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The Real Presence in the Eucharist: A
Comparison of the Teaching of some Modern
Roman Catholic Theologians with that of
the Teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas and of
the Council of Trent.

A Thesis presented for the Degree of Master of
Arts in the University of Durham.

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ABSTRACT

The Second Vatican Council and the subsequent teaching given by Pope Paul VI have certainly led to fresh developments in the Church's understanding of the sacraments and of their necessity as the principal means of sanctification, both in the economy of the Church and in the life of the individual Christian. If this is the case with sacraments in general, it is much more so with regard to the Holy Eucharist, in which (according to traditional Roman Catholic teaching) the Lord gives himself, body, blood, soul and divinity really and truly under the sign of sacramental bread and wine for the nourishment and building up of the Church.

Some modern Roman Catholic theologians (Schoonenberg, Schillebeeckx, Rahner) and the New Dutch Catechism have tried to re-express this doctrine of the Real Presence of the Lord in the Eucharist, in such a way as to be understood by the modern man. They have suggested substituting new terms like 'transfinalization' and 'transsignification' for the traditional word 'transubstantiation', to denote the Real Presence of the Lord in the Eucharist. These new approaches, as might have been expected, found a different reception in different parts of the Church. The ensuing controversy naturally provoked an official response, which was given in the form of an encyclical Mysterium Fidei by Pope Paul VI, where he encourages the theologians to be faithful to the official teaching of the Church and presents Thomas Aquinas as the model.

In this thesis, I have undertaken to compare the opinions of the modern theologians with that of the Decree of the Council of Trent and the opinion of St. Thomas. Trent gives official doctrine, and the Summa of Thomas is the best example of theologizing. Keeping this in mind, this thesis is divided into nine chapters. Chapter I comprises a brief summary of the opinions of the above-mentioned theologians. Chapter II is a survey of the doctrine in the Early Middle Ages. Chapters III, IV and V examine the teaching of Thomas at considerable length. Chapter VI gives a bird's eye-view of the Eucharistic controversies from the Fourteenth to the Sixteenth Century. This leads us into Chapters VII and VIII which deal with the Council of Trent. Finally, Chapter IX compares the opinions of the modern theologians with that of the Decree of the Council of Trent and of the teaching of St. Thomas.

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CHAPTER I

SOME RECENT ROMAN CATHOLIC OPINIONS CONCERNING THE REAL PRESENCE

Hans Küng, in the very first paragraph of his book The Council and Reunion (1961), stated that the first and very precious result of Pope John XXIII's announcement of the Second Vatican Council had been a definite change of atmosphere, both inside and outside the Roman Catholic Church.¹ Indeed, there is an oft-repeated anecdote about Pope John's reply to a cardinal who asked him why he had called a Council; rising to his feet, he crossed the room and opened a window, saying, 'I think we need a little fresh air in here'.² Most significant of all were the same Pope's words in his Allocution at the opening of the Council on 11 October 1962:

"The greatest concern of the Ecumenical Council is this: that the sacred deposit of Christian doctrine should be guarded and taught more efficaciously.... It is necessary first of all that the Church should never depart from the sacred patrimony of truth received from the Fathers. But at the same time she must ever look to the present, to the new conditions and new forms of life introduced into the modern world which have opened new avenues to the Catholic apostolate.... Our duty is not only to guard this precious treasure, as if we were concerned only with antiquity, but to dedicate ourselves with an earnest will and without fear to that work which our era demands of us, pursuing thus the path which the Church has followed for twenty centuries.... The substance of the ancient doctrine of the deposit of faith is one thing, and the way in which it is presented is another...."³

With such public encouragement from so authoritative a source, a number of leading Roman Catholic theologians were not slow to avail themselves of a new-found freedom to use modern, rather than scholastic, philosophies to express and to discuss various doctrines of the faith. This trend had already begun in a small way before the Council, but had hardly affected the teaching given in seminaries or Catholic universities, and was therefore unfamiliar to the bishops and clergy trained in those



schools. Indeed, the 1917 Code of Canon Law states in canon 1366 § 2 that in seminaries, the professors must teach and treat both rational philosophy and theology strictly according to the method, doctrine and principles of St Thomas Aquinas.⁴ The inclusion of 'rational philosophy' in this canon is decidedly eccentric, since Thomas himself stoutly maintained that in philosophy, an argument from authority is the weakest of all arguments.⁵ It is therefore all the more to the credit of the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council that when they looked at this matter, they paid more attention to Thomas than to the prescriptions of Canon Law. Article 15 of the Decree on the Training of Priests reads:

"Philosophical subjects should be taught in such a way as to lead the students gradually to a solid and consistent knowledge of man, the world and God. The students should rely on that philosophical patrimony which is forever valid, but should also take account of modern philosophical studies, especially those which have greater influence in their own country, as well as recent progress in the sciences. Thus, by correctly understanding the modern mind, students will be prepared to enter into dialogue with their contemporaries".⁶

St Thomas is put forward, not as an authority, but as a model of one who took the problems of his time seriously, and with faith tried to find a solution.⁷ This new approach is now enshrined in the revised Code of Canon Law (1983),⁸ and is therefore certain to be with us for the foreseeable future, with all its implications. Some Catholics are, admittedly, depressed about this 'demotion' of St Thomas, as if it entailed an abandoning of some essential points of the faith; but, apart from the fact that we must always distinguish between philosophy and theology, and distinguish again between theological expressions and the dogmas of the faith (the very point made by John XXIII above), it cannot be too often stressed that even the 1917 Code of Canon Law, when prescribing that both philosophy and theology should be studied according to the methods, doctrines and principles of Thomas, cited no legislation earlier than

Leo XIII's Encyclical Aeterni Patris of 1879.⁹ In other words, the canonical recommendation of Thomism (whatever that may mean) in preference to other schools of philosophy and theology lasted at the most from 1879 until the Second Vatican Council, which is a very short period in the history of the Church.

It might be thought that the abrogation of the canonical requirement to teach theology according to the methods and principles of St Thomas would automatically make it easier for Catholics to engage in ecumenical discussions with other theologians. This is true insofar as both parties could agree to call upon other philosophies to promote dialogue; but it would be a grave mistake (as I hope to prove) simply to abandon 'the methods and principles' of St Thomas, as if his theology could have nothing to contribute today.

Probably nowhere in all Catholic theology has the influence of Thomas been more prominent than in the discussion of the Real Presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist, an influence not confined to text-books or the lecture-room, but felt universally: for it seems solidly established that it was he who put together the original Office and Mass for the feast of Corpus Christi, and who wrote the hymns used on that day.¹⁰ Hence it might seem that any revaluation of Thomas's theology concerning the Real Presence would inevitably affect also popular piety, and even the very liturgy of the principal Eucharistic feast of the Roman Church. A priori, one cannot exclude this possibility, but neither can one a priori assume it to be so: for Thomas, in composing the liturgy for Corpus Christi, might well have restricted himself to what he considered matters of faith, leaving aside whatever he judged to be matters of free debate among theologians.

The fact is, that if one wishes to discover what is the official and authentic teaching of the Roman Catholic Church about the Real Presence, one has to look first and foremost at the decree issued at Session XIII

of the Council of Trent. Deliberately framed and worded to counter Protestant teachings of the sixteenth century, it has been for four centuries the touchstone of Roman Catholic orthodoxy on the subject, as it has been the target of Protestant criticism. Unfortunately, it is all too true to say that it has been (like Thomas) more talked about than understood. For many Catholics, the simple criterion of orthodoxy on the Real Presence has been whether a particular statement or practice is anti-Protestant; and for many Protestants, whether a particular opinion or practice steers sufficiently clear of the Council of Trent. Clearly, such crude tests are hardly likely to advance the cause of ecumenical understanding.

So it was that in the 1960's, when the Roman Church officially and seriously committed itself to ecumenical dialogue, men began to feel it a scandal that the Holy Eucharist, the sacramentum unitatis, should be perhaps the principal sign and cause of division between Christians. Already in the preceding decade, two leading Reformed theologians, F.J. Leenhardt and Max Thurian, had written books which 'were both very ecumenical in tone: they even accepted the notion of transubstantiation, but in a non-Aristotelian sense. They affirmed the real presence proper to the Eucharist in a manner so Catholic in spirit as to disturb certain Protestant circles'.¹¹ Mainly in Belgium and in Holland, certain Catholic theologians began to attempt to present Catholic doctrine in a manner intelligible to, and if possible acceptable to, members of the Reformed Churches: they in their turn found themselves accused of disturbing the members of their own communion.

A brief outline of this controversy within the Roman Catholic Church will make clear the reasons for choosing the topic for this thesis, and supply a justification for the plan which will emerge at the end of this chapter.

(a) Transfinalization

Partly as a result of the influence of Kant, but mainly as a consequence of discoveries made by modern physics, the old Aristotelian distinction between 'substance' and 'accidents' has been more and more abandoned by philosophers, for almost every 'thing' we know is composed of many 'substances' (in a chemical sense), and they in turn of other such substances. So in philosophy the term 'substance' has gradually come to be reserved for personal beings. But in that case, how is one to describe the Catholic doctrine about bread and wine being changed into the body and blood of Christ?

According to Schillebeeckx,¹² it was a French priest, Jean de Baciocchi, who first rose above the purely physical and purely ontological interpretations, and squarely placed the reality of the Eucharistic presence in the sacramental presence. He used the terms 'transfunctionalization', 'transfinalization' and 'transsignification' to describe the change which occurs in the Eucharist. He argued that the ultimate reality of things is not what our senses indicate, nor what chemical analysis may disclose, but consists in what the thing is for. It is easy to think of examples: the same piece of wood may be either a drum-stick or a conductor's baton; a piece of leather may 'become' either the sole of a shoe or the binding of a book - in either case it remains leather, but what it becomes is determined by the use to which it is put.

Thus in the Holy Eucharist, those mixtures of various chemical substances which we refer to as 'bread' and 'wine' become, after the consecration, 'signs' of the fact that Christ here gives himself as spiritual food and drink to the believer. In other words, by the consecration the purpose of the elements has been altered: they are no longer material things to nourish our bodies but wholly and entirely 'signs' of the fact that Christ is here coming spiritually to the recipient, and effective signs, in that, by receiving the consecrated.

elements, man does receive Christ into his heart. In this sense, an objective and fundamental change has taken place in the elements, a 'transubstantiation'. 'This was the first attempt by a Catholic theologian to synthesize "realism" (transubstantiation) and "the sacramental symbolism in its full depth of meaning".¹³

(b) Transsignification

Edward Schillebeeckx, the Belgian-born Dominican and Professor of Theology at Nijmegen, while admitting the validity of the term 'transfinalization', as a general rule equates it with 'transsignification', and seems to use the two interchangeably, but with a preference for the latter.¹⁴ At first, this generates confusion in the mind of the reader, until one realizes that Schillebeeckx wants to carry the idea of transfinalization further, and to situate it within the context of sacramental symbolism: hence his preference for 'transsignification', of which 'transfinalization' is but one aspect.

In an address delivered during the Fourth Session of the Second Vatican Council to the Fathers of the Council, he expounded very succinctly the views he was later to publish in his short book The Eucharist.¹⁵ For him, transsubstantiation is profoundly real, but it is so within the framework of 'sacramental sign'. He allows that the conciliar Fathers of Trent thought in Aristotelian categories, but maintains that they intended to define dogmatically only the reality proper to the Eucharistic presence, the Catholic Eucharistic faith, and not the categories which they used in discussing and formulating this properly Eucharistic presence.¹⁶

What then is the specific point of transsignification? Schillebeeckx argues that the Real Presence in the Eucharist should not be isolated from other modes of real presence, and that the term transsubstantiation does not restrict the Real Presence of Christ to the Eucharist, but rather evaluates and determines the mode of real presence which is proper to the Eucharist.¹⁷

Starting with the same idea as de Baciocchi, that transsubstantiation has nothing to do with chemistry,¹⁸ and accepting the term 'transfinalization' as a valid interpretation, Schillebeeckx wishes to situate this 'total change of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ' within the wider field of the sacramental gifts of the risen, glorified Christ.¹⁹ He draws an analogy with the interpersonal relationship between the host and the guest which is wrought by sharing in a meal, in which the gift of food is a sign, and an efficient cause, of personal friendship. This he terms as 'anthropology of sign'.²⁰ But he does not reduce the Eucharist to a simple gift, from host to guest. Rather, in the Eucharist, this anthropological coming together is assumed into the dynamism of the Holy Spirit, the Spiritus Creator, who brings about a truly ontological presence of Christ, giving himself in the sacramental sign of bread. This gift of himself in and through the bread and wine 'transubstantiates' - that is, 'changes the substance' of - the bread and wine, changes them into a different kind of gift. Schillebeeckx concludes: 'The reality (that is, the substance, because that is the meaning of substance) which is before me is no longer bread and wine, but the real presence of Christ offered to me under the sign of bread and drink'.²¹ The physical reality is not changed, but in the new context takes on an entirely new meaning and significance. This is the meaning of transignification.

Piet Schoonenberg, a Dutch Jesuit, though aware of the term 'transfinalization', prefers to speak of 'transsignification'. For him, the institution of the Eucharist is Christ's dedication of himself and also a Church-founding act, in which Christ really gives himself, not just a likeness of his broken body. But Schoonenberg feels that the Real Presence must also be expressed in terms of a 'realizing symbol'. According to him, after Christ's glorification, his 'local presence' was taken from us, but his 'personal presence' has become more powerful in and through the Holy Spirit.

This is not ubiquitism, but what Schoonenberg calls 'multivolipraesentia'. He gives the example of Mass, where Christ is already present even before the consecration, but the Eucharistic presence objectifies this personal presence, proceeds from it, and is directed towards its increase, not merely accidentally, but substantially, from within. Christ becomes presence by his substance; so that transubstantiation embraces two factors, the substance of bread and wine as its starting point, and the substance of Christ's body and blood as its end point. But this presence itself is pointed towards the Eucharistic meal, not merely towards adoration of the elements.²²

(c) Transubstantiation = Real Presence

Karl Rahner's position is set forth in two essays first published in 1958 and 1960, and contained in volume IV of his Theological Investigations.²³ His starting point is that whenever we speak of the Word of God as revealed to man, we speak of the Word of God coming under conditions of time and space, yet remaining creative and salvific.²⁴ In this sense, all the sacraments must be considered as 'Words of God' to man, and the Holy Eucharist is that particular Word in which the Incarnate Logos is present in his substance. It is the event by which God gives himself to the world, by which the Father's acceptance of his Son's self-giving on the Cross becomes actually present among the Christian community, sacramentally, in the space and time we live in.²⁵

'All the words of the other sacraments merely distribute and bring down to concrete situations the reality and the presence which is here in its totality. All words of command, exhortation and correction can aim only at one thing: that man should come there, and come with a mind to believe and accept in love what is here present in sacred solemnity: the gift of God to man in him who gave himself up for us. It is indeed possible, and perhaps only too often a reality,

that man's acceptance of the incarnate and crucified Logos, with the ultimate decisiveness which brings salvation, takes place outside the Eucharistic celebration. But even here it takes place by virtue of the event which constantly procures for itself in the Eucharist a new manifestation and presence in the midst of the Church, and imparts itself invisibly to all by becoming sacramentally visible here'.²⁶

For Rahner, the term 'transubstantiation' is simply a logical explanation (perhaps in English we should say: an equivalent affirmation) of the Real Presence of Christ, a statement that in the Eucharist Christ is truly, really and in his substance present.²⁷ Rahner calls it a 'logical, not an ontic, explanation': that is, the dogma of transubstantiation affirms neither more nor less than the word of Christ saying, 'This is my Body'.²⁸ All other explanations which go further than this, all further theologizing (including that of the scholastics) fall within the 'ontic' sphere, and are not part of Catholic dogma. Rahner also insists that one must consider not simply the local presence of Christ in the sacrament, but the character of sacrifice and of food which are essential to Catholic dogma.

These two essays of Rahner leave many questions unanswered (and unasked), but they are worth mentioning here not merely because of his reputation but also for two other reasons. (1) His deep concern is to stress what all Catholic theologians have already admitted, namely, that the Tridentine use of the term 'transubstantiation' does not imply that the Council thereby intended to define or to describe the 'how' of the change brought about by the words of consecration. All that Trent affirmed was the fact of a total change in the elements. (2) He is equally concerned to add that, over and above this basic principle, everything is a matter for free debate among theologians.

(d) The Encyclical: 'Mysterium Fidei'

It is obvious that the kind of theory that we are discussing is different from those held by many Catholics

of simple faith. Hence Paul VI issued an encyclical in 1965, in which he acknowledged that the penetrating investigation of the theologians has resulted in a more fruitful understanding of the doctrine of the Eucharist, but at the same time he strictly defined the limits of their field of operation. Insisting on the need for pastoral concern, he says:

"We have become aware that there are a number of speakers and writers on this sacred mystery who are propagating opinions that are likely to disturb the minds of the faithful and to cause them considerable mental confusion in matters of faith. Such opinions relate to Masses celebrated privately, to the dogma of transubstantiation and to eucharistic worship. They seem to think that, although a doctrine has been defined once by the Church, it is open to anyone to ignore it or to give it an interpretation that whittles away the natural meaning of the words or the accepted sense of the concepts".²⁹

He lists these opinions as follows: (1) It is not right to exalt the 'community' Mass to the detriment of Masses which are celebrated privately. (2) It is not right to be so pre-occupied with considering the nature of the sacramental sign that the impression is created that the symbolism - and no-one denies its existence - expresses and exhausts the whole meaning of Christ's presence in this sacrament. (3) The mystery of transubstantiation must not be treated without mentioning the marvellous change of the whole of the bread's substance into Christ's body and the whole of the wine's substance into his blood, and thus this change should not be limited to the use of terms such as 'trans-signification' and 'trans-finalisation'. (4) It is not right to put forward and to give expression in practice to the view which maintains that Christ the Lord is no longer present in the consecrated hosts which are left when the sacrifice of the Mass is over.³⁰

Then the Pope affirms that Christ is present in his Church in more than one way. Christ is present in his Church at prayer; when she is engaged in works of mercy;

when she is engaged in preaching the Gospel; and as she rules and governs God's people. Christ's presence is even more sublime when the Church offers the sacrifice of the Mass and when she administers the sacraments. Yet there is another form of presence, the supreme form, in which Christ is present in the Church in the sacrament of the Eucharist. He describes this presence thus:

"It is called the 'real' presence, not in an exclusive sense as though the other forms of presence were not 'real', but by reason of its excellence. It is the substantial presence by which Christ is made present without doubt, whole and entire, God and man. It would be an erroneous explanation of this form of presence if any one should conceive this to be an omnipresence of the 'pneumatic' nature, to use the current term, of Christ's body in glory. Erroneous, too, to confine it within the bounds of symbolism on the assumption that this august sacrament consists of nothing but an efficacious sign of Christ's spiritual presence, and of his close union with his faithful members in the Mystical Body".³¹

He is convinced that the suitable and accurate term which expresses this change is transubstantiation. As a result of transubstantiation the appearances of bread and wine take on a new expressiveness and a new purpose and they are no longer common bread and drink, but they are the sign of something sacred and the sign of spiritual food. This is because they contain a new 'reality' which can be called ontological. He states explicitly that beneath these appearances Christ is present whole and entire, bodily present too, in his physical 'reality', although not in the manner in which bodies are present in place. This is the reason why, while appreciating and accepting the terms 'trans-signification' and 'trans-finalisation', he is not satisfied to use these terms on their own, without any qualifications. For if the above two terms are used without any qualifications, it might lead to the conclusion that Christ's presence in the Eucharist ceases at the end of the Mass.

(e) The New [Dutch] Catechism (1966)

Almost immediately after the Encyclical Mysterium Fidei, there appeared, in 1966, a work commissioned by the Hierarchy of the Netherlands from the Higher Catechetical Institute at Nijmegen, entitled De Nieuwe Katechismus, of which an English translation was published in 1967.³² It was simultaneously translated into all the major European languages, and for the freshness and clarity of its exposition, won great praise everywhere. But among other matters, its treatment of the Real Presence in the Eucharist came in for criticism.

This is what it wrote:

'This presence is linked with the bread. His words proclaim it: This is my body. And the bread itself shows it. He is as close and life-giving as food, in his presence. Hence bread is the symbol in which he is among us. Ordinary bread has become for us bread of eternal life: Christ. - But then, what happens to this bread? It remains the same as regards outward appearance and taste. Otherwise the symbol in which he wills to be among us would disappear. What then is changed? - Before the Middle Ages, no special thought was given to the matter. There seemed to be something obvious in the fact that the reality of Jesus' presence should be there in the sign. The Middle Ages examined the question more deeply. The believing mind then found the following way of expressing the mystery. The "accidents", that is, the form or species (colour, taste, etc.) of the bread remained, while the "substance", that is the reality or nature of the bread did not, but became Christ himself.

