

HENRI DE LUBAC:
AN ACCOUNT OF HIS THEOLOGY

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by

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SCOPE AND CONTENT:

This thesis gathers together the writings of Henri de Lubac around the theme of revelation. It begins by an analysis of de Lubac's writings on the Biblical Revelation so as to establish what we consider to be his theological point of departure: God has revealed Himself in time, i.e., in history and Jesus Christ, and this revelation opens up the depth of nature. This is revelation in the strict sense; the subject of Part One. There is also a self-witness of God in man. This is revelation in the broad sense; the subject of Part Two. The relationship between Part One and Part Two is established on this basis: to understand what de Lubac means by revelation in the broad sense, a prior understanding of what he means by revelation in the strict sense is essential. That is to say, one cannot understand man in his concrete, historical, existential, openness to revelation, as de Lubac thinks him, without a framework of Biblical Religion

The thesis is historical, insofar as it seeks to understand

the literary career of Henri de Lubac. It is critical, insofar as it seeks to establish a focus within which his work may be unified. Finally, the thesis assesses the work of de Lubac on the fundamental issues connected with revelation, and suggests the meaning of de Lubac's contribution to contemporary Christian thought, especially Roman Catholic theology.

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ABBREVIATIONS

<u>DB</u>	Denzinger-Bannwart, <u>Enchiridion Symbolorum</u> , Ed. 10-12 (1908-1913).
<u>DS</u>	Denzinger-Schönmetzer, <u>Enchiridion Symbolorum</u> , Ed. 32, 1963.
<u>DHA</u>	<u>Le drame de l'Humanisme athée.</u>
<u>DV</u>	"La Révélation divine", in Constitution 'Dei Verbum'.
<u>LMS</u>	<u>Le mystère du surnaturel.</u>
<u>MSR</u>	<u>Mélanges de science religieuse.</u>
<u>NRT</u>	<u>Nouvelle revue théologique.</u>
<u>PL</u>	Migne, <u>Patrologia Latina</u>
<u>PG</u>	Migne, <u>Patrologia Graeca</u>
<u>PME</u>	<u>Paradoxe et Mystère de l'Église.</u>
<u>RSPT</u>	<u>Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques.</u>
<u>RSR</u>	<u>Recherches de science religieuse.</u>
<u>SCD</u>	<u>Sur les chemins de Dieu.</u>
<u>SE</u>	<u>Sacris Erudiri.</u>
<u>SR</u>	<u>The Sources of Revelation</u> , English translation of <u>L'Écriture dans la tradition.</u>
<u>S.Th.</u>	<u>Summa Theologica.</u>
<u>V^e</u>	Joseph Maréchal, <u>Le point de départ de la Métaphysique</u> , vol. 5.

HENRI DE LUBAC, S.J.

1896	20, February	Born in Cambrai, France.
1913	9, October	Entered the Society of Jesus for the Lyon Province. The novitiate year was spent in St. Leonard-on-the-Sea, England.
1914		Enlisted in the French army.
1915-1919		Served in the 1st World War in France. Severely wounded.
1st Semester, 1920		Humanity Studies at St. Mary's College in Canterbury, England.
1920-1923		Philosophy at the Maison St. Louis in Jersey.
1923-1924		Taught at the Gymnasium Notre-Dame de Mongré in Ville Franche (Rhône).
1924-1926		Theology at Ore Place, Hastings, England.
1926-1928		Continued his Theology at Lyon-Fourvière.
1927	22, August	Ordained priest.
1928-1929		Tertiary year at Paray-le-Monial.
1929		Appointed Lecturer of Theology at the Faculté Catholique de Lyon.
1931	2, February	Solemn Vows in the Society of Jesus.
1934		Took up residence at Collegium Maximum Lugdunense, Lyon-Fourvière. Professor of Dogmatics.
1938		Professor of Fundamental Theology.
1939		Professor of the History of Religions.
1946		Editor of <u>Sources chrétiennes</u> .

1950		Moved to Paris.
1951		Appointed Theologian to the Archbishop of Lyon.
1955		Returned to Lyon.
1958	5, December	Elected to the "Institut de France".
1960		Took up residence at Collegium Maximum Lugdunense, Lyon-Fourvière.
1962-1965		Theological expert at the IIInd Vatican Council.
1963		Golden jubilee in the Society of Jesus. Festschrift: <u>L'homme devant Dieu</u> (3 vols.).
		Appointed consultor for the Papal Secretariat for Non-Christian Religions and for Unbelievers.
		Elected to the Papal Theological Commission.

PREFACE

A remark on procedure is in order. It is our thesis that Henry de Lubac is consistently theological. That is to say, even his so-called philosophical writings are more clearly theological than philosophical. This is the case because de Lubac gets his starting point from the Biblical Revelation. It is reflection upon the object and the nature of that revelation which gives him grounds for further articulation about man, thought, and God.

Said another way, de Lubac is not a theologian who begins with a philosophical a priori. His a priori is theological. In fact, it is Christological. De Lubac gathers his notion of culture, of the secular, of reason, of the Divine itself, from such an a priori.

This is, then, the starting point and the conclusion of our thesis. As a matter of fact, it is the determining criterion for how we have proceeded at each step. Unlike such a theologian as Karl Rahner, Henri de Lubac does not arise from a philosophical school or movement which serves as his terminus a quo. It is true that the philosophical movement called "Transcendental Thomism" is, at times, appropriated by de Lubac, but never to the extent that it identifies his hermeneutical principle. How we begin, then, is not arbitrary. Nor is the organization of our thesis arbitrary. In our judgment, the achievement of Henri de Lubac

can only be assessed properly by first speaking, as he does, from within the tradition which he claims as his own.

In his work Athéisme et sens de l'homme, de Lubac makes note of his procedure. He says that he does not accept a "hermeneutic of suspicion" which begins by bracketing faith. Rather, he wishes to show that given faith as an a priori one can proceed to establish the conditions which must obtain and do in fact obtain so that the a priori makes sense. In other words, de Lubac's faith consciousness presents a doctrine of the world which is very noble, very rich and very coherent. This "doctrine of life", he says, is more total and fecund than all those doctrines which stand as alternatives to it. This way of proceeding then is an intelligence de la foi. Whether or not de Lubac does in fact what he sets out to do, and whether or not his procedure is persuasive are, of course, two different questions. This thesis addresses itself to the first of the two questions, i.e. it confronts de Lubac's achievement, determines its principle of unity, and shows how that achievement should be assessed. It does not address itself to the more critical and analytic question of the persuasiveness of the argument. De Lubac is more an historical theologian than a dogmatic theologian. It would not be within his own spirit to bring a refined critique to what he has written before knowing what his point of departure is, and what it is he has achieved as an author.

INTRODUCTION

Henri de Lubac is the author of some thirty-two books and over one hundred published essays and lectures. His major works have been translated into thirteen languages. In addition, he has received recognition from both the Roman Catholic world and the secular world that is his native France. In 1950 he was unofficially censured by the Roman Church for his work Surnaturel, but in 1962 he was appointed by that same Church to peritus at the IInd Vatican Council. On December 5, 1958, he was elected to the prestigious "Institut de France".

In 1937, at the age of forty-one, de Lubac published his first major work: Catholicisme: Les aspects sociaux du dogme. It was a microcosm of what he would write during the next thirty-four years. In it he attacked neo-scholasticism insofar as it relied excessively on Aristotelian categories.

"Aussi la grande théologie ne s'est-elle jamais restreinte à commenter et à justifier des textes dont l'autorité, si absolue qu'elle soit, n'empêche pas le caractère occasionnel, fragmentaire, et souvent plus négatif que positif".¹

¹Catholicisme (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1947), 4th ed., pp. 269-270. N.B. All page references are to the French editions, unless otherwise noted. The English translation of de Lubac is my own, unless otherwise noted.

In 1945, with Jean Daniélou and Claude Mondésert, de Lubac began to edit the Sources chrétiennes, a series of translations of the Fathers.² His own contribution to the series: volume 16 on Origen, served to stimulate the special study, Histoire et Esprit of 1950. His two most important works in historical theology are Corpus Mysticum (1944) and Surnaturel (1946). The former is a historical study on the two words "corpus" and "mysticum" as understood by the Fathers and Medievals. It illustrates how the content of a theological formula changes in the course of time. The term "mystical body", which in pre-scholastic times referred to the Eucharist, subsequently is used to designate the church apart from the Eucharist. This work brought the Eucharist into an ecclesial perspective twenty-five years before the Vatican Council II recalled and re-established such a perspective.³ Surnaturel was the manifesto

²The scope of this series, now almost one hundred volumes, was to re-establish the authority of the church Fathers and to show how the Fathers were influenced by Platonism and neo-Platonism. The editors, in their awareness that theology of the twentieth century must be capable of addressing contemporary issues, pointed out that the ancient Fathers adapted the philosophy of their day to present the Christian message to their contemporaries. Such an insinuation of rapprochement was an ingredient of the "New Theology".

³Corpus Mysticum disappeared from the book shelves in France in 1949, mostly because of the tenth chapter on symbolism. De Lubac, aware that he was in dangerous waters because of the liberal Protestant understanding of symbolic presence applied to the Eucharist, nevertheless treaded into the area. It was his contention that scientific, procrustean exegesis fails to do justice to the rich, poetic, and symbolic analysis of the Fathers, particularly Augustine. De Lubac saw the "rational misfits" without "feel" for toute portée noétique, to be the precursors of the modern theologians. "Raison enthousiaste des premiers, raison critique des seconds; l'une et l'autre sont bien éloignées des méthodes du symbolisme augustinien". Catholicisme, op.

for the so-called "New Theology". In four essays de Lubac effectively undermined the conventional thought which passed for traditional catholic teaching about the supernatural, and opened himself to a debate which has only subsided in our time.⁴

cit., pp. 274-75. Furthermore, he insisted that Bonaventure, not Aquinas, retained all that was best in the symbolic understanding of the ancients. "La conception augustinienne du mystère demeure chez lui très consciencieuse". It was not long before the Dominican, Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, wrote in opposition and condemnation of de Lubac.

⁴It is of interest to sketch briefly the outlines of the attack made against de Lubac and the French theologians who edited Sources chrétiennes and Théologie: the theological series begun under the inspiration of the faculty at Lyon-Fourvière. (Although de Lubac had the title "professor" at Lyon-Fourvière, his work in the classroom was at the Catholic Faculty in Lyon. Later when the Superior General of the Society of Jesus forbade de Lubac to teach Jesuit scholastics, it only showed the misinformation circulating in Rome. De Lubac never taught students in the Society.)

"...[T]he real issue", writes Bernard Lonergan, "does not lie in the possibility of a world-order without grace; the real issue, the one momentous in its consequences, lies between the essentialist and conceptualist tendency, and, on the other hand, the existential and intellectualist tendency". "The Natural Desire to See God", Collection, ed by F. Crowe (Montreal: Palm, 1967), p. 95.

This was the heart of what de Lubac calls the "witchhunt" of the Roman theologians led by Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange in 1946. La Prière du Père Teilhard de Chardin (Paris: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1964), p. 186. It was an epistemological issue and thrust its arrows into the heart of the way theology was being done in the early twentieth century by Roman Catholic theologians. The theologians in France, led by Jean Daniélou at the Institut Catholique in Paris, had as their objective a return to the sources: the Fathers, the Biblical Revelation, and the liturgical practice of the on-going ecclesial community. This return was far from antiquarianism because it sought to confront the questions of Marxism, on the one hand, and Existentialism, on the other, with the theology of the Fathers. What the French theologians were saying was that neo-scholasticism could not bear the weight of such a deep and sustained attack. Marxism, with its emphasis on history, time, optimism, and creation, and Existentialism, preoccupied with the subject and sin, needed the thought of Augustine, Bonaventure and Aquinas (correctly understood), not the immobile world of Aristotle's essences. "Autant que les manies novatrices, toutes les formes d'archéologisme nous répugnent, et nous

These historical studies are only one part of de Lubac's

savons assez d'autre part combien elles sont éloignées de l'esprit catholique". Sur les chemins de Dieu (Paris: Aubier, 1956), la troisième édition, p. 244.

Garrigou-Lagrange, professor at the Angelicum in Rome, took on Blondel, Bouillard, de Lubac, Daniélou, Fessard and Teilhard de Chardin one by one.

Et où va-t-elle aller cette théologie nouvelle
avec les maîtres nouveaux dont elle s'inspire?
Où va-t-elle sinon dans la voie du scepticisme,
de la fantaisie et de l'hérésie...elle revient
au modernisme.

Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, "La nouvelle théologie, où va-t-elle?", Angelicum XXIII (1946), p. 143. It should be said straight away, in fairness to Garrigou-Lagrange, that his basic fear was not unwarranted. But he was wrong to judge that the French theologians did indeed say what he accused them of saying. He feared that the neo-scholastic conception of truth: adequatio rei et intellectus was jeopardized by Blondel's conception: adequatio realis mentis et vitae. And yet the theologians whom he attacked were not subjectivists, they were not philosophers of action in contradistinction to contemplation.

In 1946 Pius XII took the side of the Roman theologians.

Plura dicta sunt, at non satis explorata ratione,
'de nova theologia' quae cum universis semper
volventibus rebus, una volvatur, semper itura,
nunquam perventura. Si talis opinio amplectenda
esse videatur, quid fiet de numquam immutandis
catholicis dogmatibus, quid de fidei unitate
et stabilitate?

Osservatore Romano, September 19, 1946.

In 1950, the encyclical letter Humani Generis condemned "la nouvelle théologie". De Lubac was silenced, forbidden to write on matters of faith by his superiors and exiled from the classroom. He left Lyon and spent the next five years in Paris. How de Lubac came to be singled out by his superiors is difficult to say. The attack made by Jean Daniélou, far more than de Lubac's historical studies, stung the old-line theologians into heated denunciation. Daniélou's article, "Les orientations présentes de la pensée religieuse", Etudes CCXXIX (1946), pp. 5-21, was a strident attack against Scholasticism and its leading Roman devotees. Daniélou said in this article that the phenomenological method used by existentialists of almost every stripe can better serve theology in some instances than either Aristotelian logic or Hegelian dialectic. Whereas the latter methods link concepts so that they fit into a coherent system, phenomenology emphasizes their irreducibility. Ironically it was Daniélou who received the Cardinalate from Paul VI in 1970. Although de Lubac was elected to the "Institut de France" in 1958 and made a peritus at Vatican II, as we have pointed out, he never re-entered

contribution to theology. Works like Le drame de l'humanisme athée, "Un nouveau 'Front' religieux", Proudhon et le christianisme, Athéisme et sens de l'homme, and his work on Teilhard de Chardin sought to come to grips with the emergence of nihilist and secular man.⁵ De Lubac departed from his usually calm and personally distant

the classroom after his exile, nor was that censure officially lifted. It is interesting that despite the ban of his superiors against publishing, Méditation sur l'Église went to press at the hands of some of his clerical friends. The book was the result of study days de Lubac gave to priests in southern France. Its publication was an embarrassment to him, but was later permitted to be volume 27 of the series Théologie. Deeply devoted to the church, always submissive to her magisterial voice,

Cette Patrie de la liberté, "notre mère",
neus est apparue dans sa majesté royale et
son céleste rayonnement, au cœur même de
notre réalité terrestre, au sein des
obscurités et des lourdeurs inévitables
qu'entraîne sa mission au milieu des hommes
....Notre cœur s'y est attaché.

Méditation sur l'Église (Paris: Aubier, 1953),
p. 7.

⁵ Teilhard and de Lubac were friends for more than thirty years, during which time they exchanged ideas in visits and through the mail. When Teilhard came under fire by Rome the Jesuit authorities commissioned de Lubac to analyze his confrere's writings. In 1962, La Pensée religieuse du Père Teilhard de Chardin was published; La Prière du Père Teilhard de Chardin appeared in 1964. Once again anonymous Roman officials intervened to stop publication of a second French edition and an English version. In 1965 an English work by de Lubac, Teilhard de Chardin, The Man and His Meaning, was published under the customary Roman censorship. "De Lubac sets out to show that the Roman Catholic Church and the Society of Jesus nurtured Teilhard spiritually and intellectually throughout his life and that, in turn, he was deeply committed to the ideals of both. In the text as well as in the book's lengthy notes, there is an argumentative tone and a certain sharpness unusual in de Lubac's writings. If there is any of his customary subtlety, it is in the plan of the work, not in the language". Berard L. Marthaler, "Henri de Lubac", The New Day: Catholic Theologians of the Renewal (Virginia: John Knox Press, 1968), pp. 16-17. The unpublished doctoral thesis of John Homlish, Process and Deity: A comparison of the cosmologies of Whitehead and Teilhard de Chardin (Hamilton: McMaster University, 1973), draws the conclusion that

analysis in these writings because he saw that the distortion of the Christian fact had become so deep.⁶

The traditional theologizing of Henri de Lubac does not overlook the philosophical tradition of the West. Sur les chemins de Dieu, Paradoxes, Athéisme et sens de l'homme, think that tradition over against the rationalist and scientist claim of modernity. In his words, his writings seek to re-establish "cette saine philosophie que nous avons reçue des siècles chrétiens en héritage, comme un patrimoine depuis longtemps constitué...de la dégager de certaines présentations scolaires moins adaptées".⁷

Teilhard's theism is the 'hard' theism of traditional Roman Catholic theology and not the 'soft' theism outside that tradition.

⁶The 'savage' voice of de Lubac always remained richly ironic. He was able to publish Le drame de l'humanisme athée, "Un nouveau 'Front' religieux", "Vocation de la France", and "La lumière du Christ" at the height of the Occupation, under the most rigorous censorship. A few months after circulation of these works the Gestapo began a search for the author. De Lubac fled to the south of France to join his friend Yves de Montcheuil, also under seige by the Gestapo. The latter was captured and assassinated; de Lubac managed to escape. The forward to Yves de Montcheuil: Mélanges théologiques (Paris: Aubier, 1946) was written by de Lubac as a tribute to his fellow Jesuit. It is perhaps one of the most sensitive pieces of work from his pen. Both de Montcheuil and de Lubac were contributors to La chronique sociale, a resistance journal in Lyon, as well as Témoignage chrétien, a publishing venture in Paris. The comment of Schubert Ogden that de Lubac's analysis of atheism is weak because it does not "free itself from the assumption that Christian faith in God and supernaturalistic theism are indissolubly connected..." does not take the context of such an analysis into account Cf. The Reality of God (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), p. 18, note 32. That is not to say that Ogden's criticism is without merit. As a matter of fact, it is substantially our own criticism.

⁷Sur les chemins de Dieu, p. 243.

Le Dieu du déisme, ce Dieu de plusieurs 'théodicées' modernes, qui le jugent et le jaugent bien plus qu'elles ne le 'défendent'; ce Dieu dont on ne sait plus s'il peut dire encore: 'je suis'; ce Dieu qui tend à ne plus être que 'l'harmonie universelle des choses' et qui règne sur un au-delà où 'c'est partout comme ici'; ce Dieu enfermé 'dans les limites de la raison', qui n'intervient plus dans le monde, qui n'est plus en réalité que la projection de l'homme naturel, qui tout à la fois est devenu lointain et a perdu son mystère; Dieu fait à notre mesure et défini par notre idéal; Dieu qui se confond avec 'l'ordre moral de l'univers' tel que l'homme peut le concevoir; Dieu qu'on n'adore pas et qu'on ne sert que par le culte de la moralité; Dieu qui 'n'est accessible que dans le pur savoir' et qui n'est autre 'que ce savoir même'; Dieu, enfin, dont les pensées sont nos pensées et dont les voies sont nos voies: ce Dieu-là s'est montré, à l'usage, un sujet d'attribution bien inutile, en même temps qu'il est devenu l'objet d'un ressentiment justifié. Quand enfin, pour rentrer en possession de son bien, l'homme s'est avisé de le chasser, 'réduit à l'étroite enceinte de la pensée de l'homme', il n'était déjà plus qu'une ombre.⁸

Under the influence of Joseph Maréchal and Maurice Blondel, both of whom he knew and worked with personally, de Lubac sought to speak the ontology of his tradition. He used the highly speculative work of Maréchal to chart the dynamic finality of the mind applied to the search for God.⁹ He pointed out, using the categories of Blondel's Action, how the debate between Etienne Gilson and Jacques

⁸ Ibid., pp. 203-204.

⁹ Le point de départ de la métaphysique, cahier V (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1949), pp. 184-189. Cf. also Sur les chemins de Dieu, op. cit., pp. 234-235.

Maritain might be reconciled.¹⁰ The work of Pierre Rousselot, similar to that of Joseph Maréchal, also served as a basis for de Lubac's thought.¹¹ As early as 1908, Rousselot had incorporated the Blondelian insights into the Thomistic tradition.

Notre foi n'est pas seulement une puissance de croire à de certaines vérités d'ordre surnaturel: elle est encore, et du même coup, une nouvelle puissance d'interprétation du monde visible et de l'être naturel; une renaissance de la raison. C'est une perfection de l'intelligence qui la reprend par son fond, qui la restaure, l'approfondit et l'élargit..., toute la catégorie de

¹⁰Henri de Lubac, "Sur la philosophie chrétienne: Réflexions à la suite d'un débat", Nouvelle revue théologique 63 (1936), pp. 225-253. "Les problèmes d'essence ne doivent pas être confondus avec les problèmes d'histoire, ni les principes avec les origines" (p. 237). "D'une part, en effet, si la philosophie est l'exercice autonome de la raison, ne procédant que par démonstration, on ne peut lui accoler l'épithète de chrétienne comme une épithète essentielle.... La philosophie chrétienne selon M. Maritain n'est pas chrétienneLa philosophie chrétienne selon M. Gilson, elle, n'est plus chrétienne, puisque la révélation est pour lui génératrice de raisonLa philosophie chrétienne selon M. Blondel, elle n'est pas encore chrétienne" (pp. 244-245). Quoting Tertullian's famous phrase -- which itself appears at least fifty times throughout de Lubac's writings -- de Lubac changes it to read: "la philosophie est naturellement chrétienne" (p. 234). De Lubac clarified what he meant by this when called to task by a critic of Sur les chemins de Dieu. The clarification will be pointed out in detail later on in our thesis. Cf. Sur les chemins de Dieu, p. 200, Postscript.

¹¹Pierre Rousselot, L'intellectualisme de S. Thomas (Paris: Beauchesne, 1924).

l'ens, forme objective des objets de l'esprit,
est par elle élevée et supernaturalisée.¹²

Rousselot argued that the principles of St. Thomas lead to the view that the intellect is the faculty of being in general because it is the faculty of the Infinite Being.¹³ De Lubac translated Rousselot into an apologetics in Sur les chemins de Dieu and into the area of nature-grace theology in Surnaturel. Furthermore, his writing on revelation is not without the imprint of Rousselot for whom revelation is the expansion of reason.¹⁴

¹²"Sur la philosophie chrétienne", op. cit., p. 247, note.

¹³Rousselot, op. cit., p. 48.

¹⁴"Sur la philosophie chrétienne", op. cit., pp. 240-241. De Lubac takes this formula from M. Gilson: révélation génératrice de raison, but he insists that it must be understood correctly. In the eighteenth century Lessing understood revelation to "complete" reason, as though there was something like primitive reason, and the prophet was simply a philosopher ignored. Frohschammer, continues de Lubac, had the same understanding vis-à-vis the Church: "d'avoir tenu la jeune Europe sur ses genoux, comme une mère, et d'avoir fait son éducation, mais qui prétend que son rôle est fini, depuis que la civilisation occidentale est adulte". Cf. "Sur la philosophie...", 241. Cf. also the commentary: "La Révélation divine", Tome I Constitution dogmatique 'Dei Verbum' (Paris: Les éditions du Cerf, 1968), pp. 159-302. This commentary, which we will have need to survey at greater length in the body of our thesis, gathers together the reflections on revelation of 1936. In fact, the Dogmatic Constitution Dei Verbum of Vatican II is an affirmation of what Rousselot and de Lubac had been thinking and writing in the thirties.

Whether de Lubac speaks of the Fathers or the exegetes of the Middle Ages, whether he defends Augustine against Baius or Aquinas against Cajetan, whether he uses Dostoevsky against Nietzsche or Maréchal against Kant, de Lubac seems to speak against the background of, and in the context of, revelation.

Cela ne voudra pas dire qu'elle [la philosophie] constitue, avant la révélation chrétienne, une sorte de christianisme naturel. Cela voudra même dire exactement le contraire, à savoir: que la philosophie, ne pouvant donner la réponse totale au problème de l'homme et ne pouvant néanmoins se désintéresser de cette réponse, ne trouve le lieu de son achèvement et de son repos -- d'un repos toujours actif -- que dans une révélation, qui n'est autre, en fait, que la révélation chrétienne.¹⁵

La philosophie, -- c'est-à-dire la raison réfléchie dans son exercice -- n'est sans doute capable de rien inventer à proprement parler, son rôle n'est pas de découvrir.¹⁶

In this thesis we seek to understand what de Lubac means by revelation and how such an understanding is the basis upon which what he has achieved has taken form. For de Lubac revelation is the presence of the mystery of God to the thought and to the life of man.¹⁷ The achievement of Henri de Lubac can be seen, we think, over and against this theme of revelation. For de Lubac, the divine reaches into the heart of man. The mystery which he recognizes as

¹⁵"La Révélation divine", op. cit., pp. 234-235.

¹⁶"Sur la philosophie chrétienne", op. cit., p. 232.

¹⁷"La Révélation divine", op. cit., passim.

ultimately sealed nevertheless illumines the mystery of human existence. Furthermore, for him, the revelation of God is the revelation of Jesus, and vice versa. Both together are the revelation of man. Revelation appears as both doctrine and history, word and event. To 'read' revelation is to bring these two dimensions of the reality together in the faith act. To bring together God -- persona in-effabilis -- and man -- persona effabilis -- in obedient reverence, is religion.¹⁸

There is one final remark to be made in this Introduction. It is not that easy, and at times dangerous, to speak of the spirituality of a living man. We attempt such speech because the fear is present in what we have written and in what we will write that "the repetition of formulas never insures the transmission of thought".¹⁹

¹³ La Mystique et les mystiques, ed. by A. Ravier, S.J., Preface by Henri de Lubac (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1965), p. 11. This little known essay by de Lubac defends the traditional understanding of contemplation, or the way of the mystic, against the historical movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries which paraded under the same banner. De Lubac's work on Eastern religions, his understanding of Plato and Nietzsche, his thoughts on Simone Weil, Francis of Assisi, the theme of spiritual understanding -- all these are like stones in a mosaic. The work's greatness is marred by a compactness, a tightness of fit, which leaves the reader breathless. The theme of mysticism, only occasionally present in the corpus of de Lubac's work, was to serve as the basis for a new book. It is difficult to say if such a work will eventualize, although de Lubac continues to gather notes for its publication.

¹⁹ "La répétition des formules n'assure pas la transmission de la pensée". Paradoxes (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1959: nouvelle édition augmentée), p. 13.

"Anymore than Christianity is an object which one holds in his hands but remains a mystery in the face of which we are always dumb",²⁰ so the thought of a complex mind cannot be subjected to analysis without injuring it as well as its source. Lest the repetition of formulas, or the analysis which is demanded by a thesis, obscures the spirit of the man, we take this moment to point out what we see to be the spirituality of de Lubac.

For de Lubac, God is always obscure. Si comprehenderis non est Deus.²¹ Deus semper major.²² The dissimilarity between the creator and the creature will always be greater than the similarity.²³

It is impossible to understand man except in his grasping movement toward the blessed obscurity of God.²⁴

The idea of God within us is perpetually menaced with extinction, but it is always re-born. Everything threatens it with ruin, for everything is a scandal to us, when lo and behold! the very threat which menaced it with death gives it fresh life. Each day brings a new witness of it. For man will never finish wrestling with God. The mysterious

²⁰"Le christianisme n'est pas un objet que nous tiendrions en mains; c'est un mystère en face duquel nous sommes toujours ignorants et profanes". Paradoxes, p. 26.

²¹St. Augustine, Sermon 52, n. 16 (P.L., XXXVIII, 663). Sur les chemins de Dieu, p. 142.

²²Sur les chemins de Dieu, p. 157.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Le mystère du surnaturel (Paris: Aubier, 1965), p. 260. "Il ne faut pas penser que nous puissions comprendre l'homme autrement qu'en le saisissant dans son mouvement vers la bienheureuse obscurité de Dieu".

struggle between Jacob and the Angel, so
 foolhardy and yet so necessary, so necessary
 yet so unequal, lasts throughout the night
 -- throughout the night of our somber
 history.²⁵

Sub nocte Jacob caerula
 Luctator audax angeli,
 Eo usque dum lux surgeret,
 Sudavit impar praelium.²⁶

Exaudi me, Domine, Deus meus. Illumina oculos, meos, ne unquam
 obdormiam in nocte.²⁷ "C'est avoir Dieu que de l'attendre".²⁸

What we suggest is that de Lubac's search for God is indeed
 a search in darkness. His own spirituality is an affirmation pat-
 terned after the reality of Holy Saturday, when the Word was no longer
 heard in the world. The effort of de Lubac, like the reconciliation
 of Nietzsche, is painful. One gathers from the writings of the former
 an affirmation, even though he knows, with Bousset, that "human
 language cannot touch upon God without in some way wounding him".²⁹

²⁵Sur les chemins de Dieu, p. 233. "Toujours
 menacée et comme prête à mourir, l'idée de Dieu en nous est aussi
 toujours renaissante. Tout la ruine, semble-t-il, car tout nous est
 scandale, et voici que cela même qui semblait la ruiner l'alimente à
 nouveau. Chaque jour en apporte quelque nouveau témoignage. L'homme
 n'aura jamais fini de se débattre contre Dieu. La lutte mystérieuse
 de Jacob avec l'ange, lutte audacieuse mais nécessaire, nécessaire
 mais inégale, a duré toute la nuit, -- toute la nuit de notre sombre
 histoire".

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Fenelon, Oeuvres (éd. de Paris), vol. VIII, p. 557. Cf.
Sur les chemins de Dieu, p.201.

²⁹Sur les chemins de Dieu, p. 233.

One gathers from the writings of the latter an affirmation as well.

But quite a different kind of affirmation.

Cette marche à travers l'hadès, en effet, ne porte-t-elle pas la rédemption dans l'hadès même? Elle prolonge en quelque sorte le cri poussé sur la croix: 'Pourquoi m'as-tu abandonné?' Nul n'a pu pousser ce cri d'un abîme plus profond que celui dont la vie consiste à être engendré perpétuellement par le Père....Il y a une expérience de l'abandon sur la croix et de la descente aux enfers, une expérience de la poena damni. Il y a le sentiment accablant de la 'dissemblance toujours plus grande' de Dieu, dans la ressemblance, si grande soit-elle, de la créature avec lui; le passage par la mort et par la ténèbre, le franchissement de 'la sombre porte'....La foi vécue et sentie, la charité, l'espérance, sont remontées de l'âme dans un endroit inaccessible, en Dieu. Et ce n'est plus que 'dans la nudité', la pauvreté et l'humiliation' que l'âme crie vers lui....L'expérience obscure du Samedi saint est le prix auquel se prépare l'éclosion d'une nouveau printemps de l'espérance, de ce printemps qui a été 'canonisé dans le jardin de roses de Lisieux'....Enchantement du Samedi saint...Grotte profonde, d'où s'échappe le fleuve de vie!'³⁰

³⁰Henri de Lubac, Paradoxe et Mystère de l'Église (Paris: Aubier, 1967), pp. 210-211.

PART ONE

THE MYSTERY OF GOD IN TIME AND HISTORY

CHAPTER ONE

THE BIBLICAL REVELATION

The mystery of God appears to the life and to the thought of man. It appears in time, i.e., in history and in Jesus Christ, but it is not restricted to time and Jesus Christ. It appears in the depth of nature. However, it is only grasped in the depth of nature by the mystic who has, in some way, been opened to and opened by the revelation of God in time.

Toutefois, dans l'état présent de l'humanité, la possibilité effective d'une connaissance de Dieu commune (c'est-à-dire universellement répandue), ferme et sans mélange d'erreur, ¹ doit être attribuée à la révélation divine.

Le danger de toute philosophie religieuse, c'est de se prendre pour la religion. C'est de remplacer peu à peu la foi divine par la réflexion humaine. C'est de naturaliser en croyant approfondir.²

In Part One we are concerned with what de Lubac understands to be the mystery of God appearing to the life and thought of man, but mediated by the Bible. In Part Two we are concerned with what de Lubac understands to be the mystery of God appearing to the life and thought of man, but not mediated by the Bible. In the Conclusion we

¹Henri de Lubac, "La Révélation divine", p.266.
Hereafter this work is noted by DV.

²Henri de Lubac, Nouveaux Paradoxes (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1958), p. 179.

are concerned with the relationship of Part Two to Part One.

1. The Object of Revelation

Whether we consider revelation from the point of view of God's self-witness in human nature, or in non-human nature, in history or in Jesus Christ, the object of revelation is one: God himself. "Le Dieu créateur se manifeste à nous par ses oeuvres comme en un livre...."³ This self-witness of God himself is the primary object of the revelation. In reference to such a mode of witness, de Lubac affirms that "Dieu a voulu se révéler à l'homme et lui révéler sur lui son plan de salut".⁴ It has pleased God seipsum revelare.⁵ What God, then, has first made known is himself. "L'objet de la révélation divine, qu'on le nomme 'Dei Verbum' ou 'Vita aeterna' est donc Dieu même. Dieu se révèle à l'homme".⁶ De Lubac insists that this personalized object of revelation does not consist in the teaching of a doctrine. "L'objet révèle ne consiste pas en notions, par elles-mêmes sans efficacité vitale...."⁷ Nor is the revelation God makes of himself in time the same as the vision of God. For de Lubac there can be an idolatry of the object of revelation whether that object be mediated by nature or time.

³SCD, p. 14.

⁴DV, p. 172.

⁵Ibid., emphasis added.

⁶Ibid., p. 161.

⁷Ibid., p. 168.

Les théophanies de l'Ancien Testament nous suggèrent que 'au-dessus même de la parole, il y a la vision', et toute la Bible est réellement soulevée par ce⁸ désir et cette nostalgie de voir Dieu.

Deus est semper major in whatever mode he presents himself to man.

This is a constant theme of de Lubac. Nevertheless, the living God 'steps out' of his mystery in a way that is unique. He speaks himself to humanity, and he speaks the mystery of his will: his plan for salvation. De Lubac says that the sacramentum voluntatis ejus and the revelation of God himself is the two-fold object of Biblical Revelation.⁹ This two-fold object is signified in the person of Jesus Christ. "Le mystère du Christ...est pour nous le 'sacrement' de Dieu. Dieu...se révèle dans le Christ".¹⁰ The two-fold object of Biblical Revelation cannot be separated. The design God has -- the mystery of his will, who is Christ -- is the personalized object made concrete. The richness of what St. Paul means in Ephesians by mysterion is thus the object of revelation. According to de Lubac, the "mysterion of his will" is the "sacrament of Christ" which is at one and the same time both the sign of God and the means to God.¹¹

By such an emphasis on the personalized object of Biblical Revelation, de Lubac is recalling what he has thematized in his

⁸Ibid., p. 163.

⁹Ibid., pp. 167-171.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 172.

¹¹Ibid.

essay on the development of dogma, written in 1948.¹² Agreeing with the Protestant criticism, leveled against the theology of revelation as outlined in part by the Council of Trent, de Lubac stresses that a "new depth" in the notion of revelation is in order.¹³ "The content

¹²De Lubac first wrote on revelation explicitly in his article "Le problème du développement du dogme", RSR 35 (1948), 130-150. The question was in direct response to an article by Fr. Boyer, "Où 'est-ce que la théologie", Gregorianum 21 (1940), 255-266. As early as 1930, however, while preparing his lengthy work Catholicisme, de Lubac handled such issues central to revelation as history, interpretation, the role of the magisterium, etc. That many of these themes have been taken up and developed in a far more thorough way by such theologians as Rahner, von Balthasar, Schillebeeckx, cannot be gainsaid. Again, de Lubac's singular contribution is not so much the elaboration of the theological issue as it is the witnessing of the issue by the ancients. The historical clarification and understanding that the Fathers had of revelation is indeed de Lubac's aim. Rahner makes the point this way:

What is it that makes the properly historical studies like those of de Lubac or de la Taille so stimulating and to the point? Surely it is the art of reading texts in such a way that...they say something to us which we in our time have not considered at all or not closely enough, about reality itself.

Karl Rahner, "The Prospects for Dogmatic Theology", Theological Investigations, Vol. I, pp. 9-10. The following question is not without relevance here: "Upon what basis does de Lubac select the witnesses of the Fathers?" De Lubac develops his theological positions within the context of what the magisterium has said on the issue. He reads the texts of the magisterium, the texts of the Patristic and Medieval writers, in the light of the Biblical Revelation so as to arrive at a synthesis. This, of course, is how we judge de Lubac's procedure. The question continues to remain for us, however, and we shall have more to say to the question in our conclusion. What weight is given to such of these 'sources'? It seems to us, that in the beginning of his theological career de Lubac utilizes the Patristic and Biblical sources more (let us say that at least he calls upon them more frequently) than the magisterium's pronouncements, while in his more recent writing an increased weight is given and attention paid to the magisterium's pronouncements.

¹³"Le problème du développement du dogme", p. 153.

of revelation, taking revelation under its first form and its subsistent integrity, is neither exactly nor sufficiently described as a series of statements".¹⁴ It "would not be legitimate to believe that revelation has been made without an intrinsic bond joining it to the one total reality of Christ, that it has been committed to us like a simple formula, in a series of propositions which are detached from this unique mystery and thus separated from each other, like ready-made majors for our future syllogisms".¹⁵ What is primary for de Lubac is the activity of the redemption; it is the gift God makes of himself in his Son; it is the final and definitive realization of this great plan hidden in Himself from the origin of the world and now revealed,¹⁶ i.e., the summons to Life Eternal in and through Christ. Thus there is a two-fold primacy to revelation as a reality and as an activity. In Jesus Christ, revealed reality and activity of revelation, gift and revelation of gift coincide. Christ is at once mystery and revelation of mystery, the whole of

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 154. "Le contenu de la révélation, à le prendre sous sa forme première et dans son intégralité subsistante, n'est ni exactement ni suffisamment désigné comme une série d'énonciables". N.B. When the English is given in the text of our thesis it is to provide easier reading.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 155. "Ce qui serait illégitime ce serait de croire en conséquence que la révélation nous a été faite sans lien intrinsèque avec la réalité une et totale du Christ, qu'elle nous a été livrée comme un simple formulaire, en une série de propositions détachées de ce mystère unique et pas là séparées les unes des autres, telles des 'majeures' toutes prêtes pour nos raisonnements futurs."

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 156.

revelation and the whole of dogma.¹⁷ We can distinguish "particular truths and detached propositions, concerning respectively the Trinity, the Incarnate Word, baptism, grace, etc.... This is a legitimate and necessary abstraction..., but only on condition that one is always aware of its being an abstraction and never under-evaluates the concrete Whole whose content it can never exhaust".¹⁸ Based on a text from Jules Lebreton, de Lubac says that at the beginning adherence to Christ must be presented as a "perception toute concrète et toute vivante".¹⁹

[Q]u'en Jésus-Christ tout nous a été, d'un coup, à la fois donné et révélé; et que, par conséquent, toutes les explications à venir, quelle que soit leur teneur et quel que soit leur mode, ne seront jamais que le monnayage en fractions plus distinctes d'un trésor déjà possédé en entier; que tout était déjà contenu réellement, actuellement, dans un plus haut état de connaissance et non pas seulement dans des 'principès' ou des 'prémises'.²⁰

Here, then, as well as in all his writing, de Lubac places Jesus in the foreground of revelation. Jesus is the whole, the object of a total, overall, intuitive, living grasp. This superior state of knowledge contains in advance "really", "actually", all

¹⁷Ibid., p. 157.

¹⁸Ibid., "C'en est une seconde que de séparer de cette révélation globale ou de ce 'Tout de dogme' certaines vérités particulières, énoncées en propositions détachées, qui concerneront respectivement la Trinité, le Verbe incarné, le baptême, la grâce, etc. Abstractions légitimes et nécessaires,...mais à condition qu'on en ait conscience et qu'on ne méconnaisse pas le 'Tout' concret dont elles n'épuiseront jamais le contenu".

¹⁹Ibid., p. 155

²⁰Ibid., pp. 157-158.

of dogma with all the richness of its later development.²¹ Jesus is the normative truth of mystery.²²

In his commentary on Dei Verbum, de Lubac places stress on this "concentration christologique" of revelation.

La Parole de Dieu par excellence, par définition, c'est le Christ. En lui, Parole substantielle, nous avons toute la vérité que Dieu a voulu manifester aux hommes.... car Il est l'Envoyé du Père...car c'est en lui-même que Dieu se révèle...Il est donc à la fois le messager et le contenu du message, le révélateur et le révélé....²³

De Lubac acknowledges that his own understanding of the object of revelation is not unlike that of Karl Barth.²⁴ "God's revelation is Jesus Christ, God's Son".²⁵ Quoting Pascal, de Lubac says that "Jésus-Christ est l'objet de tout, et le centre où tout tend".²⁶ And yet this "concentration christologique" is not a "pure" christocentrism for de Lubac. That is to say, he affirms that Christ is the Word of the Father, the sacrament of God. Christ does not speak of himself but out of obedience to the Father whose envoy he is.²⁷ God is invisible and "inexpressibly incomprehensible",²⁸ who "dwells in light inaccessible".²⁹ Referring to Bouillard's comment

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid., p. 155.

²³ DV, pp. 179-180.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 182.

²⁵ Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, Vol. I, Part II, trans. by Thomson and Knight (Edinburgh: Clark, 1956), p. 1.

²⁶ Quoted by de Lubac, DV, p. 182, note 9.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 183.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

on Barth's christocentrism, de Lubac judges that it is necessary to reaffirm the Spirit and the Father in the mission of Christ.³⁰

That christology be a theology (and not simply something of place and circumstance) one ought never to omit the remark that in the New Testament, Christ refers to his Father, always returning to God the Father.³¹

If we have concentrated on the personalized object of God's self-witness as characterizing de Lubac's understanding of Biblical Revelation, we have done so because the concentration is a particular contribution of de Lubac to the area of Roman Catholic thought on the subject. Other Roman Catholic theologians spoke to the subject

³⁰Ibid., p. 184.

