thomisme dans la pensée catholique récente<sup>28</sup> ». Cet anti-thomisme procéderait d'une « nouvelle théologie », elle-même adossée à une nouvelle philosophie, l'existentialisme<sup>29</sup>. « Soucieux de rejoindre la philosophie existentialiste sur son propre terrain et bien disposés à l'égard de son opposition aux 'formulations rationalisantes du scolasticisme décadent', les nouveaux théologiens ont compromis l'orthodoxie : 'Il est assez évident en effet que la théologie scolastique n'est pas en prise avec ces catégories [d'historicité et de subjectivisme]', dit-il en citant Daniélou<sup>30</sup>. « Dès 1946, la destruction de la philosophie et de la théologie scolastiques avait pris les proportions d'une croisade triomphante. Maurice de Gandillac confirme l'acte de décès du néo-thomisme. Hans Urs von Balthasar écrit une épitaphe pour St Thomas et les Pères de l'Église<sup>31</sup> ». Or, selon lui, « les causes [des erreurs produites par l'existentialisme] tiennent à une acceptation implicite des principes de base de l'existentialisme, à savoir le primat de la subjectivité et le rejet d'une philosophie et d'une théologie systématique<sup>32</sup> ».

Dans le même numéro est donné le *verbatim* du discours de Mgr Dino Staffa<sup>33</sup>, secrétaire de la Sacrée Congrégation des Séminaires et des Universités, pour l'inauguration de la chaire St. Thomas d'Aquin à l'université pontificale du Latran, le 10 mars 1963. Le discours porte un titre-programme : « le renouveau du thomisme ». « Parmi les causes les plus graves du malaise [parmi les universitaires catholiques] se

<sup>25</sup> GREENSTOCK, *Thomism*, p. 574-578.

<sup>26</sup> GREENSTOCK, *Thomism*, p. 579.

<sup>27</sup> ANTHONY D. LEE, *Thomism and the Council*, dans *The Thomist*, 27 (1963), p. 451-492.

<sup>28</sup> LEE, *Thomism and the Council*, p. 459.

<sup>29</sup> LEE, *Thomism and the Council*, p. 463.

<sup>30</sup> JEAN DANIÉLOU, *Les orientations*, p. 14.

<sup>31</sup> LEE, *Thomism and the Council*, p. 465.

<sup>32</sup> LEE, *Thomism and the Council*, p. 466.

<sup>33</sup> Mgr Staffa est également conseiller de la commission théologique préparatoire du concile, et vice-président de la commission conciliaire pour les Séminaires et les universités.



trouve encore, comme toujours, l'opposition, renouvelée, et répandue y compris parmi les fils de l'Église, au Docteur Commun<sup>34</sup> ».

Quels sont les reproches adressés à l'existentialisme ? Ils sont nombreux, mais les trois plus importants sont très clairement énoncés : fondamentalement, il priverait la théologie catholique de tous ses principes essentiels ; ensuite, il conduirait à un éclectisme qui aboutirait à faire un choix arbitraire entre l'ancien et le moderne, sans considération pour le développement de la doctrine à travers l'histoire ; enfin, il conduirait à un *affaiblissement de l'autorité de l'Église*<sup>35</sup>. Parler ainsi de deux théologies, c'est affirmer clairement, au fond, qu'il n'y a qu'une seule façon de faire de la bonne théologie.

### L'ASPIRATION À « D'AUTRES » THÉOLOGIES

Que disent de ces enjeux théologiques, dans l'après-guerre, les autres revues ? Avant la publication d'*Humani Generis*<sup>36</sup>, abondamment commentée, vécue par les uns comme une confirmation de tout ce qu'ils dénonçaient, comme les autres comme un rappel à la rigueur mais pas un renoncement aux nouvelles méthodes, de nombreux auteurs manifestent leur impatience à s'affranchir d'une méthode et d'une démarche dans laquelle ils ne se reconnaissent plus.

Dans *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, Edward Siegman, en 1949<sup>37</sup>, évalue sévèrement l'utilisation des citations bibliques par les manuels de théologie : « À la question 'la méthode de présentation de l'Écriture dans nos manuels de théologie est-elle satisfaisante ?', la réponse est largement négative, de la part d'un nombre croissant d'enseignants et d'étudiants. Bien sûr, ils ne limitent pas leur critique à la façon dont l'Écriture est traitée dans ces manuels, comme nous le ferons dans cet article. Ils condamnent comme dépassée et contraire à toute pédagogie l'ensemble de la méthode de présentation dans nos manuels de dogmatique et attribuent à cette méthode l'apathie générale des séminaristes et des prêtres envers la science-reine (...) Nos manuels de théologie dogmatique suivent tous ce que l'on appelle la méthode positiviste-scolastique, (...) une méthode dépassée ».

Au même moment, en 1948, dans *Theological Studies*, les cosignataires de la rubrique « Current theology », dont John Courtney Murray, déclarent : « L'étude des Pères de l'Église permet « de combler le fossé qui s'est créé, dans l'opinion de beaucoup, entre la théologie et la spiritualité. Les Pères de l'Église ne sont pas simplement des professeurs de doctrine chrétienne mais des maîtres de vie spirituelle... À cet égard, les études patristiques offrent un complément précieux, et sans doute aussi un nécessaire correctif à la mentalité rigidement intellectualiste créée par l'immersion des étudiants dans la pensée scolastique<sup>38</sup> ».

<sup>34</sup> DINO STAFFA, *Le renouveau du thomisme*, dans *The Thomist*, 27 (1963), p. 129-137 ; citation tirée de la page 134.

<sup>35</sup> LEE, *Thomism and the Council*, p. 475-478.

<sup>36</sup> Encyclique *Humani Generis*, d'août 1950.

<sup>37</sup> Edward F. SIEGMAN, *L'utilisation de l'Écriture sainte dans les manuels de théologie dogmatique*, Vol. 11, p. 151-152.

<sup>38</sup> John Courtney MURRAY et al.; *Current theology*, dans *Theological Studies*, 9 (1948), p. 250-289.

Pour commenter *Humani Generis*, Gustav Weigel, après avoir éteint l'existentialisme, termine par cette étonnante ouverture: «assumer le pari existentialiste pour rencontrer l'homme moderne? Par souci apostolique? Pas complètement déraisonnable. Pas complètement valide. Mais c'est mieux que l'action de ceux qui avancent sans ouvrir les yeux<sup>39</sup>».

Les «nouveaux mouvements» qui précèdent le concile sont-ils au cœur du conflit culturel entre les «deux théologies»? Rien n'est moins sûr. Dans son article déjà cité de 1963, le rédacteur en chef de *The Thomist* se félicite des «nouveaux mouvements pastoraux»: «au milieu de cette agitation intellectuelle, cependant, d'autres mouvements se firent jour, qui s'avèrent ultérieurement bénéfiques à la vie de l'Église». Ainsi, «l'intérêt pour la Bible s'est développé avec les avancées des recherches contemporaines dans le domaine de l'Écriture (...) Là étaient les semences du renouveau, de la proclamation moderne, de l'histoire du salut et de la catéchèse nouvelle. L'insistance souhaitable sur le souci pastoral des âmes a été servie par un mouvement liturgique en pleine expansion, qui pouvait conduire les laïcs vers une participation plus vivante dans les mystères solennels de l'Église du Christ, (...) par l'ouverture d'un dialogue avec les autres Chrétiens pour renforcer l'esprit religieux comme un monde plus puissant au sein d'un monde sécularisé. (...) Tous ces mouvements, qui portent aujourd'hui du fruit, se sont développés sous l'influence d'idéologies en conflit, et avec l'incertitude des «premiers pas», malheureusement sans le soutien d'une théologie systématique<sup>40</sup>».

Autrement dit, la question au concile n'est pas tant la nouveauté des mouvements pastoraux, liturgiques et bibliques, ou bien patristiques, que le thomisme se fait fort d'absorber, que la question de la relation philosophie-théologie. Pourquoi alors cet acharnement contre l'existentialisme? Car il est, à cause du primat qu'il accorde à la subjectivité, cela même qui expose la citadelle catholique<sup>41</sup> à ce dont elle s'est si bien, grâce au thomisme, défendu: le protestantisme.

Pourtant, c'est bien à penser le christianisme, dans un dialogue incluant les protestants, y compris en s'en distinguant, que des auteurs s'emploient. Ainsi, Gustave Weigel, dans *Catholic Theology in dialogue*<sup>42</sup>, consacre un premier chapitre à «L'ecclésiologie catholique dans notre temps» - où il établit une histoire de l'ecclésiologie comme discipline formelle apologétique, en réponse à la Réforme protestante. Il situe le tournant ecclésiologique au début du 20<sup>e</sup> s., et voit dans l'encyclique *Mystici Corporis* de 1943 la consécration par Pie XII d'une ecclésiologie centrée sur le symbole du corps du Christ. Il articule ces évolutions au progrès du renouveau biblique et patristique<sup>43</sup>, et montre comment cette évolution s'accompagne d'un changement dans la méthode.

Dans un deuxième chapitre, «The Scriptures and Theology<sup>44</sup>», il évoque la «convergence» des exégètes catholiques et protestants vers une méthodologie

<sup>39</sup> GUSTAV WEIGEL, *The historical background of the Encyclical Humani Generis*, dans *Theological Studies*, 12 (1951), p. 208-230.

<sup>40</sup> LEE, *Thomism and the Council*, p. 468.

<sup>41</sup> Joseph Clifford FENTON, *Tower of David*, dans *AER*, 142 (, p. 41-49.

<sup>42</sup> GUSTAV WEIGEL, *Catholic Theology in Dialogue*, New York NY, 1960.

<sup>43</sup> WEIGEL, *Catholic Theology*, p. 14.

<sup>44</sup> WEIGEL, *Catholic Theology*, p. 29-48.

identique<sup>45</sup>. Il parle de la manière dont les catholiques ont dû évoluer pour arriver à ce point de convergence : « La réelle faiblesse de leurs efforts était due à l'assomption implicite que toute affirmation était, ou impliquait, une affirmation logique que le sens commun pouvait atteindre. Bien qu'ils dussent admettre, à cause de la tradition catholique, qu'il y avait plus d'un sens dans l'Écriture, ils s'en tenaient à la doctrine thomiste que tous les sens s'enracinaient dans le sens littéral des mots ». Il cite comme signe de cette convergence catholico-protestante le nom de professeurs ayant formé indifféremment des universitaires des deux confessions : William Albright à l'université John Hopkins, les Canadiens Roderick McKenzie et David Stanley, les Américains John McKenzie, Roland Murphy, Patrick Skehan, Edward Siegman, Bruce Vawter et Joseph Fitzmyer.

### LE CONCILE COMME MOMENT DE LA CRISTALLISATION DE CET AFFRONTEMENT ?

#### POUR DEMEURER BON CATHOLIQUE FAUDRAIT-IL DEVENIR PROTESTANT ?

Le titre de cet article de Mgr Lefebvre éclaire à sa manière le conflit culturel que nous essayons d'analyser. La note préliminaire à cet article publié en 1970 dans *La Pensée Catholique*<sup>46</sup> précise : « l'article qui suit a été composé en octobre 1964, alors que peu de schémas du Concile avaient été approuvés. Pour des motifs tout à fait étrangers à l'article lui-même, il n'a pas été publié. Nous pensons que ce cri d'alarme de 1964 demeure plus que jamais actuel. Il prouve aussi que, dès ce moment, on pouvait prévoir les conséquences de cet esprit néo-moderniste qui régnait au Concile, conséquences dont nous sommes les témoins atterrés aujourd'hui ». « Est-il possible de déceler le motif, du moins apparent, qui a permis à ces thèses révolutionnaires de prendre place officiellement à la barre du Concile ? Nous croyons pouvoir dire que c'est à la faveur d'un œcuménisme qui, se présentant d'abord comme catholique est devenu au cours même des sessions un œcuménisme rationaliste<sup>47</sup> ». La manière dont

<sup>45</sup> WEIGEL, *Catholic Theology*, p. 31.

<sup>46</sup> Marcel LEFÈVRE, *Pour demeurer bon catholique faudrait-il devenir protestant?*, dans *La Pensée Catholique*, 126-127 (1970), p. 9-19.

<sup>47</sup> *Pour demeurer...*, p. 10. Et de suivre: Venons-en d'abord à la *Primauté de Pierre*, qu'on veut mettre en échec par une *collégialité* mal définie et mal comprise [...] Mais qu'on juge de la thèse nouvelle qui contient deux affirmations: 1. Tout, absolument tout pouvoir sur l'Église est donné à Pierre seul. 2. Tout ce même pouvoir a été donné aussi à Pierre et aux Apôtres collectivement [...]. S'il s'agit de la *Vierge Marie*. C'est avec une impudence incroyable, en dépit du désir explicite du Saint-Père, que le schéma proposé supprime le titre de Marie Mère de l'Église; les œcuménistes regrettent que la Vierge Marie y soit nommée Médiatrice [...] Au sujet de l'*Eucharistie*, bien que ce sujet n'ait pas été traité *ex professo*, on aura remarqué deux allusions qui tendent à diminuer l'estime de la présence réelle de Notre Seigneur. On met l'Écriture et l'Eucharistie sur un pied d'égalité [...] Dans tout le schéma de la *Révélation*, on cherche à minimiser la valeur de la Tradition au profit de l'Écriture. (...) La Vérité de l'Église a évidemment des conséquences qui gênent les protestants et hélas aussi un certain nombre de catholiques imbus de libéralisme. Désormais le nouveau dogme qui prendra la place de celui de la Vérité de l'Église sera la dignité de la personne humaine et le bien suprême de la liberté: deux notions qu'on évite de définir clairement. D'où il suit, d'après nos novateurs, que la liberté de manifester publiquement la religion de sa conscience devient un droit strict de toute personne humaine qu'aucune personne au monde ne peut interdire. Que la religion soit vraie ou non, qu'elle entraîne à sa suite des

ce membre du groupe du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* voit les enjeux dans les débats en cours pose la question de la représentation d'eux-mêmes qu'ont les catholiques vis-à-vis de « l'autre » protestant. Il est peut-être aisé aujourd'hui de considérer Mgr Lefebvre comme un cas atypique de catholique — dans ce cas encore pourtant, le rapport entre ce profil atypique et des profils jugés plus typique serait instructif. Mais notre but n'est pas de trancher cette question ici. On se contentera de revenir à notre corpus de revues et de théologiens américains pour voir quels habitus théologiques sont, de fait, en conflit, à l'intérieur du monde catholique, et notamment par rapport à la question de cette identité catholique.

Il convient en effet d'articuler ensemble ces conceptions philosophiques, que nous avons exposées très brièvement, avec les implications ecclésiologiques et théologiques qu'elles comportent. Et de montrer, par l'analyse des positions des acteurs du concile que sont les experts, que ces débats sont portés par eux à l'intérieur du concile. Revenons sur une des figures parmi les plus connues de ces acteurs<sup>48</sup>, Joseph Clifford Fenton. Thomiste, doyen de la faculté de théologie de la *Catholic University of America* entre 1952 et sa retraite en 1965, consultant de la Sacrée Congrégation pour les Études et les Séminaires depuis 1950, secrétaire de la *Catholic Theological Society of America* en 1946 et 1947, éditeur de l'*American Ecclesiastical Review* depuis 1944<sup>49</sup>, expert au concile, l'homme cumule les fonctions et offre un point de repère intéressant dans l'affrontement culturel que nous essayons d'analyser.

Si en effet son rôle dans la mise sous silence de Murray après 1954 est maintenant connu<sup>50</sup>, la liste de ses autres combats nous instruit encore davantage sur la polarisation de l'espace théologique catholique. En 1948, il dénonce dans les termes les plus vifs le travail de Gustave Thils<sup>51</sup>. « Telle qu'elle est présentée et expliquée dans la science de la théologie sacrée, la caractéristique de catholicité de l'Église a

vertus ou des vices, peu leur importe. La seule limite sera un bien commun qu'on se garde bien de définir! [...] Il s'ensuivrait que les catholiques n'auraient plus le droit de travailler à établir ou à rétablir un État catholique. Ils auraient le devoir de maintenir l'indifférentisme religieux de l'État. Pie IX a appelé cela « du délire » à la suite de Grégoire XVI et encore une « liberté de perdition » (*Quanta Cura*, 8 déc. 1864). Léon XIII a fait sur ce sujet une encyclique admirable *Libertas praestantissimum*. Mais tout cela était pour leur temps et non pour 1964! [...] La Vérité de l'Église est la raison d'être de son zèle à évangéliser [...] Ce zèle, ce feu qui veut embraser le monde est gênant pour les protestants. [...] Ces exemples suffisent amplement à prouver que les commissions ont une majorité de membres imbus d'un ecuménisme qui non seulement n'est plus catholique selon leur propre affirmation mais ressemble étrangement au modernisme condamné par Saint Pie X et dont le pape Paul VI nous affirme dans son encyclique « *Ecclesiam Suam* » qu'il en constate la reviviscence ».

<sup>48</sup> On pourra se reporter notamment à R. Scott APPLEBY and John H. HAAS, *The Last Supernaturalists. Fenton, Connell, and the Threat of Catholic Indifferentism*, dans *U.S. Catholic Historian*, 13 (1995), and APPLEBY and HAAS, *The Intellectual Life. Essays in Memory of John Tracy Ellis*, Part 2, p. 23-48.

<sup>49</sup> Et jusqu'à sa démission en décembre 1963, officiellement pour raisons de santé.

<sup>50</sup> Joseph A. KOMONCHAK, *The Silencing of John Courtney Murray*, dans *Cristianesimo nella storia*, 17 (1996), p. 657-702; et KOMONCHAK, *Catholic Principle and the American Experiment. "The Silencing of John Courtney Murray"*, dans *U.S. Catholic Historian*, 17 (1999).

<sup>51</sup> Joseph Clifford FENTON, *The Note of Catholicity in Scholastic Theology*, dans *AER*, 118 (1948), p. 127-142. Cette recension fait suite à quatre articles de 1946-1947 dans lesquels il dénonce les attaques du « professeur de Malines » (FENTON, *The True Church and the notes of the Church*, dans *AER*, 116 [1946], p. 245).

une valeur précise et de très grande importance. (...) dans un des traités les plus impudents et les plus savants parmi ceux qui traitent de la catholicité de l'Église, le chapitre « La Catholicité » dans la thèse « Les notes de l'Église dans l'apologétique catholique depuis la Réforme », du docteur Gustave Thils, semble prendre pour un acquis le fait que la note de catholicité, telle qu'elle est présentée par les théologiens depuis quelques siècles, a été mise à l'épreuve et prise en défaut<sup>52</sup> ».

En 1952 et en 1957, Fenton croise le fer avec Congar, pour ses ouvrages, *Vraie et fausse réforme dans l'Église*<sup>53</sup>, puis *Christ, Marie et l'Église* et *L'Apostolat des Laïcs*<sup>54</sup>. La traduction de *À la rencontre du protestantisme* de George Tavad, en anglais, est l'occasion d'une critique acerbe<sup>55</sup> : « Ce que le Père Tavad a à dire, dans sa traduction anglaise, à propos de 'tous les groupes américains' et à propos des 'catholiques américains' ne peut pas être considéré autrement que comme scrupuleusement blessant et insultant (...). *À la rencontre du protestantisme* n'est, en aucune manière, un travail important ou même sérieux ».

Fenton n'est pas seul dans ces combats. Lors de la polémique avec Murray sur les relations entre l'Église et l'État, Francis Connell<sup>56</sup> et George Shea<sup>57</sup> interviennent. En septembre 1952, George Shea, dans un article sur la liberté religieuse en Espagne<sup>58</sup>, montre comment la répression de toute expression publique du protestantisme par l'État constitue un devoir envers la « Vérité » de la foi. Quelques mois après, en mai 1953, comme pour appuyer leur position par des auteurs faisant autorité, ils ouvrent les colonnes de la revue, d'abord à Ottaviani<sup>59</sup>, tout juste créé cardinal, puis en mai 1954, à Amleto Cicognani, délégué apostolique aux États-Unis<sup>60</sup>.

#### UNE CARTOGRAPHIE DES EXPERTS AU CONCILE.

Qu'ont en commun tous ces noms évoqués ? Fenton, Connell, Shea, Thils, Murray, Congar, Tavad — et plus haut dans notre exposé, Charles Curran, Weigel ? Tous sont mobilisés au concile comme experts — seul Weigel n'est pas expert mais consultant du Secrétariat pour l'unité des Chrétiens. Alors que Fenton, en 1951, se réjouit que ces « nouveaux théologiens n'aient en rien entamé la vraie doctrine de l'Église<sup>61</sup> », on sait à quel point le décret sur la liberté religieuse fût un des lieux du combat conciliaire.

<sup>52</sup> FENTON, *The Note of Catholicity*, p. 128.

<sup>53</sup> Joseph Clifford FENTON, *Reform and Integralism*, dans AER, 126 (1952), p. 126-139.

<sup>54</sup> Joseph Clifford FENTON, *An Ecumenist viewpoint on the Church's Magisterium*, dans AER, 137 (1957), p. 113-126.

<sup>55</sup> Joseph Clifford FENTON, Book review of G. Tavad's *The Catholic Approach to Protestantism*, dans AER, 133 (1955), p. 352-353.

<sup>56</sup> Francis CONNELL, *To tell the immutable truth, always*, dans AER, 121 (1949), p. 312-321.

<sup>57</sup> George SHEA, *Catholic doctrine and 'the religion of State'*, dans AER, 123 (1950), p. 161.

<sup>58</sup> George SHEA, *Spain and religious freedom*, dans AER, 127 (1952), p. 161-172.

<sup>59</sup> Créé cardinal en janvier 1953, et pro-secrétaire du St. Office, il écrit: Alfredo OTTAVIANI, *Church and State. Some present problems in the light of the Teaching of Pope Pius XII*, dans AER, 128 (1953), p. 321-334.

<sup>60</sup> Amleto CICOGNANI, *For Church and Pope*, dans AER, 130 (1954), p. 289-291.

<sup>61</sup> Joseph Clifford FENTON, *The status of a controversy*, dans AER, 124 (1951), p. 451-458. Et il l'écrit à nouveau en 1960, *Rome and the status of Catholic theology*, dans AER, 143 (1960), p. 395-417.

Clairement, alors que le moment du concile lui-même marque une rupture des *habitus* de silence ou de soumission au sein du groupe des théologiens — voir le cas éclairant de Murray rappelé au concile pour y défendre les idées pour lesquelles il avait été invité au silence, le recours à la théologie protestante est envisagé, non pas pour quitter la tradition catholique, mais pour nourrir un renouveau. De ce renouveau était attendu un infléchissement « existentiel », qui pouvait conduire à dépasser le juridisme et le moralisme propres au catholicisme. Mais c'est bien cela que refusaient les tenants de la « vraie théologie », comme ils la désignaient. À ces théologiens tentés de renouveler ou d'infléchir les pratiques, les rappels à l'ordre ne manquent pas : au moment du concile encore, dans *The Thomist*, Luigi Ciappi, o.p., rappelle que « la mission du théologien [...] n'est pas de se substituer au Magistère de l'Église ; elle est plutôt de se mettre au service, humblement, du Magistère, avec la conviction que c'est seulement en servant la vérité que l'esprit humain devient libre et participe à la souveraineté spirituelle de Dieu<sup>62</sup> ». L'appel à l'autorité, que ce soit dans le recours à des signatures de personnalités de la Curie ou dans l'argument d'autorité dans le débat théologique, est déjà, en lui-même, un marqueur de la disposition au dialogue dans l'espace théologique.

Cette cartographie et ces polémiques réelles ne doivent pas être caricaturées au point de laisser croire qu'il existerait un plan figé des forces en présence. On est là dans un affrontement culturel, et il s'agit toujours de positions relatives, de champs de force qui évoluent. À ce titre, pour conclure, on évoquera la figure particulièrement intéressante d'un autre expert au concile, B. Lonergan. Son parcours nous semble assez exemplaire, précisément parce qu'il dessine une trajectoire, et que, sur cette trajectoire, nombreux sont ceux qui cherchent à se l'approprier. Le premier Lonergan est un thomiste. Sa thèse<sup>63</sup>, préparée à la Grégorienne, sous la direction de Charles Boyer, porte sur « Grâce et liberté : la grâce opérante dans la pensée de St. Thomas ». Ses quatre premiers articles, publiés dans *Theological Studies*, se rapportent à l'étude de Thomas<sup>64</sup>. Aussi c'est sans surprise que l'on trouve dans *The Thomist*, en 1958, la recension la plus élogieuse qui lui soit consacrée, à la suite de la sortie de son premier ouvrage, *Insight* : « Ce livre constitue, il me semble, le premier produit parfait de la reconstruction [du thomisme] initiée par Léon XIII. *Insight* pourrait inaugurer une nouvelle ère dans la philosophie scolastique<sup>65</sup> », indique Germain Grisez.

Pourtant, dix ans après, c'est un deuxième Lonergan que l'on peut lire, tel qu'il apparaît dans le recueil d'articles qui est édité sous le titre *A second collection*<sup>66</sup>. Que ce soit dans « La déshellénisation du dogme », « Le futur du thomisme », « Philosophie

<sup>62</sup> Luigi CIAPPI, *Magisterium of the Church and sacred theology*, dans *The Thomist*, 27 (1958), *Vatican II: The Theological Dimension*, p.196-210. Citation p. 210.

<sup>63</sup> Frederick E. CROWE and Robert M. DORAN (eds.), *Grace and Freedom. Operative Grace in the Thought of St Thomas Aquinas*, 2000.

<sup>64</sup> Bernard LONERGAN, *The Concept of "Verbum" in the Writings of St. Thomas Aquinas I, II, III et IV*, dans *Theological Studies*, 8-10 (1957-1959)..

<sup>65</sup> Germain GRISEZ, de Georgetown University in *The Thomist*, (1958), p. 554-560. Citation p. 554.

<sup>66</sup> Bernard LONERGAN, *A second Collection*, Toronto, 1996 [1<sup>re</sup> édition 1974].

et théologie », ou bien encore « Révolution dans la théologie catholique », Lonergan invite à déplacer les frontières culturelles qui enferment la théologie. Il situe l'espace théologique entre deux marqueurs au cœur de notre débat, St. Thomas et Bultmann : « On veut quelque chose de plus [que la méthode transcendantale]. Quelque chose que ni l'interprétation de l'Écriture dans des termes aristotéliens par l'Aquinat ni l'interprétation du Nouveau Testament par Bultmann dans les termes du premier Heidegger ne nous fournissent. Ce qu'il nous faut plutôt, c'est la mise en commun des fruits de l'expertise historique et de modèles dérivés des appréhensions de la conscience, depuis les types variés de sa différenciation et de sa spécialisation<sup>67</sup> ».

Dans leur introduction à *A second collection*, William Ryan et Bernard Tyrell précisent : « Ce changement, un tournant dans la pensée de Lonergan, peut être daté : les années 1964-65. Frederick Crowe et David Tracy, dans leurs remarquables écrits, ont explicité les développements de la pensée de Lonergan avant et après ce tournant. Pour ce qui nous concerne, nous pouvons pointer vers ce souci principal de Lonergan, l'analyse intentionnelle, et ensuite distinguer deux thèmes majeurs présents dans cette deuxième collection : d'abord, l'émergence, clairement, du primat du quatrième niveau de conscience humaine, le niveau existentiel, le niveau de l'évaluation et de l'amour ; ensuite, l'importance de la conscience historique<sup>68</sup> ».

## CONCLUSION

Cette cartographie des théologiens montre clairement des débats internes à l'espace théologique nord-américain, tel qu'il se dessine dans les revues théologiques et les lieux d'enseignement de la théologie. Ces débats sont aussi bien propres à la situation singulière du catholicisme sur ce continent, que, parfois, des échos par rapport à des débats liés à des situations européennes. Dans tous les cas, ils préfigurent une typologie des experts au concile, qui est sans doute un indicateur du conflit socio-culturel qui s'y joue tout au long des quatre sessions.

On peut aisément reconnaître l'affinité qui existe entre toute démarche protestante et les pensées de l'existence. Ce qui apparaît peut-être, bénédiction pour les uns, malédiction pour les autres, c'est comment les catholiques eux-mêmes sont sensibles à cette affinité dès qu'ils considèrent la foi et la vie dans la foi comme des événements d'existence. Or, une telle approche n'est-elle pas toujours celle de ceux qu'on appelle les « spirituels » : ils sont toujours des « existentiels » ! En face de cette démarche, il y a ceux dont la démarche est ontologique, c.-à-d. essentialiste. Cette répartition des

<sup>67</sup> «Something more is wanted [than transcendental method]. It is not supplied either by Aquinas' interpretation of Scripture in Aristotelian terms or by Bultmann's interpretation of the new Testament in the terms of the early Heidegger. Rather what is wanted is a coming together of the fruits of the historical expertise and, on the other hand, of models derived from the data of conscientiousness, from the different types of its differentiation and specialization,, from the various structures that result from differentiation and specialization» («Philosophy and Theology», p. 193 – 208, citation p. 205-206, LONERGAN, *A second Collection*. Premières parutions: *The dehellinization of dogma*, dans *Theological Studies*, 1967; «The future of thomism», conférence du 15 mars 1968 à St. Paul's Seminary, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvanie; «Philosophy and Theology», discours à l'American Catholic Philosophical Association, 1970; «Revolution in Catholic Theology», repris de *The Catholic Theological Society of America, Proceedings*, 27 (1972), p. 18-23.

<sup>68</sup> LONERGAN, *A Second Collection*, «Introduction», p.VII-VIII.



esprits fait qu'il y a deux conceptions de la vérité. L'une d'elle se définirait assez bien par l'adéquation entre la chose et l'intelligence. L'autre, par l'engagement.

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## ELEMENTA ECCLESIAE

### A BASIS FOR VATICAN II'S RECOGNITION OF THE ECCLESIAL CHARACTER OF NON-CATHOLIC CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

As if to fulfill the fateful prediction of its principal drafter, Gerard Phillips, Assistant Secretary of the Theological Commission at the Second Vatican Council, that much ink would flow concerning its meaning and proper interpretation,<sup>1</sup> recent years have seen renewed discussion regarding the expression *subsistit in* of article 8 of the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (*Lumen gentium*).<sup>2</sup> At issue is a correct appreciation of the debate which occurred in the conciliar period between a rigid and exclusivist interpretation of Pius XII's identification of the Roman Catholic Church and the mystical body of Christ in the 1943 encyclical letter, *Mystici corporis*,<sup>3</sup> and the efforts of Catholic theology to arrive at a positive evaluation of other Christian

<sup>1</sup> Gérard PHILIPS, *L'Église et son mystère au II<sup>e</sup> concile du Vatican. Histoire, texte et commentaire de la constitution «Lumen gentium», 2 T., Paris, 1967, T. 1, p. 119.*

<sup>2</sup> «This is the unique church of Christ which in the creed we profess to be one, holy, catholic and apostolic [...] This church, constituted and organized as a society in the present world, subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and the bishops in communion with him” (LG 8). Discussion in recent years was sparked by the publication of Alexandra von TEUFFENBACH, *Die Bedeutung des subsistit in (LG 8). Zum Selbstverständnis der katholischen Kirche*, München, 2002; and Karl Joseph BECKER, *The Church and Vatican II's 'Subsistit in' Terminology*, in *Origins*, 35 (2006), p. 514-522, first published in the English version of *L'Osservatore Romano* (December 14, 2005), p. 1, 6-7. Luigi SARTORI, *Osservazioni sull'ermeneutica del subsistit in proposta da Alexandra von Teuffenbach*, in *Rassegna de Teologia*, 45 (2004), p. 279-281. Francis A. SULLIVAN, *A Response to Karl Becker, s.j, on the Meaning of Subsistit In*, in *Theological Studies*, 67 (2006), p. 395-409; *The Meaning of Subsistit in as Explained by the Doctrine of the Faith*, in *Theological Studies*, 69 (2008), p. 116-124; *Further Thoughts on the Meaning of Subsistit In*, in *Theological Studies*, 71 (2010), p. 133-147. Karim SCHELKENS, *Lumen Gentium's 'Subsistit in' Revisited. The Catholic Church and Christian Unity after Vatican II*, in *Theological Studies*, 69 (2008), p. 875-893. Schelkens has helpfully shown, through a careful historiography of the various versions considered by the drafting committee within the Doctrinal Commission, that the term *est*, was first replaced by *adest*, and finally *subsistit* (p. 884-891). CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH, *Responses to Some Questions regarding Certain Aspects of the Doctrine of the Church*, in *Origins*, 37 (2007), p. 134-136. Jared WICKS, *The Pope's Message to Protestants – and Catholics. Not-so-fully Church in Christian Century* (21 August 2007), p. 9-11.

<sup>3</sup> Pius XII describes the mystical body of Christ, the “true Church of Jesus Christ” as “the One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Roman Church.” Pius XII, “The Mystical Body of Christ (*Mystici corporis*, 1943),” no 13; cf. no. 91. [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/pius\\_xii/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-xii\\_enc\\_29061943\\_mystici-corporis-christi\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xii/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_29061943_mystici-corporis-christi_en.html). To belie a strictly exclusivist interpretation of the church's position, Pius XII condemned the interpretation of the axiom “no salvation outside the church” advanced by the American Jesuit Leonard Feeney in 1949, and maintained the traditional conviction that those who were not members of the visible church might, through a life of faith and charity, be related to the church or belong to it by desire. *Suprema haec sacra*. English version in *AER*, 127 (1952), p. 308-315. In that same year, the Congregation of the Holy Office issued an instruction authorizing Catholic scholars to undertake more formal conversations with other Christians

communities. A much neglected aspect of recent discussion is the role played by the notion of those “elements of grace and sanctification”, constitutive elements of the Church of Christ, referred to in the subsequent clause of the same sentence in article 8 of *Lumen Gentium*.<sup>4</sup> The *relatio* explaining the use of the term *subsistit in* explains that its use is a direct consequence of the Constitution’s robust understanding of the “elements of truth and sanctification” that are “proper to the church of Christ”.<sup>5</sup> It was necessary “so that the expression might better agree with the affirmation about the ecclesial elements which are found elsewhere”.<sup>6</sup>

The council sought to recognize more than a collection of baptized individuals beyond the borders of the Catholic Church, to affirm more than a purely sociological vision of other Christian bodies and acknowledge their truly ecclesial character. Explaining its use of the terms “churches and ecclesial communities” to refer to those Christian communities separated from the Catholic Church in its Decree on Ecumenism (*Unitatis redintegratio*), the council explained:

It must not be overlooked that the communities that have their origin in the separation that took place in the West are not merely a sum or collection of individual Christians, but they are constituted by social ecclesiastical elements which they have preserved from our common patrimony, and which confer on them a truly ecclesial character. In these communities the one sole Church of Christ is present, albeit imperfectly, in a way that is somewhat like the presence in particular churches, and by means of their ecclesiastical elements the church of Christ is in some way operative in them.<sup>7</sup>

As a contribution to the consideration of how the Second Vatican Council can itself be seen as an event of “reception”, this paper will explore the development of theological consensus on the recognition of other Christian communities in the period immediately preceding the council, with particular attention to the role of the notion of the *elementa ecclesiae*. But before turning to this development, a brief word regarding its prevalence in the council’s effort to reflect on the life of the non-Catholic churches is in order.

### THE NOTION OF *ELEMENTA ECCLESIAE* IN THE EARLIEST SCHEMATA

It is important to frame this discussion by acknowledging that the notion of *elementa ecclesiae* or elements of the church was not a new idea introduced in the

engaged in ecumenical efforts. See “*Instructio ad locorum ordinarios ‘De motione oecumenica’ (Ecclesia Catholica)*”, AAS, 42 (1950), p. 12-17.

<sup>4</sup> “Nevertheless, many elements of sanctification and of truth are found outside its visible confines. Since these are gifts belonging to the church of Christ, they are forces impelling towards catholic unity.” In the Latin version, these affirmations are found within a single sentence: “Haec Ecclesia, in hoc mundo ut societas constituta et ordinata, subsistit in Ecclesia catholica, a successore Petri et Episcopis in eius communione gubernata, licet extra eius compaginem elementa plura sanctificationis et veritatis inveniantur, quae ut dona Ecclesiae Christi propria, ad unitatem catholicam impellunt” (LG 8).

<sup>5</sup> *Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Vatican II*. Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1970-, II/I, p. 219-220. (hereafter cited as AS).

<sup>6</sup> AS III/I, p. 177.

<sup>7</sup> AS, III/II, p. 335. The expression “churches and ecclesial communities” is employed in *Lumen Gentium* 15 and *Unitatis Redintegratio* 19, cf. 3.

course of the conciliar debate. Indeed, it is striking to consider its frequent use from the earliest drafts of the council documents. It was already present in chapter XI of the schema on the church debated in the first session of the council between 1 and 7 December, 1962. In reflecting on the attitude of the Catholic Church toward the separated Christian communities, the schema acknowledged that in them “there exist certain elements of the church, above all Sacred Scripture and the sacraments which, as effective means and signs can bring about a mutual union in Christ, and by their nature as realities belonging properly to the church of Christ, impel towards catholic unity”.<sup>8</sup>

The *relator* of this chapter was not the Secretary of the Preparatory Theological Commission and chief drafter of the schema, Sebastian Tromp, but the Dutch Jesuit Johannes Witte.<sup>9</sup> Witte was well acquainted with the reflections of the ecumenists of his day, being a frequent participant in the international network of Catholic theologians established in 1952 by his compatriot, Johannes Willebrands, the Catholic Conference for Ecumenical Questions. When he appealed to the notion of the *elementa ecclesiae* in his presentation of the Catholic commitment to ecumenism, Witte drew upon a quarter century of study and dialogue.

Willebrands, now the Secretary of the newly established Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, refers in his diary to a meeting with Witte on 16 January 1961, more than a year before the first draft documents were distributed to the bishops. Against the protests of Tromp, yet with the full knowledge and support of Cardinal Ottaviani, Witte sought Willebrands’ advice on the drafting of a chapter on ecumenism for the proposed constitution on the church. Willebrands writes:

The most difficult case has to do with the *membra Ecclesiae*. There is a difference of opinion. Fenton says: There is no difference in this matter between being baptized and unbaptized, just like there is no difference between never having been in the army and having been a former soldier: at this moment you are not a member. Others want a differentiation that comes to expression in one way or another. But Witte thinks that Cardinal Bea is going too far in his article —they are not just members, the “separati baptizati”.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> “In iis enim elementa quaedam Ecclesiae existent et potissimum Scriptura Sacra et sacramenta. Quae, ut media et signa unitatis efficacia unionem mutuam in Christo producere possunt et natura sua, et res Ecclesiae Christi propriae, ad unitatem catholicam impellunt.» *Schema constitutionis dogmaticae de Ecclesia*, in *Schemata constitutionum et decretorum de quibus disceptabitur in Concilii sessionibus*, Civitate Vaticana, 1962-63, I pars., XI, 51, p. 82.

<sup>9</sup> Witte was a professor at the Gregorian. He was the drafter for the Latin drafts of this chapter which were elaborated by Sub-Commission XI of the Preparatory Theological Commission. Tromp refers to Witte’s involvement in his diary, see Alexandra von Teuffenbach (ed.), *Konzilstagebuch Sebastian Trop SJ mit Erläuterungen und Akten aus der Arbeit der Theologischen Kommission, II. Vatikanisches Konzil*, Vol. 1, Rome, 2006. See entries for July 14, 1961, where Witte reports to the Preparatory Theological Commission on the draft; and May 29, 1962, mention of Witte’s submission of the final version. Congar records meeting with Witte and Gagnebet to discuss the draft of *De Oecumenismo* on September 22, 1961, and on the discussion of Witte’s text by the commission on November 21-22, 1961. Yves CONGAR, *Mon journal du concile*, 2 Vols., Vol. 1, p. 66, 81-82.

<sup>10</sup> Theo SALEMINK (ed.), “You Will be Called Repairer of the Breach”. *Diary of J. G. M. Willebrands*, Leuven, 2009, p. 255. Willebrands is referring to the American theologian Joseph-Clifford Fenton, a member of both the Preparatory Theological Commission and the conciliar Theological Commission. He was professor at the Catholic University of America and Editor of the *American Ecclesiastical Review*. Salemink suggests that Witte was likely referring an address by Augustine Bea published as, *Il cattolico di fronte al problema dell’unione dei Cristiani*, in *La Civiltà Cattolica*, 112 (1961/1), p. 113-129.

A more complete treatment of our topic would include an exploration of the conflicting views on membership in the church and the conciliar decision to set aside this more juridical framework in favour of a reflection on the real but existing communion that exists between the churches.<sup>11</sup> For the purpose of the present study, we note that Witte found, in the notion of the *elementa ecclesiae*, a path to avert this impasse and an avenue towards a fuller reflection on the reality of communion in the church of Christ shared with non-Catholic communities.

Witte was not alone in appealing to the *elementa ecclesiae* to reflect on the ecclesial character of non-Catholic communities. The proposed schema, “On the Unity of the Church” (*Ut omnes unum sint*), submitted to the council fathers by the Preparatory Commission for Eastern Churches during the first session, acknowledged the “vestiges of unity” present in the Eastern Churches separated from Rome, including many supernatural, theological, liturgical, and canonical means of grace.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, the first draft of a decree “On Catholic Ecumenism” prepared by the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, a text which was never debated in aula, affirmed the presence of “visible and invisible elements” belonging to the common patrimony of the church and found in the separated communities. These constitutive elements of the church were presented there as “means” and “sources” of salvation.<sup>13</sup> Components of these three draft documents: chapter XI of *De ecclesia*, the text of the Oriental Commission, *Ut Unum Sint*, and the draft from the Secretariat for Christian Unity, were to be combined and form the basis for the council’s Decree on Ecumenism (*Unitatis redintegratio*).<sup>14</sup>

Outside of these official drafts produced by the various preparatory commissions, an appeal to the idea of the *elementa ecclesiae* can be found in a series of other influential texts reflecting the mind of the bishops. The pre-conciliar *vota* of the Dutch bishops included a pointed request to deepen the appreciation of the “traces” or “vestiges”, of the church, or “elements of truth” that are found in non-catholic communities.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Bishop Charue refers to this decision in his diary, in the entry for February 28, 1963. Leo DECLERCK (ed.), *Carnets conciliaires de l'évêque de Namur A. M. Charue*, Louvain-la-Neuve, 2000, p. 93.

<sup>12</sup> *De ecclesiae unitate “Ut omnes unum sint”*, in *Schemata*, IV pars, p. 249-271. See especially no. 10.

<sup>13</sup> *De unione fovenda inter christianos* in *Schemata*, IV pars, p. 373-391, especially I, 1 and 2, p. 374.

<sup>14</sup> AS I/4, p. 7-9. Originally, a tripartite committee was suggested, to be composed of members of the Oriental Commission, the Doctrinal Commission, and the Secretariat for Unity. By February 1963 the intransigent members of the Oriental Commission refused to collaborate in the project and questioned the competency of the Secretariat in the matter. See Jan GROOTAERS, *The Drama between the Acts. The Second “Preparation” and its Opponents in History of Vatican II*. Vol. 2, p. 439-435. In the drafting of the Decree on Ecumenism, an initial draft by Thils was rejected, and instead a text by Witte would form the basis for the first chapter on the “Principles of Catholic Ecumenism.”

<sup>15</sup> See Jan Y. H. A. JACOBS, *Les ‘vota’ des évêques néerlandais pour le concile*, in Mathijs LAMBERIGTS and Claude SOETENS (eds.), *À la veille du concile Vatican II. Vota et réactions en Europe et dans le catholicisme oriental*, Leuven, 1992, p. 108. Jacobs notes that four members of the Dutch episcopate raise this point, namely, B.J. Alfrink (Utrecht), R.A. Nierman (Groningen), P.J. Moors (Roermond), and M.A. Jansen (Rotterdam). As well, he notes the likely influence of a memorandum that was circulated in several languages by the Steering Committee of the Catholic Conference for Ecumenical Questions (C. Boyer, Fr. Davis, C.-J. Dumont, J. Höfer, J. Willebrands), which laid out their expectations for the upcoming ecumenical council (p. 103-104). For more on the role of Willebrands in these developments, see the forthcoming essay by Jared Wicks in *Pro Ecclesia* (2011).

Assertions comparable to those of the Witte draft can also be found in three of the five alternate schemas on the church, most notably in the schema submitted by the German and Austrian Conferences of Bishops.<sup>16</sup> The German schema suggests that other baptized Christians living in good faith are imperfectly joined to the church through saving elements which belong properly to it. A proposed schema submitted in the name of a number of Latin American bishops, the Chilean schema, alluded to the many important “common elements of our theology” shared by Orthodox and Protestant Christians which ought to be considered within a framework of ecclesial communion.<sup>17</sup>

In a fateful twist, the Philips schema paired sentences from two chapters of the first schema (I and IX), juxtaposing the affirmation of an identity between the one church of Christ —the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church of the creed— and the Catholic Church, with the recognition of ecclesial realities beyond its borders: “This church ... is the catholic Church; nonetheless, some elements of sanctification are still found outside its visible confines”.<sup>18</sup> Indeed, the new schema presented to the fathers in the second session of the council, based on the Philips text, insisted that “many” such elements could be found beyond the visible structure of the Catholic Church, realities (later, “gifts”) that belong properly to the church of Christ and remain forces impelling towards catholic unity. In the course of the council, it would become necessary to better harmonize these affirmations. Through the introduction of the term *subsistit in*, the Theological Commission sought both to solidify the recognition that the church of Christ is present and active outside the institutional bounds of the Catholic Church and to uphold the traditional teaching that the church established by Christ continues to exist in the Catholic Church.

<sup>16</sup> “Ista elementa, quibus Ecclesia ut signum salutis constituitur, ex natura sua ad se invicem ordinantur et vicissim se postulant.” In *Concilio Vaticano II Synopsis. Constitutio Dogmatica de Ecclesia Lumen Gentium*. Francisco GIL HELLÍN (ed.), Città del Vaticano, 1995, p. 716-750, no. 13 at p. 733-734.

<sup>17</sup> The Chilean Schema speaks of “common elements” drawn from a shared patrimony in a note concerning its presentation on membership in the church from the perspective of communion, rather than a purely juridical one: “El aspecto de comunión entre los cristianos es otro aspecto del ministerio de la Iglesia. Otro descubrimiento de la vuelta a las Fuentes bíblicas y patrísticas. Tiene —importancia ecuménica: porque es un aspecto vivido intensamente por los orthodoxos y protestantes. Acusan ellos a los católicos a reducir toda la comunión a la obediencia a la jerarquía. Importar mostrar los elementos comunes de nuestra teología y presentar la jerarquía dentro de la comunión de la Iglesia, como servicio de la comunidad.» In *Synopsis. Constitutio Dogmatica de Ecclesia*, p. 762-801, especially II, 1, p. 784, general notes. See also the enumeration of expressions of common patrimony in II, 3, p. 789-790.

<sup>18</sup> “Haec igitur Ecclesia ... est Ecclesia catholica ... licet elementa quaedam sanctificationis etiam extra totalem compaginem invenire possunt.” From a version of the Philips schema dated February 27, 1963. CSVII, Archives Philips, 596. This version of the Philips schema was the fruit of collaboration by a group of *periti* who met at the Belgian College on 24-26 February. Philips learned of the decision to accept his schema as the basis of the document on the church and to consult the other alternate schemas in a telephone call from Bishop Charue on February 26, 1963. See Karim SCHELKENS (ed.), *Carnets conciliaires de Mgr. Gérard Philips Secrétaire adjoint de la commission doctrinale*, Leuven, 2006, p. 92-93. I am indebted to Jared Wicks for drawing this reference to my attention. In the schema presented to the bishops in April, “elementa quaedam” had been revised to read “elementa plura.” See AS II/1, p. 220.



In view of these facts, it would be incorrect to characterize the evolution of the Constitution on the Church as the simple introduction of a novelty into the document in the course of the council. It would be far more accurate to say that from the drafting of the first schema *De ecclesia*, we are in the presence of conflicting or contrasting assertions: a narrow interpretation of *Mystici corporis* and the emerging theological consensus of the day. The latter sought to speak in a more positive manner about non-Catholic Christian churches in light of the broader tradition's recognition that the justifying grace of salvation and hence, the one church of Christ, is operative outside the visible boundaries of the Catholic Church. The new theological consensus would be more fully embraced in the course of the council. In the word of Gustave Thils, one of the principal drafters of the Decree on Ecumenism, "The history of the years 1943-1960 was repeated, in a shorter lapse of time, at the Second Vatican Council. [...] The conciliar debate, carried on under the banner of ecumenism, quickly made the most of the theological contribution made in ecclesiology since the end of the war of 1940-45, with the result that we now know".<sup>19</sup> It is to those developments that we now turn.

### ORIGINS OF THE NOTION OF THE "ELEMENTS OF THE CHURCH"

The Catholic Church has consistently regarded the churches of Eastern Orthodoxy as churches in the theological sense of the word.<sup>20</sup> However, when new communities were formed in the wake of the Protestant Reformation, introducing new divisions within Western Christianity, it is fair to say that the Catholic Church had no theological categories to describe them adequately. Anglicans and Protestants were referred to variously as "dissidents" and "heretics". For the most part, they were regarded as "fallen away Catholics".<sup>21</sup> Catholic theology was not in possession of a language or any systematic reflection on the corporate life of the Church of England

<sup>19</sup> Gustave THILS, *L'Église et les Églises. Perspectives nouvelles en œcuménisme*, Bruges, 1967, p. 158-159.

<sup>20</sup> Yves Congar provides a lengthy list of citations from the often forgotten teaching of the magisterium to enumerate the terms used to apply to "dissident Christendoms", including the use of the term "churches" in reference to the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches, in Yves CONGAR, *Chrétiens désunis. Principes d'un «œcuménisme» catholique*, Paris, 1937, p. 288. See especially Appendix VI, p. 381-382. [English trans: *Divided Christendom. A Catholic Study of the Problem of Reunion*, London, 1939.] Any citations are my free translation from the original French. Witte's draft chapter of the schema *De Ecclesia* included a footnote of one and a half pages in length, reproducing many of the same sources, and indicating his debt to this list in the Appendix of *Chrétiens désunis*. See *Schema constitutionis dogmaticae de Ecclesia*, XI, 51, note 6, p. 88-90.

<sup>21</sup> This seems to be the reasoning of Pope Pius XI, who rejected the invitation to send Catholic participants to the meeting of Faith and Order at Lausanne, in 1927: "So, Venerable Brethren, it is clear why this Apostolic See has never allowed its subjects to take part in the assemblies of non-Catholics: for the union of Christians can only be promoted by promoting the return to the one true Church of Christ of those who are separated from it, for in the past they have unhappily left it. To the one true Church of Christ, we say, which is visible to all, and which is to remain, according to the will of its Author, exactly the same as He instituted it." *Mortalium Animos* (1928), at: [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/pius\\_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-xi\\_enc\\_19280106\\_mortalium-animos\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19280106_mortalium-animos_en.html) It is worth noting Pius XI's reliance on Cyprian's ecclesiology. Another expression of this tendency to consider all non-Catholic Christians as "lapsed Catholics" can be seen in the principle of considering them all as subject to Catholic canon law.

or of Protestant churches, Christian communities that continued to evolve and develop their own ethos—including distinctive confessional statements, theological expression, liturgies, and politics—in the over four centuries that had elapsed since the Reformation.

### THE CONTRIBUTION OF YVES CONGAR

The first Catholic theologian to reflect systematically on this question was the French Dominican, Yves Congar, in his first major work, *Chrétiens désunis*, published in 1937. In light of the new and unprecedented reality of an organized ecumenical movement, Congar sought to establish a theological ground for active ecumenical engagement on the part of the Catholic Church. He set out to appropriate all that was “theologically receivable” in two approaches reflected in the pioneering efforts of Anglican and Protestant ecumenists on the one hand, and in Orthodox perspectives on the other. As he observed from a distance the burgeoning of this movement in the meetings of Life and Work and Faith and Order, Congar noted:

Ecumenism begins when one admits that others—and not only individuals, but ecclesiastical bodies as such—are also correct, even if they say things that differ from us, that they also possess truth, holiness, the gifts of God, though they do not belong to our [form of] Christendom. There is ecumenism (...) when we believe that the other is Christian, not *in spite of* their confession, but *in it and through it*. Such a conviction directs a complex, concrete “ecumenical” attitude comprising: the respect of other confessions, of the action of the Holy Spirit in them (not only in individual souls); the sense and avowal of the historical sins of one’s own confession, its limits and failures; the desire to know the other confessions and the gifts they have received from God; entering into friendship with them and, while we await the fullness of unity, into as much effective communion as is possible.<sup>22</sup>

Congar recognized the need to elaborate a theological basis for the corporate aspect of such an engagement and sought to do so without renouncing the Catholic Church’s conviction of an identity and continuity with the one visible church of Christ in history. In this regard he was inspired by the writings of the Russian Orthodox theologian Nikolai Berdiaev. While the Orthodox shared the Catholic conviction of standing in continuity with the one church, Berdiaev was nonetheless able to distinguish between the “the ecumenical Church, where *the fullness of truth is found*, and the Orthodox Church *as a confession*, bearing inevitably the marks of human limitation. One considers that the Orthodox Church is more true than the others, yet incomplete so long as the fullness of the ecumenical church is not realized both within her, and beyond her present narrow and confessional boundaries”.<sup>23</sup> Berdiaev’s thought furnished a basis for reflecting on the varying degrees of communion between the churches and the one church of Christ and for recognizing that, so long as ecclesial division persists, something is lacking from the historical expression of catholicity in each church.

<sup>22</sup> CONGAR, *Chrétiens désunis*, p. 173-174.

<sup>23</sup> CONGAR, *Chrétiens désunis*, p. 176. He cites Nikolai BERDIAEFF, *Esprit et Liberté. Essai de philosophie chrétienne*, Paris, 1933, p. 345ff; and BERDIAEFF, *L’œcuménisme et confessionnalisme*, in *Foi et Vie* (novembre 1931), p. 757-776.

Congar develops his consideration of what he called “dissident Christendoms” by way of an analogy from the case of individual “dissident Christians.” He begins from the recognition that the tradition has always recognized an existence of Christianity beyond the boundaries of the visible church in the implicit faith of those not in full communion, and insists that all those who are justified the grace must belong in some way to the body of Christ, since the grace they receive “is not foreign to the Church”.<sup>24</sup> The church, he argues, is quite simply “humanity reconciled with God in Christ”.<sup>25</sup> Proceeding from the case of the justified non-Christian to that of the baptized Protestant he asks, what is the “Christian value” of his or her baptism, and of the prayer and worship of these “churches”?

The church, he argues, is created by God in Christ as “*a fullness*”, a fullness of those principles capable of leading humanity to a new life in Christ and of gathering all into the unity of his body. These principles of unity “are less the sum of diverse elements than an ordered, organic, and living fullness”.<sup>26</sup> Among these principles or elements, he includes sanctifying grace, the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity, incorporation into Christ and the church through baptism, the profession of faith, the grace of the sacraments, participation in the communion of the church, the teaching of the gospel, and the pastoral guidance of the hierarchy, the ministers of the church.<sup>27</sup> While this fullness is offered to all believers, these gifts are not received equally by all those who belong to the church by baptism. If this is true, Congar argues, we must admit that there are differing degrees of belonging to the church or distinguish between perfect and imperfect belonging in the case of both individuals and groups.

The Protestant Christian, he wrote, will not find in their own confession the totality of these principles or elements, or may encounter them in an imperfect form.<sup>28</sup> They are estranged members of the church:

... they belong to it invisibly, they belong to it incompletely, yet they truly belong to it. They are of the church to the extent that they belong to Christ, for that which unites them to Christ is a fibre of his mystical Body, a constitutive element of the church. That such an element exists, in whatever manner, outside the church, is due to an abnormal and violent situation, and calls by nature for a complete integration into the invisible and visible body of Christ, the catholic Church.<sup>29</sup>

Yet even outside the Catholic Church, this element retains its efficacy by reason of the good faith of the believer and results in a real incorporation into the communion of Christ and his church. For this reason, Congar argued that baptized Christians of other Christian churches are to be considered members of the church, not only in a spiritual sense, or *in voto*. It should be recognized that the life they lead within their

<sup>24</sup> CONGAR, *Chrétiens désunis*, p. 278.

<sup>25</sup> CONGAR, *Chrétiens désunis*, p. 282.

<sup>26</sup> CONGAR, *Chrétiens désunis*, p. 283.

<sup>27</sup> CONGAR, *Chrétiens désunis*, p. 287. These are developed at greater length in chapter II, p. 59-113.

<sup>28</sup> CONGAR, *Chrétiens désunis*, p. 289.

<sup>29</sup> CONGAR, *Chrétiens désunis*, p. 292.

own communities tends toward a full and real (in *re*) incorporation in the catholic ecclesiastical body. Nor can these Christians continue to be regarded indiscriminately as “heretics”.<sup>30</sup> Those born into the divided churches cannot be regarded as morally responsible for the divisions wrought in the past, and continue to live according to the Christian tradition in good faith, though we may differ in its interpretation.