When we consider the matter in terms of present-day thought one should therefore say that the reality, the nature of material things is what they are - each in its own way - for man. Hence it is the essence of nature of bread to be earthly food for man. In the bread at Mass, however, this nature becomes something quite different: Jesus' body, as food for eternal life. Body in Hebrew means the person as a whole. Bread has become Jesus' person. - This is a mysterious presence. We must not imagine, for instance, that Christ's body enters our mouth in a very small edition, so to speak, just as in Nazareth he entered the house of Mary in actual life size. We must be equally on our guard against the

opposite explanation, which would be purely "symbolic", as though Jesus were not really present. It is better to say that the bread is essentially withdrawn from its normal human meaning or definition, and has become the bread which the Father has given us, Jesus himself'.³³

This is the essence of the statement, but two pages later, the authors have another section concerning the duration of the Eucharistic presence (which obviously affects the practice of reservation of the Eucharist).³⁴ This runs as follows:

'When does the Eucharistic presence of Jesus cease? It ceases when the form of bread is no longer there. It is not a matter of deciding how long it can still be called bread from the scientific point of view (indeed, one might well ask whether bread was a scientific concept). But some theologians did try to think along scientific lines, and then came to the opinion that the presence ceased a quarter of an hour after eating. But the conviction today is that the matter can be dealt with more simply and humanly. Bread is something to eat. As soon as it is eaten, it is no longer called bread. The form or species of bread remains till the host has been eaten. Then it is no longer something to eat. It has already been eaten. So too a piece of bread which has been reduced to dust is no longer called bread. Hence little particles which may have been left behind on the altarcloth are not in any sense the presence of Christ. The point is this. What would still be called bread by ordinary, sensible people? As long as it is there in that sense, Christ is present. In a word, bread must be taken as an anthropological and not as a scientific term. As soon as we have received the body of Christ, the Eucharistic presence is transformed into that which it is meant to bring about: an intenser presence in us through the Spirit'.

The history of what followed is extremely obscure, and to unravel it would require a thesis of its own, but the broad outline is this. Because of complaints about the pastoral consequences of certain opinions in the New Catechism, the Congregation of the Council in Rome asked that a commission of three Roman theologians and three nominated by the Dutch Bishops should draw up a list of points on which the Catechism could, and ought to be, clearer. This commission met from 8 - 10 April 1967, but it appears that the changes requested by the three

Roman theologians were not acceptable to those nominated by the Dutch bishops. Consequently, Pope Paul VI appointed a new commission of six Cardinals, and after a long and complicated series of discussions, they issued their judgement, among which was a short section concerning the Real Presence in the Eucharist:

'The text of the Catechism must state unambiguously that after the consecration of the bread and wine, the very Body and Blood of Christ are present on the altar, and are sacramentally received in Holy Communion, so that all who come to the divine table in a worthy manner are spiritually fed with Christ the Lord. Moreover, it must be explained that the bread and wine, in their deep reality (not phenomenologically) are, by the uttering of the words of consecration, changed into the Body and Blood of Christ; and so it comes about that, where the appearances of bread and wine, or the phenomenological reality, remain, there lies hidden in a most mysterious way the very humanity of Christ together with his divine person.

Once that marvellous change has taken place (a change which in the Church has received the name transubstantiation), then the appearances of bread and wine, since they do in reality contain and signify Christ himself, the source of grace and charity to be communicated at the holy Mass, do assuredly take on a new significance and a new purpose. But the reason that they take on that new significance and new purpose is that transubstantiation has taken place (cf. Paul VI, Mysterium Fidei art. 46)'.³⁵

(f) Conclusion

From this all too brief survey, it is clear that the opinions voiced by the theologians mentioned, and by the New Catechism, diverge, at least in some way, from what the ordinary Catholic, untrained in theology, often believes, and that they are, at least in some way, 'new' to Catholic theology. Does that mean there is a real contradiction between the two ways of looking at the Real Presence, or that the 'new opinions' are in some way 'unorthodox'?

To answer these two questions is the purpose of this thesis, and I shall try to answer them by examining

first, the teaching of St Thomas Aquinas on the Real Presence (for no one has ever accused Thomas of heresy on this point!), and secondly the dogmatic decree of the Council of Trent on the Holy Eucharist (which is still the only definitive, dogmatic statement of the Roman Catholic Church on the point).

If the new interpretations do not contradict the Council of Trent, they can hardly be called unorthodox or heretical; if they prove to be (at least to some extent) very similar to those taught by Thomas (and I hope to show that this is the case), then there is a strong presumption that they represent a very classical stream in Catholic theology. And if, in spite of that, they represent a way of thinking which is not normal or common among ordinary Catholics untrained in theology, then the conclusion must be that perhaps it is this 'common' view which needs correcting, rather than the 'modern' interpretations.

CHAPTER I : NOTES

1. London, 1961, p.1.
2. See, for example, X. Rynne, Letters from Vatican City, London, 1963, p.46.
3. Translation from W.A. Abbott, The Documents of the Second Vatican Council, pp. 713-5.
4. The Latin reads: 'Philosophiae rationalis ac theologiae studia et alumnorum in his disciplinis institutionem professores omnino tractent ad Angelici Doctoris rationem, doctrinam et principia, eaque sancte teneant'.
5. Summa Theologiae, 1, 8 ad 2um: 'licet locus ab auctoritate quae fundatur super revelatione humana sit infirmissimus...'. Thus the Blackfriars edition (p. 30): the Piana and the Leonine read 'super ratione humana', but the Blackfriars text is clearly to be preferred.
6. Translation from A. Flannery, Vatican Council II: Decree on the Training of Priests, art. 15.
7. Declaration on Christian Education, art. 10, and Decree on the Training of Priests, art. 16.
8. The new canon concerning the study of philosophy in seminary training, canon 251, reads:
Philosophica institutio, quae innixa sit oportet patrimonio philosophico perenniter valido, et rationem etiam habeat philosophicae investigationis progredientis aetatis, ita tradatur, ut alumnorum formationem humanam perficiat, mentis aciem provehat, eosque ad studia theologica peragenda aptiores reddat.
Canon 252, on the study of theology, simply states that systematic or speculative theology should be conducted 's. Thoma praesertim magistro'.
9. See the footnote under c. 1366 §2 listing the sources in Gasparri's edition, Codex Iuris Canonici.... Praefatione, Fontium Annotatione et Indice ab Emo. Petro Card. Gasparri auctus, Rome, 1918.
10. One text is given in Thomas's Opuscula Theologica, vol. II: De re spirituali, edited by R. Spiazzi and M. Calcaterra, Turin, 1954, 275-81. A list of articles discussing the authenticity of the attribution is given on pp. 273-4. For a popular survey of the question, see J. McHugh, 'Panis Angelicus fit Panis Hominum', in the Ushaw Magazine 85 (1974), pp. 29-33.

11. E. Schillebeeckx, in 'Transubstantiation, Transfinalization, Transfiguration', Worship 40 (1966) on p.329. The two books referred to are: F.J. Leenhardt, Ceci est mon corps, Paris, and Neuchâtel, 1955, and M. Thurian, L'Eucharistie, Paris and Neuchâtel, 1959.
12. E. Schillebeeckx, The Eucharist, London, 1968, pp. 108-09.
13. Ibid., p.109.
14. See, for example, The Eucharist, pp. 109, 118, but notice that from p.144 onwards Schillebeeckx speaks only of 'transsignification', and lets 'transfinalization' fall out of use.
15. The address is that cited in footnote 11, as an article in Worship. The particulars of the book are given in footnote 12.
16. Worship, pp. 327-8; The Eucharist, pp. 53-76.
17. Worship, p. 332.
18. There had been a long debate in Italy, between 1949 and 1960, between F. Selvaggi, Professor of Physics and Chemistry at the Gregorian University, Rome, (pleading for a physical, and even chemical, change in the elements), and Professor (later Bishop) Carlo Colombo, Professor of Theology in Milan. Details are given in Schillebeeckx's article in Worship on p. 333, footnote 21.
19. Worship, p. 334.
20. Worship, p. 337.
21. Ibid.
22. Since Schoonenberg's writings are all in Dutch, I have here relied on Schillebeeckx's summary of his work, in The Eucharist, pp. 117-21.
23. London, 1966. The earlier essay, entitled 'The Presence of Christ in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper', given on pp. 287-311, was first published in 1958; the later one, entitled 'The Word and the Eucharist', printed on pp. 253-87, was first published in 1960 (see p. x of the English translation).
24. Theological Investigations IV, pp. 257-60.
25. Ibid., p.281.
26. Ibid., p.282.
27. Ibid., p.300, 302, 303, etc.

28. Ibid.,
29. English translation published by the Catholic Truth Society, 1965, under the title The Holy Eucharist, art. 10.
30. Ibid., art. 11.
31. Ibid., art. 39.
32. The New Catechism, London, 1967.
33. pp. 342-3.
34. p. 345.
35. Acta Apostolicae Sedis 60 (1968), p. 689. A very obscure account of the deliberations of the earlier commission of theologians is given on pp. 685-6.

CHAPTER II

A SURVEY OF THE DOCTRINE
IN THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES

It is usual to place the beginning of the controversies about the nature of Christ's presence in the Holy Eucharist in the ninth century, and there is good reason for doing so. Before that century, the mode or nature of the presence is not discussed, and in the course of that century a debate began which has never since ceased.

Paschasius Radbertus (ca. 785 - 860), Abbot of Corbie (near Amiens) was the author of the first monograph ever written on the Holy Eucharist, De corpore et sanguine Domini.¹ In this work he made three major points, each of which is in some way a new development, or a new departure, in the history of doctrine:

- (1) that 'the substance of bread and wine is changed into Christ's Body and Blood' (8:2):²
- (2) that the Eucharistic presence is the presence of the very flesh that was born of the Virgin Mary, crucified, and raised to life (4:3 and 7:2):³
- (3) that the Eucharistic Body and Blood is miraculously created or multiplied each day at the consecration in the Mass (4:1 and 12:1).⁴

The first point is new in that it introduces into theological discussion about the Eucharistic presence the term 'substance', and affirms that the substance of bread and wine is changed; the second is new in that it identifies the sacramental presence with the presence of the reality (res) of Christ's flesh; and the third is new in saying that a certain 'reality' (which is Christ's flesh and blood) is created or multiplied each day.⁵

Not unnaturally, the work came in for severe criticism, and its first and best-known critic was a monk of the same Abbey, Ratramnus (died after 868), who

around 850 wrote a book with the same title, De corpore et sanguine Domini.⁶ 'Ratramnus stressed the figurative aspects of the sacrament, and the mysterious mode of Christ's Eucharistic presence, but denied the identity of the sacramental and historical body insisted upon by Paschasius'.⁷ Unfortunately, this reply was neither a complete treatment of the subject nor a devotional work, was full of unconventional language and unusually subtle arguments, often briefly stated; and hence this has led to various judgements about it.⁸ But at least the question had been put, and had sharpened the debate : what is the relationship or distinction or difference between the sacramentum of the Eucharist and the res or reality of the same Eucharist?

Things came to a head two centuries later, when Berengarius of Tours (died 1088) came into conflict with Church authorities over his teaching on the mode of the Eucharistic presence. Berengarius, a pupil of Abelard, was a fine and subtle dialectician, but seems to have been fairly intolerant of those who disagreed with him. He based his teaching on the following distinctions or definitions. For him, a sacrament is something external, visible, material and transitory; what is internal, invisible, immaterial and eternal is not the sacrament but the reality (res) which the perceptible sacrament contains. On these terms, it is clear that the body and blood of Christ cannot be called a sacrament - they are the reality which the sacrament (bread and wine) signifies.⁹

Berengarius' teaching was condemned several times during his life : at Rome and at Vercelli in 1050, at Paris in 1051 and at Tours in 1054, at Rome in 1059 and 1079, and there is to this day considerable debate both about his precise opinions and about their orthodoxy. Much of his work is lost, or available only in citations by his arch-enemy Lanfranc of Bec, and what survives is prolix and repetitive.¹⁰ However, his main point can be clearly seen in this quotation, replying to Lanfranc:

'It is rather amazing, especially in view of your great erudition, that you do not hesitate to put it down in writing that I deny the Flesh and Blood although you admit that I use the expression "sacraments of the Flesh and Blood". For how could anyone who professed to be a father be accused of denying that he had a son? You even belie your own erudition, saying that I place the whole matter in the sacrament alone, for it is impossible to prove something to be at once a sacrament and nothing but a sacrament since it is evident that if there is a sacrament there must of necessity be a (concomitant) reality (res), as I have expressly said before'.¹¹

In short, if Berengarius' rigorous distinction between the sacrament and the reality is kept in mind, he cannot justly be accused of denying a Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, though he did of course deny that the bread and wine ceased to be bread and wine after the consecration.¹² And this was the real point at issue, theologically.

Two of the formulas which he was compelled to subscribe are significant, those at Rome in 1059 and in 1079. In the former he affirmed:

"I am in agreement with the Holy Roman Church and the Apostolic See. In my heart and in word I profess that I have the same belief concerning the sacrament of the Lord's table as my lord the venerable Pope Nicholas and this holy synod by evangelical and apostolic authority have given and commanded me to hold. That is, that the bread and wine placed on the altar are, after the consecration, not merely the sacrament of but also the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; that these are not only sacramentally but truly handled and broken by the hands of the priests and ground by the teeth of the faithful. This I swear by the holy and consubstantial Trinity and by these holy gospels of Christ; and I proclaim that those who shall oppose this belief are, along with their dogmas and their followers, worthy of everlasting exclusion".¹³

Berengarius later rejected this, but then, in 1079, he signed the following oath which was more sober in its wording:

"I, Berengarius, believe in my heart and confess with my lips that the bread and wine which are placed on the altar are, by the mystery of the sacred prayer and the words of the Redeemer, substantially changed into the true and proper and life-giving body and

blood of Jesus Christ our Lord; and that, after consecration, they are Christ's true body, which was born of the Virgin and hung on the cross, being offered for the salvation of the world, and which sits at the right hand of the Father; and Christ's true blood, which was poured forth from His side; not only by way of sign and by the power of the sacrament, but in their true nature and in the reality of their substance".¹⁴

In comparing the two, we realize that the first states that Christ's Body 'is truly handled and broken' by the hands of the priests and 'ground' by the teeth of faithful. It is very much physical in character. But all these terms are missing from the second; and from then on, this became the standard formula.

'An epitome of Lanfranc's work against Berengarius was later incorporated into the Decretum of Ivo Chartres (2:1-10), and some of Lanfranc's texts appeared under Augustine's name in Ivo's Panormia (2:137)',¹⁵ and so made their way into the mainstream of medieval theology.

For within a century of the death of Berengarius there appeared the great textbook which was to dominate the later Middle Ages, the Libri Sententiarum of Peter Lombard (ca. 1100 - 1160). In the critical edition by the Franciscans of Quaracchi (near Florence) - and only in this edition¹⁶ - the sources are listed at the foot of the page, and in the treatment of the Eucharist, page after page is filled with references to these texts from Lanfranc and Ivo.¹⁷ This was the work upon which all the medieval masters lectured, including St Thomas, right up to the time of the Reformation. It is therefore necessary to look at Peter Lombard's presentation of the various 'opinions' or sententiae concerning the Eucharist, to understand what was generally accepted during the second half of the Middle Ages.

He treats of the Eucharist in the Fourth Book, in Distinctions VIII - XIV. A list of the chapter headings in Dist. VIII will show that the first five are not relevant to our theme:

- Cap. I. De Sacramento altaris.
 II. Quod huius Sacramenti in veteri Testamento figura praecessit, sicut et baptismi.
 III. De institutione Sacramenti.
 IV. De forma.
 V. Quare Christus post alium cibum dedit hoc Sacramentum discipulis.

It is with chapter VI, De sacramento et re, that our topic comes under discussion.

Peter Lombard here faces the basic problem, as it was between Paschasius and Ratramnus, between Lanfranc and Berengarius, and he begins by setting out three definitions, two from St Augustine, all three found in Ivo, and also in the Decretum Gratiani. In other words, he feels he is on solid ground, agreed by all. He writes:

'Now let us see what is there sacrament, and what is reality. "A Sacrament is a visible form of invisible grace": therefore the form of bread or wine, which is seen there, is a Sacrament, that is, "a sign of some sacred thing, because - apart from the appearance which it presents to the senses, - it brings something else to mind". The appearances therefore "keep the names of the things which were there beforehand, that is, bread and wine".¹⁸

He continues:

'But the reality of this Sacrament is twofold, namely, one that is contained and signified, the other which is signified and not contained. The reality which is contained and signified is the flesh of Christ, which he took from the Virgin, and the blood which he shed for us; the reality which is signified and not contained is the unity of the Church in the predestined, the called, the justified and the glorified'.¹⁹

Then he cites as proof of this 'twofold reality' passages from Jerome and Augustine, in the former of which (also found in Ivo) occurs the distinction which was to dominate debate throughout the Middle Ages:

'Three things are therefore to be distinguished here : one, which is only a Sacrament; another which is Sacrament and reality; and a third, which is a reality and not a Sacrament. The visible appearance of bread and wine is a Sacrament and not a reality; the flesh and blood of Christ properly so called are both Sacrament and reality; his mystical flesh is a reality and not a Sacrament'.²⁰

i.e. the bread and wine = the Sacrament of Christ's
Body and Blood;

Christ's Body and Blood = the Sacrament of his mystical
body, the Church.

From this it follows (Dist. IX) that there are two ways of eating this Sacrament, one 'sacramental' (which may be done by good men or evil who receive the sacrament), the other 'spiritual' (by which good men receive the sacrament and also are thereby spiritually united within the mystical Body of Christ).²¹ This is for Peter Lombard a fundamental principle:²² it has always been accepted that it is possible to receive the Body and Blood of Christ unworthily, 'to eat and drink judgement to oneself' (cf. 1 Cor 11:29). Therefore there must be a sense in which that which is eaten and drunk by the reprobate is the Body and Blood of Christ (1 Cor 11:27).

Consequently, he argues (Dist. X, Cap. 1) that the Body of Christ cannot be upon the altar merely as a sign: i.e. if what lies upon the altar is merely bread and wine, not the substance of the Body and Blood of Christ, then what an evil person eats or drinks is simply bread and wine. Against this, it is easy to collect texts affirming that what is received is truly the Body and Blood of Christ (Cap. 2).

This naturally raises the question, 'How is the bread and wine changed?' (Dist. XI, Cap. 1), and 'What does it mean to say that the Body of Christ is produced (confici) from the substance of bread?' (Dist. XI, Cap. 2). And why did Christ institute the Sacrament in

this form, why under both bread and wine, and why is water mixed with the wine? (Dist. XI, Capp. 3-6). And finally, 'What remains of the bread and wine after the consecration?' (Dist. XII, Cap. 1), - what indeed is broken upon the altar - bread, or the Body of Christ?' (Dist. XII, Capp. 2-4). Obviously, Peter Lombard has raised all the major questions, and our task is to see how Thomas Aquinas comments on them.

But before we do, we need to observe two other statements: (1) Innocent III in 1202 had been consulted on the words of Christ at the Last Supper, and especially on the meaning and origin of the words 'Mystery of faith' which were found inserted in the institution narrative for the first time in the Gelasian sacramentary. During this discussion he distinguishes well the faith of the Church in the change of substance from minimalistic spiritualistic interpretations of Christ's presence in the Eucharist.

"You have asked who has added to the words of the formula used by Christ Himself when He transubstantiated the bread and wine into His body and blood, the words which are found in the Canon of the Mass generally used by the Church, but which none of the evangelists has recorded... Namely, in the Canon of the Mass, we find the words "Mystery of faith" inserted into the words of Christ.... Surely there are many words and deeds of the Lord which have been omitted in the gospels; of these we read that the apostles have supplemented them by their words and expressed them in their actions.... But, in the words which are the object of your inquiry, Brother, namely the words "Mystery of faith", some have thought to find support for their error; they say that in the sacrament of the altar it is not the reality of the body and blood of Christ which is (there) but only an image, an appearance, a symbol (figura), since Scripture sometimes mentions that what is received at the altar is sacrament, mystery, figure (exemplum). These people fall into such error because they neither understand correctly the testimony of the Scripture nor receive respectfully the divine sacraments, ignorant of both the Scriptures and the power of God.... Yet, the expression "Mystery of faith" is used, because here what is believed differs from what is seen, and what is seen differs from what

is believed. For what is seen is the appearance of bread and wine and what is believed is the reality of the flesh and blood of Christ and the power of unity and love....".²³

Then he talks of the threefold distinction in the elements of the Eucharist:

"We must, however, distinguish accurately between three elements which in this sacrament are distinct: namely: the visible form, the reality of the body, and the spiritual power. The form is of bread and wine; the reality is the flesh and blood; the power is for unity and charity. The first is 'sacrament and not reality'; the second is 'sacrament and reality'; the third is 'reality and not sacrament'. But, the first is the sacrament of a twofold reality; the second is the sacrament of one (element) and the reality of the other; the third is the reality of a twofold sacrament....".²⁴

(2) In 1215 the Fourth Lateran Council, presided over by the same Innocent III, had among its aims the repudiation of certain heresies, the most important of which was the Albigensianism. It is the definition of faith 'contra Albigenses et Catharos' that contains the first official affirmation of transubstantiation.

"Truly there is one universal Church of the faithful, outside of which there is absolutely no salvation. In this Church the priest himself is the sacrifice, Jesus Christ; and his body and blood are truly contained in the sacrament of the altar under the appearances of bread and wine - the bread being transubstantiated into his body and the wine into his blood by the divine power. Thus the mystery of unity is brought to perfection as we receive from him what he has received from us....".²⁵

There are two terms that are to be noted here. Innocent III in 1202 uses the term 'transubstantiavit' and the Fourth Lateran Council uses the term 'transsubstantiatis'. The latter term certainly includes the threefold reality explained by Innocent III, but what precisely is its meaning? Luther goes so far as to say that Aristotle and Aquinas were responsible for the introduction of transubstantiation, and McCue thinks that there is an element of truth in it.