³¹Henri Bouillard, S.J., "Croire et comprendre", Mythe et Foi, Actes du colloque organisé par le Centre international d'études humanistes et par l'Institut d'études philosophiques de Rome (Paris: Aubier, 1966), pp. 296 and 311. Quoted by de Lubac, DV, p. 184. De Lubac's judgment follows von Balthasar's opinion on Barth as well as Bouillard's. We agree with von Balthasar's judgment that Barth's emphasis in Dogmatics is not always the concretized, personalized identification of the Word of God and Jesus Christ. "As the doctrine of Church Dogmatics unfolds, the central notion of God's Word is gradually replaced by another: Jesus Christ, God and man. It becomes clear that God's Word is not the most comprehensive designation for the nature and content of revelation. Word is only one designation for the Son...." Cf. page 26, note 38 of our thesis, VonBalthasar, p. 100. This judgment on the part of de Lubac, Bouillard and von Balthasar amounts to a criticism of Barth. As a point in fact, de Lubac makes the criticism explicitly, accusing Barth of a "christomonism" rather than a "christocentrism". DV, p. 183. In our judgment the emphasis in Dogmatics on Jesus Christ rather than Word of God is not a change of mind on Barth's part, as though he was mistaken about the latter and insightful about the former. Nor, furthermore, do we accept de Lubac's criticism that Barth neglects the Trinitarian nature of revelation. Texts can be gathered, as we have done here, which might indicate that de Lubac's christocentrism is too emphatic or all inclusive. The point in all of this, and the banality of the point troubles us, is that the mystery of God's self-witness in time is complex and cannot be reduced or simplified so as to avoid the complexity. Barth devotes an entire chapter to the Holy Spirit as God's Revelation (Dogmatics, pp. 203-401). Making our own the advice de Lubac gives that "one cannot say everything at one time about something" (La Mystique et les mystiques, p. 11), we think it also applies to Barth.

within the defensive framework of Trent and Vatican I. These theologians, taking their cue from the Constitutions of those Councils, are cautious to emphasize the doctrine of revelation, the veritates formaliter a Deo revelatae, against the liberal Protestants and the Modernists.³² De Lubac insists on the necessity of attaching

³²The theologians we have in mind are, among others, A. Gardeil, Le donné révélé et la théologie (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1909); R. Garrigou-Lagrange, De Revelatione per Ecclesiam catholicam proposita (Rome, 1950); H. Dieckmann, De Revelatione Christiana (Fribourg, 1930). The singular focus of the post-Tridentine and post-Modernist Roman Catholic theologians was the extent to which revelation had been attacked philosophically by Kant and theologically by Sabatier in France and Harnack in Germany. Leaving aside the question of Kant's "historical faith" and "religious faith" and the relationship between them, Kant's brilliantly unified critiques brought about the elimination and excluded the possibility of knowing transcendental revelation -- at least in the minds of some of his readers. Consistent with his great thesis of the first Critique, Kant measured revelation by reason because he used the moral concepts, arrived at through reason, to judge the "alleged revelation". (E. Kant, Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone, trans. by T. M. Greene and H. H. Hudson [New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1960], p. 11.) The extent to which religious faith includes a transcendent revelation is a weighty question, one we do not wish to tackle. The comment of Baillie that Kant "recoiled...from the rationalist theory of the Leibnitzo-Wolffian school...." cannot be taken lightly. (Baillie, The Idea of Revelation (New York: Columbia Press, 1956), p.9. The rationalism latent in Kant's religion led to Schleiermacher's universalization of revelation. "What is revelation? Every original and new communication of the universe to man is a revelation....Every intuition and every original feeling proceeds from revelation". (F. Schleiermacher, On Religion, trans. by John Oman [New York: Harper and Row, 1958], p. 89.) What links there are between Schleiermacher, Hegel and A. Ritschl, and to what extent the Roman Catholic response was based upon a correct understanding of these men is outside the scope of this thesis. Baillie's judgment that Kant, Hegel and Schleiermacher only rejected revelation insofar as it meant the "acceptance of an authoritatively communicated truth" is a radical judgment in the light of how most Roman Catholic theologians have understood these men. We do not mean it is an incorrect judgment, but that if it is true, then Roman Catholic theology of the later twentieth century owes more to Kant, Hegel and Schleiermacher than it realizes. We make this judgment for the following reason. If it is true, as Baillie

revelation to the person of Jesus. Against a theology of statements he insists on a theology of person. This is a singular point of departure which sets apart de Lubac and the theologians of France at the turn of the century from those post-scholastic theologians of the counter-Reformation.

We do not wish to misinterpret de Lubac on this point, as though he were one of those cavalier minds which substitutes person for thought. But the category of person does come into singular

says, that natural theology was the victim of Kant's critique; if Schleiermacher departed from the old formulation of reason versus revelation and found a middle way between both of them; if Hegel put philosophy at the service of religious consciousness (Baillie, pp. 11-13), then the theologizing of such Roman Catholics as Rahner, Lonergan and Metz is not without roots in nineteenth century thought. As far as de Lubac is concerned we judge that his "return to the sources" puts a greater distance between himself and those brilliant minds than we have recalled. It would be inaccurate to say that de Lubac's philosophical spirit, although close to the roots of modern day Thomism, bears the clear traces of nineteenth century philosophy. We accept de Lubac's insistence that he rejects Kant. For a critique of the Modernist crisis, particularly as regards the problem of revelation from the Roman Catholic perspective, see J. Rivièrè, Le Modernisme dans l'Eglise (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1929); R. Marle, Au coeur de la crise moderniste (Paris, 1960). The defensive insistence on truth in revelation by the Roman Catholic theologians must be seen in the context we have touched upon. The hard line of Gardeil, Garrigou-Lagrange, and Dieckmann (see note 50) is indeed a narrow insistence, but one we cannot exclude or take lightly. Referring once again to the Bampton lectures of John Baillie, brilliant as they are, they do, in fact, survey the emphases. "How far we have travelled from the New Testament", says Baillie, "when we think of God's revelation as being of such a kind as to put a strain on the memory!" If the anti-Modernist Roman Catholic theologians, as well as the Catechism of Trent are judged exclusively as "straining the memory", then we submit that the judgment is excessive. De Lubac makes room for the doctrinal dimension of revelation, although not with the same insistence as, for example, R. Garrigou-Lagrange. Cf. also K. Rahner, Theological Investigations, Vol. I, p. 123; L. M. Dewailly, Jésus-Christ, Parole de Dieu (Paris: Aubier, 1958), p. 28; J. Mouroux, L'expérience chrétienne (Paris: Aubier, 1952), p. 193; R. Guardini, L'Essence du christianisme (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1947), p. 74; H.

focus for our author. That is all we are saying. For de Lubac the doctrinal content of revelation can never be sold short. "Obviously, one should not conclude that revelation carries with it no doctrine ..."³³ "But all the doctrine of the Church, even the most abstract concepts and judgments are but an explanation of the concrete and personal understanding which the Apostles had of the man Jesus...."³⁴ The concrete and personal understanding is what is central for de Lubac. Its explanation is secondary, although vital. As a matter of fact, it is our judgment that, according to de Lubac's synthesis, the personalized object of God's self-witness in Jesus Christ alone preserves the possibility of his affirming what in fact belongs to, and what in fact does not belong to, human and non-human nature. Not that it guarantees an exhaustive affirmation but regarding essentials it is a sine qua non for him. In other words, because de Lubac is faithful to the realism of Incarnation, he is faithful to his own humanity. How that is so is the conclusion of our thesis.

Niebecker, Wesen und Wirklichkeit der übernatürlichen Offenbarung (Munich, 1955), p. 155; G. Söhngen, Die Einheit in der Theologie (Munich: Verlag, 1952), pp. 316, 354; H. Urs von Balthasar, La théologie de l'histoire (Paris: Aubier, 1955), p. 193.

³³ DV, p. 162, note 5. De Lubac quotes George-H. Tavard, Écriture ou Église? La crise de la Réforme (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1963), p. 16. "On n'en conclura pas, évidemment, que la révélation ne comporte pas de doctrine...."

³⁴ Quoted by de Lubac, DV, p. 163, note 5 from Rousselot, S.J., "Petite théorie du développement du dogme", RSR 53 (1965), p. 376.

Excursus

We wish to point out, within the framework of the object of Biblical Revelation, the point toward which this thesis moves. If, as de Lubac says, Jesus Christ is "la vie toujours présente",³⁵ and if it is "le Christ qui [] est l'Auteur, l'Objet, le Centre, le Sommet, la Plénitude et le Signe"³⁶ of the Biblical Revelation, then between human and non-human nature which possesses life and the Sign which identifies Himself with it, there must be a connaturality which is a necessary condition for any meeting or engagement to take place. To atomize revelation into articles and prescriptions which have no intrinsic link to Jesus Christ is analogous to the separation of mind and its object. Once the separation has been affirmed no manner of bridge can heal the schism. It is de Lubac's thesis that a separation between man and God can never be so radical as to preclude an orientation that is, in some manner, immanent.³⁷ Novel as the self-revelation of God is, it is not without basis. As von Balthasar puts it: "...creatureliness is a promise of, and a plea for, the things which God has in mind for man".³⁸

³⁵DV, p. 181.

³⁶Ibid., p. 182.

³⁷This we take to be the thesis of Sur les chemins de Dieu. The imago Dei is never destroyed, even with the Fall, for de Lubac and it serves as the basis for all natural knowledge of God as well as the possibility for hearing a revelation.

³⁸Hans Urs von Balthasar, The Theology of Karl Barth, trans. by John Drury (New York: Holt, Rinehard and Winston, 1971), p. 112. Cf. the German edition: Karl Barth: Darstellung und Deutung Seiner Theologie (Köln: Verlag Jakob Hegner, 1951), p. 136.

The concept of nature is formally presupposed at the base of what is to come; but it has a material aspect as well. The whole content of creation is polarized positively towards grace; from God's Revelation it will receive its fullness and its truth.³⁹

If this is so, and we think that de Lubac affirms it to be so, there is something more to be added. Because Jesus Christ, insofar as and because He is an object "Through whom, by whom, and with whom" God has chosen to reveal himself, then the reason why creation is "polarized positively" is due precisely to the fact that Jesus is a man. In other words, were the self-revelation of God to be other than a man we would have only some undefined "X" to which that self-revelation would be made manifest. We make this judgment on the basis of what de Lubac says in L'Écriture dans la tradition. "The entire revelation of the most high God is fulfilled in Jesus Christ".⁴⁰ "Christ's presence in the Bible transcends both awareness and men and lies in the profound logic of idea and event. It is infused by God into the living flesh of his People".⁴¹

For de Lubac there are no stages in the revelation of God, so that one cannot affirm both a progression and a continuity of God's self-manifestation.⁴² There is, however, a kind of "anticipation". Similarly, there is, in the order of human and non-human

³⁹Ibid., pp. 112-113.

⁴⁰De Lubac, L'Écriture dans la tradition (Paris: Aubier, 1967). English translation, The Sources of Revelation, trans. by Luke O'Neill (New York: Herder and Herder, 1968), p. ix. Hereafter The Sources of Revelation will be noted by SR.

⁴¹SR, p. 40.

⁴²Ibid., p. 91.

nature, an "anticipation" which partakes in the full awareness of what nature is eventually to become. In both cases the "anticipation" is God's self-witness in Jesus who nevertheless is infinitely different from either the Old Testament (which prefigured him) or human nature (which finds its realization in him). Here we face the mystery of paradox. The distance between the self-revelation of God in Jesus and nature is qualitatively infinite. Yet, it is the former which is intrinsic to the latter and which "penetrates it in all its parts".⁴³

We have made this excursus keeping in mind that de Lubac himself has not explicitly drawn the same analogy. But we are certain it is his point of view. Furthermore, the analogy of "newness" regarding the Old and New Testament, which de Lubac explicitly develops, and to which we will return in subsequent pages, will reinforce what we have declared to be the basis for our own thought.

Here, in summary, is what we have understood de Lubac to be saying. (1) The object of revelation is God made manifest in Jesus Christ. (2) That personalized object cannot be reduced to a series of veritates formaliter revelatae a Deo. (3) The revelation of the person of Jesus, as object to be known and believed, is the basis upon which any apologetics would have to be grounded. (4) Our own conclusion is that, for de Lubac, the self-witness of God

⁴³Ibid., p. 193.

in both human and non-human nature, i.e., natural revelation, is conditioned upon this self-witness in Jesus Christ. In brief, for de Lubac, there is no theology without a Christology. It is the revelation of God in the person of Jesus which, for de Lubac, gives spirit, coherence, meaning and finality to what is.

2. The Nature of Biblical Revelation

Faithful to the spirit of Henri de Lubac, we must insist with him, straight away, that the revelation of God to man is, at its deepest, a mystery. Throughout our effort to come to grips with de Lubac's thought on the matter of God's "stepping out of mystery" we recall what he has said of mystery.

[Le mystère] n'est donc pas quelque chose d'irrationnel, d'absurde, ou, en mettant tout au mieux, de simplement non contradictoire mais. devant quoi l'on devrait renoncer à tout effort d'intelligence; quelque chose qui se dérobe à toute pénétration, comme une paroi verticale et lisse à laquelle on ne peut que se heurter. Et ce n'est pas davantage une vérité qui serait provisoirement inaccessible à notre recherche, un domaine qui ne serait pas encore ouvert à la raison humaine, mais que celle-ci, en devenant 'adulte', pourrait espérer peu à peu réduire, ou récupérer comme sien....⁴⁴

⁴⁴Henri de Lubac, Paradoxe et Mystère de l'Église, pp. 30-31. Hereafter this work is noted by PME. De Lubac points out that what he means by mystery is not what Leibnitz nor Lessing and Herder meant by that concept. Leitnitz, according to de Lubac, "narrowed down the mystery to manageable proportions" (ibid., p. 32). Thus for Leibnitz there was a correlation between adulthood and mystery free existence. De Lubac also makes reference to Kant's essay "What is Enlightenment?", Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals and What is Enlightenment?, trans. by Lewis White Beck (New York:

And yet, if God's self-witness in time "concerns us, touches us, acts in us, reveals us to ourselves" we must be prepared to bring it to speech.⁴⁵

A. The Analogy of Word

The constant tradition of both Catholic and Protestant theology has made use of the analogy of word to specify the nature of Biblical Revelation.⁴⁶ Henri de Lubac is no exception. The revelation of God is accomplished by speech. "Dieu s'adresse... aux hommes 'comme à des amis'".⁴⁷ "Dieu a voulu... 'cum hominibus conversari'".⁴⁸ Revelation is a conversation of God with men.⁴⁹

Bobbs-Merrill, 1959), p. 85. We do not think that Kant's question necessarily is the same as Leibnitz's and therefore it is not clear why de Lubac makes the cross reference. Kant's call to maturity: Sapere aude (p. 85) is in the context of the free use of reason, although Kant is the first to suggest that not everyone is capable of, nor should they be permitted, the unleashed power of reason. Leibnitz's call to maturity is directly related to the ultimate discharge of mystery as a sign of the mature use of reason. De Lubac's insistence on mystery as a sign of maturity rather than the lack of it reminds us of Farrer's "Prophecy and Poetry" of the Bampton Lectures. (The Glass of Vision, pp. 113-131.) We do not mean to weaken the brilliance of Farrer's questioning by suggesting analogies but his remark that the "moving of these men's minds [the Biblical writers], or of any men's minds, by divine direction is in any case a profound and invisible mystery, as is the whole relation of the creature to the creator" is strikingly similar to the ideas and the rhetoric of de Lubac.

⁴⁵PME, p. 31.

⁴⁶Latourelle, op. cit., pp. 315-328. According to Latourelle, and we agree, the Jesuit E. Dhanis' work is germane as well. E. Dhanis, "Révélation explicite et implicite", Gregorianum 34 (1953), pp. 187-237; Garrigou-Lagrange, op. cit., throughout.

⁴⁷DV, p. 173.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 174.

⁴⁹Ibid.

"Speaking", then, is not only a manifestation in which words resound to the ear, but "speaking" is a "living word addressed to the man of today..., a word which affects him, since it is for him that it was uttered and remains uttered".⁵⁰

De Lubac does not use the analogy of speech to specify revelation in exactly the same way that the Scholastics used the concept, but he is more faithful to their analysis than to those modern theologians who would eliminate the analogy of word altogether.⁵¹ St. Thomas understood speech to be the making known to

⁵⁰SR, p. 73.

⁵¹The modern theologians we have in mind present revelation primarily as a series of events whose author and subject is God. God's activity takes precedence over God's communication. Or, as Latourelle puts it, "God's activity in human history" constitutes revelation. Examples of such theologians may be found primarily in the Protestant tradition, principal among such authors being J. Baillie. Baillie, correctly, draws the line of departure between medieval authors, principally Aquinas, and contemporary authors, principally Barth, on the issue of "event and interpretation". It is true that Aquinas stressed prophetic illumination when he considered revelation. However, his discussion was carried on in the context of inspiration. "The illumination of the receiving mind," says Baillie, "is a necessary condition of the divine self-disclosure" (op. cit., p. 64). Where we disagree with Baillie's judgment is on the point of inspiration. "The concept of inspiration", according to Baillie, "is thus the necessary counterpart of the concept of revelation, but its meaning and scope have often been misconceived through its being applied primarily to the prophetic and apostolic witness, and withal their written witness, to the revelation, rather than to that illumination of the prophetic and apostolic mind which is an integral part of the revelation to which such witness was borne" (ibid., p. 66). Aquinas, and particularly Bonaventure, did not apply inspiration as exclusively as Baillie suggests. The Roman Catholic emphasis on inspiration as the guarantee of the witness and the written word is the result of the historical method which arose in the nineteenth century and which brought into question the problem of inerrancy. Cf. Denzinger, Enchiridion Symbolorum, editio 21-23 (Friburgi: Herder, 1937), 2010, 2011. Inspiratio librorum Veteris Testamenti in eo

another the idea in one's mind.⁵² But, of course, St. Thomas, along with St. Bonaventure, spoke to the question of revelation in terms of prophecy.⁵³ Therefore, the problem of intellectual illumination took precedence over every other consideration. Those who equate the narrow definition locutio Dei attestans with the rich and multifaceted mystery of revelation, e.g., Garrigou-Lagrange, C. Pesch, and the so-called Manualists, fail to draw out, and thereby short circuit, the analogy of word as it was used by both the Biblical writers themselves and the Fathers of the Church.⁵⁴ De Lubac,

consistit, quod scriptores israelitae religiosas doctrinas sub peculiari quodam aspectu, gentibus parum noto aut ignoto, tradiderunt. Inspiratio divina non ita ad totam Scripturam sacram extenditur, ut omnes et singulas eius partes ab omni errore praemunit. These two statements were condemned as Modernist errors by the decree Lamentabili, 3 July, 1907. The encyclical letter of Leo XIII, Providentissimus Deus, 18 November, 1893, spoke to the question of inspiration in the same way. Cf. DB 1941-1953. Both of these documents of the magisterium were in direct response to Modernism. It was an emphasis, however, and corroborates what Baillie says to be the case. But the other emphasis is not to be excluded either. That emphasis we take to be the insistence on illumination of the mind as well as the inspiration of the text. In our mind de Lubac preserves the balance, cautioning against a too exclusive attention to "The God who Acts" which ends up by removing altogether the trans-historical nature of revelation.

⁵²S.Th. I, q. 107, a.1. But "as a temporary event, revelation, for St. Thomas, stands out as an operation which is hierarchial, successive, progressive, and polymorphous". Latourelle, op. cit., p. 160.

⁵³Cf. Latourelle, op. cit., pp. 155-172.

⁵⁴For these theologians, the analogy of word was almost exclusively in terms of the communication of truth, setting aside the element of person-to-person communication. Cf. Baillie, op. cit., pp. 27-32. It should be kept in mind, however, and we have pointed this out more than once, that the historical moment which nourished Garrigou-Lagrange and Gardeil was anti-Modernist. "What was needed

taking his cue from the Constitution Dei Verbum which qualifies "speech" with "as to friends", and insists on the object of word as the Reason of God in Christ, draws out the interpersonal and dynamic elements of the analogy.⁵⁵ Commenting on the task of the Church, de Lubac judges that it should be a "religious listening". He thereby suggests that the Church is at the service of what is spoken, much as one who waits on a communication so as to become united with it.⁵⁶ Referring to the Biblical Revelation, de Lubac quotes from the encyclical Ecclesiam suam of Paul VI:

La Révélation, qui est la relation surnaturelle que Dieu lui-même a pris l'initiative d'instaurer avec l'humanité, peut être représentée comme un dialogue dans lequel le Verbe de Dieu s'exprime par l'Incarnation, et ensuite, par l'Évangile...C'est dans cette conversation du Christ avec les hommes que Dieu laisse comprendre quelque chose de lui-même, le mystère de sa vie....⁵⁷

Paradoxically, de Lubac refers to the listening that is part of every dialogue, every conversation, as a capacity for mystery.⁵⁸ In another place he says that revelation never alters the character

was to protect the concept of revelation against the denials of rationalism and the contamination of liberal Protestantism". Latourelle, op. cit., p. 208.

⁵⁵DV, pp. 174-175.

⁵⁶Ibid., pp. 159-160.

⁵⁷Quoted by de Lubac, ibid., pp. 174-175.

⁵⁸De Lubac, "Préface", La Mystique et les Mystiques, p. 34.

of mystery.⁵⁹ At its deepest, de Lubac carries the analogy of "speaking", of "word", of "conversation", to "silence". The passivity such an interpretation involves reminds us of the Scholastic emphasis on prophecy, all the while retaining a more personalistic "openness". Referring to the Biblical Revelation as a word addressed to the man of faith, de Lubac says:

When we open our Bible, not merely as believing historians or even as members of the faithful who simply seek instruction, but also as believers who are accomplishing a religious activity according to the total logic of our faith, then 'it is accurate to say that we are questioning Scripture. It would be more exact to acknowledge that it is Scripture which is questioning us, and which finds for each of us, through all time and all generations, the appropriate question'.⁶⁰

In such an analysis, to be sure a prior disposition is affirmed, i.e., faith, but the aspect of faith de Lubac emphasizes for conversation or dialogue is listening or passivity or obedience. Nor must we forget what de Lubac says, given the word of God addressed to man, given the attitude of obediencial listening, that "les voies par où Dieu atteist l'homme resteront toujours un mystère".⁶¹ Here

⁵⁹ Paradoxe et mystère de l'Église, op. cit., p. 38. "Toujours le mystère transcende nos définitions. Nous pour dire des choses exactes, puisqu'il nous est révélé; mais sa révélation ne change pas les conditions d'exercice de nos intelligences et ne lui ôte pas à lui-même son caractère mystérieux".

⁶⁰ SR, p. 73.

⁶¹ DHA, p. 401.

de Lubac refers to Dostoevsky's state, and seems to say that Dostoevsky's meditation on the Scriptures was a stage in that final silence through which he grasped, or rather, was the beyond.⁶² The "speaking" of God, therefore, remains most obscure.

When we ask, "What does it mean to say 'God speaks'?", we observe a man who claims to have heard. Here is what de Lubac says of a saint who appears on the historical scene:

Brusquement, un voile se déchire. Un pan d'éternité se manifeste. La nuit devient lumineuse. Bien des critiques intimidantes apparaissent aussitôt ridicules. C'est une telle Plénitude, -- un tel Amour, -- une telle Joie, que tout cède. Toutes les négations s'effacent devant la Présence indiscutable. L'homme, à nouveau, respire....Le passage d'un saint est appel à la conversion.⁶³

With this rhetoric, de Lubac describes the existential "yes" of one who himself has been called to conversion and thereby represents the conversion call to another. Analogously, the result of the 'speech' of God to the prophet, or to the king, or to the humble servant, is an effected change which in its historicalness addresses another to hear the unhistorical.

Karl Barth's exegesis of the Word of God is similar to what we understand de Lubac to be saying. In Church Dogmatics, Barth rejects Tillich's designation of 'speaks' as symbolic.⁶⁴ For Barth,

⁶²Ibid., p. 392.

⁶³PME, p. 221.

⁶⁴Barth, Church Dogmatics, Vol. I, Pt. I, p. 150.

"God speaks". And yet Barth does admit that the proposition corresponds with both human inadequacy and human brokenness.⁶⁵ However, how else can correspondence between that which is adequate and unbroken and that which is inadequate and broken be brought about if not symbolically? We find it difficult, therefore, to understand what Barth rejects in Tillich's use of symbol on this point. When Barth describes "Word of God" as both spiritual and corporeal he seems to let in through the back door what he has thrown out through the front. Since we cannot afford a lengthy parenthesis on this point, we appropriate our reading of Barth and our reading of Tillich as comfortably similar with de Lubac. Barth, Tillich, and de Lubac are always using "Word of God" as reason communicating with reason, person communicating with person. We do not see how they can consider the natural power of speech which strikes the ears as sound waves to be what they mean. For them, communication, at its deepest, can be initiated by such power but that is the power between men, not between the creator and the creature.

Barth says:

God's Word is not a thing to be described, nor is it a concept to be defined. It is neither a content nor an idea. It is not "a truth", not even the very highest truth. It is the truth because it is God's speaking, Dei loquentis persona. It is not something objective. It is the objective, because it is the subjective, namely, God's subjective.... Certainly God's Word is not the formal possibility of divine speech, but its fulfilled reality....⁶⁶

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 155.

What Barth insists upon is that the speech of God is God Himself. "God's revelation is Jesus Christ, God's Son".⁶⁷ This is what we mean by 'speaking', and what we are certain de Lubac means. In this sense, 'speaking' is symbolic.

Whatever else 'speaking' means, however far the analogy of word may be taken, it certainly never excludes that rich exegesis spoken of by the medievals and stressed by de Lubac. The revelation of God, as spoken word, is the lover calling to his beloved in the style of the Song of Songs.⁶⁸ The spoken word is the shared intimacy of the person, the expression of another, the standing forth of another, which, in one sense unites with, but in another sense takes over, the other. In Paradoxes de Lubac stops short of drawing the analogy of conversation or dialogue to its full anthropomorphic limit.⁶⁹ If we take that limit to be the complete sharing of two

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸DV, p. 204.

⁶⁹The constant theme of the Paradoxes is the affirmation of mystery and transcendence over against reason and immanence. In the section entitled "Exigences de l'esprit" this is particularly clear.

Or, une pensée chrétienne n'existe nulle part en soi. Elle n'a pas la substance objective de la doctrine. Elle ne peut naître que par l'effort de pensée du chrétien, et l'effort de pensée fourni par nos Pères ne nous dispense pas d'un effort analogue (p. 33).

Non ego mutabor in te, sed tu mutaberis in me (ibid.).

Il n'y a de "paroles d'évangile" que les paroles de l'Évangile. Les paroles des encycliques sont paroles d'encyclique: chose assurément très digne, très importante, mais autre chose (p. 35).

interiorities, i.e., God and man, with a view towards reciprocal exchange, then de Lubac takes exception. Rather, his emphasis on understanding the word of God as dialogue would lead more directly to that interpretation of the Eastern Fathers for whom the word of God has an annihilating or consuming project.⁷⁰ De Lubac would not describe the Biblical Revelation as the disclosure of subject to subject. Rather he would seem to subscribe to what Austin Farrer says:

Neither out of the Scripture I read nor in the prayers I tried to make did any mental voice address me....And this is why, when Germans set their eye-balls and pronounce the terrific words "He speaks to thee" (Er redet dich an), I am sure indeed that they are saying something, but I am still more sure that they are not speaking to my condition.⁷¹

⁷⁰ Among the Greek Fathers Origen is most often quoted, and, what is more, defended, by de Lubac. The full length work Histoire et Esprit, and the four volume Exégèse médiévale which took its inspiration from Histoire et Esprit, is evidence of that. It is difficult to substantiate the point we make in our text, at least with any list of propositions or texts from the Fathers. The argumentation would run along this track. The mysticism of the Greek Fathers, particularly Origen, rests heavily on a voluntarism, i.e., the unity of the Godhead is most often defended; God's will is absolute; the principle agent in creation and redemption is the Divine Will. There is a kind of 'progression' evident in Origen (actually it is the 'process' of sanctification) which consists in a return to the will of God by the soul. This return is not a conformity but an "annihilation" of the created will in the presence of the uncreated will. Spiritual union, therefore, does not have the note of harmony or balance but rather oneness, i.e., the Divine Will. Cf. H. Crouzel, Origène et la connaissance mystique (Bruges, 1961), pp. 47-85; H. Urs von Balthasar, "Le mystère d'Origène", RSR, 26 (1936), pp. 513-526; de Lubac, Histoire et Esprit (Paris: Aubier, 1950), pp. 1-45.

⁷¹ Austin Farrer, op. cit., p. 8.

The 'speaking' analogy only makes sense for de Lubac if it is authenticated by the living witness who speaks. That is to say, there is cojoined with the speaking, the action, the fact, which guarantees that what one hears is indeed more than an intra-mental voice. "On lit: 'Revelatio supernaturalis...est manifestatio veritatis religiosae facta per verba Dei ad hominem'.⁷² But according to de Lubac, it is the "gestis verbisque" which distinguishes the Biblical Revelation from the cosmic revelation.⁷³ Taking exception to that Scholastic definition: "revelatio naturalis fit per facta; revelatio supernaturalis per verba", de Lubac stresses the intrinsic rapport between not facta and verba but gesta and verba.⁷⁴

Rapport si étroit, si intrinsèque que, d'une part les actes révélateurs sont ceux qui se trouvent expliqués par les paroles, et d'autre part les paroles sont évidemment secondes par rapport aux actes dont elles proclament le sens, mettant en lumière leur contenu mystérieux. Davantage, l'insistence sur les paroles, au détriment des actes, supposait une moindre intelligence du caractère spécifique de la révélation, ainsi qu'une méconnaissance de la signification profonde du mot même de 'Parole de Dieu'.⁷⁵

De Lubac thus takes cognizance of an "intellectualism" which, carried to its limit, would reduce Biblical Revelation to a kind of gnosis.⁷⁶ We cannot reduce divine revelation to the series

⁷²DV, p. 176.

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁶Ibid., pp. 162-163; p. 178.

of words which expresses it.⁷⁷ It is the acts of God in history, the personal "gestures" of God, interpreted by words, which thus hold the center of focus for de Lubac. Truly, God speaks, but his word (dabar) is always active; it has a 'double value, it teaches salvation and effects salvation'.⁷⁸ The Word of God infallibly does what it says; it is at one and the same time creative and interpretive of history: "Dicere Dei est facere".⁷⁹ De Lubac does not want to oppose with any antagonism a "révélation-connaissance" and a "révélation-événement".⁸⁰ The "gesta verbaque" preserves both the intellectual meaning of doctrine which is revealed (i.e., prophetic revelation of truth) and the personal ephiphany which guarantees the doctrine. According to de Lubac, this balance of "word" and "gesture" shows that the self-witness of God as witnessed by the Scriptures is accomplished in time in the course of history, and not accomplished as an announcement outside of time. It is to that historical aspect of God's self-witness to which we now turn.

B. History

1. The Meaning of History

De Lubac speaks to the question of the historical character

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 177. "Par réaction contra une thèse "intellectualiste" qui finissait par "atomiser" les vérités de la foi, et pour ne pas réduire la révélation divine à "la série des mots qui l'expriment".

⁷⁸Ibid.

⁷⁹Ibid.

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 178.

of the Biblical Revelation in several of his works. The primary sources for our consideration of the issue will be the Dei Verbum, Exégèse médiéval, and Histoire et Esprit.⁸¹ Quoting Fénelon, de Lubac judges that one would "ignorer profondément l'essentiel de la religion pour ne pas voir qu'elle est toute historique".⁸²

With Augustine, he thinks that Christians have always meditated on the "historia dispensationis temporalis divinae Providentiae pro salute generis humani".⁸³ It is de Lubac's thesis, and he offers lengthy documentation on the point, that from Genesis to Apocalypse, from the earliest Fathers, through the medievals, the historical dimension of the self-witness of God was of significant emphasis.⁸⁴ Not only that, but, he says, the Second Vatican Council itself sought to restore in all its force, the functional and existential realism, both historical and cosmic, of Christian salvation as presented in the Bible.⁸⁵

Outside of his own Roman Catholic synthesis, de Lubac admires the work of Oscar Cullmann on the question of history vis-à-vis the Biblical Revelation. With Cullmann he thinks that in the primitive Church there was no place for speculations on God independent

⁸¹DV, pp. 172-179; 184-198; Exégèse médiéval, Vol. II, Pt. II, pp. 425-487; Histoire et Esprit, pp. 202-204.

⁸²DV, p. 185.

⁸³Ibid.

⁸⁴Histoire et Esprit, Chapter I, pp. 15 - 98 ; Exégèse médiéval, Vol. II, Pt. 1, pp. 373-415; 425-478.

⁸⁵DV, p. 186.

from time and history.⁸⁶ "La révélation n'a pas eu lieu hors du temps de l'histoire, dans un temps mythique: mais par elle Dieu est intervenu dans l'histoire humaine elle-même..." quotes de Lubac.⁸⁷

But it is also clear in what sense de Lubac understands the opposition between history and myth. He disagrees with R. Bultmann who, he says, demythologized the Christian faith in the name of a 'historicité ponctuelle' thereby dehistoricizing it.⁸⁸ Of Bultmann, de Lubac judges that his opposition between the Word of God as a temporal event and the Word of God as temporal is carried too far. The same for Bultmann's description of revelation as a "salutary event and not the communication of intellectual truths".⁸⁹ For Bultmann, the historicity of revelation and the empiric fact of Jesus Christ are to be understood insofar as they take place at the "interior of the world, insofar as they

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 187.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 188.

⁸⁸ Quoted by de Lubac, ibid., p. 188. De Lubac does not give the reference to Bultmann, although it is clear that his analysis of Bultmann is made on the basis of secondary sources -- at least in de Lubac's commentary on Dei Verbum. In our judgment, Bultmann's a priori is what de Lubac finds unacceptable. We take the a priori to be Bultmann's interpretation of existence as "prior to faith" and to look at existence for the "ontologically existential possibility of the existential occurrence of faith, and by means of its analysis to gain a 'preliminary understanding' of Christian language and Christian theology, above all of exegesis". K. Barth, Church Dogmatics, Vol. I, Pt. 1, p. 39. Barth's understanding is read in the light of R. Bultmann, 'Der Begriff der Offenbarung im NT' (1929); 'Die Geschichtlichkeit des Daseins und der Glaube', Z. Th. K. (1930), p. 339 f.

⁸⁹ DV, p. 188.

address me and solicit my faith".⁹⁰ They are "pure actions of God".⁹¹ De Lubac finds this understanding of the historical character of revelation unacceptable. He does not mean by history what Bultmann means.

La Parole prophétique est Parole incarnée,
tandis que les dichotomies bultmanniennes
dissolvent le mystère de l'Incarnation.
L'Événement salutaire fait corps avec
Jésus-Christ, Existant réel, Verbe fait
chair, entré véritablement dans notre
histoire.⁹²

De Lubac's own understanding of the history of salvation avoids two extremes: the extreme which "engloberait l'histoire de toutes les expériences de l'humanité concernant le salut retracée sans interprétation théologique, en dehors de tout souci doctrinal"⁹³ and the exclusive extreme which would put everything on the plain of history.⁹⁴ The former could end up in an "amorphous evolutionism" because it could fail to distinguish the search of man and the gift of God; the latter could end up in an antimetaphysical social gospel because it could fail to appreciate the mystery of the Son of God.⁹⁵

In de Lubac's way of thinking:

En tout cas, s'il est vrai que l'Église primitive n'a pas spéculé indépendamment de l'histoire, il ne s'ensuit pas que la foi chrétienne ait jamais été purement 'historique'. Toujours elle

⁹⁰Ibid.

⁹¹Ibid.

⁹²Ibid., p. 189.

⁹³Ibid.

⁹⁴Ibid.

⁹⁵Ibid., pp. 190-191.

a contemplé, 'dans son horizontalité historique, la verticalité de la Parole venue de Dieu'.⁹⁶

Revelation, then, is not only the 'revelation of salvation'; it is, in history and by history the 'revelation of salvation'.⁹⁷ For de Lubac, therefore, God has revealed himself as the Saviour of men by intervening in the history of men. That does not mean that the final object of salvation is historical. "Il faut dépasser le plan de l'histoire pour que l'histoire acquiert son sens ultime".⁹⁸ De Lubac thinks that history does not acquire meaning and significance except by a final judgment, which is precisely the end of history.⁹⁹

Le but du mystère messianique est le mystère de la participation à la vie intime de Dieu lui-même, qui n'est pas histoire, mais éternité.... Nous dirons que toute l'histoire du salut dont il parle culmine en un point qui, à la fois, l'achève et la transcende.¹⁰⁰

Quoting Jaeger again, de Lubac says that the summit of this history of salvation is the Incarnation of the Verbe de Dieu.¹⁰¹

De Lubac does not, therefore, have a philosophy of history but a theology of history. True to his Augustinian tradition, time is a creature. History never has ultimate significance, either in its past, or its present, or its future. Rather he insists upon the idea of a truth which is, at its highest point, concrete:

⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 191.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 192.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 194.

l'idée de la Vérité personnelle, apparue dans
l'histoire, oeuvrant dans l'histoire et, du
sein de l'histoire, régissant tout l'histoire
....¹⁰²

De Lubac speaks to this question of history in places other than those connected directly with theology. It has been said by George Grant that the word 'history' has no synonym in the Bible, and yet those who claim Biblical religion as their own also claim 'history' to be constitutive of what they are.¹⁰³ Grant recalls the distinction between 'Geschichte': historical existence, and 'Historie': the scientific study of the past.¹⁰⁴ For both Grant and deLubac history is an aspect of reality. For both men interest in "history as a study is directly related to [their] belief that we are historical beings".¹⁰⁶ De Lubac does not say that "to know about anything is to know its genesis, its development up to the present and as much of its future as we can".¹⁰⁷ He distinguishes the 'history' St. Gregory defines in his Moralia as the pattern of recurrences, and the theological

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ George Grant, Time as History (Toronto: CBC Corp., 1969), p. 1.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 4.

¹⁰⁵ Grant, op.cit., p. 4; de Lubac, Exégèse médiévale, Vol. II, Pt. 2, p. 467.

¹⁰⁶ Grant, op. cit., p. 4.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 5. Cf. de Lubac, Exégèse médiévale, Vol. II, Pt. 2, p. 467 f.; Catholicisme, pp. 85-100.

meaning of history (or the facts pure and simple coupled with a principle of discernment which can itself be inserted in the facts, but which, as such, pertains to a sphere outside the facts).¹⁰⁸ The latter definition is what de Lubac means by history.

Voilà pourquoi, s'il y a vraiment quelque explication possible, non plus seulement partielle et relative, mais totale, englobante et valant absolument, de l'histoire, cette explication ne peut être que théologique. Seule la foi anticipe avec sécurité l'avenir. Seule une explication se fondant sur la foi peut invoquer un principe définitif et faire appel à des causes dernières.¹⁰⁹

For de Lubac, "histoire absolutisée" is one of "des principales idoles inventées par notre siècle".¹¹⁰ If that is so then what it means to

¹⁰⁸ De Lubac, Exégèse médiévale, Vol. II, Pt. 2, p. 467. "Mais, précisément, tout sens de l'histoire suppose qu'on ne s'en tient pas à l'historia, c'est-à-dire aux faits purs et simples, ou au pur et simple récit des faits. Il suppose qu'on se place, au moins en un second temps, à un autre point de vue que celui du simple narrateur. On use alors, pour expliquer des faits... d'un principe de discernement qui peut bien avoir lui-même son insertion dans les faits, mais qui, comme tel, appartient à une autre sphère et déborde leur observation".

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., pp. 469-470. De Lubac refers to the work of H. Niel, S.J., "Le sens de l'histoire", RSR 46 (1958), pp. 60-77, in note 1. "K. Löwith remarque à ce sujet qu'au cours du XIX^e siècle le courant eschatologique était principalement représenté par des philosophies athées. On a parlé à ce propos de vérités chrétiennes devenues folles, mais sans assez marquer en quoi elles étaient folles. Cependant, emporté par son excès, ce mouvement historique s'est comme remis en question lui-même. Tour à tour Kierkegaard, Jaspers, Heidegger ont dénoncé l'impossibilité de toute philosophie de l'histoire. On a relevé l'impossibilité pour l'homme de sortir de sa condition et d'embrasser du point de vue de Dieu la totalité du devenir historique". De Lubac quotes R. Niebuhr as saying that "all philosophy of history is a snare".

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 470. Cf. Grant, op. cit., p. 2.

conceive man as an historical being and yet not to conceive history as absolute takes on great significance.

For de Lubac, the greatest attack ever leveled against Christianity came from Nietzsche. "It must be agreed, then, that never, before Nietzsche, had so mighty an adversary arisen, one who had so clear, broad and explicit a conception of his destiny and who pursued it in all domains with such systematic and deliberate zeal".¹¹¹ And that attack against Christianity, according to de Lubac, took place on the field of history.

Nietzsche takes it as an accepted fact that God cannot "live" anywhere but in the human mind. But he is an undesirable guest there: he is, according to Zarathustra, "a thought which bends everything that is straight". The way to get rid of him is not so much to refute the proofs of his existence as to show how such an idea came to be formed and how it succeeded in establishing itself in the human mind and in "gaining weight" there. This "historical refutation" is "the only one that will carry finality".¹¹²

God, then, for Nietzsche, was a creation of man, an horizon which says nothing about the way things are, but rather a value which instinct wills to create.¹¹³ The point in our analysis is to free

¹¹¹Henri de Lubac, The Drama of Atheist Humanism, trans. by Edith M. Riley (New York: Meridian Books, 1963), p. 65; [121]. Hereafter, this work is quoted in English translation for the sake of easier reading. When a critical text seems apparent, the French text will be given. Regardless, the French will always be referred in [].

¹¹²Ibid., p. 19; [41]. Cf. Henri de Lubac, Sur les chemins de Dieu (Paris: Aubier, 1956: la troisième édition), pp. 19-27.

¹¹³Cf. Grant, op. cit., p. 29.

de Lubac from the charge of Nietzsche. If, as we have suggested, there is, for de Lubac, an "historical sense" to the Christian Revelation, there is not a modern doctrine of progress. He says of the doctrine of infinite perfectability in time:

L'homme se fait dans l'histoire et par l'histoire, et c'est pourquoi chaque génération ne se comprend pleinement que comme un chaînon d'une humanité en marche; mais la marche de cette humanité n'aurait point de sens ou, pour mieux dire, l'humanité ne marcherait pas, et ce nom même sous lequel nous la désignons ne serait qu'un flatus vocis, s'il n'y avait, présent au coeur de notre monde et l'attirant comme une fin, un éternel, qui imprime en chacun de nous le sceau de sa face et confère ainsi, à chacun de nous son irréductible intériorité.¹¹⁴

Seulement, pour comprendre et le temps et le monde, il est nécessaire de porter son regard au delà: car c'est son rapport à l'éternité qui donne au monde sa consistance et qui fait du temps un devenir réel.¹¹⁵

In reference to Marxism and its doctrine of progress, de Lubac admits that there is a strong family likeness between such anticipations and what the Christian tradition says of the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven. But there is this radical difference.

Seulement, ce que le chrétien espère pour un autre monde, à la fin du temps, le marxiste le rêve pour ce monde-ci, à l'intérieur de notre temps. Ce que le chrétien attend d'une intervention surnaturelle, le marxiste l'

¹¹⁴De Lubac, "L'idée chrétienne de l'homme et la recherche d'un homme nouveau", Etudes 255 (1947), p. 24.

¹¹⁵Ibid.

escompte comme le terme naturel d'un processus tout immanent.¹¹⁶

The criticism de Lubac makes of Marx has many of the same notes of Nietzsche's criticism of Christianity and Christianity's spawned daughter, according to Nietzsche: technology.