Congar’s position and that received by Vatican II is essentially Augustinian. Augustine had argued repeatedly that the sacraments of schismatics and heretics were effective means of grace. Indeed, although their full effect might not be realized apart from a restored unity, that which schismatic communities had maintained from the common heritage of the church continued to bear fruit.<sup>31</sup> Commenting on Augustine’s approach to separated communities, Congar would later write, “For Augustine, not only are the sacraments not fruitful for salvation except within the *unitas*, within the *una Catholica*, but that which does exist of the sacraments, of the ministry, and of the true faith in the separated communions belongs to this *una Catholica*. Here we are at the threshold of a theology of the elements of the church”.<sup>32</sup>

Congar seeks to build on Augustine’s insight by extending the notion of differing degrees of belonging or of communion among individual “dissidents” to his reflection on the “dissident Christendoms” as “ecclesiastical bodies.” He argues that while they may not be considered members of the *Una Ecclesia* in the full sense, one can nonetheless affirm that they are, in differing degrees, “*elements of the Church*”.<sup>33</sup> He uses the term “elements” here interchangeably to refer to the churches themselves and to the constitutive aspects of the church previously enumerated. “They are elements of the church to the extent they have more or less maintained, in that which constitutes their sociological reality as a religious body, elements or principles

<sup>30</sup> Among his contributions to the wider question of ecclesial recognition, see also Yves CONGAR, *Note sur les mots ‘Confession’, ‘Église’ et ‘Communion’*, in *Irénikon*, 23 (1950), p. 3-36; Also in *Chrétiens en dialogue*, Paris, 1964, p. 211-242; *Les ruptures de l’unité* in *Istina*, 11 (1964), p. 133-178.

<sup>31</sup> In *Chrétiens désunis*, (p. 297-298), Congar notes his debt to *De unico baptismo contra Petil*, c. 3, no. 4; *PL* 43, 547; Cf. *De baptismo contra Donatistas*, Book III, c. 19, no. 28; *PL* 43, 154. The principle of the latter which he seeks to apply is the traditional custom of the fathers “that whenever they found anything divine and lawful remaining in its integrity even in the midst of any heresy or schism, they approved rather than repudiated it.” Elsewhere he refers to the importance of Augustine’s thought for the Decree on Ecumenism’s positive evaluation of other Christian churches, with reference to *De baptismo contra Donatistas* I, 10; *PL* 43, 117: “And so there is one Church which alone is called Catholic; and whenever it has anything of its own in these communions of different bodies which are separate from itself, it is most certainly in virtue of this which is its own in each of them that it, not they, has the power of generation. For neither is it their separation that generates, but what they have retained of the essence of the Church; and if they were to go on to abandon this, they would lose the power of generation. The generation, then, in each case proceeds from the Church, whose sacraments are retained, from which any such birth can alone in any case proceed, —although not all who receive its birth belong to its unity, which shall save those who persevere even to the end. Nor is it those only that do not belong to it who are openly guilty of the manifest sacrilege of schism, but also those who, being outwardly joined to its unity, are yet separated by a life of sin.” See Yves Congar, *Le développement de l’évaluation ecclésiologique des églises non-catholiques. Un bilan*, in Gellert BEKES and Vilmos VAJTA (eds.), *Unitatis Redintegratio 1964-1974. The Impact of the Decree on Ecumenism*, Rome, 1977, p. 63.

<sup>32</sup> CONGAR, *Le développement de l’évaluation ecclésiologique*, p. 63-64.

<sup>33</sup> CONGAR, *Chrétiens désunis*, p. 302.

which realize the one church. These principles are the realities by which God draws humanity to himself, and incorporates into Christ a people destined to receive his inheritance".<sup>34</sup>

### MYSTICI CORPORIS: DEEPENING REFLECTION ON SACRAMENTAL ECCLESIOLOGY

Leaders of the organized ecumenical movement, which was developing without official Catholic representation or participation, surely took note of Congar's constructive attempt to provide an ecclesiological foundation for Catholic ecumenical engagement. In a biographical note, Congar recalls with some satisfaction that copies of his new book were on sale at the 1937 meetings of Life and Work (Oxford) and Faith and Order (Edinburgh).<sup>35</sup> However, the reception of his proposal was postponed by two significant events, not the least of which was the outbreak of the Second World War. An additional difficulty was introduced into the theological landscape by the publication of Pope Pius XII's *Mystici corporis* in 1943, in particular by the encyclical's identification of the spiritual reality of the mystical body of Christ with the visible institutional reality of the Roman Catholic Church. The spiritual and juridical realities, the *res* and the *sacramentum* of the church, were considered to be virtually identical. *Mystici corporis* neglected any reflection on the other Christian churches in their corporate reality and considered baptized non-Catholic individuals at best as "ordered" to the church by their baptism, though not members in any real sense. One of the effects of Pius XII's teaching was to generate considerable reflection over the next decade on the notion of "membership" in the church, as the encyclical was often interpreted as excluding any real participation in the body of Christ by those who rejected any aspect of the faith, sacraments, and governance of the Catholic Church.

One notable exception to this trend was a contribution by Dom Jean Gribomont in 1949, "Du sacrement de l'Église et de ses réalisations imparfaites".<sup>36</sup> As the title indicates, rather than focus on the narrow question of real (*reapse, in re*) or moral (*in voto*) belonging to the church on the part of non-Catholic individuals, Gribomont sought to build on the broad sacramental or incarnational approach developed by *Mystici corporis* to consider the ecclesial reality of the dissident communities in its corporate dimension. He noted that for Aquinas, any consideration of "real" membership was located within a reflection on the *res* of the church, on the communication of divine grace. This reality cannot be entirely identified with the *sacramentum*, the visible, exterior reality of the church. By analogy, it would be possible to consider that a non-Catholic belongs imperfectly to the *res* of the church, even if not incorporated into its visible structure. Conversely, any visible manifestations of grace must also retain some sacramental value.

<sup>34</sup> CONGAR, *Chrétiens désunis*, p. 302.

<sup>35</sup> CONGAR, *Chrétiens en dialogue*, p. xxxv.

<sup>36</sup> Jean GRIBOMONT, *Du sacrement de l'Église et de ses réalisations imparfaites*, in *Irénikon*, 22 (1949), p. 345-367. Also worthy of mention for placing the encyclical against the background of broad historical development and debates is Clément LIALINE, *Une étape en ecclésiologie. Réflexions sur l'encyclique «Mystici Corporis»* in *Irénikon*, 19 (1946), p. 129-152, 283-317; and 20 (1947), p. 34-54.

Extrapolating this line of thinking, Gribomont turns to a consideration of the external and visible signs of the body of Christ that are found in and belong to the corporate reality of other Christian communities. He argues that they too, because they have preserved many “common elements”<sup>37</sup> and are, by analogy, truly Christian and catholic; they are not entirely separated from the church. Gribomont builds on Congar’s recognition of “catholic elements” and “ecclesial values”<sup>38</sup> which retain a certain efficacy in other Christian churches and argues for the need to affirm the truly “ecclesial character”<sup>39</sup> of these communities. Recognizing that the sacramental structure of the church and the reality of grace are always held together in an eschatological tension, he reasons that evidence of the constitutive elements of the church must ground the recognition of real ecclesial communion. Even where some constitutive element of the church seems to be lacking, they are never totally absent, as one finds in the living faith of other Christian communities a sincere desire to maintain many others. Indeed, he considers the ecumenical movement to be one of the clearest indications of this desire, a sign that the life of the church continues to flow in and through the separated churches.<sup>40</sup> Dom Gribomont’s contribution is particularly significant in that it was one of the only contemporary authorities cited in Witte’s draft chapter XI of *De ecclesia*.<sup>41</sup>

#### ELEMENTA ECCLESIAE OR VESTIGIA ? 1949-1954

### The Toronto Statement of the World Council of Churches 1950

Congar’s *Chrétiens désunis* appeared in 1937 at the very moment that ecumenical pioneers voted to establish a new World Council of Churches (WCC). Though the project for the founding of the WCC was delayed by ten years due to the outbreak war, the founders of the WCC would draw upon his idea of “elements” of the church to establish a basis for membership within this new fellowship. The period of 1949 to 1952 saw an unprecedented opportunity for concerted reflection owing to a confluence of events within both Catholicism and Protestantism. The 1949 Instruction of the Holy Office under Pius XII, *Ecclesia catholica*, published in the wake of the WCC Assembly at Amsterdam, recognized the ecumenical movement embodied by the newly established WCC as one inspired by the Holy Spirit and authorized the participation of qualified Catholic theologians in ecumenical conversations. These events were followed closely by the Dominican Christophe-Jean Dumont of the Istina Centre for ecumenical studies in Paris. Almost immediately, the Istina Centre sought the permission of the Holy Office in Rome for a small group of Catholic theologians to meet with representatives of the WCC.<sup>42</sup> The subject of their conversation was

<sup>37</sup> GRIBOMONT, *Du sacrament de l’Église*, p. 359.

<sup>38</sup> GRIBOMONT, *Du sacrament de l’Église*, p. 360-361.

<sup>39</sup> GRIBOMONT, *Du sacrament de l’Église*, p. 363.

<sup>40</sup> GRIBOMONT, *Du sacrament de l’Église*, p. 364-365.

<sup>41</sup> *Schema constitutionis dogmaticae de Ecclesia*, XI, 51, note 6, p. 88.

<sup>42</sup> Willem Adolf VISSER ‘T HOOFT, *Memoirs*, Geneva, 1973, p. 317-20. Ten WCC representatives were joined by ten Catholics, including Dumont, Yves Congar, Jean Daniélou, Jérôme Hamer, Maurice Villain, and Jean Guilton.

the draft text of the Toronto Statement on “The Church, the Churches, and the World Council of Churches” that would be adopted by the Central Committee of the World Council in July of 1950.<sup>43</sup> World Council leaders have not hesitated to suggest a debt of the Toronto Statement to this exchange.<sup>44</sup> The Toronto Statement sought to establish an ecclesiological “baseline”, a minimum requirement for churches wishing to belong to the WCC. The Catholic and Orthodox Churches were not the only churches to identify themselves with the one church of Christ. Nonetheless, the Statement could affirm:

All the Christian churches, including the Church of Rome, hold that there is no complete identity between the membership of the Church Universal and the membership of their own church. They recognize that there are church members “extra muros”, that these belong “aliquo modo” to the Church, or even that there is an “ecclesia extra ecclesiam”. This recognition finds expression in the fact that with very few exceptions the Christian churches accept the baptism administered by other churches as valid. But the question arises what consequences are to be drawn from this teaching.<sup>45</sup>

Reflecting further on the implications of the recognition of baptism, the Statement sought to articulate the grounds for an understanding of the corporate ecclesial reality of in those other churches belonging to the fellowship of the WCC. In seeking a language to express this reality, two terms came to the surface: first, Congar’s notion of the “elements of the church”, and second, the notion of the *vestigia ecclesiae* first adopted by John Calvin in reference to the decadent Roman Church of the sixteenth century. In accordance with the Toronto Statement:

*The member churches of the World Council recognize in other churches elements of the true Church. They consider that this mutual recognition obliges them to enter into a serious conversation with each other in the hope that these elements of truth will lead to the recognition of the full truth and to unity based on the full truth.*

It is generally taught in the different churches that other churches have certain elements of the true Church, in some traditions called “*vestigia ecclesiae*” Such elements are the preaching of the Word, the teaching of the Holy Scriptures and the administration of the sacraments. These elements are more than pale shadows of the life of the true Church. They are a fact of real promise and provide an opportunity to strive by frank and brotherly intercourse for the realization of a fuller unity.<sup>46</sup>

These words point to the emergence of a significant ecumenical consensus, one which was deeply indebted to Catholic efforts to re-appropriate a common theological tradition.

<sup>43</sup> WCC, *Central Committee*, “Toronto Statement (1950),” At: <http://www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/central-committee/toronto-1950/toronto-statement.html>.

<sup>44</sup> “Son élaboration peut être considérée comme une œuvre commune.” Oliver TOMKINS, *Rencontre de Présinge [Rapport]*, p.9. Archives Monastery of Chevetogne (henceforth AMC), Papers Willebrands, no. 40. See also Oliver TOMKINS, *The Church, the Churches, and the Council*, in *Ecumenical Review*, 3 (1952), p. 261-262.

<sup>45</sup> WCC, *Central Committee*, Toronto Statement, IV, 3.

<sup>46</sup> WCC, *Central Committee*, Toronto Statement, IV, 5.



## A Call for Catholic Contributions : Christophe-Jean Dumont

Dumont saw in this document a significant basis for dialogue with Catholic ecumenists who sought to elaborate an ecclesiological framework for a positive recognition of the ecclesiality of other Christian communities. His editorial for the fall 1950 issue of *Vers l'Unité Chrétienne*, written on the heels of the publication of the Toronto Statement (though without any explicit reference to it), takes up the notion of the elements of the church to argue the need for a more positive recognition in Catholic theology of all that is “of the church” in other Christian communities. Such a development, he suggests, could make a significant contribution to “the progress of the dialogue which has begun in favour of Christian unity”.<sup>47</sup> Several months later, Dumont used the platform of *Vers l'Unité Chrétienne* to issue a call for a concerted study of the notion of the *vestigia ecclesiae* by Catholic theologians. He wrote, “However separated from the church, the diverse confessions preserve, in diverse proportions and ways, something of the realities which belong properly to the church.” These realities, including the Scripture, baptism, other sacraments, and ministry are “elements of the inheritance entrusted by Christ to his church. (...) It seems obvious”, he wrote, “that the Catholic theologian ought to recognize, within the other confessions, though in differing degrees and with a value yet to be specified, ‘vestigia Ecclesiae.’”<sup>48</sup> He committed the Istina Centre to bringing together Catholic theologians and invited their contribution to a project of concerted study whose aim it would be to elaborate a positive and constructive theological understanding of the non-catholic churches. To guide their reflection, he proposed a detailed questionnaire inviting a careful survey of the scriptures, the church fathers, the teaching of the magisterium, and reflections in contemporary theology for the resources to ground such an ecclesiology. It asked them to consider the value of the many realities or elements of the church found in other confessions. “How”, he asked, “in each case, can we qualify the positive relationship subsisting between these confessions and the Church, due to the permanence of these *vestigia* ?”<sup>49</sup>

One of the first responses to Dumont’s invitation was a brief paper by Yves Congar which appeared in the January 1951 edition of *Vers l'Unité Chrétienne*.<sup>50</sup> Congar proceeds by first distinguishing between the church as a community of grace and the church as institution, with its array of means of salvation. He indicates that the *vestigia* or “elements”, of the church, as he prefers to call them, belong to the latter, external dimension of the church :

The means of grace are many. They form a cluster the integrity of which is found only in the church of Christ and of the apostles (and so the fullness of the reality of grace is also found only in this ecclesial body), but of which some element or another can be separated inasmuch as it has an objective consistency – taking advantage of the solution to the Donatist crisis. Thus, wherever any ecclesial means of grace is present, one can speak of a

<sup>47</sup> *Unité de l'Église et l'unité chrétienne*, in *Vers l'Unité Chrétienne*, 26 (1950), p. 1-4.

<sup>48</sup> Christophe-Jean DUMONT, *Vestigia Ecclesiae*, in *Vers l'Unité Chrétienne*, 32 (1951), p. 6-7.

<sup>49</sup> DUMONT, *Vestigia Ecclesiae*, p. 7.

<sup>50</sup> Yves CONGAR, *À propos des 'Vestigia Ecclesiae'*, in *Vers l'Unité Chrétienne*, 39 (1952), p. 3-5.

“vestige of the church”: I would prefer to say, “element of the church.” This would be a certain element of the institution, apt of itself to procure something of the reality of grace.<sup>51</sup>

While desirous of engaging Protestant thinkers in a genuine dialogue on the notion of *vestigia ecclesiae*, Congar displays a reserve concerning the inherently negative judgment that underlies the approaches of both Luther and Calvin, and points to a fundamental difference in Protestant and Catholic approaches to the mediation of grace in and through the structures of the church. Luther does not use the term *vestigia*, but favours the use of the expression *reliquias* (relics) and similar expressions to designate the Roman Church. Congar observes that Luther prefers the term “community” or “Christendom” to that of “Church”, no doubt because he privileges the idea of the church as the *communio sanctorum*. While he acknowledges many “signs” of the church among the papists, including baptism, eucharist, the power of keys, the Symbol of faith, and the Scriptures, Congar notes that Luther is hesitant to recognize any inherent Christian value in them.<sup>52</sup> Turning to Calvin’s use of the term *vestigia ecclesiae*,<sup>53</sup> he observes that while this can be negatively construed as the church “in a state of ruin”, Calvin also recognizes the persistence of ensigns (*enseignes*) or substantial marks of the true church which endure despite being damaged or besmirched by the transgressions of many.

## The Présinge Meeting in 1951

Both the Toronto Statement and Congar’s contribution provided the basis for discussion at a subsequent meeting between Catholic theologians and representatives of the WCC held in Présinge, Switzerland in November of 1951.<sup>54</sup> The manner in which the theme of the meeting was framed indicates a desire on the part of the WCC to engage Catholic theologians in thinking through some of its own theological self-understanding as well as to better understand the Catholic position:

<sup>51</sup> CONGAR, *À propos des ‘Vestigia Ecclesiae,’* p. 3.

<sup>52</sup> CONGAR, *À propos des ‘Vestigia Ecclesiae,’* p. 5; See also Yves CONGAR, *Vraie et fausse réforme dans l’Église*, Paris, 1950, p. 410f. The recent common statement of the Lutheran Catholic Commission on Unity, *The Apostolicity of the Church*, refers to the importance of Luther’s recognition of these marks of the church: “Luther himself rarely spoke of the “apostolic church”. But he understood the reality that we designate the church’s apostolicity as continuity in proclaiming the same message as the apostles and as continuity in practicing baptism, the Lord’s Supper, the office of the keys, the call to ministry, public gathering for worship in praise and confession of faith, and the bearing of the cross as Christ’s disciples. These are the marks of the church by which one can recognize it, since they are the means by which the Holy Spirit creates faith and the church. Among these marks, the gospel message, however, is the decisive criterion of continuity in practice with the apostolic church.” See II. 2.4.1., no. 95. [http://www.prounionie.urbe.it/dia-int/l-rc/doc/e\\_l-rc\\_ap-03.html](http://www.prounionie.urbe.it/dia-int/l-rc/doc/e_l-rc_ap-03.html). I am indebted to Jared Wicks for drawing this to my attention.

<sup>53</sup> John CALVIN, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book IV, II, 11 and 12; Also: Commentary on Acts, XXIII, 7; and Lettre à Sadolet, Edition ‘Je Sers,’ p. 71; Confession de la Rochelle, article 28.

<sup>54</sup> Participants included the Dominicans Dumont, Congar, and Jérôme Hamer, Dom Olivier Rousseau of Chêvetogne, Frans Thijssen, and Mgr. Charles Journet. Among the WCC representatives were Visser t’Hooft, Jean Bosc, Oliver Tomkins, Heinrich Kraemer, Suzanne de Dietrich, Paul Evdokimov, and Max Thurian. See *Rencontre de Présinge*, a report in French and Dutch. 24 typed pages. AMC, Papers Willebrands, nos. 32-54. This report includes an extensive citation of Congar’s paper, *À propos des ‘Vestigia Ecclesiae’* and Dumont’s questionnaire from *Vers l’Unité Chétienne* fall of 1950. VISSER ‘T HOOFT, *Memoirs*, p. 320.

Given the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church in the matter of ecclesiology, what meaning and what value does catholic theology attribute to realities of an ecclesial nature (such as, for example, a valid priesthood and episcopate by virtue of the apostolic succession) which subsist in certain confession separated from the Roman See? —We could have formulated it in other terms: What is the position of Catholic theology in the face of the opposition between the so called “Catholic” and “Protestant” tendencies which appeared to dominate in the Assembly of the World Council of Churches?<sup>55</sup>

The contribution of Oliver Tomkins at this meeting reveals a desire on the part of the World Council to dissipate any misperceptions of the ecclesiological presuppositions of the WCC. The Toronto Statement establishes a minimum criterion of ecclesiality, and considers as “churches” all those bodies who share a common faith in Jesus Christ. It sought not to assess the value of the various churches, but rather to find a minimum of common ground among the diverse notions of ecclesiality held by the churches. “The main problem” the Toronto Statement aimed to address “is how one can formulate the ecclesiological implications of a body in which so many different conceptions of the Church are represented, without using the categories or language of one particular conception of the Church.”<sup>56</sup> It would be impossible to generalize concerning the ecclesiological self understandings of all the member churches of the WCC, but he suggests, they willingly use the terms “church” and “churches” in a manner that does not conform to what would be considered legitimate from a Catholic perspective.

### The Catholic Conference for Ecumenical Questions 1952

To organize and coordinate the works of Catholic ecumenists, Johannes Willebrands and Frans Thijssen established the Catholic Conference on Ecumenical Questions. Its first international meeting was held at Fribourg, Switzerland, in August of 1952. The Steering Group for this new “Catholic ecumenical Council”<sup>57</sup> included Dumont and Thijssen, both of whom had been party to conversations with WCC representatives on the ecclesiology of the *vestigia* or “elements of the church.” Congar gave a keynote address to the 1952 meeting on the state of investigations into the notion of the “elements of the church” and its potential to orient Catholic ecclesiological thought.<sup>58</sup> He noted that Catholic theology had failed to develop fully the consequences of its constant recognition that the working of God’s grace extended beyond the canonical structures of the visible church, and of the validity of baptism among separated Christians. An overly deductive and juridical approach had led Catholic ecclesiology to neglect the subjective and historical reality of the churches,

<sup>55</sup> *Rencontre de Présinge*, 2 typed pages outlining the planned meeting. AMC, Papers Willebrands, nos. 368-370.

<sup>56</sup> WCC Central Committee, *Toronto Statement*, II.

<sup>57</sup> *Projet d'un conseil catholique œcuménique*, or *Katholieke Oecumenische Raad*, 7 typed pages. Accompanying documents and invitation to a «Réunion catholique œcuménique à Fribourg, 11-13 août 1952.» AMC, Papers Willebrands.

<sup>58</sup> Yves CONGAR, *Les éléments de l'Église parmi les chrétiens réformés et la réflexion ecclésiologique. Comment peuvent-ils orienter la théologie catholique?*, Five typed pages in the notes of the Conférence Catholique sur les questions œcuméniques, 11-13 August 1952. AMC, Papers Willebrands.

the experience of which must lead us inevitably towards a theology of communion. An ecclesiology which took seriously the living presence of “elements” or “vestiges” of the church in the corporate life of the “dissident communions”, he insisted, would lay the foundations for a new approach to ecumenism by the Catholic Church. Ecumenism could no longer be considered according to the notion of individual conversions or return to Rome, but must now be appreciated as “the progressive attainment of a point of unity located along the trajectory of the Catholic Church, yet beyond our present positions and oppositions.” Such an approach would redirect Catholic ecumenical action towards “an effort *par omnia et in omnibus* [by all and in all things] to heal, purify, and accomplish in unity and fullness”.<sup>59</sup>

### The Assemblée at Evanston 1954

The encounters and exchanges of the early 1950s provided the impetus for reflection on the notion of the elements of the church. The literature from the quarter-century preceding the Second Vatican Council has been helpfully surveyed by Emilien Lamirande.<sup>60</sup> Among Protestant reactions to the Toronto statement were a number who were reticent about the possible ecclesial-centric, or more precisely, Roman-centric interpretations of the notions of *vestigia* or elements of the church. For the Methodist Clarence T. Craig, the Toronto Statement’s use of the notions of the *vestigia* or elements of the church was unforgivably “arrogant”,<sup>61</sup> and betrayed an attitude that was fundamentally opposed to ecumenical progress. While recognizing this danger, the Waldensian G. Miegge saw not only a negative concept in the notion of *vestigia ecclesiae*, but a positive affirmation of the indefectibility of the church. In his view, they must be understood, “not as a function of the Catholic Church”, not as “Roman” vestiges, but in light of a Christological center. “Wherever these vestiges are present”, he wrote, “one must recognize that the church is present in its deepest essence; the body of Christ is present, the Head himself, present and acting”.<sup>62</sup> Due to a number of negative reactions, it was suggested at the 1954 Evanston Assembly of the WCC, that the term *vestigia ecclesiae* no longer be employed to describe the ecclesial values in the member churches of the WCC. This paved the way for a broader acceptance of the more constructive approach laid out in Congar’s notion of the elements of the church.

### THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF GUSTAVE THILS

Many of these developments are presented in the careful study of Gustave Thils in his *Histoire doctrinale du mouvement œcuménique*,<sup>63</sup> first published in 1955, and revised

<sup>59</sup> CONGAR, *Les éléments*, p. 4.

<sup>60</sup> Emilien LAMIRANDE, *La signification ecclésiologique des communautés dissidentes et la doctrine des ‘vestigia ecclesiae’*. *Panorama théologique des vingt-cinq dernières années*, in *Istina*, 1 (1964), p. 25-58.

<sup>61</sup> Clarence T. CRAIG, *The Reality of the Church and Our Doctrines of the Church*, in *Ecumenical Review*, 3 (1951), p. 216.

<sup>62</sup> G. MIEGGE, *Vestigia ecclesiae, signe de l’Église dans les églises*, in *Verbum Caro*, 11 (1957), p. 210-211.

<sup>63</sup> Gustave THILS, *Histoire doctrinale du mouvement œcuménique*, Louvain, 1955; Nouvelle édition, 1963. To distinguish between these two editions, we will refer to *Histoire doctrinale I* and *Histoire*

in 1963. In both editions, which pay careful attention to the developing ecclesiology of ecumenism, he devotes considerable space to the question of the elements of the church, drawing largely upon the sources that we have cited here. As a reflection of the widespread reserve relating to the more negative remainder concept of *vestigia ecclesiae*, he elects, in the 1963 edition of *Histoire doctrinale*, to speak of “elements”, where the earlier version favoured the term *vestigia*.<sup>64</sup>

Thils insists in his pre-conciliar writings, but perhaps more so in his later commentary on article 3 of the *Decree on Ecumenism*, that “elements of the church” refer not only to the visible means of salvation that make up the institution of the church, they also include the invisible, inner reality that flows from the corporate life of other Christian communions,<sup>65</sup> the life of grace and the theological virtues. Congar had described these aspects as contributing to the ecclesial life and unity of the dissident churches in his early writing, especially in *Chrétiens désunis*. However, in later shorthand presentations of his thought, and in the work of other authors through the 1950’s, there was a tendency to reduce them to the visible, external dimension of the churches in their incarnational or sacramental character. Thils laments a tendency among some authors to limit the understanding of the elements of the church to visible means of salvation considered quantitatively, as if having simply more of them would necessarily imply a more vital witness by any given community. He notes that this narrowing led at times to an overly juridical or “quantitative” interpretation of the doctrine of the elements of means of grace outside the Catholic Church, neglecting the fervour by which they are received, a true measure of their authenticity and truly ecclesial quality.<sup>66</sup>

In the end, it may be Thils who offers the most an astute reading of the debate, for he discovers, in the very teaching of Pius XII, the grounds for reconciling seemingly contradictory positions. Thils observes that the “Mystical Body” was the commanding idea of the original schema *De Ecclesia*, proposed at the first Vatican Council in 1869, though it was not retained.

*doctrinale II.*

<sup>64</sup> Compare THILS, *Histoire doctrinale I*, p. 142-147 and *Histoire doctrinale II*, p. 247-258. In the latter text he explains, “Nous avons vu plus haut que, à Evanston, on avait décidé d’écarter l’expression *vestigia ecclesiae* dans ce contexte. En somme il vaut mieux que toute les «valeurs chrétiennes» ne soient pas appelées simplement ‘vestiges d’Église’. L’expression *vestigia Ecclesiae* devrait avoir un sens théologique précis d’ ‘aspect d’Église’, à la manière dont il est question une fois à Evanston: les Église orthodoxes, y lit-on, affirment être la seule vraie Église du Christ, mais cela ne les empêche nullement de ‘reconnaître dans d’autres confessions chrétiennes certains aspects de l’Église’. Les réserves d’Evanston paraîtront donc excellentes aux théologiens catholiques, en ce qui concerne le cas particulier du Conseil œcuménique. Mais l’importance de la doctrine des éléments d’Église demeure entière dans le domaine de l’ecclésiologie” (p. 269).

<sup>65</sup> THILS, *Histoire doctrinale I*, p. 188. Gustave THILS, *Le décret sur l’œcuménisme, commentaire doctrinal*, Paris, 1966, p. 53. The text of the Decree on Ecumenism states, “Moreover, some and even very many of the significant elements and endowments which together go to build up and give life to the Church itself, can exist outside the visible boundaries of the Catholic Church: the written word of God; the life of grace; faith, hope and charity, with the other interior gifts of the Holy Spirit, and visible elements too” (n. 3).

<sup>66</sup> Gustave THILS, *L’Église et les Églises. Perspectives nouvelles en œcuménisme*, Bruges, 1967, p. 25-27. See also Wolfgang DIETZFELBINGER, *Vestigia Ecclesiae*, in *Ecumenical Review*, 15 (1963), p. 375.

It is certain, in any case, that several fathers of the council distinguished between the visible Church and the mystical Body, judging, as did Bishop Dupanloup, that “the mystical Body of Christ is larger than the visible Church, because in its complete extent it includes all the just” (Mansi, t. 51, c. 786). Up until 1943, this idea was a given among many theologians. They had a good part of the theological tradition in their favour, and nothing in it prevented them from reserving these two different expressions for two different groups of people: the Church, for those who belong visibly to the Catholic Church; the Mystical Body for all the just. In fact, the encyclical refuses this duality. The Catholic Church is the mystical Body. This idea is closer to the tradition. It appears more clearly than in the past, that the notion of the church essentially includes all spiritual and invisible values of the supernatural order.<sup>67</sup>

Drawing on *Mystici corporis*, the ostensible source of conflict, Thils argues that the presence of God’s sanctifying grace – not only in the lives of individual non-Catholic Christians, but as it is manifested in their churches’ preaching of the Word, celebration of the sacraments, ministry, and witness —are expressions belonging to the visible, corporate reality of the Church of Christ. The spiritual elements, the *res* of the church, cannot be divorced from its visible sign. Thils, with the collaboration of Frans Thijssen, was the principal drafter of the initial text on ecumenism prepared by the Secretariat for Unity in the fall of 1961.<sup>68</sup>

## RESISTANCE TO ECCLESIAL RECOGNITION

### PROTAGONISTS OF AN ECUMENISM OF RETURN

Protagonists of an exclusivist identification of the Catholic Church and the Church of Christ generally considered the only acceptable ecumenical engagement as the promotion of a return to the fold of the Roman Church.<sup>69</sup> Not surprisingly, few gave any systematic consideration to the reflection on the ecclesial character of non-Catholic Christian communities, or more particularly to the idea of the *elementa ecclesiae*. One notable exception was Edward Hanahoe, a disciple of Joseph Clifford Fenton and a consultant to the Secretariat for Christian Unity during the council. In a lengthy chapter on the *vestigia ecclesiae*, written in a rambling, apologetic and neo-scholastic style, Hanahoe set out to determine the true nature of the “*vestigia*”, “elements” or “traces” of the church in non-Catholic religious bodies referred to in the Toronto Statement of the WCC.<sup>70</sup> His estimation of the potential for the *elementa* to

<sup>67</sup> Gustave THILS, *Orientations de la théologie*, Louvain, 1958, p. 105.

<sup>68</sup> Peter DE MEY, *Gustave Thils and Ecumenism at Vatican II*, Unpublished manuscript, 17 pages. See especially p. 1-5 on the activities of Thils, Thijssen and Witte in the successive drafts of *De Ecumenismo*.

<sup>69</sup> See, for example, Edward F. HANAOE, *Catholic Ecumenism. The Reunion of Christendom in Contemporary Papal Pronouncements*, Washington, 1953, a doctoral dissertation completed at the Catholic University of America under the direction of Joseph Fenton.

<sup>70</sup> Edward F. HANAOE, *Vestigia Ecclesiae. Their Meaning and Value*, in Edward F. HANAOE and Titus F. CRANNY (eds.), *One Fold. Essays and Documents to Commemorate the Golden Jubilee of the Church Unity Octave 1908-1958*, 1959, p. 272-383. Emilien LAMIRANDE reserves his harshest criticism for Hanahoe’s “Denzinger Theologie”: “l’auteur est peu informé des développements récents de la théologie”. *La signification ecclésiologique des communautés dissidentes*, p. 39-41.

serve as effective means of grace is based on a grudging recognition that the Spirit of God is not constrained by the walls of separation. He draws on Fenton's interpretation of *Mystici corporis*: "it is the teaching of this encyclical that people who are separated from the Church in belief and in rule cannot be living the life of sanctifying grace and cannot possess the virtue of charity." Even so, Fenton was obliged to acknowledge, in light of the tradition, "that all people who are living a life of sanctifying grace and who are motivated by love and charity are in some way joined or united to Our Lord's true Church in its faith and government".<sup>71</sup> In such a view, the presence of any such people in other Christian communities would seem to be a rare, exceptional occurrence, owing nothing to that community's corporate life of faith.

Two things are to be noted in this position. The source of sanctifying grace among non-Catholic Christians is seen in the Roman Catholic Church, not the Church of Christ, or more properly speaking, Christ. Hanahoe echoes this position when he maintains, "We would define the supernatural *vestigia* as contingent effects, supernatural in character, existing in the membership of a separated religious body and reflecting the teaching and practice of the Catholic Church from which their ancestors, directly or indirectly, separated".<sup>72</sup> Secondly, no agency of grace is attributed to the corporate dimension of these elements as aspects proper to the life of non-Catholic Christian communities. Any corporate agency is "an accident." He writes, "Obviously, we cannot speak of them as existing in the manner of a property flowing from the nature of the separated society itself and which could univocally characterize all the members of that society. (...) In the final analysis, the determination of the fact and of the quality of the supernatural *vestigia* turns on the individual member".<sup>73</sup> Non-Catholic Christians appear to be related to the church by some vague desire, with little to distinguish them from non-believers.

### CONFRONTATION OF VIEWPOINTS IN THE PREPARATORY THEOLOGICAL COMMISSION

As we indicated at the outset, one of the important challenges of the council would be met in the confrontation between those militating for an exclusivist interpretation to Pius XII's identification of the Church of Christ with the Catholic Church and those that were more inclusivist, recognizing the saving grace of Christ outside its bounds, including in and through the corporate life of the separated churches. Sebastian Tromp, whose hand in *Mystici corporis* was recognized by all, laid out his hopes for the council in a speech given at the Gregorian University on 25

<sup>71</sup> Joseph Clifford FENTON, *The Catholic Church and Salvation*, Westminster, 1958, p.84. Cited by HANAHOE in *Vestigia Ecclesiae*, p. 295.

<sup>72</sup> HANAHOE, *Vestigia*, p. 303. On this point, Hanahoe claims agreement with Charles BOYER, *Vestigia Ecclesiae – Elements of the Church*, in *Unitas*, 8 (1956), p.67-69. While Boyer's assessment of the value of the *vestigia* of the church for the sanctification of other baptized Christians is more positive, his framework remains one of "return" to Rome. They are elements "detached" from the church of Christ, tormented by nostalgia like exiles outside their natural home. Once the dissidents discover their limitations and understand their true source, they will be inclined to return to their true home (p. 69).

<sup>73</sup> HANAHOE, *Vestigia*, p. 306.



November, 1961.<sup>74</sup> Concerned that the “ecumenical” nature and intent of the council were being understood incorrectly, and convinced of the need to act decisively in the face of a crisis of doctrinal authority, he looked to the council to reaffirm in the strongest terms the identity between the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church and the “Roman” Church. Indeed, the paragraph on the “Church as the Mystical Body of Christ” in the first schema was framed as a “solemn” declaration, an approach not retained by the council.<sup>75</sup>

Congar’s diary records that a very heated debate on Witte’s chapter of the schema on the church, *De Oecumenismo* took place in the Preparatory Theological Commission during that same week. His account is worth citing at some length, for it provides insight into both the tone of the debate and the apparent ecclesiological impasse. His entry of 21 November notes a “violent offensive” against the draft by Balic and Tromp.<sup>76</sup> The following day, Tromp dominates the discussion, supported in his views by Schauf:

Neither one of them have an ecumenical spirit. They know nothing but a thought world of affirmations shaped by the most consequential applications of their fundamental principle: the Catholic Church is the Mystical Body of Christ and she alone is the Mystical Body. We are completely unarmed, beside ourselves that we are on a terrain where ecumenism could no more live than a plant transported onto a concrete slab. For example, to combat the idea that the Orthodox Churches are truly local churches, as I suggest by the consideration of the presence of priesthood and thus of the sacramental power in them, Father Tromp says an apostate can also validly consecrate the eucharist ... For him, the Orthodox Churches are nothing more than a social fact of apostasy. This has NO RELATIONSHIP to concrete historical reality.<sup>77</sup>

Congar’s account provides a clue to understanding the crux of the opposition to a more positive consideration of non-Catholic Christian communities. Opposition to the positive recognition of ecclesial life beyond the Catholic Church considered other Christians practically as “apostates”, or as we have suggested above, “fallen away Catholics”. This betrays a Cyprianic ecclesiology of unity. The proponents of a more generous evaluation of the corporate life of non-Catholic communities were seeking to develop and build upon the thought of Augustine.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>74</sup> Sebastianus TROMP, *De futuro Concilio Vaticano II* in *Gregorianum*, 36 (1962), p. 5-11.

<sup>75</sup> “Docet igitur Sacra Synodus et sollemniter profitetur non esse nisi unicum verum Iesum Christi Ecclesiam, eam nempe quam in Symbolo unam, sanctam, catholicam et apostolicam celebremus (...) ideoque sola iure Catholica Romana nuncupatur Ecclesia.” *Schema constitutionis dogmaticae de ecclesia*, I, 7, p. 12. The terms “docet” and “sollemniter profitetur” were considered unnecessary and removed at the request of Archbishop Maurice Baudoux (St. Boniface, Canada), AS II/I, p. 618.

<sup>76</sup> CONGAR, *Mon journal du concile*, Vol. I, p. 81. He is referring to Charles Balic, ofm., professor at the Antonianum and the Latran, consultant to the Holy Office, and *peritus* on the doctrinal commission.

<sup>77</sup> CONGAR, *Mon journal du concile*, Vol. I, p. 82. Emphasis in original. Heribert Schauf was a seminary professor in the diocese of Aix-la-Chappelle, consultant to the Preparatory Theological Commission, and a *peritus* on the doctrinal commission during the council.

<sup>78</sup> For a significant study of the patristic sources, see Jérôme HAMER, *Le Baptême et l'Église. À propos des "Vestigia Ecclesiae"*, in *Irénikon*, (1952), p. 142-164, 261-275.

In spite of this and other impassioned exchanges in the conciliar period, the reference to the elements of the church, “efficacious means and signs of unity” found in non-Catholic Christian communities, remained in the schema received by the bishops and bore fruit in the subsequent elaboration of the council documents. This theology was certainly refined in the course of the council. While a number of the minority bishops objected to the implicit acceptance of other baptized Christians as members of the ecclesial body of Christ, and many more were resistant to the assertion that this sacramental bond implies a real though imperfect communion between the Catholic Church and other “churches and ecclesial communities”, the doctrine of the *elementa ecclesiae* was never itself an object of serious protest. It became an important aspect of the council’s ecclesiology of communion, establishing the ground for the recognition of the truly ecclesial character of non-Catholic churches and communities and of their role in the economy of salvation. These developments, received by the whole church through the conciliar process, stand in continuity with the tradition.

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## PRÉCURSEUR DU SECRÉTARIAT POUR L'UNITÉ : LE TRAVAIL ŒCUMÉNIQUE DE LA 'CONFÉRENCE CATHOLIQUE POUR LES QUESTIONS ŒCUMÉNIQUES' (1952-1963)

L'importance du mouvement œcuménique à l'intérieur des mouvements de renouveau qui ont influencé Vatican II fut déjà fortement soulignée en 1966 par Dom Olivier Rousseau dans sa contribution à la collection de Baraúna :

Peut-être étonnerons-nous quelques-uns en déclarant que, de tous les mouvements énumérés, celui qui a marqué le plus les autres, au point de vue qui nous occupe, en leur donnant une raison de finalité, est l'œcuménisme. Il en est comme le leit-motiv<sup>1</sup>.

Ce chapitre étudie une initiative œcuménique importante et son impact potentiel sur le Concile. La *Conférence Catholique pour les questions œcuméniques* organisa neuf rencontres dans différents pays européens entre 1952 et 1963. Premièrement, je soulignerai les tentatives de la *Conférence Catholique* et de son secrétaire Johannes Willebrands pour être reconnus comme un corps légitime par la hiérarchie de l'Église catholique<sup>2</sup>. Par la suite je présenterai le travail de la *Conférence Catholique* en trois étapes chronologiques, qui révèlent aussi une méthodologie différente. De 1953 à 1954 et de 1955 à 1959, la *Conférence Catholique* a étudié le travail préparatoire du Conseil Œcuménique des Églises. Le résultat de ce dialogue à distance consistait en deux rapports rédigés par Yves Congar et publiés dans la revue *Istina*. Ensuite, je me focaliserai sur un document qu'on pourrait peut-être considérer comme la plus grande contribution de la *Conférence Catholique*. La *Note du Comité Directeur de la Conférence Catholique pour les Questions œcuméniques sur la restauration de l'Unité chrétienne à l'occasion du prochain Concile* fut, après sa sortie le 15 juin 1959, envoyée à un certain nombre de cardinaux, archevêques et évêques de l'Église catholique, mais ne sera jamais publiée. Comme le travail normal de la *Conférence Catholique* consistait en l'organisation des rencontres annuelles, je finirai cet aperçu en analysant les contributions du colloque de 1961 sur *Le renouveau dans l'Église*. Dans la dernière section, une étude minutieuse des allocutions d'ouverture que Willebrands prononçait au cours de chacune des neuf assemblées plénières de la *Conférence Catholique* tentera

<sup>1</sup> Dom Olivier ROUSSEAU, *La constitution «Lumen Gentium» dans le cadre des mouvements rénovateurs de théologie et de pastorale des dernières décades*, dans Guilherme BARAÚNA & Yves M.-J. CONGAR (éds.), *L'Église de Vatican II. Études autour de la Constitution conciliaire sur l'Église* (Unam Sanctam, 51b), Paris, Cerf, II: 35-56.

<sup>2</sup> Deux publications sur la *Conférence Catholique* étaient une aide importante pendant ma recherche: Mauro VELATI, *Una difficile transizione. Il cattolicesimo tra unionismo ed ecumenismo (1952-1964)*, Bologna, 1996 et Jan Y.H.A. JACOBS, 'Naar één oecumenische beweging'. *De Katholieke Conferentie voor Oecumenische Vragen: een leerschool en gids. 1951-1965*, Tilburg, 1991.

de mieux rendre compte de la vision de l'un des grands œcuménistes catholiques de sa génération au cours de la décennie précédant le Concile Vatican II.

### LA CONFÉRENCE CATHOLIQUE COMME INSTITUTION À LA RECHERCHE D'UNE RECONNAISSANCE ECCLÉSIASTIQUE

Dans sa conversation avec le Père Vodopivec le 18 mai 1960, Willebrands rappelle que l'idée d'établir un « *Conseil Catholique œcuménique*<sup>3</sup> » fut développée par des représentants de l'association œcuménique hollandaise Saint Willibrord en 1950.

The existence of the Conférence is something providential. How did you get this idea? I vividly remember the moment when the thought entered my head. In 1950, in Hotel Noord-Brabant in Utrecht, during the break of meeting of the SWV. I always had the feeling that Divine Providence had given me the idea, yet, I had always felt powerless and worthless to be given such a responsibility. The cooperation of all the members has been fantastic —and the growing importance of the Conférence has not reduced my sense of unworthiness and powerlessness. On the contrary. Although I have grown, through the support and help of so many, the real discrepancies between my own abilities, my preparedness and the task at hand, is only resolved in the Lord Jesus. Therein lies the problem of my trust in Him. Therein lies the core task of everything<sup>4</sup>.

L'initiative d'organiser régulièrement des rencontres internationales d'œcuménistes catholiques n'eut son sens qu'à partir de cette année-là, étant donné le changement de politique au Vatican. Le monitum *Cum compertum* de juin 1948, qui, d'un ton prohibitif, avait été rédigé en réaction à la création du COE, fut heureusement suivi, en mars 1950 — le document ayant pourtant été daté du 20 décembre 1949 — par l'Instruction *De motione oecumenica*<sup>5</sup>. Ainsi que cela est répété au début et à la fin du document, les chrétiens non-catholiques sont priés de retourner à l'Église catholique, « l'unique véritable Église du Christ ». Dans ce sens, l'Instruction interprète les efforts de promotion de l'unité comme étant mis en place « sous l'inspiration de la grâce du Saint-Esprit ». Toutefois, les lecteurs catholiques sont avertis que la tendance à se fixer sur « ce qui nous unit » plutôt que sur « ce qui nous sépare » pourrait conduire à « un dangereux indifférentisme ». De plus, le document exprime aussi ses préoccupations au sujet de l'appel régulièrement entendu à développer le soi-disant « esprit irénique ». Lorsqu'on enseigne l'histoire de la Réforme, on ne devrait pas exagérer « les défauts des catholiques » ou « dissimuler des fautes des Réformateurs » — on est confronté

<sup>3</sup> Voir FWC: *Projet d'un Conseil Catholique œcuménique*. Willebrands confia les archives de la *Conférence Catholique pour les questions œcuméniques* à l'abbaye bénédictine de Chevetogne. Je remercie l'abbaye et son archiviste, dom Lambert Vos, pour m'avoir permis de consulter abondamment ce matériel. Les références à ce Fonds Willebrands à Chevetogne seront désormais précédées par l'abréviation FWC.

<sup>4</sup> Theo SALEMINK (dir.), « *You Will Be Called Repairer of the Breach* ». *The Diary of J.G.M. Willebrands 1958-1961*, Leuven, 2009, p. 151-152.

<sup>5</sup> SUPREMA SACRA CONGREGATIO S. OFFICII, *Instructio ad locorum ordinarios «De motione oecumenica»*, in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 42 (1950), p. 142-147. Le Père Boyer en publia une traduction française dans l'édition française du périodique de l'association *Unitas* dont il était président, en juillet 1950 (p. 3-7) et y ajouta un commentaire (p. 9-11) dans lequel il insista sur le fait que l'instruction faisait respecter la position catholique sur l'unité: « la seule union possible, la seule union légitime est celle du retour des dissidents à l'Église Romaine » (*Ibid.*, p. 10).

ici à la distinction douloureuse entre *Catholicorum defectus et culpae Reformatorum*<sup>6</sup>. Cependant, la grande finalité de l'Instruction fut de fournir des normes claires à ses destinataires —les *locorum ordinarii*— sur la façon de s'occuper des « réunions » et « conférences mixtes entre catholiques et non-catholiques » en vue de « promouvoir la 'réunion' dans la foi » (*ad fovendam in fide « reunionem »*). Elles ne devront jamais être organisées sans l'accord de l'autorité ecclésiastique compétente. L'ordinaire du lieu devrait accorder la permission avant l'organisation des rencontres locales entre croyants ou des rencontres entre théologiens. Dans le dernier cas, le Saint-Office devrait recevoir un rapport annuel « sur les questions traitées, les personnes qui y ont pris part et ceux qui, de chaque côté, ont fait des rapports ». Concernant les conférences au niveau interdiocésain, national ou international, le Saint-Siège devrait les autoriser avant que l'organisation de l'événement.

Les réactions protestantes à ce document tendent à souligner que « sa portée principale fut celle d'avertissement<sup>7</sup> », et sont encore plus critiques vis-à-vis des autres événements de la même année 1950, comme la publication de l'encyclique *Humani generis* et la proclamation du dogme de l'Assomption de Marie. Lorsque, après la mort du pape Pie XII, on demanda au dominicain français et directeur de *Istina*, le P. Christophe Dumont, d'écrire une appréciation sur la contribution du Pape à l'œcuménisme dans une partie de l'ouvrage sur *La vie de l'Église sous Pie XII* (1959), il admit que ce Pape n'avait pas pris un nombre considérable de nouvelles initiatives comme l'avait fait son prédécesseur, mais que l'Instruction *De motione oecumenica*, ou d'après ses premiers mots *Ecclesia Catholica*, « créera des possibilités de rapports que ne laissait pas espérer l'encyclique *Mortalium animos* », et que c'est « jusqu'à ce jour le document le plus explicite et en même temps le plus positif dont puisse se réclamer l'activité catholique en faveur de la restauration de l'unité chrétienne ». Dans sa conclusion Dumont répète que « grâce à l'Instruction *Ecclesia Catholica*, le grand travail catholique en faveur de l'unité s'est vu conférer droit de cité parmi les préoccupations générales et primordiales de l'Église<sup>8</sup> ». Dans ses discours d'ouverture, Willebrands avait aussi régulièrement recours —souvent en forme de citations directes— à l'Instruction et parfois aussi à d'autres documents du magistère, pour indiquer que la *Conférence Catholique* voulait rester dans les limites de l'enseignement magistériel sur l'œcuménisme<sup>9</sup>.

Dans son article, Dumont mentionne que l'initiative prise par le Père Charles Boyer d'organiser une rencontre internationale d'œcuménistes catholiques à l'abbaye gréco-catholique de Grottaferrata —dans le cadre de l'Année Sainte de 1950— représente un des premiers fruits de l'Instruction du St-Office, et considère comme très significatif

<sup>6</sup> *De motione oecumenica*, p. 144.

<sup>7</sup> Lukas VISCHER, *The Ecumenical Movement and the Roman Catholic Church*, dans Harold Edward FEY (dir.) *A History of the Ecumenical Movement*. Vol. 2: 1948-1969 – *the Ecumenical Advance*, Geneva, 1970, p. 316.

<sup>8</sup> Christophe-Jean DUMONT, *L'œcuménisme*, dans *La vie de l'Église sous Pie XII*, Paris, 1959, p. 90-109. On trouvera les citations aux p. 95, 101 et 109.

<sup>9</sup> Ceci est le cas pour sa conférence inaugurale à Fribourg et également pour un article qu'il publia après sa nomination comme secrétaire du Secrétariat pour l'Unité Chrétienne. Voir Johannes G.M. WILLEBRANDS, *Il movimento ecumenico. Sviluppo e speranza*, dans *Humanitas*, 15 (1960), p. 263-277, à la p. 264.

le fait que le St-Père ait accordé une audience à ce groupe à Castel Gandolfo. Bien que ni Willebrands ni le Père Thijssen — ce dernier étant un proche collaborateur de Willebrands dans l'association œcuménique Saint Willebrord — ne prirent part à la réunion de Grottaferrata, leur initiative de mettre sur pied une *Conférence Catholique* pour les questions œcuméniques fut regardée comme s'inscrivant dans le sillage de l'initiative de Boyer. Comme l'écrit Dumont dans le même article : « Sur l'initiative de deux prêtres hollandais, fut repris le projet qui avait commencé de se réaliser deux ans plus tôt à Grottaferrata<sup>10</sup> ». Dans son discours d'ouverture de la réunion de 1952 à Fribourg, qui semble avoir été la première réunion de la *Conférence Catholique*, Willebrands se référa avec courtoisie au tout début de son discours au lien entre le nouvel événement et l'initiative de Grottaferrata<sup>11</sup>. Willebrands et Thijssen réussirent avec cette initiative paneuropéenne parce qu'ils avaient visité tous les grands œcuménistes catholiques et parce que l'initiative n'avait pas été prise à Rome<sup>12</sup>.

Une première caractéristique de la *Conférence Catholique* fut de respecter strictement les règles édictées par le Vatican sur l'organisation de ce genre d'événement et de chercher aussi la reconnaissance ecclésiastique. En effet, ils demandaient toujours la permission aux ordinaires des lieux où l'assemblée plénière de la *Conférence* devait se tenir, Fribourg (1952), Utrecht (1953), Mainz (1954), Paris (1955), Chevetogne (1957), Paderborn (1959), Gazzada (1960 et 1963) et Strasbourg (1961). De plus, on demandait aux participants d'obtenir la bénédiction de leurs ordinaires avant de prendre part aux réunions de la *Conférence Catholique*. On demandait aussi aux évêques locaux d'assumer la présidence des réunions ou de la déléguer à une autre personne au cas où ils auraient d'autres obligations. Pour cette raison, Willebrands se présentait délibérément comme le secrétaire. Lorsque l'ordinaire du lieu acceptait de prononcer une adresse de bienvenue à leurs réunions, cela était considéré comme hautement pertinent. Dans les archives de Chevetogne, on trouve le texte d'une de ces adresses, celle du coadjuteur d'Utrecht, Mgr Alfrink, à la conférence de Dijnselburg, près d'Utrecht, en 1953. Celui-ci s'attachait spécialement à l'importance de l'apostolat de la conversion des non-catholiques, qui dans son diocèse atteignait un total de 1000 par année<sup>13</sup>.

La réaction du Père Villain de Lyon vaut la peine d'être citée intégralement :

Quelle surprise et quel choc ! « Nous aussi, nous faisons de l'œcuménisme », prononça le prélat dès l'exorde. Mais de quel œcuménisme s'agissait-il ? La réponse venait dès la seconde phrase : il s'agissait de convertir les protestants, à commencer par les pasteurs, et l'orateur

<sup>10</sup> Christophe-Jean DUMONT, *La vie de l'Église sous Pie XII*, p. 106.

<sup>11</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Introduction à la Conférence Catholique Œcuménique de Fribourg*, p. 1.

<sup>12</sup> Voir FWC: *Projet d'un Conseil Catholique œcuménique*, p. 7: « Il nous semble désirable que le Secrétariat ne soit pas établi à Rome, mais dans un pays où existe un contact vivant avec les chrétiens séparés: a) car ainsi il sera d'autant plus facile de distinguer entre le Conseil et les autorités ecclésiastiques officielles et de désavouer le Conseil, le cas échéant; b) ainsi il sera d'autant plus facile d'obtenir des informations et d'établir des contacts; c) il sera d'autant plus facile d'exécuter les directives, c'est-à-dire sur place même; d) les frères séparés s'y rapporteront plus commodément. Un petit pays, où existe un contact vécu et vivant avec les chrétiens séparés offrirait peut-être les meilleures garanties pour le siège du Secrétariat général ».

<sup>13</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Introduction à la conférence de Dijnselburg par S. Exc. Mgr. B. Alfrink*. 6 août 1953.



exposait dans tout leur détail, les diverses méthodes de conversion en usage dans l'archidiocèse. J'étais assis entre le P. Congar et le P. Dumont. À chaque nouveau couplet, nous baissions la tête un peu plus. À la fin, ma tête touchait mes genoux<sup>14</sup>.

La consultation regroupant la plus large présence des représentants de la hiérarchie fut sans doute la première qui eut lieu sur le sol italien, à Gazzada en 1960. Ainsi que le rappelle Willebrands dans son discours d'ouverture de la conférence de Strasbourg une année plus tard : « La présence de trois Cardinaux (le Cardinal Alfrink, archevêque d'Utrecht, le Card. Montini, archevêque de Milan et le Card. Bea, Président du Secrétariat pour l'Unité des Chrétiens) lui a donné une splendeur nouvelle, qui a marqué en même temps l'importance du travail œcuménique et l'intérêt qu'y porte la Hiérarchie de l'Église<sup>15</sup> ». On appréciait surtout la présence du Cardinal Augustin Bea et le fait qu'il fasse une adresse à la *Conférence*. Dans son allocution, il reconnaissait que « la 'Conférence Catholique' a été une espèce de préparation officieuse, en même temps d'ailleurs que d'autres institutions similaires, au Secrétariat pour l'Unité des Chrétiens », et il souligna que beaucoup de membres et consultants du Secrétariat avaient été choisis parmi les membres actifs de la *Conférence*. Son adresse comportait également des remerciements pour le travail de « son infatigable secrétaire Monseigneur Willebrands qui désormais pourra se consacrer entièrement à cet important travail pour l'Union en y apportant la grande expérience et la vaste connaissance qu'il a acquises dans sa précédente activité ». Dans son adresse d'ouverture déjà évoquée à la réunion de la *Conférence Catholique* de Strasbourg, Willebrands en parla en ces termes élogieux : « Le discours du Cardinal Bea et le dialogue suivant entre Son Éminence et les participants, l'appréciation et la reconnaissance, exprimées par le Cardinal, pour le travail œcuménique des Centres, des Instituts, des Monastères, et pour le travail individuel, ont donné un grand encouragement et une joie profonde à tous ceux qui étaient présents<sup>16</sup> ». Dans le même sens, nous pouvons ajouter une citation du diaire récemment publié, à la date du 21 septembre 1960 :

Early in the morning, Cardinal Bea arrives, and celebrates the Community Mass. The Cardinal speaks at the first session and responds to an hour and a half of questioning. This gathering is the high point of the Conference. We have never experienced anything like this before. The openness, the caring, the depth of Cardinal Bea makes a lasting impression. How many people are here, who have given their life to work for unity, to work for the separated brothers, without ever receiving any encouragement or gratitude from the hierarchical institutions? Now there is a special blessing from the Holy Father for their work. Later, Père Congar speaks about « un miracle dans l'Église<sup>17</sup> ».