J.F. McCue in his article 'The Doctrine of Transubstantiation from Berengarius through Trent: The Point at Issue',²⁶ takes the lead from Jorissen and reckons that a considerable number of medieval theologians were of the opinion that transubstantiation was not a necessary consequence of the doctrine of the physical presence. He states, "from about 1300 on, Lateran IV was read as having made transubstantiation a sine qua non of orthodoxy, though many found transubstantiation philosophically less plausible than an alternative quite similar to what would later be called 'Consubstantiation'." Though the word 'transubstantiation' only appears towards the middle of the XIIth century, in the 'Sentences' of Roland (Alexander III), Jorissen is of the opinion that the transition from 'substantialiter converti' found in the confession of faith imposed on Berengarius in 1079 to 'transubstantiation' is a matter of terminology and does not in itself constitute a substantive advance.²⁷

In fact, before Thomas, theologians were divided in their opinion between transubstantiation and what was later termed consubstantiation. Baldwin of Ford (died 1190), and Alan of Lille (ca. 1120-1202) considered the doctrine of transubstantiation to be an 'articulus fidei'. Peter of Capua (died 1244) who taught in Paris approximately 1200-18, considered the doctrine of the Real Presence to be an article of faith but the way in which this came about to be a matter of theological debate. Though he himself preferred transubstantiation, he clearly states that the alternatives - consubstantiation, annihilation - are not to be judged heretical.²⁸ Jorissen concludes that transubstantiation and Real Presence are the two sides of a single coin; and that they did not exclude the possibility of other attitudes within the doctrine of the Real Presence.

McCue is quick to point out that for at least 85 years after the Council no one supposed that it had canonized transubstantiation and that the language of

transubstantiation could quite easily be used for the other alternatives. He cites a text from Peter Lombard about the advocates of consubstantiation: "Others have been of the opinion that the substance of bread and wine remain here and that the body and blood of Christ are also present; and for this reason they say that the one substance becomes the other: because where the former is, so is the latter".²⁹

Thus even after the Fourth Lateran Council consubstantiation was not clearly condemned as heresy. The alternatives were not juxtaposed as orthodoxy or heresy. But one should be careful not to stress this toleration too much. In fact, especially as we draw nearer to the mid-thirteenth century, Hugh of St. Cher (c.1232), Alexander of Hales (1223-1227) and William of Militona (1245-1249), for example, clearly defended transubstantiation against consubstantiation. Albert the Great, in his Commentary on the Sentences, bases his argument on the words of institution 'Hoc est corpus meum', and clearly prefers transubstantiation to succession or consubstantiation. He rejects the latter two terms as unsuitable for the sacramental character of the Eucharist. He writes, "It must be said that, though it is possible for a glorified body and especially the body of the Lord to be in the same place with the bread, there is a problem because of the nature of the sacrament, not because of the nature of place.... For the accident would lead only to its own substance and thus it would fail to function as a sign". His criticism becomes stronger especially in his De Corpore Domini. Bonaventure too is firm in his rejection of consubstantiation and condemns it as heretical. He says that to deny transubstantiation 'contraria est sanctorum auctoritati et rationi'.³⁰

But the most outright rejection of consubstantiation comes from Thomas Aquinas. Indeed, McCue is of the opinion that Aquinas was the first thirteenth century

writer to label consubstantiation heretical and considered it impossible. Now the scene is set for Thomas and without delaying we shall go straight into Thomas.

CHAPTER II : NOTES

1. PL 120: 1263-1351.
2. 'Substantia panis et vini in Christi carnem et sanguinem efficaciter interius commutatur' (PL 120: 1287 C).
3. PL 120: 1279 BC and 1285 BC.
4. PL 120: 1277-8 and 1310-11.
5. Cf. N.M. Häring in NCE X 1050, 'Paschasius Radbertus'.
6. PL 121: 103-70.
7. J.J. Ryan in NCE XII 93, 'Ratramnus'.
8. Ibid., 94. - Another opponent of Paschasius who deserves to be mentioned is Rabanus Maurus (ca. 776-856), but there is hardly space to discuss his (much debated) contribution in a short survey which is intended merely to highlight the main crossroads of early medieval theology. For basic references see M.F. McCarthy in NCE XII 37-9, 'Rabanus Maurus'.
9. Cf. N.M. Häring in NCE V 618-20, 'Eucharistic Controversies'.
10. Cf. C.E. Sheedy in NCE II 320-1, 'Berengarius of Tours'.
11. De sacra coena 26, translated in NCE V 619.
12. Cf. Häring in NCE V 619.
13. Translated by McCue in Harvard Theological Review, 61 (1968), 387.
The Latin text is given in DS 690 (not in DB).
14. Translation in Neuner 1501.
The Latin text is given in DS 700 = DB 355.
15. Häring, NCE V 619.
16. Petri Lombardi Libri IV Sententiarum, studio et cura PP. Collegii s. Bonaventurae in lucem editi. 2a editio recognita, Ad Claras Aquas prope Florentiam, Tomi duo, 1916.
17. Tomus II, pp. 787-818. Further references will be given only by Distinctions and chapters.

18. The references given in the Quaracchi edition under Dist. VIII, Cap. 6 are:
 (1) to Augustine, De civitate Dei X, 5 (PL 41: 282) and Epist. 105 Ad Donatistas 3, 12 (PL 33: 401); to Ivo, Decret. 2:8 and Pan. 130 (PL 161: 148; 1074); and to the Decretum Gratiani Canon Sacrificium 32:1 (Corpus Iuris Canonici I, 1324);
 (2) to Augustine, De doctrina christiana II, 1, 1 (PL 34:35); to Ivo, Decret. 2:8 and Pan. 131 (PL 161: 148, 1074); and to the Canon Signum 33 (Corpus Iuris Canonici I, 1324);
 (3) Ivo, Decret. 2:9 and Pan. 132; Canon Specie (34), in both cases on the same pages as under (2).
19. Dist. VIII, Cap. 7.
20. The text comes originally from the Gloss on 1 Cor. 11:23; see the footnote in the Quaracchi edition, vol. 2, p. 792, fn. 3.
21. Dist. IX, Cap. 1.
22. Dist. IX, Cap. 2.
23. Neuner 1502 = DS 782 = DB 414.
24. Ibid., 1503 = DS 783 = DB 415.
25. Translated in Harvard Theological Review, 393 = DS 802 = DB 430.
26. Harvard Theological Review 61 (1968), 385-430.
27. Ibid., p. 387.
28. Ibid., p. 390.
29. Ibid., p. 393.
30. Ibid., p. 399.

CHAPTER III

SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS (1224 - 74):

(1) THE EUCHARIST AS SACRAMENT

St Thomas Aquinas' exposition of the doctrine of the Eucharist is found in his three major theological works. We need only remark that the treatise De Venerabili Sacramento Altaris, ascribed to him in the major editions of the corpus, is nowadays considered not authentic.¹

The first major work is his commentary on the Sentences: Scriptum super libros Sententiarum (Paris 1252-56). J.A. Weisheipl maintains that strictly speaking this is not a 'commentary' but rather a carefully elaborated and edited version of questions discussed in the classroom, polished after the event.² Our interest lies in Book IV, which must have been written in 1256, at the beginning of his career as master. In this book Distinctions VIII - XIII deal with the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. It is hardly possible, however, to discuss it here, because Thomas's commentary on this part runs to almost 100,000 words; but this is no great loss because, being tied to the text of Peter Lombard, the commentary becomes very repetitive, and in any case the same arguments reappear in the Summa in a much clearer form. It is interesting to note that, according to Tolomeo of Lucca, Thomas wrote a second version of Book I while teaching in Rome (1266-68), but abandoned the project when he conceived the idea of a Summa Theologiae.³

The next work of great importance is Summa Contra Gentiles (1259 - 64). This seems to have been the result of a request made by St Raymond of Peñafort, one time Master General of the Dominican order (1238 - 40), to write a work against the errors of the infidels for the use of Dominican missionaries preaching against Moslems, Jews and heretical Christians in Spain and North Africa.⁴

In Book IV, Chapters LXI - LXIX, which deal with the Eucharist, Thomas is answering the charge that the doctrine is self-contradictory. Once again Thomas summarizes the same arguments in his Summa Theologiae.

In the meantime, that is, even before the completion of Summa Contra Gentiles, it is generally held that Thomas, in 1264, compiled the liturgy for the feast of Corpus Christi and its octave at the request of Urban IV.⁵ J. McHugh in his article 'Panis Angelicus Fit Panis Hominum' maintains that "the four Eucharistic hymns used in the Office and Mass of Corpus Christi have traditionally been ascribed to St Thomas Aquinas, and though his authorship has in this century been questioned, the closer one looks at the evidence, the harder it becomes to deny that he wrote them".⁶ He rightly states that these hymns, particularly the Lauda Sion, bear the characteristic marks of St. Thomas' highly intellectualised Eucharistic theology presented in Summa Theologiae. But the Adoro te devote is considered to be inauthentic.

So we turn to the Third Part of the Summa Theologiae, where Thomas treats of the Holy Eucharist in Questions 75-80: occurring so late in the work, these questions must have been written right at the end of his life, probably in 1272-3, in Naples.

He treats of the seven sacraments in the conventional order, also found in Peter Lombard, i.e. Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, etc. And here Thomas reveals his power as a speculative theologian, for he does not merely juxtapose the seven sacraments one by one, side by side; rather, he immediately begins to discuss whether there is a logic and a reason in this order (q.65,a.2).

He develops this idea in further detail when, in q. 73, he begins to treat of the Eucharist, asking first (a.1): 'Is the Eucharist a sacrament?' Here he does not intend to prove that it is a sacrament. He takes that for granted, because the Church teaches so. But he, as a

speculative theologian, is interested in asking how it fulfils the conditions required for it to be a sacrament. According to him, the sacraments of the Church are meant to serve man's need for spiritual life and growth. Taking the parallel from the growth of the body, he states that Baptism is spiritual birth, confirmation is spiritual growth and the Eucharist is the spiritual food (q.73, a.1c). Indeed, he distinguishes two principles of growth in man, one within man himself, which is the internal principle of growth; and the other external, i.e. food. So though confirmation provides the internal principle of growth, we need also the Holy Eucharist as our spiritual nourishment.

In the same question, Thomas distinguishes the Eucharist from other sacraments. Taking his lead from Chrysostom, Aquinas says, "what the power of the Spirit is to the water of Baptism, the very body of Christ is to the appearances of bread and wine. These are operative only because of the very body of Christ that they contain". Here Thomas wants to make a clear distinction between the power of the Holy Spirit in the Baptismal water and the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. He says, "whereas the Eucharist contains something that is sacred in itself absolutely, namely, Christ, the water of Baptism contains something that is sacred in relation to something else, that is, it contains the power of sanctifying us.... The Eucharist is fully established when the matter is consecrated". The Blackfriars edition in its footnote points out that according to Thomas the real presence of Christ is already brought about before the actual communion. This is the dogmatic basis for the Catholic cult of Christ in the Eucharist outside the moment of communion, though the other sacraments are fully established only at the moment when a person receives the sacrament. Thomas expresses this very clearly: "In the sacrament of the Eucharist what we call the 'thing and sign' is in the very matter, but that which is the 'thing only', namely

the grace bestowed, is in the person who receives. In Baptism both of these are to be found in the person who receives the sacrament, namely the character which is the 'thing and sign' and the grace of the forgiveness of sins which is the 'thing only'." (q.73, a.1 ad 3).

In art.3, Thomas emphasises that the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist is essential for salvation. In this sacrament the bread and wine are the sacramental sign of the Body and Blood of Christ; and the Body and Blood are the sacramental sign of the unity of the Mystical body of Christ. Therefore, receiving (or eating) this bread and wine is essential for our salvation, for there is no salvation outside the Church which is the Mystical body of Christ. But Thomas is quick to accept that the sacrament of the Eucharist is not required for salvation in the same way as Baptism is. Baptism is the beginning of the spiritual life and the Eucharist is the culmination (consummatio) of the spiritual life and hence this sacrament of the Eucharist is necessary to bring about full spiritual development. In fact, Baptism itself is ordered towards the Eucharist; and therefore, even if a child dies without receiving communion actually, by the fact of Baptism it is intended that he shall eventually receive the Eucharist and thus share in the unity of the body of Christ.

In Baptism, which is the first grace, man 'plunges into' the passion of Christ and is thus justified. On the other hand, the Eucharist really 'contains' the passion of Christ; and it is also the food which unites him further with Christ. Thus man is rendered perfect through this union in the passion. The Eucharist, according to Thomas signifies three things: (1) The Past: it looks back to the sacrifices of the Old Testament, which commemorate figuratively the passion of our Lord, which is the one perfect sacrifice. The patriarchal and Mosaic sacrifices were only shadows or types of the new sacrifice. The Eucharist is the new and true sacrifice, which supersedes and replaces them.

(2) The Present: it signifies the unity of Church into which men are drawn together. Thomas cites from Damascene: "It is called communion because by it we are joined to Christ and because we share his flesh and his godhead and because we are joined and united to one another through that". At the same time, Thomas warns us that this unity is not physical togetherness but spiritual solidarity in charity. (3) The Future: it prefigures that enjoyment of God which will be ours in heaven (a.4).

There are also other questions which Thomas is trying to answer in this Q.73. They are: (1) Why is this sacrament called by many names? (2) Why was it instituted before Baptism though now we receive it after Baptism? (3) What was the most outstanding type or figure of this sacrament? Though all these are important, these do not affect our subject of study in a direct way. Hence, we will not deal with these. We can conclude this question in the words of Thomas: 'The Eucharist is the perfect sacrament of our Lord's passion, because it contains Christ himself who endured it. Hence it could not have been instituted before the Incarnation; that was the time for sacraments which were merely prefigurative of our Lord's passion' (q.73,a.5,ad 1).

In the next Question, 74, Thomas examines 'the matter of this sacrament'. There are eight points of inquiry.

1. Are bread and wine the matter of this sacrament?
2. Is a fixed quantity necessary for the matter of this sacrament?
3. Is the matter of this sacrament wheaten bread?
4. Is it unleavened or leavened bread?
5. Is the matter of this sacrament wine of the grape?
6. Should water be mixed with it?
7. Is the mixing of water required for validity?
8. How much water should be added?

Though these are interesting points of inquiry, they do not really affect our discussion of 'Real Presence'. Hence, we will not delay any longer and go straight into the central teaching of Thomas, namely (a) the Conversion (Transubstantiation) and (b) the mode of the Presence.

CHAPTER III : NOTES

1. Cf. Opuscula theologica, vol. I, ed. R. Verardi, Turin 1954, p. XII.
2. J.A. Weisheipl, Friar Thomas D'Aquino, Oxford, 1975, p. 359.
3. Ibid., p. 359.
4. Ibid., p. 359.
5. Ibid., p. 176.
6. Ushaw Magazine, June 1974, No. 243, p. 29.

CHAPTER IV

SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS:

(2) DE CONVERSIONE - TRANSUBSTANTIATION

Thomas, having established that the Eucharist fulfils the conditions required for a sacrament, now tackles the central aspect of the manner of Christ's presence in the Eucharist. Question 75 is entitled 'De conversione panis et vini in corpus et sanguinem Christi'; the Blackfriars edition significantly terms it 'Transubstantiation'.

Thomas begins the discussion by asking: 'Is the body of Christ really and truly in this sacrament or only in a figurative way or as in a sign?' When he raised this question, Thomas was very much aware of the two trends that existed within the Church. One was spelt out by Paschasius Radbertus and those who followed his line of thinking. They professed that the substance of bread and wine is changed into the Body and Blood of Christ; and that the Eucharistic presence is the presence of the very flesh that was born of the virgin Mary, crucified and raised to life. Their appeal was to Ambrose, and they drew their inspiration from him. Medieval stories concerning the appearance of a child in the Host and the over-flowing of blood from the chalice belong to this tradition.

The other, in direct opposition to this, stressed the figurative aspect of this sacrament. Though the first proponent of this opinion was Ratramnus, it was Berengarius who carried it to its logical conclusion and became the champion of the school which said that Christ is present in this sacrament only in a figurative way. These claimed to derive their inspiration from Augustine, and therefore Thomas here gives a few quotations from Augustine which seem to have inspired this school. In Jn.6:54 Jesus says,

'Unless you eat the flesh of the son of man and drink his blood.....', which Augustine explains when commenting on the fourth Psalm: 'Take what I have said in a spiritual way. You will not be eating this body which you see, nor will you be drinking that blood which my executioners will shed. I have entrusted a mystery to you. If you take it in a spiritual way it will bring you life; flesh is of no avail'. Again commenting on 'Lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age' (Matt.28:20), he says, 'until the close of the age the Lord is above, but at the same time the Lord is here with us as the truth on which our minds feed. The body in which he rose can be in one place only, but his truth is found everywhere'. To strengthen their stand, they appealed also to Gregory, according to whom our Lord reproved the official (in Jn.4:48) because he wanted the bodily presence of Christ. These are the 'objections' of q. 75, a. 1.

Thomas, as we said, was aware of the above two trends. But he was also aware of the stand taken by the Church. We shall only refer to a few. Pope Innocent III (1208) urged the Waldensians to profess the reality of the presence of Christ's body and blood in the Eucharist.

'.... with sincere hearts, we firmly and unhesitatingly believe and loyally affirm that after consecration the sacrifice, that is, the bread and the wine are the true body and the true blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. And we believe that in the Sacrifice a good priest effects nothing more than a bad priest; because it is not by the merit of the one consecrating that the sacrifice is accomplished, but by the word of the creator and by the power of the Holy Spirit'.¹

The same faith was repeated by the Fourth Lateran Council:

'.... In this Church the priest himself is the sacrifice, Jesus Christ; and his body and blood are truly contained in the sacrament of the altar under the appearances of bread and wine - the bread being transubstantiated into his body and the wine into his blood by the divine power....'.²

But perhaps the most interesting document of this age is a little-known letter of Pope Clement IV to Maurinus, the Archbishop of Narbonne, dated 28 October 1267, absent from the older editions of Denzinger, but happily published in the new edition by Schönmetzer, as No. 849. It is important both because of its content and its date - about five or six years before Thomas wrote q. 75.

(It has come to our ears that) 'you have been saying that the most holy body of our Lord Jesus Christ is not essentially on the altar, but only as something signified beneath a sign, and that you have also been saying that this is a very common opinion in Paris. The word has got aroundand when it finally reached us, we were deeply shocked, and could hardly believe that you had said such things, which contain manifest heresy and take away from the truth of the sacrament.... You must firmly hold what the Church commonly teaches, namely that once the sacred words have been uttered by a priest in accordance with the rite of the Church, then, under the appearances of bread and wine, the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ are truly, really, and essentially present, even though they are - in terms of place - in heaven (licet localiter sit in caelo)'.

Thomas must have been well informed about this controversy if indeed the 'purely figurative presence' was said to be 'a very common opinion in Paris'.

Thomas now goes on to give his own opinion. We already get an idea of his line of thinking from the Fathers he chooses to quote from in his Sed contra. (1) Hilary: 'there is no room for doubt about the reality of the body and blood of Christ. Our Lord taught and our faith accepts that his flesh is really our food and his blood is really our drink.'

Footnote:

I am grateful to Dr. McHugh for calling my attention to this little-quoted text, omitted not only in the early editions of Denzinger, but also by Neuner; and also for kindly supplying the above English translation of the Latin.

(2) Ambrose: "just as our Lord Jesus Christ is the real Son of God, so the real flesh of Christ is what we receive, and his blood is really our drink". Both emphasise Faith.

Thomas in this question does not intend to prove the 'Real Presence', but takes it for granted. He, like Hilary and Ambrose, categorically declares that 'we could never know by our senses that the real body of Christ and his blood are in this sacrament, but only by our faith which is based on the authority of God'. He refers to Cyril, who commenting on the text of Luke, 'this is my body which is given for you' (22:19), says, 'do not doubt the truth of this, but take our Saviour's word in faith: he is truth itself, he does not lie'. Thomas then begins to reflect on the basic logical reasons why a purely symbolic presence is not enough, and why a real presence is required.

First, the sacrifices of the Old Law, according to Aquinas, contained the true sacrifice only in a figurative way, as we read in Hebrews: 'the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities' (10:1). But the sacrifice of the New Law instituted by Christ should be something more than that of the Old Law and thus the Eucharist contains Christ himself who suffered for us not merely symbolically or figuratively, but in actual reality as well. Dionysius says that this is 'the fulfilment of all the other sacraments', in which a share of Christ's power is to be found. It should be pointed out that Thomas does not reject the sign or the figurative value, but maintains that it is both real and figurative, for the figurative meaning will only vanish at the parousia.

Secondly, Thomas reckons that it fits in perfectly with the charity of Christ's Incarnation, in that he could not leave us without his bodily presence in this our pilgrimage, but joins us to himself in this sacrament in the reality of his body and blood. This also

satisfies the deepest principle of friendship, for as Aristotle says, 'friends should live together'. In John we read, 'he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me and I in him,' (6:57). And thirdly, this Real Presence is just what is right for the perfection of our faith, for faith has to do with unseen realities.