Comment donc se réaliserait enfin l'essence d'un être qui n'a point d'essence, qui n'est qu'un nom commun pour désigner la suite des générations et la multiplicité des individus? Pas plus que l'essence de l'homme, l'espèce humaine n'existe vraiment: qu'est-ce dès lors que la solidarité humaine? Qu'est-ce que l'avenir humain? Ai-je encore le droit de dire que, si une libération est à venir, c'est l'humanité qui sera libérée? Ce ne seront tout au plus que des individus, -- et pourquoi devrais-je admettre que, par le fait qu'ils viendront plus tard, ces individus futurs vaudront mieux que les autres? Ne seront-ils pas tout comme nous de 'médiocres habitants du coin d'univers que s'appelle la Terre'?...Réconciliée avec elle-même, l'Humanité (continuons d'employer ce mot) ne peut l'être avec la Nature.¹¹⁷

This criticism, thought at its deepest by Nietzsche and reconciled by the "eternal return of the same", takes this form on the pen of Dostoevsky:

And why should I love my neighbour or posterity, which I shall never see, which will know nothing about me, and which in its turn will disappear without leaving any traces or memories (time makes no difference to this), when the earth in its turn changes into a block of ice and flies through space,...¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 148.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 154.

¹¹⁸ DHA, p. 346; [202].

In de Lubac's words: "Rien n'est donc plus dangereux qu'un optimisme mal fondé: il n'en peut sortir que du désespoir".¹¹⁹

De Lubac proposes a two-edged reconciliation to Nietzsche's accurate attack on Biblical Religion insofar as that religion has been appropriated by both atheist and believer and reshaped to be of service to the modern west. The first edge of the sword of reconciliation is what de Lubac calls the way of escape from the prison of things that are clear.¹²⁰

Nietzsche spoke of myth and mystery without making any distinction between them, whereas a selective use could be made of these words to signify two opposite types of sacredness There is the sacredness of myth which, like vapour rising from the earth, emanates from infrahuman regions; and there is the sacredness of mystery, which is like peace descending from the heavens. The one links us with Nature and attunes us to her rhythms but also enslaves us to her fatal powers; the other is the gift of the spirit which makes us free. One finds its embodiment in symbols which man moulds as he pleases, and into which he projects his terrors and his desires, the symbols of the other are received from on high by man who, in contemplating them, discovers the secret of his own nobility. In concrete terms there is the pagan myth and the Christian mystery.¹²¹

For de Lubac the mystique engendered by myth is characterized by a "heady, feverish, ambiguous irrationality",¹²² while the mystique

¹¹⁹De Lubac, "L'idée chrétienne de l'homme....", p. 158.

¹²⁰De Lubac, L'éternel féminin, p. 24

¹²¹DHA, p. 47; [91].

¹²²Ibid.

engendered by mystery is a "chaste and sober rapture of the spirit".¹²³
 Interestingly enough, de Lubac links the mystique of both Nietzsche
 and Dostoevsky. He has profound respect for both these brilliant
 minds. He judges, furthermore, that their insight is based on an
 "immediate incontestable experience".¹²⁴ The similarity of the
 experience of the atheist and the believer, de Lubac thinks, is that
 "both are, as it were, projected outside time".¹²⁵

Nietzsche feels within himself the force
 which produces the universe, which is dis-
 covered untouched, unchanged, free and
 sovereign at every moment of universal
 Becoming.¹²⁶

As for Dostoevsky,

We don't know in what the ecstasy consisted.
 But it is not an ending. It is a dawn, a
 promise....The mysticism of the Brothers
Karamazov is the mysticism of the resurrection.
 It is eschatological. It is that of the
 Fourth Gospel but also that of the Apocalypse
What Dostoevsky yearns for is to abolish
 time.¹²⁷

The question de Lubac asks, both of Nietzsche and Dostoevsky is,
 "how did he know he was right"?¹²⁸ In the context of Marxism, but

¹²³Ibid.

¹²⁴Ibid., p. 218; [369] for Dostoevsky; de Lubac, "Nietzsche
 ystique", Affrontements mystiques (Paris: Ed. du Témoignage chrétien,
 1950), p. 76 for Nietzsche.

¹²⁵DHA, pp. 373-374; [221-222]; [372-373].

¹²⁶De Lubac, "Nietzsche mystique", p. 28.

¹²⁷DHA, p. 245; [411].

¹²⁸De Lubac, "L'idée chrétienne de l'homme....", p. 152;
 "Nietzsche mystique", p. 24.

addressing himself to the same problem of progress, de Lubac puts the question this way:

Mais enfin, dans quel livre éternel,
demanderons-nous simplement, les marxistes
ont-ils lu ce sens de l'histoire tel qu'ils
le déterminent avec assurance?...Mais d'où
leur vient l'idée du terme où, selon eux,
l'histoire s'achemine infailliblement?¹²⁹

Therefore, there is a criterion de Lubac demands which, in the last analysis, is not itself subjected to the vagaries of time and yet which has enough of a relationship to time so as to serve as the basis of arbitration and reconciliation between as distant and yet as close a synthesis as that thought by both Nietzsche and Dostoevsky. That criterion, of course, is, for de Lubac, the Biblical Revelation.

2. The Meaning of Progress

While de Lubac excludes, therefore, any notion of history as the evolution from less perfect to more perfect, he does seem to speak of progress in revelation.

From the first creation to the last end, through material opposition and the most serious opposition of created freedom, a divine plan is in operation, accomplishing its successive stages among which the Incarnation stands out as chief....For if the salvation offered by God is in fact the salvation of the human race, since this human race lives and develops in time, any account of this salvation will naturally take a historical form -- it will be the history of the penetration of humanity by Christ.¹³⁰

¹²⁹De Lubac, "L'idée chrétienne de l'homme....", p. 152.

¹³⁰De Lubac, Catholicism, trans. by Lancelot C. Sheppard (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1950), p. 79.

De Lubac, in our estimation, at least as far as the accord between the Old and New Testaments is concerned -- which becomes the historical question vis-à-vis revelation -- does not clearly face the question of history as progress insofar as that question was asked at its deepest by Nietzsche. On the one hand Circuitus illi jam explosi sunt.¹³¹ The whole has both "direction and significance".¹³² And yet, on the other hand, in unum sane finem putamus quod bonitas Dei per Christum suum universam revocet creaturam.¹³³ For de Lubac, the idea of the progress of mankind in its entirety towards a determined end finds vigorous expression in the Hebrew world.¹³⁴ "A historical fact lies at the origin of Israel, their choosing by Jahweh, followed by an alliance, a compact, berit".¹³⁵ Thus, in one sense, there is no progress in the revelation of God to the Hebrews. And yet, de Lubac says, "the historical character of the religion of Israel can be understood in all its originality only through its consummation in the religion of Christ".¹³⁶ Is there, at first glance, some contradiction in what de Lubac says at one point and what he wishes to uphold at another? We think not.

For de Lubac the tradition of the West has always spoken

¹³¹Ibid., p. 80.

¹³²Ibid.

¹³³Ibid.

¹³⁴Ibid., p. 87.

¹³⁵Ibid., p. 89.

¹³⁶Ibid., p. 92.

of the stages of the history of salvation.¹³⁷ De Lubac thinks that the most traditional and the most dogmatic division of God's self-witness was made both by St. Paul and then by Augustine: "ante legem, - sub lege, - sub gratia, - in pace" or "natura, - lex, - gratia, patria".¹³⁸ The first two cover the period from Adam to Abraham and then Abraham to Jesus; the last two are not properly speaking historical but are to be understood as the time between the two comings of Christ.¹³⁹ The division made by St. Bonaventure, according to de Lubac, is particularly Catholic: "lex naturalis, lex scriptae, lex gratiae".¹⁴⁰ The division made by Rupert of Deutz in the 12th century is based on the Apostles' Creed and is, at base, Trinitarian: creation (the age of the Father), redemption (the age of the Son), sanctification (the age of the Spirit).¹⁴¹

Le premier âge comprend alors le temps d'avant la chute...le deuxième commence après la chute...quant au troisième, il coïncide avec l'histoire de l'Église...il dure depuis la Pentecôte jusqu'à la fin des temps: c'est l'âge de l'Esprit du Christ.¹⁴²

It is the first theological period or stage that attracts our attention here, to the end that we might understand what, for de Lubac, is the relationship between Creation and the Alliance. What does it mean to say that the "Word of God is creative", or that "God

¹³⁷ DV, pp. 197-199.

¹³⁸ Ibid., p. 198.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 198, n. 9.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p. 199.

¹⁴² Ibid.

creates everything by His Word", or -- as Barth asks the question -- "What does it mean to say Jesus is Lord of all things"?¹⁴³ De Lubac suggests that an answer to the question has been given by the thesis of Teilhard de Chardin.¹⁴⁴ Teilhard speaks of creation, according to de Lubac, not as something over with, but as a permanent relation between God and the world.

L'idée d'une création 'continue' permet, sans l'imposer, de concevoir un univers en évolution, progressant dans l'être et franchissant successivement des 'seuils', des 'paliers ontologiques' pour 'accéder à des zones supérieures'.¹⁴⁵

De Lubac makes no comment, at least not a direct one, on this way of speaking and thinking. It would seem that by his rather cryptic reference to such a scheme, as well as by his lengthy development of another way of thinking creation, he either does not understand Teilhard or else finds his language and thought here, as well as in other places, excessive.¹⁴⁶

The Christological interpretation of creation is, therefore, an acceptable way, as far as de Lubac is concerned, for reading

¹⁴³ Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, Vol. I, Pt. 2, p.

¹⁴⁴ DV, p. 200, note 4.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 200.

¹⁴⁶ De Lubac, La pensée religieuse du Père Teilhard de Chardin (Paris: Aubier, 1962), pp. 16-17. Speaking to the question of Teilhard's scientific thought, de Lubac makes the following laconic remark:

Nous ne pouvons nous flatter d'être compté parmi les disciples du Père Teilhard. Nous n'avons jamais entrepris, comme lui, de recherches personnelles dans le domaine des sciences positives. Notre intérêt s'est tourné presque exclusivement, avec celui de

certain Biblical texts. Jn. 1,3: "Omnia per ipsum (verbum) facta sunt, et sine ipso factum est nihil..."; Col. 1,16-17: "In ipso condita sunt universa..., omnia per ipsum et in ipso creata sunt... et omnia in ipso constat"; I Col. 8,6: "Unus Dominus Jesus Christus, per quem omnia et nos per ipsum"; Rm. 11,36: "Ex ipso et per ipsum et in ipso sunt omnia"; He. 1,2: "Locutus est nobis in Filio...per quem fecit et saecula".¹⁴⁷ Even where this is a rather narrow exegesis of the Biblical text, de Lubac judges, nonetheless, that the Verbum Dei, the Parole de Dieu, is the "principle of everything".¹⁴⁸

C'est 'une réalité dynamique, une force en action, qui crée toutes choses' et qui 's'y manifeste comme vie et lumière', -- en attendant de 'se faire chair parmi nous', ainsi que dira saint Jean dans son Prologue.¹⁴⁹

De Lubac, taking the exegesis of the Parole de Dieu and the Sagesse de Dieu given by Origen as well as by modern exegetes, identifies both with Christ. Furthermore, de Lubac, quoting J. Starcky, remarks that St. John, as well as Philo, understood for logos the 'wisdom' of the Old Testament and the 'Word' of the New Testament.¹⁵⁰ Thus

bien d'autres, vers le passé chrétien,...Aussi nous est-il arrivé plus d'une fois de poser au Père Teilhard, oralement ou par écrit, des questions qui, adressées à plus jeune ou moins grand que lui, se fussent appelées objections, et les réponses reçues, souvent éclairantes, n'étaient pas toujours de nature à décourager toute instance.

¹⁴⁷DV, p. 201.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., p. 202.

¹⁴⁹Quoted by de Lubac, ibid., p. 202.

¹⁵⁰Ibid., p. 203, note 18.

"Creative Word" means the witness of God in creation. This cosmic or natural revelation precedes Abraham in time but not in being known. Yet, the theology of the creation and the redemption are not to be separated, according to de Lubac. It is the Christ, associated with both the first creation and the new cosmos, who is the final end of all.¹⁵¹

Thus de Lubac recalls that creation and redemption are intimately linked insofar as creation is known as the first stage of the redemptive work. Eschatology, he says, is expressed in the 'protology'.¹⁵² Creation is the first article of the faith and in the Christian tradition Christ appears as the 'explanation of the universe, the meaning given to creation'.¹⁵³ It is clear, in our judgment, that de Lubac, in reflecting upon the stages of the history of man thinks that the Alliance precedes Creation. That is to say, the very link between the two is based upon the later fact, i.e., upon Christ as interpreter or, as de Lubac recalls elsewhere, the "exegete" of the Biblical account of God's self-witness.¹⁵⁴

There are three paragraphs in Dei Verbum which we include in our text at this point so as to clarify further de Lubac's commentary as well as to point out how the theology of Vatican II corresponds to what de Lubac had thought and written as early as 1959.

¹⁵¹Ibid., p. 204.

¹⁵²Ibid.

¹⁵³Ibid.

¹⁵⁴Ibid., p. 162.

God, who through the Word creates all things and keeps them in existence, gives man an enduring witness to himself in created realities. Planning to make known the way of heavenly salvation, he went further and from the start manifested himself to our first parents.

Then after their fall, his promise of redemption aroused in them the hope of being saved, and from that time on he ceaselessly kept the human race in his care, to give eternal life to those who perseveringly do good in search of salvation.

Then, at the time he had appointed, he called Abraham in order to make of him a great nation. Through the patriarchs, and after them through Moses and the prophets, he taught this people to acknowledge himself the one living and true God, provident Father and just judge, and to wait for the Savior promised by him, and in this manner prepared the way for the gospel down through the centuries.¹⁵⁵

In de Lubac's judgment the mode and clarity of God's self-witness to our first parents is unknown. Man is always called by God to freely answer His call.¹⁵⁶ This does not mean, de Lubac reminds the reader, that the modern theory of evolution, which refuses to admit a perfect revelation at the beginning of humanity, is anyway to be admitted or reinforced.¹⁵⁷ "Those who perseveringly do good", those who "search for salvation" reminds de Lubac of what Paul calls the "law written in their hearts" and their "conscience".¹⁵⁸ We

¹⁵⁵ Dogmatic Constitution "Dei Verbum", Official Latin text, paragraphs 5, 6, 7, Chapter I, section 2.

¹⁵⁶ DV, p. 206.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

shall have more to say to this point when we speak of the Church and de Lubac's frequent appropriation of what he says is the Fathers' of the Church doctrine of "anonymous Christianity". Here we wish to distinguish the natural or cosmic revelation as the first stage Christianity would fulfill. Certainly, de Lubac does not make the distinction nor see the development as he suggests Matthew Tindal, the English Deist, in his work, Christianity as Old as the Creation, or the Gospel a Republication of the Religion of Nature, sees it.¹⁵⁹ For de Lubac the cosmic revelation was indeed a supernatural revelation. That is to say, the recognition of creation only happens on the basis of the Alliance. As far as the race of men before the Alliance, de Lubac thinks, along with Newman, that the "voice of conscience" was their infallible guide.¹⁶⁰ "Si le Christ, demandait Porphyre, si proclame la voie du salut, la grâce, la vérité, qu'en est-il des hommes de tant de siècles, qui ont précédé le Christ"?¹⁶¹ De Lubac answers with Augustine's judgment that all of those who live piously and justly, whatever their epoch, have been saved.¹⁶² The relationship of the universe as created to the universe as redeemed is made, by de Lubac, on the basis of Christ as Word and Wisdom of God. It is a relationship which is known on the basis of the New Testament Revelation, of course. De Lubac thus carries further the

¹⁵⁹Ibid., p. 210.

¹⁶⁰Ibid., p. 211.

¹⁶¹Ibid.

¹⁶²Quoted by de Lubac, ibid.

Christocentrism he affirmed as the concrete object of the Biblical Revelation. Precisely how the relationship exists is difficult to know if one has as a presupposition the stages of revelation as somehow constitutive of God's self-witness. If, on the other hand -- and we claim de Lubac holds this to be true -- the self-witness of God is not an evolutionary event of history anymore than God is a personage of history,¹⁶³ then the complete revelation was made ab initio. That is to say, the Word of God was spoken once and for all, but humanity came to know this Word in time. One mode of the Word was the Christ. Certainly, for de Lubac, this mode of God's self-witness was unique. What 'unique' means, of course, is matter for a treatise De Verbo Incarnato, and de Lubac has not given us such a treatise. Even though he often insists upon the privileged position of the Christ as revelatory of God, he still insists that 'behind' the revelation is the mystery.

The question of progress in revelation, the question of history, becomes even more difficult in the rapport between the Old and New Testaments. Biblical Revelation is one. Generally the attitude has been, at least among Roman Catholics, that the law gave way to the spirit. In fulfilling the Old, a new 'stage' had arrived. A superior revelation followed an inferior one. Now men knew all there was to know about God for He showed Himself gradually. De Lubac does not accept this evolutionary character of revelation, not

¹⁶³Cf. Henri de Lubac, The Eternal Feminine, trans. by Rene Hague (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), pp. 151-152.

only in reference to what we have discussed but also in reference to the Old and New Testaments. In fact, de Lubac finds that 'Old' and 'New' are inappropriate qualifications of God's self-witness in history as recorded in the Scriptures.

If we do hold that the New Testament is the successor of the Old then how can we avoid the possibility of a Testament that would be the successor of the New?¹⁶⁴ That, it seems to us, is what de Lubac wishes to avoid. He wishes to maintain that there is one revelation of God in time and that revelation is what has come to be called Biblical Religion. Furthermore, it is de Lubac's way of thinking the relationship between Old and New Testaments, not so much as they are witnessed in words but as they are event realities, i.e., historical, that takes us outside of history.¹⁶⁵ Simply the way one understands the Alliance as it has been made historically determines whether or not one will be irrevocably tied to history or able to escape it. The analysis which de Lubac makes, we should add, is in the context of the spiritual understanding of the Bible. The distinction between 'letter' and 'spirit' is a careful and thorough distinction in the writings of de Lubac. We will speak to that distinction here and, because the distinction is made on the basis of a response to revelation, i.e., faith, we will speak to the consideration of spiritual understanding in the next

¹⁶⁴De Lubac, Exégèse médiévale, Vol. I, Part I, p. 352.

¹⁶⁵Ibid.

chapter of our thesis as well.

On the one hand, de Lubac maintains that, for the Christian, there cannot be two books, two successive Testaments.¹⁶⁶ But rather there are two Covenants established by God. The first prepares for the second. The second, however, is absolute and final. "Il est définitif, éternel...toujours nouveau...renouvelant tout".¹⁶⁷ On the other hand, he thinks that the exegesis of Karl Barth, Roland de Pury and Wilhelm Visher goes too far by refusing to see in any notion of progressive revelation anything but a 'vestige of humanism, of that incorrigible humanism which, from Erasmus's day down to our own, has never stopped blowing on theology'.¹⁶⁸ In de Lubac's mind, and he refers to Jean Levee on the point, it would be a grave error to place all the affirmations of the Bible on the same religious level simply because they are all the 'word of God'.¹⁶⁹

In reference to the Testaments, he says:

Le second sort du premier, sans le renier.
Il ne le détruit pas: en l'accomplissant,
il le vivifie et le renouvelle. Il le
transfigure. Il le fait passer en lui.¹⁷⁰
D'un mot, il change sa lettre en esprit.

There is only one revelation which, from the point of view of the whole revelation, has a coherence and a unity which it would not have

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 309.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ De Lubac, Histoire et Esprit, p. 105.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., p.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

had at any prior moment. Karl Rahner, by de Lubac's own admission, makes some "judicious remarks" in this regard.

In spite of its character as event, its variety and multiplicity, God's historical activity in the world has as a whole an inner connexion, an inner teleology, so that any act in this saving history only becomes comprehensible and meaningful as an element in the whole. Comprehensible and meaningful, of course, not in the sense that we could on our own construct the whole from a part by some sort of physical or biological extrapolation; but it is meaningful and united just in that sense in which the manifold, changing behaviour of a free spiritual person is a single significant unity.¹⁷¹

The "ambiguous relationship" between Old Testament and New Testament does not arise, furthermore, on the basis of an intellectual development -- nor on the basis of time.

Elle ne s'étale pas non plus dans la durée: elle survient d'un coup. Ce n'est point une progression par étapes: quoique préparé, c'est enfin un brusque passage, c'est un transfert global, c'est un changement de registre, par quoi tout prend un autre sens.¹⁷²

The reference to "illumination" being the factor of discrimination is, in our judgment, crucial as far as de Lubac is concerned. Discerning the "whole", the "unity" of God's self-witness in time, comes back, once again, to that Augustinian spirit so characteristic of de Lubac's

¹⁷¹Karl Rahner, Theological Investigations, Vol. I, p. 87.

¹⁷²De Lubac, Exégèse médiévale, Vol. I, Part I, pp. 310-311.

thought. In another context, but apposite to the point at hand, de Lubac compares spiritual understanding (the grasp of the whole) to mysticism. Like mysticism, spiritual understanding depends on an illumination which can only be given from above. "Elle est plus reçue que conquise ou trouvée".¹⁷³ In other words, there is no 'scientific' or 'critical' basis upon which one can rely so as to ground what de Lubac sees to be the unity of the Biblical Revelation.

La 'vraie science' des Écritures, au sens ancien de ce mot, ne dépend pas toute de la 'science', au sens moderne et précisif, même si elle en profite largement.¹⁷⁴

De Lubac does not mean to disregard the work of critical Biblical scholars who, through their typology called the sensus plenior, bring a certain kind of unity to the written words of Scripture.¹⁷⁵ Nor, on the other hand, does he fail to grasp the inadequacies of the patristic and medieval syntheses. We may have to surpass or to correct the ancient exegesis but we can never set it aside, at least as far as de Lubac is concerned.¹⁷⁶ Whether the problem which confronts the reader be the unity of the Testaments or the exegesis of a particular 'event', we cannot, according to de Lubac, attain to the whole of the spiritual meaning by a purely human science, by defined methods, those of religious history, adapted to the 'grounding

¹⁷³Ibid., p. 360.

¹⁷⁴Ibid., p. 359.

¹⁷⁵Ibid., pp. 356-357.

¹⁷⁶Ibid., p. 361.

of proofs'.¹⁷⁷ "Pour échapper à l'illuminisme, ne versons pas dans le scientisme".¹⁷⁸ In short, and this is a point we will have reason to investigate later, a philosophical or theological distance from the Biblical words can never arrive at what de Lubac judges to be the essential modus operandi scripturae.

Mais il n'est pas inscrit en Dieu que le plus savant sera forcément le plus croyant, ni le plus spirituel; ni que le siècle qui verra se réaliser les meilleurs progrès de l'exégèse scientifique sera, par le fait même, le siècle qui comprendra le mieux la Sainte Écriture.¹⁷⁹

Thus the "ambiguity" de Lubac refers to in the relationship of Testaments exists on the level of 'word' or 'event'. The "ambiguity" is resolved when word-and-event, through the illumination that is revelation received, are joined in spiritual understanding. A change of key which gives a different meaning to everything comes about through the confessional attitude of reverence, or faith.¹⁸⁰ The "passage" is really a mutation.¹⁸¹ The "mutation" is a new "insight". De Lubac uses the analogy "un enracinement de la typologie dans l'Ancien Testament lui-même".¹⁸² By this he means that there is a growing interiorization of the Biblical Religion on the part of

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 362.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 310.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., p. 311.

¹⁸² Ibid., p. 313; cf. also Farrar, The Glass of Vision (London: Dacre Press, 1948).

the prophets who announce a purer and more interior religion as they refer back to the experiences and traditions of their ancestors, "en réemployant et réinterprétant les textes anciens à la lumière d'événements récents ou de situations nouvelles".¹⁸³ It is out of this searching that definitive Biblical Religion emerged.¹⁸⁴

As far as the patristic and medieval writers are concerned, de Lubac thinks that their task was essentially analogous to that of the prophets. They brought an interiorization of the gesta verbaque in the light of the one and only kairos, i.e., Jesus Christ.¹⁸⁵ The whole Biblical event, then, became 'new' through the "evangelical innovation". Thus, for de Lubac, the "mutation" or "change of key" was not simply just another degree higher in the ascent which was still to be pursued.¹⁸⁶ The "metamorphoses", for de Lubac, avoided the character of being continually created. "In point of fact the reality even of secular history does not consist solely in the density of a concrete and progressive time".¹⁸⁷

By insisting on the "radical breach" between the Testaments de Lubac avoids the logical conclusion that would otherwise follow from the premises of continuousness. What is at issue is the

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 316.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 318.

¹⁸⁷ This is Luke O'Neill's comment as translator of L'Écriture dans la Tradition. Cf. Henri de Lubac, The Sources of Revelation, trans. by Luke O'Neill (New York: Herder and Herder, 1968), p. 100.

"realities of the dual Testaments", not the books of the Bible.¹⁸⁸

These realities are related insofar as there is one saving act.

Apart from the saving act, grasped in its completeness, the realities of the dual Testaments are only in juxtaposition, not in harmony.

Karl Rahner speaks to the function of saving act in this way.

There is one saving act: the single inner unity of Incarnation, Cross and Resurrection. All the earlier saving acts are intrinsically directed to Christianity as their end, and every revealed Word which enters into composition with them and accompanies them thus has intrinsic reference to the definitive and unsurpassable Revelation of God in Christ. And so Augustine's statement is really true, that the New Testament is already present concealed in the Old....[T]his presence is of course prophetic, that is, the Word of the Old Testament already possesses in actual fact an inner orientation to God's definitive Word in and through Christ.¹⁸⁹

But the "inner orientation" to which Rahner refers is always known post factum, not as some conclusion or as something "de pure technique ou de pure intellectualité" rather as the prophetic insight to which we have referred.¹⁹⁰ Nor is the "inner orientation" to be conceived as a stage in the making known of God's wisdom.

Ce qui est ancien est passé, tout est devenu nouveau. La lettre cède, l'Esprit l'emporte; les ombres s'effacent, la Verité fait son entrée.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁸ De Lubac, Exégèse médiévale, Vol. I, Part I, p. 318.

¹⁸⁹ Rahner, op. cit., p. 88.

¹⁹⁰ De Lubac, op. cit., pp. 358-359.

¹⁹¹ De Lubac quotes Gregory Nazianzus, Disc. (December 25th, 379), C. 2 (PG: 6.26, 313A).

On our part we make the following observation regarding de Lubac's analysis. What de Lubac tries to reconcile is what has come to be known historically as two Testaments, and what has come to be described in essentialist terms, i.e., as some thing, completed, added on to, fulfilled.¹⁹² On the one hand, de Lubac does not "ignore the progress of revelation". On the other hand, he thinks progress cannot escape the relativism inherent in history. The "new key" for de Lubac is, of course, in the last analysis, the divine affirmation of Jesus Christ, which affirmation is outside of history, although subjected to history. "It assumes the occurrence of a spiritual revolution", says de Lubac of the Christian's approach to the Biblical witness, "and it results from a dialectical movement in which symbols are reversed".¹⁹³ De Lubac thus prefers the concept "dialectics" to that of "progress" to express the relationship between Testaments. "Dialectics" supposes that one has the content which is somehow inter-related, i.e., in opposition and yet in synthesis. Here is how de Lubac says it:

Le Temps, sous l'action divine, a d'abord
fait son œuvre. Mais au Jour décisif, le

¹⁹² Ibid., Vol. III, Part 1, p. 144. "L'intelligence chrétienne de Écritures ne tient pas seulement compte d'une évolution historique; elle ne provient pas non plus d'une simple changement de perspective intellectuelle. Elle suppose l'accomplissement d'une révolution spirituelle et elle résulte d'un mouvement dialectique par quoi des signes sont inversés".

¹⁹³ Ibid.

grain ne s'est pas détaché tout seul de son enveloppe; la pure essence de la victime ne s'est pas dégagée sans le fer du sacrificateur pas davantage le fidèle n'est devenu infidèle et le religieux, superstitieux, par le seul effet du temps ou de la réflexion. Tout est changé, tout est renouvelé, quia ille Homo novus venit. Dans un kairos unique, l'Acte du Christ a produit le passage. Il a tracé la ligne de partage du temps. Il a séparé, il a réuni. La Croix du Christ, de sa double barre, a changé les signes. Tel est, si l'on peut dire, le pivot de la dialectique chrétienne.¹⁹⁴

Thus, Jesus Christ is the basis for de Lubac's understanding of the Testaments. Jesus Christ is the "exegetis as well as the exegete" of the Bible. Rather than the Bible being orientated to Him, or progressing to Him, de Lubac thinks that He is intrinsic to it and penetrates it in all its parts.¹⁹⁵ Actually, apart from Jesus Christ the Book of the Bible is empty and sterile. "Le Livre demeure donc, mais en même temps il passe tout entier dans Jésus, et sa méditation par le croyant consiste à contempler ce passage".¹⁹⁶ It is clear, therefore, that for de Lubac, Christianity is not a religion of the Books of the Bible, nor is it a religion of history insofar as historical events are 'read' in a particular way. It is, at base, religion of the Word who is Jesus Christ -- "non d'un verbe écrit et muet, mais d'un Verbe incarné et vivant".¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 146.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 152.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 196.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

The problem of history, therefore, insofar as it has become a problem because of the events which are historical and recorded in the Bible, and insofar as New Testament follows Old Testament in point of time, is, for de Lubac, in the light of what we understand him to be saying, a pseudo-problem. De Lubac's emphasis, which emphasis he has retained and restored through his devotion to and acceptance of the way the Patristic and medieval exegetes viewed the Bible, is one of novelty rather than integration. De Lubac, and he insists his way is the ancient and medieval way, places more concentration and more determination on the newness of the content of the New Testament, i.e., Christ, than he does on the way the New Testament follows the Old Testament. Biblical Religion is one for de Lubac and that oneness arises not from progress that is assembling and integrating but rather from one decisive moment in time which is also a moment outside of time. The Biblical writings are the "charter" for what has already been confessed in faith. There is a "before" in the readings of the Bible, or as de Lubac also says, a "perspective d'ensemble".¹⁹⁸

La substance du Nouveau Testament, c'est Le Mystère du Christ. Or cet Mystère est tout d'abord un grand Fait: c'est ce qu'on peut appeler, pour faire court, le Fait rédempteur, ou le Fait du Christ. C'est le Fait de son incarnation....Il est aussi le Fait de l'Église, qui n'est pas séparable du Christc'est le Fait mystérieux.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁸Ibid., Vol. IV, Part II, p. 109.

¹⁹⁹Ibid., p. 111.

As "Fact" it is Historia and therefore foundational. But it differs from all other facts which are Historia to the extent that it is "active", "efficacious", and "assimilating", while they are "figures". The difference is that the former is reality while the latter yields to reality.²⁰⁰

Le Mystère du Christ, dans l'Acte sauveur
qui le constitue en son principe, demeure
toujours actuel, englobant toujours à
mesure tout ce dont il est la source
'Jesus Christus heri, hodie, ipse et in
saecula'.²⁰¹

De Lubac presents this solution in the context of the literal versus the allegorical meaning of the Scriptures, or, as he says, the "literal meaning" versus the "spiritual meaning". We have suggested here that this distinction of "literal meaning" and "spiritual meaning" is part of the solution to the question of the historical meaning of the Biblical Revelation.

The other part of the solution, to which we shall also turn in the following chapter, is the Church. In other words, in one sense, it is the extension of Christ through believers which insures that there is a correlation between what the Bible means and the Mystery of Christ. Apart from the Mystery of Christ as both illuminating and the illumination of believers there is no reason to read the Bible, at least no reason de Lubac judges adequate and true.

²⁰⁰Ibid., p. 113.

²⁰¹Ibid.

3. Summary

In summary, we would underline the following aspects of revelation and history in the writings of Henri de Lubac.

(1) The Christian Revelation is God manifested to men in the person of Jesus Christ. He is God with us, among us, for us. He is the full and definitive revelation; all other revelation is measured by His.

(2) We cannot understand the Christ as revelation except insofar as He presents Himself as the accomplishment of the divine promises of the Old Testament. The absolute novelty which He is, is situated in the 'line' of something which prepares for Him, announces Him and prefigures Him. He defines Himself by rapport to the anterior "figure" which He accomplishes in surpassing.

(3) According to the witness of the Bible, the revelation of God is made in history. The Biblical writers have understood that there is a general revelation of God in the universe: a natural or cosmic revelation. But the idea of Alliance precedes that of creation. The consciousness of God's self-revelation in creation is later. The idea of Alliance which allows creation to be thought is the self-revelation of God to Israel.

(4) This historical revelation is distinguished from revelation as understood in mythic religions. Myth recalls an event, but this event takes place in mythic time, at an extra-temporal instant. The revelation of the Bible takes place in real time, i.e., in historical duration.²⁰²

²⁰²M. Eliade has shown this to be so throughout his vast literary corpus.

(5) The Biblical idea of historical revelation includes the idea that there is one history of revelation: God did not say or do everything at one time. By means of events, a progressive revelation prepared for that of the New Testament which was definitive.

(6) The progressive movement is only affirmed on the basis of the term which distinguishes the true meaning of what preceded it. The term is Jesus Christ.

(7) The event appears as revelation only accompanied by the word which interprets it.

(8) What we call the Word of God is at one and the same time an historical act and language. That is to say, the verba gestaue are reciprocal. Revelation is not simply the communication of ideas but the manifestation of God in the determined historical realities, which interpret the prophetic and apostolic word.

(9) Revelation is partly understood as the illumination of the mind. That is to say, by one and the same act God makes Himself known and saves men. One may say it this way: apart from knowledge of Jesus Christ Jesus Christ is true, but apart from faith in Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ is not true.

(10) The Christocentrism of de Lubac permits him to resolve the problem of the relativity of revelation insofar as revelation is historical and relativism is inherent in history. This is so because God's affirmation of Jesus Christ is outside of time. The future is, in this pivotal sense, present.

(11) The Books of the Bible are of time and therefore subject to the vicissitudes of time. Biblical religion, however, is not

of time and therefore escapes those vicissitudes. (This is not to say, we are quick to add, that de Lubac eliminates suffering from religion. Here we are speaking theoretically, and to one particular aspect of what is at its deepest, the profound mystery of God and man, and man and God.)

(12) God does not show Himself face to face. His Word, whether the Parole de Dieu or the Verbe de Dieu, is always mediated. He veils Himself in unveiling Himself.

4. Conclusion

Two ideas have been introduced in this Chapter: (1) God, mediated by Jesus Christ, is the object of revelation, and (2) this mediation was made in history and therefore while subject to history is above history. At first, these ideas seem minor. Henri de Lubac, however, influenced the theological world of France and Roman Catholicism by articulating these ideas. What follows gives some indication of why that was so.

August Brunner's book Geschichtlichkeit begins with the sentence "Die Geschichtsphilosophie ist ein Kind des 18. Jahrhunderts".²⁰³ What was merely childlike or maturing in the eighteenth century developed in the nineteenth century and especially in the twentieth. Brunner continues:

Das geschichtliche Sein ist nicht nur ein wichtiger, sondern für den Menschen der wichtigste Bereich der Wirklichkeit. Dies

²⁰³ August Brunner, Geschichtlichkeit (Berlin: Franck Verlag, 1961), p. 1.

ist in den letzten Jahrhunderten immer klarer hervorgetreten. Der Unterschied zwischen dem naturhaften und dem geschichtlichen Sein, der lange so gut wie unbeachtet geblieben war, erschien in seiner ganzen Bedeutung. Zugleich wurde der Bereich des Geschichtlichen umfassender, als man zuvor gemeint hatte.²⁰⁴

This is corroborated by Alfred Stern. In his book, Philosophy of History and the Problem of Values, Stern devotes the first chapter to "The New Historical Sense" which he develops more at length in Chapter Two as "Historical Reality".²⁰⁵ John Lukas, in his book Historical Consciousness or the Remembered Past, speaks in Chapter One of our historical condition and in Chapter Two of the new texture of history.²⁰⁶ He quotes often and with great favour the words of the Dutch historian, Johan Huizinga: "Historical thinking has entered our very blood".

John T. Marcus, in his book Heaven, Hell and History, a survey of man's faith in history from antiquity to the present, discusses the historical crisis of our time.²⁰⁷

At the heart of this crisis of values lies a crucial problem of ideology and psychology: the repudiation of all sense of order and

²⁰⁴ Ibid., pp. 5-6.

²⁰⁵ Alfred Stern, Philosophy of History and the Problem of Values (Gravenhage: Mouton and Co., 1962), pp. 17-38.

²⁰⁶ John Lukas, Historical Consciousness or the Remembered Past (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), pp.

²⁰⁷ John T. Marcus, Heaven, Hell and History (New York: Macmillan, 1967).

meaning in human experience. The course of civilization is seen as an incoherent sequence of events, or as a relentless movement of superhuman forces against which the individual and humanity itself are helpless. In its intellectualized expression, this anxiety has manifested itself in repeated proclamations of the ultimate purposelessness of man's existential condition in history, i.e., that there exists no redemption from man's meaningless role as an historical being. The denial of a meaningful continuum in history has fostered the sense of void. Individual life appears futile in the larger context of man's lack of destiny. This loss of the sense of an historical objective seems to deprive human experience of its moral raison d'être. Indeed when history as a whole seems futile, the notion of coherent purpose in the individual is shattered, and each event seems an isolated, purposeless phenomenon in the abyss of time.²⁰⁸

Untranscendability and the finality of death -- these were the recurrent themes of early twentieth century thought. They brought to full flower what the nineteenth century -- the greatest of all centuries, according to Leo Strauss -- had sown.

Darwin left us a view of the untranscendability of the human condition. It is true that Darwin and evolutionism generally led themselves to the notion of progress, and at the level of evolution of biological efficiency this can hardly be doubted, but they undermined the purpose of progress in man's search for release from the present human condition. As long as Darwin's concept of cumulative adaptation to the environment left open the possibility of inheriting culturally acquired characteristics, there was still some purpose in

²⁰⁸Ibid., p. xiv.

man's cultivation of human behaviour.

Add to this that with the development of modern physics we have a situation of relativism and indeterminacy. In Thomas Mann's Doctor Faustus -- written at a time when the German army was over-running Belgium during the First World War -- we read that there is only this one problem in the world.²⁰⁹ But how does one break through? How does one get into the open? How does one burst the cocoon and become a butterfly? The whole situation is dominated by this question. The revolution in physics, which began in the late nineteenth century, reached a climax in the works of Planck and Einstein, during the first decade of this century. Its main consequences were new concepts of the atom and its nuclear structure and of the nature of mass and energy. The results of quantum mechanics and relativity were translated into metaphysical concepts, summed up in the notion that relativism and scientific indeterminacy are the inherent and irremediable conditions of man's knowledge of the physical world. Indeterminacy, probability, relativity, gained new status as the scientifically respectable mode of thought.

Indications of this relativism, indeterminacy, etc., could go on and on. In T. S. Elliot we read the description of man floundering in a wasteland of meaninglessness. In Kafka we confront man's nightmare of delusion vis-à-vis reality. In Brecht we see the basic inhumanity of man. In O'Neill's The Iceman Cometh we see our self-delusions as the only prop to exist in a goalless world. In

²⁰⁹ Thomas Mann, Doctor Faustus, trans. by H. T. Lowe-Porter (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948), p. 452; 480.

Günther Grass's The Tin Drum we catch a glimpse of a stunted Germany. Huxley, Orwell and Wells have all added to this detranscendentalization of history.

Henri de Lubac, acquainted with the philosophical and literary streams of thought, sought to reverse that theological direction which had appropriated untranscendability and the finality of death. He stressed transcendence over against history. He knew that a theology which ignored the question of history, which had become hardened, could not bear the weight of the human questioning. As a spokesman for the nouvelle théologie he addressed the question of person and history so as to preserve what he knew to be true and, at the same time, allow for the new questions that were being asked. This was one of de Lubac's major contributions to twentieth century theologizing. He took seriously the meaning of mystery, the meaning of person, and the meaning of history. It seems clear that de Lubac did not develop these ideas with any system or rigour. By re-introducing them, however, as theological categories, he did provide a platform for what would later be called Vatican II theology. That is not meant to say that what is deficient and erroneous in Vatican II theology should be charged to de Lubac. His reflection, in our judgment, was balanced and sane, though incomplete.

Against the development of science and technology which asked the meaning of revelation in the light of the truth established by reason, de Lubac stressed revelation's irreducibility.

Against sceptics like Bayle, free-thinkers like Collins, deists like Woolston and Reimarus, who looked at the Bible in the same

way one might look at Cicero, Virgil or Shakespeare, de Lubac stressed Sacred Scripture's sacred history genre.

Against the historical assumptions of Nietzsche, and the progressivist optimism of Hegel, de Lubac stressed the absoluteness of the Creator's "stepping out of mystery".

Against those in his own Roman tradition like Garrigou-Lagrange who insisted that Aquinas, and the commentators on Aquinas, had special unalterable insight into the human and the divine, de Lubac recalled the authority of Augustine, the status of Alexandria, and the mysticism of Bonaventure.

In our judgment, the ideas of God's revelation in the person of Jesus, and the historical nature of that revelation, are not insignificant. Henri de Lubac spoke to these issues with precision because, in our judgment, he saw the category of person and relativity to be so crucial for his own time and the time we now live out.

Notre intérêt s'est tourné presque exclusivement, avec celui de bien d'autres vers le passé chrétien, pour en recueillir certaines richesses traditionnelles que notre époque, ²¹⁰ routinière ou fiévreuse, s'exposait à perdre.

²¹⁰ La pensée religieuse du Père Teilhard de Chardin,
p. 16.

CHAPTER TWO

FAITH AND REVELATION

1. Introduction

What we have attempted in Chapter One has been a systematic presentation of what Henri de Lubac considers to be the basis upon which his idea of man has its foundation. We have said little about the cultural and historical context of the writings we have relied upon. This for two reasons: one, de Lubac's understanding of the Biblical Revelation was recorded, in his early career, on the basis of his thinking through the spiritual understanding of the Bible. While the documentation is sparse, we think that the question of spiritual understanding partly arose, for de Lubac, because of the attack, so subtle because it was so sophisticated, made by the German exegetes through their historico-critical method.¹ Discussing this context for Histoire et Esprit and Exégèse médiévale would not have aided our project since what we had in mind was to put in place, as firmly as possible, the structural supports upon which our thesis could be raised. In other words, we wished to get to the heart of the matter so as to preclude later questions such as, "Is de Lubac a philosopher or a theologian?"; or "From where, the world or revelation, does de Lubac get his starting point?" In this way we

¹De Lubac often refers to the excess of German Biblical scholarship. Cf. Histoire et Esprit, op. cit., p. 15; Exégèse médiévale, Vol. I, Pt. I, p. 362; The Sources of Revelation, p. viii.

established the theological personality of de Lubac, so that in subsequent chapters, particularly the chapters of Part Two on nature and philosophy, we will be in a better position to discuss these topics as de Lubac has thought them.

The second reason, somewhat more technical but no less substantial, is that were we to have culturally focused de Lubac's thinking on revelation we would have run aground because of the theme itself which was not always tied to cultural or historical conditions for him. That is to say, we judged it more advantageous to treat the subject thematically because the publications are spread out over a long period of time. For example, Exégèse médiévale was begun in 1959 and completed in 1964, and de Lubac never wrote anything explicitly on the subject of revelation until 1970.

In preparing La pensée religieuse du Père Teilhard de Chardin, de Lubac remarks that he seeks to correct the misunderstandings that have accumulated around a number of Teilhard's teachings by allowing Teilhard to speak for himself, to give his own explanations and interpretations.² The pages which follow proceed with the same hope regarding de Lubac's teachings.