L'histoire de la *Conférence Catholique* montre que Willebrands, conformément à l'instruction du St-Office, faisait régulièrement rapport à Rome du travail de la *Conférence*. À travers ses agendas, Willebrands a toujours l'impression que le Cardinal Ottaviani apprécie son travail. Son commentaire du 3 mars 1959 fait référence à une

<sup>14</sup> Maurice VILLAIN, *Vers l'unité. Itinéraire d'un pionnier 1935-1975*, Lyon, s.d., p.208, cité dans Mauro VELATI, *Una difficile transizione*, p. 59.

<sup>15</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Strasbourg*, p. 1.

<sup>16</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Strasbourg*, p. 1.

<sup>17</sup> Theo SALEMINK (dir.), «*You Will Be Called Repairer of the Breach*», p. 209.

audience dans laquelle Willebrands reçoit la demande de rassembler les réactions de tous les non-catholiques à l'annonce du Concile, et durant laquelle Ottaviani lui aurait dit: «Tu sei molto bravo!». Le 23 juin de la même année, Willebrands présente le mémorandum du Comité Exécutif de la *Conférence Catholique* sur les tâches œcuméniques du prochain Concile au Cardinal Ottaviani. Le Cardinal exprimait alors l'espoir qu'«il servirait comme une préparation pour le concile».

Pourtant, les contacts avec la hiérarchie catholique n'étaient pas toujours fructueux. La conférence d'ouverture de Willebrands lors de la réunion de Mayence en 1954 fait référence à une tentative assez tardive d'obtenir la permission du Cardinal Stritch de Chicago pour inviter des observateurs au nom de la *Conférence Catholique* à l'assemblée générale du COE à Evanston. Willebrands pressent déjà que la réponse sera négative, mais il accepte la décision de la hiérarchie catholique: «Persönlich glaube ich eine negative Antwort erwarten zu müssen. Aber auch dann haben wir Grund zur Dankbarkeit, dass wir etwas tun durften um diese Sache zu dienen<sup>18</sup>».

Depuis 1956, Willebrands était en contact régulier avec le secrétaire de l'*International League for Apostolic Faith and Order* (ILAFO), une association de théologiens protestants et orthodoxes qui avait été fondée en 1950 pour promouvoir la tradition «catholique» dans leurs Églises<sup>19</sup>. La *Conférence Catholique* reçut en 1957 l'invitation de participer à la réunion de l'ILAFO au cours de laquelle les thèmes de «La nécessité de l'épiscopat» et «Le sacrifice de la Sainte Messe» seraient discutés. Après qu'il eut été convenu que la *Conférence Catholique* déléguerait 6 membres pour cette rencontre œcuménique, la permission fut demandée à l'évêque de Southwark, qui était l'ordinaire du lieu, mais celui-ci refusa en envoyant une lettre véhémement. Willebrands n'hésita pas à exprimer son indignation au sujet de cette décision à Rome, où il reçut le soutien de la part du Père Tromp qui croyait que l'ordinaire aurait pu référer la décision à Rome, suivant la procédure pour les rencontres internationales contenue dans l'instruction du Saint-Office de 1949<sup>20</sup>.

<sup>18</sup> FWC: *Katholische Konferenz für oekumenische Fragen. Arbeitstagung: 21.-24. April 1954, Priesterseminar, Mainz*. Einleitung: Prof. Dr. J.G.M. Willebrands (Sekretär), p. 6.

<sup>19</sup> Comme les statuts l'indiquent: «By 'Apostolic Order' is meant the priestly threefold ministry of bishops, priests and deacons duly consecrated or ordained by bishops in the Apostolic Succession and in the Communion of the Catholic Church». Voir aussi FWC: *International League for Apostolic Faith and Order*. Bulletin No 1, p. 1.

<sup>20</sup> FWC: *Réunion du Comité Directeur de la Conférence catholique pour les questions œcuméniques tenue le 14 déc. 1957 à Rome*, où on lit à la p. 6: «Le secrétaire a rendu une visite au R.P. Tromp, s.j., le 16 décembre. Le R.P. Tromp s'est montré très étonné, voire même un peu indigné, du refus de l'évêque de Southwark quant à notre participation à la réunion de Pulborough. Il a dit qu'un évêque local ne pouvait pas avoir le mot décisif en la matière d'une réunion internationale. Dans le cas de Pulborough, le refus de l'évêque était certainement contre la tendance et l'avis de l'instruction du Saint-Office de 1949. Pour l'avenir, il a demandé au secrétaire d'avertir à temps le Saint-Office d'une telle réunion, afin de ne pas courir le risque de travailler en vain».

## LA CONFÉRENCE CATHOLIQUE AU TRAVAIL

## LES RAPPORTS DE CONGAR (1954 ET 1959) EN CONVERSATION AVEC LE COE

Le dominicain Yves Congar s'est vu confier à deux reprises la publication d'un rapport au nom de la *Conférence Catholique*. Publiés de manière anonyme dans *Istina*, ces articles se voulaient une contribution catholique à la réflexion en cours au sein du Conseil Œcuménique des Églises<sup>21</sup>. Une vue d'ensemble de l'histoire assez chaotique de la rédaction de ces textes clarifiera le fait que cette jeune association d'œcuménistes catholiques était de bonne volonté et désireuse, par ses observations, de manifester son intérêt pour le travail accompli au sein du Conseil Œcuménique des Églises, mais n'était pas suffisamment préparée et structurée pour assumer efficacement cette tâche<sup>22</sup>.

Organisée à Utrecht en août 1953, la deuxième réunion de la *Conférence Catholique* fut la première rencontre consacrée à un thème particulier, comme ce sera le cas pour les réunions ultérieures. Le Comité Central du COE décida à sa réunion de Toronto, en 1950, de se focaliser sur le thème de l'espérance au cours des prochaines années. À la suite de la consultation d'autres œcuménistes, Willebrands décida de se consacrer au même thème pendant la conférence d'Utrecht<sup>23</sup>. Pendant ce temps, le Conseil Œcuménique des Églises préparait sa seconde assemblée qui allait se tenir à Evanston en août 1954 sous le thème : *Le Christ, seul espoir du monde*. Au cours de la réunion d'Utrecht, les théologiens catholiques abordèrent le thème de l'espérance chrétienne dans l'Ancien et le Nouveau Testament. Ils voulaient surtout être informés des réflexions sur ce thème dans les comptes-rendus du COE préparatoires à la rencontre d'Evanston. Le Père Dumont présenta un exposé sur ce sujet qui sera par la suite publié dans la revue *Istina*<sup>24</sup>. Il donna une étude critique du rapport de 1952 publié par une commission spéciale au sein du Département d'Études du COE. Dumont accorda une attention particulière aux tensions entre les orthodoxes et les protestants et semblait sous-entendre que les catholiques et les orthodoxes seraient capables de trouver plus facilement un accord sur un certain nombre de questions. Leur forte focalisation sur les sacrements et sur la possibilité pour les croyants d'être transformés par la grâce de Dieu s'alignait plus facilement sur l'idée d'une « eschatologie réalisée », contrastant

<sup>21</sup> *Le Christ, l'Église et la grâce dans l'économie de l'espérance chrétienne. Vues catholiques sur le thème d'Evanston*, dans *Istina*, 2 (1954), p. 132-158 et *La Seigneurie du Christ sur l'Église et sur le monde. Par un groupe de théologiens de la 'Conférence catholique pour les questions œcuméniques'*, *Istina*, 7 (1959), p. 131-166.

<sup>22</sup> Mis à part les rapports trouvés dans les archives de Willebrands à Chevetogne, je m'appuierai sur les chapitres deux («La Conferenza e il Consiglio ecumenico: un dialogo a distanza») et trois («Tra Roma e Ginevra») dans Mauro VELATI, *Una difficile transizione*, p. 50-99.

<sup>23</sup> MAURO VELATI, *Una difficile transizione*, p. 54-55 fait mention des différences d'opinion entre Bouyer et Willebrands à ce sujet.

<sup>24</sup> Christophe-Jean DUMONT, *L'espérance chrétienne d'après les travaux préliminaires à la seconde assemblée du Conseil œcuménique des Églises à Evanston (U.S.A.)*, dans *Istina*, 1 (1953), p. 80-106. *Istina* publia le texte final du rapport sur le thème principal d'Evanston sous le titre *Le Christ, seul espoir du monde*, dans *Istina*, 2 (1954), p. 182-217.

avec l'« eschatologie idéaliste » des protestants<sup>25</sup>. Il n'y avait aucun consensus sur le rôle que l'Église devait assumer dans l'accomplissement de l'espérance chrétienne.

Dans l'invitation à cette consultation, Willebrands avait entrevu deux aboutissements possibles :

Nous souhaiterions que cette réunion conduite à une double initiative : (1) une réunion de quelques théologiens de notre milieu avec certains théologiens à désigner par le Conseil Mondial des Églises, traitant le thème : « Le Christ, espérance du monde » ; (2) un memorandum sur l'espérance chrétienne, à rédiger par quelques théologiens de notre milieu et à offrir au Conseil Mondial des Églises<sup>26</sup>.

Dans la conclusion du débat, Willebrands se livre à une certaine autocritique. Peu de membres avaient eu l'opportunité d'examiner à l'avance les rapports du COE. La *Conférence Catholique* ne s'était pas suffisamment préparée pour « donner une réponse catholique à Evanston. » Ceci serait confié à une commission d'études. Dumont se demandait s'il n'était pas préférable, considérant qu'une réaction catholique au document préparatoire pour Evanston viendrait « trop tard », de demander à Rome d'écrire une « Encyclique sur l'Espérance ». Enfin, il a été convenu que la Commission d'Études écrive le memorandum et que ce texte soit débattu pendant la réunion suivante, qui serait organisée en avril 1954 à Mayence<sup>27</sup>.

La Commission d'Études de la *Conférence Catholique* se réunit le 7 novembre au Centre d'Études *Istina* et confia la tâche de rédiger un memorandum au Père Congar. On confierait en outre à un membre de nationalité allemande le soin de préparer un memorandum sur le thème que la Commission Foi et Constitution avait annoncé comme devant être le thème central de l'assemblée d'Evanston : *Notre unité en Christ et notre désunion en tant qu'Églises*<sup>28</sup>.

En décembre, le memorandum du P. Congar était déjà prêt à être publié sous la forme de *Dix thèses Catholiques sur le thème d'Evanston*. Le texte avait été envoyé à l'avance aux membres de la *Conférence Catholique* et débattu *in absentia* de

<sup>25</sup> Christophe-Jean DUMONT, *L'espérance chrétienne*, p. 101-102 : « Je pense, pour ma part, que cette conception sacramentelle est celle qui représente au maximum l'idée d'une eschatologie réalisée (selon une expression dont on attribue la paternité au professeur Dodd), qui se distingue, sans s'opposer à lui, de l'élément proprement futur, à venir, de l'eschatologie. (...) Il peut y avoir entre l'Église romaine et l'Église Orthodoxe des divergences de vue assez profondes tant sur la grâce que sur l'Église; du moins y a-t-il entre elles ceci de commun: une conception très réaliste de la transformation de l'être profond de l'homme par la grâce; un attachement très étroit à l'affirmation du caractère proprement théandrique de l'Église. L'absence de l'une et de l'autre, leur rejet positif, est sans doute ce qui différencie le plus profondément les communions issues de la Réforme.»

<sup>26</sup> FWC: *Réunion 6-9 août 1953 – Programme*, p. 2. Voir aussi FWC: Willebrands, *Einleitung zur katholisch-oekumenischen Konferenz von Dijnseburg*, 6-9 August 1953, p. 10 : « Dieses Gespräch dürfte dann aber allerdings nicht aufgefasst werden als Debatte oder als seine Kommissionen zusammenkunft des WCC und der Römischen Kirche, die dann auf diese Weise in das Gespräch von Evanston einbezogen würde, sondern als Antwort, als Reaktion unsererseits auf die vorbereitenden Rapporte von Evanston, wie auch für unsere eigenen Information über Evanston. »

<sup>27</sup> FWC: *Slotzitting. Zondagochtend*, 9 Aug. 1953.

<sup>28</sup> L'idée était plus tard abandonnée et remplacée par deux exposés qui furent présentés pendant la consultation de la *Conférence Catholique* à Mayence: Friedrich Buuck S.J. sur les membres de l'Église selon les points de vue catholique et protestant et Maurice Bévenot S.J. sur les tendances ecclésiologiques au sein de Foi & Constitution.

Congar pendant la réunion de Mayence<sup>29</sup>. Dans son introduction à la conférence, Willebrands réfléchissait déjà à la question de la publication du mémorandum. Congar était conscient du caractère personnel du texte, mais il avait aussi envoyé pour discussion son projet à *Istina* en présence des Pères Lialine, Hamer et Dumont. Il aurait voulu voir le travail publié « comme l'aboutissement d'un travail commun<sup>30</sup> ».

Dans le débat de clôture de la consultation de Mayence, la question de la publication était relancée. De l'avis de Willebrands, cela a été un « fardeau beaucoup trop lourd » de donner une réponse à Evanston. Il avait l'impression que la théologie catholique n'avait pas encore entièrement saisi l'essence du concept chrétien d'espérance. D'autres membres tels que Michel de Paillerets étaient sans réserve en faveur de la publication. On ne publiera pas une déclaration doctrinale officielle de l'Église catholique. Un texte collectif n'exprime jamais l'opinion de chacun. « Ce texte aurait certainement l'avantage d'exister. » Dom Olivier Rousseau croyait que le texte de Congar manquait quelque chose d'essentiel à la tradition catholique en ceci qu'il ne faisait pas référence aux sources liturgiques. L'évêque de Mayence, Albert Stohr, insista pour que les thèses finales et politiquement dangereuses soient enlevées et que le nom de la *Conférence Catholique* ne soit pas mentionné<sup>31</sup>. Après la dernière

<sup>29</sup> Cf. FWC: Willebrands, *Katholische Konferenz für Ökumenische Fragen. Arbeitstagung 21.-24. April 1954, Priesterseminar, Mainz. Einleitung*, p. 3 : « Es ist wohl sehr bedauerlich, dass P. Congar nicht persönlich bei uns sein kann, — wohl aber im Geiste —, und dass er an unserem Dialogue und der Entwicklung unseres Gedankenganges nicht mündlich teilnehmen kann, sondern nur schriftlich. Doch ist auch diese Anwesenheit eine sehr reelle, und sind wir ihm sehr dankbar für den uns zur Verfügung gestellten Text. Während er im Heiligen Lande weilt, wird er dennoch im Geiste mit uns vereinigt sein. » Le 8 février Congar recevait la nouvelle de la nouvelle de la part de son provincial qu'il était suspendu de sa position de professeur au Saulchoir, ensemble avec trois autres professeurs dominicains, Chenu, Féret et Boisselot, et qu'il ne résidera plus en France. À sa propre suggestion il resta quelques mois en Terre Sainte avant d'aller à Rome en novembre 1954. Congar parle de cette période dans son *Journal d'un théologien (1946-1956)*, éd. Étienne FOUILLOUX, Paris, Cerf, 2001. Le rapport de la réunion suivante du Comité Directeur (24-25/11/1954) note que le Père Congar a été explicitement invité à prendre part à titre d'invité durant un jour.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. FWC: Willebrands, *Katholische Konferenz für Ökumenische Fragen. Arbeitstagung 21.-24. April 1954, Priesterseminar, Mainz. Einleitung*, p. 4 : « Obwohl P. Congar sich des persönlichen Charakters seines Werkes bewusst ist, will er es doch gerne als Resultat gemeinsamer Arbeit betrachtet sehen. » Cependant, quelques lignes plus loin, le secrétaire s'interroge encore : « Dann stellt sich aber doch die Frage ob wir überhaupt bereit sind, zu einer solchen Publikation, die ein gemeinschaftliches katholische Wort zu den vorbereitenden Rapporten für Evanston sein soll. Oder ist unsere Konferenz noch zu jung um eine solche Verantwortung zu übernehmen? »

<sup>31</sup> FWC: Congar, *Dix thèses Catholiques sur le thème d'Evanston*, p. 17: « La tâche de l'Église est d'amener l'effort du monde ou de l'histoire sous la souveraineté de Jésus-Christ, et de lui apporter ainsi vérité et guérison. » (thèse 9) et p. 18: « Les laïcs d'Église portent une grande part de l'espérance que le monde peut mettre en Jésus-Christ à travers son Église: une part dans la réalisation des signes et du témoignage par lesquels les hommes sont appelés à croire et à former le corps du Christ. La part principale dans l'influence guérissante par laquelle l'Église anticipe à quelque degré, dans la société humaine, la transfiguration promise. » (thèse 10) À paraître avec: *Le Christ, l'Église et la grâce*, p. 154: « Mais, en raison du péché, cet effort de l'homme, pour autant qu'il est entrepris en dehors d'une confession explicite du Christ — à plus forte raison s'il est accompli en opposition formelle avec elle — est ambigu et impur. En l'absence du secours de la grâce, il est finalement inefficace sur son propre plan. Il est, en outre, radicalement inadéquat au caractère essentiellement eschatologique du Royaume. » (thèse 9) *Le Christ, l'Église et la grâce*, p. 156: « La tâche de l'Église, dans ce domaine, est d'amener l'effort de l'homme dans l'histoire sous la souveraineté de Jésus-Christ et, en lui apportant remède et guérison par l'annonce authentique de la foi et la grâce des sacrements, de lui révéler (et de lui rappeler) la

révision du texte au monastère de Chevetogne au mois de mai — en présence des Pères Dumont, Hulsbosch, Strotmann et Willebrands — le texte pourra finalement être publié dans *Istina* sous le titre de *Le Christ, l'Église et la grâce dans l'économie de l'espérance chrétienne (Vues catholiques sur le thème d'Evanston)*, accompagné d'une présentation du comité éditorial d'*Istina*<sup>32</sup>.

Dans son discours d'ouverture à la consultation suivante, tenue en mai 1955 à Paris, le secrétaire de la Conférence Catholique revenait avec satisfaction à ce processus minutieux et rendait compte de la réception initiale de leur travail par le COE :

Il est trop tôt pour juger que ce témoignage catholique n'a pas eu beaucoup d'écho auprès de nos frères séparés et spécialement auprès du Conseil œcuménique des Églises. Étant donné que les catholiques n'étaient présents d'aucune manière à l'Assemblée d'Evanston, il était impossible d'y faire entendre ce témoignage. Bien que le secrétaire du Conseil œcuménique, le dr. Visser 't Hooft, a fait traduire aussitôt le texte en anglais, il était trop tard pour exercer une influence sur les études préparatoires d'Evanston. Le dr. Visser 't Hooft lui-même a appelé l'attention sur ce document catholique et sur tout notre travail comme un contact précieux avec l'Église de Rome. Ce qui est le plus important c'est que nous ayons rendu un témoignage, et en faisant cela nous avons accompli un devoir catholique, dont l'efficacité et les résultats restent toujours mystérieux<sup>33</sup>.

Lors de la consultation de Paris les membres de la *Conférence Catholique* souhaitaient se concentrer sur la signification des deux images importantes de l'Église — « Épouse du Christ » et « Corps du Christ » — dans les traditions catholique-romaine, anglicane, réformée et luthérienne. Après la réunion, Willebrands envoya une lettre à Visser't Hooft pour s'enquérir du thème que les œcuménistes catholiques pourraient bien développer dans les années futures en vue de rendre service au COE.

perspective eschatologique de sa destinée et de l'assumer dans l'économie proprement surnaturelle du Royaume.» Cf. aussi Mauro VELATI, *Una difficile transizione*, p. 65: «L'impianto generale rimaneva quello ideato da Congar pur essendo evidenti i rimaneggiamenti di stile e di contenuto all'interno delle singole tesi; solo la parte relativa al ruolo del laicato nella chiesa venne definitivamente eliminata, avendo suscitato fin dall'inizio numerose perplessità.»

<sup>32</sup> ISTINA, *L'Église et l'espérance*, dans *Istina*, 2 (1954), p. 129-131. Quelques citations: «[S]i nous les publions sous la seule responsabilité de notre revue, les pages intitulées: *Le Christ, l'Église et la grâce, dans l'économie de l'espérance chrétienne*, sont cependant le fruit d'échanges de vues poursuivis entre quelques théologiens catholiques de différents pays d'Europe. Elles n'ont manifestement pas pour but de donner sur les notions catholiques de l'Église et de la grâce une étude exhaustive qui les envisagerait sous tous leurs aspects. (...) Afin de les rendre plus accessibles à nos frères séparés, ces pages ont été rédigées à dessein dans un langage aussi voisin que possible du langage biblique, réservant aux notes quelques références à des documents qui, outre l'Écriture et en accord avec elle, font pour nous autorité. Il n'est sans doute pas nécessaire d'ajouter que c'est à titre purement privé que nous publions ces pages. Bien que nous ayons entière confiance d'y être demeurés, en tout, fidèles aux enseignements du Magistère, elles ne sauraient engager directement sa responsabilité. Ainsi en va-t-il, d'ailleurs, du travail de tout théologien.» Les notes, ajoutées aux 10 thèses de Congar au cours de la rédaction ultime du texte, contiennent de longues citations du Concile de Trente, de la *Summa Theologiae* de l'Aquinat, *Mystici Corporis* et autres documents magistériels.

<sup>33</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Conférence catholique pour les questions œcuméniques*. 1-4 août 1955, Cours Dupanloup, Boulogne sur Seine, p. 1. Visser 't Hooft mentionnait le travail de la *Conférence Catholique* pendant sa *Déclaration à l'Assemblée*. Le père Dumont avait pris part à l'assemblée comme journaliste accrédité. Voir pour le résumé de ses impressions Christophe-Jean DUMONT, *Réflexions sur l'Assemblée œcuménique d'Evanston*, dans *Istina* 3 (1954), p. 311-329. Cf. Mauro VELATI, *Una difficile transizione*, p. 72.



En novembre 1955, le secrétaire du COE suggéra le thème de *La Seigneurie du Christ sur l'Église et sur le monde* et s'intéressa spécialement à la connaissance de la pensée catholique sur le rapport entre ces deux formes de la Seigneurie du Christ. Une réunion fut uniquement retenue pour l'été 1957 afin de permettre une préparation soignée pour cette conférence. En juillet 1956, le Département d'Études du Conseil Œcuménique des Églises s'était réuni pour préparer un questionnaire sur le thème en vue d'un usage ultérieur dans les Églises membres<sup>34</sup>. Durant le même été, Willebrands effectua un voyage en Allemagne et en Belgique afin de choisir des spécialistes pour contribuer à l'étude biblique, historique et théologique du thème. Un rapport biblique fut préparé par les professeurs Cerfaux, Cambier, Schlier et Schnackenburg, et avait été présenté par Cerfaux à Chevetogne<sup>35</sup>. Les études historiques avaient été demandées aux professeurs Kempf et Dom Leclercq<sup>36</sup>. Les théologiens Groot, Hamer et Volk étaient chargés de la contribution théologique, qui fut présentée par Groot<sup>37</sup>. Dans sa conférence préliminaire Willebrands expliqua le concours attendu des membres. Le chef du Département d'Études du COE avait proposé qu'une discussion soit initiée entre une délégation de chacun des deux groupes<sup>38</sup>.

Pendant la réunion du Comité Directeur de la *Conférence Catholique* en décembre 1957, on espérait encore produire une synthèse du travail préparatoire et des discussions ayant eu lieu lors de la réunion de Chevetogne avec un rédacteur pour la partie exégétique, un autre pour la partie théologique et un troisième pour celle historique. Congar était personnellement en faveur d'un rapport final cohérent qu'il rédigerait lui-même<sup>39</sup>. Pendant la réunion au Centre d'Études *Istina* au printemps

<sup>34</sup> *La seigneurie du Christ sur le monde et sur l'Église. Conférence consultative d'Arnoldshain, Allemagne, du 5 au 8 juillet 1956*, dans *Istina*, 3 (1956), p. 471-479. Un deuxième rapport fut également publié. Voir *L'Église et le souverain domaine du Christ sur toutes choses*, dans *Istina*, 5 (1958), p. 227-256.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Jules-Marie CAMBIER, *La Seigneurie du Christ sur son Église et sur le monde d'après le Nouveau Testament*, dans *Irenikon*, 30 (1957), 373-404.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Friedrich KEMPF, *Die katholische Lehre von der Gewalt der Kirche über das Zeitliche in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung seit dem Investiturstreit*, in *Catholica*, 12 (1958), 50-66 et Jean LECLERCQ, *L'idée de la Seigneurie du Christ au moyen âge*, dans *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique*, 53 (1958), p. 57-68.

<sup>37</sup> Ce groupe, ensemble avec Thijssen et Willebrands, se rencontra à Münster en Avril 1957 afin de préparer un nombre de thèses qui pourraient être utiles pour montrer les différents aspects du sujet: «Royauté ou Seigneurie», «Le monde», «Le royaume», «Le message de l'Église au monde», «Devoir missionnaire de l'Église». Certaines de ces thèses anticipent sur des idées qui ne deviendront largement partagées que durant le Concile. FWC: *Quelques thèses à propos de «La seigneurie du Christ sur l'Église et sur le monde»*, (4) «La royauté du Christ est d'un ordre à part. Elle ne peut être séparée des dignités sacerdotale et prophétique. Comme telle, elle est présente dans la triple fonction de l'Église: le peuple de Dieu tout entier est à la fois royal, sacerdotal et prophétique.»; (10) «Le royaume de Dieu suppose une *koinônia* dans la participation aux mêmes biens spirituels.»

<sup>38</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Réunion à Chevetogne du 5 au 9 Août 1957. Introduction au thème*, p. 11.

<sup>39</sup> FWC: lettre Congar-Willebrands 05/02/1958: «Moi, je ne concevais guère qu'un travail *unique*, qui soit théologique, en assumant les études bibliques et la dimension des apports historiques.» Voir Mauro VELATI, *Una difficile transizione*, p. 87. Velati rappelle aussi une lettre de Cambier à Willebrands dans laquelle il exprime sa déception que Congar écrive un texte entièrement nouveau à la place d'une synthèse de toutes les contributions précédentes. En effet, les idées que Congar énoncera dans sa présentation *Les raisons et les exigences principales d'un renouveau* pendant la réunion de 1961 de la *Conférence Catholique* sont en fait déjà anticipées dans ce rapport. Voir *La seigneurie du Christ sur l'Église et sur le monde*, p. 160: «En face d'un bilan positif, on pourrait dresser aussi un bilan négatif du christianisme, celui de ses faiblesses, de ses retards, du manque d'audace des chrétiens...».



1958, l'idée initiale fut abandonnée et on confia à Congar de préparer lui-même le rapport final. Au cours de sa réunion de novembre 1958, le Comité Directeur venait de recevoir le texte de Congar. Ce dernier avait accepté que le rapport, après une nouvelle rédaction<sup>40</sup> sur base des remarques apportées par les membres, soit publié au nom de la *Conférence Catholique*, car beaucoup de membres y avaient activement contribué<sup>41</sup>.

Dans son introduction à la réunion de Paderborn, qui se tint au cours des derniers jours de septembre 1959, Willebrands annonça la publication prochaine du rapport dans *Istina*. Il rappela le fait que, à l'opposé du COE, la *Conférence Catholique* parle d'abord de la Seigneurie du Christ sur l'Église, et il ajoutait : « Une différence de point de vue sur l'Église est même déjà remarquable dans le titre<sup>42</sup>. » Son exposé mentionne les noms de ceux qui pourraient bientôt participer à la rencontre avec le Département d'Études du COE, mais cette réunion allait être annulée par le COE pour les raisons mentionnées ci-dessous. Velati déplore que la Conférence Catholique prenne plus de trois ans pour achever son travail. Pendant ce temps, le COE fut complètement préoccupé par les discussions sur l'adhésion de la Conférence Missionnaire Mondiale au COE<sup>43</sup>.

#### LA NOTE DU COMITÉ DIRECTEUR À L'OCCASION DE L'ANNONCE DU CONCILE

Même s'il est difficile d'évaluer l'impact de cette initiative, il semblerait que la décision du Comité Directeur de la *Conférence Catholique* de préparer et propager une « Note sur la restauration de l'Unité chrétienne à l'occasion du prochain Concile<sup>44</sup> », pourrait avoir été parmi les plus importantes initiatives prises par des organes œcuméniques catholiques romains afin de promouvoir un esprit œcuménique au sein de l'Église catholique romaine, ou au moins parmi sa hiérarchie, dans la décennie

<sup>40</sup> Que ceci ait provoqué quelques tensions est attesté dans l'agenda de Willebrands. Voir Theo SALEMINK (dir.), « *You will be called repairer of the breach* », p. 76 (08/02/1959) : « Back home: spoke with Congar and Rousseau about P. Congar's report on La Seigneurie du X. We went through all the remarks. Congar took note of these and will re-work what is possible, but he can't make a report based on the opinion of others. »

<sup>41</sup> Cette fois-ci, les auteurs du rapport ont été explicitement mentionnés. Voir *Le souverain domaine du Christ sur la création restaurée*, dans *Istina*, 7 (1959), p. 129-130 : « Le rapport que nous publions ci-après a été lui aussi progressivement élaboré au cours de plusieurs sessions de la 'Conférence catholique pour les questions œcuméniques' par plusieurs membres de cette Conférence. (...) Le fruit de ces premiers travaux et des discussions auxquelles ils ont donné lieu a été pris dans une rédaction finale que nous offrons à la réflexion et à la critique de nos lecteurs. »

<sup>42</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Introduction au thème « Unité et Mission »*, p. 2.

<sup>43</sup> Mauro VELATI, *Una difficile transizione*, p. 90-91 : « A distanza di più di tre anni dunque dall'inizio del lavoro sulla signoria di Cristo appariva un primo risultato concreto. Un tempo forse troppo lungo per i ritmi del movimento ecumenico. » Velati also quotes from a letter of Hamer to Willebrands: « Malgré son intérêt, la 'Seigneurie' est un peu dépassée. Pour le Conseil œcuménique, le sommet de la Parabole est dépassé depuis un certain temps. Nous arrivons un peu tard. »

<sup>44</sup> FWC: *Note du Comité Directeur de la « Conférence Catholique pour les Questions œcuméniques » sur la restauration de l'Unité chrétienne à l'occasion du prochain Concile*. Les citations en anglais sont prises de la traduction révisée par Willebrands lui-même, FWC: *Memorandum from the Executive Committee of the 'Catholic Council for Oecumenical Questions' concerning the restoration of Christian Unity on the occasion of the forthcoming Oecumenical Council*.

avant Vatican II. Dans sa contribution de 1992, « 'Mouvements' théologico-spirituels et concile (1959-1962) », Étienne Fouilloux se focalise exclusivement sur ce texte comme une illustration du fait que « le mouvement œcuménique a également le vent en poupe » et sa brève *laudatio* mérite d'être citée intégralement :

Son principal intérêt est de définir avec précision la position des œcuménistes catholiques avant même la fondation du Secrétariat pour l'unité et la rédaction des schémas préparatoires au concile : on peut donc lui accorder le statut de votum du mouvement œcuménique de souche catholique dans son ensemble<sup>45</sup>.

Après avoir fourni un court résumé du document, il conclut :

Ces vœux seront effectivement retenus par Vatican II. A cet égard, la note est indéniablement, et parmi d'autres, une des sources lointaines, non seulement du décret sur l'œcuménisme, mais d'autres décisions majeures de l'assemblée. Son mélange de modestie, voire de prudence, et d'espairs réalistes paraît assez représentatif de la phase originale et méconnue qui court de l'annonce du concile à son autonomisation par rapport à la Curie<sup>46</sup>.

Avant de donner une analyse de ce document et avant d'indiquer son influence potentielle sur des textes conciliaires, quelques mots sur l'histoire de sa composition et de sa dissémination. Le diaire de Willebrands sur la période de 1958-1961, récemment publié, sera une preuve particulièrement utile en la matière. Il est assez remarquable que Willebrands n'a rien écrit à la date du 25 janvier 1959, mais le rapport d'un bref voyage de Willebrands à Strasbourg — du 7 au 9 février en vue de rencontrer Dom Rousseau et le Père Congar pour discuter du thème des prochaines *Journées œcuméniques de Chevetogne* — commence avec une surprise. Le Père Dumont, un des membres du Comité Directeur de la *Conférence catholique*, avait lui aussi effectué un voyage de Paris à Strasbourg afin que tous les quatre puissent avoir une réunion sur le Concile à venir. Normalement rédigé en néerlandais, l'agenda passe maintenant au français pour signaler que Willebrands y transmet les réflexions de Dumont : « Que pourra faire notre Conférence ? Il semble qu'elle a une responsabilité et doit prendre une initiative<sup>47</sup> ». La *Conférence* étant le « seul groupe international » ayant des « relations directes avec le COE » devrait préparer les évêques de l'Église catholique ainsi que leurs théologiens en vue du prochain Concile. Une réunion urgente du *Comité Directeur* fut prévue pour le 26 février et, dans l'entre-temps, le Père Dumont rédigerait un texte tandis que Willebrands informerait le Père Boyer et Mgr Höfer et les autres membres du *Comité Directeur*. Boyer et Höfer ne firent pas d'objections<sup>48</sup>,

<sup>45</sup> Étienne FOUILLOUX, *Mouvements théologico-spirituels et concile (1959-1962)*, dans Mathijs LAMBERIGTS et Claude SOETENS (dir.), *À la veille du Concile Vatican II. Vota et réactions en Europe et dans le catholicisme oriental*, Leuven, 1992, p. 185-199, voir p. 197.

<sup>46</sup> Étienne FOUILLOUX, *Mouvements théologico-spirituels*, p. 198.

<sup>47</sup> Theo SALEMINK, « *You Will Be Called Repairer of the Breach* », p. 76.

<sup>48</sup> Mauro VELATI, *Una difficile transizione*, p. 144, cite un rapport que Willebrands fit d'une réunion : « Que pouvons-nous faire en ce temps de préparation ? La question de la restauration de l'unité chrétienne a été posée. Les futurs participants du concile, les pères abbés et les évêques, ainsi que les théologiens du concile, se sont-ils préparés à cette question ? Il faut que nous composions aussi vite que possible un aperçu de la situation : comment l'église orthodoxe se présente-t-elle aujourd'hui à nous et comment la chrétienté protestante et réformée ? ».

et, le 1<sup>er</sup> mars, Willebrands discute de l'avant-projet de Dumont et formule quelques remarques. L'agenda rend compte de quelques inquiétudes: «What will we do with this report? Will the Comité Directeur sign it? P. Boyer? Shall we send it to the Bishops<sup>49</sup>?». L'agenda relève «réponse favorable sur l'avant-projet du rapport» du Père Boyer, le 3 mars, mais nous devons attendre le rapport d'une réunion à *Istina* le 13 mai, pour voir Willebrands et Dumont discuter des remarques qui arrivent. Pendant cette réunion, l'idée fut avancée de «présenter le projet au Cardinal Ottaviani, et à Tardini et Tisserant<sup>50</sup>». Ottaviani était le Secrétaire du Saint-Office, Tardini Secrétaire d'État du Pape Jean XXIII, et Tisserant le Doyen du Collège cardinalice. Le mémorandum serait donc envoyé aux archevêques et cardinaux de l'Église catholique pour discussion «dans les réunions épiscopales de sa province<sup>51</sup>». La version finale du rapport fut approuvée pendant la réunion du Comité Directeur du 15 au 16 juin. L'agenda de Willebrands mentionne que Tardini ne pouvait pas le recevoir à cause de la visite du Général de Gaulle, mais qu'il a été chaleureusement reçu par le Cardinal Ottaviani. Son secrétaire, le Père Paul-Henri Philippe o.p., préfet du St-Office, promet que la *Note* serait transmise à la *Commissio antepreparatoria* et ne serait «pas lue à travers des 'lunettes noires<sup>52</sup>».

Le document reflète les résultats d'une décennie d'étude intense de la part de la *Conférence Catholique* des positions théologiques des Églises issues de la Réforme et témoigne de ses relations œcuméniques avec le COE, tandis que son rédacteur principal, le Père Dumont, fut, en sa qualité de directeur d'*Istina*, un spécialiste de l'Orient. Puisque tous les co-auteurs du texte assumeront des rôles importants au sein du Secrétariat pour l'Unité Chrétienne, comme secrétaire (Willebrands), membres votant (Boyer, Davis), ou consultants (Dumont, Höfer), les idées exprimées dans ce document trouvèrent facilement leur chemin dans le travail du Secrétariat, et surtout dans l'élaboration du décret sur l'œcuménisme *Unitatis Redintegratio*. Donc, j'introduirai les déclarations les plus remarquables du document en faisant immédiatement une petite comparaison avec les documents conciliaires.

De prime abord, nous devons être attentifs au titre de ce document, qui parle de «la restauration de l'Unité chrétienne». Dans la section suivante, après l'introduction «*Quelques difficultés préalables d'ordre psychologique*» (§§ 3-9), on invite à utiliser le terme «retour» avec beaucoup de prudence puisqu'il se prête facilement au malentendu. (§ 5) Lorsque la rédaction finale du décret sur l'œcuménisme décidait d'ajouter une introduction au décret, les mots d'ouverture semblent en conséquence être vraiment similaires au titre de notre document: «unitatis redintegratio inter

<sup>49</sup> Theo SALEMINK, «*You Will Be Called Repairer of the Breach*», p. 82.

<sup>50</sup> Theo SALEMINK, «*You Will Be Called Repairer of the Breach*», p. 96.

<sup>51</sup> FWC: «Projet de lettre d'envoi de la 'Note' de notre 'Conférence' aux Cardinaux et Archevêques».

<sup>52</sup> Theo SALEMINK, «*You Will Be Called Repairer of the Breach*», p. 106. Cf. MAURO VELATI, *Una difficile transizione*, p. 151: «In mancanza di una documentazione certa risulta difficile stabilire se essa giunse anche nelle mani di Giovanni XXIII». Velati est au courant d'une initiative similaire de l'œcuméniste suisse Otto Karrer, intitulé *Pour le Concile Œcuménique*, qui fut envoyé en mai 1959 aux évêques de Suisse.

universos christianos», «la restauration de l'unité entre tous les chrétiens<sup>53</sup>». Il importe de bien comprendre la signification du préfixe «re» dans le mot Latin *redintegratio*. On n'appelle pas au retour à l'Église catholique, mais à l'effort commun parmi tous les chrétiens d'atteindre un nouvel objectif, notamment l'unité parmi les chrétiens<sup>54</sup>. Quant à la *Note*, on peut toutefois se demander comment un titre aussi prudemment choisi et une telle préoccupation pour une terminologie politiquement correcte peuvent être harmonisés avec les références régulières du document au «problème de la réunion» (§ 3, § 20), à la «tentative de réunion» (§ 24), ou avec l'intérêt du document pour les mouvements de la *High Church* dans les autres églises chrétiennes parce qu'ils encouragent le «rapprochement» et la «réunion» (§ 37). Bernd Jochen Hilberath commence la section conclusive de son commentaire théologique sur *Unitatis Redintegratio* avec un sous-titre en forme de question: «*Ende der Rückkehr-Ökumene?*», spécialement quand il réalise que la terminologie de la réunion n'est pas encore complètement absente dans une description de son rêve œcuménique par le Cardinal Jaeger, de Paderborn<sup>55</sup>.

On formule un autre conseil aux catholiques dans le premier paragraphe du mémorandum, celui d'arrêter d'attacher «une égale importance à l'essentiel et à l'accidentel, à la substance immuable et aux déterminations secondaires, toujours révisables, fruits de circonstances historiques passagères<sup>56</sup>» (§ 5). Aussi trouvera-t-il son écho dans la fameuse adresse d'ouverture au Concile prononcée par le Pape Jean XXIII le 11 octobre 1962<sup>57</sup>. La *Conférence Catholique* anticipe également le Concile en affirmant que, quand les catholiques croient qu'ils doivent éviter le mot «Église» pour parler des autres corps chrétiens, ils doivent éviter à leur tour d'utiliser une

<sup>53</sup> *Unitatis Redintegratio* 1 considère «redintegrare» et «restaurare» comme synonymes: le paragraphe parle de «unitatis redintegratio», «ad omnium christianorum unitatem restaurandam», «unitatis inter omnes Christi discipulos restaurandae».

<sup>54</sup> Bernd Jochen HILBERATH, *Theologischer Kommentar zum Dekret über den Ökumenismus Unitatis redintegratio*, dans Peter HÜNERMANN et Bernd Jochen HILBERATH (dir.), *Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzil*, Freiburg, 2005, p. 109.

<sup>55</sup> Lorenz JAEGER, *Das Konzilsdekret «Über den Ökumenismus»*. *Sein Werden, sein Inhalt und seine Bedeutung*, Paderborn, 1968, p. 108, cité dans HILBERATH, p. 200 : «Dabei sagen wir in aller Aufrichtigkeit, dass nach unserem Glauben die Wiederherstellung der Einheit sich durch die Einheit aller Christen in der römisch-katholischen Kirche vollziehen wird, in welcher die einige Kirche subsistiert. Wenn alle Kirchen zusammen ihre Treu gegen den Herrn immer neu prüfen, dann kann in der Zukunft eine Wiederherstellung der Einheit geschehen unter Umständen, die wir uns noch nicht vorstellen können. Die Einheit wird eine Gabe des Heiligen Geistes sein».

<sup>56</sup> Par. 5: «Il importe grandement de ne pas laisser croire que tout soit à nos yeux irréfutable dans l'Église et que nous attachions une égale importance à l'essentiel et à l'accidentel, à la substance immuable et aux déterminations secondaires, toujours révisables, fruits de circonstances historiques passagères».

<sup>57</sup> Voir le discours d'ouverture de Jean XIII au Concile, *Gaudet Mater Ecclesia*, du 11 octobre 1962 —dans la traduction française afin d'envisager une comparaison avec le texte original français de la *Note* cité dans la note infrapaginale précédente: «En effet, autre est le dépôt lui-même de la foi, c'est-à-dire les vérités contenues dans notre vénérable doctrine, et autre est la forme sous laquelle ces vérités sont énoncées, en leur conservant toutefois le même sens et la même portée. Il faudra attacher beaucoup d'importance à cette forme et travailler patiemment, s'il le faut, à son élaboration; et on devra recourir à une façon de présenter qui correspond mieux à un enseignement de caractère surtout pastoral».

terminologie qui manque de référence ecclésiale, et mieux utiliser un terme comme celui de « communion<sup>58</sup> ».

Dans le prochain paragraphe, « *L'état d'impréparation des esprits* » (§§ 10-19), le document se demande si les évêques sont suffisamment préparés à faire des déclarations objectives sur les autres églises chrétiennes quand elles seront rassemblées dans un Concile. À partir de ce paragraphe, le document préfère désigner séparément « l'Orient » (§ 11), « la communion anglicane » (§ 16) et « les communions issues de la Réforme » (§ 19). Le Concile a aussi pris la décision, dans le troisième et le dernier chapitre du décret sur l'œcuménisme, de faire la distinction entre sa réflexion sur le dialogue et, d'une part « Les Églises Orientales » (UR 14-18), et d'autre part les « Églises séparées et les communautés ecclésiales en Occident » (UR 19-24). Le paragraphe préliminaire du chapitre fait allusion à la fonction de pont des églises anglicanes quand il déclare que « parmi celles qui gardent en partie les traditions et les structures catholiques, la Communion anglicane occupe une place particulière » (UR 13).

En commençant à parler de « communions issues de la Réforme », la *Note* déclare en outre : « Il est à peine besoin de souligner le nombre et la profondeur des divergences dogmatiques et canoniques qu'une tentative de réunion aurait à surmonter<sup>59</sup> ». Dans le même esprit, UR 19 reconnaît : « Étant donné que ces églises et communautés ecclésiales, à cause de leur diversité d'origine, de doctrine et de vie spirituelle, se distinguent notablement, non seulement de nous-mêmes, mais aussi entre elles, il est très difficile de bien les définir, et nous n'en avons pas ici l'intention ».

La déclaration la plus remarquable de ce paragraphe est la conscience que jusqu'aujourd'hui, dans l'ecclésiologie catholique romaine, « une juste conception de la « catholicité » de l'Église, faite d'unité dans la diversité, n'a pas été abordée jusqu'ici dans toute son ampleur<sup>60</sup> » (§ 14). Le document explique ensuite qu'une correcte compréhension de la catholicité implique « la légitimité d'un triple pluralisme, liturgique, canonique et théologique ». Nous sommes ici confrontés à une compréhension de la catholicité qui va plus loin que la tentative de Congar dans le chapitre trois de *Chrétiens désunis* de faire autant attention à la diversité dans l'unité qu'à l'unité dans la diversité. Dans la communication *De ecumenismo catholico et de opere conversionum* que Gustave Thils avait présentée en août 1961 au cours de la réunion plénière du Secrétariat pour l'Unité Chrétienne, il a presque défendu la même idée quand il déclara que « L'Église peut intégrer parfaitement une pluralité des rites, de liturgies, de formes théologiques, de traditions disciplinaires<sup>61</sup> ». On devra attendre jusqu'à la seconde intersession avant que cette théologie mûrie de la catholicité soit

<sup>58</sup> Pour la même raison, le Concile employait le même terme *communitates ecclesiales*. Voir e.a. *Lumen Gentium* 15, et *Unitatis Redintegratio* 19.

<sup>59</sup> FWC: *Note* § 19: « En ce qui concerne les communions issues de la Réforme, il est à peine besoin de souligner le nombre et la profondeur des divergences dogmatiques et canoniques qu'une tentative de réunion aurait à surmonter ».

<sup>60</sup> FWC: *Note*, § 14: « Une question, capitale cependant pour une juste conception de la "catholicité" de l'Église, faite d'unité dans la diversité, n'a pas été abordée jusqu'ici dans toute son ampleur: c'est celle de la légitimité d'un triple pluralisme, liturgique, canonique et théologique ».

<sup>61</sup> Centre Lumen Gentium [CLG]: Fonds Gustave Thils 499: Secretariat ad Christianorum unitatem fovendam, *Sub Commissio III: "De Oecumenismo catholico et de opere conversionum"*, Feria V, 31/8/1961. Voir Peter DE MEY, *Gustave Thils and Ecumenism at Vatican II*, dans Doris DONNELLY, Joseph FAMERÉE,

finaleme nt introduite dans LG 13 et 23, comme on peut aussi le trouver dans UR 4 et 14-17<sup>62</sup>.

Le bref paragraphe intitulé « *Distinguer mais non dissocier* » (§§ 20-23) réitère le besoin de faire des distinctions entre églises si le Concile souhaite aborder la question œcuménique d'une façon acceptable. Pour l'Église catholique, cela fait une différence si on a à traiter « a) des communions chrétiennes ayant conservé la forme et la réalité d'une structure épiscopale sacramentelle; b) de celles qui ont délibérément rejeté cette structure; c) ou de celles qui, tout en ayant conservé la forme, en ont perdu la réalité<sup>63</sup> ». Ceci est immédiatement appliqué à l'Eucharistie: « Ce qui est en cause, en particulier, c'est la réalité de l'Eucharistie, corps sacramentel du Seigneur, dont la signification est étroitement apparentée à celle du Corps mystique qu'est l'Église et qui ne saurait être sans relation ontologique avec lui<sup>64</sup> » (§ 20). J'ai cité ce paragraphe parce qu'il est probable que les membres du Secrétariat pour l'Unité Chrétienne se souvenaient de ce texte lors de la composition du fameux, mais non incontesté, § 22 d'*Unitatis Redintegratio* :

Bien qu'elles n'aient pas avec nous la pleine unité dont le baptême est la source et bien que nous croyions que, en raison surtout de la déficience du sacrement de l'Ordre, elles n'ont pas conservé la substance propre et intégrale du mystère eucharistique, cependant les communautés ecclésiales séparées de nous, lorsqu'elles célèbrent à la sainte Cène le mémorial de la mort et de la résurrection du Seigneur, professent que la vie consiste dans la communion au Christ et attendent son avènement glorieux<sup>65</sup>.

En faisant ces distinctions, le document déclare presque en passant qu'« il est raisonnable d'espérer, en effet, que la réunion des Orthodoxes pourra être obtenue

Mathijs LAMBERIGTS et Karim SCHELKENS (dir.), *The Belgian Contribution to the Second Vatican Council*, Leuven, 2008, p. 389-414, p. 402.

<sup>62</sup> Voir p.e. *Lumen Gentium* 23: «La divine Providence a voulu que les Églises diverses établies en divers lieux par les Apôtres et leurs successeurs se rassemblent au cours des temps en plusieurs groupes organiquement réunis, qui, sans préjudice pour l'unité de la foi et pour l'unique constitution divine de l'Église universelle, jouissent de leur propre discipline, de leur propre usage liturgique, de leur patrimoine théologique et spirituel». *Unitatis Redintegratio* 4: «Conservant l'unité dans ce qui est nécessaire, que tous, dans l'Église, chacun selon la charge qui lui est confiée, gardent la liberté qui leur est due, qu'il s'agisse des formes diverses de la vie spirituelle et de la discipline, de la variété des rites liturgiques, et même de l'élaboration théologique de la vérité révélée; et qu'en tout ils pratiquent la charité».

<sup>63</sup> FWC: *Note*, § 20: «Les réflexions qui précèdent ne font que rappeler, en la précisant, cette constatation élémentaire que le problème de la réunion se présente, historiquement et théologiquement, de façon différente selon qu'il s'agit: a) des communions chrétiennes ayant conservé la forme et la réalité d'une structure épiscopale sacramentelle; b) de celles qui ont délibérément rejeté cette structure; c) ou de celles qui, tout en ayant conservé la forme, en ont perdu la réalité».

<sup>64</sup> FWC: *Note*, § 20: «Ce qui est en cause, en particulier, c'est la réalité de l'eucharistie, corps sacramentel du Seigneur, dont la signification est étroitement apparentée à celle du Corps mystique qu'est l'Église et qui ne saurait être sans relation ontologique avec lui».

<sup>65</sup> Mais, voir aussi déjà FWC: Willebrands, *Introduction à la conférence catholique œcuménique de Fribourg*, p. 3: «Les protestants ont conservé la commémoration de la Cène à laquelle ils n'attribuent plus le caractère du sacrifice et dans laquelle beaucoup d'entre eux nient la *realis presentia*. Mais ils reconnaissent en elle un instrument de salut et de l'union la plus intime avec le Christ».

plus facilement et plus rapidement que celle des Protestants<sup>66</sup>. (§ 22) Le ton pathétique avec lequel le Concile s'adresse aux églises orthodoxes dans UR 14-18 me donne l'impression que l'espoir des pères conciliaires cinq années plus tard n'avait pas changé. Si les Églises orthodoxes pourraient seulement embrasser un « élément » de plus de l'ecclésiologie catholique romaine, alors la pleine communion entre les deux Églises serait bientôt célébrée.

Le paragraphe se termine avec l'avertissement qu'une intensification des contacts avec les orthodoxes de la part de l'Église catholique ne devrait pas entraver les relations œcuméniques des églises orthodoxes avec les autres Églises, « que ce soit ou non dans le cadre du Conseil Œcuménique des Églises » (§ 23). À la lumière de cette observation, il est vraiment ironique que le rédacteur de la Note, le Père Dumont, ensemble avec Mgr Willebrands, peu de mois plus tard, tomberait précisément dans ce piège pendant le soi-disant incident de Rhodes. Willebrands et Dumont avaient reçu la permission du Cardinal Ottaviani de participer à la réunion du Comité Central du Conseil Œcuménique des Églises à Rhodes (19-27 Août) comme journalistes. Le Secrétaire Général du COE, Visser 't Hooft, fut furieux quand il apprit, à travers la Radio Vaticane, qu'une réunion informelle avait eu lieu entre les deux observateurs catholiques et une large délégation d'orthodoxes en vue de commencer les relations bilatérales entre les deux églises. À la suite de cet incident, une réunion entre la Conférence Catholique et la Division des Études du COE qui était prévue pour octobre 1959 à Assise — et pour laquelle le Cardinal Ottaviani avait également donné sa permission — devait être annulée. D'après quelques interprétations, l'incident de Rhodes accéléra le processus de mise en place du Secrétariat pour l'Unité Chrétienne<sup>67</sup>.

Une observation méthodologique finale (§§ 24-26) porte sur l'existence de « difficultés de fond » parmi les Églises. Le document explique que les positions doctrinales des églises constituent « un tout assez cohérent » qui est guidé par « un principe initial ». UR 11 donnera le conseil suivant aux spécialistes catholiques en œcuménisme qui tentent d'expliquer la logique de la doctrine catholique aux non-catholiques: « En comparant les doctrines entre elles, ils se rappelleront qu'il y a un ordre ou une 'hiérarchie' des vérités de la doctrine catholique, en raison de leur rapport différent avec le fondement de la foi chrétienne<sup>68</sup> ». Bien sûr, en lisant le sous-

<sup>66</sup> FWC: Note, § 22: «[I]l est raisonnable d'espérer, en effet, que la réunion des Orthodoxes pourra être obtenue plus facilement et plus rapidement que celle des Protestants.

<sup>67</sup> Jan JACOBS, *Naar één oecumenische beweging*, p.24. À mon avis, cependant, on peut difficilement conclure de l'incident de Rhodes que la réunion de 1957 de la CCQO à Chevetogne fut un désastre. Jacobs décrit l'incident de Rhodes comme une partie d'un paragraphe intitulé: «*De conferentie in augustus 1957 te Chevetogne: de mislukking van een veelbelovend initiatief*» (p. 19-24). Voir pour un récent récit détaillé de l'incident, Karim SCHELKENS, *L'affaire de Rhodes au jour le jour. La correspondance inédite entre J. Willebrands et C.J. Dumont*, dans *Istina*, 54 (2009), p. 253-277.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. déjà Christophe-Jean DUMONT, *Les voies de l'unité chrétienne. Doctrine et spiritualité*, Paris, 1954, p. 157-161: «Y a-t-il une hiérarchie des valeurs entre les vérités de foi?». La réponse à cette question est un 'oui' mais bien nuancée: «Du point de vue catholique, ce serait donc une attitude erronée et fâcheuse dans nos efforts de restauration de l'Unité chrétienne que d'envisager la possibilité même en matière doctrinale d'un compromis qui, sous prétexte de hiérarchie des valeurs, sacrifierait les vérités de second plan, les abandonnant à une adhésion facultative. Mais l'attitude inverse ne serait ni moins erronée, ni moins fâcheuse, qui consisterait, prétextant le caractère également obligatoire de toutes les



titre, on rappelle aussi la discussion en cours parmi des œcuménistes qui croient dans le projet d'« œcuménisme de consensus » et d'autres, déçus par la *Déclaration commune sur la doctrine de Justification*, appelant à un « œcuménisme de différence<sup>69</sup> ».

« *La conjoncture présente* » (§§ 27-41) a convaincu les auteurs du document qu'il existe dans chacun des groupes d'Églises évoqués beaucoup de « données défavorables », « données favorables » et « données ambivalentes ». L'un des facteurs favorables mentionnés fut bien rappelé dans le processus d'élaboration du décret sur l'œcuménisme, à savoir « la conviction croissante — et ressentie par des masses toujours plus larges de fidèles et de leurs pasteurs — de la nocivité des divisions pour la résistance des chrétiens aux forces du mal, l'échec à la montée du matérialisme sous toutes ses formes, ainsi que pour l'expansion du règne de Jésus-Christ<sup>70</sup> » (§ 32). L'introduction de UR déclare : « Il est certain qu'une telle division s'oppose ouvertement à la volonté du Christ. Elle est pour le monde un objet de scandale et elle fait obstacle à la plus sainte des causes : la prédication de l'Évangile à toute créature ». Le memorandum relève aussi l'opinion croissante « que le schisme est une querelle entre nos hiérarchies respectives, querelle à laquelle les simples fidèles ne sont pas directement intéressés et qui pourrait prendre fin avec quelque bonne volonté réciproque<sup>71</sup> ».

L'existence des communautés de rite oriental en communion avec l'Église catholique est cependant mentionnée comme un exemple d'une réalité ambivalente :

D'une part, une fraction — très minime jusqu'ici — de l'opinion publique des Églises Orthodoxes y voit une amorce et un heureux prototype de l'union rétablie entre l'Église latine et l'Église d'Orient. En outre, sans parler des bienfaits propres que ces communautés tirent de leur communion avec l'Église catholique quant à l'élévation de leur niveau général intellectuel et spirituel, elles sont au sein de l'Église catholique une affirmation concrète de son caractère universel, ouvert à toute légitime diversité ; éventuellement même une revendication en faveur du droit de cité effectif des traditions propres de l'Église d'Orient au sein de l'Église universelle. Ce sont là autant de facteurs favorables. Mais, d'autre part, leur seule existence — a fortiori leur activité, même si elle s'abstient de tout « prosélytisme » formel vis-à-vis des Orthodoxes — est ressentie par nos frères séparés orientaux comme une menace, une manœuvre déloyale dirigée contre les Églises Orthodoxes afin de leur arracher par ruse leurs fidèles, attitude jugée incompatible avec une recherche sincère et une proposition loyale de réunion<sup>72</sup>.