Finally, he strongly declares that every opinion which holds that Christ's body and blood are only symbolically in this sacrament is heretical. Therefore, the stand taken by Berengarius is erroneous. The heresy of Berengarius is not that he denied the Real Presence, but that he limited it to a sign. To defend their position Berengarius and others who followed him used texts from Augustine, but Thomas accuses them all of misunderstanding the words of Augustine. Aquinas reckons that when Augustine says, you will not be eating this body which you see, he does not intend to exclude the reality of Christ's body; what he does rule out is that they would eat it under the same form in which they were looking at it. Augustine, again commenting on the text of John 'the flesh is of no avail' writes, 'It is of no avail, in the way they understood. They thought of eating flesh as if it had been torn from the carcass or sold in the butcher's stall; they did not understand flesh as enlivened by the spirit. When the spirit is united to the flesh, then indeed it is of great avail, for if flesh could never be of avail, the Word would not have been made flesh to dwell among us'. According to Thomas, Augustine is here referring to Christ's body in its natural appearance and not to the presence in an invisible way under the sacramental appearances.

Already here he mentions that the body of Christ is not in this sacrament in the way that a body is present in a place. Later he will discuss this in great detail, but at the moment he is satisfied simply to say that Christ's body is there in a way proper to this sacrament.

According to Catholic doctrine, then, the body and blood of Christ are truly present and not merely in a figurative way. Thomas, then, asks logically, 'Does the substance of the bread and wine remain in this sacrament after the consecration?'. This, the second article of q. 75, is the first step towards the doctrine of transubstantiation. Besides transubstantiation, there are three other logical possibilities:

(1) Impanation: This is the extreme view, according to which the substance of bread is hypostatically united to Christ. The stories of Christ appearing in the host must have given rise to this notion. But Thomas does not quote such stories to make a theological argument. On the contrary, he gives two very good texts from John Damascene: (1) 'because bread and wine is typical human nourishment, he joined his godhead to them and made them to be his body and his blood'; (2) 'the bread we receive in communion is not ordinary bread, but united to the godhead'. Now, we join together realities that actually exist. Therefore, the bread and the wine must actually exist in this sacrament alongside the body and the blood of Christ.

(2) Companation: This too is a logical possibility, namely, that the substance of bread is united in some unspecified way to the body of Christ. Since all sacraments should resemble one another, and we do not say that the Holy Spirit abolishes water in Baptism or oil in Confirmation, so the substance of the material elements of bread and wine remains in this sacrament. Hence in this sacrament, we should speak of companation.

(3) Consubstantiation: i.e. the co-existence of the body of Christ with the substance of bread. After the consecration, the substances, both of the body and blood of Christ and of the bread and wine, coexist in union with each other. The analogy of the red-hot iron where both fire and iron are united but each continues unchanged, is used to explain consubstantiation. Bread and wine are employed in this sacrament to bring out its

significance of the unity of the Church. The text is taken from Augustine: 'One loaf is made of many grains and one wine of many bunches of grapes'. But the substance of the bread and wine is required for this significance. Therefore, the substance of the bread and wine remains in this sacrament.

Thomas rejects all three views mentioned above, namely, impanation, companation and consubstantiation. And for the purpose of his argument groups them all in one, for they all maintain that the substance of bread and wine remains after the consecration. That is the point Thomas attacks. In his Sed Contra, he quotes Ambrose: 'Although we see the appearance of bread and wine, we should believe that, after the consecration, there is nothing other than the flesh of Christ and his blood', but by contrast with the previous article, Thomas here makes use of philosophical arguments to refute what he sees as heresy. (a) It is accepted that Christ is not present before the consecration but is present after the consecration. On this all agree; but (b) Thomas does not accept consubstantiation, for 'a thing cannot be where it was not before, except by being brought in locally or by something already there being changed into it'. This would involve local motion.

But Thomas rules out local motion on three grounds. First, if local motion were to be accepted, the body of Christ would cease to be in heaven. Secondly, every bodily thing that is moved from place to place must pass through all the intermediate places and this cannot be attributed to this sacrament. Thirdly, the body of Christ in this sacrament begins simultaneously to be in different places, and this is not possible if there is local motion. To say that the body and blood of Christ, therefore, move into the bread and wine is absurd. Hence all three views are to be rejected.

This leaves only one alternative, namely, that the substance of bread and wine is changed into the body and blood of Christ. Then, he argues that 'what is changed

into something else is no longer there after the change'. Therefore, the substance of bread is no longer there after the consecration. This the only logical alternative to 'local motion'.

Thomas then turns to theological arguments. First, he points to Scripture, 'This is my body'. Now this would not be true if the substance of the bread was still there, as the substance of bread is not Christ's body. In Book IV Contra Gentiles 63, he gives a fuller treatment and argues that if the substance of bread co-exists with the body of Christ, Christ should rather have said, 'Here is my body'. The word 'here' points to the substance which is seen and that is the substance of bread, if the bread remains in this sacrament along with the body of Christ. But the demonstrative pronoun 'Hoc' indicates the substance present under its accidents. 'This' means this thing, this reality, this substance, underlying the visible appearances, the accidental qualities which are the object of sight and of the other senses.

Or one could argue from liturgical practice. He says that 'it would go against the reverence which is accorded to this sacrament if there were another substance present there which ought not to be given the worship of patria'. The principle of 'lex orandi lex credendi' could be of help to understand this.

Similarly, Canon Law forbids anyone to receive the body of Christ after taking bodily food, but allows one to take one consecrated host after another. The presumption underlying this ancient prescription is that, after the consecration, the host is no longer in any sense bodily food: but there is only the body and blood of Christ.

If the substance of bread and wine is not in this sacrament, what happens to it? In article 3 Thomas asks, 'Is the substance of the bread annihilated when this sacrament is consecrated, or is it perhaps reduced to a more elementary kind of matter?' To answer these

questions Thomas uses Aristotelian physics, but Roguet thinks that, though Thomas uses Aristotelian physics, his arguments are theological, and not purely philosophical.³

Three arguments may be brought forward to support that the substance of the bread is either annihilated or at least reduced to a more elementary kind of matter.

First, whatever has a bodily nature must be somewhere. Now the substance of the bread is of a bodily nature, and it no longer remains in this sacrament, as we have just seen. But there is no place for it to go. Therefore, it can no longer exist. It must then be reduced to nothing or at least to a more elementary kind of matter.

Secondly, the terminus a quo of any change does not remain, except to the extent that it is now in the potentiality of the subject of the change: for example, when fire is made from air, the form of air does not remain, except in the potentiality of matter; and it is the same when something black is made from something white. These are examples of what is called substantial and accidental changes respectively. Now in this sacrament the substance of the bread and wine is the terminus a quo and the body and blood of Christ is the terminus ad quem. As Ambrose in his De Officiis says, before the consecration it is called by the name of another nature, after the consecration it is called the body. Hence, when the consecration has taken place, the substance of the bread and wine no longer remains. It may be that they are reduced into a more elementary kind of matter.

Thirdly, one or other of two contradictories must be true. Now it is untrue to say, 'After the consecration the substance of the bread and wine is something'. Therefore, it must be true to say, 'The substance of the bread and wine is nothing'.

This time in Sed Contra, Thomas quotes from

Augustine 'God is not the cause that anything should tend towards non-existence'. Thomas claims that this sacrament is a work of divine power and that there is not annihilation. In IV Contra Gentiles 63 speaking of this change, he says that matter lies wholly under the power of God, since by that power it is brought into being; hence, it may be that by divine power one individual substance may be converted into another pre-existing substance. He also writes in the same chapter that by the divine power, which does not presuppose matter, but produces it, this matter is converted into that matter, and consequently this individual into that.

In refuting those who advocate annihilation or reduction to a more elementary kind of matter, Thomas considers them not as heretics but as those who hold a false opinion. He is thinking here of two theologians: (1) William of Auvergne (c.1180-1249), also known as 'William of Paris', a French Scholastic philosopher and theologian, and (2) Roland Bandinelli (1105-81), a professor of Bologna who later became Pope Alexander III (1159-81). They considered it impossible that the bread and wine should be changed into the body and blood of Christ and therefore, advocated annihilation. The difficulties which they were trying to face are the following.

We know that the substance of bread and wine is present before the consecration but after the consecration it is no longer there, but only the body and blood of Christ is present. This could happen instantaneously, that is, one moment it the substance of bread and wine and in the next it is the body and blood of Christ. Now this would mean that the substance of bread and wine has departed. Where has it gone? The underlying material constituents, into which mixed bodily natures can be resolved, are the four elements, namely, earth, water, air and fire. If one of these four elements were to be separated from a substance, the whole substance would be resolved into other elements too. Now if the substance of bread and wine were to be resolved into these four

elements, and result in the presence of the body and blood of Christ, then it would involve local motion; and this would be perceived by our senses. But in fact our senses do not perceive such a resolution. Moreover, here, there is no question of a resolution into prime matter, leaving it without any form at all, because prime matter cannot be without a form. Therefore, on the whole any resolution, however instantaneous it may be, would involve local motion and perception by senses.

As instantaneous resolution is not possible, some suggest a gradual reduction into the underlying material or a gradual departure. This would mean two things. One, there could be a situation where the body and blood of Christ could co-exist along with the substance of bread and wine; but this has already been ruled out. Two, a situation where under a part of the host there is neither the substance of bread nor the body of Christ. This again is not possible, for the same reason.

Unable to overcome the above said difficulties, they concluded annihilation. But this is impossible for Thomas He says,

"There is absolutely no other way in which the real body of Christ can begin to exist in this sacrament, except by the changing of the substance of the bread into it. But there is no room for this change, if you say that the bread is annihilated or that it is reduced to its underlying elementary kinds of matter. It is also impossible to find a cause for such a reduction or annihilation in this sacrament. In a sacrament the effect should be signified by the form of the sacrament. But neither reduction nor annihilation is signified by the words of the form - 'This is my body'."

As we can see, Thomas very much depends on Aristotelian physics. Some say that it is incompatible with modern theories, but modern physics too would raise exactly the same questions. For example it reduces matter to energy, but is unable to say what energy is. Some say this is where metaphysics comes to the help of physics. An Aristotelian could define energy as potency becoming act. No wonder Roguet remarks that no matter what the

relationship between Aristotle's theory of matter and the modern theory, Thomas's arguments retain their philosophical and theological value.⁴

Annihilation, according to Thomas, is impossible and to show this he gives the following example. The air from which fire has been made is no longer here or there but it does not follow that the air has been annihilated. We should remember that annihilation is the passage from being to absolute non-being. But in this sacrament it is the disappearance of a substance which is converted into another. The substance of bread, as Roguet points out, becomes not-bread in becoming the body of Christ; but it does not become nothing.⁵

Further, Thomas says that the form which is the terminus a quo is not changed into the other form, but one form succeeds to another in the same subject; hence the first form does not remain except in so far as it is in the potentiality of the matter. But here the very substance of the bread (both matter and form) is changed into the body of Christ and hence annihilation is ruled out.

At this point it is good to remember that the substantial change of Aristotelian hylomorphic theory is the reduction of a first form into the potentiality of the matter and the simultaneous eduction of a second form out of the potentiality of matter. This only applied analogously to the Eucharistic change. This will become clear in the next article.

'Can the bread be turned into the body of Christ?' It does not seem possible for the bread to be turned into the body of Christ. The general law of change is that there is a subject which first of all is in potentiality to, and then actuated by, the final actuation. Aristotle says, 'change is the actuation of that which is still in potentiality (motus est actus existentis in potentia). But in this case there is no subject underlying the substance of the bread and the

substance of the body of Christ, because as Aristotle says, it is the nature of substance not to be in a subject.

Again in the general law of change, the form of that into which a thing is changed begins to exist in the matter of that which is changed into it. In this case of substantial change, by matter is meant the prime matter, *materia prima*, pure potentiality. When air is turned into fire, which did not previously exist, the form of the fire begins to be in the matter of the air; and likewise, when food is changed into a man who already exists, the form that man begins now to exist in the matter of the food. If then the bread is changed into the body of Christ, you will have to say that the form of Christ's body is now beginning to be in the primal matter of the bread. But this is not true. We cannot then say that the bread is converted into the body of Christ. Further, Aristotle remarks that when two realities are essentially opposed, one of them never becomes the other; thus whiteness never becomes blackness, although the subject of whiteness may become the subject of blackness. Now just as two contrary forms are essentially opposed as being the very sources of formal difference, so also two individuated parts of matter are essentially opposed as being the very sources of distinction. Therefore, it cannot be that the individuated matter of this bread should become the matter which gives its individuation to the body of Christ. Thus it is impossible for the substance of this piece of bread to be changed into the substance of the body of Christ.

In Sed Contra, Thomas cited from Pseudo-Isidore 'do not think of it as surprising and impossible that earthly and corruptible elements should be changed into the substance of Christ'. In reply to the above objections, he once again simply states that in this sacrament we have the reality of Christ's body and this is not by local motion.

Thomas is aware that speculations on the Eucharist can cause one to lose sight of the fact that he is dealing with a matter of faith. To avoid this he quickly states that this change in the Eucharist is not like any natural change, but is entirely beyond the powers of nature and brought about purely by God's power (sola Dei virtute effecta). It is a unique total conversion. Interestingly he once again quotes Ambrose, which only goes to show the thinking of Thomas. It runs thus: "It is clear that for the virgin to conceive was beyond the power of nature. But what we consecrate is that body which was born of the virgin. Why then do we look for natural laws where the body of Christ is concerned, seeing that the Lord Jesus was born of the virgin in a way that transcends the natural order?" Chrysostom commenting on Jn.6:64 says: "They are spiritual, not to be taken in a carnal sense or according to the laws of nature, but they have been lifted above all earthly necessity and natural laws".

Then he uses a philosophical argument - that God, and God only, can bring about such a change. Every agent is effective to the extent that it is in act. This is the metaphysical idea that the order of action is relative to the order of being. The higher a thing is in the order of being, the more actual it is, the greater is its power of action. But every created agent is limited in its actuality since it is found within the limitations of a genus and of a species. According to this philosophy, in bodily things the very substance is a composition of potentiality and act. At the same time to be limited, defined in the logical order of intelligibility or essence corresponds to and is a sign of being limited or contracted, in the order of realness or existence. Therefore the action of every created agent has a definite and limited range. And what limits everything in its actual existence is its form. For this reason every change that takes place to the laws of nature is a changing of form. But God is unlimited actuality or

Thomas would say 'Pure Act'. Hence God is able to bring about not only 'formal changes' but changing of the whole being of a thing.

We must realise that nobody is talking of accidental change. Thomas eliminated the idea of transformation of substance; that would mean that the breadness has become the body of Christ, i.e. one from another. That would be a physical change perceptible by sense. Yet he says 'conversio'. What does it mean? In IV Contra Gentiles 63, Thomas has already discussed this question of substantial change. He says that we have to consider how subject is changed into subject, a change which nature cannot effect. Every operation of nature presupposes matter, whereby subjects are individuated; hence nature cannot make this subject become another subject. Both in the Contra Gentiles and in the Summa, Thomas concludes that matter lies wholly under the power of God, since by that power it is brought into being. The whole being of a created thing, i.e. both its matter and its form, come from God. Though a creature can change one thing into another by changing its form, a creature cannot alter the prime matter which is common to both. This is because the existence of a creature does not depend on another. But the author of being is able to change that which is 'being' in the one into that which is 'being' in the other, by taking away what kept this form being that. As the substance of bread and wine does not remain after the conversion, what remains is termed accidents. Consequently, we are not speaking about accidental change, nor are we talking about transformation as we have already seen. Therefore, the only possibility remaining is a substantial change, whereby God changes the whole being of one creature into another. Cajetan, commenting on this article, in the Leonine edition, vol. XII, Rome, 1906, p.170, says:

'Est igitur ratio convertibilitatis totius unius rei in totam alteram rem, communicatio earum in natura entis communis omnibus creaturis tantum. Et hinc habes, secundum Auctorem, quod secundum totalem

conversionem quaelibet creatura potest per divinam omnipotentiam converti in quamcumque aliam creaturam, quia creaturis omnibus communis est huiusmodi entis natura'.

Thomas himself puts it very clearly. By divine power the complete substance of the bread is converted into the complete substance of Christ's body and the complete substance of the wine into the complete substance of Christ's blood. Hence this change is not a formal change, but a substantial one. It does not belong to the natural kinds of change, and therefore it can - indeed must - be called by a name proper to itself 'TRANSUBSTANTIATION'. This is the first time he uses this term. As far as I can understand from what we have seen so far, by the term transubstantiation, Thomas only wants to affirm that in this sacrament there is no more bread and wine, but that only the body and blood of Christ is really present, though of course in a sacramental form.

This, however, raises a further problem, treated in the next article, namely, 'Do the accidents of the bread and wine remain in this sacrament?' It seems that the accidents cannot remain in this sacrament for the following reasons:

- 1) Take away that which is first and you remove that which follows on it. But substance naturally comes before accident, as Aristotle shows. Since after the consecration, the substance of bread no longer remains in this sacrament, it seems that the accidents cannot possibly remain.
- 2) Moreover, in this sacrament of truth there should be no deception. Now it is through the accidents that we judge of the substance. It seems that our human judgement is deceived if the substance of the bread departs but leaves its accidents behind.
- 3) Again, although faith is not subject to reason, it is not opposed to it, but rather above it; (Ia.I,6 ad 2; I,8). Now our reason starts off from sense-knowledge. Our faith, then, ought not to run counter to what our senses tell us. But to our senses that seems to be bread which our faith affirms to be the substances of

Christ's body. It is not then desirable that in this sacrament the accidents of the bread, which are the object of our sense-knowledge, should still remain when the substance of the bread is no longer there.

- 4) Furthermore, that which still remains after the conversion has taken place would appear to be the subject of the change. If then the accidents of the bread remain after the conversion has taken place, they would seem to be the subject of the change. But this is impossible, because an accident cannot be the subject of another accident.

The above objections are based on philosophical principles, but Thomas in his reply does not sound philosophical. In the Sed Contra he cites Augustine: under the appearances of bread and wine which we see we honour the invisible realities of the flesh and blood. Thomas, here, has to reconcile that the change is a fact though there is no apparent change. Thomas says that men are not accustomed to eating human flesh and drinking human blood and if that were the case it would be an object of contempt for unbelievers. Therefore, divine providence very wisely arranged to give us the body and blood of Christ under the appearances of things in common use, namely bread and wine. This in turn will increase the merit of our faith.

Every effect depends more on the first cause than it does on secondary causes (De Causis, prop. I). The power of God who is the first cause can bring about any change. Though, existentially, accidents depend upon the substance in which they are, what the substance itself really is depends upon God. Further, there is no deception in this sacrament because accidents (which are the proper object of our senses) are really there. But what the substance really is, is the object of the intellect and this in turn is maintained by faith; and faith is not in opposition to what our senses tell us. But faith reaches where senses cannot reach. It is very interesting to note that Thomas seems to condemn

the idea exploited by the preachers, namely that the accidents conceal a reality. On the contrary, for Thomas accidents do not conceal the body of Christ but reveal it to the intellect enlightened by faith. An example, though imperfect may explain this better. If we go to Agra in India and sit by the river Jumna, we will see the reflection of the Tajmahal. Now it is only a reflection but it does not deceive us or conceal anything from us. It in fact reveals the reality of the Tajmahal. Similarly (not exactly, for this sacrament is unique) in this sacrament the accidents do not conceal but reveal the reality of the body and blood of Christ.

Thus Thomas establishes that in this sacrament there is a substantial change and that the accidents remain. Now in article 6, he asks: 'Does the substantial form of the bread remain in this sacrament after the consecration?'

The first objection is that the bread is something that is produced by the power of man, and therefore, its form must be an accident. As such, like any other accident, the substantial form must remain after the consecration. The second is based on Aristotle: the soul is what makes a physical body to be such and also makes it fundamentally alive (anima est actus corporis physici potentia vitam habentis). The soul is the form of the body. Now the substantial form of the bread could not be converted into the soul (i.e. the form) of Christ's body. Thirdly, we realise that whatever it is that remains after the consecration, nourishes and does everything that bread would do; this can only be the result of the bread's substantial form. Therefore, the substantial form of bread must remain after the consecration.

At first sight the continuance of the substantial form seems to give a simple solution to all difficulties: in other words, some form of companionship or consubstantiation. But Thomas asserts that the substantial form does

not remain. If the substantial form were to remain, only the prime matter would have been changed. Consequently not the complete body of Christ but only its prime matter would be involved in this conversion. Thomas's own words make it clear:

'Were the substantial form of the bread to remain, it would do so either as informing prime matter or as separate from it. Now the first alternative is ruled out. Because, were it to remain as informing prime matter, then the complete substance of the bread would remain; but we have already seen the opposite. Nor could it remain in some other piece of matter, because each piece of matter is exclusively actuated by the form it has. Were it to remain as separate from matter, it would now be an intelligible form, indeed it would be an intelligence, because all forms separate from matter are such.

What Thomas is here saying is that if we get a substantial form without the matter, then it becomes a spiritual being, indeed an intelligent spiritual being, like an angel. On the other hand if the substantial form were to remain as informing prime matter then what would remain would be totally bread, and bread alone. The first of these is absurd, and the second would imply that no change had taken place at all - except perhaps symbolically.

Finally, he accepts that some operations like 'nourishment' of the body can be observed in this sacrament. But this is not because of any still remaining form or matter but because of the accidents that remain. Thomas, here does not offer any philosophical explanation but simply goes beyond it and categorically states that the accidents are 'miraculously' allowed to produce them. This is a problem which he simply does not resolve.