Reference Points in the Life of de Lubac

There are three central points of reference around which the publications of de Lubac may be grouped: the Occupation, the

²La pensée religieuse du Père Teilhard de Chardin, pp. 15-16.

publication of Humani Generis, and the Second Vatican Council. The first period is divided into two parts. The first part (1930-1941) extends from de Lubac's first publication "Apologétique et théologie" until the Occupation of France; the second (1941-1944) covers the time of Occupation. The second period is also divided into two parts: before Humani Generis (1945-1950) and after Humani Generis (1951-1955; 1956-1960). The third period is the contemporary moment which saw de Lubac a theological expert at the Second Vatican Council and witnessed his publications on the documents of Vatican II. This division seems appropriate based upon our reading of de Lubac's bibliography as well as the biographical data that is available through the public Archives of the Society of Jesus in Lyon.³

An analysis of the writings of each period leads us to draw the following conclusions. 1) Before the Occupation a number of theological themes were introduced which provided the material for the major work, Surnaturel. The article on "Catholicisme" and the one entitled "Le caractère du Dogme chrétien" provided the starting point for Catholicisme. Two articles of this period were directly conscious of the impending civil disaster. 2) During the Occupation de Lubac's published work was, on the one hand, sympathetic to Nietzsche and Proudhon, and, on the other hand, a summons to the

³The Tabulae relate the careers of the Jesuit Fathers and Brothers in rather matter-of-fact chronology. They are compiled by the Archivist and available upon request at Lyon-Fourviere.

French people to recognize and respond to their Christian heritage.⁴

The refutation of Nietzsche -- if refutation there be -- was not to show theoretically that Nietzsche was wrong but rather a summons to the French to 'remember' who they were and upon what basis they knew who they were. This period will provide us with another reflection on faith. 3) After the Occupation, and before Humani Generis, de Lubac launched out theologically to pursue those themes he had begun between 1930 and 1941. Paradoxes was written then. 4) After Humani Generis de Lubac wrote on non-Christian things and on the Church. His work on the Church includes, not an ecclesiology in any systematic form, but rather reverent reflections made in the light of his new situation. Nouveaux Paradoxes was published then. Both the topic of Church and the meaning of faith in Nouveaux Paradoxes will interest us. 5) In 1955 de Lubac returned to Lyon and began work, at the direction of his superiors, on Teilhard de Chardin's thought. 6) The period which began with the Second Vatican Council and which extends to the present day saw the publication of five major works. Two of them, on Augustine and the Mystery of the Supernatural, had their basis in the periods before the Occupation and before Humani Generis. The latter work will be significant for our study of faith. So too will be La foi chrétienne, the only full length reflection de Lubac wrote on faith. It will be this period

⁴Cf. "La vocation de la France", one of the twenty-nine pamphlets issued under the press Témoignage Chrétien, p. 1. The pamphlets were part of the French Résistance, therefore de Lubac's name did not appear on many of them.

over against which we can make judgments regarding development in the thought of de Lubac.

2. Faith

A. Before the Occupation (1930-1940)

The first article de Lubac ever wrote begins with a personal episode.⁵ He was preparing a young man of twenty years for baptism. The young man had studied the catechism de Lubac had given him and he found that it presented no intellectual difficulties. "For three years", he said, "I have meditated on Pascal". De Lubac remarks that contemplation and experience had fixed him in faith. He then goes on to say that it is the development of science, particularly the sciences of history, which coincide with the progress of unbelief.⁶ De Lubac seems to be saying that the "proof formulas" (structured after the Quinque Via) resemble too closely the method of scientific history. Their rational method tends to eliminate mystery and to reduce the affirmation of God to the conclusion of a syllogism.

De Lubac makes these remarks in the context of an apologetics which he judges has intellectualized the act of faith.⁷ The object of faith is not an object of science for de Lubac, and, therefore, when the object of faith is identified with dogmas con-

⁵Henri de Lubac, "Apologétique et théologie", NRT LVII (1930), p. 361.

⁶Ibid., p. 362.

⁷Ibid., p. 365.

ceived as "things in themselves", faith is reduced to an intellectual adhesion to truths.⁸ The object of faith is God Himself, made manifest in Jesus Christ. Our faith is essentially a 'gospel'; it is the good news brought by Jesus Christ. It is the truth in religious things, and in these things truth and life are one.⁹

How is faith achieved? For de Lubac, the doctrine of illumination once again gives him the answer. Faith is that light which illumines the mind and the will to see the beauty of the supernatural doctrine.¹⁰ And, as we have mentioned elsewhere in these pages, doctrine for de Lubac is the person of Jesus Christ. Thus, for de Lubac, an "interior call", which is neither subjective nor natural, is at the basis of faith. The "interior call" is the object of revelation made present, for the "interior call" is not apart from the object which summons it to response. Furthermore, there is a unity, for de Lubac, between truth and life. So that, to respond to the source of life -- which is the truth -- is to have faith. We take de Lubac to mean that the truth of man consists in his being "illuminated" to affirm what he is. Nor should we judge this "illumination" to remove all obscurity. Faith, de Lubac quotes John of the Cross as saying, brightens the darkneses of the soul; it does not eliminate all darkness.¹¹

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid., p. 368.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid., p. 377.

The writings of this period, generally, introduce a break with what had been, to that point, traditional Roman Catholic catechetics. De Lubac refuses to be caught by a theologizing which has a history no earlier than the Council of Trent. He is beginning to gather material for Surnaturel, so that his understanding of faith as an illumination more closely tied with creation than with history begins to take shape.

B. During the Occupation (1941-1944)

Again and again, during this period, de Lubac placed his spiritual resources at the service of the French Resistance movement. His pen flowed quickly and carefully, but nonetheless with theological depth, to produce over fifty articles which were widely circulated. Many of these articles were published by the Resistance press, but others passed through the Gestapo censors as publishable. This was particularly the case with all the articles which were later gathered together to form Le drame de l'humanisme athée. The theme of everything de Lubac wrote during this time was that both a social and a spiritual carnage was taking place in Europe that could not be solved except by a Europe united under the inspiration of its heritage. He calls Frenchmen to a recognition of their heritage. He reminds them that only Christianity gives meaning to European civilization, and that France herself -- "who has a genius for bearing children" -- should once again be the conscience of Europe.

¹²De Lubac, "La Vocation de la France", Témoignage Chrétien (Paris: Témoignage Chrétien, 1941), p. 3.

De Lubac, by this deeply moving plea for Frenchmen to unite, recalls that aspect of faith which is rooted in tradition which is handed down from generation to generation and which is nourished by community. He reminds Frenchmen that, in addition to the family and the fatherland, the church as a community of faith is essential for unity. "Faith is the community of persons gathered together in Christ for eternity".¹³ "The person today is being crushed by a system".¹⁴ De Lubac summons the French to a human revolution based upon charity which is "the first mystery of our faith".¹⁵

Two later articles, in substance similar to the preceding one because they had their roots there, have a more sweeping horizon. De Lubac sees the solution of faith as a unifying factor not only to be France's salvation, but also he sees the crisis of faith to be the suicide of contemporary man.¹⁶ "The religious fracture of our day is an essential fracture; it strikes at the root of human destiny".¹⁷ "Today faith is totally eclipsed. Europe was Christian. There were troubles in the past, to be sure, but never were they grave enough to wound totally her single conscience".¹⁸ De Lubac's insight is not altogether unlike that of Nietzsche, for he attributes

¹³Ibid., p. 4.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶De Lubac, "Explication Chrétienne de notre temps", Cité Nouvelle, II (18), 1941, p. 1.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid.

the cause of the malaise to be indifference. "There is more concern for the limits of the Christian life than for Christian virtue and the Christian spirit".¹⁹ Why de Lubac judges this to be the case is because faith recoils before movements of thought like Positivism and Scientism. He says that these movements exchange myth for mystery and metaphysics and, therefore, despoilate faith.²⁰ What de Lubac, at base, speaks out against here is the mortal blow such ideologies give to the person. On the one hand, we may say that de Lubac understands faith to be that collective awareness of where one has come from; on the other hand, faith is more than intellectual awareness. Mystery is an essential component, not only for the object of faith but also for the act of faith.

In the second article to which we referred as more sweeping in its horizon, de Lubac drives his literary fist into the growing menace of the Third Reich in Europe.²¹ The "New Front" to which he refers is that demand to choose between 'Europe' and 'Juda' as though one were to choose between Christianity and paganism.²² "Lors qu'on invite l'Européen moderne à rejeter 'le poison juif', ne soyons pas dupes de la formule: on ne réclamerien de moins que l'apostasie définitive de l'Europe".²³

Faith, therefore, is to be preferred to unbelief. It is a

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 2. ²² Ibid., p.20.
²³ Ibid., p. 21.

²¹ Henri de Lubac, "Un nouveau 'front' religieux", Israel et la foi chrétienne, ed. by. Chaine, Richard, Bonsirven, de Lubac (Fribourg: Libr. de l'Université, 1942), pp. 9-39.

dimension of man that cannot be set aside without disastrous consequences. We take de Lubac to mean that apostasy, the reverse of faith, is what happens when a political regime wants "everything in Caesar's hands".²⁴ There seems to be a meaning to religious faith, then, apart from faith in Jesus Christ. The act by which one believes can be understood, within certain limits, insofar as its object is God. In another writing from this period, de Lubac calls the age "barbarie réfléchie".²⁵

As soon as man ceases to be in contact with great mystical or religious forces, does he not inevitably come under the yoke of a harsher and blinder force, which leads him to perdition?²⁶

Contrasting Nietzsche and Kierkegaard, de Lubac chooses Kierkegaard as expressing his own sentiments.

To believe is neither to know nor to understand, still less, of course, is it simply to profess a doctrine. Mystery is not a rational system; faith is not a "starting-point for thought"; belief is not speculative; the real individual is face to face with a real God....²⁷

For de Lubac, the inspiration of Kierkegaard is set over against the intellectualism of Hegel.²⁸ Rightfully, de Lubac judges, does Kierkegaard stress fiducia, rather than notitia and assensus.²⁹

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ DHA, p. 46; [90].

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 54; [105].

²⁸ Ibid., p. 55; [106].

²⁹ Cf. Baillie, op.cit., p. 86.

Furthermore, he calls Kierkegaard's reclamation of faith from romantic sentimentalism and Hegelian intellectualism the saving of Christianity from both the "aesthetic illusion" and the "temptation of logic".³⁰ But de Lubac questions Kierkegaard.

But is he always quite clear as to what the philosopher is getting at? Does he do justice to his efforts, to the very ambition of reason? Does he recognize how much a "converted" Hegelianism could contribute -- like all human thought -- to an authentic "understanding through faith?" Has he even a dim idea of what such an understanding could be? After having extricated Christianity in its purity, does he not tend to relegate it to an inhuman solitude?...These are altogether different questions.³¹

Thus de Lubac, by virtue of his questions, gives an indication of that balance between faith and thought, or at least, that respect for thought, which is his own theological milieu and history. But let it be remarked that de Lubac respects and approves of Kierkegaard's main emphasis. "To judge faith solely according to the value of its rational 'preambles' would", de Lubac says, "be to place it on a naturalistic basis".³² De Lubac is concerned to save Kierkegaard from both Nietzsche and Heidegger, at least as far as their nihilism is concerned.³³ Nor, we think, does de Lubac's intent rest solely upon, although we believe it to be the context of this article, cultural expediency. For him, Kierkegaard's understanding

³⁰DHA, p. 57; [109].

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid., p. 58; [110].

³³Ibid.

of faith is "amply" and "richly expressed", even though it "retains a strongly Lutheran flavour".³⁴ Immediately following this de Lubac says, "The mere fact that he constantly uses the words 'paradox' and 'improbable' where we would say 'mystery' and 'marvellous' may serve to illustrate these observations".³⁵

Another clandestine publication during these years appears as the third chapter of part one of the 1945 edition of Le drame de l'humanisme athée. De Lubac wrote the article in 1943, during the Occupation and called it "Le combat spirituel".³⁶ As far as we can determine the two works are identical. Developmentally, the article is out of place in Le drame..., although we do see a certain organic positioning insofar as it is an effort to respond to Nietzsche. The article has far more significance when seen in a 1943 time frame. Basically, de Lubac continues the same summons to the French to recapture their heritage of faith. Not that they had lost faith, but rather the faith de Lubac has in mind is what the scholastics called fides formata, i.e., faith formed in charity, or what de Lubac later calls foi vécue.

"Virtue", "inward strength", have gone; the "sap has dried up".³⁷ Christian faith has become "humdrum, listless, sclerotic",

³⁴Ibid., pp. 58-59; [110-111].

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶De Lubac, "Le combat spirituel", Cité Nouvelle, II (65), 1943, pp. 769-783.

³⁷DHA, p. 70; [128].

formalistic and routine.³⁸ De Lubac, then, speaks of faith in the context of life. He uses such modifiers as "openness", "spiritual", "pure", "authentic", "heroic" in regards to faith. Faith is an act that is personally engaging and personally demanding. It is not an intellectual flight so much as a passionate stance. Fides salvifica is a faith that is heroic because it does not exist apart from charity.³⁹

Without losing consciousness of where we are in our analysis of faith, we ask, "Why did de Lubac write, when he did, of people like Nietzsche, Proudhon, Kierkegaard and Dostoevsky?" The spirit of Europe was being attacked by a psychology run wild. It would do no good to recall, as de Lubac would do later, the theology of the Fathers. In the presence of what de Lubac called the "spiritual and metaphysical crisis", a spiritual and metaphysical remedy was required.⁴⁰ And so he turned to Kierkegaard and to the novelist Dostoevsky to suggest an alternative to the prophetic voices of Nietzsche and Proudhon.

Yes, Dostoevsky was a prophet: because he not only revealed to man the depths that are in him but opened up fresh ones for him, giving him, as it were, a new dimension; because, in this way, he foreshadowed a new state of humanity (that is to say he heralded it by giving a preview of it); because in him the crisis of our modern world was concentrated into a spearhead and reduced to its quintessence;

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Ibid., p. 73; [133].

⁴⁰Ibid., p. viii; [8].

and because there is the vital adumbration of a solution there, a light-fringed cloud for our present journey through the wilderness.⁴¹

Without discussing de Lubac's analysis of Dostoevsky, which would require a thesis in itself, we wish to point out what de Lubac sees as characterizing the faith of Dostoevsky. In the first place, both Dostoevsky and Nietzsche protested against the "wall of evidence" and "two and two make four".⁴² For both of them "heroism is superior to any happiness whatsoever".⁴³ Yet heroism, like love, for Dostoevsky but not for Nietzsche, rested upon "faith in the immortality of the human soul".⁴⁴ De Lubac tells us that the same profound experience of God's death confronted both of them, yet Dostoevsky "decided against it".⁴⁵ Therefore, we may conclude that evidence is not involved in the assent of faith. In the second place, Dostoevsky's faith was marked by pro and contra.⁴⁶ This was especially true when he confronted the reality of death, particularly the death of Christ. The doctrine of the resurrection was no solace; it remained unbelievable. Dostoevsky rejected all "optimistic theology" which would eventually eliminate evil. And yet he believed to have

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 165-166; [286].

⁴²Ibid., p. 169; [292].

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 171; [296].

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 172; [297].

been delivered from evil. "Anyone whose chief desire is for reassurance will not take Dostoevsky as his confident".⁴⁷ And as Dostoevsky himself remarks: "Thus it is not like a child that I believe in Christ and confess Him. My hosanna has come forth from the crucible of doubt".⁴⁸ Therefore we may conclude that contradiction or, let us say, tension, is involved in the act of faith. In the third place, faith is arrived at through experience, through what we will call in "Chapter Four" when discussing philosophy: a closeness to the object. For Dostoevsky, de Lubac says, it took the form of closeness to Christ. Out of the experience of the Bible there arose Dostoevsky's profession of faith.⁴⁹ That experience may be defined further, de Lubac suggests, as the silence of listening. Quoting Berdyaev's reflection:

The Grand Inquisitor produces arguments, he is convincing: he is endowed with a potent logic and a strong will bent on carrying out a definite plan. But Christ's silence, His gentle refusal to speak, carry more persuasion and a more decisive influence than all the Grand Inquisitor's force of argument.⁵⁰

The conclusion of de Lubac's essay on Dostoevsky was not finished until 1943. It is the most sensitive part of what would later be the Drama of Atheist Humanism because it spoke to Dostoevsky's "experience of eternity" as another, and the central, element in

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 179; [308].

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 180; [309].

⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 182-183; [315-316].

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 186; [321].

believing.⁵¹ Dostoevsky was an epileptic. De Lubac suggests, along with other biographers, that epilepsy was somehow significant in Dostoevsky's experience.

It is impossible to blink the fact that, underlying his most inward thought and what one may venture to call his mysticism, there was that humble, that humiliating physical reality: the epileptic fit.⁵²

De Lubac suggests that it was this form of madness which brought time to an end for Dostoevsky so that he could lay hold of eternity.⁵³ There is a sense in which Emil Brunner's comment that "all revelation is in the present moment" has meaning here.⁵⁴ God became present to Dostoevsky through his personal experience. Faith was a "seeing". As Richard Niebuhr remarks of the prophets, "One must look with them and not at them to verify their vision".⁵⁵ This should not lead one to conclude that psychological analysis of the "experience of eternity", of "revelation in our present moment", or of "seeing" is possible.

For what he [Dostoevsky] had set out to do was to take us as far as the world of the spirit. But that world, as he knew, is invisible. There is no means of reaching it

⁵¹Ibid., p. 215; [366].

⁵²Ibid., pp. 215-216; [366-367].

⁵³Ibid., p. 217; [368].

⁵⁴Quoted by Baillie, op. cit., p. 105.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 107.

by any direct contact: "A material demonstration of the other world, what a preposterous idea". Dostoevsky is not an Empiricist of the spiritual; in the last analysis he is not a "psychologist" and he does not wish to be one. "The inaccessible reality which solves everything still remains beyond the horizon, at the same remote distance, whatever efforts man may make to reach it. It is transcendent....The vanishing-point is outside the picture and yet strictly inherent in it, outside the field of psychology and in the spirit".⁵⁶

The aspects of the act of faith we judge de Lubac to have stressed during this period of his life are not apart from the contingencies of the historical moment in which he wrote them. That there are other aspects we shall point out later on as we develop his thought. First, and foremost, is de Lubac's insistence upon faith as a lived dimension of one's life. To distinguish between fides salvifica and fides non salvifica is a meaningless distinction for de Lubac. We might draw the analogy between the cadaver and the living man. There is an infinite distance between the two states of being, almost so that nothing, absolutely nothing, is said of the latter by the former. Thus fides salvifica is "demanding", "engaging", "heroic", "decisive", "paradoxical", and "experiential". In the best sense of the word it is an existential, the existential, stance. In the second place, the act of faith cannot be reduced to a higher form of reason. At this point, de Lubac does not say what the relationship is between faith and reason, except to point out that an age of reason, under whatever guise, drives out faith. In the third place,

⁵⁶DHA, p. 233; [391-392].

faith is related to community. Like the revelation to which it is in response, faith comes about through koinonia, grows and matures on the basis of fellowship. In the last place, the process of how one comes to faith remains a mystery. One can say of it, however, that an 'experience' is involved which is based upon obedience to what one has 'heard'. Faith, in this context, like so much of human understanding, owes a great deal to the experience of others, to presuppositions others have taken for granted, and which the believer has neither the inclination nor the time and patience to pursue. How or why one is placed in a situation which permits him to 'hear' is, of course, not discernible. But 'hearing' and 'obedience' are joined together in an exalted experience that is recognizable as faith.

For de Lubac, at this time in his life, the fiducial element of faith is expertly encouraged on the basis of obedience, and will remain central in all later writing on the matter. In our judgment, de Lubac calls for an act of faith, informed by charity, which makes the demand of obedience. De Lubac's emphasis on charity as essential to faith (an emphasis which will present itself more clearly in Paradoxes) reminds us of Pascal's insight that the heart has reasons which reason does not know. Questions of God's existence and nature are "questions either of the lover seeking to know Him or of the unbeliever seeking to escape Him".⁵⁷ These

⁵⁷Bernard Lonergan, Method in Theology (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), p. 116.

questions are the questions of fides quaerens intellectum. The falling in love of faith, as Bernard Lonergan speaks of it, in some sense, precedes knowledge. "So it is that in religious matters love precedes knowledge and, as that love is God's gift, the very beginning of faith is due to God's grace".⁵⁸ It is our judgment that de Lubac's emphasis on faith as formed or salvific is an emphasis on being in love.

C. Humani Generis (1944-1955)

This period of de Lubac's life was perhaps the most decisive. Between 1944-1950, he continued to work on the theological themes he had begun earlier and so brought to publication such works as Catholicism, Histoire et Esprit, and Corpus Mysticum. He also developed the article on the "Christian Idea of Man" to include, what he saw to be, the threat of Marx's doctrine laying hold of France. The Paradoxes were also published; their sub-title is "Perspectives religieuses et philosophiques". They were written after the style of Pascal's Pensées and published the year Yves de Montcheuil, a confrere and confidant of de Lubac, was assassinated by the Gestapo. Much of the work reflects the mood of that event as well as the mood of a Lyon after Occupation. Two aspects of faith occupy de Lubac's thoughts: the personal loving response of submission to God and the dark night of faith. Ironically these remembrances would be important during the five years de Lubac spent in

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 123.

Paris, unable to publish on matters of faith. After his return to Lyon in 1955, de Lubac published the fruits of his meditation of the previous years in Méditation sur l'Eglise and several articles on the Church. As one might suspect, the relationship of the Church to faith takes on importance. The pages which follow, then, gather together those aspects of faith we have pointed to: faith as loving response, faith as obscure, and faith as ecclesial.

If we have spoken of faith in the preceding pages as an act that is of the person in community remembering, if we have concentrated on faith as it stands over and against rationalistic inference in the years of de Lubac's writing preceding Humani Generis, the concentration is on faith as the personal loving act of submission to the other. Just as there is a social dimension to faith, so here de Lubac speaks of the faith as the most personal of all acts. "De même que l'acte de foi est, de tous les actes, le plus libre, ainsi l'expression de la foi est, de toutes, la plus personnelle".⁵⁹ It is the personal act of abandon, not caught up in theory.⁶⁰ It does not capture its object, but is schooled in it.⁶¹ The act of remembering, of recognizing God is thus an act which unites one to God and to his life. "La foi est abandon".⁶² The abandon involves a kind of love, for how else could one explain the adhesion to God?

⁵⁹De Lubac, Paradoxes, p. 9.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Ibid.

"La foi doit participer au privilège de la charité: elle ne cherche point à prendre son objet, à l'accaparer".⁶³ De Lubac's insistence on faith as submission uniting one in love reminds us of St. Augustine's description.

To believe is not only to believe in God, because the devils do that also; credere in Deum means believing him, loving him, choosing him, penetrating him by love, being incorporated to his members.⁶⁴

Once again, we return to that emphasis on faith as the recognition of the reality of God born of love. Against a faith which was defined by Vatican I in opposition to Deism, i.e., faith as the acceptance of a revelation that was made in history, de Lubac stresses faith as a recognition of a transcendent and personal Absolute from whom both the being as well as the accomplishment of man derives. Aquinas, speaking of faith, says much the same: Actus credentis non terminatur ad enonciabile, sed ad rem.⁶⁵

These short reflections on faith, written after the Occupation but before Humani Generis, were the last writings permitted to de Lubac on matters pertaining to the Christian faith. In 1950 he left Lyon and spent the next five years in Paris. During that time he published his notes on Buddhism, notes he had gathered in preparing a course on the History of Religions at Lyon. When he returned to

⁶³ Ibid., p. 10.

⁶⁴ Augustine, Tractatus in Joannem, tr. 29, no. 6.

⁶⁵ STh., IIa IIae, q. 1, a. 2, ad 2.

Lyon, at the invitation of the Archbishop there, having been made personal theologian to the Archbishop, he still did not teach but was permitted to publish once again. For our point of interest there are two works which speak to faith and which clearly point out aspects of faith brought into focus by the events of 1950-1955. The works are Nouveaux Paradoxes and Méditation sur l'Eglise; the aspects of faith are the obscurity of faith and the ecclesial dimension of faith.

De Lubac speaks of faith much in the same way as does John of the Cross. "O nuit qui me guides plus sûrement que la lumière de midi".⁶⁶

Ma lumière n'est que nuit. Je ne puis même pas dire, par paradoxe, que c'est une nuit lumineuse. Son obscurité, néanmoins, discerne mieux que toute lumière. De toutes les lumières qui ne lui seraient pas amies de toutes les fausses lumières, elle m'écarte, en toute lumière.⁶⁷

The obscurity of night, de Lubac speaks of, is the resistance to submission. It is the summons to the "Garden of the Father" which breaks loose of time by submitting to revelation and, a fortiori, to mystery.⁶⁸ De Lubac judges that the submission to mystery, and the resultant obscurity is, nonetheless, fecund.

La soumission totale de l'esprit à la Révélation est une soumission fécondante....Mais la

⁶⁶De Lubac, Nouveaux Paradoxes, p. 169.

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 178.

soumission totale de l'esprit à quelque système humain que ce soit est une soumission stérilisante. Par la première, j'accepte les conditions d'une dilatation de ma pensée. Par la seconde, j'en nie les conditions mêmes.⁶⁹

For de Lubac, the life of faith is an exigence of life, not unlike, in our judgment, the exigence of man toward the Good. He makes the following comparison between philosophy and theology, and seems to say that it is faith which gives one the exigence to theologize in the same way that knowing gives one the exigence to philosophize.

En commençant à philosopher, nous ne savions pas encore ce que c'est que la réflexion. Peut-être, en commençant à théologiser, ne savons-nous pas encore ce que c'est que la foi. Au moins, tout ce qu'est la foi; tout ce qu'elle comporte d'exigence, pour l'exercice même de la vie de l'esprit.⁷⁰

As we have mentioned elsewhere in these pages, the years between 1950 and 1955 were difficult ones for de Lubac. That judgment is based upon the kind of writing de Lubac did, as well as his presence in Paris rather than in Lyon. Méditation sur l'Eglise stands out as the humble, thoughtful response of a man not at all wounded seriously by misunderstanding. And yet there is a note which resounds throughout, similar to the one in Nouveaux Paradoxes. We leave aside, for the moment, the ecclesiology of Méditation sur l'Eglise, and turn to the relationship between faith and church.

De Lubac speaks of the passivity required by belonging to

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 179.

the Church as analogous to the passivity of faith. "C'est que toute activité qui mérite d'être appelée chrétienne se déploie nécessairement sur un fond de passivité".⁷¹ The gift of God is a dispossessing gift, not measured by our human life nor capable of being nourished by human resources.⁷² Dispossession or "dying to self" is a permanent aspect of faith brought about by the effect of ecclesiastical obedience. 'Ecclesiastical', it should be noted, is not co-extensive with either the dogma or the reality of the Roman Church, for de Lubac.⁷³

Dans notre langue actuelle, ce beau nom est usé, pour ne pas dire dégradé. Il est devenu le titre courant d'une profession pour registres d'état civil, une étiquette pour un rayon de vêtements particuliers... Dans son acceptation première, sans distinction obligée de clerc et de laïc, l'ecclésiastique vir ecclesiasticus, est homme d'Église. Il est homme dans l'Église. Mieux, il est l'homme de l'Église, l'homme de la communauté chrétienne.⁷⁴

The Church, therefore, is the unity of believers, that koinoia which establishes, nourishes, and confirms faith. And it is the community which teaches obedience, so essential an aspect of faith.⁷⁵ Thus, for de Lubac, the authority of the community, the Church, is "peut-être le point le plus secret du mystère de la foi".⁷⁶ True, the

⁷¹De Lubac, Méditation sur l'Église, p. 199.

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴Ibid., pp. 186-187.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 199.

⁷⁶Ibid.

authority de Lubac speaks of here is the magisterium of the teaching Church. He describes the Church in terms his audience understands (the audience, de Lubac tells us in the forward is fellow priests at days of recollection, study week-ends and retreats).⁷⁷ But he also means the Church in the larger sense of all those who believe, for what the Spirit does in the Church as a whole is also what He does in each Christian soul.⁷⁸ For Catholics, the Church is not the Church as it is dreamed but the Church in fact.⁷⁹

Elsewhere de Lubac thinks that the Fathers of the Church saw the Church to be identical with all mankind.

Pour eux en effet, en un sens, l'Église n'était point autre que le genre humain lui-même, dans toutes les phases de son histoire, en tant qu'il devait aboutir au Christ et être vivifié par son Esprit. C'était 'toute la condition humaine'.⁸⁰

And he quotes Justin as saying that "the seed of the Word is innate in the whole human race".⁸¹ This in no way should be construed that de Lubac accepts that one-sided emphasis which denies visibility for the "intérieure, toute spirituelle, communauté lumineuse de Dieu dispersée dans tout l'univers".⁸² He stresses, perhaps overstresses in light of his hearers, that need for loyalty and listening to the

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 7.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 199.

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 203.

⁸⁰De Lubac, Catholicism, p. 156. ⁸¹Ibid., p. 242.

⁸²De Lubac, Méditation sur l'Église, p. 65.

"Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Roman Church".⁸³ But he does remark, by way of caution, that

Peut-être oublions-nous quelque fois en fait, quoique nous le sachions bien en principe, que l'intransigeance d'imposer aux autres nos goûts personnels;...qu'un christianisme qui s'installerait délibérément tout entier sur la défensive, renonçant à toute ouverture et à toute assimilation, ne serait déjà plus le christianisme; que l'attachement sincère à l'Église ne peut servir à canoniser nos préjugés, ni à faire participer nos partialités à l'absolu de la foi universelle.⁸⁴

De Lubac here makes a distinction between the Roman Church which nourishes and sustains faith and the church which nourishes and sustains faith. It is the Roman Church which "preserves" faith in her children, just as the church which "preserves" the absolute faith of all believers. The distinction between faith and absolute faith vis-à-vis the church is thus a distinction based, not upon the essence of faith, but the faith as it has been appropriated by one within a tradition. The community of believers is thus prior to any particular community of believers in the theoretical sense. Practically, they are one and the same thing for what they nourish in this particular individual.

The distinction between Roman Church and church is not always clear in Méditation sur l'Église, and therefore the relationship between church and faith is obscure. In our judgment, faith is often interchangeable with faithfulness in this work of de Lubac. He

⁸³Ibid., p. 96.

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 214.

seems to be calling for a loyalty or faithfulness to the Roman Church analogous to the loyalty or faithfulness he called for from the French during the World War. It should not, for that reason, be concluded that de Lubac judged faith only to be faith insofar as one was a member of the Roman Church. During this period of his life, the originating themes of faith as personal response to the person of Jesus, faith as reverent submission both to the revelation of Jesus and to the community in history, are developed. The theme of submission to the Roman Church as symbolizing faith assumes a priority it did not have in the earlier writings. De Lubac is establishing his orthodoxy in the face of the challenge made against it, all the while maintaining the kind of historical theologizing which brought him into public controversy. The meaning of faith as an ecclesial reality takes more balanced emphasis, in our judgment, in La foi chrétienne of 1970. It is to that work to which we now turn our attention.

D. Vatican II

La foi chrétienne is an essay on the structure of the Apostolic Symbol.⁸⁵ It is an historical study which seeks to point out that

Notre existence intime, nos relations
personnelles, notre action sociale, nos
recherches et nos démarches en vue de
l'unité chrétienne, toute l'orientation

⁸⁵De Lubac, La foi chrétienne (Paris: Aubier, 1971), 2nd ed., p. 1.

fondamentale de notre pensée et notre vie, seront droites et fécondes, dans la mesure où elles se trouveront conformes à la réalité de ce mystère [trinitaire].⁸⁶

1. Faith, Belief, Religion

The true faith, according to de Lubac, is characterized by credere in Deum. "Faith in" is a singular concept, to be used of a singular object.

Je crois en Dieu..., en Jesus Christ....
Nous disons donc par exemple: "Credo... Ecclesiam", c'est-à-dire, non pas: "Je crois en l'Église", mais simplement: "Je crois que l'Église existe."⁸⁷

For de Lubac the words of the Creed: "the church", "the resurrection of the body", "the communion of saints", "the forgiveness of sins", "life everlasting" are the four effects of faith.⁸⁸ One does not believe in these realities; one only believes in God. Furthermore, these realities are the result of what de Lubac here calls foi réfléchie as opposed to foi vécue.⁸⁹ Why? Because credo in Deum, the faith involved, is interpersonal and has a character that cannot be reduced to events nor metaphysical elaboration.⁹⁰ Credere in Deum "caractérise la véritable foi. Seule il fait le chrétien".⁹¹ The distinction here is between credere Deum and credere in Deum.⁹²

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 15.

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 153.

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 154.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 155.

⁹⁰Ibid., pp. 155-156.

⁹¹Ibid., p. 157.

⁹²Ibid.

"Croire en Dieu est assurément plus que croire à Dieu".⁹³ The "more" is the interpersonal, lived faith, as opposed to an intellectualized foi réfléchie.⁹⁴ It expresses our filiation by adoption, "qui est la foi confiante (fides fiduciae) et le credere in Deum qui est la tendance à Dieu par la foi mêlée d'amour".⁹⁵ To become a Christian, says de Lubac, is not to "adhere to transcendent values" but it is to be converted: "se tourner vers le Dieu vivant".⁹⁶ To become a Christian is not to have belief but to have faith.

De Lubac makes the distinction between belief and faith on the following basis. Corresponding to "croire" are two substantives: "croyance" and "foi".⁹⁷ "Croyance" is the root of "créance" and both of these arise from the Latin credentia.⁹⁸ Credentia is more global than fides since it is used in both a religious and a non-religious sense.⁹⁹ De Lubac, depending upon A. Meillet's Mémoires de la société de linguistique, says that "all opinion which is not founded on intrinsic reasons or direct observation will qualify croyance, not only as to its nature but also the degree of certitude or probability".¹⁰⁰ Foi is different. In itself, paradoxically, "la foi est le plus ferme et le plus assuré -- quoique toujours libre et toujours menacé".¹⁰¹

⁹³Ibid.

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 158.

⁹⁵Ibid.

⁹⁶Ibid., p. 160.

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 160.

⁹⁸Ibid.

⁹⁹Ibid.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p. 161.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 162.

De Lubac agrees with Calvin for whom "each step bears in itself some incredulity mixed with faith".¹⁰² Or, as de Lubac quotes Tillich: "faith will compose itself of both faith and doubt".¹⁰³ De Lubac makes the point that faith is always faith, that while it is an essentially personal act, the source of being, the "total synthesis", yet it is incarnate and therefore never fully triumphant.¹⁰⁴

Faith, like beliefs, is founded on a witness, yet the witness of faith is uniquely different than the witness at the base of belief.

Il est le témoignage de Dieu; il ne demeure pas, comme les témoignages humains, totalement extrinsèque à l'esprit qui le reçoit. En effet, Dieu n'est pas extérieur à l'être qu'il a créé.¹⁰⁵

For de Lubac, the transcendence of God is "Tout Autre", but not "pur autre".¹⁰⁶ The transcendence of God engenders an intimate presence, and it is this presence which is itself a Power to which absolute obedience can be given.¹⁰⁷ Agreeing with Tillich's statement that faith is "the creative foundation of everything, always present in everything, always creating and destroying, always closer to us than we are to ourselves, it is, at the same time, always inaccessible",¹⁰⁸ de Lubac makes the distinction between faith and belief (foi and

¹⁰²Ibid.

¹⁰³Ibid.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., pp. 162-163.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., p. 163.

¹⁰⁶Ibid.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., p. 163.

¹⁰⁸Ibid.

croyance) insofar as the former is based on this "experience" of God, while the latter is based on the "experience" of another.¹⁰⁹ The "experience" of God is a sacred experience, arising from the presence of God; the "experience" of another is a profane experience, arising from the presence of another.¹¹⁰ The internal as opposed to external witness is the basis of the distinction. Furthermore, faith is a response to the Word of God which "reveals and which in revealing, reveals itself".¹¹¹ "Par une croyance quelconque, nous croyons à un homme; par la foi, nous croyons bien à Dieu".¹¹² But the act "croyons en Dieu" is of another nature than the act "croyons à Dieu". De Lubac tells us that the act of faith, "croyons en Dieu", is the giving of faith, while believing God, "croyons à Dieu" is the noetic element alone. The distinction is on the basis of knowledge and recognition (connaissance and reconnaissance).¹¹³ When he gives God faith in response to His initiative a bond is established that can be said to be faith on both sides.¹¹⁴ His initiative is the gift of being: one's response is the recognition of this gift. Quoting St. John of the Cross, de Lubac draws out the analogy of two hands

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 164.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 165.

that are clasped in agreement, or, more fittingly, two spouses who reciprocate with the gift of themselves.¹¹⁵ "Faithful loyalty" exists on both sides.¹¹⁶ "God shows Himself faithful in realizing that which he promises".¹¹⁷

Du côté de l'homme, le mot de foi suggère donc soumission, confiance totale, attente du secours de Dieu, appui pris sur les gages qu'il a donnés de son amour et de sa fidélité; d'un mot: Amen à Dieu.¹¹⁸

While de Lubac is careful to draw the distinction between faith and beliefs, he nevertheless affirms that faith does not exclude beliefs. "[L]a dissociation des deux choses serait arbitraire et mortelle".¹¹⁹ It is the beliefs, according to de Lubac, which establish the objectivity of faith, and which prevent the believer from falling into arbitrary subjectivism. This aspect of faith, however, de Lubac judges, should not be carried too far, for the danger is that the Christian substitutes the unity of faith for the multiplicity of beliefs.

La Trinité se révèle à nous dans ses oeuvres -- création, rédemption, sanctification, -- et c'est à travers ses oeuvres, ce n'est qu'à travers ses oeuvres que notre foi l'atteint. Nous croyons à la réalité de ces oeuvres, qui nous font connaître quelque

¹¹⁵Ibid.

¹¹⁶Ibid.

¹¹⁷Ibid., p. 166.

¹¹⁸Ibid.

¹¹⁹Ibid., p. 167.

chose de leur Auteur. Si donc notre foi n'est pas un simple "tenir pour vrai", si même elle est substantiellement autre chose, elle comporte cependant aussi, et nécessairement, un "tenir pour vrai".¹²⁰

And yet the unity of faith cannot substitute a credo in for a credo quod. De Lubac gives examples that this is the case in the Reformed Churches in France as well as the Reformed Swiss Church. He acknowledges that the "theology of the Manuals", in his own tradition, often failed to balance the credo in and the credo quod, but that the Second Vatican Council maintains the equilibrium that has always been the tradition of Christianity.

Son enseignement sur la foi, corrélatif de celui qui précède sur la révélation, met l'accent, comme de juste, sur l'aspect existentiel de la foi comprise comme la réponse personnelle de l'homme et l'engagement de tout son être, -- mais sans céder à un subjectivisme illusoire.¹²¹

Just as faith and beliefs can be distinguished, and should be, so faith and religion are distinguished for de Lubac. But to oppose faith and religion as though religion were some historically accumulated icing on faith is, according to de Lubac, "anthropological reductionism".¹²² "Religion establishes a link between man and the divinity" and a "link between man and other believers".¹²³ De Lubac says, interestingly we might add since he never before even suggested

¹²⁰Ibid., p. 168.

¹²¹Ibid., p. 169.

¹²²Ibid., p. 172.

¹²³Ibid., p. 173.

in his writings , that the Christian religion appears empirically like one religion among others. But for the Christian it is the religion par excellence, the perfection of religion.¹²⁴ Why this is so, de Lubac judges, is based upon Aquinas' principle that "grace is not a substitute for nature; it doesn't amputate nature; it doesn't render its achievement unuseful, but on the contrary, it calls it and establishes it".¹²⁵

Returning to the distinction between faith and religion, de Lubac draws the distinction between **θρησκεία** and **εὐσεβεία**. The first, **θρησκεία** is cult and the institutional structures which carry cult; the second, the sentiment of piety and adoration.¹²⁶ Both are synonyms for religion; however, it is the latter according to de Lubac which was a favourite with the first Christians. Both words are opposed to "religiosity", or that false piety or false cult. Both words, while distinct from faith, are not opposed to faith in such a way that one "abandons all religion so as to discover perfect faith".¹²⁷ De Lubac thinks that neither Barth nor Bonhoeffer oppose **θρησκεία** and **εὐσεβεία** faith. What Barth opposes to faith, according to de Lubac, is that religion become perverted, religion become pure anthropology, religion "disguised" or "camouflaged".¹²⁸ Religion, he says, in the garb of Kantian rationalism or Schleiermacherian

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid., pp. 174-175.

¹²⁷ Ibid., p. 176.

¹²⁸ Ibid., p. 179.

sentiment, is a "Christianity without Christ".¹²⁹ So too for Bonhoeffer. "Il avait soin le plus souvent de mettre ce mot de 'religion' (comme ses dérivés, 'religieux', 'religiosité') entre guillemets".¹³⁰ Quoting Max Thurian, de Lubac says that Bonhoeffer never envisaged

un christianisme sans religion, c'est-à-dire
sans liturgie, sans mystère, sans prière;
christianisme intellectuel et moral, vie
selon un évangile dépouillé de toute con-
templation, existence de générosité devant
Dieu.¹³¹

Religion, even non-Christian religion, according to de Lubac, is not a purely negative reality. To oppose all religion is to begin with that "hermeneutique du soupçon" which is, at base, "the passage from Christianity to atheism".

Refusant tout "avoir" comme toute "sécurité",
vidant la foi de tout élément "religieux"
estimé trop humain, trop intéressé, trop
lourd et trop impur, il n'est, au mieux
qu'une fiction d'intellectuel. Une foi
qui peu à peu en vient à ne plus comporter
ni signe extérieur, ni culte, ni fête, ni
institution sociale, ni référence à l'
histoire, ni croyance objectivement formulée,
ni rapport à la culture, ni sentiment, une
foi sans aucun soutien ni moyen d'expression,
ne correspond plus à la foi ni du chrétien
moyen, ni de l'homme d'Eglise, ni du saint.¹³²

Along with Barth, de Lubac agrees that Christianity is not primarily,

¹²⁹Ibid., p. 180.

¹³⁰Ibid., p. 182.

¹³¹Quoted by de Lubac, ibid., p. 183.

¹³²Ibid., p. 187.

or in the first place, a religion. "It is a salvific action of God, realized and manifested in history".¹³³ "The faith", according to Chenu, and de Lubac agrees, "introduces the event, history, joined to the absolute of personal being".¹³⁴ The event that Christianity is, is, of course, Christ. It is a transforming event which far from wiping everything out that preceded it, gave to the movement of natural religion -- "always inefficacious in itself" -- "le principe qui le redresse, le vivifie et l'achève en le transformant".¹³⁵

De Lubac returns here to that Roman Catholic doctrine of the balance between faith and reason, and the theological interpretation of the Fall, upon which the doctrine of analogy is admitted. The movement of man in giving visibility to his drive toward self-transcendence is not without place in the scheme of revelation. That is to say, there is a basis upon which one can say that the revelation authenticates what man is and what he seeks. Left to himself, of course, reason, as well as religion, as well as faith, are dangerously fickle, and man is unable to know, or believe, or give expression to belief with any certainty. Faith, credere in Deum, is, essentially, a religious act. "Il est l'acte religieux fondamental, celui qui fonde en l'homme la vraie religion, c'est-à-dire qui établit l'homme efficacement dans son vrai rapport à Dieu".¹³⁶ Faith, then, in the way de Lubac understands it, balanced by beliefs

¹³³Ibid., p. 189.