La question finale soulevée dans ce memorandum est : « *La part attendue du bon vouloir de l'Église catholique* » (§§ 42-55). L'une des premières choses que la

vérités de foi, à ne plus tenir compte, pratiquement, dans notre vie de la nécessaire hiérarchie de leurs valeurs».

<sup>69</sup> Cf. Ulrich KÖRTNER, *Wohin steuert die Ökumene? Vom Konsens- zum Differenzmodell*, Berlin, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005. Voir aussi MINNA HIETAMÄKI, *Agreeable Agreement. An Examination of the Quest for Consensus in Ecumenical Dialogue*, Londres, 2010.

<sup>70</sup> FWC: Note, § 32.

<sup>71</sup> FWC: Note, § 32. Heureusement, un des moments inoubliables du Concile sera la levée des anathèmes mutuels le 7 décembre 1965.

<sup>72</sup> FWC: Note, § 38. *Unitatis Redintegratio* 17, pour sa part, parlera seulement d'une façon positive des Églises catholiques orientales, en « rendant grâce à Dieu de ce que beaucoup d'Orientaux, fils de l'Église catholique, qui gardent ce patrimoine et désirent en vivre plus purement et pleinement, vivent déjà en pleine communion avec leurs frères qui observent la tradition occidentale ».

*Conférence Catholique* propose pour favoriser le progrès de l'œcuménisme, est de se focaliser moins sur la dimension canonique du problème de réunion, que sur la « communion (*koinonia*<sup>73</sup>) » entre Églises: « Ceci peut se faire en rendant à la notion de 'communion' (*koinonia*) la place première qui lui revient et en présentant le but poursuivi comme étant le rétablissement de l'entière communion de foi, de discipline et de vie sacramentelle en quoi consiste l'unité visible de l'Église<sup>74</sup> ». L'argumentation du mémorandum mérite d'être citée intégralement :

De l'importance de la signification théologique de cette manière de présenter les choses découle un avantage psychologique évident. Car, si sur le plan canonique la question du rapport d'une Église locale à la seule Église-une-et-universelle doit nécessairement être tranchée par le oui ou le non, la réponse à la question de la communion dans le contenu objectif de la foi et dans la vie sacramentelle appelle une infinité de degrés et de nuances. En effet, dans le contenu objectif de la foi, toute confession dissidente conserve quelque mesure de communion avec l'Église catholique. Quant à la vie sacramentelle, il y a : communion dans le baptême, là où celui-ci est administré valablement, et communion dans l'eucharistie, là où un épiscopat et un sacerdoce valides ont été conservés ; cette eucharistie n'est pas une autre eucharistie que la nôtre, un autre Corps du Christ, bien qu'elle ne soit pas célébrée ni reçue en commun avec nous. (§ 45)

L'ecclésiologie de communion qu'on rencontre ici est consonnante avec le premier et le second chapitre de *Lumen Gentium* — mettant en valeur à la fois la dimension verticale de la communion, c.-à-d. la relation entre l'Église et la Trinité, et la dimension horizontale de la communion, c.-à-d. la relation entre l'Église catholique et les autres églises, les religions du monde, et finalement le monde entier — même si on rencontre le terme « communion » moins souvent que le terme « peuple de Dieu » dans *Lumen Gentium*. Il se révèle une harmonie profonde entre la référence de la *Note* à l'existence d'une « infinité de degrés » de communion et la conviction de *Unitatis Redintegratio* que « ceux qui croient au Christ et qui ont reçu valablement le baptême, se trouvent dans une certaine communion, bien qu'imparfaite, avec l'Église catholique » (*UR* 3). De même, la définition de la pleine communion avec l'Église catholique en *LG* 14 pourrait avoir été partiellement inspirée par ce texte : « Sont incorporés pleinement à la société qu'est l'Église ceux qui, ayant l'Esprit du Christ, acceptent intégralement son organisation et les moyens de salut qui lui ont été donnés, et qui, en outre, grâce aux liens constitués par la profession de foi, les sacrements, le gouvernement ecclésiastique et la communion ».

Cependant, je ne suis pas d'accord avec le mémorandum quand il tend à identifier la notion de l'« unité visible de l'Église » avec la pleine communion. L'unité visible

<sup>73</sup> La référence au terme grec, qui est bien courant dans la littérature œcuménique aujourd'hui, est surprenante pour un document de 1959.

<sup>74</sup> FWC: *Note*, § 44. Ceci est clairement l'opinion de Dumont lui-même. Voir le chapitre « Unité de grâce et Unité visible » (p. 200-207) dans Christophe-Jean DUMONT, *Les voies de l'unité chrétienne*, p. 203: « Pour le théologien catholique, l'unité visible n'est réelle et complète que si se vérifient trois conditions: unanimité dans l'adhésion à un même contenu objectif de la foi, appartenance à un unique corps ecclésial hiérarchiquement organisé, participation en commun aux mêmes sacrements et, en particulier, au sacrement du Corps et du Sang du Seigneur ». Dumont se rend compte de l'existence d'opinions différentes, surtout dans le protestantisme et dans le Conseil Œcuménique, mais son approche est plutôt « kontrovers theologisch ».

ne tient-elle également compte de degrés ? Dans le § 45 de la *Note*, les autres Églises chrétiennes semblent aussi avoir été, de manière déplorable, réduites aux « églises locales » qui sont reliées elles-mêmes à « l'unique et universelle Église », c.-à-d. l'Église catholique. Le document contient cependant aussi un plaidoyer important pour l'élaboration d'« échelons intermédiaires de la hiérarchie » qu'on rencontrera plus tard dans *LG* 23 :

Il faut ajouter que le besoin impérieux, éprouvé par de nombreuses Églises catholiques locales, d'une restauration, dans le droit et le fait, des échelons intermédiaires de la hiérarchie (provinces ecclésiastiques et groupements nationaux des provinces) pourrait contribuer, s'il y était satisfait, à la réintégration dans l'unité catholique d'Églises telle que les Églises Orthodoxes – et même anglicanes – auxquelles une telle structure n'a cessé d'être familière<sup>75</sup> (§ 49).

L'idée que « si l'on n'admet pas la légitimité d'une forme de théologie d'expression plus purement biblique et patristique, il ne paraît guère possible d'espérer un accord durable sur les points doctrinaux controversés » a été reprise dans la formulation de l'enseignement conciliaire lui-même. Finalement, notre document fait appel, au moins au regard des Églises orthodoxes, à « un aménagement prudent et progressif de la discipline concernant la *communicatio in sacris*<sup>76</sup> » (§ 50).

#### LA CONSULTATION DE 1961 SUR *LE RENOUVEAU DANS L'ÉGLISE*

Pour chacune des sessions de la *Conférence Catholique*, les orateurs choisis par le Comité Directeur présentaient en plénière leur exposé relatif au thème. Dans cette section, je présenterai brièvement les exposés présentés à la conférence organisée à Strasbourg (1961), et ceci pour deux raisons. Le thème de la conférence, *Le renouveau dans l'Église*, fut choisi délibérément comme une déclaration d'intention en vue du prochain Concile. Au regard du thème général de ce livre, il serait intéressant de découvrir ce que les catholiques engagés dans le mouvement œcuménique ont eu à dire sur le renouveau dans l'Église. D'autres mouvements préconciliaires ont été aussi présentés au cours de la conférence de 1961 et dans ce livre. On a l'impression, en outre, qu'il existe des différences entre les orateurs pour ce qui concerne la portée et les modalités du processus de renouveau.

Dans une lettre envoyée quelques mois auparavant au Père Louis Bouyer, un des orateurs, Willebrands rappelle à l'oratorien que les réunions de 1960 et 1961 avaient été conçues dans une complémentarité. La réunion de Gazzada, traitant « Les différences compatibles avec l'unité », avait débattu, selon Willebrands, « le pluralisme

<sup>75</sup> Voir *Lumen Gentium* 23: « Cette variété des Églises locales montre avec plus d'éclat, par leur convergence dans l'unité, la catholicité de l'Église indivise. De même, les Conférences épiscopales peuvent, aujourd'hui, contribuer de façons multiples et fécondes à ce que le sentiment collégial se réalise concrètement ».

<sup>76</sup> À comparer avec *Unitatis Redintegratio* 15: « Puisque ces Églises, bien que séparées, ont de vrais sacrements — principalement, en vertu de la succession apostolique: le sacerdoce et l'Eucharistie —, qui les unissent intimement à nous, une certaine *communicatio in sacris*, dans des circonstances opportunes et avec l'approbation de l'autorité ecclésiastique, est non seulement possible, mais recommandée ».

horizontal<sup>77</sup> », tandis que la réunion de Strasbourg se focalisait sur « le pluralisme vertical. »

Le premier article de la conférence de 1961 avait été confié au Père Congar et fut intitulé *Les raisons et les exigences principales d'un renouveau. Pêché et sainteté dans l'Église*<sup>78</sup>. Dans une lettre envoyée à Willebrands le 7 octobre 1960, dans laquelle il fournissait au Secrétaire de la *Conférence Catholique* des noms à inviter comme orateurs, le dominicain français savait bien que le sujet de la conférence était parallèle à son ouvrage de 1950, *Vraie et fausse réforme dans l'Église*<sup>79</sup>. Bien que, à un certain moment, il renvoie son lecteur à cet ouvrage, son exposé a été réécrit et il renvoie aussi à de nouvelles sources telles que l'ouvrage de Gerhart Ladner, *The Idea of Reform* (1959<sup>80</sup>).

La première partie de l'article de Congar expose les raisons soutenant le renouveau dans l'Église, telles que présentées par « les fidèles et les prêtres catholiques » et « par nos frères séparés ». Ainsi qu'il le déclarait déjà dans l'introduction à *Vraie et fausse réforme*, le renouveau de l'Église semble particulièrement nécessaire au regard de la laïcisation progressive du monde et à cause du désir ardent, exprimé par beaucoup de catholiques, que les célébrations liturgiques soient caractérisées par une plus grande authenticité<sup>81</sup>.

Une grande attention est prêtée aux attentes et critiques des frères séparés. Peut-être en anticipant déjà cette prise de connaissance, partagée avec ses lecteurs dans la préface à la seconde édition, que sa critique du protestantisme dans l'ouvrage de 1950 avait été trop incisive, Congar fournit une juste représentation des critiques protestantes. À l'opposé de sa critique sur l'« insuffisance » de sa christologie dans *Vraie*

<sup>77</sup> Au cours de la conférence de Gazzada, les orateurs recevaient la tâche d'indiquer comment la relation entre unité et diversité était visible dans différents domaines. Quelques exemples: le Jésuite Georges Dejaifve parla de *Orient et Occident: deux théologies, une seule foi?*; le prêtre slovène et consultant au Secrétariat pour l'Unité Chrétienne, Giovanni Vodopivec, traita de *L'unité dans la diversité et les missions*; le futur évêque Carlo Colombo, alors professeur au Seminario Arcivescovile Venegono Inferiore (Varese), fut invité à donner une conférence sur *La fonction de l'Épiscopat dans l'Église et ses relations avec la primauté pontificale*.

<sup>78</sup> Pour une version publiée de ce discours, voir Yves M.-J. CONGAR, *Comment l'Église Sainte doit se renouveler sans cesse*, Chevetogne, 1963.

<sup>79</sup> CONGAR, *Vraie et fausse réforme dans l'Église* (Unam Sanctam, 20), Paris, Cerf, 1950. Sa lettre à Willebrands aborde la question de l'avenir de son livre —qui connaîtra une seconde édition en 1968: «Partout, on me dit: Mais ne rééditez vous pas ce livre, en vue du concile? Vous savez qu'une réédition a été interdite en 1952 ou 53. Ce n'est pas moi qui demanderai quoi que ce soit. Chacun prend sa responsabilité. J'ai pris celle d'écrire ce livre; je n'ai pas pris celle de l'empêcher de poursuivre une meilleure carrière. Il appartiendrait éventuellement à ceux qui l'ont prise, de me faire savoir, d'une façon ou d'une autre, que les temps sont changés...»

<sup>80</sup> Gerhart B. LADNER, *The Idea of Reform. Its Impact on Christian Thought and Action in the Age of the Fathers*, Cambridge, 1959. Cf. aussi Phillip H. STUMP, *The Influence of Gerhart Ladner's The Idea of Reform*, dans Thomas M. IZBICKI & Christopher M. BELLITTO (éds.), *Reform and Renewal in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Studies in Honor of Louis Pascoe, S.J.* (Studies in the History of Christian Traditions, 96), Leiden, 2000, p.6-17.

<sup>81</sup> FWC: Congar, *Les raisons et les exigences principales d'un renouveau. Pêché et sainteté dans l'Église*, p.2-3.

et fausse réforme, l'article comporte en effet quelques références positives à Karl Barth<sup>82</sup>. Congar ne mentionne les orthodoxes et anglicans qu'en passant. Excepté quelques critiques, les premiers « reprocheraient à l'Église catholique plutôt de trop s'adapter et d'avoir trop introduit de nouveautés<sup>83</sup>. » Les derniers seraient principalement opposés — c'est du moins le point de vue de Congar — à « l'infaillibilité de l'Église ».

La critique protestante de l'Église catholique est inspirée par son intention de sauvegarder « la primauté absolue de Dieu<sup>84</sup>. » L'ecclésiologie catholique romaine semble n'être pas suffisamment consciente que la Bible et la tradition, que l'Église et le royaume, sont des réalités différentes. Les protestants préfèrent faire une distinction entre l'Église visible et l'Église invisible, à laquelle les qualités d'unité, de catholicité, d'apostolicité et de sainteté ont été attribuées. Même la forme récente de l'ecclésiologie catholique romaine de l'Église comme corps du Christ est critiquée du fait qu'elle considère l'Église presque comme la continuation du Christ. Congar exhorte ses collègues œcuménistes catholiques : « Il me semble que des questions de la Réforme doivent être prises en considération. » D'une manière tout à fait neutre, il réfère à l'adage *Ecclesia semper reformanda*<sup>85</sup>.

Dans l'ecclésiologie catholique, Congar trouve deux « principes de solution » importants, qui sont liés à « la condition paradoxale de l'Église<sup>86</sup> ». Son élaboration de la première thèse — « L'Église est d'en haut et d'en bas, sainte et faite d'hommes pécheurs<sup>87</sup> » — est loin d'être un sujet neuf dans son œuvre. En 1947, Congar publiait déjà un article sur *Sainteté et péché dans l'Église*<sup>88</sup>, qu'il a retravaillé dans *Vraie et fausse réforme dans l'Église* comme une partie de la réponse à la question centrale de la partie I : « Pourquoi et en quel sens l'Église se réforme-t-elle ? ». La solution de Congar consistait à faire une distinction entre (1) l'*Ecclesia de Trinitate* qui est, comme un don de Dieu, infaillible, (2) l'*Ecclesia ex hominibus* ou *congregatio fidelium* qui est pleine de péchés parce qu'elle est remplie de pécheurs, (3) l'Église comme institution hiérarchique où il est aussi disposé de trouver des erreurs dans les membres de la hiérarchie et, enfin, (4) l'Église comme une réalité humano-divine dont il dit qu'elle est en même temps sainte et pécheresse. Dans son exposé pour la *Conférence Catholique*, Congar simplifie son premier schéma en parlant seulement de la sainteté et de la peccabilité de la même « Église terrestre ». Il critique la « conception nominaliste de l'Église comme pure *collectio fidelium*<sup>89</sup> » qu'on retrouve dans les ecclésiologies protestantes, car les Saintes Écritures utilisent des images organiques pour l'Église, telles que corps du Christ et temple de l'Esprit Saint. Il préfère « le réalisme de la tradition catholique

<sup>82</sup> FWC: Congar, *Les raisons*, p. 6: «Peut-on encore dire, sans plus, que toute l'action sanctifiante passe par les organes hiérarchiques? La critique de Barth, n'a-t-elle pas quelque vérité?»

<sup>83</sup> FWC: Congar, *Les raisons*, p. 3.

<sup>84</sup> FWC: Congar, *Les raisons*, p. 3.

<sup>85</sup> À comparer avec les «trois griefs sérieux à faire au motif», dans *Vraie et fausse réforme*, p. 462-466.

<sup>86</sup> FWC: Congar, *Les raisons*, p. 7.

<sup>87</sup> FWC: Congar, *Les raisons*, p. 7-9.

<sup>88</sup> Yves M.-J. CONGAR, *Sainteté et péché dans l'Église*, dans *Vie intellectuelle*, 15 (1947), p. 6-40. Voir aussi son *L'Église est sainte*, dans *Angelicum*, 42 (1965), p. 273-298.

<sup>89</sup> FWC: Congar, *Les raisons*, p. 8.

d'Orient et d'Occident<sup>90</sup> » qui est à mesure d'affirmer que « l'Église est sainte, bien que faite de pécheurs<sup>91</sup>. » La nécessité de la réforme dans l'Église n'est toutefois pas exclusivement liée aux péchés de chrétiens individuels, mais Congar reconnaît aussi l'existence des « limites, retards, fautes historiques » de l'Église comme un corps collectif<sup>92</sup>. Ceci est développé par Congar dans sa seconde thèse : « L'Église est faite par l'acte souverain de Dieu, et à faire par les hommes dans l'Histoire ». Le mouvement de la réforme qu'entend promouvoir Congar prévoit une position moyenne entre ceux qui, au nom des principes théologiques de la tradition « n'ont pas d'intérêt au mouvement du monde et ne cherchent pas à la rejoindre » et « les partisans d'une ouverture inconditionnée<sup>93</sup> ». En concluant son article, Congar peut donc dire : « [I]l existe un *tertium genus* : celui des réformateurs sérieux par fidélité et dans la fidélité, sur la base d'un vrai ressourcement évangélique et d'une volonté de traduire l'Évangile de Jésus-Christ dans les formes adaptées au temps dans lequel il nous est donné d'être ses témoins<sup>94</sup>. »

J'ai prêté beaucoup d'attention à la conférence donnée par le dominicain Congar, parce qu'elle fut, à mon avis, l'appel le plus vibrant au renouveau offert aux participants de cette conférence. À la conférence d'ouverture de Congar suivaient deux autres contributions thématiques substantielles, l'une par l'Oratorien Louis Bouyer, lui-même un ancien Pasteur luthérien, et l'autre par le professeur Hermann Volk, de Münster, qui sera élu moins d'un an plus tard évêque de Mayence. Les deux exposés se caractérisent par leur volonté de soutenir le programme de renouveau de l'Église catholique, associée à une forte conviction de la vérité de la doctrine catholique. À en croire Bouyer, le magistère catholique romain pourrait sans difficulté souscrire au principe de *Ecclesia semper reformanda*<sup>95</sup>, car il exprime simplement que l'Église, qui est loin d'être parfaite, doit se soumettre au jugement de la Parole de Dieu. Cependant, il n'existe, ni dans le protestantisme ni dans le catholicisme, d'unanimité sur la manière dont ce principe doit être concrètement appliqué. À l'intérieur du protestantisme, Bouyer fait référence aux polémiques contemporaines entre Barth et Brunner et entre Barth et Bultmann<sup>96</sup>. Au sein du catholicisme, Bouyer pointe la dispute entre les

<sup>90</sup> FWC: Congar, *Les raisons*, p. 8.

<sup>91</sup> FWC: Congar, *Les raisons*, p. 9. Congar fait référence à une contribution de Mgr. Charles Journet au dernier colloque, en 1953, mais ce théologien n'aborda la *Conférence Catholique* que durant sa session de 1955 à Paris avec une présentation sur *L'Église, épouse du Christ*. Les idées de Journet sur la peccabilité et la sainteté de l'Église, publiées d'abord dans *Nova et Vetera* en 1934 en forme d'un article intitulé *Remarques sur la sainteté de l'Église militante*, eurent une profonde influence sur le Concile, spécialement grâce à leur réélaboration dans la seconde partie de *L'Église du Verbe incarné* (Paris, 1961). En même temps, Congar apprécie les prises de parole individuelles des protestants qui ont montré une certaine compréhension de la position catholique.

<sup>92</sup> FWC: Congar, *Les raisons*, p. 9: « On ne peut attribuer un acte moral comme tel à une collectivité. Mais on peut lui attribuer des fautes, des manquements, des incompréhensions, des médiocrités. C'est ainsi qu'on attribue à la France, par exemple, tout un ensemble de fautes dans sa politique algérienne. »

<sup>93</sup> FWC: Congar, *Les raisons*, p. 13.

<sup>94</sup> FWC: Congar, *Les raisons*, p. 13.

<sup>95</sup> C'était le titre de cette conférence.

<sup>96</sup> FWC: Bouyer, *Ecclesia semper reformanda*, p. 4-7.

modernistes et les anti-modernistes<sup>97</sup>. Bouyer admet que l'Église catholique possède une solution théorique, en ce sens que l'autorité d'interpréter authentiquement la Parole de Dieu n'appartient pas aux théologiens seuls. « Cette autorité, d'une certaine manière, appartient à tout le corps vivant de l'Église, mais elle trouve les organes de son expression, eux-mêmes directement visés par l'assistance divine, dans les évêques successeurs des apôtres et spécialement dans le successeur de Saint Pierre<sup>98</sup>. » D'une manière semblable à celle de que Congar, il parvient à dire que l'unique Église est caractérisée par deux aspects complémentaires<sup>99</sup>. D'une part, elle est protégée contre l'erreur et le péché à travers son infaillibilité. D'autre part, comme *congregatio fidelium*, l'Église est placée sous le jugement sauveur de Dieu. Cette solution implique concrètement « un état de tension permanente<sup>100</sup> » « [d]u fait que les mêmes hommes qui ont à se réformer sans cesse sous l'effet de la Parole divine sont ceux auxquels il est confié de la garder et de la maintenir<sup>101</sup>. » Bouyer regrette la focalisation presque exclusive sur l'infaillibilité papale dans l'Église catholique, qui est d'une certaine façon compréhensible, à son avis, « par réaction contre l'erreur protestante<sup>102</sup> ». À la fin de son exposé, il exhorte son public à non seulement élaborer systématiquement « une théologie de la Parole », mais aussi à « la remettre au cœur de la théologie tout court<sup>103</sup>. »

Dans l'exposé présenté par le professeur Volk, *Die Erneuerung der Ekklesiologie als erneuertes Selbstverständnis der Kirche. Ihre Ökumenische Bedeutung*, nous découvrons un théologien qui a trouvé les réponses aux problèmes ecclésiologiques, en particulier dans l'encyclique *Mystici Corporis*<sup>104</sup>. Premièrement, l'auteur est convaincu qu'il est légitime de défendre l'idée du renouveau de l'Église aussi longtemps qu'on tient à la complexité de la définition de cette dernière dans *Mystici Corporis*. Il serait faux de concevoir l'Église comme une instance qui, exclusivement, « participe à l'infaillibilité de Dieu » ou comme une instance exclusivement humaine qui nécessite

<sup>97</sup> FWC: Bouyer, *Ecclesia semper reformanda*, p. 10.

<sup>98</sup> FWC: Bouyer, *Ecclesia semper reformanda*, p. 6.

<sup>99</sup> FWC: Bouyer, *Ecclesia semper reformanda*, p. 7.

<sup>100</sup> FWC: Bouyer, *Ecclesia semper reformanda*, p. 8.

<sup>101</sup> FWC: Bouyer, *Ecclesia semper reformanda*, p. 7-8.

<sup>102</sup> Sa critique soigneusement formulée —ou plus précise: son résumé de la critique protestante sur l'Église catholique— mérite encore d'être entendue aujourd'hui et semble être une anticipation de l'enseignement de LG 12 sur le *sensus fidelium* ou de DV 10. « La façon progressive dont, après avoir mis la tradition sur le même plan que l'Écriture, puis l'avoir opposée à l'Écriture, comme une seconde source indépendante de révélation, nous exaltons l'autorité du magistère, sans montrer assez explicitement son lien et, plus précisément, sa dépendance, et à l'égard de la tradition gardée par l'Église entière, leur donne l'impression que ce magistère hiérarchique, et spécialement papal (voire, en fait, curial), est seul à détenir un accès immédiat à la Parole divine. Pour tous les autres membres de l'Église, voire pour ses Évêques eux-mêmes, il leur semble que la réception de la vérité divine est non seulement un acte passif, mais une pure et simple acceptation de ce qu'il leur est imposé de croire, uniquement par voie d'autorité. » FWC: Bouyer, *Ecclesia semper reformanda*, p. 9.

<sup>103</sup> FWC: Bouyer, *Ecclesia semper reformanda*, p. 10.

<sup>104</sup> Voir aussi la version publiée de cet article: Hermann Volk, *Erneuerung der Ekklesiologie als erneuertes Selbstverständnis der Kirche und ihre ökumenische Bedeutung*, dans *Catholica*, 15 (1961), p. 241-270.



un renouvellement permanent<sup>105</sup>. *Mystici Corporis* enseigne, comme le répétera LG 8, que l'Église est faite de « principes et éléments juridiques » (MC 63) autant que de « dons spirituels » (MC 63) et ceci, est comparable à la présence de la nature humaine et divine en Christ (MC 64<sup>106</sup>). Volk se rend compte que le ministère ordonné appartient également à la promesse du Christ à l'Église, mais affirme que le nouveau de ce ministère pourrait devenir nécessaire dans la mesure où « das Amt seinem Träger nicht die heilig machende Gnade verleiht<sup>107</sup>. »

Jusqu'alors, le théologien a regardé le nouveau de l'Église à partir d'une perspective théologique. Lorsqu'il regarde la réalité historique de l'Église, il sait alors que l'Église « hat zweifellos die Tendenz, das Konstante immer für das Bessere zu halten. » Il est cependant au courant que « Änderungen können notwendig werden, damit die Kirche glaubwürdig und wirksam sein kann<sup>108</sup>. »

Volk est également convaincu qu'un nouveau de l'ecclésiologie de l'Église catholique pourrait contribuer au nouveau de l'Église elle-même. Son point de départ est une fois encore *Mystici Corporis*. Bien qu'il sache que l'encyclique avertit contre « eine rein pneumatische Auffassung der Kirche », il apprécie la manière dont *Mystici*

<sup>105</sup> FWC: Volk, *Die Erneuerung der Ekklesiologie als erneuertes Selbstverständnis der Kirche. Ihre ökumenische Bedeutung*, p. 7.

<sup>106</sup> FWC: Volk, *Die Erneuerung der Ekklesiologie*, p. 8: « Die Enzyklika *Mystici corporis* vergleicht daher den qualifizierenden Zusammenhang der Kirche mit Christus mit dem die Menschheit Christi qualifizierenden Zusammenhang mit dem Logos (Nr. 62). »

<sup>107</sup> FWC: Volk, *Die Erneuerung der Ekklesiologie*, p. 9. Ceci est une idée fondamentale pour l'auteur, qu'il répétera deux fois encore dans son article. Voir FWC: Volk, *Die Erneuerung der Ekklesiologie*, p. 26 : « Die Amtsvollmacht, etwa der Sündenvergebung und damit der rettenden Heiligung, heiligt nicht den Amtsträger, sondern den, der diese Amtsvollmacht beansprucht. Für das Eigentliche, für die sanktifikatorische Gnade, ist der Amtsträger wie jeder Gläubige auf einen anderen angewiesen. Die Ämter dienen in der Heilgnade nicht dem, der sie hat, sondern dem, der sie beansprucht. Ämter sind nicht Selbstzweck, sie sind zum Dienste und nicht zur Salvierung ihrer Träger vor Gott. » FWC: Volk, *Die Erneuerung der Ekklesiologie*, p. 27 : « ...auf den Heiszusammenhang mit Christus in der Weise des Sanktifikatorischen ist der Amtsträger wie jeder Gläubige angewiesen. » Volk fait découler de cela que le ministère ordonné est en première instance un service (*diakonia*). Il regrette que cette connaissance n'est pas toujours présente dans l'Église catholique. FWC: Volk, *Die Erneuerung der Ekklesiologie*, p. 28 : « Papst, Kardinäle, Bischöfe, selbst Geistliche erscheinen von der offiziellen Gestalt des Amtes her viel eher in einer Selbstherrlichkeit als in der Gestalt eines solchen, der einen zwar hohen Dienst, aber eben doch einen Dienst zu tun hat und diesen auch als Dienst versteht und vollzieht. » De fortes observations comme celles-ci trouvaient finalement aussi leur chemin dans LG 27. Ces idées sont encore présentes dans Hermann Volk, *Das Zweite Vatikanische Konzil und die Selbstreform der Katholischen Kirche*, dans *Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd. 2, Mainz, 1966, p. 145-160, ici p. 158: «Die Zuordnung der Amtsträger zu den Gläubigen wird durch die Tendenz des Konzils verstärkt, das kirchliche Amt der Schrift gemäß als *servitium*, als *diakonia* zu beschreiben. Das Amt qualifiziert den Träger des Amtes nicht uneingeschränkt und in vollem Umfange in dem Sinne, daß der Träger des Amtes in dem, was er anderen vermittelt, selbständig, autark sei; vielmehr ist der Träger des Amtes in dem, was er anderen verleiht, selbst auf andere Amtsträger angewiesen. So kann keiner, der Kraft seiner Amtsvollmacht anderen im Namen Gottes die Sünden vergeben hat, diese sich selbst vergeben. Mit dieser Beschreibung des Amtes als Dienst geht einher die häufig geäußerte Meinung, das kirchliche Amt möge bescheidener auftreten. » [article écrit à la fin de la Deuxième Session du Concile, décembre 1963, et publié en 1964]

<sup>108</sup> FWC: Volk, *Die Erneuerung der Ekklesiologie*, p. 10. Il donne aussi des exemples : « Wir sind selbst Zeugen von weitreichenden Veränderungen, etwa in der Feier der Abendmessen, der Feier der Karlturgie, in der Errichtungen von Säkularinstituten und auch in anderen Vorgängen. »

*Corporis* a renforcé la conscience ecclésiologique « der konstitutiven Bedeutung des Heiligen Geistes für die Kirche<sup>109</sup>. » Dans la partie constructive de son exposé, il s'étend sur les trois « fruits de l'Esprit ». (1) L'Esprit peut aider l'Église à éviter de devenir exclusivement juridique (« eine falsche Gesetzmäßigkeit<sup>110</sup> »). (2) Puisque l'Église est guidée par l'Esprit comme « principe surnaturel et puissant » l'Église peut aller plus loin que simplement tolérer une diversité en son sein, mais la diversité devrait être une évidence<sup>111</sup>. Volk regrette qu'au sein de l'Église catholique on promeuve souvent l'uniformité et qu'on a peur de « la pluriformité légitime de la vie chrétienne ». Ceci est finalement le signe d'un manque de confiance dans la force de l'Esprit Saint à garder la pluriformité dans l'unité. (3) Le troisième fruit d'une ecclésiologie davantage focalisée sur le St-Esprit devrait être son encouragement d'une forme spécifique de liberté qui, dans les Saintes Écritures, est signalée comme la liberté des enfants de Dieu. Volk soulève des questions critiques. L'Église n'apparaît-elle pas souvent « als ein reines Rechtsinstitut mit intern sehr wirksamen Mitteln<sup>112</sup> » ? Crée-t-elle assez « Raum zur Diskussion<sup>113</sup> » ?

À la fin de son exposé, Volk appelle premièrement à une conceptualisation de l'Église qui ne se focalise pas exclusivement sur les ministres ordonnés : « Les laïcs n'appartiennent pas seulement à l'Église ; ils sont l'Église<sup>114</sup> ». Volk croit encore être dans la ligne de *Mystici Corporis*, mais il insiste en même temps sur le fait que le « concept du corps mystique, qui tend à mettre l'insistance sur le ministère ordonné, doit être complété par une autre caractérisation biblique de l'Église comme peuple de Dieu<sup>115</sup>. » En conséquence, on commencerait à attendre des laïcs plus que l'obéissance

<sup>109</sup> FWC: Volk, *Die Erneuerung der Ekklesiologie*, p. 14.

<sup>110</sup> FWC: Volk, *Die Erneuerung der Ekklesiologie*, p. 17-20. In Hermann VOLK, *Das Zweite Vatikanische Konzil und die Selbstreform der Katholischen Kirche*, p. 157. Mgr Volk répétait cette idée dans la section traitant du *Schema Pro Ecclesia* : « Durch eine Übertreibung der rechtlichen Seite in der Kirche wird der Raum für das Nichtfaßbare, für das Charismatische verengt. Im Konzil ist aber der gnadenhafte Charakter der Kirche eindeutig betont. Dadurch wird zugleich ausgesagt, daß die Kirche nicht in unserer Verfügung ist, so daß die konziliare Lehre für den Geheimnischarakter der Kirche und für jede Form der Gnade offen ist. »

<sup>111</sup> FWC: Volk, *Die Erneuerung der Ekklesiologie*, p. 20: « Der Geist Christi als übermenschlich mächtiges Prinzip verleiht der Kirche eine übermenschlich begründete Einheit und gibt ihr Zuversicht, in der Kraft dieses Prinzips Verschiedenes in der Einheit zu halten. Das Wissen um die Kraft des Geistes zur Einheit verleiht der Kirche die Kraft, innerkirchlich mögliche Unterschiede nicht nur zu ertragen, sondern als eine Selbstverständlichkeit zu betrachten, weil sie keine Beeinträchtigung der Einheit im Geiste sind. »

<sup>112</sup> FWC: Volk, *Die Erneuerung der Ekklesiologie*, p. 22.

<sup>113</sup> FWC: Volk, *Die Erneuerung der Ekklesiologie*, p. 23.

<sup>114</sup> FWC: Volk, *Die Erneuerung der Ekklesiologie* : « Die Laien gehören nicht nur zur Kirche, sie sind selbst Kirche. »

<sup>115</sup> FWC: Volk, *Die Erneuerung der Ekklesiologie*, p. 27 : « Der Begriff des *corpus Christi mysticum*, welcher zur Betonung des Amtes neigt, wird ergänzt durch die andere biblische Beschreibung der Kirche als Volk Gottes. Die Komplementierung des Richtigen durch ein anderes Richten führt immer zur theoretischen und praktischen Verdeutlichung der Heilswirklichkeit, auch der Kirche. » Plus tard, Volk était enchanté que le Concile ait été attentif à de telles demandes, « vor allem durch die Beschreibung der Kirche auch als Volk Gottes noch vor der Beschreibung des Amtes, wodurch auch das Amtverständnis angereichert wird. Zum Volke Gottes gehören nämlich alle Glieder der Kirche; sie stehen in dieser Sicht der Kirche zunächst einmal gemeinsam und in gleicher Weise Gott

aux commandements, à savoir de vivre vraiment une vie spirituelle. Volk considère aussi un aspect négatif dans les plaidoyers récents pour la restauration du diaconat comme un ordre indépendant dans l'Église. Ceci pourrait retarder l'engagement des laïcs<sup>116</sup>.

Pendant ce symposium, les membres de la *Conférence Catholique* furent aussi enrichis par une conférence sur *Le renouveau biblique et l'œcuménisme*. Le Père Stanislas Lyonnet, un jésuite français enseignant à l'Institut Biblique de Rome, bientôt suspendu de ses activités d'enseignant<sup>117</sup>, esquissa premièrement la situation difficile de l'exégèse catholique à la suite de la crise moderniste<sup>118</sup>, puis l'arrière-fond et le contenu de l'encyclique de Pie XII *Divino Afflante Spiritu* (1943) — associée au nom du cardinal Bea, le premier président du Secrétariat pour l'Unité Chrétienne<sup>119</sup>. Il croit que le renouveau biblique qui suivit la publication de cette encyclique portera beaucoup de fruits œcuméniques. Maintenant que les catholiques approfondissent aussi la Lettre aux Romains, l'enseignement de Luther sur la justification apparaîtra bientôt dans une lumière nouvelle<sup>120</sup>. Toutefois, Lyonnet est au courant que cela requiert de ses collègues non seulement d'être de bons philologues, mais aussi de développer un intérêt théologique authentique<sup>121</sup>.

Dom Olivier Rousseau, du Monastère bénédictin de Chevetogne, partagea ses considérations sur l'un des plus vieux mouvements préconciliaires, le mouvement liturgique<sup>122</sup>. Une vue d'ensemble de l'histoire du mouvement<sup>123</sup> se termine dans

gegenüber. » Voir Hermann VOLK, *Das Zweite Vatikanische Konzil und die Selbstreform der Katholischen Kirche*, p. 158.

<sup>116</sup> FWC: Volk, *Die Erneuerung der Ekklesiologie*, p. 29.

<sup>117</sup> Voir Anthony DUPONT & Karim SCHELKENS, *Scopuli vitandi: The Historical-Critical Exegesis Controversy between the Lateran and the Biblicum (1960-1961)*, dans *Bijdragen*, 69 (2008), p. 18-51.

<sup>118</sup> FWC: Lyonnet, *Le renouveau biblique et l'œcuménisme*, p. 1-2.

<sup>119</sup> FWC: Lyonnet, *Le renouveau biblique et l'œcuménisme*, p. 5-9.

<sup>120</sup> FWC: Lyonnet, *Le renouveau biblique et l'œcuménisme*, p. 13: «Quand on relit les controverses du Concile de Trente au sujet de la satisfaction, on s'aperçoit que la conception que Luther s'en faisait diffère moins de celle que l'Église catholique s'en fait aujourd'hui que de celle qu'elle faisait au temps de Luther.» Lyonnet a écrit ces lignes à peu près 50 ans avant la *Déclaration Commune sur la Doctrine de la Justification* (1999).

<sup>121</sup> FWC: Lyonnet, *Le renouveau biblique et l'œcuménisme*, p. 15: «En particulier, il arrive que le professeur d'exégèse adopte à l'égard de son collègue, professeur de théologie fondamentale ou dogmatique, une attitude, très compréhensible peut-être, mais singulièrement irritante pour ce dernier. Il est en effet tenté de dire: La solution que je propose générerait peut-être mon collègue, mais je n'y puis rien; telle est la seule explication scientifique possible; à lui de chercher d'autres preuves et de se débrouiller comme il pourra! Une telle attitude n'est pas seulement irritante, elle est illégitime. Comme le fait très justement remarquer le Père Karl Rahner dans un article dans *Stimmen der Zeit* et *Orientierung*, le professeur d'exégèse est aussi un théologien, qui ne saurait se désintéresser des répercussions en théologie ou en apologetique de ses propres solutions.»

<sup>122</sup> Parce que les archives de la *Conférence Catholique* à Chevetogne ne contiennent pas le texte de sa conférence, je ne peux aborder P. Manns, *Un exemple concret de renouveau dans l'Église: St. Bernard*. L'article du Père Théodore Strotmann de Chevetogne sur *La notion de renouveau chrétien dans la pensée de Berdjaev* est très informatif, mais il est indirectement en rapport avec le renouveau dans l'Église catholique.

<sup>123</sup> Nous rencontrons ici une instance dans laquelle l'orateur fait déjà allusion en 1961 au titre de ce volume en disant, tandis que «l'Église s'était montrée intransigente» sur le point de «la langue

une réflexion sur certains défis récents. La fin du colonialisme demande non seulement l'introduction des célébrations liturgiques dans les langues vernaculaires de ces pays, mais aussi une adaptation de la proclamation de l'Évangile dans leur contexte<sup>124</sup>. Il apprécierait aussi que les commissions préconciliaires étudient les points suivants :

Tout d'abord, une possibilité de concélébration eucharistique plus étendue pour le rite latin, et la communion sous les deux espèces dans un certain nombre de cas. Ensuite, en raison de l'insistance qu'on met en notre époque à souligner dans la pastorale la qualité communautaire de l'assemblée chrétienne, on sera amené également à remettre l'accent sur l'importance de l'évêque comme président de l'assemblée liturgique, assemblée par excellence de l'Église locale, de chaque Église.

Parmi les fruits œcuméniques du renouveau liturgique, Dom Rousseau estime qu'il est possible que les Églises veuillent dans le futur s'engager elles-mêmes dans une « édition commune de la Bible » ou dans l'étude commune des « principaux trésors de la patristique<sup>125</sup>. » Le moine bénédictin est pourtant convaincu que le mouvement liturgique rendra l'Église catholique plus familière avec « un univers chrétien de formes diverses<sup>126</sup> » qui, à un certain moment, impliquera une révision approfondie de l'ecclésiologie de l'Église catholique romaine, ou au moins « la revalorisation de l'épiscopat et des Églises locales<sup>127</sup>. »

Mais il est clair qu'en s'engageant dans cette voie, l'Église catholique, sans lâcher sa dépendance d'avec le siège de Pierre avec lequel elle aura toujours plus d'attaché que les Églises orientales, en arrivera tout de même à s'aligner sur une conception qui sera moins différente du régime pluraliste familial aux Églises orthodoxes et aux grandes confessions issues de la Réforme. Disons-nous bien que cela ne se fera pas en un jour. D'autre part, il y a une chance que les groupements liturgiques s'allient peu à peu en familles de peuples plus ou moins semblables<sup>128</sup>.

vulgaire dans la liturgie ... elle est devenue aujourd'hui beaucoup plus large.» Voir FWC: Rousseau, *Le renouveau liturgique. Sa valeur pastorale de rechristianisation; valeur œcuménique du mouvement*, p. 3.

<sup>124</sup> FWC: Rousseau, *Le renouveau liturgique*, p. 7: «Peuples jeunes! Peuples très anciens parfois, plus anciens que nous, mais que nos missionnaires ont souvent du traiter comme s'ils étaient dépourvus de civilisation et que, pour faire passer le christianisme adapté à notre mesure, ils ont du commencer par convertir à toutes nos manières de penser en le leur infusant. Ces populations le sentent aujourd'hui, et réclament souvent beaucoup plus qu'une liturgie en langue vulgaire. Elles croient possible une rééducation à partir des données chrétiennes déseuropéanisées et fondée sur la profondeur même de l'Évangile, capable de s'adapter à tous les génies, au leur comme au nôtre.»

<sup>125</sup> FWC: Rousseau, *Le renouveau liturgique*, p. 7d.

<sup>126</sup> FWC: Rousseau, *Le renouveau liturgique*, p. 7c: «Mais il y a plus. Pour nous catholiques, de telles ouvertures auront nécessairement leur écho dans les relations entre les autres Églises et la nôtre. De voir s'ouvrir ainsi une volonté de christianisation ennemie de toute étroitesse, naîtra enfin chez les autres la possibilité d'une subsistance entitative au sein d'un univers chrétien de formes diverses. C'est le pluralisme dont on a tant parlé ces derniers temps, dont nous avons parlé l'an dernier à Gazzada, et qui revient ici.»

<sup>127</sup> FWC: Rousseau, *Le renouveau liturgique*, p. 7e.

<sup>128</sup> FWC: Rousseau, *Le renouveau liturgique*, p. 7e. À comparer avec LG 13: «C'est pourquoi encore il existe légitimement, au sein de la communion de l'Église, des Églises particulières jouissant de leurs traditions propres —sans préjudice du primat de la Chaire de Pierre qui préside à l'assemblée universelle de la charité, garantit les légitimes diversités et veille à ce que, loin de porter préjudice à l'unité, les particularités, au contraire, lui soient profitables.» Rousseau trouve un soutien dans le récent plaidoyer

La conclusion de l'article de Dom Rousseau prouve largement que la *Conférence Catholique*, spécialement cette conférence sur *Le renouveau dans l'Église*, était tout à fait prête pour l'événement qui changerait de manière drastique la conception de l'Église catholique romaine :

Le résultat du prochain concile sera pour beaucoup un argument très important pour ou contre ce que nous venons de dire. Car il faut croire que l'Esprit Saint y soufflera et que ce qui en sortira sera une indication providentielle précieuse. Pourtant, nous savons bien que tout ne sera pas fait en une fois, et il est vraisemblable que le résultat du concile ne sera qu'un premier pas vers une évolution plus large, dont les jalons auront été posés<sup>129</sup>.

### DU TRAVAIL DE CONVERSION AU TRAVAIL D'ŒCUMÉNISME ANALYSE DES DISCOURS D'OUVERTURE DE J.G.M. WILLEBRANDS

Quand on se rend compte que les documents de Vatican II sont marqués par un développement théologique dans leur processus d'élaboration, alors nous ne sommes pas surpris d'observer une évolution analogue dans les discours introductifs du secrétaire de la *Conférence Catholique*. La fonction principale de ces discours fut pourtant d'informer l'assistance des décisions importantes que le Comité Directeur a prises entre deux conférences et de présenter le thème de la conférence en cours. À quelques endroits, on peut déceler l'opinion théologique propre de Willebrands.

Dans le *Projet d'un conseil catholique œcuménique* initial, largement ébauché par Thijssen en 1951, l'œcuménisme est encore considéré comme étant presque identique au travail de conversion, à la seule différence que l'œcuménisme se rapporte au « retour collectif » : Nous avons la conviction que l'apostolat des retours individuels est connexe et même identique avec le travail « œcuménique<sup>130</sup> » [...].

Dans son discours d'ouverture de la première réunion à Fribourg (1952), Willebrands voulait décrire la nature de la *Conférence Catholique*. La grande tâche d'une telle association est de contribuer à l'auto-évaluation critique dans la mesure où, dans leur manière de vivre, les catholiques reflètent la catholicité de l'Église<sup>131</sup>.

Ce respect nous mène à une introspection sérieuse et profonde au sujet de la question, à quel point nous exprimons par notre attitude et notre vie même la catholicité de l'Église. C'est alors seulement qu'il sera possible de répondre pleinement à notre tâche de catholique, tâche qui consiste à être avant tout un guide pour le frère séparé.

Plus loin dans son discours, il devient clair que Willebrands comprend la catholicité et l'œcuménicité comme des termes presque identiques se rapportant à la proclamation universelle de la foi chrétienne :

La catholicité est un principe divin, et partant, l'Église n'est pas soumise à des limites de temps et d'espace, ni à celles des nations ou des races. Elle inclut, par suite de sa catholicité, l'homme entier. Les Pères ont toujours compris la catholicité et l'œcuménicité comme

de l'ecclésiologue de Louvain Gustave THILS, *Primauté pontificale et prérogatives épiscopales: Potestas ordinaria au Concile du Vatican*, Louvain, 1961.

<sup>129</sup> FWC: Rousseau, *Le renouveau liturgique*, p. 7f.

<sup>130</sup> FWC: *Projet d'un conseil catholique œcuménique*, p. 2.

<sup>131</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Introduction à la conférence*, p. 2.

étant un tout. La communauté de Smyrna écrit aux Philoméliens : « Polycarpe, ayant rappelé à toute l'Église catholique dans le monde entier<sup>132</sup>... ».

Le cas de Johannes Michael, théologien protestant converti à l'Église catholique, invite Willebrands à faire l'éloge de l'idéal de la conversion :

La conversion est un retour d'une personne qui vivait d'une partie seulement de la révélation, à la totalité de la *paradisis* pour y vivre désormais dans la plénitude du Christ<sup>133</sup>.

Dans la conclusion du discours d'ouverture de Willebrands lors de la conférence d'Utrecht (1953), l'orateur se sent obligé de défendre l'idéal de l'œcuménisme comme *Rückkehr* en réponse à une objection faite par le fameux théologien réformé hollandais van Ruler, qui avait déclaré :

Rom will ökumenisch kein Gespräch, sondern Unterwerfung und Zurückkehr zur einigen wahren Kirche.

<sup>132</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Introduction à la conférence*, p. 3. Dans son article de 1960 « *Il movimento ecumenico. Sviluppj e speranze* ». Willebrands rappelle que les concepts de catholicité et d'œcuménicité étaient compris par les pères de l'Église comme étant presque interchangeable, mais ont connu un développement différent à la suite de l'histoire des schismes. Inspiré d'un article de 1952 du pasteur protestant Hendrik van der Linde, Willebrands peut dire : « *Purtroppo cattolicità ed ecumenicità non sono ancora identici. Questa è la nostra pena. La futura eventuale concidenza di questi concetti sarebbe la soluzione del problema ecumenico.* ». Cf. Johannes WILLEBRANDS, *Il movimento ecumenico*, p. 275.

<sup>133</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Introduction à la conférence*, p. 5. L'article de 1960 décrit le retour des individus et des groupes en des termes similaires : « *Già per il passaggio di un individuo alla Chiesa, noi uomini non possiamo essere che uno strumento nella mano di Dio, ci è consentito di dare solo un piccolo aiuto. La grazia di Dio lo muove nel tempo di preparazione, risolve i dubbi, supera le difficoltà. Quando però se tratta di un grande gruppo e di una comunità, quanto più forti sono i legami storici col passato, con la grandezza e la cultura di un popolo! Che radici profonde hanno i vincoli psicologici e sociali! Si parla di quanto è umanamente impossibile.* ». J.P. Michael, représentant *Herder-Korrespondenz*, donne une introduction à Utrecht (1953) sur « *La manifestation de l'espérance chrétienne dans la vie chrétienne.* ». Mauro VELATI, *Una difficile transizione*, p. 59, cite la lettre du Père Villain, envoyée à Willebrands après la conférence d'Utrecht (voir dans le FWC), dans laquelle il déplore le manque d'ouverture œcuménique de ce théologien allemand converti à l'Église Catholique en 1950 : « *J'ai été frappé (et je pense que tous l'ont été) de l'opposition (je ne dis pas seulement différence) de méthode entre le rapport du P. Dumont et celui du Dr. Michael. Ai-je tort: je considère le premier comme un travail œcuménique, très utile à la fois pour nous-même et pour le Conseil, si on le lui communique. J'ai tendance à penser que le second n'est pas œcuménique du tout, qu'il n'est pas utile pour nous et surtout qu'il serait blessant pour le Conseil si on venait à le lui communiquer.* ». Dans une lettre aux autres membres du Comité Directeur en date du 12 août 1958, Willebrands décide de ne plus inviter Michael à cause de son accusation injuste de la position des autres théologiens de la *Conférence Catholique*. Voir Mauro VELATI, *Una difficile transizione*, p. 169 n. 75 : « *Ce qui est pire c'est qu'il parle de 'la part de protestantisme' chez nos théologiens, d'un protestantisme 'rampant et venimeux à l'intérieur de l'Église, se diffusant comme une maladie'. Bien qu'il ne mentionne aucun nom, cette accusation vague est intolérable et n'a aucun fondement réel.* ». D'après Velati, c'était particulièrement Congar qui était visé dans les critiques de Michael. L'ouvrage de Michael de 1958 *Christen suchen eine Kirche* avait été mal reçu dans les cercles du COE, comme il apparaît dans les commentaires négatifs de Hans-Heinrich Harms, Secrétaire de la Section des Études du COE et un des contacts les plus étroits de Willebrands au sein du COE, dans *The Ecumenical Review*, 10 (1957-1958), p. 485-488. Lagenda de Willebrands note au 17/10/1958 : « *Leave Mainz to Freiburg im Breisgau, where I held a long and private discussion with Michael concerning the last difficulties. Very personal talk, however, the situation remains professionally and objectively difficult. Provisionally, do not invite to cooperate.* ». Voir Theo SALEMINK, « *You Will Be Called Repairer of the Breach* », p. 48 et spécialement n. 63.

La réponse de Willebrands :

Wir aber wollen ein Gespräch in vollkommener Freiheit, — wir wollen Unterwerfung und Zurückkehr in vollkommener Freiheit, und auch nur dann wenn der heimkehrende Bruder in freier Ueberzeugung und freier Wahl und im Lichte des Glaubens zur Einsicht gelangt ist, dass Rom wahrlich die Ökumene ist, die Säule der Wahrheit, die alles und allen umfasst<sup>134</sup>.

Dans son introduction à la réunion de 1955 à Paris<sup>135</sup>, Willebrands réfléchit à nouveau sur la signification du prédicat « catholique » attribué à l'Église. Pour lui, « l'Église Catholique est *poikoumenè* », et ainsi nos frères séparés doivent retourner à elle<sup>136</sup>. Willebrands est conscient que le concept de catholicité appartient non seulement à la portée universelle de l'Église catholique, mais aussi au fait « qu'elle a sauvegardé la totalité du mystère de salut du Christ<sup>137</sup> ». Willebrands réalise que la plus convenable réalisation de la catholicité est la communion de l'évêque et de ses prêtres et de ses fidèles au sein de l'Église locale.

Les discours préliminaires des réunions à Chevetogne (1957) et Paderborn (1959) révèlent que Willebrands a fait des efforts formidables pour résumer l'état actuel des réflexions au sein du COE sur la Seigneurie du Christ et sur unité et mission, respectivement. Les dernières lignes de la présentation de Paderborn reflètent la grande attente de l'Église Catholique à l'égard du Concile. Il commence par une citation de la Seconde Conférence sur *Foi et Constitution* à Edimbourg : « Nous avouons humblement que nos divisions sont contraires à la volonté du Christ, et nous prions Dieu, en sa miséricorde, de raccourcir les jours de notre séparation et de nous guider par son Esprit vers la plénitude de l'unité<sup>138</sup> ». Par la suite Willebrands note :

En ce jour d'aujourd'hui, l'absence de l'Église catholique, qui a été longtemps un « se tenir à l'écart », se comble. L'annonce du Concile, et l'esprit dans lequel celle-ci a été prononcée, est un fait libérateur et inspirateur. Des échos d'Italie, des États-Unis, et de partout, montrent comment, tout à coup, l'attitude des catholiques envers leurs frères séparés se

<sup>134</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Einleitung zur katholisch-ökumenischen Konferenz von Dijnseburg*, 6-9 August 1953, p. 10.

<sup>135</sup> Le contenu de cette présentation de la conférence de Mayence n'est pas particulièrement révélateur pour notre question. On pourrait seulement espérer que plus tard Willebrands ne terminât plus les rencontres œcuméniques de la même manière qu'il concluait son introduction : « Zum Schluss möchte ich dann mit Ihnen zusammen für unsere Arbeitstagung die Fürsprache erbitten der Virgo Mater Maria Assumpta, die die ganze Hoffnung des Alten Israel und des Neuen Israel in sich trug, und der, wie keinem anderen Menschenkinde, die Erfüllung dieser Hoffnung in der Fülle Ihrer Erlöstheit geschenkt wurde, Maria Assumpta, die für uns alle geworden ist: Mater Sanctae Spei ».

<sup>136</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Conférence catholique pour les questions œcuméniques*. 1-4 août 1955, Cours Dupanloup, Boulogne sur Seine, p. 4 : « Ainsi on pourrait espérer que chez nos frères séparés s'accroisse la conviction que l'Église catholique est en vérité le lieu où le Christ a déposé la totalité de la grâce rédemptrice. »

<sup>137</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Conférence catholique pour les questions œcuméniques*. 1-4 août 1955, p. 6.

<sup>138</sup> Voir aussi Johannes WILLEBRANDS, *Il movimento ecumenico*, p. 264 : « La cristianità soffre del disastro e del peccato delle separazioni nello scisma e nell'eresia, tanto nei paesi dove la Chiesa si è stabilita da secoli, quanto nella sua missione ai popoli che non hanno ancora ricevuto il dono della fede ».



transforme. Puisse ce Concile arriver à un moment plus opportun que le Concile de Trente au temps de la Réforme<sup>139</sup>.

La réunion de Gazzada (1960) s'occupa de l'unité et de la diversité. Dans son discours d'ouverture<sup>140</sup>, Mgr Willebrands clarifia encore que « La grande tâche qui nous oblige dans la rencontre avec les chrétiens séparés reste toujours de rendre plus manifeste la catholicité de l'Église. Cette tâche concerne toute l'existence chrétienne : doctrine et vie, prière liturgique et œuvres de charité. Rendre manifeste ne veut pas dire : prouver par la raison, mais plutôt donner au Mystère du Christ son expression, sa forme concrète en parole et sacrement, en prédication et vie, en tout le témoignage chrétien ». Willebrands exhorte les croyants catholiques à développer une « ouverture notionnelle » envers les autres Églises qui, par la suite, devra être suivie par une « ouverture existentielle ». Le travail de l'Église consiste à apporter « une deuxième réforme » et il se pose lui-même la question de savoir si un tel mouvement « s'orientera vers Rome », comme la première Réforme s'était détournée de Rome. Willebrands sait que la réponse sera négative. Les Églises de la Réforme ne veulent pas retourner à la forme historique de l'Église catholique qu'ils ont abandonnée au 16<sup>e</sup> s. « Ce qu'ils désirent c'est plutôt de vaincre dans l'Esprit du Seigneur ces formes historiques à cause de l'unique Seigneur ». Ils ne voudraient plus retourner vers Rome dans un sens ecclésiologique, étant donné la nouvelle autocompréhension de cette Église depuis Vatican I.