In article 7, Thomas asks, 'Is this change an instantaneous one?' We shall not spend much time on this article, as it does not really affect our central theme, namely, Christ's presence in this sacrament.

Those who objected to instantaneous change argue that between every two instants there is an intervening time. Therefore, the change must take place in the flow of time between the last instant when the bread is there and the first instant when the body of Christ is there; and thus they advocate a successive change.

But for Thomas this change is instantaneous, and he gives three reasons for its being so: (1) the substance of the body of Christ which is the term of this conversion does not allow of degrees; (2) in this change, there is no subject to allow of a gradual preparation; (3) the whole thing happens by the infinite power of God.

To those who say that the utterance of the words of consecration takes time, he replies that this change takes place in the last instant of the utterance of the words, for it is only then that the significance of the words is complete. Thus a successive change is ruled out.

The final article in this question runs thus: 'Is this proposition true, "The body of Christ comes from the bread"?' As we read this article we find that it seems to be nothing but grammatical subtleties bringing up the corollaries of the principles used in the above articles. Thomas accepts that we cannot say that 'the bread becomes the body of Christ' except in a certain analogical sense (see ad lum), but it is correct to say that 'the body of Christ comes from the bread'. He takes the later expression from Ambrose whom Thomas quotes in the Sed Contra, 'at the consecration from the bread comes the body of Christ'.

But this conversion is not like creation or natural change. Thomas differentiates transubstantiation from creation, though transubstantiation obliges us to appeal to God's creative power. In creation non-being is not converted into being, but God creates out of nothing. On the other hand in the case of natural change, the

subject remains the same before and after the change. But in this sacrament, as we have seen, the entire substance changes and only the accidents remain. Though the conversion of the bread into Christ's body has certain resemblances both to creation and to natural change, it differs from each of them and remains unique. Hence it has the name all to itself of 'Transubstantiation'.

Now we can conclude and in fact comprise the whole chapter in just one sentence. By faith what was previously entirely and only bread is changed by the creative power of God into that which entirely and only is the body and blood of Christ. This is what Thomas means by transubstantiation.

CHAPTER IV : NOTES

1. Neuner 1504 = DS 794 = DB 424.
2. Translated in Harvard Theological Review, 393 = DS 802 = 430.
3. A. - M. Roguet, Somme Théologique, III, qq. 73-78. Editions du Cerf, Paris, 1960, p.306, note 48.
4. Ibid., note 49.
5. Ibid., note 50.

CHAPTER V

SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS

(3) THE PRESENCE OF THE WHOLE CHRIST:

SACRAMENTAL PRESENCE

Thomas, as we saw, began Question 75 by saying that it is a matter of faith that Christ and only Christ is present in the Eucharist. Then he went on to explain how this presence comes about, for which he used Aristotelian philosophy to some extent, since his explanation is based on an Aristotelian understanding of the notion of substance and accidents. But these are only aids to explain what is perceived by faith. Thus he arrives at transubstantiation. By this he means that after the consecration there is no longer any bread or wine in this sacrament, because the whole substance of bread and wine has been converted into the body and blood of Christ. Only the accidents remain, to reveal this presence to our minds enlightened by faith.

So far, then, he has affirmed that the body and blood of Christ is present in this sacrament; but what about his soul and godhead? Are they also present and if they are, how do they come to be present? Further, is this presence natural or sacramental? Thomas tackles these in Question 76. In this question, Thomas affirms that the whole Christ - body, blood, soul, godhead - is present in the Eucharist; and that this is a sacramental presence. Once again he divides this question into eight articles; but all of them fall under three main considerations: (1) the total presence of the whole Christ under each species and each and every part of the species (art. 1-4); (2) Christ is not present locally nor is he subject to local motion (art. 5-6); and (3) Christ is not present in any way which may be seen by the human eye (art. 7-8).

Thomas begins his inquiry by asking, 'Is the whole Christ under this sacrament?' He starts as usual by arguing that it seems not to be so, for as we saw in the last question, the substance of bread and wine is changed into the body and blood of Christ. Now Christ is made up of three substances, godhead, soul and body (III, q.2,a.5; q.5, art.1-3), and it seems clear that the bread and wine cannot be changed into the divine nature of Christ or into his soul.

Moreover, in this sacrament Christ is presented as the nourishment of the faithful, but in fact only the body and blood are offered as food and drink. What about other parts like nerves, bones, etc., which cannot possibly be considered as food? And anyway, the dimensions of the consecrated bread and wine are much smaller than the dimensions of Christ's body, so that it is impossible to imagine that the whole Christ is contained under this sacrament. Such are the three objections with which he introduces q.76.

Once again, Thomas begins his reply with a firm appeal to faith: 'Our Catholic faith makes it absolutely necessary to profess that the whole Christ is in this sacrament'. The body of the article is then taken up with an explanation of this datum of faith.

Thomas begins by distinguishing two ways in which a part of Christ can be present in this sacrament, one of which he terms 'by sacramental sign', the other 'by natural concomitance'.

(1) By sacramental sign. As a result of the sacramental sign, we have under the sacramental appearances that into which the pre-existing substance of the bread and wine is directly changed. This change is signified by the 'sacramental form', i.e. by the words of consecration, 'This is my body' includes not only the flesh but the whole body including nerves, bones, etc. If sometimes the body is termed flesh, as in St. John, 'My flesh is food indeed' (6:55), it is because the

term flesh is more suitable in the context of eating (ad 2).

The fact remains, however, that this sacramental change refers only to the body and blood of Christ, and not to the godhead or soul of Christ. Thomas says that 'the change of the bread and wine does not have as its term either the godhead or the soul of Christ'. Hence it cannot be said that the whole Christ is present in the Eucharist by virtue of the sacramental sign or formula. Yet the whole Christ is present in the Eucharist. How? This leads to the second way.

(2) By natural concomitance. Though the terminus ad quem for the conversion of the bread is the body of Christ, the godhead and his soul are also present by natural concomitance. Thomas says: 'By a natural concomitance, you have here whatever is found to be actually joined to the term of the conversion. Because, wherever two things are actually joined together, wherever you have one, the other has to be. It is only by an act of our mind that we separate things that are thus really joined together'. Therefore, wherever the body of Christ may be, there by natural concomitance, is also the godhead and his soul. This is because of the hypostatic union of divinity and humanity in the person of Christ. Therefore, Thomas concludes, 'since the godhead never laid aside the body which was taken up into hypostatic union, wherever the body of Christ may be, you must have the godhead with it'. Here he quotes from the creed of the Council of Ephesus: "We partake of the body and blood of Christ; it is not ordinary flesh nor even the flesh of some one who is very holy and joined to the Word, sharing his dignity; but it is actually life-giving, it is the very flesh of the Word himself" (ad.1).

As to the objection that the dimensions of the bread are smaller than the dimensions of the body of Christ, Thomas simply states that the dimensions of the

bread and wine are not changed into the dimensions of Christ's body, because dimensions are accidents, and already in q.75.5. Thomas has shown that the accidents do not change. What a thing is, is its substance, the whole specific nature of a substance may be as truly contained by small as by large dimensions. For example, the complete specific nature of air is as truly found in a large as in a small amount, and human nature in its specific wholeness is equally present in a large and in a small man. It follows then that the whole substance of the body and the blood of Christ is contained in this sacrament after the consecration in the way that the complete specific nature of bread and wine was there before it.

Before we go into the next article, it is good to point out that it is only when the sacramentality and the reality of the Eucharist has been firmly established that Thomas brings up the question of concomitance. Megivern thinks that 'this in itself is significant, for it is only when he has given deep roots to both the essentially sacramental nature of the Eucharist and the absolute reality of what is contained that the stage is properly set for the fruitful understanding of concomitance. And the meeting-place of both these facts is substance'.¹ In the above article we have seen that as the result of the sacramental sign we have the substantial presence. But the relation between this sign and the reality, according to Megivern, would be adequately seen if we did not also advert to the theological implications of natural concomitance. Thus, Thomas introduces it at the right time having prepared the basis for it.

Now in article 2 he asks "Is the whole Christ under each of the two species?" Three objections are put forward which seem to imply that the whole Christ is not present under each of the two species. (1) If the whole Christ is contained equally under each species, then it would seem that either one or other

of the two is superfluous. (2) In the previous article we saw that the word 'flesh' denoted the whole body, which includes nerves, bones, etc. Blood is therefore definitely included, for we cannot think of a body without blood. Therefore, there is no need at all for two separate consecrations. (3) What has already come into being cannot again go through the process of coming-into-being. Therefore, if the whole Christ has come into being, sacramentally, in the consecrated host, then it is impossible that he should be wholly present in the consecrated wine. Thus it seems that the whole Christ is not contained under each species.

Thomas, on the other hand, affirms that the whole Christ is most certainly under each species. In his Sed Contra he refers to a gloss on 'this cup' in 1 Cor. 11:25, which says, 'the same thing is received under each species, i.e. of the bread and of the wine'. Once again he refers to the ideas of sacramental sign and concomitance to explain this. He says, "Under the form of wine the blood of Christ is present by reason of the sacramental signs, and the body of Christ by a natural concomitance, just as is the soul and the godhead, because the blood of Christ is not now separated from his body as it was at the time of his passion and death'. This is clearly based on the doctrine that in the Eucharist we receive the risen body of Christ. Therefore, where we have one substance we have the other two also.

But what of the objection that if the whole Christ is present under each species, this renders one of the species superfluous? In fact, both are essential and necessary, because they serve to represent Christ's passion, of which this sacrament is the principal memorial. At the passion the body and blood were separated, and that is the reason why, in the formula of the consecration of the blood, mention is made of it being poured out. Further it is also in keeping with sacramental usage; it enables the body of Christ

to be given for the well-being of our body and the blood is given for the well-being of our soul (ad 1).

Thomas, in this article indirectly corrects the one-sided view that considers the Eucharist only from the point of 'real presence', by referring to the passion. Thus he gives a fuller picture of this sacrament. But apart from the sacrificial representation, other reasons which Thomas gives to justify two species seem less convincing. This is because he was aware that the Latin Church had (and still has) the custom of giving communion under one species only. This should not drive anybody to a hasty conclusion. Though Thomas knows of the practice, accepts it as valid because of concomitance, and does not even criticise it, it is clearly implicit in his argument that reception of Holy Communion under both kinds would be the ideal.

He carries the discussion a little further in article 3, by asking 'Is the whole Christ under each and every part of the species'? This article, as we would immediately realise, is nothing but a corollary of the previous article. At the same time, he here introduces a discussion concerning the dimensions of Christ's body which will be dealt with in the next article in greater detail.

It seems that the whole Christ is not under each and every part of the species, because these species can be divided to infinity. This would involve that Christ is present an infinite number of times in the sacrament. But one cannot say that since just as in the natural order, so also in the order of grace, infinity is ruled out.

Secondly, the body of Christ is an organic whole, and has parts which are a definite distance from each other. This could not be true if the whole Christ were present under each and every part of the species. Besides, the body of Christ always retains the true nature of a body, and is never turned into a spirit.

But it is the nature of a body to be quantity having position, as Aristotle teaches. Now it is part of the nature of quantity that its different parts are in different parts of place. It would seem, then, that the whole Christ cannot possibly be under each and every part of the species. Thus his three objections.

Thomas, once again, affirms that the whole Christ is under each and every part of the species, this time, in his Sed Contra, citing Augustine, who says: 'Everyone receives Christ our Lord; in each one's portion he is whole and entire; he is not lessened in being given to many; he gives himself entire to each'.

Thomas, on his part defends this belief by using once again the notions of sacramental sign and concomitance. Here it is better to quote his own words lest any paraphrasing confuse the argument.

'Since the body of Christ is in this sacrament because of the effectiveness of the sacramental sign and its quantitative dimensions as the result only of a natural concomitance, the body of Christ is here as if it were just substance, that is, in the way that substance is under its dimensions, and not in any dimensive way, i.e., not in the way that the dimensive quantity of a body is under the dimensive quantity of the place that contains the body'.

When Thomas says, 'substance is under its dimensions', this is not to be taken in the sense that the integral parts of an extended substance are under the parts of the quantity that extends it, but in a more basic sense in which the whole specific nature is contained by quantity, and is equally under any part of it. For instance, we do not say that only a man's toe is present in his toe, or that it is only his hands that play the piano: we say that 'he' plays the piano, adding perhaps 'with all his heart and soul', to signify that his entire being, spiritual and material, is at this moment wholly wrapped up in playing a Mozart concerto.

Roguet commenting on this in the footnote says. 'The substance of the body of Christ is found in this sacrament

only in virtue of the words. But it is not an abstract substance or a separated substance or a spiritual substance because it is the substance of the body and therefore a material substance. Hence it must bring with it its quantitative dimensions by reason of concomitance. But if the quantity of the body is present with the substance, it is in virtue of the words and this sacramentally. And therefore, since there is a conversion of one substance into another, the quantitative dimensions themselves are reduced to the manner in which the bodily substance is present'.²

As the result of this substantial presence, the whole nature of substance is present under any part of the dimensions that contain it. Thomas gives the example of bread. The whole nature of bread is under any part of the bread, whatever the size of a loaf, divided or not divided. In its footnote, the Blackfriars edition points out that 'for Thomas this is a sequence. Where we could first say 'this is bread', we now say 'this is Christ's body'. The whole specific nature of bread was contained in the whole quantity of the host and was equally under each and every part of it. Hence the body of Christ is now contained by and under each part of the quantity of the host in the same way. But since a consecrated host can be divided any number of times, does this mean that the whole Christ is present n - number of times? This is like saying that since my soul is found in every part of my body, I have n - number of souls. This is obviously absurd. Therefore we say only that the whole Christ is present under each and every part of the body because of his substantial presence.

The objection regarding the distance between and extension of the organic body does not really stand, because the manner of the presence of the body of Christ in this sacrament is not controlled by factors deriving from it being extended: but it is there purely and simple as a substance. This discussion is carried into the next article.

The question is 'Are all the dimensions of the body of Christ in sacrament?' (art. 4). It seems not, because the complete quantitative dimensions of anything could not possibly be contained both in the whole and in each and every part. Again two sets of dimensions (namely the dimensions of bread perceived by our senses and the dimensions of Christ's body which are not perceived by our senses) cannot be had together. For if they are placed together and are unequal, the greater will overlap the lesser dimensions. In the case of this sacrament the dimensions of Christ's body are much greater and hence will pass out beyond the dimensions of the host. This means that the substance of the body of Christ would extend beyond and outside the appearances of the bread; but this could not be so, as the accidents are essential to signify the substantial presence. Therefore (so Thomas concludes his objections), 'It is quite impossible that the complete dimensions of Christ's body should be in this sacrament'.

On the other hand, Thomas firmly affirms that the complete dimensions of Christ's body are present in the host. He once again reminds us that the dimensions of the body of Christ are present not because of the sacramental sign but because of concomitance. He accepts that the dimensions of Christ's body are in this sacrament though not in a way that is normal for dimensions to be, i.e. the whole Christ is in the whole sacrament, not various parts of Christ in different parts of the sacrament; rather, the whole is in the whole, and the whole is in every part also. The other two objections too are rejected because the dimensions of Christ's body are not present in the normal way, as contained in a place or harmonizing two dimensions.

Therefore, the key point, or the central point, that should be borne in mind all the time is that the dimensions of the body of Christ are in this sacrament only by

natural concomitance, not by force of conversion, since the dimensions of the bread remain.

The next two articles (5 and 6) are concerned with local presence and movement. Thomas has already referred to these problems in question 75, and concluded that there is neither local presence nor local motion in this sacrament. He makes that point again and discusses it at greater length. First he asks, 'Is the body of Christ in this sacrament locally?' It would seem that to be 'in' something or to be surrounded by it means being 'in place'. Now we say that the substance of Christ's body is present only under the appearances of bread and wine, but not on any other part of the altar. Moreover, before the consecration, the substance of bread occupies a certain place, and after the consecration the body of Christ fills this place. If that is so, it must be in that place locally. Further, as we have seen earlier, Christ's body is present with all its dimensions and its accidents. Now to be 'in a place' is an accident of all bodies. Therefore, the body of Christ is 'locally' in this sacrament.

But it is not so. Thomas stresses that Christ's body is here not in the same way as an extended body exists, but in a way that belongs to substance, and to substance alone, to be under dimensions: and Christ's body is in this sacrament as if it were purely and simply substance. Therefore, Christ's body is not in this sacrament in a restricted sense. It is not limited just to this sacrament or circumscribed by it. It is always in heaven in its proper appearance and it is on many other altars under the sacramental appearance.

Further, the substance of Christ's body is not the subject of the dimensions of the bread as the substance of bread was. Therefore, the bread was localised whereas the substance of the body of Christ is not. This does not mean the place left by the departure of the substance of bread is empty. It is filled by the sacramental appearances which are able to fill a place either because

the dimensions themselves naturally do this or are enabled to do so by a miracle, just as they miraculously subsist as if they were substance.

The next logical question is, 'Is the body of Christ in this sacrament in a mobile way?' (art. 6). Already in the last article we have seen that Christ's body is not present as in a place. Now to move, i.e. to displace oneself locally, presupposes that one is in the place. But it is not so in this sacrament. Therefore the body of Christ, properly speaking, does not move, but as we will see one can say that it does move indirectly and this by means of accidents (per accidens).

But there are some principles which suggest that there should be local movement. (1) According to Aristotle, 'when we are in movement, the things that are in us are in movement too'. Then it follows that when this sacrament is moved, Christ is also moved. (2) The reality should correspond to that which is its figure or type. Now the paschal lamb was the figure of this sacrament, and 'none of it remained until the morning'; there was a precept on this matter. (Ex.12:10). Hence, if this sacrament be reserved till the morrow, the body of Christ should not remain until the morning. (3) If it remains till the morrow then there is no reason why it should not remain for all time. But it is not so in fact. Hence it seems that Christ is in this sacrament in a mobile way.

Thomas, consistent with his teaching, asserts that there is no local movement. On this point I shall let Thomas speak for himself lest I blunt his argument.

A thing can be fundamentally one, but manifold in the modes of its being. So, there is nothing against its being in movement on one level of its being while it remains unchanged on another. There is a difference between a body's being white and its being large; it can then be involved in a process of change from the point of view of whiteness yet simultaneously remain

unchanged from the point of view of size. Now it is not the same thing for Christ to be, simply, and for him to be under the sacrament; because when we say that he is under the sacrament we mean that he has a relationship to the sacrament. Now, according to this mode of his being under the sacrament, Christ is not moved locally in any strict sense, but only after a fashion. Christ is not in this sacrament as if he were in a place, as we have already said (art. 5); and what is not in a place is not moved locally, but is only said to be moved when that in which it is is moved.

As we have seen it is argued that there is local motion because Christ ceases to exist when the accidents of bread cease to be. Though Thomas accepts the second part, he does not agree that this entails local motion. He says that Christ's body ceases to be in something because that thing has ceased to be. God, whose being is unfailing and immortal, ceases to be in a corruptible creature by the fact that the corruptible creature has ceased to be. Thus Christ does not cease to be because of any ceasing-to-be on his part but because the accidents of bread cease to be. Therefore there is no question of local motion, of his 'going away'.

Roguet points out that, when the appearances of this sacrament disappear, Christ ceases to exist in them, but that his real existence does not suffer any alteration. Only the union of the body of Christ with the species is suppressed, for before this suppression there was a real relation between the species and the body of Christ. This is a point fundamental to a true understanding of transubstantiation, where the substance of bread is changed and not Christ. Thus Christ himself does not suffer any change, either by 'coming into' or 'going away from', the elements.³

Now we come to the last part of our discussion. In article 7, Thomas asks 'could the body of Christ as it is under this sacrament be ever seen by the eye?'

It seems possible for heavenly eyes, like those of angels and saints because they see all bodies just as they are. The glorified bodies of the saints will be like Christ's glorified body, and hence like Christ, will be able to behold Christ himself in this sacrament.

Thomas answers this saying that 'a thing that remains unchanged cannot simultaneously be seen by the same observer under different aspects. Now the glorified sense of sight perceives Christ always as he is in his natural appearance. It would appear, then, that it does not see Christ as he is under the form of this sacrament'.

But no bodily eye can see him there. First of all, because a body becomes visible by modifying the intermediary air by its accidents. But the accidents of the body of Christ, as we have seen, are here only because of the substance; therefore no intermediary change is possible, and hence no bodily eye can see the body of Christ in this sacrament.

Substance is neither the object of any sense, nor can it be imagined; it is open only to the intellect. Thomas calls the intellect a spiritual eye. Yet he warns that the body of Christ cannot be seen by the natural intellect but only by the intellect enlightened by faith.

Finally, he asks 'Does the body of Christ really remain in this sacrament when there is a miraculous appearance of the likeness of a child or of flesh?' (art. 8). From the question we can deduce that this article alludes to the stories of eucharistic miracles common in the Middle Ages and before. Thomas in fact is here referring to the miracle stories cited by Paschasius Radbertus, in chapter XIV of his book De Corpore et Sanguine Domini.⁴ He cites several miracles where people saw the form of a lamb or flesh or true blood in the eucharistic species. Among several of these miracle-stories, Paschasius gives one according to which a Jew saw the real body of a child in a host as it was

broken and given to the people. These are the miracle stories that Thomas has in mind. This naturally raises the question whether the body of Christ is truly seen in this sacrament on the occasion of such miraculous appearances.