¹³⁴Ibid.

¹³⁵Ibid., p. 190.

¹³⁶Ibid., p. 189.

and religion, is what makes one Christian. *Πίστις* (fides) pertains primarily to credere in Deum, and is what characterizes one as a saint. Faith, the act of homage, is the gift of one's self to the Being which is personal and transcendent. "There is an absolute, unconditioned, definitive and, in some way, an irrevocable engagement" to that personal Being we call God.¹³⁷ Therefore, whatever one's relationship to another person or to an object may be, regardless of how totally and faithfully that relationship endures, despite the level of sharing one may attain, it cannot be called, according to de Lubac, faith. To understand credere in, says de Lubac, is to grasp the meaning of the act of Christian faith.

2. Ecclesial Faith

De Lubac's writings, immediately prior to Vatican II, are weighted with a clarification of church as Roman Catholic Church. This is not the case, as we have said, with his earlier writings. Here he carefully distinguishes church and Roman Church. Primarily, the church is the "congregatio", the "convocatio". "The church is not a substitute for God, nor is it equal to God".¹³⁸ It is in the church that faith is realized; in the community of believers that the archetype of the perfect "yes" exists.¹³⁹ Before every distinction of church as teaching and church as taught, there is the church

¹³⁷ Ibid., p. 194.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

believing. It is the church, in this global sense, which carries and sustains the personal faith of the individual.

L'Eglise n'est pas Dieu, -- mais elle est "la Maison de Dieu", "la Maison où l'on se nourrit de sa Parole". Elle est "l'Eglise du Dieu vivant", la demeure où repose "la majesté du Seigneur", la Cité qu'Il a construite, l'école dans laquelle il enseigne, la temple où Il est adoré.¹⁴⁰

The fides ex auditu of St. Paul is the basis upon which the church has her place and her mission.¹⁴¹ The image of mother, dear to Calvin, says de Lubac, portrays this place and mission so that "hearing" is a reality.¹⁴² It is at the "interior of the church that one confesses Jesus and that one discovers the Trinity".¹⁴³ De Lubac thinks that "all private Christianity is illegitimate".¹⁴⁴ This is so because it is in the community of believers that the word of God lives and is spoken. Furthermore,

Toute la vie spirituelle du chrétien, dont la foi est la racine, est une participation à la vie de l'Église....Les relations les plus intimes avec Jésus-Christ sont celles mêmes de l'Église.¹⁴⁵

This is true not only for the ordinary believer but also for the theologian. Otherwise, says de Lubac, we speak of religious philosophy, not theology.

What we find in La foi chrétienne, germane to the point at

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 222.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p. 228.

¹⁴² Ibid., p. 233.

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. 239.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 248.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 257-258.

issue, is less of an insistence on church as Roman Catholic Church. However, de Lubac insists that church, which for him can only be Roman Catholic, since this is and has been his tradition, performs the function of storing and communicating remembrances. This function is one of the dynamics of faith, although it itself is not faith, nor can it be an object of faith.

The magnitude of such a judgment can only be measured over and against the role the Roman Church had assumed in the tradition after the Reformation. Practically, the Roman Church had become not only the preserver of faith but also an object of faith. The difficult "extra ecclesiam nulla salus" had become more and more restricted so that -- perhaps not theologically but indeed pastorally -- the Church of Rome substituted itself for the mystery beyond it.

3. The Unity of Faith and the Elan of Faith

Both of these, the unity of faith and the elan of faith, are, for de Lubac, consequences of the act of faith. The first, despite the diversity of believers and the imperfection of their faith, exists by reason of the church which, from age to age, confesses the same object. Fides ecclesiastica is not, therefore, a rather one-sided loyalty, but rather that in virtue of which one can find fellowship and identity despite contingencies of time and culture.¹⁴⁶ The unity of faith does not arise from belonging to a church, but

¹⁴⁶Ibid., p. 264.

rather the meaning of church arises from the unity of faith. To be sure, the object of faith is one. It is the task of the church to guard the unity, not, by discipline or social cohesion, to create it. "The objective unity of faith has deeper roots".¹⁴⁷ The church is measured by the Word: its role is always mediate. Hierarchy says nothing about the degree of faith, as though those who constitute the church teaching are superior believers to those who constitute the church taught. "L'objet de la foi est quelque chose de simple (incomplexe), à savoir, la chose qui est une, c'est-à-dire Dieu".¹⁴⁸ In its substance, the act of faith is global and indivisible. The believer responds to God who reveals Himself to the believer and manifests to him His plan of salvation.¹⁴⁹ That is not to say that the act of faith is always perfect, but it cannot be reduced to a "parroting" of dogmas, an obedience that is conformistic. "L'obéissance de la foi, tout au contraire, est intérieure: obedistis ex corde".¹⁵⁰

Quel que soit leur degré de culture et quelle que soit leur place dans le courant de l'histoire, tous les vrais croyants participent donc, objectivement, à la même foi. Le même Esprit, qui ne change pas, les éclaire et les unit.¹⁵¹

Unity, then, between Old Testament and New Testament, between believers of one Christian persuasion and another, exists among men who profess, through the Spirit, the same God. "Cette unité

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 274.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 275.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 276.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p. 277.

objective de la foi, conclurons-nous, n'est par seulement celle du dogme: c'est en même temps celle du mystère".¹⁵² Dogma and mystery are united. But, de Lubac maintains, dogma is not a truth of faith declared by an official act of authority.¹⁵³ That is too intellectualistic an emphasis. Dogma is the

ensemble de la vérité chrétienne en tant qu'elle est reçue par la foi, sur l'autorité de Dieu, dont la tradition de l'Église, précisée ou non par une définition de la part de l'autorité, est pour nous la messagère.¹⁵⁴

If mystery is separated from dogma, as though the latter was clarity and the former obscurity, one destroys the meaning of dogma that de Lubac enucleates. Dogma is the mystery of Christ. In its unity it can neither increase nor diminish. Here de Lubac is faithful to, but reworks his article of 1948, on the development of dogma. The one fact of God's Word will never be fathomed nor exhausted. It is upon this that the mystery of the economy and the mystery of theology is based.¹⁵⁶

In his book the Future of Belief, Leslie Dewart speaks of revelation as a living historical fact, continuous and present, by which God truly reveals Himself historically, and not only at one moment in time.¹⁵⁷ Dewart says that this revelation is not finished

¹⁵²Ibid., p. 278.

¹⁵³Ibid., p. 280.

¹⁵⁴Ibid., p. 281.

¹⁵⁵Ibid., p. 283.

¹⁵⁶Ibid., pp. 284-285.

¹⁵⁷Quoted by de Lubac, ibid., p. 285.

and in truth never will be finished.¹⁵⁸ De Lubac's thesis is opposed to such a conception. For him, a thesis such as Dewart's denies the revelation of God in Jesus.¹⁵⁹ Quoting St. John of the Cross, de Lubac says that "En nous donnant son fils qui est son unique Parole, Dieu nous a tout dit et tout révélé".¹⁶⁰ The truth which is believed, however, is not a static truth for de Lubac. It is fecund both in itself and in the subject who receives it. Implications can be made explicit and it can be appropriated unlimitedly.¹⁶¹ Development of dogma is the fathoming of mystery. This fathoming is the intelligence de la foi brought about by the Spirit who has been given to us.¹⁶² But the revelation of God is not, for de Lubac, one stage, as though a third Testament were a possibility. On this point, de Lubac states his agreement with Bultmann who admired the "incessant vitality of faith which grasps new historical situations". De Lubac states that it is faith which assimilates, transforms, and purifies culture, not vice-versa.¹⁶³ To speak of the "dehellenization of dogma" is to speak of the "disappearance of dogma", according to de Lubac.¹⁶⁴

De Lubac thus seeks to harmonize the multiplicity of believers and the unity of their faith, the multiplicity of dogmas and

¹⁵⁸Ibid.

¹⁵⁹Ibid.

¹⁶⁰Ibid., p. 286.

¹⁶¹Ibid.

¹⁶²Ibid., p. 287.

¹⁶³Ibid., pp. 292-293.

¹⁶⁴Ibid., p. 294.

the unity of dogma, the multiplicity of churches and the unity of Church. It is his thesis here that the basis of unity is the object of faith revealed to the individual who lives in the Church by the power of the Spirit. Revelation received constitutes faith.

De Lubac reacts against a universalism because he contemplates the singleness of the object of faith as enucleated by the believing community, and this enucleation is not apart from, although at times he seems to say that it is subordinated to, the revelation of God to the believer. It is the "fathoming of mystery" which brings about the "appropriation of the mystery". The mystery of faith, like the mystery of the object of faith and the mystery of that object reflected upon, is never reduced to a luminousness that would destroy it as mystery. Degrees of faith are degrees of "fathoming the mystery" and this fathoming itself is the work of God in us. In one sense we take de Lubac to be understanding "fathoming" as an interiorization of mystery, i.e., living by it much the same way one lives by being deeply married. He most certainly does not mean a kind of searching the depths of something analytically, so as to illuminate what has before been unilluminated. He says in many places that one must constantly surpass that which he knows of God to find God. Theology, in this sense, is not a search for rational satisfaction analogous to that which one gets from perfect knowledge of an object, but rather, theology is the "mediation of the mystery which one lives".¹⁶⁵ For de Lubac, theology

¹⁶⁵Ibid., p. 304.

is the action of diastole and systole, the rhythmic dilatation of the soul following each contemplative contraction.¹⁶⁶

If we have been speaking of faith as though it were some thing, i.e., if we have reified it; if we have given the impression that the cognitive meaning of faith is to be subordinated to the existential, lived, or effective meaning, then we have not correctly interpreted the writing of de Lubac. What we have tried to point out, with de Lubac, is that any search for an 'essence' of faith is doomed to failure insofar as a kind of genus might exist within which species of acts are recognizable and meaningful. For the sake of science, of course one must distinguish, explain, understand, and judge. But we do not wish to give the impression that in distinguishing faith from reason, faith from cognition, faith from church, faith from vision, faith from charity, we leave any one of the latter realities behind. There is a movement to the human spirit which is at once ratification and subsequent building. There is not a frontier toward which one sets out, as though at some future time that frontier will be crossed. The frontier, for the believer and for the Christian believer is indeed defined (although, if we accept de Lubac's analysis, the difference between the frontiers is radical and constitutes the radical difference in the movement by which the frontier is achieved). But that definition can never exclude the meaning of mystery. By definition, then, the elan of faith as an act is an elan that is

¹⁶⁶Ibid., p. 306.

characterized by self-transcendence, and conversion is the way to self-transcendence. In the pages which follow and which conclude our reflection, with de Lubac, on faith, we mean to point out what we see to be a departure from what had come to be the Scholastic understanding of the question.

Briefly, de Lubac's position is that movement toward mystery, characterized by conversion, is constitutive of the human spirit believing and seeking to believe. This is how he describes it. "To believe in God is to be converted to God".¹⁶⁷ The recognition "que je suis pour lui (εἰς αὐτόν) et je m'élançe vers lui (εἰς σὸν)" is the expression of St. Paul to the Thessalonians and is the exegesis de Lubac gives to I Peter 1, 8 and I Peter 1, 21.¹⁶⁸ To turn to God, to be converted to God, to believe in God are one and the same thing. With von Balthasar, de Lubac defines the act of faith as "le comportement d'ensemble, la disposition par laquelle l'homme correspond par la force de la grâce, à l'appel de Dieu se révélant".¹⁶⁹ "Comportement" and "disposition" are not static concepts, not a form separated from a content, not a content that is purely intellectualistic, but l'acte théologique.¹⁷⁰ This "theological act" joins together cognition and confidence, intellect and will, in an affirmation that is an act of conversion.¹⁷¹ Using Augustine's

¹⁶⁷Ibid., p. 307.

¹⁶⁸ I Thess. 2.12; II Thess. 2.2; 3.5.

¹⁶⁹Ibid., p. 342.

¹⁷⁰Ibid.

¹⁷¹Ibid.

commentary on credere in, de Lubac describes the act of conversion as a dynamism, a beginning, a voyage begun. "Croire en Dieu, c'est tendre vers lui; c'est aller vers lui; c'est progresser chaque jour sur le chemin qui conduit à lui; c'est enfin accéder jusqu'à lui".¹⁷²

This elan of faith is the dynamism proper to faith as it is ordered to the Good. The movement of faith, converted self-transcendence, is the "knot which joins the order of creation to the order of revelation; the order of nature to the order of grace".¹⁷³

Using the language of Blondel, de Lubac calls the elan of faith the pneumatic element, insofar as, analogous to natural knowledge, it is known directly and concretely.¹⁷⁴ The noetic element of faith, again based upon the analogy of natural knowledge, is the notions which are implied by the pneumatic element.¹⁷⁵ The elan of faith is so constitutive of faith, as far as de Lubac is concerned, that it is never destined to end. De Lubac bases his exegesis of I Cor. 13 on the work of Francois-Marie Lacan, and uses that work to establish the Biblical foundation for his understanding of the elan of faith. "Bref, la foi, l'espérance et la charité demeurent toutes les trois, mais la plus grande d'entre elles, c'est la charité".¹⁷⁶ He reads Origen, Irenaeus, Aquinas, and Augustine to reinforce his exegesis. His own understanding of God as mystery, and the meaning

¹⁷²Ibid., p. 347.

¹⁷³Ibid.

¹⁷⁴Ibid.

¹⁷⁵Ibid., p. 359.

¹⁷⁶Ibid., p. 360.

of mystery not to be problem but reality, allows him to say that faith too lives in eternity as the "elan of love, moved by the attraction of love".¹⁷⁷

Il serait ridicule, et contraire à toute expérience comme à toute foi véritable, d'interpréter cette vision face à face comme une saisie définitive (comprehensio, κατάληψις), à la manière d'une science acquise ou d'une philosophie humaine. L'axiome augustinien: Si comprehenderis, non est Deus, vaut aussi bien pour le ciel que pour la terre.¹⁷⁸

E. Conclusion

We have been interested in this Chapter to explain de Lubac's thoughts on faith. What follows is a critical summary.

In the first place, from what we have seen in Chapter One and what we will point out in Part Two, de Lubac moves away from that point of view which seemed to dominate neo-scholasticism. This must always be maintained, even though, at times, certain statements are made by de Lubac which might compromise his position. There may be other points, but at least these are clear. We take the essentialist position on faith to include the following points: 1) Faith is essentially intellectual. In reaction to liberal Protestantism and Modernism, which tend to minimize the intellectual character of faith as confidence, intimate experience, is neglected. Love of God is attributed to charity; not to faith. 2) The material object of the intellectual assent are the revealed truths. 3) The formal

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 364.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., pp. 365-366.

object of faith, or the motive of faith, is the authority of God, who reveals. This authority is the guarantee of the truth which contains the witness of a being who can neither deceive nor be deceived. 4) The assent of faith is free; man has the power to believe or not to believe. The revealed truths are neither evident nor demonstrable. 5) Faith is obscure. 6) Man cannot give the assent of faith without the illumination and interior inspiration of the Spirit. Why? Because faith is supernatural; it is a gift of God.

De Lubac's study of faith avoids such an essentialist position. De Lubac understands person as more than intellect; revelation as more than inspiration. Faith, for him, is a response of a living man to the living God as manifested through Jesus Christ. While the object of faith is God Himself, yet that object is finally -- in this life -- unknowable. And yet, faith consists in man recognizing this reality and turning toward it. Furthermore, since it is only through Jesus Christ that the Christian is initiated to the reality of God, a relationship to Jesus Christ is a relationship to God.

A relationship to Jesus Christ involves the person of man with the person of Jesus through the Church. Finally, revelation is interior to faith, i.e. one cannot speak about a revelation outside of faith. In other words, there is no objective revelation that is grasped by minds. Faith is revelation-received. The light of faith is the Word-received. The Word-received is being grasped by the mystery of God.

Summarily, then, we judge de Lubac to have introduced, once

again, the category of person-in-relationship as a theological emphasis. Faith, both as an act and a state, cannot be thought, as de Lubac thinks it, apart from the revelation of the mystery of the Divine as mediated by Jesus. This is religious faith. It involves the person. It is not a religious attitude which might involve intellect. Nor is it a stance over and against transcendent being or supernatural beatitude. The thesis of faith as "ultimate concern", which supports a generic attitude of dependence upon that which is higher, or deeper, or the ground of one's self, would not be acceptable for de Lubac. This is so because de Lubac defines faith as the personal relationship with God as revealed by Jesus Christ.

The thesis of faith as "knowledge born of religious love" would not be totally correct according to de Lubac. This is so because "knowledge born of religious love" does not carry the weight of full relationality. In other words, such a definition fails to get far enough beyond the intellectual for de Lubac.

The Christian faith has a unique and exclusive character for de Lubac. It is within this tradition that he discovers and responds to what he knows to be true. To speak of faith as a generic reality with modalities, e.g., Christian faith, Muslim faith, Buddhist faith, is to speak incorrectly. This is the case, it seems to us, because faith -- in such a way of speaking -- is taken out of its relational category and placed in a category of substance. De Lubac, with his emphasis on mystery and on person, overcomes such an emphasis.

This is not meant to exclude the possibility of remembered

reverence or loving obedience in those who are not of the Christian tradition. De Lubac says that

le concept formel de foi, dans le christianisme, est inséparable de son contenu essentiel; foi et contenu ou objet de la foi sont intrinsèquement solidaires.¹⁷⁹

Thus, it is "in Christianity" that de Lubac's theology takes form. He is not a phenomenologist of religion nor a psychologist. What he knows to be his faith may or may not be dynamically similar to other believing persons. That is not his question. It is the question, however, to think through correctly the nature, the content, and the object of that which de Lubac knows to possess himself and what he believes must possess those who share his own destiny.

F. Criticism

If there are grounds for criticism of de Lubac's position they would be established around these points:

(1) There seems to be an understanding of faith, in the earlier writings, as generic. That is to say, in the writings which pre-dated Humani Generis there are grounds for saying that faith is not exclusively coextensive with a personal response to the living God articulated by Jesus Christ. In the writings which appeared after Humani Generis and before Vatican II there is clearly such an identity. With La foi chrétienne the seeming inconsistency is resolved. De Lubac never meant to speak of faith as an act, nor the

¹⁷⁹Ibid., p. 327.

object of faith, outside his own tradition. In our judgment, it would have been helpful and illuminating if he had done so.

(2) The writings after Humani Generis and before La foi chrétienne tend to be defensive. That is to say, de Lubac wished to re-establish what, for some, had been termed heresy. His emphasis on the personal, the relational, the "heart" rather than the "mind", gave way, at times, to sermonizing. We do not find such writing helpful in establishing consistency. Perhaps the historical moment warranted this type of presentation with this kind of emphasis.

(3) The later writings, save for La foi chrétienne--and even there, at times--tended to emphasize the Church. There was a shift from thinking faith, history, mystery and person to thinking "Holy Mother Church." Even here, however, as we hope to point out in the following pages, the earlier emphases appear. They appear less centrally, however.

(4) Finally, there is a general consistency throughout de Lubac's writings. The above criticisms are rather minor compared to the contributed theological insight which prepared the way for later twentieth century Roman Catholic theologizing.

3. The Church

Although we have had occasion to mention the church when discussing faith, we have not considered the church as it has been more carefully, and with detail, treated in de Lubac's writings. The pages which follow seek to understand what occasioned de Lubac's

theological writing on the church, what was his particular emphasis, and how such an emphasis had something to say about his understanding of man. Furthermore, this consideration of church concludes "Part One" of our thesis, and provides an introduction to "Part Two."

The historical moment greatly influenced de Lubac's choice of theological topics.¹⁸⁰ We have had occasion to point this out. In our judgment, de Lubac was led to a thoroughgoing historical investigation of such topics as grace, Eucharist, faith, church and revelation because the moment he knew in time was attacking the past foundations upon which these theological themes had been built. That foundation, by de Lubac's own admission, was a concept of the dignity of person.

De Lubac judges that

Griserie scientifique, révolte ontologique,
réduction noétique: telles sont, en résumé,
les trois tentations dont s'accompagne le
progrès de notre âge...¹⁸¹

All of these spring from an individualism run aground. That individualism is a mystique of man just as the Marxist collectivist notion of man, the Socialist notion of man, and the technician's notion of man, are mystiques. De Lubac judges that an excessive

¹⁸⁰De Lubac, Catholicism, p. 266. "Si fermé en effet que se veuille parfois le monde théologique aux influences du dehors, il ne peut rester toujours imperméable aux courants qui emportent le siècle, et ce n'est pas toujours lorsqu'il s'en croit le mieux protégé qu'il y résiste le plus efficacement".

¹⁸¹De Lubac, "L'idée chrétienne de l'homme et la recherche d'un homme nouveau", p. 20.

individualism, elaborate and ubiquitous in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, had taken hold of theology as well. He appropriates the judgment of Père Philippe de Regis that:

Perhaps Marxism and Leninism would not have arisen and been propagated with such terrible results if the place that belongs to collectivity in the natural as well as in the supernatural order had always been given to it.¹⁸²

He thinks that E. Masure is also right.

Our treatises on grace and the sacraments, on the Eucharist, even on the church, are fashioned so as to give the impression that God the Redeemer is never faced with anything but an untold number of individuals, everyone of them regulating on his own account the measure of his personal relationship with God.¹⁸³

De Lubac, therefore, in his own theological writing, calls for a restoration of the truly Catholic man.¹⁸⁴ He publishes so as to

¹⁸²Quoted by de Lubac, Catholicism, p. 267.

¹⁸³Quoted by de Lubac, ibid., p. 277.

¹⁸⁴De Lubac has written three books and several articles on the Buddhist concept of man. They arose as a result of his assignment to teach a course on the history of religion at Lyon. In several classes, de Lubac apologizes for the writing for he knows that his own understanding has been fashioned in the West and it is a delicate and somewhat audacious venture to speak outside that tradition. His published material on Buddhism, however, emerged when he was 'silenced' by his superiors from publishing on matters of his own faith. This material does not stray wildly or widely. Rather it treats those aspects of Buddhism which touch upon the Christian and Marxist concept of man. Rationalists of the nineteenth century, de Lubac says, attempted to use Buddhism as a "machine du guerre" against Christianity. (Henri de Lubac, La Rencontre du Bouddhisme et de l'Occident [Paris: Aubier, 1952, p. 172). These rationalists

summon man to that personal yet corporate identity without which he

claimed that Buddhism offered both a higher perfection than Christianity as well as being a source of inspiration for Christianity. Christianity, de Lubac quotes them as saying, is the Buddhism of the West (*ibid.*, p. 175). A. Malraux judged Buddhism to be the first universal humanism -- the first attempt of man without God to defend himself against his fate (*ibid.*, p. 264). Haeckel recognized his own theories, such as the eternity of matter, in Buddhism. Others have concluded that Buddhism anticipated everything from positivism, evolution, and modern science to nuclear energy (*ibid.*, pp. 235-236). De Lubac thinks on the other hand, that only a shallow mind can identify Christ and Buddha or Christianity and Buddhism (*ibid.*, p. 254). In fact, he considers it a more likely hypothesis that Christianity influenced Buddhism (*ibid.*, p. 80). He points out that those elements of Buddhism which seem to resemble Christian elements are later developments of a sect within Buddhism called Amidism. This sect was very possibly influenced by Nestorian Christianity in the fifth century (Henri de Lubac, *Amida* [Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1955], pp. 226-236). In any case, what is the position of the person in Buddhism? De Lubac, in *Aspects du Bouddhisme* [Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1951], says that since there is no historical foundation for Buddhism, and since its character is so mythical, it reduces human destiny to a dream. Buddha is not God and there is no personal, living God at the heart of its religion (*ibid.*, p. 41). Christian man is made in the image and likeness of a personal God, but Buddhist man is a creature attempting to return to the void of Nirvana. Man is an unimportant nomad seeking escape in the de-personalized heaven of pantheism. The I-Thou unity of the creature with Amida is attained through the loss of identity and personality (de Lubac, *Amida*, pp. 270-272). Buddhist charity, "*maitri*", may seem like Christian charity but in reality it never rises above pity or compassion (de Lubac, *Aspects du Bouddhisme*, p. 38). In addition, "*maitri*" is merely provisional and never enters into man's eternity. "*Maitri*" is simply a technique used in achieving detachment: one's neighbour is never loved for his own sake (*ibid.*, p. 41). Thus, on the one hand, Buddhist man is seeking to lose his identity in the eternal void and, on the other hand, his neighbour is merely a tool for achieving his escape. Bergson, de Lubac says, saw Buddhism to be "'un mysticisme incomplet parce qu'il n'a pas vu l'efficacité de l'action humaine et qu'il a manqué de chaleur'" (de Lubac, *La rencontre...*, p. 285). De Lubac does not think that Buddhist man is really in competition in the market place of modern anthropology.

N.B. We have pointed out de Lubac's judgments on Buddhism so as to highlight his own thesis on Western man. His study of Asian things, it goes without saying, is more popular than scientific and, therefore, suffers from such emphasis. Although de Lubac seems to have carried on research in the field, his sources are taken mostly from French authors.

cannot appreciate himself and his task in time. When de Lubac speaks of humanism (and he is cautious to distinguish its differing forms) he says that its chief result is "l'écrasement de la personne humaine".¹⁸⁵ He wishes to restore to the West its concept of the human person.

The theme of the church, then, is also articulated with a view to such a restoration. For de Lubac the theological consideration of church is done against that rigid, individualistic, sectarian, polemic which expounded mystery in legalistic terms.¹⁸⁶

Il est certain, d'une façon plus générale que l'intelligence logique -- celle de l'homo faber plus que de l'homo sapiens, -- commence par découper les objets, les 'définir', les isoler pour les relier ensuite artificiellement; et il n'est pas moins certain que, dans son appétit de clarté analytique, elle s'impatiente de toute idée mystérieuse...condition de la science, elle comporte une rançon.¹⁸⁷

He stresses that both the unity of mankind and a universality of mind are indispensable characteristics of the traditional Christian concept of man. There can be no authentic Christian man who is not truly catholic in the richest sense of that word. This is the basis for de Lubac's writings on church, and is evident as his emphasis in every period when he wrote on the subject. It is to that theme of church to which we now turn.

¹⁸⁵De Lubac, DHA, p. 8.

¹⁸⁶De Lubac, Catholicisme, p. 265.

¹⁸⁷Ibid.

A. Catholicism (1947)

The church is catholic, not because it is spread throughout the earth, nor because of the number of persons who claim it as their own.¹⁸⁸ Catholicity has nothing to do, in de Lubac's mind, with geography or statistics; rather it is the society of man gathered together with "la forme que doit revêtir l'humanité pour être enfin elle-même".¹⁸⁹ Catholicism, for de Lubac, is co-extensive with religion itself. By asserting such a view, de Lubac stresses, not the hierarchial ingredient of de ecclesia, not its legal component, not its external form, but rather that which human nature itself establishes. The Church is "le Christ ressuscité, lorsqu'il se manifeste à ses amis, prend le visage de toutes les races, et chacun l'entend dans sa langue".¹⁹⁰

Le Christ aussitôt qu'il existe, porte
en lui virtuellement tous les hommes,
-- erat in Christo Jesu omnis homo....
Il s'est incorporé à notre humanité, et
il se l'est incorporée.¹⁹¹

Thus, for de Lubac, the idea of brotherhood is the idea of church, and the idea of brotherhood comes from Christ who seeks to remind humanity of its lost unity so that it might once more be restored. Like Judaism, of which she is the flower,¹⁹² the church is

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., p. viii.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 256.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., pp. 14-15.

¹⁹² Henri de Lubac, "Un nouveau 'front' religieux", pp. 9-40.

essentially social.

One of the chief instruments of the church's unity is the reality of sacraments.¹⁹³ De Lubac stresses again and again that these have as their raison d'être "le salut de l'Église".¹⁹⁴

Le premier effet du baptême, par exemple, n'est autre que cette agrégation à l'Église visible....L'efficacité de la Pénitence trouve une explication analogue à celle du baptême....l'Eucharistie est aussi par excellence le sacrement de l'unité: sacramentum unitatis ecclesiasticae.¹⁹⁵

In a lengthy chapter, which he later worked into a fully developed book, Corpus Mysticum, de Lubac recalls the ancient tradition of the church which saw the Eucharist as an exclusive symbol of the unity of believers.¹⁹⁶ "La véritable piété eucharistique

¹⁹³De Lubac, Catholicisme, p. 57.

¹⁹⁴Ibid., p. 81

¹⁹⁵Ibid., pp. 58, 61, 63.

¹⁹⁶In Corpus Mysticum (Paris: Aubier, 1949), an historical study of the relationship of the church to the Eucharist up until the middle ages, de Lubac points out how the title Corpus Mysticum was applied to both Eucharist and church, then to Eucharist alone, and finally to church alone. He shows that it is not until the latter half of the twelfth century that the body of Christ, which is the church, begins to be described by the adjective "mystical" (pp. 117-127). There were "corporeal" and "spiritualist" schools of thought, de Lubac points out. The latter school (represented by Augustine and Ambrose among others) was favoured until the time of Anselm and Peter Lombard. Thus, for example, Augustine spoke of "caro spiritualis" (quoted in ibid., p. 140). In general this "spiritualist" emphasis can be seen from the fact that the Eucharist was referred to as "corpus mysticum" or "caro spiritualis". However, when Berengarius appeared on the scene (d. 1088) "il conserve donc un point de vue foncièrement spiritualiste....Reprenant par exemple un mot de la tradition spiritualisante 'non phantasticum sed verum', il ajoute:

"nec solum in sacramento, sed in semetipso" (pp. 165-166). Thus, de Lubac traces the introduction of the word "substantia" in Eucharistic theology. "La formule 'consecrare in substantiam corporis' tenait son rang à côté des formules similaires qui disaient soit seulement 'in sacramentum', 'in mysterium', 'in dignitatem', soit 'in carnem', 'in corpus' (*ibid.*, p. 171). Next, he shows how the description of communion as corporeal eating led to the description of the Eucharist presence as corporeal presence (*ibid.*, p. 178). This was quite a different emphasis from Augustine's teaching that Christ was "spiritually" yet "really" present in the Eucharist (*ibid.*, p. 179). All of this, says de Lubac, led to the impression that the "res" was separated from the "virtus" which was narrowly restricted to the sacrament itself; at the same time, "mystical" and "spiritual" were used to qualify the effect of the sacrament only and not the sacrament or "virtus" itself. In reality, however, the "res" and "virtus" are indissoluble according to de Lubac, since the "res" is as much life as it is unity, and "virtus" is as much unity as it is life (*ibid.*, p. 207). In short, the reaction to Berengarius occasioned the development of a theology of the Eucharist which resembled more and more an apologetic for the "real presence" (*ibid.*, p. 254). There is a further point of importance that bears on this development. "Anselme et Abélard sont les fondateurs du 'rationalisme chrétien'" (*ibid.*, p. 267). They introduced a new concept of "intelligence" to the theological world -- dialectics. Preoccupied with rational demonstration, which did not easily lend itself to the contemplation of mysteries, they helped to point theology in the direction of the apologetical rather than the theological or contemplative. Once again de Lubac asserts that this rational impatience with mystery is a far cry from the loving contemplation of the mysteries which characterized Augustine's "intelligence de la foi". Finally, de Lubac suggests that faith in the church was, for the Fathers of the church, the guarantee of Eucharistic realism.

It seems to us that de Lubac made substantial contribution to the present effort in Catholic theology to break away from the "physicalism" or "corporealism" in past Eucharistic theology. F. Clark notes in his Adiumenta ad Tractatum de SS. Eucharistiae Sacramento (Romae: Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana, 1966), p. 121, that the new theories of "transignification" and "transfinalization" are really not new at all. He says that the essential ideas behind them first appeared in La présence réelle by Yves de Montcheuil in 1936. Although privately circulated, the ideas in the work gained sufficient attention to be condemned by Pius XII in his encyclical, "Humani Generis". Since Yves de Montcheuil was a personal friend of de Lubac [Proudhon et le Christianisme (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1945) is dedicated to the memory of Yves de Montcheuil and de Lubac wrote an introduction to Yves de Montcheuil's work: L'Eglise et le monde actuel, but which he (de Lubac) did not sign.], and since their theological sympathies were, generally speaking, the same, it is not unreasonable to conclude that de Lubac's Corpus Mysticum was a strong support, although an indirect one, of the pioneering efforts of de Montcheuil.

n'est donc pas un individualisme dévot".¹⁹⁷ He argues for a return to that sound tradition which saw a profound unity between the mysteries of the Eucharist and the church, rather than a concentration on that later medieval scholasticism which was scientific rather than religious.¹⁹⁸

Catholicism, in many ways, is a précis of de Lubac's future literary career. The themes introduced here are often developed into full length works later on. It seems to us, however, that little substantial change in theological insight occurs between Catholicism of 1947 and Les églises particulières of 1972.

B. Méditation sur l'Eglise (1953)

This work of de Lubac appeared as a clear break in the field of ecclesiology, even somewhat of a departure from Catholicism. Although it was not the first attempt to break away from the manual theology,¹⁹⁹ it did bring a breadth of view, a patristic richness, a feeling for the modern situation and a sense of the whole living church that was unique. Its lyrical prose exuded life and warmth

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 291.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 292.

¹⁹⁹ By manual theology we understand the post-Tridentine theology contained in textbooks used to train Roman Catholic seminarians. For example, the texts of C. Van Noort and A. Tanqueray. Cf. Part Two, Chapter Three, note 14 of our thesis.

and the love of a living reality.

Continuing his theme of mystery and synthesis, de Lubac says here that the church is "le lieu de tous les mystères",²⁰⁰ for it contains the mystery of Christ and the mystery of man. The solidarity of Christ and man together is uniquely mysterious. Created before all things, the church, like Christ, lives in time and will live in eternity.

Similar to the theme of Catholicism de Lubac sees the church as part of the Christian mystery, not another Christian mystery.

Or, à partir d'un certain état de crise,
ou d'un certain point de maturation, telle
de ces parties de l'unique Tout, tel
mystère particulier passe pour ainsi
dire au premier plan de la réflexion.²⁰¹

The emergence of the Church in the "foreground of the reflexive landscape", at the particular moment in history of which de Lubac writes, is co-extensive with the experience of man's new situation: his brotherhood. De Lubac thinks that it is the emergence of the Church in the consciousness of all Christians which can mediate the false individualism of the past and the false collectivism of the present.²⁰² He calls this consciousness of church, by both Protestants and Catholics, "une vaste poussée collective".²⁰³ He

²⁰⁰ Henri de Lubac, Méditation sur l'Église, p. 12.

²⁰¹ Ibid., p. 16.

²⁰² Ibid., p. 9.

²⁰³ Ibid., p. 18.

stresses that the consciousness of church, while always a part of lived faith, nevertheless, in these days, appears as that solitary form of authentic brotherhood.

Finally, speaking to a theme he will later develop in La foi chrétienne, de Lubac sees the church, from one point of view, as a result of sin. Therefore, it is a creature. Man does not believe the church; man believes God. The church is provisional.

Et l'on verra en elle un moyen, provisoire
comme tout moyen. Ce pourra être là, au
surplus, manière utile de montrer que dans
le christianisme jamais l'être personnel
n'est subordonné ou sacrifié à quelque
organisme collectif, comme l'individu
l'est à la société selon tant de théories
humaines....²⁰⁴

And yet, from another point of view, de Lubac, quoting Clement of Alexandria, says that "just as the will of God is an act and is called the world, so also His intention is the salvation of men and is called the Church".²⁰⁵ Again, in attempting to speak to the dimensions of mystery, our author confronts us with paradox -- one of his favourite devices. Thus, while the church is a means, still it is an end. While it is in via, still it is in patria. While it leads to Christ, still it is Christ. However, despite de Lubac's effort at balance and qualification, it is clear that Méditation sur l'Église does in fact introduce and stress the temporality of the church. Like Catholicisme it sees the need for a form, properly conceived and lived, which can provide an alternative for national

²⁰⁴Ibid., p. 51.

²⁰⁵Ibid., p. 46.

socialism. De Lubac, once again, takes up a theme, investigates its theological understanding in history, and provides a correct and balanced alternative to a pressing, immediate question.²⁰⁶

C. Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus

Throughout his writings on the church, de Lubac speaks to the question of salvation outside the church. He concedes that the formula of "outside the church, no salvation" is not only a negative but an ugly way of expressing the truth that it is by the church alone that man is to be saved. To say that the church is the divinely appointed means of salvation is not to limit salvation to its visible members only.

As de Lubac sees it, humanity is comprised of many individuals, all of whom share the same destiny and the same desire for that destiny. God has not imposed himself upon man in any mechanical or mathematical fashion. Rather he has used various and sundry forms of religion to bring man to himself. Men in these religions are characterized by a groping after the truth.

Par ce qu'on observe dans leurs institutions
et dans leur conscience de recherche, d'
élaboration pénible, d'anticipations partielles,

²⁰⁶Chapter VIII of Méditation sur l'Église is entitled "Nos tentations à l'égard de l'Église". De Lubac re-published this chapter, substantially the same, years later. Also, his article "L'Église dans la crise actuelle", NRT 91 (1969), 580-596, built upon Chapter VIII, nevertheless seems to employ a "tight-clenched hardness" (Méditation sur l'Église, p. 215) in the face of what he calls the "autodestruction" of believers ("L'Église dans la crise actuelle", p. 580).

de justes inventions naturelles et de solutions encore imparfaites, ont eu à remplir dans l'histoire de notre salut une fonction nécessaire, c'est qu'ils tiennent dans notre humanité, dans cette humanité telle que l'ont faite à la fois la chute et la promesse du Rédempteur, une place inévitable.²⁰⁷

This does not mean that the church is not the unique means of salvation. De Lubac affirms the absolute necessity of Christianity for salvation and he does not teach that it merely facilitates the process.²⁰⁸ On the other hand, he maintains that it would be rigorism to condemn all pagans to hell since we know that

la lumière du Verbe éclaire tout homme venant en ce monde, et que, sous mille formes anonymes, la grâce du Christ peut être partout à l'oeuvre.²⁰⁹

De Lubac urges us to see the larger picture of salvation. He teaches that we should not conceive of salvation in individualist terms so much as in collective terms. He sees mankind mysteriously united and oriented towards that spiritual unity which the church seeks to effect in the present order of things. It is not surprising, therefore, that there are many "anonymous Christians", as they are now called, who are not fully aware of the spiritual unity towards which they are striving but which they radically possess by reason

²⁰⁷ Henri de Lubac, Catholicisme, p. 193.

²⁰⁸ Henri de Lubac, Le fondement théologique des missions (Paris: Editions de Seuil, 1946), p. 36.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 35 (emphasis added).

of their humanity.²¹⁰

D. Later Writings

Two later writings: Paradoxe et mystère de l'Église (1967), and Les Eglises Particulières (1971), substantially continue de Lubac's understanding of the church. The former is, to a large extent, a collection of short essays written over several years; the latter takes some earlier themes of the author and re-works them in the light of a contemporary question.

Paradoxe et mystère de l'Église brings together the language of mystery and the language of maternity -- favourite symbols for de Lubac -- to describe a foundation upon which dialogue is possible

²¹⁰The idea of "anonymous Christianity" in contemporary theology is derived from the fathers through de Lubac, as far as we can ascertain. It flows from the view that since all mankind is called to salvation, the human race is a kind of preliminary "people of God", or a blueprint of what is to be constructed. Hence, by the very fact that a man is a member of the human race, he is radically a member of the church. Edward Schillebeeckx, O.P., for example, speaks of an "ecclesial" and a "worldly" expression of the very same "God-related life concealed in the mystery of Christ" (Edward Schillebeeckx, O.P., "The Church and Mankind", in Concilium, Vol. I: The Church and Mankind, ed. Edward Schillebeeckx, O.P. [Glen Rock, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1965], p. 83). See, also, Karl Rahner, S.J., "Membership of the Church According to the Teaching of Pius XII's Encyclical 'Mystici Corporis Christi'", in Theological Investigations, Vol. II, trans. by Karl H. Krüger (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1964), pp. 81-88. For a fairly recent documentation of the point, see Boniface Willems, O.P., "Who Belongs to the Church?" in Concilium, Vol. I, pp. 131-151. The first name mentioned by Willems on this particular turn of contemporary theology (viz. "anonymous Christianity") is that of Henri de Lubac (ibid., p. 144).

among the various churches within Christianity. It is interesting to point out that Lumen Gentium, the Constitution on the Church from Vatican II, uses the same images de Lubac appropriates, and much for the same reason:

ad eam variis modis pertinent vel ordinantur
sive fideles catholici, sive alii credentes
in Christo, sive denique omnes universales
homines, gratia Dei in salutem vocati.²¹¹

De Lubac does not agree, however, with a theological interpretation of the "People of God" which would identify the church with either its Hellenic or Semitic roots.²¹² He does not think that the Fathers of the first four or five centuries had such origins in mind when they spoke of the church as the "People of God".

Il faut d'ailleurs tenir compte du fait que, si la notion d'Eglise a ses racines dans l'Ancien Testament, elle a grandi aussi dans l'atmosphère hellénistique, et se rappeler enfin qu'elle n'est pourtant ni juive ni hellénistique: elle est une nouvelle création chrétienne, elle n'est rien d'autre que chrétienne.²¹³

De Lubac thinks that, while the "People of God" may be an image which opens ecumenical dialogue, nevertheless the image needs balance with that of mystery and mother. Referring to ecumenism, de Lubac says:

L'oecuménicité, selon les Pères, a-t-on écrit,

²¹¹Quoted by de Lubac, Paradoxe et mystère de l'Église, p. 73.

²¹²Ibid., pp. 78-79.

²¹³Ibid., p. 78.

'est quelque chose de dynamique, qui travaille sans cesse pour gagner et changer le monde selon l'Évangile'. Ce qu'il importe ici de bien voir...n'est pas une idée, ou une réalité quelconque. Ce n'est pas l'idée chrétienne, ce n'est pas le christianisme. C'est une réalité, une existence, une action, une force personnelle: c'est la personne même de Jésus-Christ: Ego sum via, veritas et vita.²¹⁴

Therefore, regardless of the image that is used, de Lubac insists that every image be grounded in Christ, who is responsible for the church, the raison d'être of its being. Only in this way can one affirm the unique reality of church without reducing it to a Kantian epi-phenomenon, formed by the will of man and destined to be surpassed in this world.²¹⁵

Perhaps the most interesting, because it is so timely, of all de Lubac's remarks concerning the church occurs in Les églises particulières dans l'Église universelle. He continues to feel the

²¹⁴Ibid., p. 135.

²¹⁵Cf. E. Kant, Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone, trans. by Theodore M. Greene and Hoyt H. Hudson (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1960), pp. 98 f. It seems to us that Kant's understanding of revelation, as his understanding of faith, religion and church, are conclusions of the way he understands man himself. For Kant, man's essence is his freedom. De Lubac does not accept that definition. For de Lubac, man's essence cannot be thought apart from God and the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. That revelation, whether mediated by the Bible or man's reason illumined by grace, is not a function of man himself -- except in the sense we shall explain in Chapter Three.

importance of the image of the church as 'mother' in the face of the depersonalization of man by modern technic.