Probablement à cause de l'énorme quantité de travail à laquelle Willebrands eut à faire face en sa qualité de secrétaire du *Secrétariat pour l'Unité des chrétiens*, les discours préliminaires aux réunions de Strasbourg (1961) et Gazzada (1963) sont manuscrits. Willebrands commence la présentation de la réunion de Strasbourg en admettant l'influence de la *Conférence Catholique* sur la composition du Secrétariat :

L'esprit œcuménique qui a inspiré et les discussions et les suggestions de Gazzada, a pu influencer facilement le travail du Secrétariat par le fait qu'un grand nombre de membres et des consultants du Secrétariat ont été choisis parmi ceux qui participent aux réunions de la Conférence<sup>141</sup>.

L'élément le plus frappant de cette introduction est que Willebrands met en contraste l'attitude des Anglicans envers le Secrétariat pour l'Unité et envers l'Église catholique en général, avec l'attitude des Protestants et des Orthodoxes. Avec beaucoup de sympathie, il lit une longue citation d'un article sur « Canterbury and

<sup>139</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Introduction au thème 'Unité et Mission'*, p.7. Willebrands répétait la même idée dans un de ses articles publié avec une longue citation de Jedin en appui. Cf. Johannes WILLEBRANDS, *Il movimento ecumenico*, p.265 : «... allora il Concilio di Trento arrivò ben tardi, e troppo tardi per proteggere molti da questo errore. » Il plaide positivement dans son article pour « un dialogo continuo e diretto con i fratelli separati » et raconte, d'une manière similaire à son introduction à la conférence de Paderborn, comment le dialogue a déjà commencé: « Da questa presa di coscienza il dialogo ebbe inizio, prima timidamente e con esitanza, più tardi rafforzato dalla persecuzione del Nazismo da noi tutti subita, quando teologi cattolici e protestanti, sacerdoti e pastori s'incontrarono nelle prigioni e nei campi di concentramento, dove la loro fedeltà a Cristo ed alla Chiesa li aveva portati. Diversi gruppi interessati a questi dialoghi sono sorti in Germania, Olanda, Francia, Svizzera ».

<sup>140</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Gazzada 19.IX.60*, p. 1-3.

<sup>141</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Strasbourg 1961*, p. 2.

Rome », publié par le Dr. Ramsey un peu avant son installation comme archevêque de Cantorbéry :

Charity demands the speaking of truth in love. It is a fallacy that a dogmatic or exclusive position is necessarily uncharitable: it can be held and commended with humility and charity. It is equally a fallacy that a liberal position is necessarily charitable: it can be held with an uncomprehending contempt for other views. I dissent from, but I respect the conscience of, someone who tells me that the Roman Church is alone the true Catholic Church of Christ and that I am outside it, at best an errant baptized layman, *laicus vagans extra ecclesiam*. Because I respect the conscience of such a one, I know that his position issues inevitably in policies which hurt and cause friction. On his side, there is all the difference between unchurching me in hatred and contempt and doing so with an attitude of conscientious love for me. In neither of us charity is enhanced by denying that « things are what they are, and the consequence of them will be what they will be ». In both of us, charity should enable us to speak of those very matters, and their causes, in friendship as well as frankness<sup>142</sup>.

Willebrands continue :

Ces paroles sont en opposition nette avec les exigences exprimées souvent par des théologiens protestants, répétées également par le métropolitain Nikodim de l'Église orthodoxe russe. Ils réclament qu'avant tout rapprochement l'Église de Rome devrait abandonner sa position concernant la primauté du Pape et l'Infaillibilité de son enseignement *ex cathedra* ce qui reviendrait non seulement pour nous à quitter l'obéissance de la foi (Rom. 1,5), mais la requête elle-même va directement contre la déclaration de Toronto (1954) du Comité directeur du Conseil Œcuménique des Églises<sup>143</sup>.

Le dernier discours préliminaire tenu par Willebrands au début la conférence de Gazzada (1963) eut lieu pendant la première intersession du Concile. La plus importante partie de son discours contient une description de ses responsabilités majeures au sein du Secrétariat. Willebrands décrit les visites mutuelles entre les responsables d'Églises, et spécialement les contacts entre Rome et Cantorbéry<sup>144</sup>. De façon détaillée, il décrit les nombreux contacts avec les représentants des autres Églises afin de les inviter comme observateurs au Concile<sup>145</sup>. Il signale que c'était lui qui avait proposé à Visser't Hooft et aux responsables d'autres Églises résidant à Genève — après la lecture du deuxième tome de l'*Histoire du Mouvement Œcuménique* — d'adresser l'invitation, comme observateurs au Concile, aux fédérations mondiales, afin d'éviter d'inviter les nombreuses Églises nationales et même les sectes<sup>146</sup>. Dans le même ordre d'idées,

<sup>142</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Strasbourg 1961*, p.6. Dans la version de ce texte rédigée à la main, la citation se trouve sur une page différente de son introduction sur la p. 2.

<sup>143</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Strasbourg 1961*, p. 2.

<sup>144</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Gazzada 1963*, p. 6-9.

<sup>145</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Gazzada 1963*, p. 9-18. Voir la section sur «The Ecumenical Presence at the Council» dans le troisième chapitre, écrit par Joseph A. KOMONCHAK, *The Struggle for the Council during the Preparation of Vatican II (1960-1962)*, dans Giuseppe ALBERIGO et Joseph A. KOMONCHAK, *History of Vatican II. Vol. 2: Announcing and Preparing Vatican Council II. Toward a New Era in Catholicism*, Maryknoll et Leuven, 1995, p. 167-356, voir p. 318-326.

<sup>146</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Gazzada 1963*, p. 9.

il explique pourquoi il était important pour l'Église catholique d'adresser aussi une invitation au Conseil Œcuménique des Églises :

Le Conseil Œcuménique des Églises était un cas particulier. Il ne représente pas une confession, ni un type ou une structure déterminée d'Église. Mais son importance œcuménique est évidente et reconnue par tous. Si nous voyons la présence des observateurs dans la perspective de l'unité, comment pourrions-nous ne pas reconnaître cette importance et aussi les mérites du Conseil Œcuménique comme tel, et de demander aussi, par cette invitation, sa collaboration dans la perspective de l'unité. Il ne s'en suit pas que par une éventuelle collaboration avec le Conseil Œcuménique nous nous limitons dans tout le travail pour l'unité aux possibilités et aux méthodes du Conseil Œcuménique, mais nous espérons du bien de cette collaboration<sup>147</sup>.

Willebrands admet qu'il lui est arrivé de se décourager un peu face à la lenteur du Patriarcat Œcuménique à accepter l'invitation de l'Église catholique. Il cite, en partant d'un rapport qu'il avait fait après sa seconde visite à « Constantinople » :

À tout prendre, je ne suis pas enthousiaste de l'attitude des Orthodoxes : déjà en février je leur ai fait une visite et j'ai discuté toute la question en détail. À l'heure actuelle, leur réponse n'est pas encore prête. Mais aussi ils manquent de force et de conviction : le fait que Cantorbéry et le Conseil Œcuménique des Églises réagissent favorablement leur est important pour arriver eux-mêmes à une décision, et encore ils sont hésitants<sup>148</sup>.

Cette section contient aussi un passage intéressant sur la relation entre le Secrétariat et la Commission Orientale. Le Secrétariat avait insisté sur le fait qu'il revenait à la Commission Orientale d'établir les premiers contacts avec le « Patriarcat de Constantinople ». Toutefois, après leur visite, l'archevêque de Testa et le Père Raes S.J. expliquaient à Willebrands que les orthodoxes préféraient avoir des contacts directs avec le Secrétariat<sup>149</sup>. Son discours contient également une explication honnête de l'attitude anti-œcuménique de la Commission Théologique préparatoire. Rappelant comment le secrétaire de la Commission Théologique a exclu toute coopération avec le Secrétariat sous forme d'une commission mixte, il décrit les différents éthos entre les deux organes de la curie comme suit :

Or, tout le travail du Secrétariat était conçu en fonction du dialogue avec les chrétiens séparés. Le travail de la Commission théologique était apparemment conduit contre les chrétiens séparés, ou, comme ils le disaient, contre les erreurs. On comprend facilement que tout élément œcuménique restait absent de leur travail et qu'y manquait même la compréhension de ceux qu'on voulait réfuter<sup>150</sup>.

<sup>147</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Gazzada 1963*, p. 10.

<sup>148</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Gazzada 1963*, p. 13.

<sup>149</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Gazzada 1963*, p. 12. Voir Joseph A. KOMONCHAK, *The Struggle for the Council*, p. 324: «The inaction of the OR led the Orthodox to make it clear that they wished their conversations with Rome to be mediated by the Secretariat. Late in 1961, Bea brought this to the attention of Pope John, who granted the request. From then on the Secretariat was in charge of all ecumenical concerns and conversations».

<sup>150</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Gazzada 1963*, p. 5. La relation du Secrétariat avec les autres commissions préparatoires fut bien meilleure. Voir la citation suivante: «Nous avons essayé de faire connaître la pensée, les intérêts des chrétiens séparés aux autres commissions préparatoires, afin qu'on en puisse tenir compte, dans la mesure du possible. Cette méthode a été bien acceptée par certaines commissions,

Les pages les plus personnelles du discours sont celles commémorant l'impact que le Pape Jean XXIII a eu sur l'amélioration des relations entre l'Église catholique et les autres Églises avec son insistance sur la nécessité de combiner vérité et amour :

Le pape n'opposait, ne substituait point l'amour à la vérité, mais il enseignait la vérité par l'amour et dans l'amour<sup>151</sup>. Il se faisait le serviteur des hommes. Il désirait faire connaître la vérité. Toute naissance est le fruit de l'amour — la connaissance de Dieu aussi, et la connaissance du Christ et de son Église, de la présence du Christ dans l'Église. Le pape était l'humble serviteur de Dieu et des hommes, il en avait une connaissance profonde et personnelle, il était un témoin de Dieu. Cet appel, a-t-il été entendu ? Tout le changement de l'atmosphère, du climat dans les relations entre l'Église et les frères séparés s'explique par cela. Le monde entier l'a aimé comme un frère ou comme un père, comme un envoyé par Dieu. Le Patriarche de Constantinople a exprimé ce sentiment en lui appliquant les paroles de l'Évangile : « Fuit homo missus a Deo, cui nomen erat Johannes<sup>152</sup> ».

Je termine mon aperçu de ce que fut, à mon avis, le plus impressionnant discours d'ouverture que Willebrands ait prononcé au cours des réunions de la Conférence Catholique, en citant entièrement le paragraphe préliminaire, dans lequel il explique comment le Pape Jean croyait que son Concile allait devenir une contribution importante à l'unité chrétienne :

Concile – Observateurs. Deux mots qui évoquent pour tout œcuméniste catholique, le plus grand événement que le S. Esprit ait donné à l'Église de notre temps, événement qui, sans doute, n'est pas contraire à l'institution mais la déborde infiniment. D'autant plus que le Concile a été conçu et consigné par le Pape Jean XXIII sous le souffle du Saint Esprit, dans le charisme de la prophétie et non comme la conséquence d'une préparation élaborée et calculée de l'Institut. Les institutions n'ont pas toujours suivi de grand cœur la voix prophétique du Pape. Dès l'origine, dans l'esprit de Jean XXIII, l'idée du Concile et les chrétiens non-catholiques étaient liés dans la perspective de l'Unité. Ce ne serait pas un Concile d'Union, mais un Concile sous le regard de l'Esprit de l'Unité dans la perspective de l'Unité de tous ceux qui confessent le Christ, sous un seul Seigneur, par la même foi et dans l'unique baptême<sup>153</sup>. L'Église au Concile devrait être une invitation à l'Unité par une réforme intérieure qui la portera à une sainteté plus parfaite, à une catholicité plus manifeste, à une apostolicité plus fidèle, à une unité plus profonde et plus riche<sup>154</sup>.

notamment la commission liturgique, la commission pour l'apostolat des laïcs, la commission pour la discipline des sacrements».

<sup>151</sup> Allusion implicite au discours d'ouverture *Gaudet Mater Ecclesia*: «L'Église catholique, en brandissant par ce Concile œcuménique le flambeau de la vérité religieuse au milieu de cette situation, veut être pour tous une mère très aimante, bonne, patiente, pleine de bonté et de miséricorde pour ses fils qui sont séparés d'elle». Voir les AS I/1, p. 166-175.

<sup>152</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Gazzada 1963*, p. 6. Pour les réflexions sur le Pape Jean XXIII et Vatican II, voir Giuseppe ALBERIGO et Joseph A. KOMONCHAK, *History of Vatican II*. Vol. 1, p. 1-18; et voir également le vol. 2, aux p. 14-21.

<sup>153</sup> *Gaudet Mater Ecclesia*: «... l'Église catholique estime que son devoir est de faire tous ses efforts pour que s'accomplisse le grand mystère de cette unité que Jésus-Christ, à l'approche de son sacrifice, a demandée à son Père dans une ardente prière [...]».

<sup>154</sup> FWC: Willebrands, *Gazzada 1963*, p. 1.

## ÉPILOGUE

Ce volume est consacré à l'étude de la réception des mouvements préconciliaires à Vatican II. La volonté d'être pleinement engagée dans le mouvement œcuménique que l'Église catholique a exprimé pendant le Concile, était en effet enracinée dans l'engagement œcuménique des théologiens catholiques de la décennie précédant Vatican II. Dans ce chapitre, j'ai étudié l'œuvre de ce qui pourrait être considérée comme la plus importante association internationale d'œcuménistes catholiques, la *Conférence Catholique pour les questions œcuméniques*. Le mouvement devait prendre soin d'opérer dans les règles pour les relations œcuméniques tracées par Pie XII en 1950. Toutefois, grâce aux aptitudes diplomatiques de son secrétaire — devenant plus tard le Cardinal Willebrands —, il s'est développé en une organisation qui fut bien connue et appréciée à Rome et qui pourra même organiser sa consultation de 1960 dans l'archidiocèse de celui qui deviendra le Pape Paul VI. En conséquence, la première génération des membres et des consultants du Secrétariat pour l'Unité Chrétienne avait largement été choisie parmi les membres de la *Conférence Catholique*.

La *Conférence Catholique* mérite certainement d'être reconnue comme un mouvement de renouveau. En 1961, elle y consacra une consultation dont nous avons étudié les grandes présentations. Au cours de cette consultation, l'attention a aussi été accordée aux interactions entre les mouvements préconciliaires à travers des exposés sur le mouvement liturgique et biblique. Moins de six mois après l'annonce du Concile — la formulation d'une réponse catholique aux thèmes intéressant le COE leur ayant pris plus de temps, comme nous l'avons vu — la *Conférence Catholique* était capable de préparer une prise de position sur « la restauration de l'unité chrétienne », un texte qui ne serait pas seulement au regard du titre mais aussi de son contenu comparable, sur beaucoup de points, au Décret sur l'Unité Chrétienne *Unitatis Redintegratio*.

Mon analyse de plusieurs textes collectifs et personnels des membres de la *Conférence Catholique* a mis au clair que les théologiens appartenant à cette association défendaient en effet beaucoup d'idées théologiques nouvelles, mais ne pouvaient pas complètement cacher leur formation scolastique et tenaient parfois des opinions moins ouvertes d'un point de vue œcuménique. Nous avons trouvé d'une part des appels à développer une ecclésiologie du peuple de Dieu, à fixer l'attention sur l'évêque et l'église locale dans l'ecclésiologie catholique, à comprendre la catholicité comme une unité dans la diversité et à permettre des degrés de communion. Mais, d'autre part, pour ne mentionner que certains exemples, nous avons entendu un membre parler encore de « l'erreur protestante », et nous ne sommes pas tout à fait sûr que Willebrands ait complètement abandonné son intérêt pour le travail de conversions. Après tout, le titre de ce livre parle aussi de *La théologie catholique entre intransigeance et renouveau*.

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# LE CONSERVATISME CATHOLIQUE AU BRÉSIL

## ASPECTS HISTORIQUES AVANT LE CONCILE VATICAN II

Les études sur le concile Vatican II (1962-1965) et sur sa réception au Brésil sont pauvres. Au-delà de leur quasi non-existence au niveau académique, celles qui existent adoptent un type d'interprétation conforme, idéologiquement situé dans le champ théorique de ce qui dans le pays a été connu comme la théologie de la libération. En dehors de cela, et aussi grâce à l'influence de cette façon d'envisager la théologie et la place de l'Église dans le monde, les historiens et sociologues se sont concentrés sur l'étude du catholicisme dans le pays simplement au travers des personnages de ladite « gauche catholique » ou du « catholicisme progressiste », en oubliant les importants acteurs sociaux, c.-à-d. le « conservatisme catholique ».

Les études sur cette question font leurs premiers pas et fournissent de nouveaux éléments et de nouvelles réflexions qui permettent un approfondissement de la compréhension des relations entre l'Église et le monde contemporain. Au plan international, les études de Perrin<sup>155</sup>, Buonasorte<sup>156</sup> et Lay<sup>157</sup>, sont considérées comme les plus importantes de ce courant de pensée catholique. Au Brésil, les études historiographiques sur Vatican II qui se concentrent sur les groupes de laïcs et pères qui ont représenté durant le 20<sup>e</sup> s. la négation des possibilités pour l'Église de Rome de transiger avec les valeurs de la modernité sont très limitées.

Au-delà de notre thèse de doctorat, *Les bastions de la tradition. L'anti modernité catholique brésilienne au Concile Vatican II*<sup>158</sup>, nous pouvons seulement indiquer les études de Gisele Zanotto, qui s'est consacrée à l'étude de l'ensemble des valeurs préconisées par la Société brésilienne pour la défense de la Tradition, de la Famille et de la Propriété (TFP), et celle de Lizanias de Souza Lima — unique jusqu'à maintenant — sur la figure la plus importante du conservatisme brésilien : Plínio

<sup>155</sup> Luc PERRIN, *Il caso Lefebvre*, Genova, 1991; *L'«eresia» della'aggiramento. Paura e negazione di una alterità dentro la Chiesa dopo il Vaticano II*, dans Alberto MELLONI, et Gianni LA BELLA (dir.), *L'alterità. Concezione ed esperienze nel cristianesimo contemporaneo*, Bologna, 1995; et PERRIN, *Il «Coetus Internationalis Patrum» e la minoranza conciliare*, dans Maria Teresa FATTORI, Alberto MELLONI (dir.), *Levento e le decisioni. Studi sulle dinamiche del Concilio Vaticano II*, Bologna, 1997.

<sup>156</sup> Nicola BUONASORTE, *Per la «pura, piena, integra fede cattolica»*. Il P. Victor Alain Berto al concilio Vaticano II, dans *Cristianesimo nella Storia*, 22 (2001), p. 111-151; BUONASORTE, *Tra Roma e Lefebvre. Il tradizionalismo cattolico italiano e il Concilio Vaticano II*, Roma, 2003; BUONASORTE, *Siri: tradizione e Novecento*, Bologna, 2006.

<sup>157</sup> Benny LAY, *Il papa non eletto. Giuseppe Siri cardinale di Santa Romana Chiesa*, Roma-Bari, 1993.

<sup>158</sup> Rodrigo Coppe CALDEIRA, *Os baluartes da tradição. O conservadorismo católico brasileiro no Concílio Vaticano II*, Curitiba, 2011.



Corrêa de Oliveira<sup>159</sup>. Au-delà de ces recherches, se détache le livre de Roberto de Mattei portant également sur Plínio Corrêa de Oliveira, *Le croisé du XX<sup>ème</sup> siècle*<sup>160</sup>, qui apporte beaucoup d'éléments importants — même si à certains moments le style hagiographique nous laisse voir que de Mattei est un sympathisant de la cause du TFP — pour comprendre les pensées des dirigeants catholiques et de ceux qui les entourent. Nous pouvons aussi rappeler l'étude de Charles Antoine<sup>161</sup> qui avait pour objectif plus général de présenter les différents courants du conservatisme catholique brésilien.

Avec ma thèse je souhaite montrer comment D. Geraldo de Proença Sigaud (évêque de Diamantina) — l'un des principaux noms du catholicisme conservateur et antimoderne brésilien — a été, avec Marcel Lefebvre et Antônio de Castro Mayer, l'un des principaux acteurs dans l'organisation de la « minorité conciliaire ». Ceci étant, le texte que je présente ici a pour objectif premier de présenter certaines des facettes principales du conservatisme catholique brésilien avant le début du concile Vatican II.

### LE CATHOLICISME BRÉSILIEN ENTRE LA RÉNOVATION PRÉCONCILIAIRE ET L'INTRANSIGEANCE ANTIMODERNE

Nous pouvons globalement affirmer que le catholicisme brésilien, jusqu'à la moitié des années 1930, avait un centre commun autour duquel il gravitait : le projet de *néo chrétienté*<sup>162</sup>, dont l'un des principaux objectifs était de rechristianiser la société brésilienne, née de la république laïque et de ses transformations économiques. « Rechristianiser » signifiait, à partir d'un mouvement laïc ample, intellectualisé et organisé, amener le catholicisme des foules — appelé « populaire », et qui s'est développé alors que le Brésil était tout à la fois sous la domination coloniale portugaise et marqué par des croyances hétérodoxes regardées avec méfiance par Rome — à une pratique qui soit guidée par les directives de la Sainte Foi.

Ainsi, l'Église brésilienne marchait dans une direction unique et son rôle était guidé par une certaine homogénéité. Le personnage principal de cette période, qui a rassemblé les catholiques autour de lui pour mener à bien son projet, était D. Sebastião Leme, archevêque de Rio de Janeiro<sup>163</sup>. L'ignorance religieuse, vilipendée par D. Leme

<sup>159</sup> De fait, rares sont les études sur Plínio Corrêa de Oliveira et son organisation. Lizanias de Souza LIMA, *Plínio Corrêa de Oliveira. Um cruzado do século XX*, 1984, Dissertação (Mestrado em História) – Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo/SP, 1984; Gizele ZANOTTO, *É o caos!!! A luta anti agro-reformista de Plínio Corrêa de Oliveira*, 2003, Dissertação (Mestrado em História) – Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Florianópolis/SC, 2003; *Tradição, Família e Propriedade (TFP). As idiosincrasias de um movimento católico (1960-1995)*, 2007, Tese (Doutorado em História) – Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Florianópolis/SC, 2007; SEIBLITZ, Zélia. Conflito na diocese de Campos, dans P. SANCHIS (dir.), *Catholicismo. Modernidade e tradição*, São Paulo, 1992.

<sup>160</sup> Roberto de MATTEI, *O cruzado do século XX. Plínio Corrêa de Oliveira*, Porto, 1996.

<sup>161</sup> Charles ANTOINE, *O integrismo brasileiro* Rio de Janeiro, 1980.

<sup>162</sup> Riolando AZZI, *A neocristandade. Um projeto restaurador*, São Paulo, 1994.

<sup>163</sup> Le moment qui marque le début de ce projet est la publication de sa Lettre pastorale, alors qu'il était encore évêque de Recife et Olinda. La pastorale de D. Leme faisait partie d'un cycle qui se déclinait à partir de la proclamation républicaine, alors que l'institution ecclésiastique concentrait ses forces dans la consolidation de réformes internes, comme le recrutement de nouveaux membres étrangers pour les

comme la grande faiblesse du catholicisme brésilien, faisait référence au catholicisme professé par le peuple, le catholicisme populaire caractérisé par ses confréries, tiers ordres, *companhias*, *folias* et *reisados*<sup>164</sup>.

Au-delà du catholicisme populaire — combattu à partir de l'époque que les chercheurs appelèrent romanisation —, d'autres ennemis surgissaient ou se confirmaient dans l'horizon catholique, comme le libéralisme et le communisme. C'est à cette période que commencèrent à surgir des groupes de laïcs qui, fort de leur combat contre les erreurs modernes, s'attaquaient maintenant aux déchets du modernisme qui polluaient l'Église, disaient-ils. Parmi ceux-ci, la pensée du français Jacques Maritain, qui arrive au Brésil pour la première fois en 1936 avec son ouvrage *Humanisme Intégral*.

Cet ouvrage de Maritain visait à dépasser, une fois de plus, la perspective des condamnations mutuelles entre la modernité et l'Église, spécialement pour tout ce qui faisait référence aux questions de l'organisation politique de l'État, et suggérait la construction d'une nouvelle chrétienté, mais fondée cette fois sur des idéaux démocratiques. De telles perspectives n'étaient pas vues d'un bon œil par ces catholiques qui concevaient encore que l'État idéal, pour le catholicisme, était une monarchie guidée par les valeurs catholiques. Ainsi, les conflits entre les groupes de catholiques qui voyaient dans l'œuvre de Maritain une grande opportunité pour l'apparition d'une Église plus adaptée à l'époque et ceux qui ne voyaient dans cette tentative qu'un danger et une hérésie seront fréquents au Brésil dans les années 1930-1960.

L'un des principaux représentants de ce laïcat brésilien, si ce n'est le principal représentant du conservatisme catholique brésilien et de son militantisme, spécialement anticommuniste, a été Plínio Corrêa de Oliveira<sup>165</sup>. On peut noter que dès les années 1920, il s'est regroupé autour de lui un groupe d'individus qui, suite à

ordres religieux et la création de diocèses. D. Leme et sa pastorale ont marqué la nouvelle ère de l'Église brésilienne de telle façon que son influence aurait commencé à s'affaiblir seulement à partir de 1942, l'année de sa mort. Voir Scott MAINWARING, *Igreja católica e política no Brasil, 1916-1985*, São Paulo, 1989.

<sup>164</sup> Augustin WERNET, *A Igreja paulista no século XIX. A reforma de D. Antônio Joaquim de Melo (1851-1861)*, São Paulo, 1987.

<sup>165</sup> Plínio est né le 13 décembre 1908 dans la ville de São Paulo. Ses parents, João Paulo Corrêa de Oliveira et Lucília Ribeiro dos Santos, mariés en 1906, appartenaient aux anciennes familles de l'aristocratie rurale qui se sont formées au Brésil à partir de la fin du XVI<sup>e</sup> s., et qui «de par leur position sociale et leur éducation, peuvent être comparées à la noblesse européenne de la même époque», voir Roberto de MATTEI, *O cruzado do século XX. Plínio Corrêa de Oliveira*, Porto, 1996, p. 34. Selon Mattei, l'avocat João Paulo Corrêa de Oliveira descendait de maîtres d'engenho du Pernambuco et la mère de Plínio, Dona Lucília, de *bandeirantes* et d'aristocrates du café. Ceci étant, les parents du futur dirigeant catholique appartenaient à la haute société de São Paulo de l'époque. Au début de l'année 1919, Plínio a commencé ses études au Collège São Luis, école appartenant à la Compagnie de Jésus et dans laquelle se retrouvaient les enfants de la classe dominante traditionnelle de São Paulo. C'est avec les jésuites et grâce à leurs enseignements que «Plínio a retrouvé l'amour de la vie méthodique, qui lui avait déjà été inculqué par la gouvernante Mathilde Heldmann, et surtout cette conception militante de la vie spirituelle à laquelle son âme aspirait profondément» (voir MATTEI, *O cruzado*, p. 52). Dans son éducation transparaissait l'ascendance que la culture française exerçait sur les classes dominantes brésiennes. Cette éducation raffinée a fait de lui un militant inflexible contre les *manières décadentes* de la société moderne.

différentes actions lors des décennies suivantes, se sont par la suite concentrés en une institution juridiquement reconnue en 1960, la « Tradition Famille et Propriété ». À partir de là, et jusqu'à l'officialisation de la *Société*, Plínio et ses amis sont devenus le bastion du catholicisme conservateur.

Le groupe qui se forme autour de Plínio deviendra, parmi tous ceux qui apparaîtront à cette époque, le plus aguerri et le plus intransigeant face à un monde toujours plus profane. En réalité, ce groupe se verra lui-même comme le dernier rempart de la tradition menacée par ceux qui veulent faire du catholicisme une religion plus proche des demandes modernes. En effet, à plusieurs endroits du monde, y compris au Brésil, se développait une perspective plus ouverte à la modernité et à ses valeurs. Différents mouvements catholiques, comme le mouvement liturgique et le mouvement théologique, visaient une appropriation des valeurs modernes, ce qui était impensable pour les disciples de Plínio. Les adhérents à ce *groupe d'élite*, particulièrement les pères Antônio de Castro Mayer<sup>166</sup> et Geraldo de Proença Sigaud<sup>167</sup>, sont devenus les plus grands et les plus aguerries défenseurs de la Tradition<sup>168</sup> consolidée par l'Église ultramontaine. En effet, ce groupe recherchait dans une identité tridentine et, plus spécialement, ultramontaine les contenus de sa grammaire<sup>169</sup>.

Nous pouvons dire que l'endroit où ces deux évêques pourront faire valoir avec le plus de force les idées pour lesquelles ils se battent sera l'évènement religieux majeur du 20<sup>e</sup> s. : le concile Vatican II (1962-1965). C'est là qu'ils deviendront, avec les autres évêques défenseurs de la même grammaire, les remparts de la Tradition, cette dernière étant considérée comme de plus en plus menacée par une société toujours plus déchristianisée et laïque. Les évêques conservateurs comprendront que le rôle qu'ils doivent jouer au concile est celui de défendre l'Église contre les représentants de cette tendance émergente de libéralisation, qui s'est développée et a pris de la vigueur durant toute la première moitié du 20<sup>e</sup> s. La répression par l'Église ultramontaine de ceux qui remettent en question les différentes certitudes dogmatiques de l'Église aura un effet différent au moment du concile. Comme l'affirme Berger, « dans ce cas

<sup>166</sup> Antônio de Castro Mayer est né à Campinas le 20 juin 1906. Il a été ordonné prêtre à Rome en 1927. Il a été coadjuteur avec droit de succession du diocèse de Campos en 1948, avant d'en devenir évêque de 1949 à 1981. Il a écrit les œuvres suivantes: *Réforme agraire. Question de conscience* (1964), en collaboration avec Geraldo PROENÇA SIGAUD, Plínio CORRÊA DE OLIVEIRA et Luiz MENDONÇA DE FREITAS, *Pour un Christianisme authentique*, Anthologie de lettres pastorales; *Et ils le crucifèrent, Sermons du Vendredi Saint, Cours de Chrétienté* (1972); *Pour le mariage indissoluble* (1975); *La Royauté de Notre Seigneur Jésus Christ* (1977); *La médiation universelle de la bienheureuse Vierge Marie* (1979); ainsi que des chroniques hebdomadaires dans *Le Monitor Campiste* sous le pseudonyme DAC.

<sup>167</sup> Geraldo Proença Sigaud est né à Belo Horizonte le 16 septembre 1909, et a été ordonné prêtre en 1932. En 1947, il a été sacré évêque de Jacarezinho (PR), où il a accompli son ministère jusqu'en 1961, année où il est devenu Archevêque Métropolitain de Diamantina (MG). Il a écrit une *Lettre pastorale sur la secte communiste* et un petit livre intitulé *Catéchisme anticommuniste*.

<sup>168</sup> Je comprends *Tradition* comme «ensemble des représentations, images, savoirs théoriques et pratiques, comportements, relations, etc., qu'un groupe ou une société accepte au nom de la continuité nécessaire entre le passé et le présent», voir Danièle HERVIEU-LÉGER, *Religione e memoria*, Bologna, 1996, p. 137.

<sup>169</sup> Je comprends ici *grammaire* «comme l'organisation articulée d'une perception, d'une réflexion ou d'une expérience; comme la structure nerveuse de la conscience quand on communique avec soi-même et avec les autres», voir George STEINER, *Gramáticas da criação*, São Paulo, 2003, p. 14.

particulier, l'allégorie freudienne de l'hydraulique s'applique très bien. Quand l'élan réprimé est finalement libéré, il menace de faire exploser l'ensemble de l'édifice. Il est clair que les bombes ont commencé à jaillir avec le Concile Vatican II<sup>170</sup> ». C'est dans ce climat que Sigaud et Mayer, ainsi que d'autres évêques, vont s'affirmer comme les gardiens de la Tradition face à la nouvelle irruption.

Ces deux évêques ont tous les deux été proches de Plínio Corrêa de Oliveira et ont joué un rôle très important dans le groupe en exerçant le rôle de garants spirituels et politiques. Forgeant leurs idéaux à partir des conceptions de l'Église du 19<sup>e</sup> et de la première moitié du 20<sup>e</sup> s. et en s'appuyant sur de nombreux documents pontificaux condamnant le monde moderne, mais aussi à partir des expériences politiques brésiliennes, spécialement les vagues anticommunistes qui ont eu lieu dans le pays — la première dans les années 1930 et la deuxième dans les années 1960 — les pères de l'ancien groupe du journal *O Legionário* — qui deviendra par la suite la TFP — ont établi, à travers les polémiques des plus variées, le cadre politico-religieux national pour des décennies.

Au-delà de ses ennemis externes, le groupe du *Legionário* voyait dans le progressisme catholique la menace majeure à l'autorité de l'Église. Il semble qu'à l'intérieur du progressisme ils incluaient toutes les idées défendues par les mouvements de rénovation nés depuis la fin du 19<sup>e</sup> s., qui se sont ensuite développés durant toute la première moitié du 20<sup>e</sup> s., et qui seront à leur comble lors du concile Vatican II (1962-1965). Parmi ces mouvements se trouvait la « nouvelle théologie », qui cherchait à réconcilier la pensée théologique avec la modernité en dépassant la réflexion scolastique. Ces mouvements comprenaient aussi le mouvement social catholique et l'expérience des prêtres ouvriers ; la fondation de la Jeunesse Ouvrière Catholique (JOC) ; le mouvement biblique, ainsi que les études catholiques endossant les découvertes des exégètes protestants ; les initiatives catholiques en faveur du mouvement œcuménique ; le mouvement liturgique, qui, se forgeant dans la tradition bénédictine, cherchait à ouvrir les chemins de la participation plus active des laïcs à la liturgie ; et le mouvement des laïcs dans son ensemble, qui s'exprime dans l'Action catholique<sup>171</sup>.

Nous pouvons prendre comme exemple de polémique le mouvement liturgique, très critiqué par Mayer et Sigaud à l'occasion des débats conciliaires sur la liturgie. Ce mouvement est né au Brésil à partir de 1933. Son initiateur fut Dom Martinho Michler, Bénédictin, arrivé depuis peu d'Allemagne, il lui est assigné la tâche de dispenser un cours de liturgie dans le tout nouvel Institut Catholique d'Études Supérieures de Rio de Janeiro, employant rapidement les moyens universitaires et intellectuels catholiques. À partir de 1935, le mouvement liturgique s'amplifie grâce à la fondation de l'Action catholique brésilienne. Les idées du mouvement, telles que la messe dialoguée, l'Office divin récité par les laïcs, la diffusion du Missel, se sont alors accrues dans tout le Brésil<sup>172</sup>.

<sup>170</sup> Peter L. BERGER, *Rumor de anjos. A sociedade moderna e a redescoberta do sobrenatural*, Petrópolis, 1997, p. 37.

<sup>171</sup> Sur ce point, voir João Batista LIBANIO, *Igreja contemporânea. Encontro com a modernidade*, São Paulo, 2000.

<sup>172</sup> José Ariovaldo SILVA, *O movimento litúrgico no Brasil. Estudo histórico*, Petrópolis, 1983.

Rapidement, les divisions autour des nouvelles pratiques liturgiques sont apparues et différentes controverses se sont succédées. La principale controverse qui a impliqué le groupe *Legionário* a eu lieu à la fin de l'année 1947 suite à l'Encyclique de Pie XII *Mediator Dei*. Dans ce document, Pie XII traçait les « lignes doctrinales et pastorales et les limites dans la promotion de la vie liturgique pour l'ensemble de l'Église<sup>173</sup> ». Le document a été reçu par le *Legionário* comme une victoire face à « l'hérésie liturgique » en développement. Le groupe du *Legionário* croyait que les dirigeants du mouvement

conduisaient à l'érosion du principe hiérarchique et des enseignements de l'Église sur le sacrement de l'ordre, identifiant et nivelant d'une certaine façon le sacerdoce ministériel et celui des fidèles. [Ils prétendaient que le mouvement liturgique faisait preuve de] rigueur et de réserve face à la dévotion à Notre Dame, aux saints, et aux images. [De plus] ils qualifiaient de désuètes certaines normes de l'ascèse classique, comme la fuite des occasions de pécher, le combat contre les passions désordonnées, etc.<sup>174</sup>.

La crainte des mouvements qui cherchaient à établir un pont entre l'Église catholique et la modernité deviendra, de cette façon, la préoccupation centrale du groupe *Legionário*. Selon les dirigeants du *Legionário*, ce fut par le mouvement liturgique et l'Action catholique que le progressisme s'est développé au Brésil. Pour eux, les traits communs qui sont nés dans ces mouvements et qui devaient être combattus par les catholiques, étaient « l'égalitarisme, c.-à-d., la tendance à un nivellement antinaturel dans l'Église et dans l'État; le libéralisme, dans ce cas l'obsession de l'adaptation de l'Église aux transformations sans cesse les plus excessives du monde néo-païen; l'aversion à l'effort, au sacrifice et à l'ascèse<sup>175</sup> ».

En 1943, à la mort de l'archevêque de São Paulo, Dom José Gaspar de Affonseca e Silva, personnalité qui manifestait déjà un grand agacement envers le mouvement de Plínio, sans toutefois prendre aucune mesure contre lui, c'est Dom Carlos Carmelo de Vasconcelos Motta qui le remplaça. Le nouvel archevêque, dont la vision était contraire à celle défendue par le *Legionário*, proposa un armistice dans le conflit généré dans les milieux catholiques par la publication de *En défense de l'Action Catholique*, de Alceu Amoroso Lima. La sensibilité plus ouverte et prête au dialogue en ce qui concerne la modernité et ses fruits commença à s'imposer dans le catholicisme brésilien, ce qui devait conduire le groupe du *Legionário* à une certaine marginalisation.

Au-delà de la diminution de l'espace accordé au *Legionário*, on observe d'autres conséquences. Plínio perdit la charge de Président du Comité diocésain de l'Action catholique de São Paulo. Mgr Antônio de Castro Mayer, l'un des plus importants collaborateurs du *Legionário*, passa en 1945 de vicaire général de l'Archidiocèse à celui de vicaire économe de la paroisse de São José de Belém, alors que Geraldo Proença Sigaud, le garant politique du groupe, fut affecté en Espagne. Les différents rédacteurs du journal perdirent leurs charges dans le mouvement catholique et, en décembre

<sup>173</sup> SILVA, *O movimento litúrgico*, p. 207.

<sup>174</sup> SOCIEDADE BRASILEIRA DE DEFESA DA TRADIÇÃO, FAMÍLIA E PROPRIEDADE. *Meio século de epopéia anticomunista*, 2 ed., São Paulo, 1980, p. 422.

<sup>175</sup> SOCIEDADE BRASILEIRA DE DEFESA DA TRADIÇÃO, FAMÍLIA E PROPRIEDADE. *Meio século de epopéia anticomunista*, p. 423.

1947, la collaboration entre Plínio et le groupe suivant ses idées au *Legionário* prit fin. Plínio et son groupe connurent un ostracisme qui dura trois ans.

En janvier 1947, le groupe reçut une nouvelle qu'ils considéraient comme un signe de la Providence divine : Sigaud fut alors sacré évêque de Jacarezinho (PR) par Pie XII. L'année suivante, Mons. Mayer fut nommé évêque coadjuteur de Campos (RJ). En 1951, Mayer fonda le mensuel *O Catolicismo*, qui, avec une ligne éditoriale similaire à celle du *Legionário*, devint l'un des principaux bastions des idées de Plínio et des catholiques conservateurs au Brésil. Le nouveau journal était dédié, tout comme le *Legionário*, au public catholique en général et avait pour objectif d'alerter les catholiques contre les facteurs de la

détérioration religieuse, morale et culturelle du monde moderne et principalement de promouvoir la lutte contre le progressisme et la « gauche catholique ». [Par ailleurs, dans la phase initiale du journal, les sujets abordés par Plínio avaient un caractère] plus prosélytiste, préoccupés à diffuser les principes idéologiques, comme s'il s'agissait d'une tentative de regroupement des forces<sup>176</sup>.

Parmi les sujets traités, on trouve les questions se rapportant à la lutte du bien contre le mal, à l'idéal de la chrétienté, aux déviances de la démocratie, au refus de la souveraineté populaire, du communisme athée, à l'identification des fléaux et des déviances de la société moderne. Il semble que les voix de l'ancien *Legionário* étaient les seules à exprimer cette forme d'engagement catholique anti-communiste semblable à celui que l'on retrouvait durant les deux décennies précédentes. On peut noter qu'à partir de 1950, et surtout après la fondation de la Conférence Nationale des Évêques du Brésil (CNBB) en 1952, on observe un changement de perspective pastorale chez la majorité des évêques. Dans une déclaration des archevêques et des évêques participants à la Semaine Nationale de l'Action Catholique en 1957, on pouvait lire la recommandation suivante : « éviter de montrer les apparences d'un compromis entre l'Église et les structures capitalistes et, face au communisme, éviter d'adopter une attitude négative de simple anti-communiste, sans combattre aussi le matérialisme capitaliste qui a conduit à la révolte, et par là-même, au communisme [...] »<sup>177</sup>.

Le mois d'avril 1959 est un moment capital si l'on veut comprendre le chemin suivi par Plínio, et par conséquent aussi par ses amis, dans ses réflexions sur l'histoire humaine et chrétienne. Le journal *Catolicismo* publie, lors de sa 100<sup>ème</sup> édition et en exclusivité, un essai de Plínio Corrêa intitulé *Révolution et contre-révolution*<sup>178</sup>, œuvre qui marqua profondément l'histoire de la pensée du charismatique leader et de ses partisans. Dans cette œuvre, les membres du groupe *Catolicismo* ont vu réunies les lignes essentielles de leur idéal et une vision panoramique de l'esprit du combat qu'ils devaient poursuivre.

En juillet 1960, s'ouvre un nouveau chapitre de l'histoire de Plínio et de son groupe par la fondation de la Société brésilienne de défense de la Tradition, de la Famille et

<sup>176</sup> Lizanias DE SOUZA LIMA, *Plínio Corrêa de Oliveira. Um cruzado do século XX*, 1984, Dissertação Mestrado em História, São Paulo/SP, 1984, p. 106.

<sup>177</sup> Antônio Flávio PIERUCCI, *A Igreja católica, 1945-1970*, dans Boris FAUSTO (dir.), *História general da civilização brasileira. O Brasil Republicano*, T. 3, São Paulo, 1984, p. 360.

<sup>178</sup> Voir Plínio CORRÊA OLIVEIRA, *Revolução e Contra-revolução*, 4 ed., São Paulo, 1998.

de la Propriété, la TFP. Le nombre croissant d'adeptes, dans tout le Brésil, des idées défendues par Plínio et ses compagnons du *Catolicismo* permettait d'instituer une association qui organiserait de façon plus efficace les actions du groupe.

Le groupe de l'ancien *Legionário* se donnait une compréhension de sa mission à travers la négation des idées qui étaient supposément contraires à celles du catholicisme. Il l'envisageait à partir d'une perspective négative. Il croyait qu'il devait réagir à l'offensive de ces forces anti-chrétiennes. *Réaction* fut le mot d'ordre de l'Église brésilienne pendant pratiquement toute la première moitié du 20<sup>e</sup> s., marquant profondément l'Église universelle du 19<sup>e</sup> s. et sa perspective ultramontaine. Le groupe de Plínio fut celui qui se saisit radicalement de cette mission de réagir contre toutes les forces d'opposition à l'Église. Et le nouveau champ de bataille qui devait exiger toutes ses forces était à l'horizon : le concile Vatican II.

### UN 'CONSERVATEUR' RÉPOND À LA «CONSULTA TARDINI»

Comme on le sait déjà, l'épiscopat brésilien était l'un des plus importants numériquement au concile, juste après celui de l'Italie et des États-Unis. Le nombre d'évêques brésiliens qui répondirent à la consultation initiée par le cardinal Tardini — sur ce dont le concile devrait discuter — dépasse la moyenne mondiale, atteignant 79%. Ces suggestions peuvent, selon Baraúna, se répartir entre trois courants que l'auteur ébauche à partir des *vota* de l'épiscopat brésilien<sup>179</sup>.

Celle qui est particulièrement intéressante est celle que l'on trouve dans les *vota* Sigaud et Mayer. En raison de la brièveté de son texte et de l'importance prise par cet évêque dans l'organisation de la minorité conciliaire, la réponse de Sigaud a été retenue. Les suggestions qu'il fait sont liées au domaine liturgique, à l'utilisation sans restriction du latin pour les messes et les sacrements, au renforcement des dogmes existants et à la proclamation de nouveaux, spécialement en ce qui concerne Marie comme co-rédemptrice, et expriment sa réticence face aux nouvelles théologies et aux idéologies en général.

L'ébauche de la réponse de Sigaud à Tardini traçait les grandes lignes de la réponse officielle qui allait composer le *vota* du prélat<sup>180</sup>. Déjà au début de son exposé, Sigaud laisse clairement entendre que ses préoccupations ne relèvent pas du

<sup>179</sup> 1) Une minorité ultraconservatrice qui est marquée par le ton condamatoire de la modernité et de ses valeurs, notamment contre le communisme et les associations telles que la Maçonnerie, le Rotary Club, le Lions Club; 2) Une minorité qui insiste sur l'Église «ad extra» et non pas sur l'Église «ad intra»; qui se positionne en faveur du dialogue dans la lutte contre certaines idées; déclarée comme «précurseur et prophétique, qui révèle clairement la conscience que le moment est venu pour l'Église de relativiser une *petite* tradition (la post-tridentine) pour renouer avec la *grande* Tradition»; 3) Une majorité constituée par les conservateurs et les modérés. Ces évêques voient la nécessité des réformes dans la liturgie, dans la discipline ecclésiastique et dans le droit canonique, en respectant et en se compromettant toutefois avec ce qui est appelé «Tradition de l'Église». Sur ces points, voir Luiz J. BARAÚNA, *Brasil*, dans José Oscar BEOZZO (dir.), *A Igreja Latino-Americana às vésperas do Concílio. História do Concílio Ecumênico Vaticano II*, São Paulo, 1993, p. 151.

<sup>180</sup> Cette ébauche se trouve dans le Fonds des archives de Dom Sigaud, Fonds Vatican II de São Paulo (désormais FVATII/SP). Il est intéressant de noter que la réponse envoyée à Rome est plus complète.



domaine dogmatique proprement dit, mais touchent à la possible insertion des idées et coutumes modernes au sein du catholicisme<sup>181</sup>.

Faisant écho aux représentants des contre-révolutionnaires du dix-neuvième s. français, Sigaud affirme que la future assemblée n'obtiendra gain de cause que si les pères regardent en face le problème fondamental de la lutte dans laquelle la société catholique est engagée — étudier avec clarté son ennemi majeur : la révolution<sup>182</sup>.

L'archevêque commence à disserter sur les causes, les caractéristiques, les agents et les prophylaxies de la Révolution. Parmi les ennemis qui doivent, selon le prélat, être combattus par les catholiques, se trouvent la maçonnerie, le judaïsme international et la Révolution<sup>183</sup>.

Sigaud maintient que la maçonnerie serait liguée au communisme pour atteindre des objectifs communs. Qui plus est, il déclare que chacun des deux mouvements sont fils du même père : le judaïsme international<sup>184</sup>. Finalement, afin d'essayer d'éviter d'être taxé d'antisémite, Sigaud fait clairement comprendre qu'il condamne tout type de persécution à l'encontre des juifs pour motifs raciaux ou culturels : « la race juive est créature de Dieu, elle a le droit de vivre, et nous n'admettons pas l'existence de races supérieures ou inférieures. La race juive n'est pas responsable pour tout ce que ses chefs font<sup>185</sup> ». D'un autre côté, il signale que

L'Église ne peut ignorer que la Synagogue, les chefs du peuple juif, conspirent contre elle. C'est un travail de sape, méthodique, continu, intelligent, conséquent, et son objectif est la destruction de l'Église et l'implantation d'un ordre naturaliste. Cet ordre rationaliste atteint tous les aspects de la vie humaine, et s'oppose en tout point à l'ordre révélé, à l'Église et à la Société catholique. Cet ordre naturaliste, radical et universel est la Révolution<sup>186</sup>.

<sup>181</sup> «Étudiant la vie de l'Église au Brésil et dans le monde, j'observe dans celle-ci un grand affaiblissement interne, une profonde pénétration des erreurs et de l'Esprit du monde. À côté de cela, je constate un impressionnant silence des évêques, une collaboration positive de nombreux membres du clergé à la Révolution. J'observe la même chose dans de nombreuses factions de la Hiérarchie qui ne parlent pas et n'agissent pas contre la Révolution. Au lieu de lutter ouvertement contre la Révolution, de nombreux membres de la Hiérarchie empêchent que de bons prêtres et de bons laïcs participent à la lutte. Sont promus à l'épiscopat les évêques révolutionnaires, et ceux-ci ont toute liberté d'action» (FVATII/SP, fonds Sigaud, 168.1/002).

<sup>182</sup> Voir FVATII/SP, Fonds Sigaud, 168.1/002

<sup>183</sup> «les regards du Concile et de toute l'Église doivent se diriger vivement vers cette secte, la Franc-Maçonnerie. Les encycliques des Papes sur cette secte sont très actuelles [...] et il est nécessaire d'enseigner aux catholiques que la Maçonnerie est le grand ennemi de l'Église, son ennemi mortel, et qu'elle est une organisation mondiale extrêmement puissante, qui dirige et foment la lutte mondiale et définitive contre l'Église» (FVATII/SP, Fonds Sigaud, 168.1/002).

<sup>184</sup> Le discours de Sigaud sur le judaïsme fait écho à la forme dont le judaïsme se présentait dans les années 1930 au Brésil. Son représentant le plus éminent, Gustavo Barroso (1888-1959), affirmait dans un de ses livres : «La question juive n'est pas, comme beaucoup de gens le pensent et comme beaucoup de juifs s'y efforcent, une question *religieuse* ou *raciale*. C'est une *question politique*. Personne ne combat le juif parce qu'il est de race sémite ni parce qu'il suit la religion de Moïse. Mais parce qu'il agit *politiquement* dans les nations, suivant un plan préconçu et mené à travers les temps». Sur ce point, voir la citation de Barroso reprise par Marcos Chon MAIO, *Qual antisemitismo? Relativizando a questão judaica no Brasil dos anos 1930*, dans Dulce PANDOLFI (dir.), *Repensando o Estado Novo*, Rio de Janeiro, 1999, p. 238.

<sup>185</sup> Voir FVATII/SP, Fonds Sigaud, 168.1/002.

<sup>186</sup> FVATII/SP, 168.1/002.

Suivant la même ligne que son ébauche, et laissant son point de vue sur le judaïsme plus clairement transparaître, le prélat de Jacarezinho affirme :

Depuis des siècles, les dirigeants de ce judaïsme conspirent contre le Nom catholique, et de façon méthodique, préparent avec une haine mortelle la destruction de l'Ordre catholique et construisent l'Ordre de l'Empire juif mondial. C'est à cela que servent la Maçonnerie et le Communisme. L'argent, les moyens d'information et la politique mondiale sont en grande partie dans les mains des Juifs. Malgré le fait qu'ils soient les plus grands capitalistes, et devraient en cela être les adversaires majeurs de la Russie et du Communisme (idem), ils n'en ont pas peur ; au contraire, ils l'aident à remporter la victoire. Les traîtres des secrets atomiques des États-Unis sont Fuchs – Golds – Gringlass – Rosenberg : tous juifs. Les fondateurs du Communisme sont juifs et ils en sont aussi les propagandistes, les organisateurs et les « financiers ». Il est question de leurs intérêts. C'est cela la réalité. Doit-on alors les haïr ? Non ! Mais il faut opposer vigilance, clarté, lutte systématique et méthodique à leur propre lutte systématique et méthodique dont l'arme secrète est « le ferment des pharisiens qu'est l'hypocrisie<sup>187</sup> ».

Suivant Sigaud, le principal ennemi de l'Église est la Révolution : « À mon humble avis, l'Église devrait organiser une lutte systématique à portée mondiale contre la Révolution<sup>188</sup> ». Il expose les principes qui doivent régir les catholique face au combat contre la Révolution, et que le concile devrait accomplir. Le premier d'entre eux serait la condamnation de certaines doctrines. Selon l'évêque, en ce qui concerne la position de la Sainte Foi face aux erreurs :

Il y a eu plusieurs déclarations, mais cela n'est pas suffisant. Jusqu'à aujourd'hui, le maritainisme n'a pas été condamné, malgré le fait que les erreurs et l'esprit du maritainisme soient très répandus et soient la cause de grands maux dans les pays d'Amérique Latine. [...] Il faut organiser la lutte contre les doctrines et les instigateurs de la doctrine, à portée mondiale, principalement dans le clergé et les ordres religieux<sup>189</sup>.

Dans sa réponse officielle, l'évêque fait référence à lui-même en disant que :

ceux qui dénoncent les erreurs et les condamnent, souffrent de persécutions de la part des collègues et sont appelés « intégristes ». Reviennent de séminaires et même de Rome, des séminaristes remplis des idées de Révolution. Ils se proclament « maritainistes », sont « disciples de Teilhard de Chardin », « socialistes catholiques », « évolutionnistes<sup>190</sup> ».

Sigaud, plus tard, demande explicitement aux futurs pères conciliaires de condamner les idées de Jacques Maritain :

Une autre condamnation tout à fait nécessaire est la condamnation de Maritain. Ses erreurs sont la cause de dommages gravissimes dans l'Église, et surtout en Amérique Latine. Le jeune clergé en est infesté. Les dommages survenus au parti de la « Démocratie Chrétienne » viennent des idées de Maritain. Les agitations politiques en Amérique sont opérées par ses disciples. Les catholiques disent : le Vatican approuve Maritain, car il a été l'ambassadeur de France auprès du Saint-Siège. Il y a des évêques qui se déclarent « mari-

<sup>187</sup> FVATII/SP, 168.1/002.

<sup>188</sup> FVATII/SP, 168.1/002.

<sup>189</sup> FVATII/SP, 168.1/002.

<sup>190</sup> BEOZZO, *A Igreja do Brasil*, p. 110-111.

tainistes ». Dans les universités catholiques du Brésil se sont ses doctrines qui prédominent. Néanmoins, Rome ne dit mot<sup>191</sup>.

Le prélat défendait le *Syllabus* de Pie IX, et suggérait « qu'il devrait même être complété et qu'une lutte du clergé contre les erreurs devrait être organisée ». Sigaud ne fait pas seulement preuve de préoccupations envers les questions doctrinales, mais il se montre aussi très préoccupé par la morale et les coutumes. Il déclare que « la condamnation de toutes les danses dans lesquelles l'homme tient la femme dans ses bras lui semble opportune ainsi que la condamnation des danses individuelles hystériques et sensuelles ». Ses préoccupations morales touchent aussi la « mode », et suggèrent que doit « être établi un critère de décence pour le monde occidental, uniforme et universel, et rappelées les idées de décence et de simplicité ». De même, le cinéma doit être éclairé par des films informatifs, puisque le « cinéma, divertissement, le cinéma roman [...] doit avoir] une autre appréciation : toute nouvelle ou roman mérite des restrictions du point de vue catholique, puisqu'il est l'excitation extravagante des sentiments, et ceci, en général, porte préjudice à l'âme ». Sigaud suggère que soit créé à Rome un comité de critiques, dont l'opinion devrait être obligatoirement respectée par chaque Église. Faisant ainsi allusion aux livres que l'Inquisition a condamnés, il cite une nouvelle fois Jacques Maritain et ses œuvres<sup>192</sup>.

En ce qui concerne les « difficultés internes » de l'Église, l'évêque de Jacarezinho fait remarquer la « stagnation de la scolastique » et la « tendance à suivre les doctrines incorrectes [...] l'existentialisme, le socialisme, créant des adaptations honteuses ». Il souligne que l'Église devrait « faire rigoureusement remarquer à ses fils les dangers du naturalisme pédagogique, qui conçoit l'enfance comme un âge idéal, où l'être humain est presque angélique, libre des passions du péché originel<sup>193</sup> ».

L'évêque explique enfin comment combattre la Révolution : « à partir du moment où le complot de la Révolution est unique, il faut qu'il soit combattu par un plan naturel et unique [...] une société contre-révolutionnaire, construite sur les bases de la doctrine de l'Église ». Pour Sigaud, « ce dont l'Église a besoin ce n'est pas de proposer quelques retouches par lesquelles la société actuelle serait rechristianisée. On a besoin de donner une idée de l'Ordre Catholique idéal et de créer un mouvement réellement décidé à réaliser un tel ordre<sup>194</sup> ».

## CONCLUSION

Le groupe qui se forme autour de Sigaud, Mayer et Lefebvre au cours du concile Vatican II et qui formera le cœur du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum*, fer de lance de la « minorité conciliaire », a eu au Brésil un itinéraire marqué par des perspectives particulières d'intransigeance. À partir de la formation d'un groupe de catholiques dans les années 1930 — ayant Plínio Corrêa de Oliveira comme leader — liés autour du Journal *Le Legionário*, on a assisté à de nombreuses polémiques contre d'autres groupes catholiques qui visaient une adaptation aux valeurs modernes à travers beaucoup de mouvements tels que le

<sup>191</sup> BEOZZO, *A Igreja do Brasil*, p. 110-111.