Thomas begins to answer this first by stating in the Sed Contra: 'When such an apparition takes place, the same respect is accorded to what now appears as was given earlier. This would not be if Christ were not still really present; it is to him that we offer the homage of supreme worship. Hence, even when such an apparition occurs, Christ is still under the sacrament'. So the body of Christ is still truly present; but is that which is seen truly his body?

Thomas says that these miraculous appearances can happen in one or two ways. (1) It can happen as a subjective vision, where the eyes of an individual are acted upon in such a way as if they were looking at flesh or blood or a child. (2) There are other appearances where it is not so subjective, but can have some objective basis: this would be the case if either several people or a whole group should experience the same vision. In both cases, Thomas argues that there is no deception, and cites the resurrection appearance as examples of such visions.

But Thomas is strong in his conclusion that the body of Christ cannot be seen in its natural form except in heaven; in the above cases a form is miraculously produced either in the eyes of the beholders or even in the dimensions themselves of the sacrament, and this in order that God may by such miracles teach believers or unbelievers that Christ is truly present in the Eucharist.

From this article, we get a very human aspect of Thomas. He is not at all times a hard and dry speculative theologian. The answer to the last question is typical of Thomas. He is very careful not to disturb or shock the piety of the simple Christians. At the same time he does not compromise his teaching.

After this Question 76, Thomas goes on to discuss in Question 77, the problem of the accidents and what happens to them, and in Question 78, the 'Form of the Eucharist'. Both are interesting and I am sure they do enrich the whole teaching of Thomas concerning Real Presence. But we will not deal with them for three reasons. (1) They do not alter in any way the teaching of Thomas; (2) the answers to most of the questions raised there, are already hinted upon in Questions 75 and 76, or at least we can deduce the answers, and (3) it would take much more time and many more pages if we had to deal with them.

Thomas, in Questions 73, 75 and 76 has given his central teaching on Real Presence. He starts his whole investigation solidly based on faith. Then, basing his doctrine on faith, he absorbed the best human wisdom available to him at that time, to build an intellectual monument to this Holy Sacrament, towards which all other sacraments are directed. He did not limit his arguments to religious principles alone, but used all available knowledge to explain his faith both to the believers and non-believers. Logic and massive learning and mystical contemplation were fused in his teaching to an extent that had never been before.

Fr. Kenelm Foster has sketched his character superbly in three paragraphs at the end of the Introduction to his Life of St. Thomas Aquinas. I shall take only the ending of the first paragraph:

'....Let us not think of him as placidly sagacious; nor even as some oracular master of all the answers. If he is a prodigious master, it is because he himself was mastered - held by a vision of God's presence in the world's being (esse) and fascinated by the mystery of God incarnate and crucified. It is hardly possible, surely, to exaggerate either the clarity of this man's awareness of the divine presence in all existence - esse.... proprius effectus Dei - or on the other hand, his sense of the complete 'otherness', the utter transcendence of the divine nature with respect to things created.....'.

'Esse....proprius effectus Dei' this phrase in a nutshell gives us the greatness of Thomas's teaching.

'Esse....proprius effectus Dei': 'existence is the effect that God, and God alone, produces'. This phrase from the Prima Pars (q.45, a.5) is for Thomas the metaphysician the key to everything, and it sums up his vision of the world. All that exists is what it is because God knows and wills that it should be so.

God is therefore the first and principal cause of all things, and all other causes which effect change are only secondary causes acting by virtue of their share in God's power. In De Potentia q.3 a.4, Thomas writes:

'Quaecumque alia causa dat esse, hoc habet in quantum est in ea virtus et operatio primae causae, et non per propriam virtutem.'

That is:

Whatever other cause confers existence has this power insofar as there is contained in it the power and the working of the first cause; it does not do it by its own power.

In every change that ever happens - even in the falling of a leaf in the autumn - God is for Thomas the prime mover, and it is interesting to observe that the first of the five ways employed by Thomas to prove the existence of God is the argument from motion, or change.

God, therefore, the first and ultimate cause of all that is, and of every change, can and does bring about a substantial change in the eucharistic elements, a change that is not a transformation (for this would entail only a change in the form, but not in the prime matter) but a total conversion of the elements, matter and form alike. God alone could do this, and it is an utterly unique change beyond our comprehension, so much so that Thomas sometimes calls it a miraculous change. But the essence of his teaching is that since we accept by faith that Christ is really and fully present in this sacrament, and that it is no longer earthly bread or wine that is

offered to be eaten, then we must, logically, say that the entire substance of the bread and wine has been converted into the body and blood of Christ. This is entirely possible and wholly credible to one who believes that esse, or 'what a thing is', depends entirely and at each moment upon the sovereignly free will of God.

CHAPTER V : NOTES

1. J.J. Megivern, Concomitance and Communion, Switzerland, 1963, p.227.
2. A. - M. Roguet, p.314, note 66.
3. Ibid., p.319, note 77.
4. PL 120, 1316-1321.
5. London, 1959, p.22.

CHAPTER VI

EUCCHARISTIC CONTROVERSIES

FROM THE FOURTEENTH TO THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

Thomas, the believer and speculative theologian, first declared his faith in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and then used the best available philosophy to explain this belief. The metaphysical theory of principal and instrumental (secondary) causality was faithfully applied by him. But that was not to be the last word on the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.

From the fourteenth to the sixteenth century, it was not that Thomas's Summa, but Peter Lombard's Sentences, which dominated all the schools of theology, and so the same old problems remained on the agenda. Nominalism too flourished, and so metaphysical discussion of the doctrine of the Real Presence was pushed into the background in the search for simpler solutions. A very brief sketch of some major figures during this period is therefore included as an introduction to exposition of the doctrine of the Council of Trent.

(a) John Wyclif (c. 1329-84)

From the moment Martin Luther issued his 95 theses, it was obvious that the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist would come under question. Luther was very much influenced by Wyclif, an Oxford scholar and a reformer. According to N.M. Haring, 'Berengarius' position concerning the permanence of Bread and Wine after consecration was later adopted by Wyclif'.¹ His major works are 'Triologus, cum supplemento Trialogi' (1383) and 'De Eucharistia' (1379) in which he attacked transubstantiation. This caused Pope Gregory XI to issue no less than five bulls against him. The Council of Constance even ordered his books to be burned and

his body be removed from the consecrated ground, a decision confirmed by Pope Martin V and carried out in 1428.²

Wyclif's main opinions on the Eucharist are:

- 1) The material substance of the bread and similarly the material substance of the wine remain in the sacrament of the altar.
- 2) In the same sacrament the accidents of the bread do not remain without the subject.
- 3) Christ is not in this sacrament in his (true) identity (identity) or in that reality which is properly termed bodily presence.(3)

Thus Wyclif, attacking transubstantiation, definitely advocates consubstantiation.

(b) John Huss (1369-1415)

Huss was a native of Bohemia, who around 1400 came under the strong influence of Wyclif, and was condemned along with Wyclif at the Council of Constance. His main work was De Ecclesia (1413), and though he shared to a large extent Wyclif's theology, in the thirty propositions of Huss condemned at Constance (D-S. 1201-30) there is no mention of the Eucharist: they are all concerned with ecclesiology. Perhaps this was to avoid repeating the propositions of Wyclif, but it is worth noting that Huss, though very close in theology to Wyclif, insisted on the sacramental idea of the Eucharist without denying transubstantiation.

(c) Martin Luther (1483-1546)

Two of Luther's important works that deal with the Real Presence in the Eucharist are: An den Christlichen Adel Deutscher Nation and De Captivitate Babylonica Ecclesiae (1520). In 'The Babylonian captivity of the Church', he denounced the denial of communion under both kinds to the laity, the doctrines of transubstantiation and the sacrifice of the Mass. At the same time it should be pointed out that he cannot be accused for not

believing in the Real Presence ; on the contrary he strongly believed in it.

'This is my body, I confess that the body of Christ is in heaven. I confess as well that it is in the sacrament. I don't care whether this be against nature, so long as not against faith'.⁴

Thus Luther strongly upholds the Real Presence. On the other hand he rejected transubstantiation and advocated consubstantiation, which he justified by an analogy with the hypostatic union. The analogy of iron and fire is used to explain this, thus affirming that both the body of Christ and the substance of bread remain in this sacrament. Two quotations will be enough to illustrate his teaching.

'Jesus as Christ, assumed humanity and divinity in the oneness of his person, without destroying the one by the other, so in the Eucharist he makes the substance of bread 'co-exist' with the reality of his body without reducing the former to the identity of the latter'.⁵

'It is with the sacrament as with Christ himself. As for the bodily indwelling of the Godhead, it was not necessary that the human nature should be transubstantiated, so that the Divinity should be present under the accidents of human nature; but each nature remains whole and inviolate; this man is God, this God is man'.⁶

(d) Huldrych Zwingli (1484-1531)

Zwingli, the Swiss Reformer, went one step further than Luther: for him, the presence in the Eucharist was a merely symbolic presence. Haring points out that 'until 1524 he did not openly deny the Real Presence but heavily stressed the Mass and the Eucharist as a symbol and commemoration rather than a mystical renewal of Christ's death'.⁷ In a letter to Malthaus Alber of Reutlingen (1524), he proposed a purely symbolic interpretation which he developed further in his Commentarius de vera et falsa religione (1525). In the latter he says:

'The sacraments are signs or ceremonies in which a man proves himself the candidate and soldier of

Christ, and makes the Church certain of your faith rather than you yourself'.⁸

As a result of this line of thinking, Zwingli interprets 'This is my body' as meaning 'This signifies my body'. Thus he rejects any carnal presence of Christ either transubstantiation or consubstantiation.

(e) Andreas Karlstadt (1480-1541)

Karlstadt was one of the earliest supporters of Luther, and it is very significant to note that he was a professor of Thomistic philosophy at the University of Wittenberg. In 1516 he published 151 theses that repudiated the traditional Catholic doctrine on grace and free will, and in 1521, he denounced monastic vows, celibacy and the doctrine of the Eucharist. At the invitation of Martin Bucer, he intervened unsuccessfully to reconcile the Lutheran and Zwinglian factions on the question of Real Presence, but later he himself rejected any form of 'Real' Presence and advocated a merely sacramental presence. Luther in return launched a bitter attack against him.

(f) John Oecolampadius (1482-1531)

Oecolampadius must be mentioned because he was, unlike Karlstadt, a consistent supporter of Zwingli. He was in fact a professor at the University of Basel, and so we see a divide opening between Luther and the German Reformers on the one hand, and Zwingli with his Swiss supporters on the other. Thus at the Colloquy of Marburg (1529), Oecolampadius defended the Eucharistic doctrine of Zwingli, saying, like his master, that the words 'This is my body' mean 'This is the symbol of my body'.

(g) John Calvin (1509-1564)

Calvin, the French Reformer, tried hard to mediate between Luther and the Swiss Reformers. He rejected transubstantiation without any consideration, but this does

not mean he accepted consubstantiation. Calvin aimed rather at propagating a dynamic concept of the Real Presence. He denied any change in the elements, asserting that people who share Holy Communion receive only the power or virtue of the body and blood of Christ. Hence his teaching is termed 'Virtualism'. In 1536 he wrote:

'A sacrament is an external sign by which the Lord seals on our conscience his promises of good-will toward us in order to sustain the weakness of our faith.... It is composed of the external sign and the Word which, when preached, makes us understand what the visible sign means'.⁹

Again, speaking in connection with the body of the risen Christ, he says:

'Since we have doubt but that it has its own proper measure as required by the nature of a human body, and that it is contained in heaven, into which he has been received until he shall come to the judgment, so too we hold that it is wrong to degrade him into the corruptible elements or imagine that he is present in all things'.¹⁰

It should be said here that Calvin, and the Calvinistic form of Protestantism, did not come within the purview of the Council of Trent. To the Council Fathers, Protestantism was identical with Lutheranism - that calamity from the north. Yet it must be borne in mind that Calvinistic ideas had already begun to have its influence.

These brief remarks are necessary to set the scene for the Council of Trent. In fact, all the discussions concerning the Eucharistic presence of the Lord were influenced by these controversies, and all that the Fathers of Trent tried to do was to assert what they considered to be the minimum which a man must hold in order to be termed a Catholic. We may now turn, then, to the teaching of the Council concerning the Real Presence of the Lord in the Eucharist.

CHAPTER VI - NOTES

1. NCE 5, p.620. 'Eucharistic Controversies', p.620.
2. F.L. Cross, The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, p.480.
3. D.S. 1151-53.
4. Y. Brilioth, Eucharistic Faith and Practice Evangelical and Catholic, 1930, p.109.
5. G. Martelet : The Risen Christ and the Eucharistic Word, 1976, pp. 141-2.
6. Brilioth. p.101 (or Luther's Work VI.511).
7. NCE 5, p.620.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. G. Martelet, p.144.

CHAPTER VII

THE COUNCIL OF TRENT:

(1) THE PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION
OF THE THEOLOGIANs.

After much delay, the long awaited Council eventually assembled at Trent on 13 December 1545; and quickly moved into a discussion of the relationship between Scripture and Tradition. This was the subject of its first decree in Session IV, on 8 April 1546. It brought out its next decree on Original sin in Session V, on 17 June 1546, before embarking on the drafting of its longest, most crucial and most central decree, namely, on Justification. This was published in Session VI, on 13 January 1547. The discussion then moved on to consideration of the sacraments. The Fathers spent a considerable amount of time and attention in discussing the sacraments in general and each sacrament in particular. Such detailed work was necessary for it was here that the doctrinal differences in practice between the Catholics and the Protestants were most apparent. We shall limit our concern to the decree on the Holy Eucharist.

On 31 January 1547, in order to speed up matters, it was decided that while the Fathers discussed sacraments in general and in particular Baptism and Confirmation, the 'minor theologians' (professional theologians acting as technical advisers but without a vote in the Council) would start the discussion on the Eucharist. Here I would like to add that the account of the discussion will be presented without the critical apparatus found in the official Acta of the Council, because they are not relevant to our theme; and similarly I will simply translate the text presented at the time, without correcting the sometimes false or inadequate references to the works of the Reformers.

Ten articles concerning the Real Presence were submitted to the minor theologians on 3 February 1547

for their consideration:¹

1. In the Eucharist, the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ are not (present) in reality (revera), but only as in a sign, just as wine is said to be in a round sign-board in front of a tavern. This is the error of Zwingli, Oecolampadius and the Sacramentarians.
2. Christ is presented to us in the Eucharist, but only as one to be spiritually eaten, by faith. This is an error of the heretics named above.
3. The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ are indeed (present) in the Eucharist, but together with the substance of bread and wine, so that there is no transubstantiation, but a hypostatic union between the humanity and the substance of bread and wine. Luther, in his Testament about the sacrament of the altar, says: 'I profess that in it, the body and blood of Christ are truly eaten and drunk, corporeally in the bread and wine'. And again, in his Assertions: 'After I had seen what Church it was which had determined otherwise, namely, a Thomistic, i.e. an Aristotelian one, I became bolder. I had till then been stuck in a tight corner, but at length firmly assented to the first opinion, namely, that there is real bread and real wine there, in which the true flesh and true blood of Christ is present, in exactly the same manner and to no less a degree than they themselves posit, with their theory of accidents'. Luther again, to the king of England: 'Anyone who says that the bread is transubstantiated is an ungodly blasphemer'.
4. Christ in the Eucharist should neither be adored nor venerated by feasts, nor carried round in processions, nor taken to the sick; and those who (so) adore the sacrament are idolaters. Luther to the Waldensians: 'We say that those who do not adore the sacrament should not be condemned, or even accused of heresy, since this is not commanded, nor is Christ present

for this purpose (ad hoc; German-darum). Nevertheless, you see on every side that adoration is not without danger, where faith and word are not practised; hence it would perhaps have been safer, along with the apostles, not to adore'. Or again, to the same people: 'I hate no feast more than that of Corpus Christi'. (The same idea is found in the Confession of Augsburg).

5. The Eucharist should not be preserved in the sacrarium, but should be consumed immediately, and given to those present; those who do otherwise abuse the sacrament. These propositions are found in the booklet Reformation, addressed to the people of Cologne.
6. The body of the Lord does not remain in the hosts or consecrated particles which remain after communion, but is present only while it is being consumed, not before or after its consumption. Luther (according to Cochlaeus) in the book published against him (Cochlaeus).
7. It is of divine law that the people too should communicate under both kinds (sub utraque specie), and therefore those who compel the people to use one kind only, are guilty of sin. Nevertheless if a council were to command that the people should communicate under both kinds - in that case, communion should be received under one kind only. In the Confession of Augsburg, in the chapter De utraque specie: This custom of communicating under both kinds rests on the command of the Lord, Matt.26:27; 'Drink ye all of this', where Christ clearly commands that they should all drink of the cup. Luther, on the Formula of the Mass: 'If by any chance a council should lay down (such a law), we should be the last people in the world to use both kinds. Indeed, we should wish to be the first to use either one of the two kinds or neither (certainly not both) to show our contempt for the council, and to anathematize without more ado anyone who might use both kinds on the authority of such a council'.

8. Either of the two kinds on its own does not contain as much as is contained under the two together, nor does a person who communicates under one kind alone receive as much as a person who communicates under both. Ioannes Aepinus (John Haeck), in his Disputations: 'It is ridiculous to suggest that the laity receive, under the species of bread (as they say), or that there is offered to them along with the bread, both parts of the sacrament, i.e. both the body and the blood'. So also Luther, in his Book of Disputations of 1535: 'Suppose I hold the opposite view, that I do not receive as much under one of the two kinds, as under both, because I receive not all that Christ instituted, but only one half of it'.
9. Faith alone is the sufficient preparation for receiving the Eucharist, nor are men bound to receive communion at Easter. Luther, in his Babylonian Captivity: 'The word of promise alone should reign amid pure faith, which is the one and only sufficient preparation for receiving the sacrament'. Or again, in his book on the Confession, part 3: 'My sincere advice is that Christian men should neither confess, nor approach the sacrament, during Lent and Eastertide'. The same point is made in The Visitation of Saxony, in the chapter on the Eucharist.
10. It is not lawful for anyone to administer Holy Communion to himself. This is another error of the same heretics. (No reference given).

Even a first reading of the above articles shows that the doctrine of the Eucharist faced very severe attacks from the Reformers. Hence, the Council set itself the task of seriously examining those important points which were a matter of controversy. Reading the above articles and the discussions that followed, we become aware that these ten articles can be divided into three sections; the first, containing the first two articles, the second, article three, and the third, the rest of the

articles. In the first section, the adversaries are Berengarius and Zwingli and his followers; in the second, Luther and his followers. We shall consider the debate that followed, under these three headings. The records of the discussion among the minor theologians which took place from the 3rd to the 18th February 1547 are to be found in Concilium Tridentinum V, on pp.872-959, interspersed with minutes of many other matters which were being discussed in other committees at the same time. They are far too long even to summarize here, and there is much repetition. So the most sensible thing is to pick out certain points to show the way in which these theologians argued in order to reject the propositions listed above. Where the view of the Reformers were concerned, the theologians sought to prove that these contradicted both Scripture and (Catholic) tradition. If this could be proved, then, by virtue of the decree of Session IV On Scripture and Tradition, it followed logically that the said views were erroneous and heretical.

(a) Real or merely representative Presence?

The central point of discussion in the first two articles is the distinction between presence 'revera' and 'in signo'. Everyone agreed that it was Berengarius who first introduced the theory that Christ is present in the Eucharist only 'in signo' and that the first two propositions derived from his theory. It was pointed out, therefore, that this erroneous theory had already been condemned both at the Fourth Lateran Council under Pope Innocent III and at the Council of Florence.²

Stephen Consortes, an Augustinian friar from Brixen, was the first to speak, and appealed to Matt.26:26-28 ('This is my body' and 'This is my blood') as proof that Christ is present in reality and not merely symbolically.³ This was one, indeed the main, proof-text put forward, to which Jerome of Oleastro, a Dominican from Portugal, added Jn.6:52 ('The bread that I will give is

my flesh'), 1 Cor.11:29 and 10:16.⁴

Few attempts were made to elucidate the meaning of Scripture, but two may be mentioned. Alfonso Salmeron, the young Jesuit, argued that words like 'sumite', 'bibite' and 'biberunt', etc., denote true and real (veram et realem) eating and not just spiritual eating.⁵ Similarly, Vincenzo de Leone, a Sicilian Carmelite, compared Jn.6 (The bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh) with Jn.1:1 ('The Word was God') and 1:14 ('And the Word became flesh'), and concluded that Christ is present not in mode but in reality.⁶

Most of the time, however, these theologians made their arguments by pointing to a previous condemnation by a council or synod or pope, or by referring to one of the Church Fathers. This, at least, is the impression given by the printed edition of the Acta of Trent, which as a rule simply mention the reference without quoting it, but this is certainly the short-hand of the secretary taking notes, for it is hardly thinkable that all the theologians present immediately recognized a reference to 'Hilary, Book 8 De Trinitate' and 'Ambrose Book 8 De Sacramentis' uttered in five seconds in just those words (thus Jerome of Oleastro).⁷

Out of the many texts quoted, we may select a handful by way of example, and the best example to quote is that of Jerome Lombardelli, a Franciscan Minorite, for we possess in full the original autograph of his contribution.⁸ He quotes Irenaeus, who says that 'the cup and the broken bread receive the Word of God, and the Eucharist of the blood and body of the Lord is made' (calix et fractus panis percipit verbum Dei, fit Eucharistia sanguinis et corporis Domini). He attributes to Cyprian the statement that the bread which the Lord gave to his disciples became flesh 'not symbolically (effigie) but by being naturally changed by the omnipotence of the Word', and from Origen's Homilies on the Book of Numbers (which he calls the Adversus Iudaeos) he produces this assertion: 'Then manna was food in an

enigmatic sense (in aenigmatate), but now, in reality (in specie), the flesh of the Word of God is true food, as he himself says: "My flesh is food indeed". Among the later Fathers, John Damascene is quoted as saying that 'the propitiatory bread and wine and water are supernaturally transformed into the body and blood of the Lord through the invocation of the Holy Spirit'. Texts from Augustine and Bede are also adduced.