De Lubac describes the present moment as "le phénomène de la dépersonnalisation sociale".²¹⁶ He calls our time the "ère de mécanisation, où l'homme serait peu à peu absorbé par la force même des produits de la raison".²¹⁷

C'est une 'massification' de l'espèce humaine qui, bien loin de rapprocher les hommes entre eux par des liens fraternels, aboutit d'ordinaire à l'isolement psychique de l'individu: celui-ci n'est plus intégré, mais absorbé et perdu, -- et c'est alors, à la mesure même de sa clairvoyance, le risque du désespoir.²¹⁸

Against the presence of this "mal collectif"²¹⁹ de Lubac, once again, insists that it is only in man's "vocation divine que l'homme apprend à se connaître".²²⁰ Concretely, that divine vocation is proclaimed and perceived in the church.

²¹⁶Henri de Lubac, Les églises particulières dans l'Église universelle (Paris: Aubier, 1972), p. 213.

²¹⁷Quoted by de Lubac, ibid.

²¹⁸Ibid., p. 214. The analysis de Lubac makes of the depersonalization of contemporary man by technology is not without its parallel in Jacques Ellul. Cf. Jacques Ellul, La technique ou l'enjeu du siècle (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1954). De Lubac quotes from Ellul's work L'impossible prière (Paris: Centurion, 1971), pp. 91-92, but without comment.

²¹⁹Ibid., p. 217.

²²⁰Ibid., p. 219.

Aujourd'hui, comme par le passé, tout, dans la foi de l'Église, nous convoque à la vie la plus personnelle.²²¹

De Lubac says that personalist categories have always been the best means used by the church to describe both itself and man. The personalist category, par excellence, is the maternity of the church.

La maternité de l'Église n'a plus de sens pour nos systèmes, -- mais nous, pour nous délivrer de leur abstraction, nous avons besoin de revenir à notre mère.²²²

Thus it is that the church, for de Lubac, is the meeting place where the revelation is proclaimed who is Christ, while the church herself is the revelation of God. Against the hierarchical emphasis which would depersonalize were it an end in itself, and which has sometimes been ill-conceived in an "old scholasticism", de Lubac judges that a church of Jesus Christ is the

symbole efficace de cet Amour que le poète n'a pas craint d'appeler la maternité de Dieu:

Aie pitié de moi, Seigneur, par les entrailles de ta maternité, car je sais que ton amour pour moi est comme celui d'une mère nouvellement accouchée.²²³

E. Conclusion

It seems clear that, for Henri de Lubac, man understands himself through the revelation of God in Jesus Christ proclaimed in time through the church. Any other self-understanding is subjected

²²¹Ibid., p. 223.

²²²Ibid., p. 226.

²²³Ibid., p. 229.

to the caprice of ideology. De Lubac's writings on the church, and on revelation in general, arose to speak against these ideologies: Marxism, national socialism, and liberalism.²²⁴ What is more, his writings pointed out the distance between ideology and religion. This is not to say that, for de Lubac, the new is to be rejected. He was one of the first at the beginning of the century, among Catholic theologians, who knew that "fidelity to a tradition...is never servile repetition".²²⁵ He did insist, however, that given the new questions, given the new insights in philosophy as well as theology, yet a doctrine of man which would neglect revelation would not be a doctrine for the West, if indeed it could, for long, be a doctrine for the world.

The way de Lubac spoke was designed to summon man to a renewed awareness of his heritage, given in the form of a Biblical Revelation, reflected upon in the light of modern exigencies. He rejected theological categories of later scholasticism and post-Reformation thought which were inconsistent with the tradition at its finest. He knew that the modern questions were new questions demanding fresh and vigorous response, but he was not convinced that

²²⁴We use liberalism to name the modern phenomenon of technology which depersonalizes by the elimination of chance under the guise of perfectability in time.

²²⁵Henri de Lubac, Catholicisme, p. 264.

what had been best in the past had nothing to say to the present.²²⁶

As far as his writing on the church is concerned, we have seen this to be the case. Against an idea of the church as a closed, elite, club, de Lubac offered the church as open to the world, destined to embrace all men. Against an idea of the church as exclusively legislative and hierarchical, de Lubac provided the Patristic image of the alma mater. Against an idea of the church as totally spiritual, de Lubac emphasized the concrete, association of living men, supporting one another in both the things of the spirit and the things of the world. Against the reduction of the church to the fabrication of men's minds, de Lubac recalled the establishment of the Qahal, the ekklesia, and the "People of God" as the gift of God from the beginning. Against those who substituted their own 'church' for the church of Jesus Christ, which 'church' robbed man of what was deepest in his self-understanding, de Lubac proposed, once again, that sacred space where alone man could understand himself as "made in the image and likeness of God" and therefore destined for a future not constructed by demagogues.

In "Part Two", we will focus in more closely on de Lubac's understanding of man. It is our contention that it is an understanding built upon revelation. "Chapter Three" provides a further theological consideration of man as de Lubac thinks him; "Chapter Four" concludes with de Lubac's generally philosophical work on the dignity and the destiny of man.

²²⁶Henri de Lubac, Le mystère du surnaturel, pp. 35-37.

PART TWO

THE MYSTERY OF GOD IN EXPERIENCE

INTRODUCTION

The subject of Part Two is de Lubac's writing on (1) the supernatural and (2) man's search for God. The first is a theological theme; the second is generally a philosophical theme. Both of these themes are closely interdependent for de Lubac. Both of them bear on our focus of revelation as characterizing the achievement of Henri de Lubac. Finally, both of these themes, but especially the first one, were major contributions of de Lubac to later twentieth century Roman Catholic theologizing.

The theme of the supernatural is the basis for de Lubac's idea of man. He gathers that idea from reading the Biblical Revelation in the light of two thousand years of theological commentary.

Accablée sous plus de cinq siècles d'alluvions,
l'ignorance de soi est le mal le plus grave dont
souffre la scholastique. Pour la rendre à
elle-même, écoutons le conseil de l'histoire:
Retour à la théologie!¹

The supernatural, therefore, is not a philosophical point of view.

Elle n'est pas possédée dans la lumière de la
raison: elle est crue, d'abord, dans la nuit
de la foi.²

But, there is reason to say that, for de Lubac, the theological

¹Etienne Gilson, "Les recherches historico-critiques et l'avenir de la Scholastique", *Scholastica ratione historico-critica instauranda* (Rome, 1951), p. 142, quoted by Henri de Lubac, *Le Mystère du surnaturel* (Paris: Aubier, 1965), frontspiece. Hereafter, *Le Mystère du surnaturel* is noted by LMS.

²LMS, p. 211.

doctrine of the divine-human relationship serves as the basis for his general philosophical writings. More than this, because man in his historical, de facto situation has the destiny of beatitude, philosophical reflection is not out of order. In this sense de Lubac's thoughts on the supernatural are often spoken in what seems to be purely philosophical categories. However, he is always, in our judgment, what Hans Urs von Balthasar calls the "crypto-theologian".³ De Lubac gathers, then, his philosophical insights from a theological base. He speaks of man on the basis of what revelation: both Biblical Revelation, and the revelation of God to man in thought and life, teaches. He uses the revelation as his a priori, but he proceeds to establish the conditions upon which this a priori can be true. In this regard he proceeds somewhat like Kant. For Kant, true and certain knowledge exists in mathematics and physics. This is taken for granted in the First Critique. The Second Critique is an enquiry regarding the conditions which make moral judgments possible. Similarly, de Lubac begins with the actual revelation of God in Jesus Christ and then seeks to discover (a posteriori) the conditions that must have obtained and always do obtain, to make that actual revelation actual, and actual as what it is.

³Hans Urs von Balthasar, Herrlichkeit, Vol. I. (Einsiedeln: Verlag, 1961), p. 15.

CHAPTER THREE

THE SUPERNATURAL

1. Introduction

A. The Significance of the Question

The relationship of God to man and man to God is the central reality that theology attempts to describe and interpret. In Christian theology this includes the perennial problem of man's destiny and the explanation of the Incarnation. Such concepts as the finite and the infinite, immanence and transcendence, nature and grace, the natural and the supernatural, reason and faith, law and gospel, the profane and the sacred, culture and Christianity, the world and the church, and most currently, the question of a theology of secularization, have been ways used to articulate the problematic.

Despite the fact that the emphasis and thought categories have changed, yet the underlying question has endured: "How is God related to man; how is man related to God?" Contemporary theologians illustrate this to be so. Paul Tillich says: "Der Prüfstein der Theologie ist ihre Fähigkeit, die absolute Spannung zwischen dem Bedingten und dem Unbedingten zu erhalten".¹ Henri de Lubac has

¹Paul Tillich, Gesammelte Werke, 4 (Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1961), p. 102.

written:

Ce mystère du surnaturel, que est le mystère de notre destinée divine, apparaît un peu comme la forme à l'intérieur de laquelle viendront s'inscrire tous les autres mystères de la révélation".²

Thus it seems that the question and its articulation is a point of ecumenical contact and dialogue, not only between Catholic and Protestant theologians, but with non-Christian thinkers as well. Martin Buber, for example, stated that his most essential concern was "die enge Verbundenheit der Beziehung zu Gott mit der Beziehung zum Mitmenschen".³

Furthermore, the relationship between God and man goes further than the theological speculations of specialists. As the fundamental theological reality, it is what Karl Rahner calls: "die Mitte der Wirklichkeit, aus der wir Christen leben",⁴ and therefore the basis of that Christianity, called by Jacques Maritain: "humanisme intégral".⁵

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, furthermore, says that misinterpreting the God-man relationship is "ein Koloss ein Grossteil des traditionellen Christlich-ethischen Denken".⁶ And Eulalio Baltazar understands

²LMS, p. 209.

³Martin Buber, Werke, 1 (München: Kösel-Verlag, 1962), p. 161.

⁴Karl Rahner, Schriften zur Theologie, IV (Einsiedeln: Benziger Verlag, 1962), p. 137.

⁵Jacques Maritain, Humanisme Intégral (Paris: Aubier, 1947).

⁶Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Ethik (München: Kaiser Verlag, 1963), p. 208.

its interpretation to be the primary task for Church renewal.⁷ In brief, as de Lubac suggests, quoting Louis Foucher:

...c'est la foi chrétienne qui, plaçant au milieu de tout l'idée révélée de Dieu, la notion de l'Être infini et de nos rapports avec lui, nous fait comprendre notre nature, notre destinée, la nature du monde matériel, la morale, l'histoire de l'humanité.⁸

Western Catholic theology, at least since the time of Aquinas, has interpreted the God-man and the man-God relationship in nature-supernature categories.⁹ In this chapter of our thesis, the development of this interpretation will be examined so as to situate the unique place Henri de Lubac occupies in the tradition. We will point out the "standard", post-Tridentine formulation of the relation between nature and grace, then the contributions of those theologians most directly influential for de Lubac and then that "paradoxe fondamental que constitue le rapport de l'homme à Dieu"¹⁰ as re-worked by de Lubac himself. Finally, we will give

⁷Cf. Eulalio Baltazar, Teilhard and the Supernatural (Baltimore: Helicon, 1966), pp. 15-32.

⁸Louis Foucher, La philosophie catholique en France au XIX siècle (Paris: Gallimard, 1968), quoted by de Lubac, LMS, p. 22.

⁹Cf. Edward Brueggeman, "A Modern School of Thought on the Supernatural", Theological Studies 6 (March, 1945), 5-6, for the origin of the word and technical sense of "supernatural".

¹⁰Etienne Gilson, Philosophie et incarnation selon saint Augustin (Montréal: Université de Montréal, 1947).

some indication of what we see to be grounds for criticizing de Lubac's position.

B. The Standard "View" of Nature and Grace

In order to understand de Lubac's place in the development of Roman Catholic theology with regard to the doctrine of the supernatural, it is necessary to have an understanding of the theological context out of which his insight was born. This context can be described in general terms as the "standard" or commonly accepted view of nature and grace in post-Tridentine and neo-Scholastic theology. By this standard view we mean the theory contained in the theological manuals that were in general use as text books in Catholic theological schools up until the time of Vatican II.¹¹ This is a legitimate starting point for our inquiry since such a view is often more influential in the life of a theological tradition than the more profound and nuanced insights of single theologians. As a matter of fact, within Roman Catholic theology, individual theologians often take a "back seat" to larger, "official" points of view. Thus Scholasticism, Jansenism, Modernism, etc. are more easily identifiable than men who might have held such views. Furthermore, the life of the ordinary layman, through preaching and catechetics, is often formed around such views. Finally, and most

¹¹Cf., for example, the manuals of L. Ott, Grundriss der katholischen Dogmatik (Freiburg: Verlag Herder, 1952); A. Tanqueray, S.S., Dogmatic Theology (New York: Desclée, 1905).

importantly, "standard" views are the formulations over and against which theologians outside the Roman tradition are likely to measure the tradition.

One of the best means for gaining perspective of this post-Tridentine theology of the relation between nature and grace, or the natural and the supernatural, is to consider the fundamental inquiry that informed and directed its development. The theology took form around the question of whether or not man has a "natural desire" for God, and speculation was centered on an interpretation of a few famous texts from the writings of Thomas Aquinas.

It is difficult, perhaps even impossible, to determine the definitive position of Thomas on this question. In certain texts he seems to ground the possibility of the beatific vision on a "natural desire" for it. For example:

Cum autem impossibile sit naturale desiderium esse inane, quod quidem esset, si non esset possibile pervenire ad divinam substantiam intelligendam, quod naturaliter omnes mentes desiderant, necesse est dicere quod possibile est substantiam Dei videri per intellectum, et a substantiis intellectualibus separatis.¹²

However, in other groups of texts he seems to base man's meriting of the beatific vision on the fact that man has no "natural desire" for it. Thus:

...homini inditus est appetitus ultimi finis sui in communi, ut scilicet appetat naturaliter se esse completum in bonitate. Sed in quo ista

¹²Thomas Aquinas, Summa contra Gentiles (Roma: Marietti, 1946), c. 51 (emphasis added).

completio consistat, utrum in virtutibus, vel scientiis, vel delectabilibus, vel hujusmodi aliis, non est ei determinatum a natura.

Quando ergo ex propria ratione, adjutus divina gratia, apprehendit aliquod speciale bonum, ut suam beatitudinem, in quo vera sua beatitudo consistit, tunc meretur, non ex hoc quod appetit beatitudinem quam naturaliter appetit, sed ex hoc quod appetit hoc speciale quod non naturaliter appetit, ut visionem Dei, in quo tamen secundum rei veritatem sua beatitudo consistit.¹³

These are not isolated texts. Each, in fact, is strongly corroborated.¹⁴

This apparent contradiction in the writings of Aquinas gave rise during the medieval period to a classic dispute that came to a climax in the sixteenth century controversy over the writings of Michael de Bay (1513-1589), more frequently referred to as Baius. Baianism, as his doctrine came to be called, taught that the whole of what Scholastics called the "order of grace", that is, the beatific vision and justification, was the necessary complement of the creation of the human spirit. In other words, grace was something owed to man because of his spiritual nature. According to Baianism not only was God unable to withhold grace from man in the state of original justice, but what God bestows on man [even after the Fall] is not received as a gift but rather as a natural requirement.

Pope Pius V, in his condemnation of the writings of Baius in 1567, gave the first declaration of the Magisterium on the

¹³Thomas Aquinas, De Veritate (Roma: Marietti, 1942), q. 22, a. 7 (emphasis added).

¹⁴Cf., Patric Bastable, Natural Desire for God (Dublin: Sealy, Bryers and Walker, 1947), pp. 31-32 for additional texts.

"supernaturalness" of grace. The following two propositions taken from the writings of Baius are among the seventy-nine which cannot be held as defined faith, according to Pius V.

21. Humanae naturae sublimatio et exaltatio in consortium divinae naturae debita fuit integritati primae condicionis, et proinde naturalis dicenda est, et non supernaturalis.
23. Absurda est sententia eorum, qui dicunt, hominem ab initio, dono quodam supernaturali et gratuito, supra condicionem naturae suae fuisse exaltatum, ut fide, spe et caritate Deum supernaturaliter coleret.¹⁵

Jansenism, as the doctrine of Cornelius Jansen (1585-1638) is called, belonged to the same current of ideas as Baianism and was condemned by the Magisterium in 1653.¹⁶

The Thomists of that time emphatically denied that man could have a natural desire for God. The axiom of Cardinal Cajetan (1468-1534), "naturale desiderium non se extendit ultra naturae facultatem",¹⁷ became the principle underlying the theory of the relationship between the natural and the supernatural for the entire Thomistic school of theology. However, among the other orthodox Catholic theologians there were those, the Augustinians and the Scotists especially, who held that man's desire for God is natural

¹⁵DS, 1921, 1923.

¹⁶Ibid., 2001-2002.

¹⁷Cf. Bastable, op. cit., pp. 35-38.

though not efficacious, and therefore its fulfillment is gratuitous.¹⁸ Nevertheless, because of the polemic against Baianism and Jansenism the opinion of the Thomists prevailed.

Thomistic teaching on the relationship between nature and grace has been principally concerned with maintaining two principles: grace as supernatural with respect to the nature of man, against Baianism and Jansenism, thereby preserving the "creatureliness" of man and the transcendence and gratuity of God's gifts, and grace as intrinsic to man, against an understanding of the Protestant view of justification as a purely external imputation of Christ's justice, thereby asserting its relevance for man as his highest perfection. The problem has been how to reconcile both the transcendence and immanence of the supernatural. What has resulted is the so-called "superstructure" concept of the relation between nature and grace.

Briefly, we understand the "superstructure" concept of grace this way. Human 'nature'¹⁹ is according to the Aristotelian-Scholastic model. It is made up of (1) an underlying essence or substance, the permanent entity; (2) permanent powers or abilities to perform certain actions; and (3) transitory actions which 'nature'

¹⁸Ibid., p. 83. What that "superstructure" concept means is the subject of the paragraphs which immediately follow. It was the point of departure for contemporary theologians like Rousselot and de Lubac.

¹⁹'Nature' is written with single quotation marks whenever it refers to the Aristotelian-Scholastic model.

can perform by means of these powers. Grace is similarly tripartite, superimposed on 'nature', hence a supernature. The superstructures of grace are (1) a permanent entity or quality, the "supernatural substance", called sanctifying grace, that corresponds to the 'nature' or substance of man; (2) permanent powers or "virtues", called the infused virtues of faith, hope and charity, that correspond to the permanent abilities of man's "natural" 'nature'; and (3) the transient "virtus" or power, called actual grace, that corresponds to particular actions of daily life.

Although the term "quality" was emphasized in this theology in order to affirm that grace is considered an intrinsic change in man, nevertheless an all-pervasive "extrinsicism" is the most salient characteristic of the post-Tridentine, neo-Scholastic theory of the relation between nature and grace.²⁰ The order of grace, the supernatural, is regarded as extrinsic to man considered in his 'nature', the natural order. Therefore 'nature', taken in itself as "natura pura", could be fulfilled in a purely natural destiny, without contact with God in the beatific vision. This 'nature', viewed as being a sharply circumscribed, closed system, complete and harmonious in itself, is only "disturbed" by the purely external decree of God commanding the acceptance of the supernatural order of grace. This decree continues to be a purely extrinsic

²⁰Cf., Rahner, Schriften zur Theologie, IV, pp. 209-213, for a detailed exposition of this extrinsicism.

divine ordination until justification. In the light of this extrinsicism, nature is said to possess a "potentia obediencialis" for grace. This is understood as the absence of contradiction in the elevation of nature by grace, not as a faculty of man that tends to the beatific vision as its termination.

Grace within this framework is something beyond consciousness, "above" man's conscious spiritual and moral life. It is a reality that man comes to know about from Biblical Revelation alone. "Supernatural" and "knowable by Biblical Revelation alone" are synonymous.

The final outcome of this kind of teaching about the relation between 'nature' and grace has been characterized by Karl Rahner as follows:

Es kann (wenn auch sachlich nicht berechtigt) der Eindruck entstehen dasjenige, was man ursprünglich Gnade genannt habe, sei im Laufe der Dogmengeschichte des Mittelalters als Tat der Natur aus ihren eigenen Möglichkeiten heraus aufgefasst worden (z. B. die Möglichkeit der Liebe zu Gott über alles) und man habe, um das zu verschleiern, im Grunde nochmals dasselbe als "Übernatur" über die Natur gesetzt, dieses selbe dann freilich als unbewusste Modalität des Geistig-Sittlichen der Natur in ein Bewusstseinsjenseits abgeschoben, so dass man nicht mehr sehr deutlich sagen könne, wozu dies dann noch nütze.²¹

C. A New Orientation

It was this extrinsic notion of the supernatural with all

²¹Rahner, op. cit., p. 213.

its implications for Christian doctrine and life that stimulated a reaction among certain theologians at the turn of the century. The emphasis on the transcendence of grace had left in relative obscurity the other aspect of the traditional doctrine of the supernatural -- the fact that grace, while remaining absolutely gratuitous, actually does perfect 'nature'. Similarly, emphasis on the fact that man has no claim to this perfection shadowed the complementary fact that nature is somehow open to receive it.

Maurice Blondel (1861-1949), in his philosophical treatise entitled L'Action,²² was the initiator of a new orientation towards which future Catholic theology would approach the doctrine of the supernatural. Using the philosophical method of immanence, Blondel asserted that there is no truth which does not in some way arise from man's experience of reality. If there is a transcendent in the finite, then the experience of reality itself and man's reflection on it will eventually lead to its recognition. In L'Action Blondel tried to prove by a phenomenology of the human spirit that a systematic reflection on human life and its development leads, in fact, to an acknowledgement of the presence of the transcendent in human life, and even to the threshold of the Christian Gospel.

In Blondel's epistemology the faculty of the real is not

²²Maurice Blondel, L'Action (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1893). Cf., G. Baum, Man Becoming (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970), pp. 1-36, and James Somerville, Total Commitment (Washington: Corpus Books, 1968).

the intellect but man's involvement in the whole of life. The word "action" as he used it refers to man's willing, choosing, and doing, understood as the self-affirmation by which he becomes himself and determines his own history. Man is summoned to action from the first moment of his life, and becomes himself and enters into his destiny by involving himself in his life through action.

Blondel affirmed that every man, due to his limitless concern, is carried forward by action to a decisive and inevitable option in his life: either following the drive of his action he opens himself to the infinite; or he chooses to enclose himself in the finite and by so doing violates the thrust of his own action.

This option Blondel held, is the threshold of the supernatural. A man may open himself to the infinite either by acknowledging the self-revealing God, or, if he has not heard of God, by refusing to invest the finite with infinite value, by regarding life as open-ended and ready to transcend life, if a higher summons is available. If a man thus opts for openness, his life becomes, in the language of the theologian, supernatural, because he has opened himself to, and relies on, divine grace.

Blondel insisted that his approach does not reduce the supernatural to a part of 'nature'. Grace is totally free, for while man is capable of discovering that he is in need of a dimension beyond the finite, he is, at the same time, totally incapable of achieving this by his own resources. In other words, the tendency of human nature outstrips its powers.

Blondel summed up his thought on the relationship between the natural and the supernatural in this sentence:

Il est impossible que l'ordre surnaturel soit sans l'ordre naturel auquel il est nécessaire, et impossible qu'il ne soit pas puisque l'ordre naturel le garantit en l'exigeant.²³

The philosophy of Maurice Blondel initiated a shift in the development of the doctrine of the supernatural in Catholic theology, a shift from extrinsicism to an intrinsicism, or, as it is sometimes called, to a method of immanence, or more recently, a "turn to the subject." Here we shall mention the work of three men who followed in the way of Blondel, and provided the background for Henri de Lubac's Surnaturel.

Pierre Rousselot (1878-1915), the most influential philosopher and theologian in de Lubac's early career, was the founder of a new school of Thomism that received its inspiration and impetus from Blondel. In his doctoral dissertation, L'Intellectualisme de saint Thomas, Rousselot concluded from his analysis of the activity of the intellect in the epistemology of Thomas Aquinas that to be intellectual is to be capable, in some way, of the vision of God. In his own words:

On dirait, dans la langue des scholastiques postérieurs, que nous n'avons pas la "puissance obédientielle" de voir Dieu parce que nous avons la puissance naturelle de connaître la quiddité des corps, mais bien

²³Blondel, op. cit., p. 462.

vice versa.²⁴

He sums up his understanding of the epistemology of Aquinas in the following way: "l'intelligence...est essentiellement le sens du réel, mais elle n'est le sens du réel que parce qu'elle est le sens du divin".²⁵ The intellect as such, therefore, is "the faculty of the divine".

In 1924, Guy de Broglie (1872-1927) published an article which gave momentum to the new movement.²⁶ He held the thesis of Rousselot on the nature of the intellect and its tendency to the vision of God, but he emphasized that there is no right to that vision nor exigency for it. This tendency to the vision of God is what Scholastics call a "velleity", and not an efficacious desire. It is implicit in every desire of the will, de Broglie asserts, because there are not two species of beatitude, one natural and the other supernatural, but only one beatitude, the vision of God.

Impossible donc, pour le vrai disciple de saint Thomas, de rêver un genre "béatitude" divisible en deux espèces, l'une naturelle et l'autre surnaturelle. Une seule béatitude est possible, une seule qui soit entièrement digne de son nom, parce qu'il y a une seule manière de posséder le bien divin, et c'est de Le voir, comme il y a une seule manière de Le voir, et c'est par

²⁴Rousselot, L'intellectualisme de Saint Thomas (New York: Sheed and Ward 1935), p. 39, n.2.

²⁵Ibid., p. v.

²⁶Guy de Broglie, "De la place du surnaturel dans la philosophie de saint Thomas", RSR XIV (1924), pp. 193-246.

le contact intellectuel de sa substance.²⁷

About the same time, Joseph Maréchal (1878-1944) propounded a view that brought the movement of intrinsicism a step further. In the fifth volume of his work, Le point de départ de la métaphysique,²⁸ using transcendental philosophy as his methodology, he developed the position that there is in man a metaphysical tendency to the beatific vision. This tendency sets in motion his whole conscious life, yet God has left its fulfillment to a new and gratuitous intervention on his own part. Thus, human nature is continuously tending to a perfection that is beyond the reach of its natural powers.

Nous concluons . . . que l'impulsion naturelle de nos facultés intellectives les oriente vers l'intuition immédiate de l'être absolu; que cette intuition, à vrai dire dépasse la puissance et excède l'exigence de toute intelligence finie livrée à ses seules ressources naturelles....²⁹

This brief summary of the thought of Maurice Blondel and his followers indicates their rejection of the then commonly accepted extrinsicist view of the relation between the natural and the supernatural. In so doing these philosophers and theologians radically changed the focus in which modern and contemporary Catholic theology would view the mystery of man's relationship to God.

²⁷Ibid., p. 234.

²⁸Joseph Maréchal, Le point de départ de la métaphysique, vol. 5 (Paris: Édition du Museum Lessianum, 1926). Maréchal wrote his Cahiers as a response to Kant's Critique. We shall have occasion in Chapter Four to point out how de Lubac's Sur les chemins de Dieu relied upon Maréchal's metaphysics.

²⁹Ibid., p. 315.

2. The Supernatural for Henri de Lubac

It was the publication of Surnaturel by Henri de Lubac in 1946³⁰ that marked the beginning of the modern period in the evolution of the doctrine of the supernatural in Catholic theology. This book was destined to become one of the most controversial works in modern Catholic theology, stimulating not only much judicious criticism, but also a large amount of passionate attack as well as vigorous defense. As we have mentioned elsewhere, it was also one of the "targets" of the papal encyclical Humani Generis.³¹

Nineteen years after the appearance of Surnaturel, de Lubac published two other major works on the same theme, Augustinisme et théologie moderne and Le Mystère du Surnaturel.³² These two companion volumes are an expansion and clarification of his first work and contain no change in his fundamental position. Together they present a consistent and unified exposition of his thought. These three works are the basis for our consideration of Henri de Lubac's theology of the relationship between the natural and the supernatural.

³⁰Henri de Lubac, Surnaturel (Paris: Aubier, 1946).

³¹Cf., DB, 3891; note 4 of our Introduction.

³²Henri de Lubac, Augustinisme et théologie moderne (Paris: Aubier, 1965); LMS (Paris: Aubier, 1965).

De Lubac has stated that his writings on this theme have but one aim, to demonstrate, establish and illustrate that "l'homme, image de Dieu, est, comme tel, apte à entrer en communion avec Lui, dans la liberté de l'esprit et la gratuité de l'amour".³³ On its title page, Surnaturel is called "Etudes historiques", and in the introduction to Le Mystère du Surnaturel he wrote, "L'objet de ce travail ne dépasse guère...les bornes d'une théologie positive".³⁴ In reading these books, however, it is evident that we are in contact with highly speculative and personal insights, developed and enriched by a perceptive historical methodology. In the laconic phrase of one of his critics, de Lubac's work is "historicum materialiter, theologicum formaliter".³⁵

The central thesis of Henri de Lubac's theology of the supernatural is that the sole possible destiny of man must be the beatific vision. As he formulates it:

...il ne peut y avoir pour l'homme qu'une fin:
la fin surnaturelle, telle que l'Évangile la
propose et que la théologie la définit par la
"vision béatifique".³⁶

He endeavors to prove his thesis by establishing two points: firstly,

³³De Lubac, LMS, p. 281.

³⁴Ibid., p. 13.

³⁵Guy de Broglie, De fine ultimo humanae vitae (Paris: Beauchesne et ses Fils, 1948).

³⁶De Lubac, Surnaturel, p. 493.

the illegitimacy of the concept of "natura pura" (or pure 'nature'), and secondly, a true notion of the gratuity of the supernatural.

He disproves the notion of "pure 'nature'" first by undermining its historical foundations. Pure 'nature', defined by de Lubac as "...un état où l'homme serait remis à sa propre sagesse et réduit à ses propres forces, où il aurait à se développer et à s'achever seul",³⁷ was first introduced into theology, he maintains, in the sixteenth century in order to defend a false notion of the gratuity of the supernatural. Pure nature is never mentioned by Thomas Aquinas and could have no place in his theological system since Thomas considers man as destined to only one ultimate end, the beatific vision.³⁸

According to de Lubac, there were two chief causes for this departure from Aquinas. First, there was the general acceptance of Cajetan's theory by theologians after Cajetan. For Cajetan, man can have a natural desire only for an end which is connatural to him, and therefore a natural desire for the beatific vision is impossible and human 'nature' could be fulfilled with a purely "natural end".³⁹

The second, a juridical way of speaking, became prevalent

³⁷Surnaturel, p. 15.

³⁸Cf., Augustinisme et théologie moderne, pp. 135-181.

³⁹Cf., ibid., pp. 144-146; also, supra, pp. 167-168.

in the sixteenth century. This had an effect on the theological thought of the time, and all relations between God and man came to be viewed in the light of commutative justice.⁴⁰ Theologians first neglected and then virtually abandoned the traditional doctrine that God cannot be thought of as a debtor to his creatures. Some Scholastics began to maintain that all ontological exigencies of human 'nature' exercised a strict juridical claim on God.⁴¹ Consequently, the God-man relationship would be constituted not by a free, disinterested love, but by a satisfaction of commutative justice.

De Lubac points out that because of this gradual deterioration of theological thought that ended in the reduction of all ontological exigencies of man to juridical claims on God, there remained only one way to safeguard the gratuity of grace and that was to deny any exigency, even ontological, on the part of man for the supernatural. Such a position was, in itself, an indirect affirmation of the possibility of a state in which man would in no way be destined to the beatific vision. Thus, de Lubac maintains, only two alternatives were open to Catholic theologians, either to adopt the theory that God grants grace as the

⁴⁰Cf., Surnaturel, p. 150, where de Lubac asserts that an excessively juridical view of man's relations pertained to "les conceptions générales qui formaient en quelque sorte l'atmosphère intellectuelle respirée alors indistinctement par les théologiens de tout parti...."

⁴¹Cf., ibid., pp. 129-155.

fulfillment of an obligation in commutative justice, or to elaborate a theory of a state of pure 'nature' in order to safeguard the gratuity of grace.⁴² Catholic theology followed the latter course.

According to de Lubac, the thought of Baius was completely dominated by this juridical outlook.⁴³ The same viewpoint, although not so overt, was characteristic of Jansenism.⁴⁴ Therefore, it is strictly within this context, he maintains, that the condemnations of the Magisterium must be understood.⁴⁵ In other words, it is a strict juridical exigency of 'nature' for grace that is proscribed, not the ontological exigency (i.e., natural desire) that had been the tradition until the sixteenth century.

This was not understood, de Lubac says, by most Catholic theologians, especially by Suarez and Bellarmine, who popularized Cajetan's theory in polemic against Baianism. Unfortunately, the hypothesis of a state of pure 'nature' became almost unanimously accepted in Catholic theology. However, according to de Lubac, this concept of pure 'nature' is not implied by the papal condemnations, nor is it in any way necessary to order to justify them.⁴⁶

⁴²Cf., Augustinisme et théologie moderne, pp. 183-223.

⁴³Cf., Surnaturel, p. 18, where he speaks of "Baius, ou le juridisme pur".

⁴⁴Cf., ibid., pp. 40-45.

⁴⁵Cf., Augustinisme et théologie moderne, pp. 283-326.

⁴⁶Cf., ibid., pp. 136 ff., pp. 186 ff.

He points out that some theologians: the Augustinians and Scotists particularly, continued even after the condemnations to maintain the "genuinely traditional position", namely, that the vision of God alone is man's natural end, though he cannot achieve this end by his own ability, but only through grace.⁴⁷

In the light of this historical classification, de Lubac urges that contemporary theology discard the superficial construct of pure 'nature', and return to the teaching of the Fathers and the pre-Scholastics on the God-man relationship.⁴⁸

A. Le Mystère du Surnaturel

In a later theological treatment of the relation between the natural and the supernatural, de Lubac again undertakes a negative criticism of the theory of pure 'nature'. His basic ontological reason for rejecting it as "une hypothèse insuffisante"⁴⁹ is that it does not deal with the existing world as faith believes it to be. Existing man is not in a state of pure nature. He does not have a twofold end, but only one: the beatific

⁴⁷Cf., ibid., pp. 293 ff.; also supra, p. 8.

⁴⁸Cf., ibid., pp. 326 ff., where he interprets Humani Generis as repeating "en termes particulièrement précis la vérité fondamentale que toute recherche théologique doit respecter, avant tout, mais sans canoniser aucun système".

⁴⁹Cf., LMS, pp. 41-60.

vision of God. Hence, reflection on a hypothetical world cannot explain the gratuity of grace in this actual world. It is the reality of man's nature as it is, acting at this moment, which should be the point of departure for theological consideration of his relationship with God.

De Lubac maintains that using the hypothesis of pure 'nature' as the starting point of reflection on the theology of the supernatural has, in practice, been the cause of the dualistic or separatist tendencies in Catholic theology. The theory of pure 'nature', he asserts, tends to reproduce on the natural level everything that pertains to grace, or to make the natural state of man one of ethical perfection along the lines of Aristotle's virtuous man. Nothing remains unique to the economy of grace, he says, but the word "supernatural".

Une fois le système achevé, les deux séries, celle de la "nature pure" et celle de la nature surnaturalisée, ou appelée au surnaturel, se déroulent parallèlement, en une belle ordonnance. Mais la seule différence intelligible -- si c'en est une -- que l'on mette de l'une à l'autre série consiste dans l'épithète qu'on leur accole respectivement. Sans qu'on voie rien qui les distingue, l'une est dite "naturelle" et l'autre, "surnaturelle".⁵⁰

Thus, de Lubac holds, the principal reason that motivated post-Tridentine theology to develop its hypothesis of pure 'nature', namely, to establish the supernatural as a totally free gift, has

⁵⁰LMS, pp. 65-66.

been achieved only nominally and by a perversion of genuine Christian tradition.

It now remains for de Lubac to present his own positive exposition of how grace is a free gift not only in relation to a hypothetical human 'nature' or state of human 'nature', but in relation to precisely the concrete human being man really is. He does this by beginning not with the concept of nature but with God. For de Lubac the gratuity of the supernatural is constituted by the mystery that God first, freely and sovereignly, wills man's end, the communication of the divine vision, and then wills the nature capable of receiving it. As he puts it:

...le vouloir de Dieu est ici premier, et par conséquent la liberté divine est totale....Sa liberté souveraine enveloppe en les débordant et en les causant tous les liens d'intelligibilité que nous découvrons entre la créature et sa destinée. Nature et surnaturel sont ainsi unis, sans être le moins du monde confondus.⁵¹

Nothing in the nature of man constrains God or imposes an exigency for this vision, since what precedes everything is the liberality and graciousness of God. The nature exists for the vision, not vice versa.

Le surnaturel ne lui (nature) est pas dû: c'est elle qui, pour obéir au plan divin, se devra au surnaturel, si ce surnaturel lui est offert....

...ce n'est pas le surnaturel qui s'expliquerait par la nature, au moins comme postulé par

⁵¹LMS, p. 132.

elle: c'est au contraire la nature qui s'explique, aux yeux de la foi, par le surnaturel, comme voulue pour lui. C'est la fin qui est première et qui convoque et recrute les moyens.⁵²

Therefore, de Lubac affirms that it is necessary to distinguish two instances of gratuity, two divine gifts: that of being itself, and that of being destined to the goal, the beatific vision.⁵³

Je déclare donc en premier lieu: "Dieu m'a donné l'être"; puis, second bienfait: "A cet être qu'il m'a donné, Dieu a imprimé une finalité surnaturelle; Il a fait retentir en ma nature un appel à Le voir."⁵⁴

He adds immediately, however, that from God's part this is a single, indivisible act of benevolence. Yet, the limitations of the human intellect make it not only justifiable but even indispensable to introduce these distinctions into the one divine act.⁵⁵

The above quoted statement, then, is not meant in a literal or univocal sense, but by way of an inadequate analogy, that of a gift given by one man to another. The gift that theology is considering here is "unique and a mystery". The gift that God gives is himself. Since it is necessary for the human mind to divide and dissociate, it must first represent man as already existing in order

⁵²Ibid., p. 127; p. 218.

⁵³Ibid., p. 113.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 106.

⁵⁵Cf., ibid., p. 112.

that he may be the subject for the reception of these two successive gifts.

Once this is understood, de Lubac says, then the first statement quoted above, namely, "God has given me being", can be interpreted as expressing the total contingency of man. The second, "God has imprinted upon my being a supernatural finality", expresses that the finality itself is totally gratuitous, and in no way bound to the gift of being.⁵⁶

Yet, de Lubac stresses, even these clarifications and qualifications do not eliminate the inherent inadequacies of this necessarily divisive way of describing a unique and indivisible mystery, because (and this is the point he wants most to establish):

...elle n'exprimerait pas vraiment, elle n'exprimerait pas suffisamment, dans toute sa force, le don radical de l'être que Dieu m'a fait (voici cependant que je retombe dans ce langage inévitable) en me créant. Car ce don m'est tout intérieur; il ne laisse rien en dehors de lui et rien de ce que je suis n'est sans lui. Il est pour moi incomparablement plus don que tous les dons extérieurs, surajoutés, qui peuvent ensuite m'être faits par les hommes. De ceux-ci à celui-là, aucune proportion. Leur analogie se révèle infiniment trop faible....

Or les mêmes remarques s'imposent encore et valent, mutatis mutandis, au sujet de la seconde formule, relative au bienfait de la finalité surnaturelle.... Il y manque en effet cet élément d'intériorité -- autant dire de transcendance -- apanage du Dieu créateur qui "m'est plus intérieur que je

⁵⁶Cf., *ibid.*, p. 106.

ne le suis à moi-même", -- Deus interior
intimo meo.⁵⁷

In other words, de Lubac holds that as soon as I say "I", I exist and have being; and once I exist and have my being, I have a finality, and that finality, because God freely and gratuitously wills it, is a supernatural one.

De Lubac emphasizes again that although "congenitally" (congénitalement) man has "un rapport direct à Dieu", a relationship that "lui vient de son origine",⁵⁸ there is no question of any "debitum naturae". Man's desire for the beatific vision is in no way a demand. It is, he says, a longing born of a lack and not from the beginning of possession. This desire is unique, in a category of its own, and he cannot apply univocally to it any of the patterns of thought generally used to define relationships between men. As he expresses it: "autre chose l'esprit de l'homme, autre chose l'Esprit de Dieu -- quoique, une fois donné, celui-ci devienne également, en un sens très réel, 'notre esprit'".⁵⁹

De Lubac concludes his treatise by reminding his readers that in the last analysis, the God-man relationship is a mystery, "the Christian paradox", "unknown to the gentiles", "rejected by common sense", and only "overcome in faith".⁶⁰ It is the mystery

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 107-109.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 147.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 121.

⁶⁰ Ibid., pp. 135 ff.

of the "Divine Agape", and in the words he quotes at the end of his study: "Rien n'est aussi libre que l'amour; et en dehors de l'amour il n'y a pas de liberté".⁶¹

B. The Debate Following

A theologian like Juan Alfaro generally holds that the gratuitous and supernatural character of God's gifts to men necessarily demands the possibility of a state of "pure nature". Hence, it is at least possible that man in a pure state might have lacked the vision of God as his destiny.⁶² Bernard Lonergan argues that a world-order without grace is a possibility but it is only a "marginal theorem" and not necessarily a "central doctrine for explaining the

⁶¹Hans Urs von Balthasar, La prière contemplative, (Bruges: Desclée de Brouwer, 1959), p. 328.

⁶²Were a survey to be made of the various critiques of de Lubac's position, that survey would include the following. Early Opposition, cf. Guy de Broglie, S.J., "De Gratuitate ordinis supernaturalis ad quem homo elevatus est", G, XXIX (1949), 435-463; Boyer, S.J., "Nature pure et surnaturel", G, XXVII (1947), 379-395; J. de Blic, J.S. and H. de Lubac, S.J., "Echange de vues à propos de la conception médiévale de l'ordre surnaturel", MSR, IV (1947), 365-379; L. Renwart, S.J., "La 'nature pure' à la lumière de l'encyclique Humani Generis", NRT, LXXIV (1952), 337-354; Juan Alfaro, S.J., Lo natural y lo Sobrenatural, estudio historico desde santo Tomas hasta Cayetano, 1274-1534 (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Cientificas, 1952); Juan Alfaro, S.J., "La gratuidad de la vision intuitiva de la esencia divina y la posibilidad del estado de naturaliza pure segun los teologos tomistas anteriores a Cayetano", G, XXXI (1950), pp. 63-99.

gratuity of the supernatural".⁶³

The real issue does not lie in the possibility of a world order without grace; the real issue, the most momentous in its consequence, lies between the essentialist and conceptual tendency and, on the other hand, the existential and intellectualist tendency.⁶⁴

Karl Rahner develops the theory of the supernatural existential, or the supernatural a priori, to explain his position on this point.⁶⁵ Deriving his inspiration from the ontological categories of Heidegger,⁶⁶ Rahner holds that since man exists in an order of salvation, he cannot be considered concretely in any other

⁶³B. Lonergan, S.J., "The Natural Desire to See God", Collection, ed. by F. Crowe (Montreal: Palm Publishers, 1967), p. 94.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 95. Cf. also Joseph Maréchal, S.J., "De naturali perfectae beatitudinis desiderio", Mélanges Joseph Maréchal, S.J., Tome I (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1950), pp. 323-337; Joseph de Finance, S.J., Être et agir (Paris: Beuchesne et ses Fils, 1945), p. 341.