<sup>192</sup> *Acta et Documenta concilio oecumenico Vaticano II* (désormais ADA, I/II, p. 190).

<sup>193</sup> ADA, I/II, p. 190.

<sup>194</sup> BEOZZO, *A Igreja do Brasil*, p. 111-112.

mouvement liturgique, théologique et moral. Les pères Sigaud et Mayer étaient considérés comme de grands polémistes, marqués par une sensibilité antimoderne qui voit comme une hérésie toute possibilité d'entente avec la modernité. De ce fait, ils les attaquent afin de défendre l'Église.

La réponse de ces deux archevêques à la lettre « Tardini » demeure une importante source pour la compréhension de cette sensibilité. On peut y vérifier quelques-uns de principaux aspects de la pensée antimoderne catholique brésilienne. Ainsi, l'analyse de la réponse de Sigaud est paradigmatique. Elle est marquée par le ton de l'Église ultramontaine, défensif et de condamnation. Sigaud désire que le futur concile établisse une organisation catholique mondiale contre-révolutionnaire, la condamnation des idées de Jacques Maritain et de Teilhard de Chardin, les coryphées du modernisme selon l'archevêque. Il demande en outre une position très claire contre le communisme et sa principale cause : le judaïsme international et la maçonnerie. Par la suite, au cours des débats conciliaires, il sera possible de vérifier une continuité entre les propositions de Sigaud et les positions des membres du *Coetus* mobilisés par un idéal de « rechristianisation » des sociétés sécularisées, avides de nouvelles condamnations contre les positions qu'ils considéraient dangereuses pour l'Église romaine.

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# LA PRÉHISTOIRE DU COETUS INTERNATIONALIS PATRUM

UNE FORMATION ROMAINE, ANTILIBÉRALE ET CONTRE-RÉVOLUTIONNAIRE

## INTRODUCTION

Le *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* (CIP) fut le groupe fédérateur de la minorité conservatrice (traditionaliste) pendant le concile Vatican II<sup>1</sup>. Il fut fondé — au moins à l'état embryonnaire — dès la première session<sup>2</sup> par Mgr Marcel Lefebvre, Mgr Geraldo de Proença Sigaud, Mgr Antonio de Castro Mayer et probablement dom Jean Prou de l'abbaye de Solesmes. Ces quatre Pères conciliaires, avec Mgr Luigi Carli qui se joindra à eux à partir de la deuxième session<sup>3</sup>, formaient le « comité directeur » du groupe<sup>4</sup>. Aidés par quelques théologiens — Victor-Alain Berto et dom Georges Frénaud furent les plus importants d'entre eux — ils organisaient la stratégie et les combats du groupe<sup>5</sup>.

Aux côtés de ces dirigeants, il y avait des sympathisants (environ une trentaine<sup>6</sup>) et des signataires d'occasion (environ 250). Il faut également souligner le soutien des cardinaux Michaël Browne, Giuseppe Siri et Rufino Santos, mais surtout celui d'Arcadio Larraona et d'Ernesto Ruffini. Ce dernier soutint le groupe dès la première période du concile<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Cette brève présentation du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* est établie à partir de nos recherches sur le sujet pour notre thèse de doctorat en cours d'élaboration. Sur ce groupe, quelques travaux pionniers déjà été réalisés. Voir Luc PERRIN, *Il "Coetus Internationalis Patrum" e la minoranza conciliare*, dans *L'Evento e le decisioni, Studi sulle dinamiche del concilio Vaticano II*, Maria Teresa FATTORI et Alberto MELLONI (dir.), *Testi e ricerche di scienze religiose*, nuova serie 20, Bologna, 1997, p. 173-187; *Le Coetus Internationalis Patrum et la minorité à Vatican II*, dans *Catholica*, 63, (1999), p. 71-84. Voir également Salvador Gómez DE ARTECHE Y CATALINA, qui évoque le groupe en quelques pages dans sa thèse de doctorat intitulée *Grupos «extra aulam» en el II concilio Vaticano y su influencia*, Valladolid, 1980.

<sup>2</sup> Lettre de Mgr Marcel LEFEBVRE au cardinal William GODFREY, Rome, le 19 octobre 1962, Archives Écône, fonds Marcel Lefebvre, E02-05, 001.

<sup>3</sup> Ralph Michael WILTGEN, *Le Rhin se jette dans le Tibre. Le Concile inconnu*, Paris, 1974, p. 88-89; Invitation-circulaire de Mgr Geraldo DE PROENÇA SIGAUD, Dimanche 13 octobre 1963, Archives de l'Archidiocèse de Diamantina, fonds Geraldo de Proença Sigaud; Lettre de Victor-Alain BERTO à Mgr Luigi CARLI, Rome, le 6 novembre 1963, cité dans Nicola BUONASORTE, *Per la 'pura, piena, integra fede cattolica'. Il p. Victor Alain BERTO al concilio Vaticano II*, dans *Cristianesimo nella storia*, n° 22, 2001, p. 122-125.

<sup>4</sup> Procès verbal de la réunion du samedi 12 octobre 1963, Archives des Dominicaines du Saint-Esprit, fonds Victor-Alain BERTO.

<sup>5</sup> Procès verbal de la réunion du samedi 12 octobre 1963.

<sup>6</sup> La liste sera publiée dans notre thèse de doctorat.

<sup>7</sup> Lettre de Mgr Geraldo DE PROENÇA SIGAUD à Mgr Marcel LEFEBVRE, Diamantina, le 18 avril 1963, Archives Écône, fonds Marcel Lefebvre, E02-09A, 001.

Le *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* s'est organisé au fil des sessions et des intersessions. Pendant la première période du concile, certains Pères traditionalistes se sont réunis au sein d'un *piccolo comitato*, dont l'existence est certaine<sup>8</sup>, mais à propos duquel les archives sont extrêmement lacunaires. Pendant la première intersession, Geraldo de Proença Sigaud écrit à Marcel Lefebvre pour lui demander s'il voulait bien continuer à œuvrer au sein de ce Groupe d'Études<sup>9</sup>. Ainsi, à l'ouverture de la deuxième session, ces Pères conciliaires s'organisèrent formellement, comme le prouvent les quelques procès verbaux conservés dans les archives du *peritus* de Marcel Lefebvre<sup>10</sup>. Cependant, ce n'est qu'à partir de la troisième session que le groupe prit formellement le nom de *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* et qu'il devint véritablement structuré et efficace. Enfin, pendant la quatrième session, le groupe changea de nom, après que le cardinal Cicognani, Secrétaire d'État, leur ait reproché de s'être associé sous un nom de nature à diviser l'assemblée<sup>11</sup>. Les membres du groupe modifièrent leur appellation en *Comitatus episcopalis internationalis*, sans rien changer cependant ni à leur tactique, ni à leurs combats.

L'action du groupe présidé par Marcel Lefebvre se répartissait essentiellement de la manière suivante : chaque semaine, le comité directeur organisait des conférences publiques sur les grands thèmes débattus au concile, dont les textes étaient distribués dans Rome. À partir de la troisième session, le groupe disposait d'un secrétariat tout près de la place St-Pierre. Les Pères conciliaires pouvaient venir y chercher des documents et des conseils<sup>12</sup>. De plus, les membres du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* intervenaient parfois de façon organisée dans l'*aula*, de manière à ce que l'ensemble des points d'un schéma avec lesquels ils étaient en désaccord soit critiqué par au moins un membre du groupe. Ils s'organisaient également pour faire signer leurs interventions par d'autres Pères conciliaires, espérant par ce moyen avoir un plus grand poids vis-à-vis des Commission conciliaires chargées de réviser les textes. Le groupe fit également circuler plusieurs pétitions dont certaines recueillirent un très grand nombre de signatures. Il faut cependant mentionner qu'aucune adhésion formelle n'était demandée à qui que ce soit, et chacun gardait une totale indépendance.

Les sujets sur lesquels la mobilisation du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* fut la plus importante furent la collégialité et la question des pouvoirs des conférences épiscopales, dont il était question tout particulièrement dans les schémas *de Ecclesia* et *de pastoralis episcoporum munere in Ecclesia*. Les membres du groupe firent également bloc contre la liberté religieuse et le communisme. En matière liturgique, même si les

<sup>8</sup> Lettre de Mgr Marcel LEFEBVRE au cardinal William GODFREY, Rome, le 19 octobre 1962. Archives Écône, fonds Marcel Lefebvre, E02-05 001.

<sup>9</sup> Lettre de Mgr Geraldo DE PROENÇA SIGAUD à Mgr Marcel LEFEBVRE, Diamantina, le 18 avril 1963, Archives Écône, fonds Marcel Lefebvre, E02-09A, 001.

<sup>10</sup> Procès verbal de l'assemblée du jeudi 3 octobre à 17h00, «Conventus quorundam Patrum Concilii Vaticani II...», Procès verbal de l'assemblée du mardi 8 octobre à 17h00, Archives des Dominicaines du Saint-Esprit, fonds Victor-Alain Berto.

<sup>11</sup> Lettre du cardinal Amleto CICOGNANI à Mgr Luigi CARLI, Cité du Vatican, le 11 août 1965, AS VI/IV, 410-411.

<sup>12</sup> Lettre de l'abbé Victor-Alain BERTO à A., le 23 septembre 1964; lettre de l'abbé Victor-Alain BERTO à D., le 23 septembre 1964, Archives des Dominicaines du Saint-Esprit, fonds Victor-Alain Berto, dossier «Le deuxième Concile du Vatican».

positions étaient plus nuancées, ils se prononcèrent tous en faveur du maintien de la langue latine. Il faut également mentionner leur maximalisme mariologique<sup>13</sup>.

Bref, l'histoire du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum*, c'est l'histoire condensée de tous les combats de l'intransigeance catholique au 20<sup>e</sup> s. Au concile, les conservateurs se retrouvèrent en même temps dans un même lieu pour défendre ensemble les traditions ecclésiastiques battues en brèche par un vent de renouveau. Cependant, contrairement à la position de force qu'ils occupaient au début du siècle, ils étaient alors en minorité et dans une position défensive. Ce qu'ils défendirent au concile, ce n'était rien d'autre que l'*habitus* théologique qu'ils avaient contracté pendant leur formation romaine, antilibérale et contre-révolutionnaire<sup>14</sup>. En effet, à part dom Jean Prou, abbé de Solesmes, tous les membres du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* ont un point commun : des études à Rome. Elles se firent en trois lieux distincts : au Séminaire français de Rome, à la Grégorienne et au Latran.

## LE SÉMINAIRE FRANÇAIS DE ROME SOUS LE RECTORAT DU PÈRE LE FLOCH

### UN FOYER DU COETUS INTERNATIONALIS PATRUM

Le Séminaire français de Rome, sous le rectorat du père Henri Le Floch (1904-1927), fut l'un des principaux foyers du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum*. La démonstration en est assez aisée. En effet, le CIP était composé d'un nombre assez important d'anciens élèves du Séminaire. Marcel Lefebvre (1923-1930<sup>15</sup>), tout d'abord, qui logea au Séminaire pendant les sessions de la Commission Centrale préparatoire<sup>16</sup>, était l'un des fondateurs du groupe dont il assuma la présidence. Tout comme son *peritus* et secrétaire du *Coetus*, Victor-Alain Berto (1921-1926<sup>17</sup>), il revendiquait hautement l'héritage du Séminaire français. Parmi les anciens, il y avait également Raymond Dulac

<sup>13</sup> Établi à partir des conclusions de nos recherches doctorales sur le *Coetus Internationalis Patrum*.

<sup>14</sup> Dans notre communication, nous avons également abordé l'appartenance des membres du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* à des réseaux intransigeants aux ramifications internationales, la revue *Divinitas*, la revue *La Pensée catholique*, le mouvement *La Cité Catholique* et sa revue *Verbe*, la revue *Itinéraires*, les revues brésiliennes *O Legionario* et *Catolicismo*, ainsi que le mouvement Tradition Famille Propriété. Nous avons montré que ces réseaux étaient inter reliés et qu'ils participaient également, et d'une façon très importante, à la préhistoire du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum*. Cependant, le nombre de pages qui nous est imparti étant limité, nous avons choisi de nous focaliser sur la formation des membres du CIP plutôt que de survoler superficiellement l'ensemble du sujet.

<sup>15</sup> Philippe LEVILLAIN, *Les évêques français. Le Séminaire pontifical français de Rome et le deuxième concile du Vatican (1962-1965)*, dans Philippe LEVILLAIN, Philippe BOUTRY et Yves-Marie FRADET (dir.), *150 ans au cœur de Rome. Le Séminaire français 1853-2003*, Paris, 2004, p. 160. En annexe à cet article, l'auteur a joint une liste des anciens étudiants du Séminaire français qui ont participé au concile VaticanII. Cette liste n'est cependant pas complète : nous avons remarqué l'absence de Mgr John McQuaid ; Paul AIRIAU, *Le Séminaire français de Rome du père Le Floch, 1904-1927*, thèse de doctorat, Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris, 2003, f.303 ; Sur les années de Marcel LEFEBVRE dans ce séminaire, voir Bernard TISSIER DE MALLERAI, *Marcel LEFEBVRE, une vie*, Paris, 2002, p. 39-83.

<sup>16</sup> Lettre de Mgr Marcel LEFEBVRE à Mgr Pericle FELICI, Secrétaire Général de la Commission Centrale, le 30 septembre 1961. Archives Écône, fonds Marcel Lefebvre, E02-01.

<sup>17</sup> Paul AIRIAU, *Le Séminaire français de Rome du père Le Floch, 1904-1927*, op. cit., f.26.



(1920-1926<sup>18</sup>), théologien du *Coetus* au moins durant la dernière session et fondateur, quelques années plus tard, du *Courrier de Rome*, bulletin critique sur l'Église post-conciliaire. Ses archives se trouvent au Séminaire d'Écône et chez les Dominicains du Saint-Esprit (Pontcalec), société de vie apostolique de droit pontifical, fondée par Victor-Alain Berto. Par ailleurs, les positions du CIP étaient diffusées par l'abbé Luc J. Lefèvre (1919-1925<sup>19</sup>) dans *La Pensée catholique*, revue qui relayait les positions de Mgr Lefèvre jusque vers 1975. Il faut également considérer dom Paul Nau (1924-1928<sup>20</sup>) et dom Georges Frénaud (1919-1927<sup>21</sup>), bénédictins de Solesmes, qui travaillèrent également pour le CIP. Il y avait aussi Mgr Henri Lusseau (1921-1924<sup>22</sup>) qui, s'il ne s'est pas déplacé à Rome pour l'événement conciliaire, collaborait avec le *Coetus* lors des réunions tenues à Solesmes pendant les intersessions. À leurs côtés, se trouvaient Mgr Pierre de la Chanonie (1920-1926<sup>23</sup>), ainsi que deux spiritains : le Portugais Moïse Alves de Pinho (1905-1910<sup>24</sup>) et l'Irlandais John McQuaid (1924-1925<sup>25</sup>). Il ne faut pas oublier Mgr Jean Rupp (1933-1936<sup>26</sup>) et Mgr Morilleau (1936-1938<sup>27</sup>), également anciens du Séminaire français, mais sous la direction du père Jean-Baptiste Frey (rectorat 1933-1939).

Ainsi, le *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* comptait douze anciens du Séminaire français :

NOM	Séminaire français	Nombre d'années
Moïse ALVES DE PINHO	1905-1910	5
Luc J. LEFÈVRE	1919-1925	6
Georges FRÉNAUD	1919-1927	8
Pierre DE LA CHANONIE	1920-1926	6
Raymond DULAC	1920-1926	6
Henri LUSSEAU	1921-1924	3
Victor-Alain BERTO	1921-1926	5
Marcel LEFÈVRE	1923-1930	7
John MCQUAID	1924-1925	1
Paul NAU	1924-1928	4

<sup>18</sup> AIRIAU, *Le Séminaire français*.

<sup>19</sup> AIRIAU, *Le Séminaire français*.

<sup>20</sup> AIRIAU, *Le Séminaire français*.

<sup>21</sup> AIRIAU, *Le Séminaire français*.

<sup>22</sup> Archives de l'Université Catholique de l'Ouest, Série G (personnel enseignant de la faculté de théologie), Cote 2G7 (Mgr Lusseau).

<sup>23</sup> Philippe LEVILLAIN, *Les évêques français*, p. 159; AIRIAU, *Le Séminaire français*, f.587.

<sup>24</sup> Philippe LEVILLAIN, *Les évêques français*, p. 158; AIRIAU, *Le Séminaire français*, f.818.

<sup>25</sup> AIRIAU, *Le Séminaire français*, f.818.

<sup>26</sup> LEVILLAIN, *Les évêques français*, p. 162.

<sup>27</sup> LEVILLAIN, *Les évêques français*, p. 162.

Jean RUPP	1933-1936	3
Xavier MORILLEAU	1936-1938	2
MOYENNE		5 ans

Dix d'entre eux y firent leur cursus, en partie ou en totalité, alors que l'établissement était sous la direction du père Henri Le Floch (1904-1927). Cette convergence et l'importance numérique de ces anciens du Séminaire français de Rome au sein du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* soulèvent une interrogation : la formation qui y était donnée et le climat dans lequel les élèves évoluèrent sont-ils en mesure d'expliquer leur résistance au concile ?

### UNE FONDATION ULTRAMONTAINE

Nous n'allons pas nous arrêter de façon détaillée sur la fondation du Séminaire. Mentionnons seulement quelques généralités qui aideront à comprendre la formation qui y était dispensée. Le Séminaire français de Rome fut fondé en 1853 par la Congrégation du Saint-Esprit. Elle avait été encouragée par des évêques ultramontains comme le cardinal Gousset (archevêque de Reims), Mgr Parisi (évêque d'Arras), Mgr de Salinis (évêque d'Amiens), Mgr Pie (évêque de Poitiers) et Mgr Cousseau (évêque d'Angoulême)<sup>28</sup>. Elle fut également encouragée et aidée par des intransigeants comme Mgr de Ségur<sup>29</sup> (alors à Rome), Louis Veuillot et l'abbé Marie-Dominique Bouix<sup>30</sup>. La fondation fut également encouragée par Pie IX, qui voulait que ce séminaire soit « institué comme contrepoison du Gallicanisme<sup>31</sup> ». Les papes qui se succédèrent sur le siège de Pierre portèrent tous un grand intérêt à cet établissement et s'y impliquèrent même directement, comme l'explique le père Frey dans l'introduction d'un ouvrage sur le Séminaire publié en 1935 : « De nombreux documents émanés du Saint-Siège l'ont lentement façonné, et dans les allocutions qu'ils voulaient bien adresser aux élèves dans de fréquentes audiences, les Papes leur ont prodigué les conseils et les directives<sup>32</sup> ».

Lorsqu'il conféra à l'établissement le titre de Séminaire Pontifical, par le bref *Cum nihil potius* du 20 juin 1902, Léon XIII indiqua que c'était pour que « tous [les] membres [du séminaire], directeurs et élèves, se sentent rattachés au Pontife Romain par des liens

<sup>28</sup> Première ébauche du projet du Séminaire, écrite par le père Lannurien et adressée par le père Schwindenhammer au cardinal Franson. Archives spiritaines de Chevilly-Larue. Ce projet est reproduit par Marthe de HÉDOUVILLE dans, *Monseigneur de Ségur. Sa vie. Son action. 1820-1881*, Paris, 1957, p. 211-212.

<sup>29</sup> *Annales de la maison du Saint-Cœur de Marie à Rome*, p. 3. Archives Séminaire français DiB. Cité dans le chapitre de Roger BILLY, *Le père Louis-Marie Lannurien fondateur du Séminaire français de Rome*, dans LEVILLAIN, BOUTRY et FRADET (dir.), *150 ans au cœur de Rome*, p. 20.

<sup>30</sup> Séminaire Pontifical Français de Rome, «Le Collège irlandais», <<http://www.seminairefrancaisderome.org/lettres6.php>>, [page consultée le 8 février 2010].

<sup>31</sup> Lettre du père LANNURIEN à M. LEBERRE, le 14 juillet 1853. Citée sur le site Internet du Séminaire, <<http://www.seminairefrancaisderome.org/lettres6.php>>, [page consultée le 17 juillet 2009].

<sup>32</sup> Jean-Baptiste FREY, *Le Saint-Siège et le Séminaire Français de Rome. Lettres et allocutions pontificales*, Cité du Vatican, 1935, p.XI.

encore plus étroits de piété filiale<sup>33</sup> ». Son successeur, Pie X, n'en pensait pas moins, comme le prouvent les mots qu'il eut pour l'institution lors d'une audience accordée au Séminaire, le 3 décembre 1910<sup>34</sup>. Le pape Pie XI fut probablement celui qui exprima le plus explicitement les desseins papaux vis-à-vis du Séminaire français de Rome. Ainsi, lors d'une audience qu'il accorda aux professeurs et élèves, le 19 avril 1923, il leur dit : « Vous êtes venus chercher au Séminaire Français, avec le perfectionnement de vos études, une élévation plus grande, plus ardente, plus lumineuse de votre foi, de vos sentiments chrétiens, de cette romanité qui est vraiment la perfection de la catholicité<sup>35</sup> ».

Ultimement, le but de la papauté dans la fondation du Séminaire fut bien de romaniser le clergé français. C'est pour cette raison que les différents papes qui se succédèrent sur le trône de Pierre comblèrent l'établissement des spiritains de gloire et de faveurs. Ainsi, à l'occasion du soixante-quinzième anniversaire de la fondation, en 1928, Pie XI fit deux dons, l'un de 500 000 et l'autre de 250 000 francs<sup>36</sup>. Plus tard, en 1934, l'Association des Amis du Séminaire fut érigée canoniquement et reçut plusieurs avantages de la Sacrée Pénitencerie<sup>37</sup>.

### LE RECTORAT DU PÈRE HENRI LE FLOCH

La plupart des membres et sympathisants du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* qui ont étudié au Séminaire français de Rome ont fréquenté l'établissement pendant une période bien précise, celle du rectorat du père Henri Le Floch (1904-1927). Celui-ci avait un tel ascendant sur les séminaristes qu'il convient de s'attarder sur sa personne et son supériorat, de façon à connaître et pénétrer l'univers mental et culturel dans lequel ils baignèrent pendant quelques années. Pour plusieurs d'entre eux, leur passage au Séminaire estampilla leur catholicité d'un sceau indélébile qu'il est nécessaire d'analyser pour comprendre leur conception du catholicisme.

Henri Le Floch naquit en 1862. Il était le fils aîné d'une famille paysanne et contre-révolutionnaire de Kerlaz, petite commune située dans le département du Finistère en Bretagne. En 1875, malgré l'opposition de son père, qui le prédestinait à reprendre la ferme familiale, il entra au petit séminaire de Pont-Croix. Trois ans plus tard, en 1878, il entra au scolasticat spiritain de Langonnet dans le Morbihan, puis, en 1882, au grand scolasticat de Chevilly. Ordonné prêtre en octobre 1886, il fit sa profession le 28 août de l'année suivante. Sa carrière débuta par différentes nominations dans des établissements scolaires tenus par sa congrégation : il fut tout d'abord envoyé à Notre-Dame d'Espérance de Merville comme professeur de philosophie et préfet du petit scolasticat. En 1889, il fut transféré, avec le même poste, à l'institution Saint-Joseph d'Épinal. En 1894, il fut envoyé à la Sorbonne par le conseil général de sa congrégation afin de faire une licence ès-lettres. Lorsqu'il eut obtenu son grade, il fut nommé supérieur de l'institut du Saint-Esprit de Beauvais. Sa gestion étant appréciée

<sup>33</sup> LÉON XIII, Bref *Cum nihil potius* du 20 juin 1902.

<sup>34</sup> PIE X, *Les Échos de Sancta Chiara*, janvier-février 1911, p. 101-102.

<sup>35</sup> PIE XI, Audience au Séminaire français de Rome, le 19 avril 1923, cité dans FREY, *Le Saint-Siège et le Séminaire Français*, p. 109.

<sup>36</sup> FREY, *Le Saint-Siège et le Séminaire Français*, p. 127.

<sup>37</sup> FREY, *Le Saint-Siège et le Séminaire Français*, p. 141.

à tous les niveaux, il fut nommé supérieur du grand scolasticat de Chevilly. Là, il continua la réforme des études entreprise par son prédécesseur, mais des problèmes de santé l'obligèrent à quitter son poste. Il profita de son repos forcé pour rédiger une biographie du fondateur de sa Congrégation, ouvrage couronné par l'Académie française<sup>38</sup>. En octobre 1904, il reçut un doctorat *honoris causa* de l'Institut de philosophie de Louvain et, en juillet de l'année suivante, il obtint un doctorat en théologie.

En 1904, il accepta le poste de recteur du Séminaire français de Rome, que des difficultés internes obligeaient à un changement de direction. Sous son impulsion, le séminaire se transforma, devenant peu à peu une institution fréquentée par une certaine élite, ce qui était important aux yeux du père Le Floch qui publia d'ailleurs, en 1916, un ouvrage sur *Les élites sociales et le sacerdoce*<sup>39</sup>, préfacé par le cardinal Billot. Le père Le Floch possédait par ailleurs l'appui de plusieurs membres de la curie, de Pie X lui-même, mais aussi du cardinal Merry del Val, et il était en relation avec les membres les plus représentatifs du catholicisme intransigeant de la première moitié du 20<sup>e</sup> s., comme le père Pie de Langogne, le père Jean-Baptiste Lemius, Mgr Abel Gilbert, tous consultants de congrégations romaines, mais aussi l'abbé Emmanuel Barbier, le chanoine Bernard Gaudeau, le père Edward Maxim Mateo Crawley, René Bazin, le général Édouard de Castelnau, etc. Il avait également des liens avec la Sapinière : il ne semble pas qu'il en fut formellement membre, mais son nom est mentionné dans les papiers de l'association<sup>40</sup> et il servit d'informateur et d'intermédiaire à Mgr Benigni, de qui il recevait des informations et de la documentation<sup>41</sup>. Le père Le Floch, qui diffusait lui-même auprès de ses élèves la théorie du complot judéo-maçonnique<sup>42</sup>, était également en contact avec les milieux antimaçonniques français, en particulier Paul Copin-Albancelli, l'abbé Jouin et sa *Revue internationale des sociétés secrètes*, Mgr Delassus, etc., mais sans faire partie lui-même d'aucune organisation<sup>43</sup>. Sous son rectorat, les auteurs ultramontains et intransigeants étaient par ailleurs privilégiés au sein du séminaire : l'*Histoire de l'Église* de François-René Rohrbacher et celle de Jean-Épiphane Darras étaient lues à table<sup>44</sup>, ainsi que, par exemple, les *Considérations sur la France* de Joseph de Maistre<sup>45</sup>, *Les Origines de la Civilisation Moderne* de

<sup>38</sup> Henri LE FLOCH, *Une vocation et une fondation au siècle de Louis XIV. Claude-François Poullart des Places, fondateur du Séminaire et de la Congrégation du Saint-Esprit (1679-1709)*, Paris, 1906, XXIII-570 pages.

<sup>39</sup> Henri LE FLOCH, *Les Élites sociales et le sacerdoce*. Paris, 1916, 68 pages.

<sup>40</sup> Émile POULAT, *Intégrisme et catholicisme intégral. Un réseau secret international antimodernist. La «Sapinière» (1902-1921)*, Paris, Tournai, 1969, p. 451-451.

<sup>41</sup> AIRIAU, *Le séminaire français*, ff. 486-487.

<sup>42</sup> AIRIAU, *Le séminaire français*, ff. 486-487.

<sup>43</sup> AIRIAU, *Le séminaire français*, ff. 486-487.

<sup>44</sup> Notes de dom Paul NAU prises vraisemblablement lors d'une conférence du père LE FLOCH au Séminaire français le 26 février 1926, Archives Solesmes, Carton Action française, dossier «Action française – Séminaire français», (il s'agit d'un dossier qui appartenait à dom Paul NAU), sous-dossier «Séminaire français 1927-1928». Ces notes, particulièrement éclairantes sur la vision de l'histoire du père Le Floch et des catholiques intransigeants, sont reproduites en appendice de ce chapitre.

<sup>45</sup> AIRIAU, *Le séminaire français*, ff. 721.

Godefroid Kurth<sup>46</sup> et *Les Sociétés Secrètes et la Société* du jésuite Deschamps<sup>47</sup>. La lecture des œuvres du cardinal Pie était recommandée<sup>48</sup>. Au niveau politique, le père Le Floch s'opposa aux catholiques libéraux, en raison de leur remise en cause du droit public de l'Église et parce qu'ils défendaient le droit commun. Ainsi, à l'instar du cardinal Pie et de Mgr Freppel par exemple, il préconisait une action politique basée sur l'affirmation doctrinale du droit public de l'Église et sur la fédération et l'organisation des catholiques en corps unis<sup>49</sup>. Son appui pour l'Action française, qui voulait restaurer une monarchie antilibérale donnant une place de première importance à l'Église, n'est donc pas étonnant. Il recevait par ailleurs gratuitement le quotidien de l'organisation depuis 1908<sup>50</sup> et Charles Maurras estimait beaucoup le père Le Floch, « cet homme admirable et saint<sup>51</sup> ». Au Séminaire, si le recteur ne se prononça pas publiquement sur le sujet, il n'empêcha pas (laisa faire) la propagande qui était faite en faveur de l'Action française, à la fois par certains élèves et par certains dirigeants. Cette propagande devint de plus en plus prégnante à partir des années 1920, en particulier suite à une conférence de l'abbé Henri Lusseau sur le sujet. Dans cette communication, qui semble avoir eu un vif succès, l'orateur tâcha de démontrer qu'une alliance était possible entre les catholiques et l'Action française<sup>52</sup>.

Le père Le Floch avait tout à fait l'esprit qui prédominait à la curie, celui de Pie X et du cardinal Merry del Val, comme le prouve ses nombreuses affectations au sein de différentes congrégations romaines : il fut consulteur de la Propagande (18 mai 1907), de la Consistoriale (6 novembre 1908), des Études (29 janvier 1913), de la nouvelle Congrégation des Séminaires, des Universités et des Études (30 novembre 1915), du Saint-Office (17 juin 1918), ainsi que de la Congrégation pour l'Église orientale (1923). En 1923, il devint procureur général de la Congrégation du Saint-Esprit. Il se servit de ses contacts pour promouvoir des évêques intransigeants en France, ce qui explique l'hostilité des catholiques sociaux et républicains à son égard. Il se fit également des ennemis durables en des personnes bien placées comme par exemple Louis Canet, conseiller pour les affaires religieuses au ministère des Affaires étrangères du gouvernement français, nettement moderniste et gallican au plan religieux, et républicain et anti-maurassien au niveau politique. Louis Canet eut l'occasion de porter une attaque directe contre les orientations du Séminaire et de son recteur à partir de l'arrivée au pouvoir du Cartel des Gauches en 1924. En janvier et en mars 1925, informé par Louis Canet, Édouard Herriot dénonça la théologie politique du Séminaire à la tribune de la Chambre, ce qui déclencha une vive polémique.

<sup>46</sup> DENIS FAHEY, *A Brief Sketch of My Life Work*, texte disponible dans la revue *The Angelus*, 26 (2001) : <[http://www.realnews247.com/Angelus%20Fr\\_%20Denis%20Fahey,%20C\\_S\\_Sp\\_%20A%20Brief%20Sketch%20of%20My%20Life%20Work.htm](http://www.realnews247.com/Angelus%20Fr_%20Denis%20Fahey,%20C_S_Sp_%20A%20Brief%20Sketch%20of%20My%20Life%20Work.htm)>, [page consultée le 12 janvier 2010].

<sup>47</sup> FAHEY, *A Brief sketch*.

<sup>48</sup> FAHEY, *A Brief sketch*.

<sup>49</sup> AIRIAU, *Le séminaire français*, ff. 490-493.

<sup>50</sup> AIRIAU, *Le séminaire français*, f. 497; PAUL AIRIAU, *Henri Le Floch, recteur du Séminaire français (1904-1927)*, dans LEVILLAIN, BOUTRY et Yves-FRADET (dir.), *150 ans au cœur de Rome*, p. 110.

<sup>51</sup> Lettre de Charles Maurras à Maxime Réal del Sarte, 1951, dans ANDRÉ GLANDY, *Maxime Real del Sarte. Sa vie – son œuvre*, préface de Henry Bordeaux, Paris, 1955, p. 231.

<sup>52</sup> AIRIAU, *Le séminaire français*, ff. 677-692.

Lors du rectorat du père Le Floch, le nombre d'étudiants ne cessa d'augmenter : de 100 en 1904, il passa à 120 en 1907-1908, à 140 en 1914 et à plus de 200 en 1926. En 22 ans, le nombre d'étudiants avait doublé. Cet accroissement rapide peut s'expliquer par la prolongation de la durée moyenne du séjour dans le Séminaire<sup>53</sup>, mais il faut principalement considérer l'*aura* personnelle du père Le Floch. En effet, comme le montre le travail du père Yves-Marie Fradet, la courbe des effectifs du séminaire fut ascendante jusqu'en 1926, mais à partir de l'année suivante, qui correspond à l'année où le père Le Floch fut écarté, la courbe fut en décroissance assez régulière<sup>54</sup>.

À la fin de l'été 1926, la première mise en garde de Pie XI contre l'Action française surprit le père Le Floch. Personnellement (en privé) contre cette condamnation, il devait pourtant maintenir la paix dans son séminaire qui comptait de nombreux partisans du mouvement maurrassien. Quelques mois plus tard, en décembre 1926, la condamnation officielle l'obligea à prendre position en faveur du pape, même s'il n'adhérait pas à son jugement, tout comme ses proches, les cardinaux Billot et Merry del Val<sup>55</sup>. Ainsi, jusqu'en avril 1927, il servit régulièrement d'intermédiaire entre Rome et les évêques français partageant son opinion. Au Séminaire, s'il expliqua les motifs de la condamnation aux étudiants, il laissa vraisemblablement s'épanouir une opposition maurrassienne qui permit à Francisque Gay et au cardinal Cerretti de le mettre en cause. Cela aboutit, après bien des soubresauts qu'il est inutile de détailler ici<sup>56</sup>, au départ du recteur à la fin juin 1927, et à la fin de toutes ses fonctions curiales et ce, malgré une intervention de Mgr Le Hunsec, supérieur des spiritains, et l'enquête canonique de Dom Ildefonse Schuster, entièrement favorable au père Le Floch, à l'« intégralisme théologique » et à l'antilibéralisme du Séminaire<sup>57</sup>. La presse s'empara

<sup>53</sup> AIRIAU, *Henri Le Floch*, p. 110.

<sup>54</sup> Yves-Marie FRADET, *Les effectifs au Séminaire français durant 150 ans. Essai de sociographie des anciens du Séminaire*, dans LEVILLAIN, BOUTRY et FRADET (dir.), *150 ans au cœur de Rome*, p. 207-267.

<sup>55</sup> Le cardinal MERRY DEL VAL écrivit au père LE FLOCH, le 1er novembre 1927: «Je suis profondément peiné des nouvelles que vous me donnez et mon âme est révoltée en présence des infâmes calomnies lancées contre vous. Je suis particulièrement indigné de la conduite de votre dernier agresseur [il faisait référence à l'article de Mgr Durand, publié dans le journal *La Croix* du 26 octobre 1927], de sa témérité et de ses fausses et sottises insinuations. Tout ce que vous dites est vrai. Ce qui a été dit est faux. Vous avez toujours été d'une correction parfaite et scrupuleuse comme consultant du St. Office, où vous avez rendu des services précieux et que nous avons hautement appréciés. [...] vous devez défendre votre honneur et demander une réparation. J'espère que justice vous sera rendue.» Archives Solesmes, Carton Action française, dossier «Action française – Séminaire français», sous-sous-dossier «Séminaire français 1927-1928».

<sup>56</sup> Pour plus de détails au sujet du départ du père Henri LE FLOCH, voir PRÉVOTAT, *Les catholiques et l'Action française. Histoire d'une condamnation, et La condamnation de l'Action française et les Spiritains Le cas du Séminaire français*, dans Paul COULON (dir.), *Histoire & Missions Chrétiennes*, 10 (2009), *Action française, Décolonisation, Mgr Lefebvre. Les Spiritains et quelques crises du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris, 2009, p. 69-93 (nous ne pouvons cependant le suivre lorsqu'il affirme que l'histoire d'Écône trouve ses racines dans la crise de 1927).

<sup>57</sup> «Il faut conserver les traditions de santa [sic] Chiara, toutes les traditions et principalement l'intégralisme théologique. Et quand je dis intégralisme théologique, j'entends tout l'attachement au Saint Siège et l'antilibéralisme». «Paroles adressées aux deux doyens du Séminaire français, par l' [le] Rme D. Schuster après la visite canonique en 1937», Archives Solesmes, Carton Action française, dossier «Action française – Séminaire français», sous-sous-dossier «Séminaire français 1927-1928». Nous avons reproduit ce document dans notre recueil de documents.

de l'affaire et la polémique gronda pendant de nombreuses années. Cependant, pour l'abbé Berto, comme pour dom Schuster, l'Affaire de l'Action française fut l'occasion et non la cause du départ : « Du reste, j'ai compris que l'A.F. ne fut qu'une occasion ou un prétexte en cette affaire<sup>58</sup> ».

En 1939, à peine installé sur le Siège de Pierre, Pie XII leva l'interdiction de lire l'*Action française*. Le 2 octobre 1939, le père Le Floch fut reçu en audience par le nouveau pape. Celle-ci se déroula très bien si l'on en croit le récit qu'il en fit à l'abbé Roul, un autre de ses anciens élèves et disciples<sup>59</sup>. Un article paru dans les *Échos de Santa-Chiara* va dans le même sens :

Le Séminaire français a eu au cours des vacances un hôte de marque. Le R.P. Le Floch son ancien et vénéré Supérieur de 1904 à 1927, accompagné de M. Lusseau. Il est venu y passer une dizaine de jours, au début d'octobre et a été reçu en audience par le Saint-Père. Le Souverain Pontife l'a accueilli avec la bonté la plus particulière. Des éminentissimes cardinaux, des personnages notables de la Curie romaine, ont tenu à lui marquer leur sympathie et à rappeler avec lui les souvenirs du passé. Tous ses anciens élèves s'en réjouissent et expriment leur affectueuse vénération à celui qui a marqué si profondément son empreinte au Séminaire français<sup>60</sup>.

Cet article prouve, non pas ce qu'on pourrait appeler un retournement de situation ou un changement d'attitude à l'endroit du père Le Floch, mais plutôt que l'admiration et la vénération que plusieurs avaient à son égard ne s'étaient jamais démenties. Seulement, l'ostracisme imposé à l'ancien recteur par la politique de Pie XI avait réduit au silence ses admirateurs, qui pouvaient désormais magnifier celui pour qui ils avaient une si grande admiration. Malgré sa réhabilitation à l'aube du pontificat de Pie XII, le père Le Floch ne retrouva aucune de ses fonctions et mourut retiré dans sa congrégation le 21 février 1950.

Pour l'abbé Berto, qui a toujours eu une grande admiration et vénération envers son supérieur : « [...] il est certain que la pensée constante, claire, énergique, du P. Le Floch a été de faire de sa maison une école théologique et de romanité théologique [...], qu'il y a réussi dans une très large mesure [...] »<sup>61</sup>. Selon dom Paul Nau, le père Le Floch fit du Séminaire français, « la citadelle de l'antilibéralisme — de la romanité, de l'amour du Saint Siège et de l'Église<sup>62</sup> ». Les marques d'admiration ne manquent pas à son endroit et nombreux furent ses anciens élèves qui considéraient lui devoir tout et se compter au rang de ses disciples. En premier lieu, voici un témoignage de l'abbé Berto :

[...] il n'est pas possible [...] à ceux qui se reconnaissent, à leur humble rang dans l'Église, les fils et les disciples de l'éminent religieux, de prononcer son nom sans l'accompagner de

<sup>58</sup> Archives Solesmes, Carton Action française, dossier « Action française – Séminaire français », sous-sous-dossier « Séminaire français 1927-1928 ».

<sup>59</sup> Victor N'GUYEN, *Non possumus. La crise religieuse de l'Action Française*, Centre Charles Maurras, 1986, p. 763.

<sup>60</sup> F. MONNIER, *Les Échos de Santa-Chiara*, octobre-novembre-décembre 1939.

<sup>61</sup> BERTO, *L'école théologique*, p. 56.

<sup>62</sup> Notes de dom Paul NAU, sous forme de brouillon, datées du 15 janvier. Archives Solesmes, Carton Action française, dossier « Action française – Séminaire français », sous-sous-dossier « Séminaire français 1927-1928 ».



l'expression de leur gratitude et de leur admiration, sans évoquer les délices de vivre sous cette autorité à la fois presque invisible et pourtant souveraine, cet élan imprimé à une jeunesse ecclésiastique pleine de fougue intellectuelle, mais imprimé non au hasard, dirigé en même temps par les routes les plus sûres, vers les hauteurs doctrinales les plus lumineuses. Éteindre les esprits est paresse ou couardise ; les exciter dans le pêle-mêle, témérité ; entre les deux, se place l'animation sage qui procède du véritable éducateur, perpétuellement attentif à discerner d'avec les modes d'un jour les pensées permanentes de l'Église, ne craignant point d'inspirer la hardiesse, parce qu'il sait donner autant de prix à la fidélité. De ce tempérament des contraires, si nécessaire, et dont si peu d'hommes sont capables, le P. Le Floch a donné de génie pendant vingt-trois ans le précepte et l'exemple, et c'est sans doute principalement comme Supérieur du Séminaire français qu'il vivra dans la postérité.

Plus loin :

[...] Le T. P. Le Floch a de génie les dons du chef et de l'éducateur. Certes ; mais aussi il a mûri ces dons, il les a exploités par une méditation assidue. Le Fondateur de la Congrégation à laquelle il appartient, l'admirable Congrégation du Saint-Esprit, a été son modèle ; il n'a laissé perdre aucun de ses enseignements [...] il en a fait l'âme de son gouvernement<sup>63</sup>.

Le père Le Floch exerça une véritable force d'attraction sur ses élèves, comme en témoigne cette fois Luc Lefèvre à l'occasion de la mort de son maître : « [...] il fut [...] un maître à penser, un éducateur, un administrateur et un supérieur qui forçait l'admiration et la confiance de tous. [...] »<sup>64</sup>. Continuant sur ce ton hagiographique, il estimait que son supérieur fut : « l'homme de Dieu parmi les hommes. [...] un témoin de Dieu, qui porte la Lumière, qui montre la Lumière et qui rend témoignage ; comme le Christ attire à lui toutes choses, il attirait à lui ses disciples, ses fils, pour les rendre à l'Église et au Christ<sup>65</sup> ». Dans l'hommage nécrologique qu'il lui rendit, l'abbé Lefèvre écrivait : « Après la personne du Christ, à Rome, le R. P. Le Floch habitait ses élèves à porter les hommages de l'esprit et du cœur à la personne du Vicaire du Christ siégeant sur ce trône immortel que n'ébranleront jamais le roc des erreurs et les tempêtes des passions humaines. Aussi, tous s'agenouillaient avec amour devant cette pierre angulaire et proclamaient de toute leur âme : *Tu es Petrus et super hanc petram aedificabo ecclesiam meam*. Et les papes bénissaient le Séminaire Français<sup>66</sup> ».

Mgr Pierre de la Chanonie, futur membre du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum*, abondait dans le même sens : « Vous savez, mon Père, quelle reconnaissance je garde à mon cher Séminaire : une bonne part vous en revient à Vous qui y occupez la place du Père de Chef<sup>67</sup> ». Quant à Marcel Lefebvre, il estimait devoir tout à « la haute direction du cher et révérend père Le Floch, père bien-aimé, père qui nous a appris à

<sup>63</sup> VICTOR-ALAIN BERTO, recension du livre du père Henri LE FLOCH, *Le Cardinal Billot, lumière de la Théologie, La Pensée catholique*, 7 (3<sup>e</sup> trimestre 1948), p. 120.

<sup>64</sup> LUC J. LEFÈVRE, *Le Très Révérend Père Le Floch*, dans *La Pensée catholique*, 14 (2<sup>e</sup> trimestre, 1950), p. 11.

<sup>65</sup> LEFÈVRE, *Le Très Révérend Père Le Floch*.

<sup>66</sup> LEFÈVRE, *Le Très Révérend Père Le Floch*.

<sup>67</sup> Lettre de Mgr Pierre DE LA CHANONIE au père Henri LE FLOCH, le 28 décembre 1926. Cité par AIRIAU dans *Le séminaire français*, f. 731.

voir clair dans les événements de l'époque d'alors, en commentant les encycliques des papes<sup>68</sup> ».

### UNE FORMATION TRADITIONNELLE ET CONTRE-RÉVOLUTIONNAIRE

Les élèves du Séminaire français suivaient principalement leurs cours à l'Université Pontificale grégorienne, excepté le droit canonique qu'ils devaient suivre au Séminaire Romain de Saint-Apollinaire (Latran) au moins jusqu'en 1913. Quant aux cours de liturgie, de prédication, de pastorale et de chant, ils les suivaient au Séminaire, où ils avaient également des répétitions quotidiennes des cours suivis à l'extérieur<sup>69</sup>. Dans ces répétitions, les maîtres du Séminaire faisaient pratiquer aux élèves la *disputatio*, méthode scolastique traditionnelle qui, selon un ancien recteur n'était « autre chose que la gymnastique intellectuelle destinée à donner de la perspicacité à l'esprit, de la rectitude au jugement, et à la raison de la vigueur et de la suite dans ses opérations<sup>70</sup> ».

Lorsqu'il réfléchissait sur la formation qu'il reçut à Rome, l'abbé Dulac considérait qu'elle se faisait par « l'analyse des formules dogmatiques recueillies dans le dépôt révélé; puis la déduction, par logique naturelle, des vérités impliquées dans ces formules ». Il ajoutait : « Tout le reste devait être mis au service de cette métaphysique céleste : l'Histoire, l'Exégèse, la Patristique. En somme nous restions simplement fidèles à la conception thomiste du théologien-architecte, qui commande aux sciences *subalternes* comme à des manœuvres inférieurs<sup>71</sup> ».

Les élèves furent donc formés dans la vision — division — traditionnelle des sciences : l'ultime était la théologie, et toutes les autres n'en étaient que des servantes ; elles n'étaient étudiées et acquises par l'étudiant que pour mieux maîtriser la première. Dans cette division, la philosophie thomiste était primordiale. Les élèves étaient formés au thomisme le plus pur. L'abbé Berto l'atteste en ces termes :

Le Séminaire français fut sous le Père Le Floch une école théologique. Nous y étions « informés » de Duns Scot, d'Occam, de Suarez, nous y étions « formés » au seul thomisme. Souci de vérité d'abord, certes : le Père tenait la théologie thomiste pour *vraie*. Mais aussi réalisme et volonté d'ordre. L'Église étant thomiste pour son compte, il pensait que c'était se perdre dans les nuages que de s'amuser à jouer au suarézien ou au scotiste : réalisme. En outre, il décelait sous la fantaisie de cavalcader seul un caractère d'aloï suspect, et n'entendait point, chargé de préparer des prêtres, laisser entrer chez lui l'espèce, redoutablement pullulante dès qu'on lui a une fois donné accès, des trublions théologastes : volonté d'ordre<sup>72</sup>.

Ailleurs, à propos du père Le Rohellec, chargé de faire les répétitions de philosophie au Séminaire, l'abbé Berto écrivait :

<sup>68</sup> Marcel LEFEBVRE, sermon du 23 septembre 1979, cité dans *Fideliter*, 12 (novembre 1979), p. 6.

<sup>69</sup> FREY, *Le Saint-Siège et le Séminaire Français*, p. 9-19; Paul AIRIAU, *Le Séminaire français de Rome du père Le Floch (1904-1927). Faits et problématiques*, dans *Mémoires spiritaines*, n° 17, premier semestre 2003, p. 129.

<sup>70</sup> Alphonse ESCHBACH, *Le Séminaire français de Rome. Ses premiers cinquante ans (1853-1903)*, Rome, 1903, p. 139.

<sup>71</sup> Raymond DULAC, *Souvenirs d'études romaines*, dans *La Pensée catholique*, 24 (1952), p. 43.

<sup>72</sup> VICTOR-ALAIN BERTO, *In memoriam. Images du Révérend Père Henri Le Floch C.S.Sp.*, dans *La Pensée catholique*, 84 (2<sup>e</sup> trimestre 1963), p. 21.

[...] tout son goût et tout son soin allaient à nous induire perpétuellement en tentation de thomisme intégral, toute son industrie à nous y faire succomber. Il n'était chargé que des « répétitions » de philosophie ; ses répétitions valaient des cours. Et surtout il y avait sa chambre, accueillante, savante, éclairante. On allait frapper là, avec le louable propos de ne lui prendre qu'un quart d'heure ; on lui en prenait quatre ou cinq. Lui-même, au début de la visite, essayait de se persuader que ce serait vite passé ; il restait assis, il ne faisait pas asseoir. Mais c'était plus fort que lui. Il se levait bientôt, atteignait sur les rayons de la bibliothèque un volume des *Opera omnia* de saint Thomas. On s'approchait, et le maître et l'élève lisaient côte à côte. Seulement le texte lu appelait les lieux parallèles : il fallait aller de la Somme aux Sentences, des Sentences aux Opuscules, des Opuscules aux Questions disputées ; quatre ou cinq in-folios se superposaient sur la table, et on était vite dans saint Thomas jusqu'au cou, au pied de la lettre ; mais auprès du P. le Rohellec, on n'éprouvait pas la peur de se noyer. Et quand on se retirait enfin, c'est tout juste si, derrière la porte, le délicieux Père ne se reprochait pas bien fort de nous avoir expédiés<sup>73</sup>.

Labbé Raymond Dulac avait la même appréciation envers le père Le Rohellec : « [...] pour nous, le thomiste fidèle, l'indiscutable, celui que nous suivions partout, c'était le P. Le Rohellec, qui était censé faire, au Séminaire français, le « répétiteur » de philosophie, mais qui fut pour nous le véritable maître dans cette philosophie et même, bien qu'il s'en défendît, en théologie<sup>74</sup> ». Selon Victor-Alain Berto : « Cinq ans de ce régime devaient faire des thomistes, et en toute vérité, rien dans notre éducation ne portait à autre chose et tout portait là ; non certes à faire de nous tous des théologiens thomistes, prétention ridicule, mais du moins des thomistes en théologie, et thomistes de conviction et d'étude, non par timide et moutonnier besoin de chanter avec le chœur<sup>75</sup> ».

Les répétitions données au Séminaire français étaient unanimement louées par les futurs membres du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum*. Même Raymond Dulac, si impitoyable pour les professeurs du Collège romain, en louait les répétiteurs : « Je sentais alors, je vois mieux aujourd'hui, que ces « répétiteurs » de Santa Chiara, un P. Frey, un P. Delaire, un P. Timmermans, faisaient infiniment plus pour notre instruction théologique-philosophique, que les cathédraux de la Grégorienne [...]»<sup>76</sup>.

Ces répétiteurs, ainsi que le père Le Floch, transmièrent aux élèves une lecture contre-révolutionnaire de l'histoire. En février 1926, Paul Nau prenait les notes suivantes d'une conférence donnée par le recteur : « L'histoire depuis 1789 est la conspiration contre la Vérité [...] Ainsi la France depuis 1789 : il y a deux âmes, *il y a deux Frances depuis 1789* [...] Il y a donc deux doctrines, deux citadelles absolument opposées et qui ne pourront jamais s'unir ; il ne le faut pas, elles sont irréductibles. [...] L'histoire est forgée dans les ateliers de la Maçonnerie, de la Juiverie, du Protestantisme<sup>77</sup> ». Cette lecture de l'histoire était celle des premiers auteurs contre-révolutionnaires (Burke,

<sup>73</sup> BERTO, *L'école théologique*, p. 52-53.

<sup>74</sup> DULAC, *Souvenirs d'études romaines*, p. 51.

<sup>75</sup> BERTO, *L'école théologique*, p. 52.

<sup>76</sup> DULAC, *Souvenirs d'études romaines*, p. 51-52.

<sup>77</sup> Notes de dom Paul NAU prises vraisemblablement lors d'une conférence du père LE FLOCH au Séminaire français le 26 février 1926, Archives Solesmes, Carton Action française, dossier « Action française – Séminaire français », sous-sous-dossier « Séminaire français 1927-1928 ».

Mallet du Pan, Maistre, Bonald, Barruel, Donoso Cortés), c'était celle des antilibéraux (Mgr Pie, Gousset, Parisis, Rohrbacher, Darras, etc), c'était également celle des papes, celle de *Quanta Cura* et du *Syllabus*, de *Lamentabili* et de *Pascendi*. La solution qui leur était proposée pour trouver la vérité au milieu de ces erreurs, et le moyen de les contrer, c'était de revenir au magistère, tout particulièrement aux encycliques des papes qui n'avaient pas voulu transiger avec elles et les avaient dénoncées. Voilà tout « le sens chrétien de l'histoire<sup>78</sup> » des catholiques intransigeants auquel furent formés les élèves du père Le Floch. Pour plusieurs, cette perspective eut une influence déterminante et modifia leur vision du monde. Marcel Lefebvre en témoigne :

Pour moi, cela a été une révélation, totale. Alors, puis-je dire, naissait en nous tout doucement, dans tous ces séminaristes (nous étions deux cent vingt), naissait en nous, ce désir de conformer notre jugement à celui des papes. Nous demandions : mais comment les papes ont-ils jugé les événements, les idées, les hommes, les choses de leur temps, de leur époque ? Et le Père Le Floch nous montrait bien quelles avaient été les idées directrices de ces différents papes, toujours les mêmes, exactement les mêmes dans leurs encycliques. Cela nous a vraiment éclairés, montré comment il fallait juger l'histoire, comment il fallait juger les événements, où étaient les erreurs, où était la vérité, comment il fallait penser... Cela a été une révélation, absolument, et du coup cela nous est resté. Nous sommes restés attachés à toutes ces belles encycliques des papes qui nous montrent ce qui est mauvais dans le monde actuel, les sources du mal, les sources des erreurs et qui nous disent où est la vérité<sup>79</sup>.

Marcel Lefebvre déclara plusieurs fois que le séminaire avait été une révélation, parce qu'il fit de lui un catholique antilibéral. Ce qu'il pourfendit le plus explicitement après le concile, ce fut le libéralisme, lui qui estimait être entré libéral au Séminaire : « Je me souviens [...] d'être arrivé au séminaire avec des idées qui n'étaient pas exactes, que j'ai réformées au cours de mon séminaire. Je croyais, par exemple, qu'il était tout à fait excellent que l'État fût séparé de l'Église. Eh oui ! J'étais libéral<sup>80</sup> ». S'il entra libéral, il en sortit ouvertement et définitivement antilibéral. Un changement s'était produit pendant son séjour romain et cette transformation s'était opérée de deux manières, par le contact avec les autres élèves et par l'étude des encycliques :

[...] j'écoutais les conversations de mes confrères aînés. J'écoutais leurs réactions et surtout ce que mes professeurs et supérieurs m'ont appris. Et je me suis aperçu que j'avais beaucoup d'idées fausses, en effet. [...] J'étais heureux d'apprendre la vérité, heureux d'apprendre que j'étais dans l'erreur, qu'il fallait que je change ma conception de certaines choses, et cela surtout, en étudiant les encycliques des papes qui nous montraient, justement, toutes les erreurs modernes, ces magnifiques encycliques de tous les papes jusqu'à saint Pie X et au pape Pie XI<sup>81</sup>.

<sup>78</sup> Nous faisons référence au texte de Dom Prosper GUÉRANGER, *Le sens chrétien de l'histoire*, reproduit dans le journal *L'Univers* les 21 février, 21 mars, 11 et 25 avril 1858.

<sup>79</sup> *La Petite Histoire de ma Longue Histoire. Vie de Mgr Lefebvre racontée par lui-même*, Versailles, 1995, p. 25-26.

<sup>80</sup> Archives Écône, COSPEC 36 A, 30 novembre 1976. Cité par TISSIER DE MALLERAI, *Marcel Lefebvre*, p. 47.

<sup>81</sup> TISSIER DE MALLERAI, *Marcel Lefebvre*, p. 47.

Dans un numéro de la revue *Fideliter*, il témoignait ainsi de l'orientation donnée à la formation à Santa Chiara :

Le père Le Floch nous a fait entrer et vivre dans l'histoire de l'Église, dans ce combat que les forces perverses livraient contre Notre-Seigneur. Cela nous a mobilisé contre ce funeste libéralisme, contre la Révolution et les puissances du mal à l'œuvre pour renverser l'Église, le règne de Notre-Seigneur, les États catholiques, la chrétienté toute entière. Il nous a fallu choisir : ou bien quitter le séminaire si nous n'étions pas d'accord, ou bien entrer dans le combat et marcher<sup>82</sup>.