As we follow the discussion three points become obvious. First, this treatment of Scripture is not in any recognizable sense exegesis. Secondly, there is no analytic discussion of the meaning of the Councils or Fathers; the theologians merely assert that this is what the Fathers said about the Eucharist and that Berengarius and his followers are already condemned. But, thirdly, it is clear that this approach is sufficient for their purposes, since many Protestants would have admitted that the Fathers and medievals interpreted Scripture in this way, but would have claimed that they were in error. After session IV, it was enough for the Catholics to say that Scripture had always been so interpreted by tradition as to exclude a merely symbolic presence. For Protestants who maintained the idea of a merely symbolic presence, the patristic and conciliar proof-texts were proof only of the Church's error.

On their own principles, the theologians of Trent were justified in rejecting the first article, asserting that Christ is not 'really' present, but only 'as in a sign'. From this it follows logically that they had to reject also the second article which reads 'Christ is presented to us in the Eucharist, but only as one to be spiritually eaten, by faith. This is an error of the heretics named above'. It was pointed out that if Christ is really present, then the assertion that he is present 'only by faith' is erroneous. One of the theologians, Marianus Felicianus, an Augustinian friar, went so far as to argue that if the body of Christ is really eaten, then it cannot be eaten spiritually but sacramentally.

For him 'sumitur spiritualiter', with or without 'tantum', is an error.⁹

Two objections put forward by Zwingli are given by Francis Visdomini, a Franciscan Minorite. First, the bread which Christ promised comes from heaven; but the real flesh of Christ does not come down from heaven; therefore, it is not the bread that is promised. Secondly, the bread that is promised is the life and health of the world, but the true flesh and total humanity of Christ is not the life of the world, for only the divinity of Christ can be the salvation of the world, and so the promised bread is not true flesh.

To the first objection, Visdomini replies that this bread which Christ promised does indeed descend from heaven. But it is not like the manna which rained from heaven to which Moses testifies, for Christ says, 'This is the bread which came down from heaven not such as the fathers ate' (Jn.6:59). This bread that comes from heaven is Christ Himself, who here on earth was formed in the womb of the Virgin and brought forth without any human intervention. Visdomini seems here to be arguing that just as in the Incarnation there was no local motion from heaven down to earth, so in the Holy Eucharist the body of Christ is truly present and is indeed true flesh from heaven, nevertheless it is not carried, by local motion, out of heaven down to an altar.

To the second objection he replies that it is true that God alone saves, yet Paul also says that Christ the man, through his death and resurrection, merits our salvation (cf. Rom.4: 25). Therefore, if this flesh is real which gives life to the world, then it is also our salvation and our life.¹⁰

John de Conseil, the Franciscan, sets out to refute the opinions of Eck and Galvin. Eck, according to Conseil, tried to combine the approaches of both Zwingli and

Luther. He reports Eck as saying that Christ is present in the Eucharist in a true sense, but is received as such only by the believer, and this presence is not brought about by consecration by the priest but by eating in faith. To this, Conseil, a doctor from the University of Paris, replies that although Eck, like Luther, accepts the hypostatic union, he is inconsistent when he says 'eaten spiritually'. He accuses him and others of using Augustine for their own purposes, taking what pleases them and leaving the rest. Conseil, for his part, claiming to be faithful to Augustine, quotes from the De Trinitate to prove that Christ is present in the Eucharist as a result of Consecration: 'We are referring only to that which has been received from the fruits of the earth, has been consecrated by a mystical prayer and has been duly taken for our spiritual health in memory of the Lord's Passion'.¹¹ Conseil then concludes that Christ becomes present in the Eucharist not by the efficacy of faith alone but by the words of Consecration, and this is the reason why it is called the 'cup of blessing', and all the orthodox Fathers confess it so.

After this, he deals with Calvin, who writes thus:

'And, according to the arrangement which Paul makes, the promises are to be offered to believers along with the bread and the cup. Thus, indeed, it is. We are not to imagine some magical incantation, and think it sufficient to mutter the words, as if they were heard by the elements; but we are to regard those words as a living sermon, which is to edify the hearers....'.

Again:

'They will either receive it without hearing the words of the institution read, or the minister will conjoin the true explanation of the mystery with the sign. If the promises are narrated, and the mystery is expounded, that those who are to receive may receive with advantage, it cannot be doubted that this is the true consecration'.¹²

Conseil, in response to these opinions, asks why

then the words of consecration need to be recited if they have no efficacy. He insists that words are effective, and strengthens his case with Matt.8:27 ('even winds and sea obey him'). The words of consecration are the words of Jesus himself. The minister only acts in the place of Jesus. To explain this better he draws support from Thomas Aquinas: 'The forms of the other sacraments are pronounced by the minister speaking in his own person But in this sacrament the form is pronounced as in the person of Christ himself speaking'.¹³ He also has recourse to Augustine and Ambrose, and throughout his argument strongly emphasises the necessity of consecration.

(b) Transubstantiation or Consubstantiation?

In this section we shall be concerned with the third article. The point at issue here is transubstantiation as opposed to consubstantiation. Naturally enough, the attention of the theologians was directed towards two critics of transubstantiation, namely, Luther and Wyclif. Both argued that after the consecration the substance of bread and the substance of the wine remain in the Eucharist. Luther rejected transubstantiation and taught instead that there is a hypostatic union between the humanity of Christ and the substance of bread and wine (consubstantiation). The theologians reminded the assembly that they were dealing here with errors that had already been implicitly condemned, explicitly in the case of Wyclif at the Council of Constance.¹⁴

They did not confine themselves to a mere reaffirmation of earlier condemnations but went on to give their own defence of transubstantiation. They refer to several Scriptural passages, of which I shall only reproduce a few. For Jerome of Oleastro 'This is my body' means that bread is no longer there.¹⁵

Alfonso Salmeron produces the text from Matt.26:26.... ('...gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is my body"), and points out that Jesus does not call it bread any more. It can be argued that Paul does call it bread, to which he replies simply that this is a common way of speaking. Moreover, it is neither uncommon nor without precedent in the Scriptures. In Ex.7:12, even when the rod had become a snake, Moses referred to it as a rod.¹⁶ Vincenzo de Leone, on his part, maintains that the word 'this' (Hoc) is a proof that the body of Christ is contained under the species of bread and wine, and that there can be no question of consubstantiation.¹⁷

Lombardelli quotes from a number of Fathers and ecclesiastical writers of the East and of the West: among others, Ignatius of Antioch, Ambrose of Milan, Augustine of Hippo, John of Damascus and Theophylact of Bulgaria.¹⁸ By citing a wide variety of Fathers from different traditions, the Council's theologians are implying that transubstantiation is the teaching not only of the Church of Rome in recent centuries but of all the Churches of East and West throughout the centuries.

The theologians also offer speculative arguments of their own in defence of transubstantiation. According to Vincenzo de Leone, the opponents of transubstantiation claim that if bread and wine are transubstantiated into the body and blood of Christ, there is no sacrament, because the nature of a sacrament is such that, under a visible sign, an invisible truth is offered to us. To this he replies that in transubstantiation only the substance is changed while the accidents remain, and thus the visible signs are preserved, constituting it a sacrament.¹⁹

Conseil compares the present debate to the controversy that erupted between the Arians and the

Church over the use of the word 'homoousion'. He says that if the Church could use a Greek word to express the doctrine of the true divinity of the Logos, what prevents it from using another word from another language to explain another of its doctrines. If a word like 'traselementation' can be used by Greek Christians without causing any offence, is it not lawful for Latin Christians to fashion a new word to express the incomprehensible reality? Should Augustine be condemned for using such words as 'transform' and 'traselement'? Here Conseil issues a challenge to those who claim to take their inspiration from Augustine and propagate consubstantiation.²⁰

Thus all the theologians were of one mind in refuting consubstantiation and affirming transubstantiation. These words, which they attribute to Eusebius of Emesa, sum up their position; 'Heavenly authority confirms it for "my flesh is food indeed and my blood is drink indeed". Therefore, let all the doubt of disbelief withdraw, since the bestower of the gift is also himself the witness of truth. For the invisible priest converts the visible creatures into the substance of his body and blood by the mysterious power of his words, speaking thus: "Take and eat, this is my body... Take and drink, this is my blood".²¹

(c) Adoration, Reservation and Communion

It was generally accepted by the theologians that articles 4 to 10 were the natural outcome of article 3, which we have just examined. If they could show that article 3 was erroneous, they would have no difficulty in refuting the remaining propositions. With respect to adoration (article 5), Vincenzo de Leone argues that since Christ is really present in the Eucharist, and since according to the Scriptures Christ is God, it follows that he is to be adored in the Eucharist.²² Once again, his method is simply to cite scriptural,

patristic and conciliar proof-text without detailed analysis. On reservation (article 5), Lombardelli argues that since the sacrament of the new law is a true and efficacious sign, so long as the consecrated species of bread or wine remain, what is signified by them also remains, namely, the body and blood of Christ.²³ Although the remaining articles are not our direct concern, it is of interest to note that, in dealing with the articles on communion under both species, the theologians invoke the notion of natural concomitance, which Thomas expounds in q.76 of the tertia pars. Christ is alive, says Vincenzo, risen and ascended; he will never die again, and death no longer has dominion over him (cf. Rom.6:9).²⁴ It follows from this that where his blood is, there also, by concomitance, is his body, and vice versa. Consequently, when a communicant receives under only one species, he receives the whole Christ. Conseil concludes that if Calvin denies natural concomitance, he denies also the resurrection.²⁵

We shall now move on to consider the next phase of the debate, in which the major theologians and the Fathers of the Council take up the ten articles as the basis of discussion and finally produce the decree and canons on the Eucharistic Presence of the Lord.

CHAPTER VII: FOOTNOTES

1. Concilium Tredentinum. Diariorum, Actorum, Epistularum, Tractatum Nova Collectio. Edidit Societas Goerresiana, Tom.V, Actorum Pars Altera, Collegit, Edidit, Illustravit Stephanus Ehses, Editio Secunda Stereotypa (Freiburg i.Br., 1965), p.869, line 15 - p.871, line 6. References to this work will be henceforth abbreviated to 'CT', followed by the volume, page and line numbers.
2. Profession of faith by Berengarius, DS 690; Fourth Lateran Council, DS 802; Florence, DS 1321.
3. CT V 872, 34.
4. CT V 873, 13.
5. CT V 879, 19-21.
6. CT V 883, 23-25.
7. CT V 873, 15.
8. CT V 913, 24-44.
9. CT V 877, 28-31.
10. CT V 898, 35 - 899, 10.
11. CT V 942, 26-26. The translation is taken from The Trinity, translated by S. McKenna, CUA Press, 1963, pp.104-105.
12. CT V 943, 19-26. The translation is taken from Institutes of the Christian Religion, translated by H. Beveridge, London, 1962, p.596, art.39.
13. CT V 944, 1-4.
14. DS 1151.
15. CT V 873, 18-19.
16. CT V 879, 28-30.
17. CT V 884, 13-14.
18. CT V 915, 18 - 916, 16.
19. CT V 885, 9-14.
20. CT V 944, 17-21, 41.

21. CT V 885, 48-886, 3.
22. CT V 886, 6-10.
23. CT V 918, 4-6.
24. CT V 891, 18-20.
25. CT V 958, 3-5.

CHAPTER VIII

THE COUNCIL OF TRENT:

(2) THE DECREE ON THE EUCHARISTIC PRESENCE

Following a suspension of the proceedings in March 1547, due to an outbreak of typhus, and a strongly disputed transfer to Bologna, the Council did not assemble again to resume its work until 29 April 1551. The ten articles discussed by the minor theologians, with slight modifications, were now presented to the major theologians. The so-called 'major theologians' were those allowed to speak in the General Congregation with the Fathers. They included, in addition to imperial representatives and proxies of electors of the empire, the papal theologians, Diego (or Jacob) Lainez and Alfonso Salmeron, two of the earliest companions of Ignatius of Loyola and chosen by him for this new task at the request of Pope Paul III. They were supposed to make their recommendations to the Fathers in order to assist the latter in their deliberations prior to the drawing up of the decree on the Eucharist.

The ten articles were presented to the major theologians in a slightly revised form.¹ Article 1 was altered to read:

In the Eucharist, neither the body and blood, nor the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ is (present) in reality (revera), but only as in a sign. This is the error of Zwingli, Oecolampadius and the Sacramentarians.

Here we observe that, by contrast with the earlier version in 1547 (see above, p. 86), there is now a reference to the denial of the presence of the divinity as well as of the body and blood of the Lord; and the example of the tavern sign is omitted.

Article 2 was considerably lengthened: only the first two sentences appear in the 1547 version (see above, p. 86), and the new text reads:

Christ is presented to us in the Eucharist, but only as one to be eaten, by faith, not sacramentally. This is an error of the heretics named above, chiefly Oecolampadius in ch.14 and elsewhere of his book concerning the sacrament of the Eucharist. They deny that Christ is really present in the Eucharist; and they assert that Christ cannot be eaten except by faith, but that sacramentally only a mouthful of bread is consumed.

Here it is asserted that sacramentally only 'a mouthful of bread' (bucella panis) is consumed, so that 'sacramentally' Christ is not received at all.

The long article 3 (see p.86) remained unchanged, but a new article 4 was introduced, reading:

The Eucharist was instituted only for the forgiving of sins. This article, according to the bishop of Rochester (John Fisher), is found in Luther.

Articles 4-9 of the first version were left unaltered, but renumbered as 5 to 10, the original tenth proposition ('It is not lawful for anyone to administer Holy Communion to himself') being left out.



(a) The Discussions of the Major Theologians

In order to summarize the discussion of these theologians, we will consider the topics in the order followed in the last chapter, namely, Real Presence, Transubstantiation and Adoration/Reservation. The major theologians, like the minor theologians, basing themselves on Scripture, the Fathers and Councils, dismissed articles 1 and 2 as heretical. Most of their arguments and references are almost identical to those given by the minor theologians. Hence I shall cite only a few which are not found in the previous debate.

The opponents of the Real Presence were said to claim that the verb 'is' (est) in 'This is my body' should be understood figuratively. For example, in our Lord's explanation of the parable of the sower ('the seed is the word of God'), the seed signifies, is the symbol of, the word of God. Therefore, the verb 'is' in the words of institution should be understood figuratively. To this Lainez replied that Scripture does not lend support to empty words or words without any sense. All the early Fathers, he insists, understood 'is' properly and substantively (proprie et substantive). For him the true interpretation is that which was held by the Catholic Fathers through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Hence, the word 'is' must, in this instance, be taken properly and not figuratively, for Christ instituted all the sacraments properly and not figuratively. In the case of baptism, the words about regeneration by water (cf. Jn.3:5) are used properly, as are those about the forgiveness of sins in the sacrament of penance (cf. Jn.20:23). If this be true of these two sacraments, how much more does it apply to the Eucharist. Christ is present properly and certainly does not give an occasion to commit an act of idolatry. Lainez concludes by saying that Christ promised us his flesh

and blood and gives it to us in the Eucharist; and to understand this in a figurative way goes contrary to the promise of Christ when he commends his flesh as real food and his blood as true drink (cf. Jn.6:56).²

John Arze, a Spanish secular priest, in his speech argued that the sense of Scripture held by Catholics is different from that of the Protestants. This is the reason why the Protestants understood the Real Presence as a sign or a token, while the Catholics take it properly. For him, the basic argument is that the Church Universal cannot err for she is the 'pillar of truth' (columna veritatis), and in support of the Catholic belief, he appeals to the words of Paul: 'Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord' (1 Cor. 11:27).³ This warning is solidly based on the belief that in the Eucharist we eat the body and drink the blood of the Lord, not just in sign but in reality.

Now let us turn our attention to article 3 (see p.86), which denies transubstantiation and advocates consubstantiation. The critics of transubstantiation point out that this term is new to the Church, and was never used by the Apostles. The theologians were quick to point out that it is not new in the Church, for the Fourth Lateran Council had already defined, in 1215, that the bread is changed (transubstantiari) into the body of Christ. They once again give the example of homocousion.⁴

The theologians were unanimous in rejecting the notion that there is a hypostatic union between the humanity of Christ and the substance of bread, for it is contrary to the words of Jesus. Francis de Toro clearly states that the bread is transubstantiated, that a hypostatic union between the body and the bread is impossible, and that the accidents are there without the substance.⁵ Melchior a Vosmediano added that if consubstantiation were true, then there would be three

natures present, namely, divinity, humanity and bread, which is certainly wrong.⁶

The remaining articles 4 to 10, as expected, did not provoke much of a debate. Luther's assertion (in the new article 4) that the Eucharist was instituted 'only' (solam) for the remission of sins, was declared false. Besides forgiving sins, the Eucharist has many other effects: for example, John Arze said, it also proclaims the Lord's death.⁷ Moreover, Alfonso de Contreras insists that only venial sins are forgiven.⁸ Articles 5 and 6, attacking the practices of adoration and reservation, were rejected on the ground that transubstantiation had been established. Further, ancient tradition gives support to adoration and reservation.

Articles 8 and 9 on receiving communion only under one kind, were also rejected on the ground that these are not new practices in the Church. Even the disciples at Emmaus, Alfonso Salmeron points out, communicated only under one kind (Lk.24:30f) and yet their eyes were opened. Furthermore, to say that there is no blood in the body means it is dead, which is absurd and stands rejected.⁹ John Arze argued that the logical consequence of the Protestant position would be to say that more grace is received when more hosts are eaten and much wine is drunk; which is equally false.¹⁰ Finally, article 10 (faith alone is a sufficient preparation) is again false. The objection is directed against the word 'alone'. Faith is necessary, but a man must also examine himself (cf. 1 Cor.11:28). Augustine himself, according to John Arze, demands that a man who has committed a mortal sin must do sufficient public penance before receiving Communion.¹¹ Thus the theologians brought their debate to an end on 17 September 1551.

(b) The Actual Decree

On 21 September the Council Fathers accepted the recommendations of the theologians, namely, that one set of articles (1,3,5,6,7,8) should be condemned, without qualification, as heretical, and a second set (articles 2,4,6,9,10) with some qualification - some of these were declared to be 'false' rather than 'strictly heretical'.¹² The controversy about communion under both kinds was considered at great length at a different session, leading to a different set of canons. This need not concern us here.

The Fathers' debate, which added nothing new to the arguments of the theologians, led eventually to the proclamation, under Pope Julius III on 11 October 1551, at the thirteenth session, of the decree on the Holy Eucharist.¹³

CHAPTER I: THE REAL PRESENCE OF OUR LORD
 JESUS CHRIST IN THE MOST HOLY
 HOLY SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST

To begin with, the holy Council teaches and openly and straightforwardly professes that in the blessed sacrament of the holy Eucharist, after the consecration of the bread and wine, our Lord Jesus Christ, true God and man, is truly, really and substantially contained under the appearances of those perceptible realities (cf. n. 1526). For there is no contradiction in the fact that our Saviour always sits at the right hand of the Father in heaven according to His natural way of existing and that, nevertheless, in His substance He is sacramentally present to us in many other places. We can hardly find words to express this way of existing; but our reason, enlightened through faith, can nevertheless recognise it as possible for God, and we must always believe it unhesitatingly.

For all our predecessors in the true Church of Christ who treated of this most holy sacrament very clearly professed that our Redeemer instituted this wonderful sacrament at the Last

Supper, when, after He had blessed bread and wine, He declared in plain, unmistakable words, that He was giving to them His own body and His own blood. These words, recorded by the evangelists (cf. Mt. 26.26ff; Mk. 14.22ff; Lk. 22.19f) and afterwards repeated by St Paul (1 Cor. 11.23ff), have this proper and obvious meaning and were so understood by the Fathers. Consequently, it is indeed the greatest infamy that some contentious, evil men, distort these words into fanciful, imaginary figures of speech where the truth about the body and blood of Christ is denied, contrary to the universal understanding of the Church. The Church, which is "the pillar and bulwark of the truth" (cf. 1 Tim. 3.15), has detested as satanical these interpretations invented by impious men, and it acknowledges in a spirit of unfailing gratitude this most precious gift of Christ.

The first chapter is clearly directed against articles 1 and 2, that is, Berengarius, Zwingli, the Sacramentarians and all those who hold the view that Christ is present in the Eucharist only as in a sign, and is eaten only spiritually. But Canons 1 and 8 make this refutation much sharper.

Canon 1. If anyone denies that in the sacrament of the most holy Eucharist the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, the whole Christ is truly, really and substantially contained, but says that He is in it only as in a sign or figure or by His power, anathema sit.

Canon 8. If anyone says that Christ presented in the Eucharist is only spiritually eaten and not sacramentally and really as well, anathema sit.