⁶⁵Rahner admits that the theory of the supernatural existential has been proposed in substance much earlier by E. Brisbois, S.J., "Le désir de voir Dieu et la métaphysique du vouloir selon St. Thomas", NRT, LXIII (1936), pp. 978-979; 1089-1113. Rahner, however, was unaware of Brisbois's article at the time he himself wrote the first article. See Karl Rahner, S.J., Schriften zur Theology, I, pp. 323-345; Karl Rahner, S.J. and Herbert Vogrimer, "Supernatural Existential", Theological Dictionary, trans. by Richard Strachan (New York: Herder and Herder, 1965), p. 161. C. Ernst describes Rahner's "supernatural existential" as "...a modality of human existence as this is concretely realized in an economy within which by God's free decision this existence is ordained to supernatural beatitude". K. Rahner, Theological Investigations, I, trans. by Cornelius Ernst (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1965), Introduction, p. xvi.

⁶⁶Leopold Malévez, S.J., "La gratuité de surnaturel", NRT, LXXV (1953), pp. 577-578. Malévez points out that Rahner deliberately uses "das Existential" instead of "das Existentielle". The latter, "das Existentielle" reflects the philosophy of Kirkegaard and Jaspars and refers to the concrete possibilities offered to existence, i.e.,

order. God has ordered all men to a supernatural end and since God's decree cannot be simply an extrinsic thing, a juridical decree, it must affect man intrinsically in his very being.⁶⁷

Underlying the concept of the supernatural existential is the following fact: antecedently to justification by grace, received sacramentally or extra-sacramentally, man is already subject to the universal salvific will of God, he is already redeemed and absolutely obliged to tend to his supernatural end. This 'situation' is not merely an external one; it is an objective, ontological modification of man, added indeed to his nature by God's grace and therefore supernatural, but in fact never lacking in the real order...even in the rejection of grace and in perdition a man can never be ontologically and subjectively unaffected by the inner figure of his supernatural destiny...⁶⁸

'Nature' for Rahner is what remains when the supernatural existential as unexacted is subtracted, and therefore, ontologically, has a meaning even when the supernatural existential

an act which a man places insofar as he is a free person. "Das Existential", however, is Heideggerian, and means: "the general structures of Dasein, common to human beings in general, anterior to every personal decision, to every involvement of liberty, (i.e., the ontological structure of man). "Hence, when Rahner uses the phrase "supernatural existential" he means "a reality inscribed by God in man, in every man, before every exercise of liberty".

⁶⁷Rahner, Schriften zur Theologie, I, p. 323.

⁶⁸Rahner and Vorgrimler, op. cit., p. 161.

is thought of as absent.⁶⁹ In sum, Rahner accuses de Lubac of jumping from the historical order to the metaphysical order. It is one thing to say we are called to the supernatural in the historical order; it is quite another thing to say that it could not have been any other way. In so doing, we have left the world of contingency for the world of necessity -- we have abandoned existence for essence.

Another criticism of de Lubac, although less severe, was that articulated by Hans Urs von Balthasar. In his study of Karl Barth, Urs von Balthasar argued that there can be no purely natural theology because our reason is under the influence of the present graced order.⁷⁰ And yet , he could not see how one could preserve the gratuity of the supernatural without the concept of "pure reason". He did agree that the distinction between nature and grace is minimal but to preserve the distinction between God and creatures, and to preserve the gratuity of grace, the concept of "pure nature" is theologically necessary.⁷¹ But Hans Urs von Balthasar agreed

⁶⁹William C. Shepherd, Man's Condition (New York: Herder and Herder, 1969), p. 172.

"To a man the critics reply that no natural desire for God can really be unfrustratable. For God would thus have no choice in the matter: fulfillment of the desire would not be contingent on his free decision". Shepherd himself proposes Whiteheadian categories to overcome the criticism. De Lubac does not say that a natural desire is unfrustratable. He says that there is no such thing as a 'natural' desire. To think man is to think God's gift to man.

⁷⁰Hans Urs von Balthasar, Karl Barth, Darstellung und Deutung seiner Theologie, (Cologne: Hegner, 1951), Vol. III, pp. 278-355.

⁷¹Ibid.

with de Lubac that we know more about the present order that is gratuitous than about some possible order. Since we do not know what "pure nature" is, how is it possible to explain gratuity by means of it? We simply cannot know God's possible powers in relation to another world order.

C. De Lubac's Response

In Le Mystère du Surnaturel, a lengthy study which develops the 1949 article "Le mystère du surnaturel", de Lubac articulates much the same position he has taken in Surnaturel.⁷² He seems to agree with Rahner's theory.

Dès que j'existe, en effet, tout indétermination est levée, et quoi qu'il en ait pu être 'auparavant', ou quoi qu'il en aurait pu être en une existence autrement réalisée, aucune autre finalité ne semble désormais pour moi possible que celle qui se trouve maintenant, en fait, inscrite au fond de ma nature....⁷³

And this inscription in the depths of my nature is what "Karl Rahner appelle aujourd'hui 'existential surnaturel permanent préordonné à la grâce'".⁷⁴

As far as "obediential potency", de Lubac makes it clear that he never scorned the concept except in the very sense that Rahner himself found it unacceptable. "Openness" in Le Mystère du

⁷²LMS, pp. xiii-xiv.

⁷³Ibid., pp. 81-82

⁷⁴Ibid., note 1.

Surnaturel is acceptable to de Lubac just as long as it is understood as far more than "non-contradiction" or "non-repugnance".

The question of "natural desire" is more difficult to handle; it occurs so often and throughout so many of de Lubac's writings.

Il arrive assez fréquemment que l'on raisonne comme si tout le mystère était du côté de Dieu, tandis que rien dans l'homme n'échapperait aux prises de l'expérience commune ou de la raison naturelle. Toute notre nature nous serait, au moins edroit, transparente, et nous tiendrions la clé de tout ce qu'elle nous manifeste. Il y a là quelque illusion.⁷⁵

But, for de Lubac, "l'homme est mystère"; "certains abîmes de notre nature ne s'entrouverent qu'au choc de la Révélation".⁷⁶ As Bérulle remarks, and de Lubac agrees, "Dieu nous a révélés nous-mêmes à nous-mêmes".⁷⁷ But it is not a question of revealing something new in every respect, something for which there has been no preparation, no previous awareness. The basis upon which the new can be heard is man's universal desire -- now more, now less clearly formulated -- for God.

For de Lubac, then, there is hidden in the ontological

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 259.

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 259; p. 265.

⁷⁷Quoted by de Lubac, ibid., p. 265. De Lubac quotes from R. Bultmann, L'interprétation du Nouveau Testament (trad. Od. Laffoucrière, 1959), p. 127: "De toutes façons la Révélation donne au croyant à travers l'Évangile une lumière décisive sur l'existence profane, qui n'est pas visible à la philosophie" (ibid., note 3).

depths of man a desire for God, which grace alone activates, and which Biblical Revelation alone interprets.⁷⁸ This desire has been described by Aristotle in the Nicomachean Ethics, according to de Lubac, as "that greater than human life", and by Plato whom Augustine called "the father of theology" as the vision of the good, "beauty itself, illuminated, pure, unmixed".⁷⁹ But, for de Lubac, all this is equivocal. Revelation has not, as it were, fertilized what has been germinal, illuminated what has been obscure, completed what has been partial. "On peut bien dire que par la révélation surnaturelle un ordre supérieur de vérité vient s'ajouter aux vérités qui relèvent de la raison naturelle", but de Lubac is not too sure what such an abstract statement means.⁸⁰ Practically -- and here our author is true again to his appreciation of man's situation, of man's grasp after fullness or maturity in time for eternity, of man's environment which de Lubac prefers to be integrated with man's thinking rather than bracketed apart from it -- there is a newness to Christianity.⁸¹

Venant compléter et transformer notre idée
de Dieu -- et, malgré l'emploi continué
des mêmes vocables, notre idée de la vision
de Dieu -- il ne se peut que la Révélation

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 273. "Il reste que le désir de l'esprit, qui ne tombe pas dans le champ de la psychologie empirique, n'est pas non plus déduit à partir de prémisses purement rationnelles" (ibid., p. 266).

⁷⁹Quoted by de Lubac, ibid., p. 274.

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 275.

⁸¹Ibid.

ne complète et ne transforme du même coup
notre idée de l'homme -- et notre idée de
son désir -- et enfin, si du moins nous y
consentons, ce désir même.⁸²

This means, for de Lubac, what Origen and Augustine
both said of Plato: in conceiving the vision of God as man's true
end he was deceived only as to the road, the means of reaching that
end.

Si hanc vitam illi viri nobiscum agere
potuissent..., paucis mutatis verbis atque
sententiis, christiani fierent, sicut
plerique recentiorum nostrorumque
Platonici fecerunt.⁸³

But Augustine would have been the first to recognize, according to
de Lubac, that "la connaissance de la voie rejaillit sur celle du
terme, qu'on ne peut donc se tromper sur l'une sans errer sur
l'autre".⁸⁴ For Augustine, this road and this goal were specified
more radically.

Putas quid Deus. Putas qualis est Deus?
Quidquid finxeris, non est; quidquid
cogitatione comprehenderis, non est. Sed
ut aliquid gustu accipias, Deus caritas
est; Caritas qua diligimus....⁸⁵

Thus the abstract notions of God as "le Beau lui-même, ensoleillé,

⁸²Ibid., pp. 275-276.

⁸³Quoted by de Lubac, ibid., p. 277, note 1.

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 278.

⁸⁵Quoted by de Lubac, ibid.

pur, sans mélange", are far removed from what Augustine loved.⁸⁶

That relationship is not governed by any 'natural' law, according to de Lubac.

Thus we cannot interpret the "natural desire" even as a consequent desire in our nature. But we call it "natural" to distinguish it from anything artificial or superficial, while all the time affirming that the vocation to grace infinitely surpasses the vocation to happiness. The former fulfills the latter without destroying it. Here, once again, enters the paradox in de Lubac's writings: the natural desire, even before grace, is different in kind from all the desires of our common experience. The closest we can come to understanding that is to suggest that, for de Lubac, a great stress is placed on the will of man as desire. This is so because he sees and affirms the divine-like character of man as a reflection of God; and God's will, for de Lubac, is the desire for the creature's beatitude. The "natural desire" is not in the order of intentionality, i.e., a will moved by a "sufficient reason", nor in the order of necessity, i.e., a will moved by 'natural' law. The "natural desire", according to de Lubac, is not parallel to the ancients' 'eros' nor to the ancients' physics. Rather, it is in the order of goodness which is benignity.

Dieu est l'Amour en personne, Amour qui librement, sans loi ni détermination interne suscite l'être auquel Il veut se donner, et se donne à lui librement. Non

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 279.

pas ce neutre bonum, mais cette vive flamme
de charité: Bonus.⁸⁷

This Bonus is always given freely, just as it is always willed freely.

"Rien n'est aussi libre que l'amour; et en dehors de l'amour il n'y
a pas de liberté".⁸⁸

D. Conclusion and Criticism

With Surnaturel Henri de Lubac introduced the historical method into the mainstream of twentieth century Catholic theology. He recalled what Scholastic theologians knew: the relativities of language and thought affect the development of the theology of the Fathers. He recalled that once Scholasticism had made a precise and systematic science of theology the historical factor had been eliminated by its followers.

Yet, having himself cleared away the encumbrances of history so as to free theology, de Lubac returns to what he considers the "genuine" thought of Aquinas and Augustine, and he remains there. Although he does not deny the importance of attempts to go further, he himself does not wish to go further, to open new perspectives or to consider fresh sources for investigation. Instead he classifies his work on the supernatural as one among

la série, déjà si longue, de ces 'ennuyeux
commentaires sur le désir, à la fois
naturel et inefficace, de voir Dieu selon

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 288.

⁸⁸Quoted by de Lubac, ibid., p. 290, note 5.

saint Thomas', genre dont on a bien quelques raisons de se déclarer saturé'.⁸⁹

The consequences of this limitation become evident when de Lubac tries to work out within the sphere of formal Thomistic metaphysics, the relationship between the natural and the supernatural. It is true that he avoids the "nest of arguments" and the "extravagant theories"⁹⁰ characteristic of the later Scholastics. The result is a certain clarity and simplicity of thought and expression. However, does de Lubac's theory of the supernatural bring Catholic theology nearer to a more adequate understanding of the God-man relationship? Does it clarify, as the Scholastic formulation would have it, how God can be transcendent yet immanent, relating freely yet necessarily to man, his grace gratuitous yet required?

De Lubac's resolution of this dilemma, as we have seen, is this. He attempts to prove that man's orientation to the vision of God is so basic to man that man cannot be conceived apart from that orientation. Therefore, man's desire for God is natural and absolute. At the same time, the desire itself and its fulfillment are gifts of God's love, and so totally gratuitous.

For de Lubac, there is no contradiction in the Christian mystery if we understand the priority of the supernatural in God's will and the point of double gratuity. God gives nature and supernatural finality together.

What de Lubac most firmly denies is that man as he exists

⁸⁹LMS, p. 13.

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 35.

in the concrete could have been called into existence for any other end (the theory of "pure nature"). Yet this negation seems to reduce de Lubac's affirmation of a double gratuity to words without any real content. In this case the ordination to the beatific vision may be called gratuitous, but only in the sense that God is free in creating man as he is. There seems to be no genuine, second gratuity at all. However, if there is no second gratuity, then the orientation to the vision of God (to the supernatural) is constitutive of the essence of man. This de Lubac does not explicitly say because it would seem contrary to the gratuity of the supernatural as stated in the dogmatic formulations of the magisterium.⁹¹ Therefore, the traditional dilemma remains, and no amount of his consequent elaboration on the paradox and mystery of the God-man relationship compensates for this inadequacy of his treatment.

It would seem that the root of the failure of such an undeniably great theologian as Henri de Lubac to answer for the contemporary mind the problem of the relation between the natural and the supernatural is the inherent limitation of the Aristotelian-Thomistic categories he takes as his point of departure. Frequently he wants to emphasize grace as personal, relational and dynamic, but he has restricted himself to treating it within a framework of categories that are, perhaps, as some have charged, static and

⁹¹Cf., "Humani Generis", DB, 3891: "Alii veram "gratuitatem" ordinis supernaturalis corrumpunt, cum Deum entia intellectu praedita condere non posse, quin eadem ad beatificam visionem ordinet et vocet".

impersonal. The conclusion to Le mystère du Surnaturel points out the ambiguity which seems to remain.

Tout, dans le Don que Dieu veut faire de Lui-même, s'explique -- si c'est là une explication -- par l'Amour. Tout, et par conséquent déjà le "désir" qui en résulte dans notre nature, de quelque manière qu'on entende ce désir. C'est là ce qui fait que l'épithète de désir naturel est bien peu satisfaisante, quoiqu'on ne puisse guère l'éviter si l'on veut distinguer un tel désir de tout ce qui est artificiel ou superficiel, sans risquer une confusion avec ce qui est déjà proprement et positivement surnaturel.⁹²

Yet, it can be said that even the limitation of Henri de Lubac's work in this regard has contributed positively to the evolution of the doctrine of the supernatural in Catholic theology, for it clearly manifests the limitations of the Scholastic categories to describe and interpret the central mystery of the God-man relationship for the contemporary man.

⁹²LMS, p. 281.

CHAPTER FOUR

MAN'S SEARCH FOR GOD

In Chapter Three we established that for Henri de Lubac historical man is constituted with a congenital, natural, openness to the supernatural. In other words, by virtue of creation, man is effectively called to community with God. This we understood to be a theological point of view.

Nous ne cherchons pas à établir une thèse philosophique, mais à nous rendre compte d'une affirmation dogmatique et de ses implications. Nous ne disons pas que la connaissance rationnellement acquise d'un désir de nature, en dehors de tout contexte de foi, 'prouve rigoureusement que nous sommes appelés à la vision béatifiante' et que nous pouvons obtenir ainsi naturellement 'la certitude d'être criés pour cette fin': nous disons, à l'inverse, que la connaissance révélée de cet appel, qui nous assure de cette fin, nous amène à reconnaître en nous l'existence et la nature de ce désir.¹

In this chapter, we ask about the possibility of knowing the "natural desire" outside the context of revelation in the strict sense. Since de Lubac admits that reason does in fact gain some knowledge of the "natural desire" outside of faith, we wish to put the microscope to de Lubac's "reason which gains knowledge" of the "natural desire". We wish, in other words, to speak to the question

¹Henri de Lubac, LMS, p. 259.

of natural theology as de Lubac's writings have enucleated that question.

What must be kept in mind is that, for de Lubac, the "natural desire" constitutes man as he is. And yet neither the existence nor the nature of that constitution can be known fully outside of Biblical Revelation. Also, de Lubac reminds us that one of the three great forces which dehumanize contemporary man is the noetic reduction.² Therefore what this chapter, at the start, and throughout, must not ignore is that de Lubac's natural theology is a function of his theological understanding of man.³ For him, any noetic definition of man is incomplete unless it is balanced by a superior wisdom given in the light of faith.

1. Apologetics

The "natural desire" cannot be 'proven' apologetically, or by a recourse to fundamental theology. De Lubac writes of Teilhard

²Cf. our thesis, Chapter Two, p. 131.

³De Lubac uses the phrase "natural theology" at times written 'natural theology' and at times without the single quotation marks. His procedure in this regard presents a problem to us. This thesis operates under the founded presumption that 'natural theology' refers to a theology which corresponds to the Aristotelian-Thomistic tripartite definition of man we have declared to be the "standard view" of nature and which de Lubac rejects. Natural theology, on the other hand, refers to de Lubac's understanding of "cette saine philosophie que nous avons reçue des siècles chrétiens en héritage, comme un patrimoine depuis longtemps constitué" (quoted by de Lubac, SCD, p. 243). Our effort in this chapter is to throw some light on what de Lubac understands "cette saine philosophie" to be.

de Chardin that his entire work can be considered as a 'proof' for the immortality of the human soul and the existence of God.⁴ So, too, the entire work of Henri de Lubac can be seen as a 'proof', if by 'proof' we understand an apologetic, for Christianity. As early as 1930, de Lubac called for a return to the theological-apologetical spirit of Paul, Augustine, Thomas, Pascal and Newman.⁵ He saw the inadequacy of an apologetics separated from theology, which conceived theology as:

une chose en soi, comme un bloc révélé sans rapport d'aucune sorte avec l'homme naturel, comme un objet transcendant dont la manifestation...n'a été réglée que par l'arbitraire d'un 'décret divin'.⁶

Such a modus operandi, according to de Lubac, drives a wedge between apologetics and theology reducing the former to rational religion and the latter to super-naturalized religion. When theology is understood as the explanation of the unique divine response gratuitously given to the human aspiration, then it is apologetical.⁷ In other words, de Lubac calls for a theology which understands itself propter intrinsecam evidentiam rather than propter auctoritatem Dei revelantis.⁸ He insists that this way of understanding, this approach to appropriating content, is what Aquinas saw to be the

⁴Henri de Lubac, Teilhard Missionnaire et Apologiste (Toulouse: Éditions Prière et Vie, 1966), p. 57.

⁵Henri de Lubac, "Apologetique et théologie", NRTh (1930), p. 367.

⁶Ibid., p. 364.

⁷Ibid., p. 369.

⁸Ibid., p. 373.

apologetical discourse.⁹

The value of de Lubac's article on apologetics and theology can only be appreciated over and against the way theology was being understood and carried on by Roman Catholic theological faculties at the time. At the turn of the century, apologetics was a kind of polemical rationalism.¹⁰ It was directed to winning converts by the

⁹ Ibid., p. 374.

¹⁰ It should be noted, once again, that de Lubac did not write this article in isolation from the intellectual context of French theological thought. In 1930, partly in response to the harsh critique of the Roman Church to Modernism, and partly in defense of the ideas of Blondel, Rousselot, Gardeil and Léonce de Grandmaison, de Lubac sought to establish the French apologetical method in the Faculty at Lyon. That apologetical method was best represented by the Dictionnaire apologetique de la foi catholique, ed. by A. d' Alès (Paris: 1909-28), and the work Jésus Christ: sa personne, son message, ses preuves, by Grandmaison. (Grandmaison had begun this work as an article for the Dictionnaire only to develop it into a two volume treatise.) To analyze the French apologetical method is outside the scope of our thesis. Cf. Avery Dulles, A History of Apologetics (New York: Corpus, 1971), pp. 202-225 for an extensive and, in our estimation, accurate account of it. The salient features of the French method, at the turn of the century, included the following:

- (1) The examination of the evidences of credibility cannot be made without some consideration of the specific content of revelation.
 - (2) The evidences of credibility are not equally accessible to all men of good will, whether believers or non-believers.
 - (3) By vigorous application of profane historical methods one cannot arrive at stringent conclusions regarding the religious significance of Christ.
 - (4) The moral and religious dispositions of the subject play a positive role in the apologetical process.
 - (5) Each of the arguments of credibility is not an independent whole reaching its conclusions without the concurrence of the others.
- De Lubac subscribed to these features of apologetics and much of his later work shows clear traces of their application. The fact should be recalled that Grandmaison was de Lubac's teacher in the theologate at Ore Place, and that the Parisian Jesuits did not study theology there. As these things happen, a fraternal rivalry developed between the theologate at Ore Place and the one at Chantilly. The rivalry

subtlety and skill of argumentation. The mysteries of faith were 'proven' by a chain of arguments. Apologetics was philosophical theism, the first story in the two-storied Aristotelian-Scholastic understanding of man. It was a point toward which 'natural' reason could lead and beyond which reason illumined by faith took over. "Ill will" was presupposed by anyone who could not follow the progressive and telling arguments on behalf of God, faith, Christianity, and the Roman Church.

Theology, in such a framework, was understanding the second-story of the human and cosmological construction. And even then the blueprints for the second-story safely prescribed the method. Council decrees were substantiated and often 'proven' by scriptural texts. Understanding the texts was done on the basis of the council decrees and the council decrees were understood on the basis of the scriptural texts.

It was against this extreme neo-Scholastic, manual theology, that de Lubac's understanding of the relationship between apologetics and theology appeared so revolutionary. For de Lubac, religion presented as "vita et lux" is its own best persuasion, and therefore

often became rhetorically heated, especially when the Lyonese theologian, Père Teilhard de Chardin, another student of Grandmaison, began to lecture in Paris. For further facts regarding the French theological scene see Mark Schoof, O.P., Breakthrough: Beginnings of the New Catholic Theology, trans. by N. D. Smith (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan Ltd., 1970), pp. 108-115; 201-210. The Bibliography is particularly useful. Cf. also H. Rondet, "The New Theology", Sacramentum Mundi, IV (London: Herder and Herder, 1969), pp. 234-236. This article is extremely cautious and confined. The Bibliography is the best part of the article. C. Weigel, "The Historical Background of the Encyclical Humani Generis", Theological Studies 12 (1951), pp. 208-230; J. M. Connolly, The Voices of France (New York: Macmillan, 1961), passim.

apologetical in the best sense of the word.¹¹ For him, apologetics, or fundamental theology, presents a "plus haute, plus riche, plus cohérente", conception of the world, laying hold of a "doctrine de vie plus totale et plus féconde, que toutes celles qu'on pourrait nous opposer" satisfying "les esprits exigeants" and captivating men of good will.¹²

For de Lubac, the way one theologizes is central if the ratio fidei, the rational justification of the act of faith, is to be set forth properly. But the ratio fidei must take into account the specific nature of religious knowledge and the indispensable role of grace.¹³ If this is not the case, the act of faith is reduced to an act of reason.

In a later work: Athéisme et sens de l'homme, de Lubac gives some developed indication of the hermeneutic he alludes to here.¹⁴ He sets forth some guidelines in terms of which the believer proceeds to 'defend' his faith against the non-believer, while at the same time searching for his own intelligence de la foi.

¹¹ Henri de Lubac, "Apologetic et théologie", p. 370.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid., p. 375.

¹⁴ Henri de Lubac, Athéisme et sens de l'homme (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1968), pp. 33-46. Hereafter this work is noted by ASH. This work, written almost thirty-four years after the article "Apologetic et théologie", contains the same emphasis, often repeats entire sentences, from the article. It is another example of how the thought of de Lubac has remained constant over the years.

Seulement, il sait distinguer l'exégèse approfondissante, celle qui, procédant de la foi, mène à son intelligence, d'une exégèse réductrice qui, en vertu de son orientation première, mènerait fatalement à la destruction de son objet.¹⁵

The exegesis of faith, in other words, is carried on from inside the faith, not outside it. Theology cannot abstract from nor bracket faith even when it is for the purpose of apologetics. The believer knows that "si l'on denie d'avance toute valeur à certaines zones de l'esprit, si l'on conteste a priori leur spécificité même", one will only arrive at some crippled explanation.¹⁶ Apologetics, or fundamental theology is, then, an activity which proceeds de fide ad fidem. It is an explanation "portant sur sa propre existence",¹⁷ "une critique du réel à partir d'un principe qui est Dieu même".¹⁸ With Paul Ricoeur, de Lubac is opposed to that hermeneutique du soupçon exemplified by Freud.

...Freud lui-même reconnaissait que s'il avait tiré un argument de la psychanalyse, sa pensée personnelle concernant la religion n'en était pas moins déjà fixée d'avance. Elle était celle du scientisme et du positivisme de son temps. Elle engendrait de sa part à l'endroit du sentiment religieux comme de tout forme objective de religion une attitude de scepticisme et de dénigrement systématique, et jamais il ne se préoccupa de réviser critiquement un tel dogmatisme

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 33-34.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 34.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Edourd Pousset, "Remettre sa foi en question?", Etudes 327 (1967), p. 266, quoted by de Lubac, ibid., p. 35.

'a rebours. A fortiori, ne se mit-il jamais¹⁹
en devoir d'étudier la révélation chrétienne.

For de Lubac, theology carries on a dialogue with philosophy within the framework of faith. Theology reflects upon the instinctus interior Dei invitantis in the light of Biblical Revelation and then proposes its reflexion to philosophy. De Lubac is convinced that the content of the theological reflexion, by the sheer weight of its completeness and beauty, eminently says something about man as he is, can be, and should be.

By introducing this chapter with de Lubac's distinction between theology and apologetics, we have attempted to point out one way in which philosophy cannot be conceived vis-à-vis theology. Apologetics, in de Lubac's opinion, pertains to the sphere of theology. It presupposes faith in addressing itself to the human experience. It is not, therefore, a philosophical discourse alongside of other philosophical discourses. It is, in our estimation, -- if we might use the phrase -- theism which develops in agreement with the Christian faith on the basis of rational motives. To our question, apologetics can clarify what one means by the subjective, constitutive, openness to grace, insofar as that openness is understood to be in harmony with what is most human. It is difficult, however, to see how such a procedure does in fact lead to anything more than a reshuffling of what one already has established

¹⁹Ibid., p. 36. Cf. Etienne Borne, Roger Garaudy, and Paul Ricoeur, "La foi soupçonnée", Foi et religion: Semaine des Intellectuels Catholiques 1971, (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1971), pp. 51-89.

theologically. That is to say, such an intelligence de la foi, or ratio fidei, may make sense for one who already has affirmed the desire. It makes little sense when such an affirmation has not taken place.

In a later article on the Proslogion of St. Anselm, de Lubac again speaks to the ratio fidei, and makes a distinction which seems to clarify his own theology on this point.²⁰

2. "Sur le chapitre XIV^e du 'Proslogion'"

As usual, it is difficult to separate de Lubac's judgment on a critical issue from the judgments of those whom he calls upon to speak to the Christian fact. In this case, the judgments he calls upon are those of Augustine and Anselm. The issue itself revolves around the meaning of "intelligere" in Anselm's Proslogion.

Anselm says:

I desire in a certain measure, to understand the truth, which my heart believes and loves; and I do not seek to understand so that I might believe, but I believe so that I might understand. For I so believe that if I did not believe I would not understand.²¹

Now de Lubac maintains that "understanding" for Anselm has two meanings: a philosophical-theology meaning and a contemplative

²⁰Henri de Lubac, "Sur le chapitre XIV^e du 'Proslogion'", Spicilegium Beccense, Congrès international du IX^e Centenaire de l'arrivée d'Anselme au Bec (Paris: Vrin, 1959), pp. 295-312. Hereafter this work is noted by Proslogion.

²¹PL, 158, p. 227. The translation is our own. The text is quoted piecemeal by de Lubac, ibid., pp. 295-298.

meaning.²² The former corresponds to that ratio where disquiet exists; the latter to that ratio where the "Joy of the Lord" exists.²³ The first is the movement of dialectic which supposes a specialization of reason; the second is the movement of faith which proceeds from credere in Deum to Videntem videre.²⁴

For de Lubac, Anselm is a specialist who is more strictly philosophical than theological.²⁵ And, it is clear, such a systematization is not what de Lubac means by theology.

La systématisation théologique, avec le caractère 'scientifique' qui est le sien, n'est pas la contemplation du mystère²⁶

Anselm, in the Proslogion, according to de Lubac, is a specialist who wishes to attribute to a rational reflexion a supernatural disposition.²⁷ Thus the effort of Anselm to "rendre compte rationnellement de sa foi" is a philosophical-theological venture.

²²Proslogion, p. 301.

²³Ibid., p. 304; 311.

²⁴Ibid., p. 303.

²⁵Ibid., p. 310. De Lubac says this, of course, in reference to "intelligere" as a philosophical concept. He would agree that Anselm does admit some vision of God, i.e., contemplation exists in this life. Anselm, for de Lubac, is more Bonaventurian in this regard than Thomist.

²⁶Ibid., p. 309.

²⁷Ibid., p. 310.

En d'autres termes, la preuve de l'existence de Dieu, l'intelligence même de son essence, telles que la raison les peut fournir, ne lui rendent pas Dieu présent; ou, comme dira Pascal 'sensible au coeur'.²⁸

Such a venture is characterized by an extreme dissatisfaction, according to de Lubac. He calls it, along with Barth, the "pathétique anselmien", but he disagrees with Barth's interpretation of where that disquietude exists.²⁹

For de Lubac, the Anselmian disquietude exists in the philosophical way of proof of God's existence. For Barth, the Anselmian disquietude exists in the theological way of faith itself, since, for Barth, there is no rational proof of God's existence possible.³⁰ However, to the more basic question of the possibility of proof, it would seem that de Lubac and Barth share some measure

²⁸ Ibid., p. 299.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 311. For Barth's statement on this issue see Karl Barth, Anselm: Fides Quaerens Intellectum, trans. by Ian W. Robertson (London: SCM Press, 1960), pp. 40 ff. Barth understands "intelligere" as "the appropriation of truth...to understand the truth as truth" (ibid., p. 40). For Barth, "intelligere" follows faith. De Lubac understands this as one of the two meanings. The other meaning of "intelligere" is that which precedes de fide ad fidem. This is the realm of what de Lubac calls speculative theology, and as such it pertains more to philosophy than to theology. De Lubac judges that Anselm does indeed speak of "intelligere" in this second meaning, and that it is in this meaning that the pathétique anselmien exists. De Lubac would seem to read in Anselm more of "intelligere" in the second sense than does Barth.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 17. "Therefore, the aim of theology cannot be to lead men to faith, nor to confirm them in the faith, nor even to deliver their faith from doubt". For Barth, it is a fundamental premise, according to John Baillie, "that no knowledge of God exists in the world save in the hearts of regenerate Christian believers". John Baillie, Our Knowledge of God (London: Humphrey Milford, 1939), p. 17.

of agreement. De Lubac judges that while a proof is possible for Anselm, yet "le mouvement est une ligne brisée".³¹ That is to say, what the proof gives, at best, is some need for further searching. "On ne peut dire que Dieu ait été déjà trouvé. Aucun sentiment de présence n'a été procuré. Dieu ne se cache pas tout en se montrant: il demeure caché".³² There is no "avant-goût de Dieu...car il y a ténèbres".³³ The "exigence rationnelle" is not the "désir naturel". De Lubac says that the "desir naturel" is more profound than the "exigence rationnelle".³⁴ Clearly, he understands the "natural desire" to be of another order than the "rational exigence". Therefore, the disagreement between Barth and de Lubac would not be on whether or not the proof for God renders God present (both agree that it does not and cannot), but whether there is any status to the proof at all. For Barth the proof has theological persuasiveness; for de Lubac, a de jure philosophical persuasiveness.

As far as the relation between Augustine and Anselm on this point, de Lubac says that an "evolution" has taken place from Augustine and Anselm.³⁵

L'idée augustinienne ou patristique était plus synthétique. Chez saint Anselme, une spécialisation s'opère, dont on peut estimer qu'elle marque un progrès....Chez Augustin, du moins chez l'Augustin des premières années après la conversion, il y avait...risque de confondre un processus

³¹Proslogion, p. 305.

³²Ibid.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid., p. 308.

³⁵Ibid., p. 310.

contemplatif encore naturel et 'philosophique'
avec une contemplation surnaturelle.³⁶

Although the main point of this article is marginal for our concern, nevertheless there are some conclusions we can draw from its analysis as well as from its tone. First, de Lubac is less sympathetic to Anselm's way of theologizing than to Augustine's way. He judges that Anselm is closer to Aquinas on this point and that there is sometimes a confusion -- at least for a reader -- between theology and philosophy with both Anselm and Aquinas.³⁷ Second, de Lubac seems to understand theology as the process de fide ad fidem. He does not consider a philosophical stage which serves as the preliminary entree to a theological stage. In this regard his article on Anselm substantiates his own thesis in Surnaturel. Third, the "natural desire" is a theological, i.e., contemplative, concept. It should not be confused with a rational exigence. As a matter of fact, the rational exigence, were it to exist for de Lubac, would be more a theological concept than a philosophical one.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid., p. 309. The stress here is on the Proslogion. Anselm's theology is indeed what de Lubac understands theology to be: received reverence. It is only when Anselm is 'proving' God's existence that de Lubac judges the 'proof' to be of a different genre. Anselm, like Augustine and Bonaventure, holds that some direct knowledge of God belongs to every individual. A deeper question here, one which divided the medievals, was whether or not one can know the singular. For Aquinas, one does not; for Duns Scotus and Bonaventure, one does. The Franciscan theologians based their judgment, not upon the doctrine of eternal creation as in Aristotle, but rather upon the act of Christ, which as a singular saved. Cf. M. B. Foster, "The Christian Doctrine of Creation and the Rise of the Modern Natural Sciences", Mind 43 (1934), pp. 446-468.

Fourth, reason would seem to gain no knowledge of the "natural desire" if by reason we mean a faculty of the real which is outside of a historically redeemed, and therefore graced order. Fifth, there does exist a 'proof' or 'way' to God for Anselm, according to de Lubac, but it is an area of speculation which de Lubac passes over here without great comment. De Lubac's more careful analysis of 'proof', and of natural theology, is the concern of the paragraphs which follow immediately.

3. Natural Theology

Before we discuss further whether or not a natural theology exists for de Lubac, it will be helpful to present a review of certain ideas related to the 'proof' for God's existence. These ideas arise, for the most part, from the work of Joseph Maréchal, who, by de Lubac's own admission helped him to come to terms with Kant.

A. Prologomena

1. The Question of Terminology

Most writers on the "problem of God", despite their diversity of opinion about particulars, agree that a 'proof' for God's existence has a distinct characteristic that sets it apart from every other type of proof.³⁸ De Lubac is no exception.

³⁸Cf. H. D. Robert, "Connaissance et inconnaissance de Dieu", in the collective work L'Existence de Dieu (Tournai: Casterman, 1960), p. 343; A. Farrer, Finite and Infinite (Westminster: Dacre Press, 1951), p. 7; E. L. Mascall, Existence and Analogy (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1949), p. 69; C. Scheltens, OFM, "La preuve

Les voies qu'emprunte la raison pour aller à Dieu sont des preuves, et, en revanche, ces preuves sont des voies. Cela ne leur enlève pas leur caractère de preuves, -- quoiqu'elles soient souvent des preuves incomplètes, -- mais leur objet, unique entre tous les objets de pensée, leur confère un caractère à part.³⁹

The very word 'proof' in this context is ambiguous. According to Pierre Fontan, the word 'proof' affirms that God exists on the basis of signs and clues which are not God, and yet the first level of our knowledge of these does not comprise the conscious affirmation of the Infinite.⁴⁰ Perhaps "demonstration" would be a better

de l'existence de Dieu dans la philosophie néoscholastique, sa méthode sa structure", Franciscan Studies XIV (1954), 293-302. The essays of L. De Raeymaeker, J. Defener, W. Brugger, C. Gracon, on the special character of the proof for God are also worthy of note: "De indole propria probationis existentiae Dei", Studi Filosofici intorno all-Esistenza, al Mondo, al Trascendente (Roma: Analecta, 1954).

³⁹ Henri de Lubac, SCD, p. 92.

⁴⁰ Pierre Fontan, Adhésion et Dépassement (Louvain: E. Nauwelaerts, 1952), p. 51. Emerich Coreth, Metaphysics, trans. by Joseph Donceel (New York: Herder and Herder, 1968), p. 171, puts it this way. "It follows at once that in our every act of thinking there is co-positing and presupposed the primordial realization of the necessity of absolute being. This is not yet thematically a knowledge of the absolute being of God...but it becomes thematic only when we have shown that no finite being is being itself, that every finite being is distinct from absolute being, since it possesses being only in a conditioned and restricted manner". Fr. Bernard Lonergan, in his critique of Coreth, suggests that Coreth, by his metaphysics, understands actual existents. "[T]he self-realization of the subject in inquiring, knowing, and willing grounds the account of the unity, ontic truth, and ontic goodness of things". Bernard Lonergan, S.J., "Metaphysics as Horizon", op. cit., p. 202. Lonergan continues: "It remains that the main method in metaphysics is a mediation of the immediate" (ibid., p. 203). This is strikingly similar to Baillie's statement that "the immediacy of God's presence to our souls is a mediated immediacy" (op. cit., p. 194). In less

word for our purposes, although it too has ambiguities. D. Dubarle suggests that St. Thomas used the word "via" in place of "demonstratio" to avoid the danger that the mind's way to the affirmation of God's existence would be confused with a demonstration in geometry or with scientific demonstration as set forth in Aristotle's Posterior Analytics.⁴¹ De Lubac uses the word "de-monstratio" in his work and

scientific language, Baillie says: "for though we may not try to prove either to ourselves or to others that God exists, we may do something to persuade both ourselves and others that we already believe in Him....Such is the only legitimate kind of theistic proof" (ibid., p. 240). Now this, in our judgment, is what Fontan, Coreth, Lonergan and de Lubac are saying at this point. We do not suggest that all are equally metaphysicians, but at least the method of metaphysics as a turn to the subject experiencing self, others and God is a point in common. Furthermore, at least as far as de Lubac is concerned, the thematization of what is immediate, i.e., God as present to the life and thought of man, is what 'proof' or 'way' or 'demonstration' means. Karl Rahner and Herbert Vorgrimler, furthermore, in their Theological Dictionary, trans. by Richard Strachan (Montreal: Palm Publishers, 1965), p. 381, define 'proof' as the "systematic thought devoted to that affirmation of what we call 'God' which is necessarily involved in every spiritual human act (of judgment or free decision). Its final purpose is not to convey knowledge by presenting man from without with an object previously quite unknown and therefore of no interest to him, but rather to convey the reflex consciousness that always and everywhere in his spiritual existence man has dealings with God -- whether he calls him 'God' or something else, whether he reflects on the fact or not, whether he is willing to admit and freely affirm the fact or not". If Rahner and Vorgrimler mean by this what Pascal meant when he said, "Thou wouldst not be seeking me, hadst thou not already found me", then we would judge de Lubac to agree as well.

⁴¹D. Dubarle, "Pensée scientifique et preuves traditionnelles de l'existence de Dieu", De la connaissance de Dieu (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1958), p. 40. Dubarle is obviously referring to the Summa Theologiae; in Contra Gentiles we find both "demonstrare" and "probare". Cf. Contra Gentiles, Bk. I, cc. 12.-13.

by it he means a movement of reason, valid for all minds, whose itinerary and essential mechanism can be traced.⁴² He does not mean a purely deductive proof. He is referring to something more real and living than a purely deductive logical exercise in which God's existence is derived, as the consequence of some other truth, in a play of abstractions. The 'proof' or 'demonstration' is a recognition of what is "la source de mon être....qui me fait personne et responsable".⁴³

2. What is 'proof'?

De Lubac's 'proof' is grounded in the one reality which is most real to each of us: me, myself, and his 'proof' is in demonstrating that one of the ways to God is in ourself. The 'proof' for God, in de Lubac's opinion, is a reflection on oneself in the activity of knowing, wherein we come to recognize, from within our own act of being, the finitude and contingency of the

⁴²Henri de Lubac, SCD, pp. 71-72. "Une de-monstratio peut en dessiner l'itinéraire, en analyser le mécanisme essentiel, en déterminer le ressort, y distinguer des étapes, valables pour tout esprit". Bernard Lonergan, in "Metaphysics as Horizon, p. 212, points out one of the differences between the realism of Gilson and the realism of Coreth. Lonergan says: "The basic difference is that, while Prof. Gilson's immediate realism cannot be mediated and so is dogmatic, Fr. Coreth's immediate realism not only can be but also is mediated. For Prof. Gilson realism is a whole that cannot be assembled step by step with every step guaranteed as alone rational, and with this Fr. Coreth flatly disagrees. His transcendental method is essentially the method for explicating the whole: for transcendental method ascertains conditions of possibility, and the first and foremost of all conditions of possibility is the whole itself". It seems to us that de Lubac's definition of de-monstratio puts him on Coreth's side rather than on Gilson's.

⁴³SCD, p. 73

being we experience and its necessary dependence on an Absolute Source to which it is here-and-now dynamically related.⁴⁴ He is not, therefore, identifying the recognition we have of the proposition "God exists" with the systematic, written description of that recognition. Proof in the classical sense of "reductio ad evidens" exists when some reality manifests itself and the person is penetrated by the evidence of it. It does not exist in its completeness -- as de Lubac has in mind here -- when it is schematized, even for the believer.

Mais quand l'heure de leur démonstration est passée, la mémoire de cette démonstration suffit-elle toujours à repousser l'assaut de tant d'impressions qui leur sont contraires? Ou bien dans un ciel abstrait, leur lumière peut bien continuer de briller...non pour être seulement prouvées; pour être possédées, étreintes, non pour être aperçues de loin, recouvertes d'une pâle et superficielle clarté. Or la preuve nous les impose, mais ne nous les donne pas. La certitude qu'elle nous confère ainsi n'est pas une possession.⁴⁵

Hence, for de Lubac, there is a two-fold understanding of certitude regarding the 'proof' for God. If the 'proof' is considered as an exterior and verbal examination of the process through

⁴⁴Ibid. We understand "the activity of knowing" to be that materially and formally dynamic structure which includes seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, tasting, inquiring, imagining, understanding, conceiving, reflecting, weighing the evidence, judging and choosing. Cf. B. Lonergan, "Cognitional Structure", Collection, p. 222. Lonergan, of course, has worked out a brilliant theory of understanding. Insofar as he is in the school of Maréchal, he and de Lubac are colleagues. However, Lonergan's carefully worked out theory goes far beyond what de Lubac has appropriated from Maréchal.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 73.

which the mind can come to see the truth of the proposition "God exists" then the 'proof' has provisional certitude. If the 'proof' goes beyond the itinerary, to the heart of the dynamism, to that central and secret point where reason and will originate; if the 'proof' unites both "path and mind", then certitude is absolute.⁴⁶ De Lubac criticizes the quinque via and all those thematized demonstrations if they are separated from the spirit which works to them and beyond them.