En 1977, lors d'un entretien avec José Hanu, il déclarait : « Pour ma part, j'ai beaucoup aimé le Séminaire français et romain : il nous a appris à modeler nos esprits sur le magistère de l'Église ; il nous a donné comme modèle les martyrs qui ont versé leur sang pour la foi catholique. Je continue à vivre les enseignements que j'y ai reçus<sup>83</sup> ». Quelques années plus tard, en 1985, dans sa *Lettre ouverte aux catholiques perplexes*, il écrivit : « Je n'ai pas de doctrine personnelle en matière religieuse. Je me suis tenu toute ma vie à ce qu'on m'a enseigné sur les bancs du séminaire français de Rome, à savoir la doctrine catholique selon la translation qu'en a faite le magistère de siècle en siècle depuis la mort du dernier apôtre, qui marque la fin de la Révélation<sup>84</sup> ». Cette formation antilibérale restera présente dans toute la vie de Marcel Lefebvre. Ainsi, juste avant son excommunication, il disait : « C'est surtout la formation que j'ai reçue au Séminaire français qui m'a fait réagir selon les principes que les Papes jusqu'à Pie XII, ont exposés dans leurs encycliques, c.-à-d. constituer une Société catholique sur laquelle règne Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ<sup>85</sup> ». En 1987 à propos du père Le Floch :

Je ne remercierai jamais assez le Bon Dieu d'avoir permis que je connaisse cet homme vraiment extraordinaire. C'est lui qui nous a appris ce qu'étaient les Papes dans le monde et dans l'Église et ce qu'ils ont enseigné pendant un siècle et demi : l'antilibéralisme, l'antimodernisme, l'anticommunisme, toute la doctrine de l'Église sur ces sujets. Il nous a vraiment fait comprendre et vivre ce combat mené par les Papes avec une absolue continuité pour tenter de préserver le monde et l'Église de ces fléaux qui nous oppriment aujourd'hui<sup>86</sup>.

Ces témoignages montrent bien que le Séminaire français de Rome sous le rectorat du père Le Floch fut un foyer du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum*. Ce que certains de ses anciens élèves défendirent au concile, ce ne fut rien d'autre que l'intransigeance et la romanité qui leur avait été enseignée. Les principes contre-révolutionnaires, antilibéraux et antimodernistes qui leur furent transmis eurent sur eux une emprise qui détermina l'orientation de toute leur vie et qui se manifesta à Vatican II par leur opposition à ceux qui proposaient d'adapter l'Église au monde dans lequel ils vivaient. Si le Séminaire français eut indéniablement une influence déterminante, il ne faut pas négliger l'Université Pontificale grégorienne, car c'est là que les séminaristes

<sup>82</sup> Marcel LEFEBVRE, *Le Concile ou le triomphe du libéralisme*, dans *Fideliter*, 59 (septembre-octobre 1987), p. 32.

<sup>83</sup> *Non. Mais oui, à l'Église catholique et romaine*. Entretiens de José HANU avec Mgr LEFEBVRE. Paris, 1977, p. 58.

<sup>84</sup> Marcel LEFEBVRE, *Lettre ouverte aux catholiques perplexes*, Paris, 1985, p. 15.

<sup>85</sup> LEFEBVRE, *Le Concile ou le triomphe du libéralisme*, p. 38.

<sup>86</sup> LEFEBVRE, *Le Concile ou le triomphe du libéralisme*, p. 32.

suivaient l'essentiel de leurs cours. Aussi, convient-il de se pencher également sur cet établissement ainsi que sur la formation qui y était dispensée.

### L'UNIVERSITÉ PONTIFICALE GRÉGORIENNE

Les témoignages des membres du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* sont beaucoup moins nombreux sur l'Université pontificale grégorienne que sur le Séminaire français de Rome, ce qui laisse supposer que son influence fut moins importante et marquante dans leurs choix postérieurs. Aussi, allons-nous nous arrêter moins longuement sur cette institution, d'autant plus que les travaux sur la période qui nous préoccupe sont très pauvres.

#### UN LIEU DE FORMATION COMMUN À PLUSIEURS MEMBRES DU CIP

L'Université pontificale grégorienne fut un lieu de formation commun à plusieurs membres du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum*. En plus des douze anciens élèves du Séminaire français — déjà nommés —, qui y avaient suivi leurs cours, il faut ajouter d'autres membres parmi les plus importants du CIP. Tout d'abord, il y avait les brésiliens Antonio de Castro Mayer et Geraldo de Proença Sigaud qui y étudièrent respectivement de 1921 à 1927<sup>87</sup> et de 1928 à 1932<sup>88</sup>, et qui sont parmi les fondateurs du groupe. Il faut également ajouter le cardinal Agnelo Rossi, qui semble avoir été davantage un sympathisant qu'un membre formel du CIP. Il y fit vraisemblablement ses études entre 1933 et 1937, date à laquelle il fut ordonné prêtre dans la Basilique Saint-Jean de Latran<sup>89</sup>. À ces brésiliens, il faut adjoindre l'italien Giuseppe Siri, qui y étudia de 1926 à 1929<sup>90</sup> et le philippin Rufino Jiao Santos qui y fit ses études entre 1927 et 1931. Ce dernier logeait au Pontificio Collegio Pio-Latino-Americano<sup>91</sup>. Nous ne savons pas si Antonio de Castro Mayer et Geraldo de Proença Sigaud y logèrent également, mais cela est possible.

Le tableau suivant présente les années d'études à la Grégorienne des membres du CIP. Les noms de ceux qui n'étaient pas en même temps au Séminaire français de Rome sont en gras.

NOM	Université Grégorienne	Nombre d'années
Moïse ALVES DE PINHO	1905-1910	5
Luc J. LEFÈVRE	1919-1925	6
Georges FRÉNAUD	1919-1927	8
Pierre DE LA CHANONIE	1920-1926	6

<sup>87</sup> David Allen WHITE, *The Mouth of the Lion. Bishop Antonio de Castro Mayer & the Last Catholic Diocese*, Kansas City, 1993.

<sup>88</sup> Fonds Geraldo de Proença Sigaud, Archives du diocèse de Diamantina.

<sup>89</sup> Salvador MIRANDA, «ROSSI, Agnelo (1913-1995)», *The Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church*, <http://www2.fiu.edu/~mirandas/bios-r.htm>, [page consultée le 3 novembre 2010].

<sup>90</sup> Salvador MIRANDA, «SIRI, Giuseppe», *The Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church*, <http://www2.fiu.edu/~mirandas/bios-s.htm>, [page consultée le 3 novembre 2010].

<sup>91</sup> Carmencita H. ACOSTA, *The Life of Rufino Cardinal Santos*, Manila, 1973, p. 24-33.

Raymond DULAC	1920-1926	6
Henri LUSSEAU	1921-1924	3
Victor-Alain BERTO	1921-1926	5
<b>Antonio DE CASTRO MAYER</b>	1921-1927	6
Marcel LEFEBVRE	1923-1930	7
John McQUAID	1924-1925	1
Paul NAU	1924-1928	4
<b>Giuseppe SIRI</b>	1926-1929	3
<b>Rufino Jiao SANTOS</b>	1927-1931	4
<b>Geraldo DE PROENÇA SIGAUD</b>	1928-1932	4
Jean RUPP	1933-1936	3
<b>Agnelo ROSSI</b>	1933-1937 ?	4 ?
Xavier MORILLEAU	1936-1938	2

Ce tableau n'est peut-être pas exhaustif, car nous n'avons pas fait une analyse prosopographique de tous les membres du CIP, mais seulement des plus importants. Une analyse systématique du *curriculum vitae* de tous les sympathisants du mouvement aurait peut-être révélé qu'ils furent plus nombreux à avoir étudié au Collège Romain.

#### UNE UNIVERSITÉ ROMAINE DE TRADITION ULTRAMONTAINE

Les travaux sur cette Université ne sont pas très nombreux, en particulier sur la période qui nous préoccupe, c.-à-d. celle allant de 1905 à 1938, qui représente les dates extrêmes à l'intérieur desquelles les futurs membres du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* y firent leurs études<sup>92</sup>. En dépit de cette indigence historiographique, les grands traits de cette institution peuvent être tracés et des conclusions générales suffisantes pour notre propos peuvent être apportées.

Le 18 février 1551, Ignace de Loyola fonda une première école dans la ville de Rome. Elle s'ouvrit à l'enseignement supérieur à partir de 1556. En 1581, en raison du développement rapide de l'institution, Grégoire XIII décida de faire construire un grand collège près de la Piazza Venezia. La première pierre du *Collegio Romano* fut posée en 1582, et le bâtiment fut inauguré le 28 octobre 1584. Après la suppression de la Compagnie de Jésus par Clément XIV en 1773, le collège fut confié au clergé séculier de la ville de Rome.

<sup>92</sup> Philip CARAMAN, *University of the Nations. The story of the gregorian University with its associated Instituts, the Biblical and Oriental, 1551-1962*, New York, 1981, 157 pages; G. FILOGRASSI, *Teologia e filosofia nel Collegio Romano dal 1842 ad oggi. Note e ricordi*, dans *Gregorianum*, 35 (1954), p. 512-540; Riccardo GARCÍA VILLOSLADA, *Storia del Collegio Romano dal suo inizio (1551) alla soppressione della Compagnia di Gesù (1773)*, Rome, 1954; Giacomo MARTINA, *Grégorienne (Université)*, dans Roger Aubert (dir.) *Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de Géographie ecclésiastiques*, T. 22, Paris, 1988, coll. 81-88; Karl Heinz NEUFELD, "Römische Schule". *Beobachtungen und Überlegungen zur genaueren Bestimmung*, dans *Gregorianum*, 63 (1982), p. 677-699; Ernesto RINALDI, *La fondazione del collegio romano*, Arezzo, 1914.



Une deuxième période dans l'histoire de cette institution s'ouvrit après le rétablissement des jésuites en 1814. Le Collège romain leur fut rendu le 17 mai 1824. Quelques années plus tard, le 29 mars 1848, la Compagnie dut abandonner les bâtiments en raison des troubles qui accompagnèrent la première guerre d'indépendance de l'Italie (1848-1849). Les jésuites ne réintégrèrent leurs locaux qu'en janvier 1850, mais pour peu de temps, puisqu'en 1873, les bâtiments furent confisqués par l'État Italien. Les professeurs et les étudiants se déplacèrent alors au Collège germanique situé dans le Palazzo Borromeo. Ils y demeurèrent jusqu'en 1930, après la construction de nouveaux bâtiments à la Piazza della Pilotta. Entre temps, le 4 décembre 1873, Pie IX avait conféré au Collège Romain le titre de *Università Gregoriana del Collegio Romano*. En 1928, Pie XI y avait associé deux institutions, l'Institut Biblique Pontifical (fondé en 1909) ainsi que l'Institut Oriental (fondé en 1917 et confié aux jésuites par Pie XI en 1922).

Dans cette deuxième période, la Grégorienne joua un rôle important dans l'histoire de l'Église catholique. Ses professeurs furent des auxiliaires de la Curie romaine. Plusieurs d'entre eux jouèrent un rôle particulièrement important en faveur de la romanité et de l'ultramontanisme. Tout d'abord, il convient de mentionner le rôle de Jean Perrone qui fut l'un des principaux restaurateurs des études ecclésiastiques au 19<sup>e</sup> s. Il fut également un acteur important dans la préparation de la définition de l'Immaculée Conception, puisqu'il fut le rédacteur du premier schéma de la bulle *Ineffabilis Deus* (8 décembre 1854). Il faut également souligner que les premiers schémas des constitutions de Vatican I furent réalisés par Jean Perrone, Jean-Baptiste Franzelin (un des théologiens du pape à Vatican I) et Clément Schrader, tous professeurs à la Grégorienne et défenseurs acharnés des prérogatives pontificales ainsi que de la théologie romaine.

Après la promulgation de l'encyclique *Aeterni Patris* (4 août 1879) par laquelle Léon XIII prescrivait l'étude de la philosophie thomiste dans la formation sacerdotale, la Grégorienne adhéra immédiatement à la direction donnée par le pape. Quelques années plus tard, avec l'enseignement de Louis Billot, devenu professeur de théologie dogmatique en 1885, la Grégorienne joua un rôle important dans la rénovation du thomisme, ainsi que dans la lutte contre le modernisme, puisque le cardinal Billot collabora à la rédaction de l'encyclique *Pascendi Domini Gregis*<sup>93</sup>, promulguée par Pie X le 8 septembre 1907. Excepté Mgr Moïse Alves de Pinho, il est certain que les membres du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* n'ont pas suivi l'enseignement du cardinal Billot à la Grégorienne, puisqu'il cessa d'y enseigner en 1911. Cependant, l'*aura* du professeur continuait de remplir les murs de l'établissement, comme en témoigne Victor-Alain Berto :

Jadis, à l'Université grégorienne, lorsque notre maître le P. Lazzarini S.J. rencontrait l'occasion (jamais manquée, souvent cherchée) de citer son propre maître le cardinal Billot, il ne se serait pas permis de le nommer tout sèchement; mais il le décorait de ces mots ou

<sup>93</sup> Bernard SESBOÛE, *Louis Billot*, dans *Dictionnaire du monde religieux dans la France contemporaine*, François LAPLANCHE (dir.), *Le XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, 1800-1914*, Jean-Marie MAYEUR et Yves-Marie HILAIRE (dir.), Paris, 1996, p. 62-63.

d'autres semblables: «*Eminentissimus cardinalis Billot, aetate quidem proventus, at semper intellectu florens...*» [...] <sup>94</sup>.

De plus le cardinal était très ami avec le père Henri Le Floch et se rendait régulièrement au Séminaire français. Là, les élèves pouvaient le côtoyer, comme en témoigne l'abbé Raymond Dulac: «*Billot surtout nous obsédait. C'était un vivant pour nous, un voisin que nous rencontrions; au Séminaire, où l'amitié du P. Le Floch l'attirait; dans des cérémonies qu'on le forçait de présider, et, quelquefois aussi, à la promenade du soir, le long du Tibre [...]. Nous l'aimions comme nous aimions saint Thomas, qu'il avait, trente ans auparavant, retrouvé sous la poussière et les toiles des commentateurs* <sup>95</sup>». Pour Marcel Lefebvre, le cardinal Billot «*était un professeur éminent de la Grégorienne, un professeur extraordinaire. Ses livres de théologie sont des livres magnifiques* <sup>96</sup>». Au-delà du professeur et de l'écrivain, ce que Marcel Lefebvre appréciait particulièrement, «*c'était l'homme droit: pas de compromission avec l'erreur, la vérité ferme et la lutte contre les erreurs, contre le libéralisme, contre le modernisme, comme Saint Pie X. C'était un vrai disciple de Saint Pie X* <sup>97</sup>».

À côté du Séminaire français de Rome, l'Université pontificale grégorienne fut un autre lieu de tradition ultramontaine et intransigeante au sein duquel plusieurs membres du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* passèrent quelques années. Aussi, convient-il de présenter, autant que possible, la formation qu'ils y reçurent ainsi que l'appréciation qu'ils portèrent sur celle-ci.

#### FORMATION TRADITIONNELLE ET MAÎTRES

Les cours dispensés à l'Université pontificale grégorienne suivaient le *Ratio studiorum* des jésuites, qui mettait l'accent sur les études philosophiques et théologiques, suivant respectivement l'enseignement d'Aristote et de saint Thomas d'Aquin. Ce document, dont l'édition définitive parut en 1598, fut adapté et modifié par la suite, notamment dans le nouveau *Ratio studiorum* de 1832, promulgué quelques années après le rétablissement de la Compagnie de Jésus. Ce texte ne comporte cependant aucun changement substantiel concernant l'enseignement de la philosophie et de la théologie. Après la promulgation de l'encyclique *Aeterni Patris*, Léon XIII adressa au général de la Compagnie de Jésus le bref *Gravissime Nos* (30 décembre 1892). Dans ce document, le pape confirmait Thomas d'Aquin comme le docteur propre de la Compagnie de Jésus. À la fin du texte, il faisait part de toute sa satisfaction de l'enseignement donné à la Grégorienne:

In Pontificia Universitate Gregoriana, quae fere est in conspectu nostro, in quam cogitationes et curas non leves contulimus, laetamur optatis iussisque nostris satis admodum esse factum, eamque videmus propterea et magna frequentia alumnorum et doctrinae fama

<sup>94</sup> VICTOR-ALAIN BERTO, *Un docteur romain. Le T.R.P. Réginald Garrigou-Lagrangé O.P.*, dans *La Pensée catholique*, 23 (4<sup>e</sup> trimestre 1952), p. 22.

<sup>95</sup> DULAC, *Souvenirs d'études romaines*, , p. 51.

<sup>96</sup> *La Petite Histoire de ma Longue Histoire*, p. 31.

<sup>97</sup> *La Petite Histoire de ma Longue Histoire*, p. 31.

rectae solidaeque florentem, fructus iidem tam praestabiles desiderandi quidem non erunt, ubicumque doctrina impertiatur ab iis, quos eadem mens agat eadem aluerint sturia<sup>98</sup>.

Cette inscription de l'enseignement des jésuites dans la fidélité absolue à l'enseignement de Thomas d'Aquin fut confirmée et complétée le 8 décembre 1916 par une lettre adressée aux membres de sa Congrégation par Wladimir Ledóchowski, 26<sup>e</sup> Supérieur Général de la Compagnie de Jésus. Dans cette lettre, intitulée « De doctrina S. Thomae magis magisque in Societate fovenda », et approuvée par Benoît XV, le supérieur des jésuites confirmait l'obligation de suivre l'enseignement de Thomas d'Aquin et il en fixait les limites<sup>99</sup>.

Ces quelques considérations permettent de mesurer l'importance du thomisme dans la formation philosophique et théologique reçue à la Grégorienne par les membres du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* qui y firent leurs études, et de mesurer combien elle était donnée dans un esprit de totale soumission aux directives papales. Dans cet univers où le thomisme seul avait officiellement le droit de cité, il faut cependant souligner que les divergences théologiques n'étaient pas inexistantes et que les disputes semblent même avoir été nombreuses. Dans ses « Souvenirs d'études romaines », Raymond Dulac écrivait :

En philosophie, Schaaf s'opposait à Munzi : Monaco à Gény. En théologie, Fabbri et Lazzarini représentaient l'électricité positive ; Van Laak et Huarté l'électricité négative<sup>100</sup>.

Victor-Alain Berto laisse entrevoir ces disputes d'une façon plus colorée :

[...] entre ces grands esprits, sur des problèmes ardues et proches de l'insondable, la controverse était parfois vive. Le P. de la Taille, qui n'était pas, c'est le moins qu'on puisse dire, d'un naturel craintif, et dont le visage en lame de couteau et les cheveux en queue de comète ne respiraient pas précisément la placidité, le P. de la Taille s'épanouissait pourtant, lorsqu'à peine assis dans sa chaire et ayant énoncé la question, il pouvait proclamer incontinent : « *Hac de re fervet controversia*, il y a là-dessus des controverses bouillantes ». Il prenait soin de ne pas les laisser refroidir. Et (comment oublier l'inoubliable ?) nous avons vu le cardinal Billot, à soixante-dix-sept ans, redressant comme il pouvait, sur son dos voûté drapé de rouge, son formidable crâne osseux, lancer aux auditeurs du Congrès thomiste de 1923 des apostrophes véhémentes, où son amour pour saint Thomas ne s'exprimait pas avec plus de force que sa colère toujours jeune contre les détracteurs du maître commun : « *Qui diligitis Dominum, odite malum* ». [...]

[...] le cardinal Billot, et après lui le P. Lazzarini, dans la chaire de la Grégorienne, refoulaient énergiquement hors du traité du verbe incarné la *terminus purus* de Cajétan, dont le P. Réginald, dans la chaire de l'Angélique, soutenait non moins énergiquement l'indispensable valeur pour le même traité ; [...] le P. Veermersch défendait le probabilisme que le P. Le Floch et le P. Le Rohellec regardaient d'un œil non tendre et le sourcil en bataille [...]<sup>101</sup>.

<sup>98</sup> LÉON XIII, *Gravissime nos*, 30 décembre 1892, AAS, 13 (1892), p. 379-380.

<sup>99</sup> Xavier LE BACHELET, *Les principes de la Compagnie de Jésus sur l'enseignement des sciences sacrées*, dans *DTC*, T. 8, première partie, 1924, coll. 1012-1043.

<sup>100</sup> DULAC, *Souvenirs d'études romaines*, p. 49.

<sup>101</sup> BERTO, *Un docteur romain*, p. 22-23.

Au-delà du témoignage concernant les divergences théologiques au sein de l'Université et entre les théologiens romains, cette citation laisse entrevoir l'admiration et la vénération dont jouissait le cardinal Billot. De plus, elle permet de comprendre que, au milieu de toutes ces divergences, les élèves accordaient leur confiance à quelques maîtres, triés sur le volet, et envers lesquels ils avaient une véritable vénération, vénération qui fut un vecteur privilégié de la romanité et de l'intransigeance.

Concernant la qualité des cours dispensés à la Grégorienne, elle ne semble pas avoir satisfait tous les élèves. Dans ses « Souvenirs d'études romaines<sup>102</sup> », Raymond Dulac avait des mots plutôt durs envers ses anciens professeurs :

[...] pour trois ou quatre beaux génies qui nous enthousiasmaient, nous devions subir une douzaine de mazettes que l'admirable discipline ignacienne avait vouées, *sicut baculos*, à la théologie comme elle aurait fait à un emploi de jardin ou de cuisine<sup>103</sup>.

Ainsi, à part quelques exceptions, Raymond Dulac ne gardait pas de bons souvenirs de ses professeurs. Il s'en prenait en particulier à leurs méthodes d'enseignement. Dans ses « souvenirs », il commentait amèrement la pédagogie utilisée, pédagogie traditionnelle dont l'essentiel consistait en des commentaires de manuels. Ainsi, à propos d'un manuel et d'un cours de théologie fondamentale :

Le livre de cours était une inénarrable production du P. Van Laak, intitulée *Repetitorium*. Un trait la résume : il y avait, à la fin du bouquin, une double table : un « *index des chapitres selon l'ordre logique* », et un autre « *selon l'ordre du Repetitorium* ». Ce bizarre composé avait trois formes, ou trois pointures, qui ne différaient que par la dimension et le nombre de pages. Il y avait un répertoire d'un kilogramme trois cents ; un de deux kilos ; un troisième de quatre. Il ne fallait pas dépasser l'ordre de cette mesure matérielle. Rien en effet, dans les trois, qui pût donner prise et nourriture à une puissance quelconque de l'esprit : rien pour la raison, rien pour la fantaisie, rien pour le sentiment : une pierre inassimilable, du cuir. C'était scandale de proposer, à Rome, sur le sujet de l'Église, un pareil navet.

Qu'aurait pu ajouter le commentaire oral ? Hermann Van Laak répétait son répertoire, mais en vociférations qui faisaient trembler les vitres. Au fond de la salle, adossé à une fenêtre qui donnait sur une ruelle sordide, je m'abîmais dans le splendide traité de Billot que Van Laak trouvait « trop bref », avec ses sept cents pages, pour donner la médaille à je ne sais quel Ottinger qui avait écrit, « *minimis quidem characteribus* », un volume qui atteignait les douze cents.

Il fallait entendre Joseph Taillade contrefaisant les éclats du cher homme, qu'il imaginait déroulant en treize points un parallèle entre Moïse et le Vénérable Bellarmine, lequel venait d'être béatifié.

Le P. Fabbri, chargé de commenter, l'après-midi, une autre partie du *Repetitorium*, lâchait là au premier mot, celui qu'il appelait avec une emphase feinte « *Auctor noster* », et jetait, sur la Révélation, les Locutions divines ou l'Inspiration, des notions tirées de saint Thomas, qu'il rendait bien un peu confuses, mais qui ne nous laissaient pas tout à fait à jeun. Je l'entends encore lançant, entre deux reniflements, certains motifs que nous connaissions déjà par les anciens : « *Ostende titulos compro-ban-tes tuam mi-ssio-nem !* » ou « *Adolescens, tibi dico surge* ». Tout cela au milieu de simagrées, de plaisanteries, de calembours, dont le P. Van Laak faisait souvent les frais. Aujourd'hui encore, j'ai peine à dominer la colère qui me

<sup>102</sup> DULAC, *Souvenirs d'études romaines*, p. 38-53.

<sup>103</sup> DULAC, *Souvenirs d'études romaines*, p. 41-42.

venait à la pensée du temps perdu, et au regret de ces magnifiques maîtres – un d'Alès, un d'Herbigny, un Lebreton, un de Broglie – dont la Compagnie aurait pu, si elle avait voulu, nous régaler.

Et l'abbé Dulac ressassait ses souvenirs en passant en revue d'autres professeurs :

Dans les trois années qui suivirent, le duo antagoniste était composé du P. Palermo Lazzarini et de l'Espagnol Gabriel Huarté.

Lazzarini, par bonheur, nous enseigna les grands traités : Trinité, Verbe incarné, Eucharistie. Il n'était pas génial, mais fervent, consciencieux, profond. Nous savions qu'il allait, tous les matins, préparer chez le Cardinal Billot, son ancien maître, la leçon qu'il nous donnerait le soir. Il nous a fait aimer la théologie.

Le P. Huarté [...] arrivait, souriant, précédé du bedeau, dans l'*Aula magna*, remplie de cinq à six centaines d'élèves qui bavardaient en dix langues. Il grimpa lestement les huit degrés de la haute chaire, que couronnait un cadre de la Madone, « siège de la Sagesse », puis entonnait le *Veni Sancte Spiritus*. L'Esprit invoqué ne descendait pas en langues de feu, mais en une petite pluie fine que le P. Gabriel laissait couler, une heure durant, l'index de la main droite glissant d'une ligne à l'autre de son manuel, qu'il lisait. Je ne sais plus à propos de quelle opinion, il lâche au bas d'une page cette sentence : « Cela n'est ni vrai, ni faux, parce que le contraire est probable. » - Comme on pouvait en dire autant du contraire de ce contraire il suivait de cette logique que les contraires ne s'excluent pas... Mais le P. Huarté avait un trop bon sourire pour voir « si loin ».

Au beau milieu d'une leçon, l'un d'entre nous cria, un jour : « *Cucini! cucini!* », qui est le signal des loueurs de coussins dans les gares italiennes, au départ des trains de nuit.

Il était en effet impossible d'apprendre quelque chose du cours du P. Huarté ; mais il avait d'admirables yeux d'andalou et il savait la musique.

[...] Eh ! bien, les « petits clients » de Saint Ignace n'en avaient pas pour leur argent et, vraiment, les Pères abusaient un peu de la Bulle. Nous rêvions de ce temps — pas tellement ancien : vers 1910 — où nos aînés étaient gratifiés de maîtres qui s'appelaient : Remer, de Maria, Natalini, Mattiussi et Billot<sup>104</sup>.

Cette critique acerbe ne fut cependant pas partagée par tous les anciens. Marcel Lefebvre se disait « très content d'avoir [...] l'enseignement qui nous a été donné à l'Université grégorienne à Rome par les Jésuites<sup>105</sup> » et son futur *periti*, l'abbé Berto, n'en pensait pas moins :

Avec nos professeurs Jésuites de l'Université Grégorienne [...] nous n'avions pas à beaucoup près la même fréquence et la même intimité de rapports que nous avions avec les Pères du Séminaire ; mais nous avions pour plusieurs d'entre eux la même admiration et pour leurs leçons la même docilité. Le P. Paul Gény, le P. Maurice de la Taille, le P. Arthur Vermeersh, le P. Attilio Munzi, le P. Lazzarini (dont le prénom nous échappe), le P. Félix Cappello, nous distribuaient, de leurs chaires magistrales du Collège Romain de la Compagnie, un enseignement qui éclairait de l'unique lumière romaine les diverses matières de leurs cours<sup>106</sup>.

Il est vrai que, dans la liste des professeurs qu'il admirait, l'abbé Berto ne cite pas ceux décriés par son confrère. Ces deux anciens élèves, très amis par ailleurs,

<sup>104</sup> DULAC, *Souvenirs d'études romaines*, p. 49-50.

<sup>105</sup> *La Petite Histoire de ma Longue Histoire*, p. 29.

<sup>106</sup> VICTOR-ALAIN BERTO, *La romanité et le thomisme*, dans *La Pensée catholique*, 101 (3<sup>e</sup> trimestre 1966), p. 46-47.

se situaient différemment par rapport à l'enseignement reçu à la Grégorienne. Alors que le premier prenait plaisir à faire un sort à la pédagogie utilisée, le second mettait l'emphase sur l'admiration et la soumission que les élèves avaient envers leurs maîtres. Au-delà de la pédagogie utilisée et de l'aspect croustillant de ces quelques souvenirs, ces citations laissent entrevoir que l'enseignement de la Grégorienne ne fut pas reçu de la même manière que celui dispensé au Séminaire français de Rome. Cependant, tous considéraient y avoir eu des maîtres, même Raymond Dulac. Dans l'hommage nécrologique qu'il rendit à son ami, l'abbé Berto, il écrivait :

[...] notre Rome n'était pas principalement celle des monuments, des fêtes, des *passegiate*. C'était le lieu béni de nos études et de notre formation cléricale. C'était l'Université grégorienne et c'était le Séminaire français.

Deux cents mètres à peine les séparaient, que nous franchissions quatre fois par jour d'une allure intermédiaire entre le pas et la course.

La Grégorienne, l'humble Grégorienne de l'étroite *Via del Seminario*, n'avait pas les ascenseurs, le bar et les cours mixtes de la Grégorienne de 1968 en pierres massives, celle qui se dresse hautainement sur la *Piazza della Pilotta*, mais elle avait des maîtres qui s'appelaient : Gény, Vermeerseh, Lazzarini, de la Taille. Ils succédaient, en les continuant dignement, aux Billot, Remer, Mattiussi<sup>107</sup>.

Le biographe de Marcel Lefebvre montre bien que le regard porté par les étudiants français était différent vis-à-vis de chacune de ces institutions : « Le jeune étudiant s'épanouissait au contact des premiers traités théologiques, mais son âme résidait davantage au séminaire qu'à la Grégorienne<sup>108</sup> ». Il semble bien qu'il en ait été de même pour ses confrères, comme le suggère une autre phrase de Raymond Dulac à propos de son ami : « Au Séminaire, la « répétition » des cours : mais qui était au niveau des cours et souvent les dépassait. C'est là, surtout, que mon ami s'est 'baigné' dans Rome<sup>109</sup> ».

Cependant, la formation qu'ils reçurent chez les jésuites n'en fut certainement pas moins romaine, conservatrice, intransigeante et antilibérale qu'à Santa Chiara. L'orientation philosophico-théologique n'était pas différente, et si les élèves avaient des rapports moins intimes et moins profonds qu'avec leurs répétiteurs du Séminaire français, ils y trouvèrent néanmoins des maîtres. Par conséquent, l'Université Pontificale grégorienne peut être considérée comme un autre foyer du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum*.

## L'UNIVERSITÉ PONTIFICALE DU LATRAN

Reconstruire l'histoire de l'Université pontificale du Latran, et déterminer le rôle qu'elle a joué dans la formation des membres du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* qui y étudièrent, est plus difficile que pour les deux autres institutions déjà traitées ; d'une part en raison d'une pénurie de travaux sur le sujet, et d'autre part parce que nous n'avons aucun témoignage d'un membre du CIP sur la réception de l'enseignement qu'il

<sup>107</sup> Raymond DULAC, *L'abbé Victor-Alain Berto, homme de Dieu*, dans *Itinéraires, Chroniques et Documents*, 132 (avril 1969), p. 63.

<sup>108</sup> TISSIER DE MALLERAIS, *Marcel Lefebvre*, p. 54.

<sup>109</sup> DULAC, *L'abbé Victor-Alain Berto*, p. 63.

y reçu. De plus, l'importance de l'Université pontificale du Latran dans la préhistoire du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* ne se trouve pas tant dans la formation dispensée aux futurs membres du groupe, que dans le réseau de professeurs qui collaborèrent, directement ou indirectement, avec le CIP.

#### UN LIEU DE CHEMINEMENT POUR PLUSIEURS SYMPATHISANTS DU CIP

Parmi les anciens étudiants du Latran membres ou sympathisants du CIP, il faut mentionner les cardinaux Alfredo Ottaviani<sup>110</sup> et Arcadio Maria Larraona<sup>111</sup>, les évêques Luigi Carli<sup>112</sup> et Dino Staffa<sup>113</sup>. Les professeurs — certains d'entre eux étaient d'anciens élèves — étaient plus nombreux. Tout d'abord, il y avait les cardinaux Alfredo Ottaviani<sup>114</sup>, Arcadio Maria Larraona<sup>115</sup>, Michaël Browne<sup>116</sup> et Ernesto Ruffini. Celui-ci y fut non seulement professeur (1913 à 1930), mais aussi recteur (1930 à 1932)<sup>117</sup>. Parmi les évêques, il y avait Mgr Dino Staffa<sup>118</sup>. Au nombre des théologiens qui collaborèrent avec le *Coetus Internationalis Patrum*, il faut mentionner Ugo Lattanzi<sup>119</sup>, Francesco Spadafora<sup>120</sup> et Ermenegildo Lio, professeur associé à l'Institut Patristique-Médiéval de l'Université du Latran<sup>121</sup>.

Le tableau suivant représente les étudiants et/ou professeurs de cette université membres ou sympathisants du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* :

NOM	Étudiant	Professeur
Alfredo OTTAVIANI	×	×
Arcadio Maria LARRAONA	×	×
Ernesto RUFFINI		×
Michaël BROWNE		×
Dino STAFFA	×	×
Luigi CARLI	×	
Francesco SPADAFORA		×

<sup>110</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense. Profilo della sua storia, dei suoi maestri e dei suoi discepoli*, Rome, 1963, p. 230-231.

<sup>111</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 240-241.

<sup>112</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 507; Nicola BUONASORTE, *Tra Roma e Lefebvre. Il tradizionalismo cattolico italiano e il Concilio VaticanoII*, Roma, 2003, p. 39-40.

<sup>113</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 226-227.

<sup>114</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 230-231;

<sup>115</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 240-241;

<sup>116</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 278-279.

<sup>117</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 145-147;

<sup>118</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 226-227.

<sup>119</sup> Lettre de l'abbé Berto aux Dominicaines du Saint-Esprit, Rome, le 12 septembre 1964, Archives des Dominicaines du Saint-Esprit, Fonds Victor-Alain BERTO, dossier «Le deuxième Concile du Vatican».

<sup>120</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 192.

<sup>121</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 326.



Ermenegildo LIO	×
Ugo LATTANZI	×

Outre ces hommes, l'Université du Latran comprenait également un certain nombre de professeurs qui avaient une certaine proximité de vue avec le *Coetus Internationalis Patrum*; certains indices —notamment leurs positions conciliaires et postconciliaires— peuvent laisser croire qu'ils aient collaborés avec lui au moins de façon occasionnelle, mais les sources consultées ne permettent pas de le démontrer de façon formelle. Dans cette catégorie pourraient se classer Antonio Piolanti, ancien élève, professeur et recteur à partir de 1957<sup>122</sup>, Salvatore Garofalo, étudiant et professeur<sup>123</sup>, Carlo Balic<sup>124</sup> et Michel Guérard des Lauriers<sup>125</sup>. Peuvent également être inclus dans cette catégorie Mgr Pietro Parente, ancien étudiant et professeur<sup>126</sup>, ainsi que Mgr Pericle Felici, ancien étudiant et professeur<sup>127</sup> et Secrétaire Général du concile. S'il n'appartenait pas au groupe, il n'en était cependant pas bien loin puisqu'il était proche de Mgr Luigi Carli qu'il avait fait nommer à la commission *De Episcopis* selon le témoignage de l'évêque de Segni lui-même<sup>128</sup>.

À côté de ces personnages, il n'est pas inutile de mentionner que les pères Joseph Le Rohellec<sup>129</sup> et Jean-Baptiste Frey<sup>130</sup> enseignèrent également à l'Université du Latran. Ces deux membres de la Congrégation du Saint-Esprit furent les répétiteurs, au Séminaire français de Rome, des futurs membres du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* qui y firent leurs études.

Enfin, mentionnons la proximité de Mgr Georges Cabana, membre du CIP, avec l'Université du Latran, où il envoyait étudier certains de ses séminaristes<sup>131</sup>. Avant l'ouverture du concile, il correspondait et entretenait des liens d'amitié avec

<sup>122</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 91.

<sup>123</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 190.

<sup>124</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 319.

<sup>125</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 324. Le Père Guérard des Lauriers écrivait dans *La Pensée catholique*.

<sup>126</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 115-119.

<sup>127</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 130-131.

<sup>128</sup> «Testimomianza [sic] resa da S.E. mons. Luigi CARLI il 29 novembre 1985 alle ore 10,30 in Gaeta al Dott. Giuseppe Camadini, a Mons. Giuseppe Colombo ed al Dott. Renato Papetti». Document envoyé par Nicola Buonasorté à l'auteur au mois de mai 2008. Voici un extrait de ce témoignage: «Io ho avuto una certa parte nel Concilio poiche ero nella Commissione *De Episcopis* fin della sua costituzione. Fui chiamato da Giovanni XXIII ad entrare nella Commissione dei vescovi non perchè fossi un vescovo che si notava ma piuttosto perchè ero il vescovo di mons. Pericle Felici, nativo di Segni, diocesi di cui allora io ero vescovo. Sono stato alunno di mons. Felici al Seminario Romano e all'Apollinare. Fu lui che mi fece introdurre nella Commissione *De Episcopis*, dove fin dall'inizio ho avuto modo di studiare i testi e di lavorare, proprio anche perchè ero il più vicino a Roma fra tutti gli stranieri e gli italiani della Commissione.»

<sup>129</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 277-278.

<sup>130</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 148-149.

<sup>131</sup> Lettre de Mgr Antonio PIOLANTI (recteur du Latran) à Mgr Georges CABANA, Rome, le 22 mai 1962, Archives de l'Université pontificale du Latran, fonds Mgr Antonino Piolanti, dossier «Corrispondenza Mons. Piolanti 1962».

Mgr Antonino Romeo, membre du conseil académique et professeur de l'Université Pontificale du Latran<sup>132</sup>. Mgr Romeo, qui était membre de la Sacrée Congrégation des Séminaires et des Universités, soutint l'archevêque de Sherbrooke dans sa demande d'érection canonique de la faculté de théologie de l'Université de Sherbrooke, qui fut un temps affiliée à celle de l'Université du Latran<sup>133</sup>. Dans leur correspondance, abondante et qui se poursuivit après le concile, les deux hommes échangeaient leurs craintes à propos de la situation de l'Église<sup>134</sup>. Au moment du concile, Mgr Georges Cabana côtoyait Mgr Romeo et sa famille à Rome, avec son frère, Mgr Louis-Joseph Cabana et Mgr Albertus Martin, évêque de Nicolet<sup>135</sup>.

Tous ces faits et liens permettent de conclure qu'avec le Séminaire français de Rome et la Grégorienne, l'Université pontificale du Latran fut un autre centre au sein duquel gravitèrent de futurs membres du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* avant le concile. Aussi convient-il de présenter rapidement cette Université et l'atmosphère qui y régnait dans la première moitié du 20<sup>e</sup> s., de façon à mieux comprendre la préhistoire du CIP.

### L'UNIVERSITÉ DU PAPE

L'Université pontificale du Latran est « l'Université du pape ». Son histoire s'inscrit dans une tradition d'esprit romain, de soumission absolue au Souverain Pontife et au magistère ecclésiastique. Cette réalité et cette volonté d'adhérer à cette tradition était toujours caractéristique de cette Université dans la première moitié du 20<sup>e</sup> s., lorsqu'y cheminèrent les futurs membres du CIP. Ce trait distinctif et la volonté des membres de cette Université de s'inscrire dans la fidélité à cette tradition fut bien exprimée dans le très officiel ouvrage publié en 1963 à la *Libreria Editrice della Pontificia Università Lateranense* et intitulée *La Pontificia Università Lateranense, Profilo della sua storia, dei suoi maestri et dei suoi discepoli* :

[...] cercando di cogliere l'aspetto più intimo della complessa organizzazione dell'Università Lateranense, si finisce per scoprire che l'elemento che dà valore e sostanza di vita all'Università, è la sua vocazione ad un servizio della Chiesa e del Romano Pontefice, in assoluto ossequio al Magistero, e in fedele osservanza delle sane tradizioni; in forza del quale orientamento, niente che la Chiesa accetti per buono, per quanto antico, viene respinta solo per amore del nuovo o per paura dell'accusa di oscurantismo. Tutta la storia dell'Università è perciò — in sintesi — una irradiazione luminosa di verità, permeata di spirito romano; testimonianza di una scienza severa; espressione di un magistero sempre valido perché consacrato dall'autorevole approvazione di Colui che perpetua nel tempo la missione di maestro infallibile di verità<sup>136</sup>.

<sup>132</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 52 et 317.

<sup>133</sup> Lettre de Mgr Antonino ROMEO à Mgr Georges CABANA, le 26 novembre 1960, Service des archives de l'Archidiocèse de Sherbrooke, fonds Archevêché de Sherbrooke, série Magistère, sous-série Université de Sherbrooke, A13/SA3, 6.3.1.

<sup>134</sup> Le Service des archives de l'Archidiocèse de Sherbrooke conserve plusieurs échanges entre Mgr Georges CABANA et Mgr Antonino ROMEO.

<sup>135</sup> Lettre de Mgr Antonino ROMEO à Mgr Georges CABANA, Rome, le 7 décembre 1962, Service des archives de l'Archidiocèse de Sherbrooke, P43/7.1 1936-1969 40.

<sup>136</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense. Profilo della sua storia, dei suoi maestri e dei suoi discepoli*, op. cit., 1963, p. 3.

L'histoire de cette Université commence en 1773, lorsque Clément XIV fit part de sa décision (bref *Commendatissimam* — 24 novembre 1773) de confier les facultés de philosophie et de théologie du Collège romain au clergé séculier de la ville de Rome, juste après la suppression de la Compagnie de Jésus<sup>137</sup>. Pour diriger cette institution, le pape créa une commission de trois cardinaux dont le premier était chargé des œuvres spirituelles, le deuxième de veiller au secteur économique, et le troisième de diriger le secteur des études, la bibliothèque, le musée et l'observatoire<sup>138</sup>. Selon l'auteur de la présentation historique donnée dans l'ouvrage déjà cité, « L'orientamento che si intendeva dare all'insegnamento, ampio e aperto ad ogni indirizzo, che però desse sicure garanzie di serietà e di ortodossia, appare documentato nella composizione del Corpo Insegnante, nel quale figuravano studiosi del clero secolare e regolare, italiani e stranieri; e la cui presenza era testimonianza dell'afflato apostolico romano che permeava l'Università [...]»<sup>139</sup>.

Une deuxième période dans l'histoire de cette Université s'est ouverte en 1824, suite au rétablissement des jésuites en 1814. Par le bref *Recolentes animo* du 10 avril 1824, Léon XII décida en effet de transférer l'Université confiée au clergé de Rome et le Séminaire Romain dans le Palais de l'Apollinaire. Dans les années qui suivirent, protégée et patronnée par les papes, l'Université se développa considérablement, en particulier sous le pontificat de Pie IX, au cours duquel l'Apollinaire atteignit un degré d'organisation opérant et efficace, notamment au niveau de l'organisation des études. Le 3 octobre 1853, par le bref *Ad piam doctamque Cleri institutionem*, Pie IX conféra un nouveau plan d'études à l'Apollinaire, caractérisé par l'étude du droit canonique et civil. Ainsi, après la fondation des facultés de Droit canonique et de Droit civil ainsi que l'Institut Pontifical *Utriusque iuris*, les élèves de cette institution devaient faire deux ans de philosophie, quatre ans de théologie et trois ans de droit.

Les maîtres de l'Apollinaire étaient par ailleurs en conformité de vue avec le magistère et la politique intransigeante de Pie IX, comme le prouve par exemple la participation de quelques-uns d'entre eux à l'élaboration du *Syllabus*: Domenico Iacobini, Camillo Santori, Giuseppe Cardoni, Pio Delicati, Filippo Cossa. De même, plusieurs professeurs de cette institution furent appelés à participer à la préparation

<sup>137</sup> À propos de l'histoire de cette Université, voir: *La Pontificia Università Lateranense. Profilo della sua storia, dei suoi maestri e dei suoi discepoli*, Rome, 1963, 546 pages; *La Pontificia Università Lateranense dal 1961 al 1968*, sans mention d'auteur, d'éditeur et de date, 302 pages; Ignazio SANNA, *I papi e la Pontificia Università Lateranense*, Rome, 2001, 152 pages; C. SICCA, *Cenni storici del Pontificio Seminario Romano*, Rome, 1914, 95 pages; Luigi MEZZADRI, *Il Seminario Romano. Storia di un'istituzione di cultura e di pietà*, Cinisello Balsamo, 2001, 454 pages; A. GALUZZI, *Le scuole del Seminario Romano durante la breve docenza di Angelo Roncalli*, dans *Lateranum*, XLIX, 1983, p. 102-116; Philippe CHENAUX dans AUBERT (dir.), *Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de Géographie ecclésiastiques*, fascicule 177-178a, Paris, coll. 920-922; Philippe CHENAUX, *Le Latran et ses secrétaires d'État*, dans MEFRIM, T. 116, 2004-1, p. 45-60; Philippe CHENAUX (dir.), *L'Università del Laterano e la preparazione del concilio VaticanoII*, Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Stui (Città del Vaticano, 27 gennaio 2000), Rome, Mursia, 2001, 131 pages; Étienne FOUILLOUX, *Théologiens romains et VaticanII (1959-1962)*, *Cristianesimo nella Storia* XV, 1994, p. 373-394; Andrea RICCARDI, *I 'vota' Romani*, dans Mathijs LAMBERIGTS et Claude SOETENS (dir.), *À la veille du Concile VaticanII. Vota et réactions en Europe et dans le catholicisme oriental*, Leuven, 1992, p. 146-168.

<sup>138</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 3.

<sup>139</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 4.

du concile Vatican I, événement lors duquel les anciens élèves, cardinaux et évêques, furent nombreux à défendre la primauté pontificale<sup>140</sup>.

L'Apollinaire ne fut pas au nombre des instituts de formation fermés par le gouvernement italien après la prise de Rome en septembre 1870. Cependant, les responsables de l'Université durent réaménager le programme d'études et négocier avec le pouvoir civil pour trouver un compromis.

Sous le pontificat de Léon XIII (1878-1903), l'Apollinaire continua de se développer tout en se pliant à la réforme thomiste inaugurée par l'encyclique *Aeterni Patris* du 4 août 1879. Sous le patronage de ce pontife, furent fondés la Chaire de Philosophie thomiste et de Droit Public Ecclésiastique (1880), l'Institut Léonien de Haute Littérature (1885), l'École de Philosophie Supérieure (1895) et la Chaire d'Exégèse Biblique (1897). Une nouvelle impulsion fut également donnée à l'histoire de l'Église, chaire sur laquelle se succédèrent deux hommes à l'orientation complètement différente, Umberto Benigni<sup>141</sup>, de 1901 à 1904, et Ernesto Buonaiuti de 1904 à 1906<sup>142</sup>, l'une des figures de proue du modernisme romain.

Le pontificat de Pie X (1903-1914) se traduit à l'Apollinaire par une grande méfiance à l'égard du modernisme. À ce propos, il est intéressant de lire les commentaires qui se trouvent dans le livre *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, car ils sont tout-à-fait révélateurs de l'état d'esprit qui régnait dans cette Université, à la fois au début du siècle et au moment du concile :

Sotto il pontificato di S. Pio X, un particolare interesse fu posto a tener lontano dall'Università ogni infiltrazione delle idee « moderne » [...]. La nostra Università ascoltò l'insegnamento del Papa e moltiplicò l'impegno nel tradurre in pratica le direttive ricevute; e lo fece in maniera esemplare [...]. Nonostate le prime avvisaglie di modernismo, l'Università si mantenne fedele alla sana tradizione [...]. La defezione del Prof. Buonaiuti fu certo deplorabile, ma fu un caso assolutamente isolato, e fu occasione per i Professori dell'Università di manifestare una adesione ancora più stretta al Romano Pontefice<sup>143</sup>.

Le 29 juin 1913, Pie X inaugure sa réforme de l'enseignement à Rome par la Constitution apostolique *In praecipuis*, par laquelle il régula l'enseignement du clergé romain et italien et rassemblait les séminaires de Rome. Pour les facultés de l'Apollinaire, cela se traduisit par leur unification avec le nouveau Séminaire romain majeur, produit de la fusion des séminaires Pio et SS. Ambrogio e Carlo avec le Séminaire romain. Ce Séminaire et les facultés de l'Apollinaire devaient s'établir dans un nouvel édifice construit près de la basilique Saint-Jean-de-Latran. La réforme de Pie X comportait en outre une rénovation dans les enseignements et dans les programmes. Ainsi, pour la rentrée de 1913, le corps professoral de l'Apollinaire était en partie renouvelé et amplifié. Parmi les nouveaux professeurs, il y avait entre autres

<sup>140</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 8.

<sup>141</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 156-157.

<sup>142</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 157-158.

<sup>143</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 14.

Ernesto Ruffini (recteur de 1930 à 1932), Domenico Tardini, Enrico Buonpensiere, Giuseppe Sacco, Giuseppe Tuccimei, Pio Paschini (recteur de 1932 à 1957<sup>144</sup>), etc<sup>145</sup>.

Le 24 mai 1931, Pie XI promulgue la constitution apostolique *Deus scientiarum Dominus*, dans laquelle il proposait un nouveau *ratio studiorum* pour élever le niveau des études ecclésiastiques dans les universités et facultés catholiques, et pour les adapter aux besoins du monde moderne. L'un des inspirateurs et auteurs de ce texte n'était autre que le cardinal Ruffini, alors Secrétaire de la Sacrée Congrégation des Séminaires et des Universités et recteur du Latran<sup>146</sup>. Selon la volonté expresse de Pie XI, il incombait à l'Athénée pontificale du Latran d'être le premier à appliquer la réforme. Pour en faciliter la réalisation, Pie XI décida de la construction d'un nouvel édifice pour accueillir les facultés du Latran, bâtiment qu'il inaugura personnellement le 3 novembre 1937.

### À LA VEILLE DU CONCILE : UN RÉSEAU DU CATHOLICISME INTRANSIGEANT

Une nouvelle phase dans l'histoire de l'Université s'ouvrit en 1957 avec le rectorat de Mgr Antonio Piolanti (1957-1969). Durant cette période, les activités académiques de l'Université se développèrent considérablement et les revues *Divinitas* et *Aquinas* furent fondées<sup>147</sup>. En 1958, Pie XII y fonda l'Institut Pontifical Pastoral. L'année suivante, Jean XXIII éleva le Latran au rang d'Université pontificale par le motu proprio *Cum inde* (17 mai 1959).

Cette phase fut plutôt intransigeante. Dans ses conclusions à un colloque sur « L'Università del Laterano e la preparazione del concilio Vaticano II », l'historien Philippe Chenaux montre bien la perspective que comptait défendre cette Université au concile : « [...] il Laterano a cercato, nel contesto della preparazione conciliare avviata dalla consultazione romana del 1959, di affermarsi come portavoce "autorizzato" della cosiddetta "scuola romana di teologia", in piena fedeltà e continuità col magistero di Pio XII. Ne sono testimoni il suo lungo *votum* [...], le sue diverse pubblicazioni e le iniziative prese in quegli anni<sup>148</sup> ».

La charge de certains professeurs du Latran contre les tendances « néo-modernistes » du *Biblicum*<sup>149</sup> sont également révélatrices de la perspective théologique dans laquelle s'inscrivait de nombreux professeurs de cette Université. Certaines de

<sup>144</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 90.

<sup>145</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 15.

<sup>146</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 16.

<sup>147</sup> *La Pontificia Università Lateranense*, p. 18.

<sup>148</sup> Philippe CHENAUX, *Conclusioni*, dans CHENAUX (dir.) *L'Università del Laterano e la preparazione del concilio Vaticano II*, Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi (Città del Vaticano, 27 gennaio 2000), Rome, 2001, p. 122.

<sup>149</sup> À ce sujet, voir le livre de Karim SCHELKENS, *Catholic Theology of Revelation on the Eve of Vatican II. A Redaction History of the Schema De fontibus revelationis (1960-1962)*, Leiden-Boston, 2010. Voir également Anthony DUPONT et Karim SCHELKENS, *Scupoli vitandi. The Historical-Critical Exegesis Controversy Between the Lateran and the Biblicum (1960-1961)*, dans *Bijdragen, International Journal in Philosophy and Theology*, 69 (2008), p. 18-51; Riccardo BURIGANA *Tradizioni Inconciliabili? La «querelle» tra l'Università Lateranense e l'Istituto Biblico nella preparazione del Vaticano II*, dans CHENAUX, *L'Università del Laterano*, p. 51-66.

ces attaques parurent dans la revue *Divinitas*, comme par exemple celle d'Antonino Romeo en 1960<sup>150</sup>. Les choix théologiques de ce dernier sont tout à fait perceptibles dans sa correspondance avec Mgr Georges Cabana, évêque de Sherbrooke. Voici, par exemple, un extrait d'une lettre qu'il lui envoya le 30 septembre 1958 :

Le vaste plan d'attaque contre la foi catholique, à l'intérieur même de l'Église, se déroule avec une habileté vraiment satanique. Que de prêtres, hélas !, y prennent part, souvent par pure légèreté (pour « être de son temps » !). Bien peu sont angoissés par cette défensive de la « puissance des ténèbres », que pourtant le Saint-Père a si souvent dénoncée. Veuillez Votre Excellence prier et faire prier (Vous disposez d'un magnifique « capital » de prière !) pour que Jésus N.-S. « Vie qui est la Lumière des hommes », déjoue — par St. Michel et les légions angéliques — la propagande des doctrines de négation<sup>151</sup>.

Les lettres dans lesquelles il développait des idées similaires sont nombreuses. Voici un autre exemple, tiré cette fois d'un courrier daté de mars 1961 :

Que c'est terrible, aujourd'hui que de s'opposer aux « organisations » qui, à l'intérieur même de l'Église, s'emparent de certains leviers pour vider notre religion de tout contenu, pour démolir la révélation biblique en lui substituant la « pensée d'aujourd'hui », contre toutes les directives du magistère (pape et évêques) ! Il nous faut beaucoup prier, car l'assaut des modernistes d'aujourd'hui est bien plus vaste et bien moins contenu que celui de 1900-1907 !<sup>152</sup>

Ces extraits sont tout à fait révélateurs des dispositions de Mgr Romeo, qui par ailleurs ne cachait pas son estime envers Maritain, Gilson, Madiran et Ousset<sup>153</sup>. La référence à Maritain est plutôt étonnante de la part d'un catholique intransigeant, mais à quel Maritain faisait-il référence ? En revanche, son admiration pour Gilson, Madiran et Ousset est plus logique et montre sa connaissance des réseaux intransigeants français.

Mgr Antonio Piolanti, recteur du Latran entre 1957 et 1969 et directeur de *Divinitas*, connaissait lui aussi les réseaux du catholicisme intransigeant hors de l'Italie, et il était en contact avec plusieurs d'entre eux, comme le révèle sa correspondance. Nous n'avons eu accès qu'à une partie de celle-ci, et pour les seules années 1960-1962, mais les quelques dossiers que nous avons dépouillés révèlent ses liens avec des hommes tels que Luc J. Lefèvre, directeur de la revue *La Pensée catholique*<sup>154</sup> et Plinio Correa de

<sup>150</sup> Antonino ROMEO, *L'enciclica Divino Afflante Spiritu e le opinioni nuove*, dans *Divinitas*, 4 (1960), p. 387-456.

<sup>151</sup> Lettre de Mgr Antonino ROMEO à Mgr Georges CABANA, le 30 septembre 1958, Service des archives de l'Archidiocèse de Sherbrooke, fonds Archevêché de Sherbrooke, série Magistère, sous-série Université de Sherbrooke, A13/SA3, 6.3.1.

<sup>152</sup> Lettre de Mgr Antonino ROMEO à Mgr Georges CABANA, le 28 mars 1961, Service des archives de l'Archidiocèse de Sherbrooke, fonds Archevêché de Sherbrooke, série Magistère, sous-série Université de Sherbrooke, A13/SA3, 6.3.1.

<sup>153</sup> Lettre de Mgr Antonino ROMEO à Mgr Georges CABANA, le 29 mars 1967. Service des archives de l'Archidiocèse de Sherbrooke, P43/7.1 1937-1969 60.

<sup>154</sup> Lettre de Mgr Antonio PIOLANTI à Luc J. LEFÈVRE, Rome, le 18 octobre 1960, Archives de l'Université pontificale du Latran, fonds Mgr Antonino Piolanti, dossier «Corrispondenza Mons. Piolanti 1960»; Lettre de Mgr Antonio PIOLANTI à Luc J. LEFÈVRE, Rome, le 23 février 1961, Archives de l'Université pontificale du Latran, fonds Mgr Antonino Piolanti, dossier «Corrispondenza Mons. Piolanti 1961»;

Oliveira, fondateur du mouvement T.F.P.<sup>155</sup>, qui collabora au concile avec le *Coetus Internationalis Patrum*.