This is the central and fundamental statement of the Council of Trent concerning the Real Presence, and it is to be noted that it is just that - simply a statement, not in any sense a theological argument. The Council simply affirms that in its teaching it is following the 'plain, unmistakable' sense of Scripture, its 'proper and obvious meaning', as it had always been understood by the Fathers of the Church.

Chapter II is entitled 'The Reason for the Institution of this Most Holy Sacrament'. As it does not deal with the Real Presence explicitly, I shall just quote it without any comment.

CHAPTER II: THE REASON FOR THE INSTITUTION OF THIS MOST HOLY SACRAMENT

Our Saviour, therefore, instituted this sacrament before leaving this world to go to the Father. He poured out, as it were, in this sacrament the riches of His divine love for men, "causing His wonderful works to be remembered" (cf. Ps. 111 (110) 4), and He wanted us when receiving it to celebrate His memory (cf. 1 Cor. 11.24), and to proclaim His death until He comes to judge the world (cf. 1 Cor. 11.26). His will was that this sacrament be received as the soul's spiritual food (cf. Mt. 26.26) which would nourish and strengthen (cf. n. 1530) those who live by the life of Him who said: "He who eats Me will live because of Me" (Jn 6.57); and that it be also a remedy to free us from our daily faults and to preserve us from mortal sin. Christ willed, moreover, that this sacrament be a pledge of our future glory and our everlasting happiness and, likewise, a symbol of that one "Body" of which He Himself is "the Head" (cf. 1 Cor. 11.3; Eph. 5.23), and to which He willed that we, as members, should be linked by the closest bonds of faith, hope and love, so that we might all say the same thing, and that there might be no dissensions among us (cf. 1 Cor. 1.10).

Chapter III of the decree is closer to our theme, for as one reads it, one is inevitably reminded of Thomas Aquinas: indeed, one can find almost every sentence of this chapter in QQ.73, 75 and 76 of the Tertia Pars. The principal point of this chapter is the doctrine of concomitance. It reads as follows:

CHAPTER III: THE PRE-EMINENCE OF THE MOST HOLY EUCHARIST OVER THE OTHER SACRAMENTS

In common with the other sacraments, the most holy Eucharist is "a symbol of a sacred thing and a visible form of invisible grace".¹ But the Eucharist also has this unique mark of distinction that, whereas the other sacraments have the power of sanctifying only when someone makes use of them, in the Eucharist the Author of sanctity Himself is present before the sacrament is used.

For the apostles had not yet received the Eucharist from the hands of the Lord (cf. Mt. 26.26; Mk 14.22) when He Himself told them that it was truly His body that He was giving them. This has always been the belief of the Church of God that immediately after the consecration the true body and blood of our Lord, together with His soul and divinity, exist under the species of bread and wine. The body exists under the species of bread and the blood under the species of wine by virtue of the words. But the body too exists under the species of wine, the blood under the species of bread, and the soul under both species in virtue of the natural connection and concomitance by which the parts of Christ the Lord, who has already risen from the dead to die no more (cf. Rom. 6.9), are united together. Moreover, the divinity is present because of its admirable hypostatic union with the body and the soul.

It is, therefore, perfectly true that just as much is present under either of the two species as is present under both. For Christ, whole and entire, exists under the species of bread and under any part of that species, and similarly the whole Christ exists under the species of wine and under its parts.

This in effect deals with the points raised in articles 7 and 8, concerning the legitimacy of communion under one species; it is expressed more succinctly in canon 3.

If anyone denies that in the venerable sacrament of the Eucharist the whole Christ is contained under each species and under each part of either species when separated, anathema sit.

Thus the foundation is laid for the next chapter, on transubstantiation.

CHAPTER IV: TRANSUBSTANTIATION

Because Christ our Redeemer said that it was truly His body that He was offering under the species of bread (cf. Mt. 26.26ff; Mk 14.22ff; Lk. 22.19f; 1 Cor. 11.24ff), it has always been the conviction of the Church of God, and this holy Council now again declares, that by the consecration of the bread and wine there takes place a change of the whole substance of bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord and of the whole substance of wine into the substance of His blood. This change the holy Catholic Church has fittingly and properly named transubstantiation.

The second part of the chapter is utterly Thomistic in character, and even the words are almost identical with q.76.a.4. Once again, the Council declares this doctrine to be part of the Church's tradition. The sole purpose of this chapter is to reject Luther's theory of consubstantiation, which, for the first time in the history of the Church, is declared, in the opening words of canon 2, to be heretical.

If anyone says that in the holy sacrament of the Eucharist the substance of bread and wine remains together with the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and denies that wonderful and unique change of the whole substance of the bread into His body and of the whole substance of the wine into His blood while only the species of bread and wine remain, a change which the Catholic Church very fittingly calls transubstantiation, anathema sit.

But one should note that transubstantiation is only a word which indicates the reality of the Lord's presence and nothing else; no philosophical explanation is invoked. The Council simply states that 'transubstantiation' is 'a fitting and proper term' to denote the total conversion of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ.

The remaining chapters of the decree, and their respective canons, need no commentary, for they simply draw out the logical consequences of accepting the doctrine enshrined in chapters 1, 3 and 4. But once again, we note the constant appeal to tradition: chapters 5, 6 and 8 begin with precisely this point.

CHAPTER V: THE WORSHIP AND VENERATION TO BE SHOWN TO THIS MOST HOLY SACRAMENT

There remains, therefore, no room for doubting that all the faithful of Christ, in accordance with the perpetual custom of the Catholic Church, must venerate this most holy sacrament with the worship of latria which is due to the true God. (cf. n. 1531). Nor is it to be less adored because it was instituted by Christ the Lord to be received (ut sumatur) (cf. Mt. 26.26ff). For in it we believe that the same God is present

whom the eternal Father brought into the world, saying: "Let all God's angels worship Him" (Heb. 1.6; cf. Ps. 97 (96) 7), whom the Magi fell down to worship (cf. Mt. 2.11) and whom, finally, the apostles adored in Galilee as Scripture testifies (cf. Mt. 28.17)....

Canon 6. If anyone says that Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, is not to be adored in the holy sacrament of the Eucharist with the worship of latria, including external worship, and that the sacrament therefore is not to be honoured with special festive celebrations nor solemnly carried in procession according to the praise-worthy universal rite and custom of the holy Church; or that it is not to be publicly exposed for the people's adoration, and that those who adore it are idolaters, anathema sit.

Canon 4. If anyone says that after the consecration the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ are not in the marvellous sacrament of the Eucharist but that they are there only in the use of the sacrament (in usu), while it is being received, and not before or after, and that in the consecrated hosts or particles which are preserved or are left over after communion the true body of the Lord does not remain, anathema sit.

CHAPTER VI: THE RESERVATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST AND TAKING IT TO THE SICK

The custom of reserving the holy Eucharist in a sacred place is so ancient that it was recognised already in the century of the Council of Nicaea. That the holy Eucharist should be taken to the sick and that it should be carefully kept in the churches for this purpose is right and very reasonable. Moreover, this is prescribed by many Councils and goes back to the most ancient custom in the Catholic Church. Consequently, this holy Council has decreed that this most salutary and necessary custom be retained.

Canon 7. If anyone says that it is not lawful to keep the sacred Eucharist in a sacred place, but that it must necessarily be distributed immediately after the consecration to those who are present; or that it is not lawful to carry it with honour to the sick, anathema sit.

VII: THE PREPARATION TO BE MADE TO RECEIVE THE HOLY EUCHARIST WORTHILY

It is not right that anyone should participate in any sacred functions except in a holy manner. Certainly,

then, the more a Christian is aware of the holiness and the divinity of this heavenly sacrament, the more careful he should be not to receive it without great reverence and sanctity (cf. n. 1536), especially since we read in the apostle the fearful words: "Anyone who eats and drinks unworthily, without discerning the body of the Lord, eats and drinks judgment upon himself" (1 Cor. 11.29 Vulg.). Therefore, whoever desires to communicate must be reminded of the precept: "Let a man examine himself" (1 Cor. 11.28)....

Canon 11. If anyone says that faith alone is a sufficient preparation for receiving the sacrament of the most holy Eucharist, anathema sit. And, lest so great a sacrament be received unworthily and hence unto death and condemnation, this holy Council determines and decrees that those whose conscience is burdened with mortal sin, no matter how contrite they may think they are, must necessarily make first a sacramental confession if a confessor is available. If anyone presumes to teach, or preach, or obstinately maintain, or defend in public disputation the opposite of this, he shall by the very fact be excommunicated.

CHAPTER VIII: THE USE OF THIS WONDERFUL SACRAMENT

As regards the use, our Fathers have correctly and appropriately distinguished three ways of receiving this holy sacrament. They teach that some receive it only sacramentally because they are sinners. Others receive it only spiritually; they are the ones who, receiving in desire the heavenly bread put before them, with a living faith "working through love" (cf. Gal. 5.6), experience its fruit and benefit from it. The third group receive it both sacramentally and spiritually (cf. n. 1533); they are the ones who examine and prepare themselves beforehand to approach this divine table, clothed in the wedding garment (cf. Mt. 22.11ff)....

Finally, with fatherly affection the holy Council warns, exhorts, asks and pleads, "through the tender mercy of our God" (Lk. 1.78), that each and all who bear the name of Christians meet at least in this "sign of unity", in this "bond of charity",¹ in this symbol of concord, to be finally of one heart. Keeping in mind the great majesty and the most excellent love of our Lord Jesus Christ, who laid down His precious life as the price of our salvation, and who gave us His flesh to eat (cf. Jn 6.48ff), may all Christians have so firm and strong a faith in the sacred mystery of His body and blood, may they worship it with such devotion and pious veneration, that they will be able to receive frequently their "super-substantial bread" (cf. Mt 6.11 Vulg.). May it truly

be the life of their souls and continual health for their minds; strengthened by its power (cf. 1 Kings 19.8), may they, after journeying through this sorrowful pilgrimage reach their home in heaven, where they will eat without any veil the same "bread of angels" (cf. Ps. 78 (77) 25) which they eat now under sacred veils.

- Canon 9. If anyone denies that each and all of Christ's faithful of both sexes are bound, when they reach the age of reason, to receive communion every year, at least during the Paschal season, according to the precept of Holy Mother Church, anathema sit (cf. DS 812).
- Canon 5. If anyone says that the principal fruit of the most holy Eucharist is the forgiveness of sins, or that no other effects come from it, anathema sit (cf. n. 1515).

When we look back at this decree, we see how closely doctrine and practice are interwoven, and that the whole point of the statement is to assert that the Catholic practices in Eucharistic devotions are based upon, and justified by, the belief that after the consecration there is in the Holy Eucharist no longer any bread or wine - only the outward appearances of bread and wine - and that what subsists beneath these elements, visible only to the eyes of faith, is simply and solely the body and blood, soul and divinity, of Jesus Christ. This, the Council asserted, has ever been the belief of the Church from the earliest times.

CHAPTER VIII: FOOTNOTES

1. C T VII 111, 10-114, 8.
2. C T VII 116, 5-30.
3. C T VII 122, 11-18.
4. C T VII 125, 4-8.
5. C T VII 129, 39.
6. C T VII 133, 7-9.
7. C T VII 123, 15-16.
8. C T VII 138, 2-3.
9. C T VII 121, 5-35.
10. C T VII 124, 1-3.
11. C T VII 124, 5-7.
12. C T VII 142, 3-143, 13.
13. C T VII 200, 11-204, 20. Translation is taken
from Neuner, 1515-1536.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

In the last six chapters we have briefly examined Thomas Aquinas' exposition of the Real Presence of the Lord in the Eucharist and then the definitive dogmatic statement of the Council of Trent on the same subject. In this concluding chapter we shall return to the question posed at the very beginning of our inquiry: do the opinions of the modern theologians (Schoonenberg, Schillebeeckx, Rahner) and of the New Catechism contradict the teaching of the Council of Trent, or do they faithfully continue to present that same teaching?

As we have seen, the task of any theologian is that of presenting the ancient doctrine of the deposit of faith in the new conditions and forms of life that have developed in modern times. It is his duty to unfold this sacred tradition to the people of his time as comprehensible, true and life-giving. This is what Thomas did for his own time and indeed for posterity, for the Church continues to acknowledge the value of his achievement. Our task is to see whether theologians of our own day, in their desire to re-express the unchanging truth of the Gospel in modern terms, have remained faithful, as Thomas was, to the tradition they have received.

The Dutch Jesuit, Piet Schoonenberg, certainly makes a sincere and serious effort to present the doctrine of the Real Presence in a way that modern man can understand and benefit from. He wants to be faithful to Trent, and many of his assertions sound truly Catholic. The Eucharist, he says, is our Lord's real gift of himself to us. His presence in the Church is fully actualised in the Eucharistic Presence, which he calls a 'Personal Presence', and this presence is both substantial and permanent. The celebration of this presence in the Eucharist is necessary for our salvation. Most of these positive affirmations, though somewhat lacking in clarity, seem to be orthodox.

The real difficulty is what Schoonenberg does not say. In one place he writes: 'Christ is not merely present in figure and in power. He is present to us by his substance, so that transubstantiation has not only the substance of bread and wine as its starting point, but the substance of Christ's body and blood as its end point'. The trouble with this is that it does not exclude consubstantiation and so is inadequate as a statement of transubstantiation; Luther would have no difficulty in accepting it. Although Schoonenberg uses the word 'transubstantiation', he does not make clear whether it is only the body that remains after the consecration or whether both the substance of the body and that of the bread subsist. This was the key issue at the time of Trent and can still not be swept aside: in other words, Schoonenberg's explanation cannot be considered to give the full content of the doctrine of the Council of Trent.

Not surprisingly, given this ambivalence on the subject of the Real Presence, Schoonenberg attacks the traditional practices of reservation and exposition (adoration), on the ground that the Church does not lay enough emphasis on the idea of the Eucharist as a meal. As we saw in the last chapter, Chapters V and VI of the Decree of the Council of Trent make it clear that practices such as worship and reservation of the Eucharist are the natural outcome of the Church's faith in the Real Presence; on the other hand, the meal aspect is not lost sight of—chapter II speaks of Christ's will that this sacrament be received as the soul's spiritual food, and chapter VIII develops the scriptural theme of 'food for the journey'.

Furthermore, Schoonenberg nowhere takes account of the argument of the theologians and the Fathers of the Council of Trent that the practices are not medieval inventions but a precious inheritance from the early Church. In a word, while there can be no doubt about the Dutch theologian's sincerity of intention, it can also not be denied that he fails adequately to present the full doctrine of the Real Presence.

The Flemish Dominican, Edward Schillebeeckx, resembles Schoonenberg in terms not only of his cultural background and theological formation but also of the orientation of his Eucharistic theology. Nevertheless, as we shall see, his treatment of the Real Presence is much more positive and more definitely compatible with the official teaching of the Roman Catholic Church. While safeguarding the authentic doctrine, he strives to present it in a more existential manner. He makes a clear cut distinction between the Real Presence in the Eucharist from the real presence proper to the other sacraments and purely symbolic presence. He acknowledges the ontological dimension of Christ's presence in the sign of bread and wine, substituting the word 'reality' for 'substance'. He writes thus:

'And as one reality cannot be at the same time two realities, what is really present after the consecration is no longer bread, but the body of the Lord, our Lord himself, under the sign of sacramental bread'.¹

In this he preserves the core of what the Council of Trent teaches.

According to Schillebeeckx, at the heart of the so-called 'transfinalization' and 'transignification' theories is a genuine interpretation of transubstantiation. He argues, with some legitimacy, that in post-Tridentine theology the res et sacramentum was emphasised to the detriment of the res sacramenti and was pushed into the background, an imbalance he feels the need to correct.

'Modern theologians, while accepting the Real Presence in the Blessed Sacrament, as well as the legitimacy of adoration of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament, want only to replace the emphasis where the New Testament, the Fathers and the great scholastic theologians placed it, that is, on the res sacramenti, the end for which Christ instituted it'.²

He emphasises this by using the analogy of the interpersonal relationship between a host and his guests in

the course of sharing a meal; but he is careful not to reduce the Eucharist to no more than a common meal.

Though he uses the two terms 'transfinalization' and 'transignification' interchangeably, at one point he seems to make a distinction.³ He uses the term 'transfinalization' to signify the gift of ^{the} Lord himself by means of bread and wine, and 'radical transignification' to denote the ontological presence of the Lord.

Schillebeeckx certainly presents a comprehensive view of the Real Presence, but there are questions to be raised. From the above paragraph, one can conclude that two new words are needed to bring out the full significance of the Eucharist, for one word by itself is inadequate. However, a careful analysis of the Decree of the Council of Trent would make it abundantly clear that the word 'transubstantiation' already covers both of the aspects mentioned by Schillebeeckx. Chapter IV says that because of the conviction that our Redeemer truly offers his body to us, the Church declares that the whole substance of the bread is changed into the substance of the body, and this is properly named 'transubstantiation'. Thus one single word comprises both the real gift and the ontological presence. Why therefore do we need to coin two new words? Not surprisingly, Pope Paul VI in his encyclical Mysterium Fidei, insists on retaining the term 'transubstantiation', and declares that the modern terms are in themselves individually insufficient, insofar as they do not indicate a complete conversion of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ.

Again Schillebeeckx wants to move away from Aristotelian terminologies. In doing so, he says:

'Eucharistic sacramentality demands that the physical reality does not change, otherwise there would no longer be a Eucharistic sign. But in its ontological reality, to the question "What is this bread ultimately, what is this wine ultimately?" One can no longer answer

"bread and wine", but instead, "the Real Presence of Christ offered under the sacramental signs of bread and wine". Therefore, the reality (that is, the substance, because that is the meaning of "substance") which is before me, is no longer bread and wine, but the real presence of Christ offered to me under the sign of food and drink".⁴

Though this explanation is by Roman Catholic criteria, very orthodox, it can cause confusion. He says there are two realities in a thing, namely, physical reality and ontological reality. One could ask what is really real, physical or ontological? But is Schillebeeckx all that different from Thomas? Thomas uses two terms to describe these two realities: the physical reality as accidents and ontological reality as substance. Hence there is no basic difference between Thomas and Schillebeeckx.

As a conclusion I would say that simply either of the two terms by itself does not give the full meaning of the Eucharist. But if those two terms are taken as complementing the term 'transubstantiation', then certainly Schillebeeckx has done a great service to the Church. For Thomas' way of explaining the Real Presence in the Eucharist expresses the same reality in the same way but perhaps using different words. Schillebeeckx's orthodoxy as a Roman Catholic theologian can hardly be impugned if he is merely trying to re-express the term transubstantiation in modern language.

Karl Rahner, the Jesuit, is in complete agreement with the teaching of Trent and of Thomas. For him transubstantiation is a logical explanation and affirms neither more nor less than the word of Christ saying, 'This is my Body'. He, very cleverly, distinguishes between dogma and the theologizing of dogma. As long as theology does not distort dogma, then everything else is a matter of free debate. This certainly implies two things. Thomas' theologizing in terms of Aristotelian categories do not distort the dogma, and hence Thomas is both a model and a guide to modern theologians. On the other hand, too many second-rate modern theologians need not remain slaves to the past.

This is Rahner's great contribution. Though he himself does not enter into long discussion or exposition of the doctrine of the Real Presence in modern terms, he has given us indications how to make this precious heritage meaningful to modern man. Trent gives us the doctrine and Thomas is the supreme example of theologizing the truth of the Real Presence of the Lord in the Eucharist.

As for the 'New Dutch Catechism', we have followed, in the first chapter, its chequered history of development. It set itself the task of translating the doctrine of the Real Presence of the Lord in the Eucharist to simple Christians in terms which are understood by them. Faithful to the teaching of the Church, it set out to free the ordinary Roman Catholics from 'gross realism', without falling into the opinion of a purely symbolic presence. To some extent it succeeded, but there were phrases like 'This presence is linked with the bread', 'Bread has become Jesus' person', etc; which remained very ambiguous, lacking complementing sentences. Justifiably, many eyes were raised in the wide spectrum of the Roman Catholic Church.

Finally, due corrections were made (see above p.14). The new text certainly preserves the faith of the Church. Though it uses modern terminology, it remains faithful to Trent. To do this it draws guidance and inspiration from Thomas. It certainly succeeds in emphasising the aspect of spiritual food, thus correcting gross realism. At the same time it is careful to make explicit the reality of the Lord's presence.

Now if we once again look at Mysterium Fidei, we see that Pope Paul VI holds all the different opinions of various theologians together and unifies them with the tradition of the Church. He is positively favourable towards the theories put forward by the modern theologians. He sees their merits yet is alive to their limitations. Thus he puts an official stamp of approval on their writings, saying that the modern theologians are moving

in the right direction; and he does encourage them to continue in their work, and without any shadow of doubt places Thomas as their model and guide. The modern theologians should keep the words of Maximus the Confessor (580-662) as their yardstick, 'The mystery of our salvation does not consist in syllables but in concepts and reality'.⁵ How this is to affect ecumenical discussion between Catholics and Protestants is for others to judge. But the statement of the Council of Trent and the theology of St. Thomas Aquinas should not be considered as being an essential barrier to ecumenical dialogue.

CHAPTER IX : FOOTNOTES

1. Worship, p. 332.
2. Ibid., p. 335.
3. Ibid., p. 337.
4. Ibid.,
5. Ep. 19; PG 91. 596Bf.

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