Mise au point unificatrice, d'où ressort,
à travers telles expressions marquées par
une mentalité particulière ou par un état
déterminé des sciences la valeur suréminente,
la valeur éternelle de l'opération de l'
esprit qui, sans le voir, mais infaillible-
ment, pose Dieu. Opération qui n'est point
une contrainte, à laquelle au contraire
l'esprit ne saurait s'opposer qu'en se
faisant violence et, autant qu'il est en
lui, en se détruisant lui-même.⁴⁷

"Spontaneous activity" and "spontaneous proof" for de Lubac are one and the same thing. With Blondel, he understands this activity to be "moins une invention qu'un inventaire, moins une révélation qu'une élucidation".⁴⁸ Reason is not to be understood in the limited sense of "l'accueil statique et l'analyse abstractive de 'données'", but "un mouvement de la pensée qui nous entraînerait constamment 'au delà' de ce qui est encore représentable par concepts...."⁴⁹

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 99.

⁴⁷Ibid., pp. 100 and 101.

⁴⁸Quoted by de Lubac, ibid., p. 283, note 11.

⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 293-294. "Pour nous libérer techniquement

In one place de Lubac speaks of the proof for God as necessarily preceded by "good will".⁵⁰ By this he means that reflexive experience of living. We have to be in that "certain state"

du criticisme, l'oeuvre la plus efficace est sans doute celle du R. P. Joseph Maréchal" (*ibid.*, p. 283, note 13). De Lubac refers here to Le point de départ de la métaphysique, Cahier V (1926). Hereafter the V^e Cahier will be noted as V^e. This "movement of thought" which "goes beyond concepts" is a favourite statement of de Lubac. What he means by 'concept', if we understand him correctly, since -- as we have recalled -- he does not have a worked-out epistemology, is the "product of the mind's vision" conceived as "an extension of the body's vision". SCD, p. 85. Bernard Lonergan calls this "picture thinking". Insight (New York: Philosophical Library, 1957), p. 210. The "more" than the concept is intentionality, at least according to Lonergan ("Cognitional Structure", p. 228). It includes the dynamic structure of knowing which intends reality. Lonergan puts it this way. "The intrinsic relation of the dynamic structure of human knowing to being and so to reality...is the originating drive of human knowing" (*ibid.*, p. 228). This drive is toward the unrestricted and unconditioned real, and "because human knowing reaches such an unconditioned, it transcends itself" (*ibid.*, p. 230). De Lubac, however, makes the statement: "La pensée n'êtreindra jamais l'être, mais dès ses premiers pas elle le touche. Elle ne marcherait pas, si elle n'était déjà, en un sens, arrivée" (SCD, p. 91). It is difficult to join this with what Lonergan says about thought transcending itself and reaching being. For de Lubac, thinking belongs within the perspective of the spirit. He quotes Augustine: "Noli foras ire, in teipsum redi, in interiore homine habitat Veritas...Illuc ergo tende, unde ipsum lumen rationis accenditur" (*ibid.*, p. 89). In our judgment, 'thinking' here is equivalent to Lonergan's "picture thinking" and, therefore, to be rejected as insufficient. When 'thinking' means the entire dynamic structure of knowing then there seems to be an equivalence between what de Lubac understands and what Lonergan understands. In this case, 'spirit' properly is included. Finally, the little that we are showing is the similarity at this point between Maréchal, and Lonergan and de Lubac.

⁵⁰SCD, p. 73.

of mind that can make us get close to existence and keep contact with it. Henri Bouillard says that it is necessary to be in a certain state which puts one near the reality that we are concerned with in the proof for the existence of God.⁵¹ In another place, de Lubac describes faith as lived when one gives his life to it; when one personally experiences the living and the practising of faith.⁵² Analogously, reasoning as a dynamic activity rediscovers, reestablishes, and revitalizes the quinque viae or the ontological argument or any thematized proof for God because it is "plus que le fonctionnement impersonnel d'une intelligence...."⁵³ Reasoning is the activity of a living spirit engaged in an adventure which itself forms a whole.

The proof of God, then, for de Lubac, is not the articulation or thematization of the rational route to God, but what lies behind the possibility of taking that route. It is what might be called generally the "condition of the possibility of questioning".⁵⁴ It is an approach to being from within a being that is conscious of

⁵¹Henri Bouillard, "Annexes-Discussions", L'Existence de Dieu (Tournai: Casterman, 1960), p. 358.

⁵²Henri de Lubac, La foi chrétienne, p. 149.

⁵³SCD, p. 73.

⁵⁴Bernard Lonergan, "Metaphysics as Horizon", p. 205.

itself, that can know itself knowing and affirm itself as existing.⁵⁵

Since being is the absolute, unconditioned value, totally enveloping everything that exists, it can be approached adequately only from the inside....If being is to be grasped in its absoluteness, it can only be by a sort of active, inner identity with itself, a sort of interior presence to itself. But the only experience we have in which being is interiorly present to itself is that of the inwardness of human consciousness; it is the incommunicable presence of the self to the self....The interiority of consciousness first reveals to us what it means really to exist....This is the experience of being as subject or subjectivity.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ However, some careful distinctions should be held in mind. 1. We do not mean that inferential knowledge is at stake here. That is, from the consciousness of self one concludes to the consciousness of the other, etc. The solipsistic starting point is rejected by our author. That would be what he calls the analysis of the "content of a concept". 2. We do not wish to re-establish the problem of the "bridge" for our author. That is, starting from critical premises, concluded existence is merely a postulate. 3. We do not think that de Lubac, furthermore, is similar to Gilson on this point. That is, for Gilson, we know being exists by perceiving it. For de Lubac, we know being exists by intending it. "For questioning goes beyond an already known to an unknown that is to be known...." (Bernard Lonergan, *ibid.*, p. 216). 4. We recall de Lubac's warning against the epistemological reduction of man. "Et alors la réflexion qui prend conscience de cette grandeur sans bornes s'accompagne inévitablement d'une ambivalence ironique: est-ce autre que moi? De ce même point de vue strictement noétique, est il possible de trancher?" (Henri de Lubac, *SCD*, p. 96.) De Lubac goes on to say that, for Anselm, it was not the 'proof' which led to God but rather meditation on the power and limitations of thought (*ibid.*, p. 98). Still, this point may be kept in mind as unclear in de Lubac's writings. Because he appropriates Maréchal's 'way' of philosophizing, he seems to see the limitations of it without providing his own answers. What he cautions against, i.e., a noetic reduction, is not always avoided, at least in certain parts of Sur les chemins de Dieu, e.g., see pages 104-105; 293-295; 246.

⁵⁶ R. Johann, The Meaning of Love (Westminster, Ind.: Newman, 1955), p. 5.

B. The Question of 'Natural' Theology

As with so many of his works, de Lubac seldom presents the reader with a fully worked out synthesis of his own thought. He suggests the direction such a synthesis should take, and leaves the reader to await further clarification or to consult those authors whom de Lubac judges to be true. The question of the possibility of 'natural' theology is no exception. What we have established up to this point is little more than an affirmation on de Lubac's part of the context within which the rational 'proof' for the existence of God should be schematized. That context is the fully elaborated transcendental critique of Kant made by Joseph Maréchal. We have had occasion to mention Maréchal's influence on de Lubac, particularly with regard to the supernatural. Here two further points will be made so as to illuminate what we see to be de Lubac's position on 'natural' theology.

(1) The method of transcendental reflexion as applied by Maréchal is concerned with the activity, the dynamism, the thrust and striving of the spirit to relate itself to the knowable object.⁵⁷

⁵⁷Bernard Lonergan puts it this way. "Thus, Fr. Coreth would accept the principle, nihil in intellectu nisi prius fuerit in sensu. But he would have to distinguish, say, between the way there is nothing in a box and the way there is nothing in a stomach. When there is nothing in a box, a box does not feel empty; when there is nothing in a stomach, the stomach does feel empty. Human intelligence is more like a stomach than a box. Though it has no answers, and so is empty, still it can ask questions". Bernard Lonergan, "Metaphysics as Horizon", Collection, p. 215.

De Lubac appropriates what Maréchal calls a "metempirical anticipation" to describe what he understands to be the capacity of intelligence to expand infinitely until it has surpassed the limit of finite being.⁵⁸ "Metempirical anticipation" is equivalent, if we understand de Lubac correctly, to be another way of speaking the "natural desire" for the infinite. That is to say, reason in its intentionality reaches the undefinable term.

In one place, referring to Kant's law of duty, de Lubac says that it is "une loi purement formelle".⁵⁹ For de Lubac the real God always lives behind the abstraction. And there is, he says, quoting Maritain, "une connaissance vitale et non-conceptuelle enveloppée dans la notion pratique...du bien moral...et du même coup vers le Bien".⁶⁰ Again, "en vertu du dynamisme interne" the transcendent Good is desired as final end.⁶¹ Therefore, de Lubac understands Maréchal's "metempirical anticipation" as an impulse which arises naturally and which reaches, without naming it, transcendent being. It is, to use other language, the dynamic finality of the mind and spirit, i.e., of man himself, in search of what is true.⁶²

⁵⁸Quoted by de Lubac, SCD, p. 294, note 59.

⁵⁹SCD, p. 121.

⁶⁰Quoted by de Lubac, ibid.

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Bernard Lonergan, in his article "The Natural Desire to See God", p. 87, says that "[w]e can understand directly and properly only what first we can imagine, and so the proportionate object of

Maréchal also discusses the doctrine of analogia entis in a way which appeals to de Lubac. We cannot hope to speak to that issue here except in the broadest terms. But because it is such an important issue for de Lubac, we will point out de Lubac's particular emphasis.

Maréchal postulates the "metempirical anticipation" to safeguard the "analogical knowledge of the absolute".⁶³ Maréchal's position is that analogy belongs, not to the concept, but to the judgment. There is more in the concept than the concept. There

our intellects in this life is said to be the quidditas rei materialis". We think that Marechal says the same thing. That is, whenever a philosopher speaks of the natural desire he is speaking of "the paradox that the desire to understand arises naturally, that its object is the transcendental, ens, and that the proper fulfillment that naturally is attainable is restricted to the proportionate object of finite intellect" (ibid.). A theologian is different. "[O]nly the theologian can affirm a natural desire to see God" (ibid.). De Lubac is always clear that he speaks as a theologian. There are times, limited and always qualified, when God seems to be the proportionate object of the dynamic finality of the mind for him, but then he returns once again to say: "O Dieu, qui êtes au-dessus de tout nom et de toute pensée, au delà de tout nom et de toute pensée, au delà de tout idéal et de toute valeur! O Dieu Vivant!" (quoted by de Lubac from St. Augustine, SCD, p. 125). Cf. also Victor Preller, Divine Science and the Science of God (Princeton: University Press, 1967).

⁶³SCD, p. 294. Cf V^e, p. 184.

is more in the judgment than the arrangement of concepts. There is more in knowing than a judgment about what is so. The more is not imperfect resemblance.⁶⁴ There is not the slightest possibility, then, of having any idea about, for example, the goodness of God, if that idea is based upon the goodness of man.

C'est oublier que l'analogie, en réalité, n'est pas dans le concept, mais dans le jugement, qu'elle dit à la fois et indissolublement ressemblance et dissemblance, indiquant le "rapport" (ordo, proportio), qui permet d'affirmer la premier, compte tenu de la seconde.⁶⁵

[L]e non qui succède au oui n'est pas (pour parler une fois le jargon sartrien) "néantisation": le oui continue de vivre secrètement dans le non, comme son corrélatif oblige; il l'oriente, il le détermine, il le qualifie.⁶⁶

Thus de Lubac understands analogia entis, we would say, along with Maréchal, as something more positive than negative. His stress is not on the denial of limit to what is affirmed in the judgment, but rather that which makes the judgment itself possible and true. He speaks of both the "grand monde" and the "petit monde" -- the cosmos around us and the cosmos within us -- as symbols of God.⁶⁷ By symbol de Lubac understands the "signe ontologique". He

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Quoted by de Lubac, SCD, p. 247.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 248.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 108.

says:

Toute créature est, par elle-même, une théophanie. Tout est plein de traces, d'empreintes, de vestiges, d'énigmes.... de partout s'échappent les rayons de la Divinité. Tout est ruisselant de l'unique Présence....le Créateur "a dispersé sur les créatures les reflets de ses perfections divines, et [], grâce à ces lumières visibles, nous pouvons connaître, par voie d'analogie, les splendeurs inaccessibles du Créateur".⁶⁸

Now de Lubac does not understand the mind first rising to God through created things, but rather "c'est Dieu qui, par le monde, descend en quelque manière jusqu'à mon esprit".⁶⁹ Thus there is a certain directness of God's presence to man. De Lubac uses Augustine's term: "contuitio".⁷⁰ "Contuitio" is not, for de Lubac, identified with reasoning. "Contuitio" is a direct revelation of God "sous l'abstraction qui vient de moi...."⁷¹ It is a light. Quoting St. Bonaventure, de Lubac says: "It is clear how broad is the way of illumination, and how, in everything that is perceived or known, God himself lies hidden".⁷²

⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 108-109.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 109.

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 110.

⁷²Ibid., p. 111. Patet quam ampla sit via illuminationis, et quomodo in omni re quae sentitur sive quae cognoscitur, interius lateat ipse Deus. St. Bonaventure, De reductione artium ad theologiam. Cf. Anslem, Monologion, c. xiii (PL, clviii, 161 A-B). Cf. Augustine, De Musicu, VI, c. xiii, n. 40 (PL, xxxii, 1185). These references are

The point, it seems to us, in de Lubac's way of speaking analogia entis is a certain direct knowledge of God he seems to affirm as given. God comes to man. He reveals Himself, albeit obscurely. As St. Bonaventure puts it: Deus praesens est ipsi animae. De Lubac, who clearly affirms that the revelation of God exists through the "Great world", also clearly affirms that the revelation of God exists through the "small world", i.e., the soul of man himself. What he means by this is that a certain direct knowledge of God exists. This is not to say that we can know God immediately (ontologism), nor that we have been given an a priori idea of God as a natural endowment (innatism). Rather, with John Baillie, we judge de Lubac to be saying that the presence of God continually invades our life.⁷³

de Lubac's. We include them here as one example of a cluster of theologians which occurs frequently in de Lubac's writings.

⁷³ John Baillie, Our Knowledge of God, p. 174. It would be outside the scope of this thesis to bring comparisons to light between de Lubac, Barth, Brunner, and Baillie. A certain indication, however, of where lines seem to be drawn between them is in order. We take Barth to understand that no knowledge of God exists in the world save in the hearts of regenerate Christian believers. De Lubac disagrees. For de Lubac, Jesus Christ is the fullness of revelation; he is not alone the revelation. The doctrine of analogia entis, which separates Barth, by his own admission, from Roman theology, exists for de Lubac. It exists to explain the fact that the Fall did not totally make man Verrückt. We take Brunner to make a distinction, not between natural and revealed knowledge, but rather between general and special revealed knowledge. For Brunner, "nature has come to be regarded as a more general kind of revelation" (ibid., p. 38). De Lubac agrees with this. Like Brunner, de Lubac finds God's presence within the state of nature. But unlike Brunner, de Lubac finds God's presence there to be a saving presence. The direct knowledge present in analogia entis shows this to be the case. Between de Lubac and Baillie many similarities exist. The exact point of divergence, in our judgment, centers around the question of nature itself. Baillie defends the thesis that "there

The observation certainly is in order, at this point, that de Lubac seems to depart from, by going beyond, that philosophical movement begun by Maréchal and followed in our time by Lonergan. De Lubac has, once again, started with a philosophical premise, carried it to a point and then described and established theologically what it had always been. In many ways, then, for de Lubac, an inadequacy exists with such purely philosophical themes as the "rational proofs", the "natural desire", and the "metempirical anticipation" of the intellect. It is interesting, in this regard, to note that the chapter entitled "De la connaissance de Dieu" in Sur les chemins de Dieu devotes two pages to "knowledge" in the common sense meaning of that word, and fifteen pages to the relationships which exist between poets and prophets, between mystics and philosophers. We turn to one of these relationships now, as a conclusion to our point, that de Lubac's "natural theology" is just not what ordinarily has been understood by that term.

is no such thing as human nature" (ibid., p. 39). He continues: "Or, less paradoxically, we might say, as the Greeks would have said, that it exists, not in a state of being, but in a state of becoming" (ibid.). De Lubac, as a historical theologian, attributes status to theologizing that is done in different moments of time, but he continues to work with categories of person and nature which are tied to substantial categories. Baillie's a priori categories might be too reminiscent of Kant to please de Lubac. And yet, de Lubac says, "Dieu unique aux aspects multiples; Terme unique aux multiples approches Dieu de tout moi-même! Dieu de tous! Aucune avenue vers Toi n'est fermée, sur aucune je n'ai le droit de jeter l'interdit. SCD, p. 136. Cf. John Smith, Reason and God (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), pp. 157-172.

The Philosopher and the Mystic

The knowledge one has of God, for de Lubac, is always finite, obscure, fragile, and difficult. What he calls the "subjective revelation" is always something more than simply the power of unaided reason.⁷⁴ "Point de connaissance réelle ni de densité ontologique sans mystère".⁷⁵ The impulse which persists within us, waiting to be released, is thematized by the philosopher but is properly the domain of the mystic.⁷⁶ Perhaps the chief difference between the two is that the philosopher pursues "l'Un unifiant" whereas the mystic is searching for, or being attracted by, "l'Un un".⁷⁷

Le philosophe part d'un besoin d'explication, qui est au moins virtuellement besoin d'explication totale. Ce qu'il veut, c'est unifier le multiple et tout ensemble diversifier l'un: il lui faut un système de rapports qui, embrassant toutes choses, rende toute chose intelligible. Son ambition est de comprendre l'univers. Si donc au cours de sa recherche il vient à rencontrer Dieu -- comme il ne peut manquer de le faire -- ce sera à titre de soutien du monde et de principe d'explication du

⁷⁴SCD, p. 133.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 119.

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 134. "Mystic" means one who has a direct, unmediated experience of the divine. The "mystic" de Lubac refers to, in our judgment, is of a mediated experience.

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 168.

monde. A titre d'Un unifiant.⁷⁸

But if God as the cause and unifying principle of all things satisfies the philosopher,

[] cela ne suffit point à l'homme. Cela ne suffit point à l'esprit. Plus profonde que l'exigence rationnelle, plus radicale et plus totale, tout autre qu'elle, il y a l'aspiration mystique. Par-delà la cause suprême ou l'Un unifiant que cherche le philosophe et qui n'est encore, pour ainsi dire, qu'une fonction, le mystique cherche l'Un lui-même.⁷⁹

De Lubac says that St. Thomas sought to unite the "unifying One" and the "one One" by his doctrine of the natural desire. And yet, according to de Lubac: "Le 'désir de voir Dieu' dont il affirme l'existence en notre nature est bien un désir, au fond, d'ordre mystique".⁸⁰ Therefore, the philosophical viewpoint of St. Thomas does not, in the opinion of de Lubac, fully attain "formally" what it sets out to achieve. De Lubac says:

Ainsi, saint Thomas paraît échouer dans sa tentative d'établir une continuité entre philosophie et mystique, c'est-à-dire entre le dynamisme de l'intelligence et le désir de l'esprit. La doctrine du "désir naturel de voir Dieu" est centrale dans sa pensée: il n'a point réussi à l'unifier pleinement.⁸¹

Thomas may have failed but only, de Lubac says, because the project

⁷⁸ Ibid., pp. 168-169.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 170.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 171.

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 173.

is impossible. This is so because:

l'élan mystique ne prolonge pas précisément la recherche métaphysique, il ne la double ni ne la relaie, quoiqu'il puisse l'animer et, en revanche, trouver en elle un stimulant....La recherche philosophique remonte analytiquement de l'effet à la cause, en vertu d'une nécessité rationnelle. L'élan mystique s'élève de l'effet, perçu comme signe, à cette même cause, par un mouvement qui ne se justifierait pas totalement en pure raison...mais qui procède d'une exigence de l'esprit non moins impérieuse que l'exigence logique, ou, plus exactement, d'une attraction de l'Etre à travers ses indices.⁸²

Nevertheless, de Lubac thinks the distinction between philosopher and mystic is an artificial one. To distinguish the diverse functions of the mind is to forget that the spirit is one, and man's intelligence is steeped in that same spirit. It was St. Thomas' greatness, according to de Lubac, to recognize this unity.

Par une démarche que la pure raison ne suffit point à justifier mais que l'esprit ratifie ou plutôt qu'il exige, il a su approfondir le mouvement naturel de l'intelligence jusqu'à y découvrir l'appétit spirituel.... L'esprit humain...explores toutes ses dimensions, il cherche à retrouver, par-delà les techniques et les spécialisations qui l'ont obligé pour ainsi dire à se diviser lui-même, la simplicité de son acte essentiel. Les distinctions et les oppositions formelles tendent, quoique sans y parvenir jamais pleinement, à se résorber dans l'unité. Toute la recherche de saint Thomas est une recherche de Dieu.⁸³

⁸²Ibid., p. 174.

⁸³Ibid., pp. 175-176.

De Lubac's distinction between the philosopher and the mystic is illuminating, particularly in light of what we have just discussed. His appropriation of Maréchal is done from the position of faith. Furthermore, like the doctrine of "pure nature", de Lubac thinks that the idea of a "natural reason" as separated from the supernatural, is no more than a great 'X' which has no precise intellectual meaning.⁸⁴ The dynamism of the intellect which postulates the transcendent ens as its adequate object is therefore a philosophical thesis which must be lifted up and transformed. In less technical language, "cette étincelle organique d'inquiétude ; de désir et de mécontentement insérée au plus profond des entrailles de l'Humanité"⁸⁵ is unidentifiable outside the context of revelation. What Jacques Maritain calls "la grande mélancolie païenne";⁸⁶ what Tertullian calls the anima naturaliter christiana, is affirmed philosophically by de Lubac only up to a point. The mind's desire, logically expressed by Aquinas; man's yearning, systematically charted by Blondel; the intellect's dynamism, more emphasized by Maréchal, are all, in the last analysis, unsatisfying for de Lubac. It is only when he speaks of man theologically that de Lubac has his philosophical tradition in focus.

⁸⁴ Cf. LMS, p. 60.

⁸⁵ Quoted by de Lubac, ibid., p. 169.

⁸⁶ Quoted by de Lubac, ibid., p. 170.

La puissance du Créateur imprime un mouvement "dans l'intime de sa créature et dans le fond de l'être créé, dès l'instant qu'il est créé". Mouvement de fond, caché, contre-carré d'abord et apparemment contredit par tous les mouvements de surface, mais qui leur est sous-jacent à tous. Mouvement qui fait que l'esprit, une fois enfin dégagé de tous les empêchements et comme "épuré de toutes choses", son noviciat terrestre étant accompli, s'élancera en Dieu "par un certain transport qui ne lui permet pas de s'arrêter à ce qui est moindre que cet Objet pour lequel il a été créé". Mouvement congénital, et par conséquent spontané, préalable en sa racine à toute orientation comme à tout engagement du vouloir libre. Mouvement qui n'est pas de tel individu ou de tel autre, mais de la nature qu'ils ont tous en commun.⁸⁷

C. Conclusion

It is revelation in the strict sense, then, which gives de Lubac the key to discern the movement. "Certains abîmes de notre nature ne s'entrouvrent qu'au choc de la Révélation".⁸⁸ Without this revelation there is merely a seeking for something in "une obscurité indéchiffrable".⁸⁹ The "seeking" is on the part of the spirit of man, and while it can reach a certain term, even the "seeking" itself is not outside the historic order of being "called". Therefore, aliquo modo, man is affected by his finality.

⁸⁷Ibid., pp. 174-175.

⁸⁸Quoted by de Lubac, ibid., p. 284.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 268.

"Natural reason", understood as the pure power of ratiocination, apart from any reference to grace or glory or encounter with God, is at best a philosophical hypothesis in the framework of de Lubac's thought.

Based upon such a premise, "natural theology" is abstract and, if it is affirmed and followed in practice, it leads to what de Lubac calls a "philosophie religieuse, usurpant la place qui ne revient qu'à la religion même".⁹⁰ It has "une pente fatale à dériver vers l'agnosticisme, quand ce n'est pas plutôt vers un mysticisme tout négatif ou vers un athéisme pur et simple, masque seulement pour un temps".⁹¹ Yet de Lubac does not deny a legitimacy and a necessity to "natural theology". But he does so hesitatingly and with this qualification: there is always an indirect appeal made to faith.

Par plus qu'aucun autre nous ne pouvons
faire abstraction totale de ce que la
révélation chrétienne a mis en nous pour
jamais.⁹²

Just as the statement of Vatican Council I on the "power of natural reason" must be understood as the de jure and not de facto situation, so does de Lubac separate the realm of reason and the realm of faith "in principle".⁹³ This seems to us a concession to

⁹⁰SCD, p. 253.

⁹¹Ibid., p. 254.

⁹²Ibid., p. 255.

⁹³Ibid., p. 254. De Lubac's interpretation of this teaching of the Magisterium is identical to Lonergan's interpretation. Cf. Bernard Lonergan, "The Natural Desire to See God", Proceedings of the CTSA, vol. 23 (1968).

those who defend the power of natural reason within the Roman Catholic tradition, all the while interpreting this "power" as hypothetically possible but not real in fact. De Lubac is not about to argue with "tous les grands penseurs de la tradition catholique" who may have treated the power of reason as though it were relatively autonomous and who stressed the rationality of their search for and proof of God's existence.⁹⁴ But at one point he does remark, and we think he has made his own position sufficiently clear, that "on discute pour savoir s'il faut les ranger du côté de la philosophie ou du côté de la théologie".⁹⁵ Referring again to St. Thomas, de Lubac makes mention of philosophy done by one who is a Christian.

C'est qu'il n'est pas un chrétien dont la philosophie puisse être en tout ce qu'elle eût été sans sa foi....La "sublime vérité", clé de voûte de son [saint Thomas] édifice rationnel, c'est dans la Bible qu'il la trouve, sans qu'on puisse dire ni que la Bible la lui impose, ni que sa raison l'impose à la Bible. Sa pensée la plus rationnelle a puisé une partie de sa sève dans le sol de la Révélation. Elle jaillit d'une vie religieuse et s'épanouit en acte religieux. "Dialectique et contemplation y demeurent affectueusement conjuguées dans une très haute expérience".⁹⁶

The particularly unique emphasis of de Lubac is not that he denies the possibility in principle of "natural theology", or philosophical theology -- in this he is quite within the Augustinian

⁹⁴Ibid.

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 295.

⁹⁶Ibid., pp. 295-296.

and Bonaventurian tradition -- but that he finds it unsatisfying and incapable of bearing the experience of what he knows man to be. For him, the knowledge of God is not a human acquisition.

C'est une "image", c'est une "empreinte", c'est un "sceau". C'est la marque de Dieu sur nous. Nous ne la fabriquons pas, nous ne l'empruntons pas au dehors: elle est en nous, en nous si misérables, elle est nous-mêmes, -- ou déjà plus que nous-mêmes. Antérieure à toute opération intellectuelle ou volontaire, supposée par toute conscience, notre initiative n'y est pour rien.⁹⁷

It is God who establishes what is, who gives man His own imago in creation, and further intensifies that imago with His own presence in grace and who, finally, through the revelation in Jesus Christ allows man to understand fully, and without error, what he has been given.

Dieu se révèle incessamment à l'homme en imprimant incessamment en lui son imageDe là vient qu'il n'y aurait pas nécessité pour l'homme, en tout rigueur, d'une autre révélation pour connaître son Dieu: hors de toute intervention surnaturelle, cette "révélation naturelle" y suffit. Disons, pour ne rien exagérer, qu'elle y suffit en principe. Le péché ne la pas complètement éteinte.⁹⁸

Deum scire nemo potest, nisi Deo docente.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 13.

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 16.

⁹⁹ Quoted by de Lubac, ibid., p. 13.

Toutefois, dans l'état présent de l'humanité, la possibilité effective d'une connaissance de Dieu commune (c'est-à-dire universellement répandue), ferme et sans mélange d'erreur, doit être attribuée à la révélation divine.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ DV, p. 266.

CONCLUSION

In Part One of our thesis we described the theological point of departure which, it seems to us, characterizes the achievement of Henri de Lubac. God has revealed himself in Jesus Christ. God has articulated himself in the Word made flesh. God has mediated his mystery in the humanity of Jesus which is kyrios. This "revelation" or "articulation" or "meditation" is a communication to man both of what he is and what God is.

The revelation of God in Jesus Christ is accomplished in time. As a matter of fact, it is the revelation which gives time its status. Apart from the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, time could not be properly thought as a creature. It would either be divinized or denied: divinized, insofar as nothing outside of time could measure it; denied, insofar as nothing outside of time could affirm it.

The revelation of God invites exchange. That is to say, the revelation supposes one who 'hears' and 'listens' and 'answers'. Thus the revelation of God has, as its purpose, the summoning of man to dialogue with the Divinity. In a deeper sense, the revelation summons man to 'life' itself, since without the summons man could not properly know the destiny to which he was called.

It is the revelation of God, then, in Jesus Christ, which establishes man as person (person exists in relationship), as

historical, and as destined for divine life. The affirmation of man is made, for de Lubac, on the basis of that which is not man: God's mystery, and that which is man, God's presence, in time, in Jesus. Thus, for de Lubac, Christ precedes both man and creation insofar as He is the principle of intelligibility. That is to say, the terminus a quo and the terminus ad quem for both man and creation is the person of Jesus Christ.

This starting point of revelation is the whole, for de Lubac. The life and meaning of man, his experience of faith and of church, his confrontation with ideologies which suggest to be religious alternatives, are parts of that whole which de Lubac reflects upon in the light of the whole. And yet, on the other hand, these parts can be assembled into the whole. The a priori of revelation gives de Lubac his starting point. But, as we have recalled in our text, the parts of the whole, in one sense, can be reflected upon in themselves, and shown to be the only conditions for the possibility of what has already been established.

As a theologian, Henri de Lubac accepts the revelation and his own Christian Tradition as starting points. But he does test that revelation and that Tradition against contemporary currents of thought and thus seeks to overcome an isolated theology of revelation and Tradition which ties itself to a particular moment in history. In other words, de Lubac does not accept a theology which is a substitute for the revelation.

The contribution of de Lubac in this matter of revelation

is to propose an openness to theologies. His conflict with the magisterium of the Roman Church is tied to this fact. De Lubac suggests that no one theological systematization or thematization is large enough to do justice to the patrimony of the Tradition. As a matter of fact, a theological systematization, in his judgment, can often become a substitute for the revelation itself. This was the case, for example, when certain forms of Scholastic and Neo-Scholastic theology were thought to be official theologies. De Lubac's historical theologizing goes beyond such a hardening. For him, theology is not tied to a Counter-Reformation consciousness, a fourth century consciousness, etc. Rather the Tradition itself is normative. That is to say, revelation, mediated through the Bible, is read in the light of the on-going faith consciousness of the believing community. The magisterium is part of that faith consciousness. It has a given status in the community. But, like the faith community, of which it is a part, it too is part of the Tradition. It cannot substitute itself nor its self-understanding at any one historical moment for the whole of the Tradition.

The difficulty involved in such an historical consciousness is rather clear. The authoritative force, which in this case is the official interpreter of the Biblical Revelation, as well as the interpreter of the mediating theologies, does not understand itself historically. That is to say, its judgments are not reformable. The deeper issue involved here is left unresolved, at least as far as de Lubac is concerned. His theologizing never speaks to the

issue of development, or of infallibility nor of relativism in history, in any systematic way. What he began in the early part of the century, however, has come to full flower in these days. Such authors as Hans KÜng and Edward Schillebeeckx are evidence of that. De Lubac, so it seems, while affirming the value of historical consciousness, does not sort out all the consequences of the affirmation he makes. That is to say, on the one hand de Lubac stresses revelation as both historical and personal, faith as historical and personal, man himself as historical and personal, and yet, on the other hand, he never really explains how this is so or what the implications are for such thinking. De Lubac brings together various categories and stresses both-and: both word and person, both historical and absolute.

The question which once again was raised by de Lubac's theologizing, and which continues to be raised in these days, is to what extent a revealed religion can be non-isolationistic. That is to say, what place has the experience of man in the face of a given revelation? We leave that question unanswered, although in "Part Two" of our thesis we suggest that for Henri de Lubac the experience of man is valuable enough to suggest how he, de Lubac, would tend to resolve the question.

Surnaturel

The work which singled out de Lubac was Surnaturel. While it is fully theological, nevertheless it provides a status to man's experience which seems to over-reach theological discourse. In one

sense de Lubac's thesis suggests that the created order is so constituted in relationship to God that no possibility of thinking outside that order exists. The openness of man, his constitution as questioner and listener, his reach for fulfillment, have no other basis than that he came forth from the hand of God. Man is naturally religious. More, he is naturally Christian. De Lubac establishes a theological position which quite closely links the creator and the creature, even after the Fall. However, in attempting to overcome the extrincisism of earlier theology, in closing the gap between religion and culture, or the sacred and profane, de Lubac returns to a way of theologizing which closes the door to other Traditions. If history is given status only outside itself, by a definitive judgment on the part of God, and if that judgment is the necessity of dependence between creator and creature, then at least the possibility should be granted that other Traditions articulate the judgment. De Lubac does allow for this through his doctrine of "anonymous Christianity". However, in our judgment, such a doctrine does not do justice to the thesis of Surnaturel. Furthermore, de Lubac's historical theologizing, his respect for the person and his overture to Buddhism, clash with his conclusion that while man is constituted necessarily in relationship to God by creation, and this constitution is "in one way" salvific, yet it is only within the Roman Catholic Church that the mediation of God is fully articulated and realized.

Another criticism to be made of de Lubac's thesis in

Surnaturel arises from the intimacy between creator and creature -- which such a thesis establishes -- and de Lubac's constant theme of distance between creator and creature. Of course, de Lubac does not overlook such a tension. He calls it paradoxical. And yet, so many of his writings so enforce the obscurity of God, the unknowability of God, the reaching out for God, that one could question whether or not the thesis of Surnaturel can be translated as something more than a highly specialized and overdrawn theological conclusion.

Regarding the particular problem of "openness" to grace, de Lubac seems to hedge. He says that he does not mean "openness" as a negative disposition, nor simply as a possibility of non-repugnance. He shows that the theological tradition before Aquinas, and even Aquinas himself, had a more positive understanding of man's historical relatedness to the creator. But how this positive relatedness is understood speculatively, how the freedom of God is retained in a theism which stresses the absoluteness of creator over creature, is never really persuasively shown by de Lubac's theologizing. He does insist upon going further than an extrincism. He says, regarding Karl Rahner's "supernatural existential", that he never meant "openness" in a way Rahner did not mean it. De Lubac, finally, relies upon paradox to explain what he means. Paradox balances the distance implied by the doctrine of creation, and the intimacy implied by the doctrine of love. It is interesting to note, finally, that this entire discussion has subsided in recent

years. Perhaps the problematic remains unresolvable within the framework de Lubac proposes.

Philosophy

In his work on Marx and Nietzsche, in his questioning of the idea of God and the proof of His existence, in his appropriation of Maréchal and Rousselot, de Lubac begins as a theologian. Any humanism, in his judgment, is bankrupt or leads to bankruptcy unless it takes as its point of departure the revelation of God of the man-God relationship. But this is not to say that de Lubac explicitly begins with his conclusion. He is sensitive to the differences which separate men. He accepts the brilliance of mind of such people as Marx, Feuerbach, Comte and Nietzsche. He enters into the arena of modern thought. He writes of atheism as valuable for the believer. He understands reasoning as a way to affirm the Absolute Good. And yet, through all of this, de Lubac is the believer. He suggests, not that his faith is bracketed, but rather than from within what he has been given of the good, he can test what it is men say, what it is they do, and how they think. In other words, given the revelation and the Tradition, de Lubac handles the human condition. His respect for alternative solutions to the human condition is one thing; his rejection of them quite another thing. As we have stated elsewhere, de Lubac looks to show the fit between what the Tradition is at its best and what is most noble for man. In more technical language, he shows that the conditions which must obtain to affirm the given revelation do obtain.

Our criticism of de Lubac at this point is rather straightforward. We accept his a priori. His respect for non-Christian and non-Catholic Traditions was a breakthrough, at least in Catholic circles. But the deeper question of faith and reason remains. It is true that for de Lubac the relationship between the two is intimate. But unlike the medievals, de Lubac is within a unique, critical, philosophical tradition when he argues with Descartes, with Kant and with Hegel. How can one accept the presuppositions of Cartesian reasoning or of Kantian reasoning and speak to these presuppositions with Thomistic categories of reasoning? How can one cross-over, as it were, between philosophical systems? The attempt to do this, to resolve the question, is highly refined. We do not suggest that de Lubac has made such a resolution. That would be to classify him as a philosopher. But we do suggest that de Lubac's philosophical writings appropriate too uncritically the re-thought Thomism of Marechal and Rousselot. We do grant that de Lubac meets a serious question. In fact, the question is whether theological concepts can be translated into contemporary experience and do justice both to their own content and the content of contemporary experience. Or, do they lose something in translation? De Lubac's solution is that they can carry the weight both of their own experience as well as contemporary experience. But he does not really show how that is so. A philosopher like Bernard Lonergan proceeds more critically, as the question would seem to demand. This is not to dismiss de Lubac's entrance into the fray. But it

is to suggest the limits of his contact with it.

Roman Catholic Thought

With reference to twentieth century Roman Catholic theologizing, we consider Henri de Lubac to be what James Connolly calls the "symbol of the theological revival itself".¹ De Lubac asks of the past how it can shape the future. He is not a chronicler of the past. His is not a sterile historicism. He "looks at reality itself with the very eyes of the theologians of the past"² in order to perceive the spirit and thinking underlying the formulas of history.

Most recently, the theology of Henri de Lubac summons the Roman Church to weigh carefully its rapprochement with the contemporary world. He cautions against an "aggressiveness directed equally against the church's past and its present-day existence, against all forms of its authority, against all its structures..."³ In his mind, this aggressiveness does not come either from love or thought.

I stand in amazement at the good conscience
of so many sons of the church who, never
having accomplished anything exceptional in

¹James M. Connolly, op. cit., p. 82.

²Karl Rahner, Theological Investigations, Vol. I, p. 8.

³Henri de Lubac, "The Church in Crisis", p. 103.

their own right, who have neither taken time to think nor ever really suffered, who do not even take time to reflect, and yet who, each day, urged on by an unknown and unknowing crowd, become the accusers of their mothers and their brothers.⁴

It is an aggressiveness born of individualism which parades under the label of charismatic. De Lubac's loyalty to tradition, his affirmation of the magisterium, his own personal fate, which he refuses to be highlighted, stand as an alternative to this charismatic individualism. His theologizing, so strongly contemplative, takes sides against a theologizing so strongly cognitional. Speaking uncharacteristically, he says of this theology that it is superficial, "crammed full of slogans borrowed from the advertising world", addressed to the uncritical.⁵ Quoting Karl Barth, he affirms what he sees to be his own concern.

There should be no question in the church... of jumping over the centuries, so as to link ourselves directly and immediately to the Bible.... This is what biblicism has done, loudly rejecting the symbol of Nicaea, orthodoxy, scholasticism, the fathers of the church, the confessions of faith, so as to be rooted, as they say, only in the Bible. And yet, curious as it sounds, this procedure has always resulted in a very 'modern' theology. These biblicists share the philosophy of their times; they find their own ideas in the Bible; they free themselves from the dogmas of the church but not from their own dogmas or their own conceptions.⁶

⁴Ibid., p. 104.

⁵Ibid., p. 107.

⁶Quoted by de Lubac, ibid., p. 108. He goes on to say,

Thus, most explicitly in his latest writings, and more implicitly, but just as intelligently, in his earliest writings, de Lubac cautions against substituting ideology for theology. This is why, in our judgment, his theology is always first, why revelation is the point of departure, and why it is the point of return. This has been his singular contribution to Roman Catholic theologizing at the turn of the century and continues to be his service in these days.

Finally, Henri de Lubac might be classified better as a mystical theologian than a speculative theologian. By the former we mean one who does theology more on the basis of what he suffers and undergoes, what he enjoys, appreciates, and lives, than on the basis of what he is able to rationally induce and deduce. The former includes the latter but goes beyond it. In de Lubac's case, it goes beyond it in the realm of paradox and mystery, which are categories he uses frequently. The burden of proof, of course, rests upon de Lubac to show that what the speculative or dogmatic theologian excludes should not be excluded. Furthermore, the how of de Lubac's insights is another question that should be critically addressed. Both of these demands are respectable, and yet de Lubac does not seem to have handled them. But, of course, to diagnose the problem without prescribing a cure is itself a beginning.

in a note, that "Barth more than once put Catholics on guard against the temptation of falling into the same errors committed in the past by Protestant thought".

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To a large extent, this bibliography was compiled by Jesuit scholastics at Lyon-Fourvière for the Jesuit archives. It has never been published. We have brought it up to date, and publish it here so as to give as full a context as possible for reviewing the achievement of Henri de Lubac. The bibliographies already published, in our judgment, fail to do that.¹

Despite our effort to present this complete bibliography to an English-speaking audience, a number of imprecisions remain. This is particularly evident regarding de Lubac's publications during both World Wars,² and the publications between 1950 and

¹E. Haulott, "Bibliographie du P. Henri de Lubac", L'Homme devant Dieu, III (Paris: Aubier, 1964), pp. 347-356.
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C. Benedetti, Introduction to the Italian edition of Il Mistero del Supranaturale (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1967). Benedetti gives a short bibliography as well as a list of those Italian translations of de Lubac's works.

²Twenty-nine pamphlets entitled Témoignage Chrétien appeared during the German Occupation (1941-1944) as Cahiers clandestins. The pamphlets were part of the French Resistance, therefore the

1960.³ Nevertheless, we think this bibliography offers an accurate account of both the scope and depth of de Lubac's writings.

The bibliography chronologically lists de Lubac's publications. New editions, reprints and translations, each year they appear, are also included. Generally, the independent works, e.g., books and pamphlets, are listed first, followed by publications in general works, then periodicals, and finally, prefaces, introductions, reviews and discussion notes.

The abbreviations are generally self explanatory. A whole number, appearing at the left hand column, indicates original work. A whole number plus a small letter indicates either a translation of, an extended edition of, or a re-published edition of, the original work. Underlined whole numbers indicate a major work.

An index to the periodicals may be found at the conclusion of the bibliography.

publisher and authors remained anonymous. Pamphlets one to eleven were published together in 1946: Témoignage Chrétien (Paris: Témoignage chrétien). The name P. Chaillet should be that of Henri de Lubac; C. Fessard is the publisher. De Lubac wrote a great deal for the Resistance, but exact identification is not possible today. This is so because de Lubac meant the publications to speak directly to the spiritual needs of the French people during the Occupation, and therefore saw no need to establish exact authorship later.

³Superiors of several religious orders responded to the encyclical Humani Generis in concrete ways. Henri de Lubac, among others, came into public debate, a debate which often simplified and misunderstood the situation. So as not to nourish this simplification and misunderstanding, the Jesuit Superiors judged that some few contributions of de Lubac should not be published under his name.

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