Sa position à la tête de l'Université pontificale du Latran, ainsi qu'à celle de la revue *Divinitas* — sur laquelle nous allons revenir — lui donnait une influence qui dépassait les portes de son établissement. Avant et pendant le concile, les quelques dossiers de correspondance auxquels nous avons eu accès le laissent voir en relation avec plusieurs personnages parmi les plus représentatifs de la minorité : Alfredo Ottaviani<sup>156</sup>, Giuseppe Siri<sup>157</sup>, Michaël Browne<sup>158</sup>, Ernesto Ruffini<sup>159</sup>, Arcadio Larraona<sup>160</sup>, Dino Staffa<sup>161</sup> et Luigi Carli<sup>162</sup>. Il se servit d'ailleurs de ses contacts pour essayer d'orienter les travaux dans un sens conservateur, comme le prouve par exemple une lettre qu'il écrivit au cardinal Ottaviani en décembre 1962 :

[...] sempre nel desiderio di servira la buona causa, mi permetto chiedere all'Eminenza Vostra Rev.ma che voglia adoperarsi per far nominare Perito del Concilio Ecumenico Vaticano II il Rev.mo P. Girard, Superiore Generale di S. Salpizio. La presenza in Concilio di un Superiore Generale francese di spirito veramente romano, costituirà un elemento di indubbio valore, che a Vostra Eminenza non può certo sfuggire. La ringrazio del peso che

Lettre de Mgr Antonio PIOLANTI à Luc J. LEFÈVRE, Rome, le 5 décembre 1962, Archives de l'Université pontificale du Latran, fonds Mgr Antonino Piolanti, dossier «Corrispondenza Mons. Piolanti 1962».

<sup>155</sup> Lettre de Mgr Antonio PIOLANTI à Plinio CORREA DE OLIVEIRA, Rome, le 23 janvier 1961, Archives de l'Université pontificale du Latran, fonds Mgr Antonino Piolanti, dossier «Corrispondenza Mons. Piolanti 1961».

<sup>156</sup> Lettre de Mgr Antonio PIOLANTI au cardinal Alfredo OTTAVIANI, Rome, le 2 juillet 1962; Lettre de Mgr Antonio PIOLANTI au cardinal Alfredo OTTAVIANI, Rome, le 12 décembre 1962; Lettre de Mgr Antonio PIOLANTI au cardinal Alfredo OTTAVIANI, Rome, le 14 décembre 1962, Archives de l'Université pontificale du Latran, fonds Mgr Antonino Piolanti, dossier «Corrispondenza Mons. Piolanti 1962».

<sup>157</sup> Lettre de Mgr Antonio PIOLANTI au cardinal Giuseppe SIRI, Rome, le 19 mars 1962; Lettre de Mgr Antonio PIOLANTI au cardinal Giuseppe SIRI, Rome, le 10 décembre 1962; Lettre de Mgr Antonio PIOLANTI au cardinal Giuseppe SIRI, Rome, le 19 décembre 1962, Archives de l'Université pontificale du Latran, fonds Mgr Antonino Piolanti, dossier «Corrispondenza Mons. Piolanti 1962».

<sup>158</sup> Lettre de Mgr Antonio PIOLANTI au cardinal Michaël BROWNE, Rome, le 20 septembre 1960, Archives de l'Université pontificale du Latran, fonds Mgr Antonino Piolanti, dossier «Corrispondenza Mons. Piolanti 1960».

<sup>159</sup> Lettre de Mgr Antonio PIOLANTI au cardinal Ernesto RUFFINI, Rome, le 12 septembre 1962; Lettre de Mgr Antonio PIOLANTI au cardinal Ernesto RUFFINI, Rome, le 10 décembre 1962, Archives de l'Université pontificale du Latran, fonds Mgr Antonino Piolanti, dossier «Corrispondenza Mons. Piolanti 1962».

<sup>160</sup> Lettre de Mgr Antonio PIOLANTI au cardinal Arcadio LARRAONA, Rome, le 28 septembre 1962; Lettre de Mgr Antonio PIOLANTI au cardinal Arcadio LARRAONA, Rome, le 10 décembre 1962, Archives de l'Université pontificale du Latran, fonds Mgr Antonino Piolanti, dossier «Corrispondenza Mons. Piolanti 1962».

<sup>161</sup> Lettre de Mgr Antonio PIOLANTI à Mgr Dino STAFFA, Rome, le 12 novembre 1962, Archives de l'Université pontificale du Latran, fonds Mgr Antonino Piolanti, dossier «Corrispondenza Mons. Piolanti 1962».

<sup>162</sup> Lettre de Mgr Antonio PIOLANTI à Mgr Luigi CARLI, Rome, le 8 novembre 1962, Archives de l'Université pontificale du Latran, fonds Mgr Antonino Piolanti, dossier «Corrispondenza Mons. Piolanti 1962».



vorrà dare a questa mia umile segnalazione, e di quanto di degnerà fare per portarla a felice compimento<sup>163</sup>.

L'implication de l'Université du Latran au concile Vatican II peut également se voir pendant la phase préparatoire. L'Université organisa tout d'abord une semaine d'étude sur les conciles œcuméniques dont les actes furent publiés dans la revue *Divinitas* en juin 1961<sup>164</sup>. Le numéro suivant de cette revue fut consacré au concile : *Magisterium et Theologia. Theologica scripta Joanni XXIII Pontifici Maximo et Patribus Concilii Vaticani Secundi a Pontificia Academia Theologica Romana et a Pontificia Universitate Lateranensi reverenter oblata*<sup>165</sup>. Enfin, en septembre 1962, juste avant l'ouverture du concile, un numéro entier de la revue était consacré à la présentation des actes d'un symposium de théologie sur l'Église, « patribus concilii Vatican II reverenter oblatum », actes dont les cardinaux Siri et Browne se trouvaient parmi les auteurs<sup>166</sup>.

Ces quelques considérations prouvent bien qu'il y avait un réseau actif de catholiques intransigeants autour de l'Université pontificale du Latran et de la revue *Divinitas* au moment du rectorat de Mgr Antonio Piolanti. Plusieurs membres ou sympathisants du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* appartenaient à ce réseau dans les années précédant le concile. Aussi, contrairement au Séminaire français de Rome et à la Grégorienne, l'Université du Latran ne fut-elle pas uniquement un lieu au sein duquel plusieurs d'entre eux furent formés. Le Latran fut également, de par ses professeurs et les personnages qui gravitaient autour d'eux, un réseau international regroupant plusieurs futurs représentants de la minorité conciliaire.

### CONCLUSION : RÉCEPTION DE LA FORMATION ROMAINE

L'analyse prosopographique des lieux de formation des principaux membres du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* montre une convergence des études à Rome, en trois lieux précis : le Séminaire français de Rome, l'Université pontificale Grégorienne et l'Université pontificale du Latran, qui furent des relais de la pensée intransigeante, du conservatisme contre-révolutionnaire, de l'antilibéralisme, bref, de la romanité.

La fréquentation de ces relais de la romanité n'explique cependant pas tout. Ernesto Buonaiuti, le représentant typique du modernisme romain, ne fut-il pas formé lui aussi à l'Université du Latran et n'y enseigna-t-il pas pendant quelques années ? Une étude plus précise aurait peut-être montré des nuances dans la romanité dispensée par

<sup>163</sup> Lettre de Mgr Antonio PIOLANTI au cardinal Alfredo OTTAVIANI, Rome, le 12 décembre 1962, Archives de l'Université pontificale du Latran, fonds Mgr Antonino Piolanti, dossier «Corrispondenza Mons. Piolanti 1962».

<sup>164</sup> *Acta Hebdomadae de Conciliis Oecumenicis celebratae a Pontificia Academia Theologica Romana diebus 13-18 mensis novembris A.D. 1960, Divinitas*, 5<sup>ème</sup> année, juin 1961, fascicule II, p. 193-509.

<sup>165</sup> *Magisterium et Theologia. Theologica scripta Joanni XXIII Pontifici Maximo et Patribus Concilii Vaticani Secundi a Pontificia Academia Theologica Romana et a Pontificia Universitate Lateranensi reverenter oblata* [Magistère et Théologie. Écrits théologiques présentés avec respect au souverain pontife Jean XXIII et aux Pères du concile Vatican II par l'Académie pontificale de théologie romaine et par l'Université pontificale du Latran], dans *Divinitas*, 5 (1961), p. 517-864.

<sup>166</sup> *Symposium theologicum de Ecclesia Christi patribus Concilii Vaticani II reverenter oblatum* [Symposium théologique sur l'Église du Christ présenté avec respect aux Pères du Concile Vatican II], dans *Divinitas*, 6 (1962), p. 463-585.

les éducateurs de ces établissements, en particulier pour la Grégorienne et pour le Latran. Les exceptions sont cependant des cas isolés et il est certain que la formation générale dispensée dans ces établissements était la théologie romaine, comme l'ont montré les témoignages des anciens du Séminaire français et de la Grégorienne. Pour le Latran, les témoignages sont plus rares : les anciens élèves membres du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* y furent moins nombreux et le Latran fut davantage un endroit qui accueillit des professeurs qui devinrent par la suite membres du CIP que des étudiants. Cependant, la formation n'y fut pas moins romaine qu'ailleurs. Mgr Carli, ancien de cet établissement, ne dit-il pas, en 1985 : « Ci chiamavano conservatori... Noi intendevamo semplicemente dire: 'Noi abbiamo studiato a Roma la teologia romana'. Per noi era la teologia<sup>167</sup> ».

S'il n'y avait pas eu ces établissements, si le père Le Floch n'avait pas été recteur du Séminaire français dans le premier quart du 20<sup>e</sup> s., y aurait-il eu un *Coetus Internationalis Patrum*? La question peut se poser, car c'est là qu'ils puisèrent leur romanité et leur intransigeance. Cependant, si ces endroits furent indéniablement des foyers du CIP, tous les anciens n'en firent pas partie, loin de là. À quoi cela tient-il? Nous pouvons émettre l'hypothèse que certains d'entre eux furent imperméables à l'intransigeance, tandis que les autres la remirent en cause plus tard. Mgr Lefebvre en témoigna à sa façon :

Quand je pense que toute notre vie sacerdotale et épiscopale a été orientée par ce combat contre le libéralisme, pour faire triompher la Vérité contre l'erreur qu'il voulait faire disparaître, voilà brusquement le Concile qui vient au secours du libéralisme. C'est invraisemblable. Nous avons cependant été deux cent cinquante évêques à nous manifester contre cette orientation. Malheureusement, il y avait peu d'anciens du Séminaire français dans ce groupe. Les anciens, nommés évêques en France, avaient été recyclés et se trouvaient entièrement acquis aux thèses libérales. C'est l'une des choses les plus tristes que j'ai pu constater au cours de ma vie. Et pourtant, Mgr Garrone, Mgr Ancel, je pourrais en citer de nombreux autres, avaient tous été enthousiastes. Certains d'entre eux avaient fait au Séminaire des conférences magnifiques, qui sont restées célèbres. Et cependant, ils ont abandonné le combat. Mgr Ancel est devenu « ouvriériste », Mg [sic] Garrone a prétendu que l'on nous avait trompés; les autres n'ont rien fait. Je ne sais pas ce qui a pu se passer. Ceux qui ont le mieux résisté, ce ne sont pas les anciens du Séminaire français, ce sont les évêques espagnols ou d'Amérique latine qui eux aussi avaient été bien formés dans une ambiance catholique. Ils vivaient dans des pays où la Foi catholique était officiellement reconnue, alors que la France, elle, était laïcisée depuis déjà longtemps. Ce sont eux, avec aussi les Italiens, qui ont réagi contre ce Concile laïcisateur. Ils se sont dressés contre le libéralisme des Américains, des Allemands et des Français.

À un autre endroit et à propos de son combat au concile, Marcel Lefebvre témoignait ainsi de l'importance de la formation qu'il reçut à Rome :

Je n'ai pas cherché à faire comme les autres... loin de là. Je pense que c'est la formation que j'ai reçue au Séminaire français de Rome qui m'a fait réagir selon certains principes, selon les principes que les papes ont exposés dans toutes leurs encycliques. J'ai agi dans cet esprit,

<sup>167</sup> « Testimonianza [sic] resa da S.E. mons. Luigi CARLI il 29 novembre 1985 alle ore 10,30 in Gaeta al Dott. Giuseppe CAMADINI, a Mons. Giuseppe COLOMBO ed al Dott. Renato PAPETTI. Document envoyé par Nicola Buonasorte à l'auteur au mois de mai 2008.

cet esprit de constituer des sociétés catholiques, en sorte que Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ règne sur les sociétés.

Lorsque le concile est arrivé, il aurait fallu pratiquement cesser de penser au Règne social de Notre-Seigneur, pour laisser la liberté à toutes les religions de pouvoir s'exprimer, cet esprit libéral œcuménique. Évidemment, à ce moment-là, je n'ai pu accepter une chose pareille !

Ce qui me surprend, c'est que, de tous ceux qui étaient avec moi au Séminaire, qui étaient devenus évêques, il y en ait eu beaucoup qui aient accepté tout cela : un Mgr Ancel, un Mgr Garrone, un Mgr Lebrun, un Mgr Michon, que sais-je... Ils avaient été tous enthousiastes, plus que moi pour certains, à la pensée de participer au combat des papes, au combat de l'Église ; ils avaient fait de magnifiques conférences au Séminaire, qui sont restées célèbres. Mais nommés en France, ils avaient été recyclés, ils étaient totalement passés au libéralisme, aux thèses libérales. C'est lamentable, et l'une des choses les plus tristes de ma vie<sup>168</sup>.

Il ne faut donc pas faire de ces établissements la cause absolue ni l'unique fondement du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum*. La plupart de ses membres — nous l'avons démontré au moins pour les plus importants d'entre eux — y puisèrent leur intransigeance, c'est indéniable, mais pourquoi y restèrent-ils fidèles, alors que d'autres la rejetèrent ? Probablement y a-t-il des causes psychologiques ? Certains hommes — cela peut s'observer au quotidien — sont d'une nature plus catégorique et intransigeante que d'autres, et cela n'est pas vrai seulement au niveau de la religion, mais aussi au niveau politique par exemple. Mais il faut également considérer les rencontres déterminantes que chaque homme fait sur son chemin. Après leur formation romaine, chacun des élèves suivit un parcours propre et rencontra des hommes qui purent avoir une influence déterminante sur leur perception de la catholicité. Peut-on mesurer l'influence que peut avoir un évêque ou un curé sur un jeune vicaire ? Et puis, chacun vécut des situations particulières qui purent être déterminantes.

Aussi, les causes de l'adhésion ou du rejet de la théologie romaine et de tout ce qu'elle implique peuvent être multiples. Elles ne sont probablement pas toutes identifiables ni mesurables. Cependant, s'il y a des motifs qui peuvent faire abandonner l'intransigeance, il y en a d'autres qui peuvent la faire germer et souvent, ce sont les mêmes : caractère, amitiés, chemins, etc. Parmi ces causes, il nous semble qu'il y en ait une au moins qui puisse être étudiée et documentée : l'appartenance ou la proximité avec certains mouvements et revues. Une analyse du parcours des membres du *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* révèle qu'ils furent nombreux à côtoyer les plus importants réseaux du catholicisme intransigeant préconciliaire : la revue italienne *Divinitas* fondée par Antonio Piolanti, la revue française *La Pensée catholique* de Luc J. Lefèvre, le mouvement *La Cité catholique* et sa revue *Verbe* de Jean Ousset, la revue *Itinéraires* fondée et dirigée par Jean Madiran, et enfin, les revues brésiliennes *O Legionario* et *Catolicismo* ainsi que le mouvement *Tradition, Famille, Propriété*, animés par Plinio Correa de Oliveira.

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<sup>168</sup> Archives Écône, Cagnon 1987, 3, 18 et 19. Cité dans TISSIER DE MALLERAIS, Marcel Lefebvre, p. 336

# UNE HISTOIRE DE CHANGEMENT ET DE CONFLIT DE PARADIGMES THÉOLOGIQUES ?

VATICAN II ET SA RÉCEPTION ENTRE CONTINUITÉ ET DISCONTINUITÉ

## INTRODUCTION : PARTAGE DES EAUX ?

Né en 1966, je n'ai pas assisté moi-même à Vatican II. Tout ce que je sais de l'impact du Concile sur l'Église et la vie de foi, je l'ai appris de personnes — simples chrétiens, théologiens, aussi bien que responsables ecclésiastiques — pour lesquelles il y eut, il y a, un avant et un après-concile. L'impact théologique, en particulier la réception théologique de Vatican II, je l'ai découvert à partir du discours et des textes de théologiens qui ont participé au concile et/ou à sa mise en œuvre ; certains entre-temps sont devenus membres de la hiérarchie. Immédiatement après, mais aujourd'hui encore, ils ont diffusé leurs idées et leur évaluation de l'événement<sup>169</sup>. C'est donc l'indice que le deuxième concile du Vatican a dû être un événement considérable, qui a laissé peu de gens indifférents — avec, manifestement, un 'avant' et un 'après'. Plus encore : c'est comme si Vatican II était en France le point, près de Pouilly-en-Auxois, où se trouve l'indication 'Partage des eaux', là où se rencontrent les bassins de la Seine, de la Loire et du Rhône. Tandis qu'au nord et à l'ouest de ce point, toute l'eau coule vers le Canal et l'océan Atlantique, au sud-est de ce point, toute l'eau coule vers la mer Méditerranée. Il en va ainsi, semble-t-il, pour la foi chrétienne, l'Église catholique et la théologie, 'avant' et 'après' le concile.

C'est sur cette base aussi que j'ai toujours considéré Vatican II comme une sorte d'événement particulier, entre une période pré-conciliaire et une période post-conciliaire. Je m'expose ainsi à rencontrer des difficultés avec des théologiens, des membres de la hiérarchie et d'autres qui voient Vatican II surtout en continuité avec ce qui s'est produit avant — comme si rien ne s'y était passé et comme si le concile ne marquait pas vraiment une différence. Or, des oppositions faciles sont très rarement de bons cadres d'interprétation quand il s'agit d'éclairer des phénomènes historiques et théologiques. Vouloir comprendre le concile simplement en termes de continuité et de discontinuité, c'est risquer d'oublier la complexité d'un événement comme Vatican II et de dériver dans le simplisme idéologique. Par ailleurs, la distance dans le temps aide peut-être à y voir plus clair et à situer dans une perspective plus large des événements qui ont touché une génération de croyants, de théologiens et de dirigeants ecclésiastiques. Pourtant, beaucoup dépend finalement de la terminologie que l'on

<sup>169</sup> Une expérience intéressante, mais étrange : j'ai souvent suivi des cours de professeurs qui, dans leurs exposés à la manière post-conciliaire, s'insurgeaient contre la théologie préconciliaire, sans que nous, jeunes étudiants, sachions de quoi il s'agissait — ces critiques et ces réponses visaient une théologie que nous ne connaissions plus.

utilise pour désigner le fait Vatican II et sa réception comme phénomène historique et théologique. Les termes privilégiés pour le décrire (continuité, discontinuité, *aggiornamento*, ressourcement, complexité et « perspective plus large », changement et conflit de paradigmes) sont rarement neutres — description efficace et programme théologique allant souvent de pair.

En vérité, la question qui porte sur la continuité et la discontinuité n'est pas seulement *d'ordre historique*, même si l'on interprète le plus minutieusement possible l'événement et si l'on en saisit la portée sur ce qui s'en est suivi. Cette question est en même temps *d'ordre théologique* et, aujourd'hui, manifestement dans une mesure croissante; elle se formule ainsi: « Comment Dieu se fait-il connaître lors de Vatican II et au cours de la période postconciliaire? », ou encore, « Quelle est la portée révélatrice de Vatican II et de sa réception? ». D'un point de vue théologique, il ne s'agit pas seulement ici de questions sur la nature et le comment du développement de la Tradition. Il s'agit aussi et surtout de savoir quelle orientation programmatique l'Église et la théologie doivent adopter sur la base du concile. Et c'est ici précisément qu'apparaît un conflit à propos de l'interprétation de Vatican II en termes de *changement de paradigme*. Qui plus est, quand on se demande si Vatican II a conduit à un changement de paradigme pour l'Église et la théologie, la réponse se trouve manifestement liée à *un conflit entre différents paradigmes théologiques*. En bref, celui qui interprète Vatican II d'abord en termes de discontinuité avec le passé, penche pour le changement de paradigme; celui qui opte pour la continuité relativise le changement de paradigme. Ce conflit à propos du paradigme, appliqué à l'évaluation de Vatican II et à sa réception, est l'une des principales controverses qui, depuis 1965, ont troublé en permanence le paysage théologique catholique; depuis quelques années, il a resurgi dans toute son acuité quand est arrivé à son terme le projet de Giuseppe Alberigo de réaliser l'histoire de Vatican II<sup>170</sup>. Mgr Agostino Marchetto et le cardinal Camillo Ruini ont critiqué sévèrement ce dernier projet: ils en ont contesté l'approche contextuelle, en raison de l'attention excessive portée aux tensions et aux conflits, aux interventions politiques, aux contorsions/pirouettes dans la prise de décision, à l'opposition entre la curie et l'épiscopat mondial, etc.; ils plaidaient pour une lecture plus harmonisante du processus conciliaire et des textes votés au final<sup>171</sup>. Alors qu'Alberigo et ses collaborateurs voulaient mettre l'accent sur les aspects innovants et révolutionnaires de Vatican II (en termes de changement de paradigme) et donc mettre en lumière les discontinuités avec le passé, Marchetto et Ruini voudraient privilégier la continuité et le développement harmonieux. On peut évidemment contester que cette caractérisation schématique du débat rende justice aux faits.

<sup>170</sup> Giuseppe ALBERIGO et Joseph A. KOMONCHAK (dir.), *The History of Vatican II* (5 Vols.), Leuven, 1995-2006 (Étienne Fouilloux (dir.), *Histoire du Concile Vatican II*, 5 Vols., Paris, 1997-2005); Giuseppe ALBERIGO *A Short History of Vatican II*, Maryknoll, 2006.

<sup>171</sup> Agostino MARCHETTO, *Il Concilio Vaticano II. Contrappunto per la sua storia*, Città del Vaticano, Vatican, 2005; Camillo RUINI, *Nuovi segni dei tempi. Le sorti della fede nell'età dei mutamenti*, Milano, 2005.

Mais en même temps, affirmer qu'à Vatican II *rien ne s'est « vraiment » passé* ou que rien n'a changé semble porter atteinte à la vérité historique<sup>172</sup>. Pour ne donner qu'un seul exemple, Karl Rahner voyait Vatican II comme le commencement de la troisième période de l'histoire de l'Église, après la période courte d'une Église judéo-chrétienne et des siècles de chrétienté européenne, c.-à-d. celle de l'Église du monde<sup>173</sup>. Mais il reste à voir si l'enthousiasme déclenché par l'*aggiornamento* du concile est aussi le garant d'un changement de paradigme dans la longue durée, comme Rahner l'avait estimé.

Pour apporter un peu de clarté dans ce débat, il est bon de s'arrêter pour se demander ce que comprennent les concepts de paradigme et de changement de paradigme, et comment des conflits surgissent dans cet ordre d'idées. Commençons donc par nous attarder un moment auprès du philosophe des sciences, Thomas Kuhn, qui a décrit le développement des sciences (de la nature) en termes de changements de paradigme ; nous envisagerons ensuite son adaptation théologique par Hans Küng. Ce qui va ressortir aussitôt, c'est que parler et penser en termes de paradigmes n'implique aucune option pour ou contre la continuité ou la discontinuité, mais qu'une telle démarche les associe intrinsèquement l'une à l'autre. Peut-être la discontinuité recèle-t-elle de la continuité et la continuité de la discontinuité — et cela tant sur le plan historique que théologique<sup>174</sup>.

### THOMAS KUHN SUR LE PARADIGME ET LE CHANGEMENT DE PARADIGME

Dans *The Structure of Scientific Revolution* (1962) et les nombreuses discussions qui ont suivi, Thomas Kuhn a expliqué le mode selon lequel surviennent des développements dans la science de la nature — en particulier les révolutions scientifiques. Kuhn définit un *paradigme* comme « une constellation entière de croyances, de valeurs, de techniques, et ainsi de suite, partagées par les membres d'une communauté donnée<sup>175</sup> ». Un paradigme constitue donc une manière spécifique de voir, d'œuvrer, de juger et d'agir, caractéristique pour, et pratiquée par une communauté spécifique ou des acteurs scientifiques. En outre, des paradigmes se sont développés dans

<sup>172</sup> John W. O'MALLEY, *Vatican II. Did Anything Happen?*, dans David G. SCHULTENOVER (dir.), *Vatican II. Did Anything Happen?*, London/New York, 2008, p. 52-91. Voir aussi la contribution de J. Komonchak dans le volume: *Vatican II as an «event»*, p. 24-51.

<sup>173</sup> Voir, par exemple, Karl RAHNER, *Theologisch Grundinterpretation des II. Vatikanischen Konzils*, in *Schriften zur Theologie*, Bd. XVI, dans *Sorge um die Kirche*, Zürich/Einsiedeln/Köln, 1980, p. 287-302.

<sup>174</sup> Dans la suite de ce texte, je présente les résultats d'un projet plus vaste de recherche interdisciplinaire, *The Normativity of History* (Lieven BOEVE, Mathijs LAMBERIGTS et Terrence MERRIGAN, BOF/GOA research grant, K.U.Leuven) dans laquelle la relation entre histoire et vérité théologique est étudiée du point de vue conjoint de l'histoire de l'Église et de la théologie systématique. Pour d'importantes parties du texte ci-dessous, j'ai utilisé les résultats de recherches déjà publiés en anglais. Dans l'ordre: Lieven BOEVE, *Assessing the Küng-Tracy Symposium. A Late-Modern Paradigm Challenged by a Postmodern Context? A Research Proposal on Paradigm Conflict and Paradigm Change*, in *New Blackfriars*, 92 (2011). Et BOEVE, *Systematic Theology, Truth and History. Recontextualisation*, in Mathijs LAMBERIGTS, Lieven BOEVE et Terrence MERRIGAN (eds), *Orthodoxy. Process and Product*, Leuven, 2009, p. 27-44.

<sup>175</sup> Thomas S. KUHN, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 3<sup>e</sup> éd., revue et augmentée (Chicago, 1996), p. 175; *La structure des révolutions scientifiques* (trad. par L. Meyer), Paris, 2008. La définition la plus précise et la plus développée est fournie par Kuhn dans sa postface de 1969.

et pour un contexte historique particulier, tandis que des événements et conditions historiques ont un impact sur le paradigme dominant. La réalité n'est jamais reçue toute nue, comme telle, mais toujours à travers des vitres paradigmatiques. Même si le désir de Kuhn est de comprendre les changements et la nouveauté en science, la situation la plus courante est, de toute évidence, celle de la « science normale », c.-à-d. la science qui se réalise dans un paradigme donné, incontesté ; qui est lui-même le résultat « de réalisations scientifiques plus anciennes : des réalisations qu'une certaine communauté scientifique particulière a reconnues pour un temps comme à même de fonder sa pratique future<sup>176</sup> ».

Dans cette optique, la terminologie du « paradigme » ne renvoie pas seulement au cadre, mais aussi aux modèles paradigmatiques et aux exemples de pratique scientifique inclus dans un tel cadre (savants reconnus, manuels qui font autorité, exemples typiques, etc.). Le travail des scientifiques peut être décrit comme la résolution d'un puzzle effectuée à l'intérieur de tel cadre donné qui donc, en même temps, le confirme. C'est seulement quand une telle résolution aboutit à une anomalie persistante, en désaccord avec le paradigme donné, même modifié, et donc faisant pression sur lui de l'intérieur, qu'un *changement de paradigme* peut se produire. Le nouveau paradigme réussit mieux à répondre à l'anomalie, aux nouvelles découvertes, aux événements et aux circonstances. Pourtant, le nouveau paradigme ne se développe pas automatiquement à partir de l'ancien : un changement de paradigme implique en effet une « révolution » : concepts, modèles, exemples de l'ancien paradigme perdent leur pouvoir signifiant commun et sont remplacés par une nouvelle compréhension holistique dans laquelle — s'ils survivent à la révolution — ils reçoivent une signification, une fonction ou une place nouvelles ou adaptées. Par conséquent, ce mode de changement de paradigme implique discontinuité et rupture, menant à une incommensurabilité entre l'ancien et le nouveau paradigme. On ne fait donc pas facilement le déplacement d'un paradigme à l'autre : on passe plutôt, en quelque sorte, par une conversion. Une fois passé au nouveau paradigme, on peut même difficilement imaginer ce qu'a signifié travailler dans le précédent.

Ce qui est intéressant pour le propos de notre contribution, c'est qu'avec ce travail Thomas Kuhn présente un modèle qui permet de *penser ensemble continuité et discontinuité* dans le développement des sciences de la nature, et cela sans réduire l'une à l'autre. Dans le sillage de cette perspective, nombre de disciplines ont tenté d'appliquer la théorie de Kuhn dans leur domaine propre. Il est apparu en outre que la terminologie du paradigme n'est pas seulement appropriée à la (r)évolution diachronique des paradigmes, mais est également utile pour discerner les paradigmes en compétition synchronique.

#### ADAPTATION THÉOLOGIQUE PAR HANS KÜNG : À LA FOIS DESCRIPTION ET PROGRAMME

La tentative la plus élaborée pour appliquer la pensée de Kuhn à la théologie date de 1983. Du 23 au 26 mai 1983, Hans Küng et David Tracy ont organisé un symposium à Tübingen : leur objectif était de réfléchir (a) à la manière dont la pensée en termes

<sup>176</sup> Thomas S. KUHN, *Structure*, p. 10.



de paradigmes pouvait être appliquée à la théologie et (b) à quoi ressemblerait un paradigme théologique orienté vers l'avenir. Dès le début, les éléments descriptifs et programmatiques de l'exercice furent clairement associés les uns aux autres. Se demander, d'une part, comment admettre la discontinuité (historique et théologique) dans le développement de la Tradition, de la théologie et de l'Église et, d'autre part, percevoir la continuité historique et théologique de la même Tradition à travers pareil développement, cela peut en effet déjà impliquer une position théologique normative<sup>177</sup>. À ce propos, il est intéressant de relever, entre autres, que presque en même temps, à l'occasion de sa conférence d'adieu à Nimègue en 1982, Schillebeeckx appliquait la théorie herméneutique de Hans Georg Gadamer de « la fusion des horizons » pour expliquer le développement de la Tradition théologique ; sa démarche aboutissant à un résultat fort semblable à l'application par Küng de la théorie de Kuhn. Tous deux (Küng et Schillebeeckx) en envisageaient les implications descriptives et programmatiques<sup>178</sup>. Le titre de l'un des articles postérieurs de Schillebeeckx répond aussi à la question en cause : « c'est seulement grâce aux ruptures que le dogme chrétien reste vrai<sup>179</sup> ».

Küng a inséré une version revue de ses textes présentés au symposium dans une monographie publiée en 1987, intitulée *Theologie im Aufbruch. Eine ökumenische Grundlegung*. Dans la même ligne, il a également publié deux volumes en 1994 : *Große christliche Denker*, et *Das Christentum. Wesen und Geschichte*<sup>180</sup>.

Comme déjà mentionné plus haut, Küng ne veut pas simplement présenter une théologie au moyen d'un outil descriptif en vue de lire le passé. Le modèle théologique du changement de paradigme lui sert d'abord et avant tout de document convainquant en vue de plaider pour un nouveau changement de paradigme dans la théologie contemporaine. Par conséquent, il dessine les contours de ce qu'il appelle un « paradigme théologique œcuménique postmoderne », à réaliser aujourd'hui (ce qui, dans son cas, était la fin des années quatre-vingt et le début des années nonante du siècle dernier).

<sup>177</sup> Tant les articles préparatoires que les contributions au symposium ont été publiés en allemand (en deux volumes, 1984 et 1986), mais aussi en anglais (1989) : Hans KÜNG et David TRACY (dir.), *Theologie – wohin? Auf dem Weg zu einem neuen Paradigma*, Zürich, Köln, 1984; *Das neue Paradigma von Theologie. Strukturen und Dimensionen*, Zürich, Köl, 1986; *Paradigm Change in Theology. A Symposium for the Future*, Edinburgh, 1989.

<sup>178</sup> Cf. Edward SCHILLEBEECKX, *Theologisch geloofsverstaan anno 1983*, Baarn, 1983, republié dans *Mensen als verhaal van God*, Baarn, 1989 (*L'histoire des hommes, récit de Dieu* (traduit du néerlandais par H. Cornelis), Paris, 1992), en référence à Hans Georg GADAMER, *Wahrheit und Methode. Grundzüge einer philosophischen Hermeneutik*, Tübingen, 1960 (*Vérité et méthode. Les grandes lignes d'une herméneutique philosophique*, Paris, 1992).

<sup>179</sup> Cf. Edward SCHILLEBEECKX, *Breuken in christelijke dogma's*, in *Idem e.a. (dir.), Breuklijnen. Grenservaringen en zoektochten*, Baarn, 1994, p. 15-49, p. 26 (*Ruptures dans les dogmes chrétiens*, trad. par A. DERMIENCE, in *ET Bulletin*, 8 (1997) 1, p. 11-38).

<sup>180</sup> Cf. Hans KÜNG, *Theologie im Aufbruch. Eine ökumenische Grundlegung*, München, Zürich, 1987 (*Une théologie pour le troisième millénaire. Pour un nouveau départ œcuménique*, trad. de l'allemand par J. Feisthauer, Paris, 1989); *Große christliche Denker*, München, Zürich, 1994, et KÜNG, *Das Christentum. Wesen und Geschichte*, München/Zürich, 1994 (*Le christianisme. Ce qu'il est et ce qu'il est devenu dans l'histoire*, trad. de l'allemand par J. Feisthauer, Paris, 1999).

Küng affirme que, comme dans les sciences de la nature, la condition type pour la théologie est celle d'une « science normale » : une manière donnée et globalement incontestée de faire de la théologie, caractérisée par des livres et des auteurs reconnus, des cadres de pensée et des exemples. Une nouvelle connaissance ajoute à la connaissance déjà acquise dans le paradigme en cours. Quand surviennent des situations de crise, elles sont en tout premier lieu en relation avec le contenu du paradigme existant : révélant souvent ses limites et ses contradictions, elles les mettent au défi et les interrogent. C'est pourquoi, des changements dans le contexte peuvent provoquer des crises dans le paradigme existant et conduire à un éventuel *changement de paradigme*. En effet, un tel changement de paradigme n'est pas un déplacement organique d'un paradigme vers un autre ; il implique bien plutôt une révolution, impose brutalement des changements dans le vocabulaire, les cadres de pensée, etc. Dans l'Église, des crises de ce genre ont été souvent accompagnées de graves conflits et même de condamnations. Le nouveau paradigme est installé quand il réussit à fournir des critères pour un nouvel âge de « science normale », c.-à-d. quand la majorité des spécialistes acceptent le paradigme et reconnaissent que le paradigme ancien est devenu marginal. Néanmoins, Küng ajoute aussi que, si un paradigme théologique change, tout comme dans les sciences, il n'entraîne jamais une complète discontinuité, mais se meut dans un espace entre continuité et discontinuité, évolution et révolution, stabilité et changement.

Le schéma que Küng présente en 1994<sup>181</sup> pour résumer cette application de la théorie du paradigme à l'histoire de la théologie est un peu différent de celui esquissé dans son premier livre et dans les exposés du symposium<sup>182</sup> : ce n'est plus seulement l'illustration de la première utilisation, avant tout diachronique, de cette théorie, mais aussi de son usage synchronique. S'y trouve également accentué l'entrelacement de l'aspect descriptif et programmatique de son approche. Du point de vue descriptif, Küng subdivise d'abord l'histoire du christianisme en plusieurs paradigmes : le paradigme judéo-apocalyptique, le paradigme du christianisme primitif, le paradigme œcuménico-hellénistique de l'Antiquité chrétienne, le paradigme catholique romain médiéval, le paradigme protestant-évangélique de la Réforme, le paradigme moderne et le paradigme contemporain œcuménique ou postmoderne. Dans son texte, il fait en outre la distinction, à l'intérieur de ces macro-paradigmes, entre paradigme médio- et micro- (par ex. Alexandrin ; Augustinien et Thomiste).

En même temps cependant, Küng prend aussi position sur l'état de la théologie contemporaine. Outre le paradigme contemporain, œcuménique et postmoderne qu'il désigne comme le sixième paradigme, il mentionne quatre autres paradigmes actuels, qu'il identifie comme d'anciens paradigmes qui survivent. Le traditionalisme orthodoxe, entre autres, qu'il relie au paradigme de l'Église ancienne hellénistique, et l'autoritarisme catholique romain, qu'il rattache au paradigme médiéval qui survit et qu'il voit renforcé à Vatican I. La diagonale qui relie diachroniquement le sixième paradigme aux cinq précédents montre clairement l'usage programmatique de la théorie du paradigme. En définitive, cela suggère que les paradigmes qui survivent

<sup>181</sup> Pour la figure en question, voir la couverture de KÜNG, *Le Christianisme*.

<sup>182</sup> Hans KÜNG et David TRACY, *Paradigm Change*, p. 219 ; Hans KÜNG, *Une théologie pour le troisième millénaire*, p. 195 ss.

du passé sont obsolètes, ébranlés et incapables de faire face aux défis contemporains. En ce qui concerne le nouveau paradigme postmoderne lui-même, Küng souligne les contributions des théologies existentialistes, herméneutiques, féministes, de la libération et politiques.

À notre avis, la première application systématique par Küng des idées de Kuhn à la théologie est *intéressante à un double titre*. D'un côté, elle offre un essai élaboré de la manière de penser en termes de paradigmes, de changement de paradigme et de conflit qui peut survenir dans la pratique de la théologie. Cette démarche illustre comment une théorie de la Tradition basée sur la théorie du paradigme peut rendre compte en même temps de la continuité et de la discontinuité, tant dans une perspective diachronique que synchronique, avec une visée descriptive et programmatique. Cela montre aussi, à la fois, les possibilités et les limites d'un tel exercice. Par ailleurs, l'exercice *lui-même n'est pas sans paradigme*. Küng et tous les autres théologiens qui participaient au symposium de 1983 adhéraient au même paradigme théologique, moderne plutôt que postmoderne, de la corrélation<sup>183</sup>.

### CHANGEMENT DE PARADIGME ET CONFLIT : ENTRE CONTINUITÉ ET DISCONTINUITÉ

Alors, *quelle relation avec Vatican II*? Ce concile a-t-il opéré un changement de paradigme? Ou bien en est-il un symbole? Pour Küng, le concile se trouve manifestement sur la diagonale vers le nouveau paradigme, et peut donc être considéré comme un événement paradigmatique dans sa réalisation. En même temps il concède que, au concile même, on n'en est pas arrivé à une réflexion fondamentale sur les bases de la théologie<sup>184</sup>. Dans son testament théologique, Schillebeeckx écrit, lui aussi, que Vatican II a représenté un mouvement de rattrapage de l'Église catholique dans le dialogue avec la modernité et, en ce sens, pas mal de choses ont changé<sup>185</sup>. En même temps, bien qu'il en allât autrement pour les dirigeants ecclésiastiques et les fidèles, pour les théologiens ce ne fut pas une « grande nouveauté » : « Ce que nous avons fait auparavant comme théologiens *peut désormais* devenir officiel », se disaient-ils<sup>186</sup>. Pour Schillebeeckx, en raison du mouvement de rattrapage, du compromis qui caractérisent les textes et surtout du contexte qui a changé immédiatement après le concile (de moderne à postmoderne), cela peut difficilement conduire à un changement de paradigme.

Alors, serait-ce qu'à Vatican II rien ne s'est produit, ou beaucoup trop peu de choses — *trop peu pour un changement de paradigme*? Actuellement, on ne peut proposer une réponse positive ou négative à ce sujet sans porter son regard vers une perspective historico-théologique plus large. Pour sa part, et ce qui ressort de ce symposium le montre aussi, Vatican II n'a pas été un coup de tonnerre dans un ciel

<sup>183</sup> À ce sujet, voir plus loin mon exposé *Assessing the Küng-Tracy Symposium* et, pour la discussion du paradigme moderne de la théologie de la corrélation, mon ouvrage *God Interrupts History. Theology in a Time of Upheaval*, New York, 2007, chapitre 2.

<sup>184</sup> Cfr Hans KÜNG, *Une théologie pour le troisième millénaire*, p. 146-149.

<sup>185</sup> Edward SCHILLEBEECKX, *Theologisch testament. Notarieel nog niet verleden*, Baarn, 1994, p. 41-50.

<sup>186</sup> SCHILLEBEECKX, *Theologisch testament*, p. 42.

serein. Il y avait, sur le plan liturgique, théologique, œcuménique, des développements auxquels il adhérait. En ce sens, Vatican II se situe au milieu d'un enchevêtrement de continuités et de discontinuités, et c'est à partir de là qu'il faut comprendre sa singularité. À distance, le concile apparaît comme *un exemple manifeste du dialogue difficile de l'Église catholique* et de la théologie en vue de tirer au clair sa relation avec la modernité. Et, dans la mesure où Vatican II est, pour certains, le symbole d'une plus grande ouverture et du dialogue avec le contexte moderne, ceux-ci soulignent — en fonction de leur propre option théologique — la continuité ou la discontinuité avec la tradition, c.-à-d. avec la théologie et la figure de l'Église d'avant le concile ; or, pour les deux positions antagonistes, on trouve des arguments, à ce qu'il semble. Quoi qu'il en soit, tant l'histoire concrète du concile que les textes qu'il a produits en témoignent : au point de vue du dialogue avec le contexte moderne, Vatican II est et reste une étape milliaire. La meilleure preuve en est l'intérêt, qui ne se dément pas, pour une « juste interprétation » du concile. C'est le cas de celui qui déclare que ce dialogue ne peut pas progresser davantage (parce qu'il est déjà allé assez loin et mène à la perte d'identité), mais tout autant de celui qui considère précisément le dialogue comme une voie à explorer pour poursuivre le renouvellement de l'Église et de la théologie.

Comment alors traiter plus avant la question du changement de paradigme ? Étant donné que cette question est couplée à celle qui porte sur la manière d'aborder Vatican II en termes soit de continuité, soit de discontinuité avec la Tradition (ou déjà avec le paradigme antérieur de cette Tradition), on a là une clé possible de discernement. Dialoguer avec le contexte moderne, c'est alors se positionner pour la discontinuité avec la Tradition ; critiquer ce dialogue revient à être en faveur de la continuité. C'est là que survient *un conflit entre deux paradigmes théologiques* — un paradigme *moderne* vis-à-vis d'un paradigme *antimoderna*. Le paradigme théologique moderne s'efforce de ménager un espace pour la discontinuité dans le développement de la Tradition, en soulignant la nécessité de continuité entre la théologie et le contexte. En revanche, dans le paradigme anti-moderne (souvent néo-augustinien), la continuité avec la Tradition fonctionne comme argument pour plaider en faveur de la discontinuité entre Tradition et contexte. Quant à juger/trancher si Vatican II a contribué à un changement de paradigme, ce conflit de paradigmes montre peut-être le mieux que des paradigmes sont en train de se décaler. C'est peut-être finalement ce conflit lui-même qui pourrait être analysé comme un symptôme de la nécessité d'un nouveau paradigme théologique<sup>187</sup>.

### RECONTEXTUALISATION ET INTERRUPTION

Réfléchir à la révélation et au développement de la Tradition en termes de changement de paradigme et de conflit de paradigmes, ou (dans le cas de Schillebeeckx) en termes de fusion d'horizons, témoigne dans les deux cas de la même façon de voir : la Tradition, la théologie et l'Église ne se développent pas indépendamment du contexte,

<sup>187</sup> Cf. Lieven BOEVE, *Beyond the Modern and Anti-modern Dilemma. Gaudium et Spes and Theological Method in a Postmodern European Context*, dans *Horizons*, 34 (2007), p. 292-305.

cela se réalise à partir d'une dynamique réciproque continue. J'ai décrit ailleurs ce processus de développement de la Tradition comme une « *recontextualisation*<sup>188</sup> ».

En tant que catégorie théologique, la recontextualisation implique que la foi et la Tradition chrétiennes ne sont pas seulement situées dans un contexte historico-culturel, socio-économique et socio-politique particulier, mais qu'elles sont co-constituées par ce contexte. Bien sûr, la foi ne peut pas être réduite à l'histoire et au contexte, pas plus que le développement de la Tradition ne peut être décrit comme une simple adaptation de l'une et l'autre. Néanmoins, il existe un lien intrinsèque entre foi et Tradition d'une part, histoire et contexte de l'autre. Désormais, la nouveauté du contexte exerce une influence sur les expressions historiquement conditionnées de la foi et sur leur compréhension théologique ; elle les appelle à une recontextualisation. Sensibilités contextuelles et cadres de pensée orientent vers le changement : les formes anciennes de la Tradition perdent de leur familiarité et de leur plausibilité ; il en résulte souvent de l'aliénation. Les communautés de croyants et de théologiens se trouvent elles-mêmes en plein milieu d'une recherche pour une nouvelle relation entre la Tradition de foi transmise et le contexte contemporain changeant. C'est à la fois en y participant et en se confrontant elles-mêmes au contexte changé que ces communautés créent des manières d'exprimer la foi chrétienne : tout en essayant de rester fidèles à la Tradition (la *légitimité théologique*), elles s'efforcent d'établir un lien adéquat avec le contexte dans lequel elle est située (*plausibilité contextuelle*) — instaurant donc ainsi un équilibre entre continuité et discontinuité.

Par conséquent, le concept de recontextualisation fonctionne à la fois sur les modes descriptif et normatif. (a) Comme *catégorie descriptive*, il est opératoire dans l'analyse des manières dont la Tradition a été mise au défi par le changement de contexte et la nouveauté. Historiquement, les réactions ont été variées : elles vont de la condamnation impitoyable et de la suppression de cette nouveauté, afin de maintenir la Tradition à l'abri de toute contamination, jusqu'à l'adoption non critique d'une adaptation à la nouveauté culturelle, avec le risque de diluer la spécificité de la Tradition (en fait, l'évaluation des deux thèses extrêmes va déjà nous amener à l'usage normatif du terme). Dans son usage descriptif, les efforts constants pour résister à toute influence culturelle, notamment parce que la culture est considérée comme hostile à la foi chrétienne, doivent être également décrits comme des recontextualisations. Parce que le contexte a changé, la relation d'une Tradition apparemment inaltérée à ce contexte a également changé. Le résultat d'une recontextualisation plus ancienne avec le contexte antérieur est alors projeté sur le nouveau contexte, en revendiquant pour lui une pureté qu'il n'a jamais eue auparavant. D'ailleurs, les efforts pour protéger la Tradition contre le contexte recourent le plus souvent à des stratégies fournies par le contexte lui-même. Un seul exemple significatif parmi d'autres : pour mettre l'accent sur l'impossibilité médicale d'expliquer les miracles de Lourdes, on a constitué des commissions de médecins spécialistes pour attester de leur véracité<sup>189</sup>. (b) Comme

<sup>188</sup> Pour les paragraphes suivants voir, entre autres, mon article déjà cité : BOEVE, *Systematic Theology, Truth and History. Recontextualisation*.

<sup>189</sup> Déjà en 1859, un professeur de la faculté de médecine de Montpellier fut requis pour examiner quelques-unes des guérisons survenues après les apparitions. Pour les développements historiques et les procédures actuelles, cf. <http://www.lourdes-france.org/> (Guérisons et miracles).

*catégorie normative*, la recontextualisation appelle un programme théologique dans lequel la perception du lien intrinsèque entre foi et contexte incite les théologiens à prendre au sérieux les défis du contexte, en vue d'en arriver à un discours théologique contemporain: un discours qui, en même temps, puisse revendiquer une validité théologique et une plausibilité contextuelle<sup>190</sup>.

Du point de vue de la recontextualisation, une évaluation contemporaine de l'élaboration théologique de Küng sur les paradigmes et le changement de paradigme peut conduire à une perception *plus radicale* du changement de paradigme en théologie, du fait que l'on porte un regard plus attentif sur la détermination historiquement contingente et l'effectuation des paradigmes. Il s'en suivra que les traits propres aux sensibilités postmodernes, tels que la particularité, la pluralité, l'altérité et l'ambiguïté, deviendront beaucoup plus visibles. Ce fait même fournira aussi le témoignage de ce qu'on revendique: que penser à propos de la théologie, de la Tradition et de leur développement n'est jamais indépendant d'un paradigme. D'un point de vue théologique, cela impliquera aussi une nouvelle réflexion sur la vérité théologique comme incarnation: la vérité est donnée non pas en dépit de, mais grâce à la contingence historique<sup>191</sup>.

De soi, il s'agit déjà là d'une expression normative partant d'une vision théologique sur le développement de la Tradition: celui-ci découle d'une recontextualisation comme mécanisme —étant donné que le contexte environnant est aussi à chaque fois co-constitutif pour la Tradition qui s'y développe. En tout cas, pareille perspective normative n'est pas dépourvue d'arguments, et c'est naturellement sa pertinence explicative et éclairante —tant au niveau de la description que du programme— qui en constitue la force. Finalement —et d'un point de vue théologique, c'est le plus important—, cette position normative peut également être légitimée sur des bases théologiques. C'est dans et à travers la complexité et l'ambiguïté de l'histoire que Dieu se révèle. La révélation de Dieu se réalise à travers l'interprétation d'expériences, d'événements, de textes, etc. Quand on recontextualise, il ne s'agit pas en premier lieu de la Tradition, de la théologie ou de l'Église, mais de Dieu qui se révèle dans notre histoire. Aujourd'hui, comme je l'ai développé ailleurs, Dieu se fait surtout connaître là où *continuité et discontinuité se rencontrent*: dans *l'interruption*, tant de l'histoire et du contexte que de la Tradition. C'est justement là où des idées, des images, des modèles de comportement en cours, tant contextuels que théologiques, se figent que se produit un accroissement de l'altérité théologique. De ce point de vue, une théologie qui est interrompue par la nouveauté et l'altérité du contexte peut devenir une théologie de l'interruption quand elle apprend à lire de telles interruptions comme des *loci theologici*, des lieux où Dieu peut se révéler lui-même de nos jours. L'interruption devient alors une clé de lecture théologique<sup>192</sup>. Dans une telle perspective, la discontinuité du renouveau et de la réforme ne barre pas la route à la continuité de la Tradition, de la théologie et de l'Église, mais elle en est précisément la condition de

<sup>190</sup> *Plurality and the Quest for Unity in Contemporary Christology*, Leuven, 2000, p. 577-593.

<sup>191</sup> Pour une première incitation à développer cette manière de penser, voir Lieven BOEVE, *Theological Truth, Particularity and Incarnation. Engaging Religious Plurality and Radical Hermeneutics*, in LAMBERIGTS, BOEVE et MERRIGAN (dir.), *Orthodoxy. Process and Product*, p. 323-348.

<sup>192</sup> C'est le principal argument de mon livre déjà cité: BOEVE, *God Interrupts History*.

possibilité, tandis que le désir de continuité de la Tradition de la révélation incite à la recontextualisation. Par ailleurs, la simple conservation d'une figure de la Tradition qui a pris forme dans un autre contexte (et donc le maintien d'une discontinuité avec le contexte) risque justement de mettre en jeu le lien avec la Tradition vivante comme interprétation de l'histoire de Dieu qui se révèle dans notre histoire. On en arrive alors justement à perdre ce qu'on veut conserver.

Comment alors le concept de recontextualisation offre-t-il une *solution dans le débat* en cours sur Vatican II comme changement de paradigme et sur sa réception comme conflit de paradigmes ? Ainsi que dit plus haut, la recontextualisation offre une manière (a) de penser ensemble la continuité et la discontinuité, en tenant compte du développement de la Tradition aussi bien que de la relation au contexte ; (b) dans celle-ci, il y a une influence réciproque qui résulte de la manière selon laquelle continuité et discontinuité sont en relation mutuelle dans le développement de la Tradition d'une part, et dans la relation avec le contexte d'autre part. Or, l'histoire de Vatican II et l'histoire de sa réception semblent confirmer cette perspective. En tout premier lieu, la perspective de la recontextualisation nous aide à nous demander si Vatican II constitue un changement de paradigme. Nous l'avons déjà dit : Vatican II est une étape dans le difficile dialogue de l'Église avec le contexte moderne (qui entretemps s'est radicalisé en postmoderne). Cela étant, le concile est *plutôt un exemple paradigmatique* de la complexité du processus de recontextualisation *que la réalisation d'un changement de paradigme*<sup>193</sup>. Là où l'Église a cherché plutôt à garder la discontinuité avec le contexte, Vatican II a accordé officiellement plus de place pour le dialogue avec le contexte — et donc pour la recontextualisation (d'un point de vue normatif). Mais, quand le dialogue avec le contexte met trop en jeu la continuité, et donc s'oriente vers une adaptation au contexte, au risque d'amener la discontinuité avec la Tradition — la réaction est alors de critiquer le principe même du dialogue avec le contexte (et donc de la recontextualisation). Cela nous permet aussi de décrire à nouveaux frais et de juger le conflit paradigmatique entre les positions moderne et antimoderne concernant la réception de Vatican II comme faisant partie du processus de recontextualisation — plutôt que d'y voir un conflit spécifique de macro-paradigmes (comme Küng semble l'affirmer), dont l'un, qui provient du passé, est, dès lors, complètement dépassé.

Aujourd'hui, plutôt que de choisir une position en faveur de la continuité ou de la discontinuité, il nous faut examiner comment les deux positions s'ajustent au difficile dialogue avec le contexte, pour en arriver à *une nouvelle auto-compréhension théologique*, qui offre en même temps plausibilité contextuelle et légitimité théologique. À ce propos, en s'appuyant sur une recherche historico-systématique antérieure sur Augustin et les néo-Augustiniens<sup>194</sup>, on pourrait en effet se demander si le prétendu paradigme antimoderne (à identifier souvent comme néo-Augustinisme antimoderne et postmoderne) peut, aujourd'hui, être analysé adéquatement comme un paradigme indépendant à l'intérieur du conflit de paradigmes évoqué plus haut. Ne fait-il pas

<sup>193</sup> *Mutatis mutandis* nous pouvons même affirmer que Vatican II est à comparer avec la manière dont les conciles de Nicée et de Chalcédoine sont des exemples de recontextualisation dans le contexte gréco-hellénistique.

<sup>194</sup> Voir Lieven BOEVE, Mathijs LAMBERIGTS et Maarten WISSE (ed), *Augustine and Postmodern Thought. A New Alliance against Modernity?*, Leuven, 2009.



plutôt partie du processus actuel de recontextualisation dans un contexte moderne, ou plutôt postmoderne ? Il semble que, dans nombre de prétendues crises de paradigmes au cours de l'histoire de l'Église et de la théologie, Augustin a été invoqué comme « la » réponse. Ce fut souvent (pourtant pas exclusivement) par ceux qui étaient les plus soupçonneux vis-à-vis d'une trop grande ouverture au contexte en train de changer et donc d'une recontextualisation qui allait trop loin. Par conséquent, un tel néo-augustinisme est-il à interpréter comme un paradigme au sens fort du terme, ou bien est-il *plutôt le symptôme d'une crise*, et une étape dans un changement de paradigme plus général ? Ou encore, est-il les deux en même temps ? Une réaction paradigmatique récurrente, qui relie le mode conflictuel au processus complexe de la recontextualisation en des temps de changement contextuel ? Et *mutatis mutandis* (italique ?), ne pourrait-on pas dire la même chose à propos de l'autre pôle de l'opposition, qui parie trop facilement pour la continuité avec le contexte ?

### CONCLUSION

Le langage et la terminologie utilisés pour désigner le changement et le conflit de paradigmes dérivent trop facilement en simple opposition entre continuité et discontinuité. Or, on sous-estime ainsi la complexité du processus de recontextualisation, dans lequel discontinuité et continuité sont intrinsèquement liées entre elles, toutes deux étant en relation avec la Tradition et le contexte. Ce qui, de notre point de vue, est perçu comme discontinu peut être considéré sous un autre angle, comme favorisant la continuité, et vice-versa. Plus précisément, et d'un point de vue théologique, on pourrait suggérer qu'à vrai dire il n'y a, dans l'histoire du christianisme (catholique), qu'un seul macro-paradigme théologique à l'œuvre, greffé sur le principe théologique de l'Incarnation : c'est à ce principe qu'est étroitement reliée la conception du développement de la Tradition en termes de recontextualisation. Dès lors, si l'on se place à ce point de vue, quelque chose de singulier et de définitif s'est produit à Vatican II, même si ce n'est pas avec l'impact d'un « partage des eaux » dramatique.

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